

Listening for the Promise

WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL

Epiphany 3 – January 25, 2026

“I thank God that I baptized none of you, save Crispus and Gaius”

- 1 Corinthians 1:14 -

Doesn't it seem odd that Paul would make such a bold proclamation? After all, the Great Commission is to make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. In our day, there are evangelists and preachers who boast about how many they've saved, yet Paul points out how few he baptized. This isn't just a matter of false humility; for Paul, it was a reminder of the power and authority by which we all are saved.

Paul always put the focus on what mattered most: the work of Christ. What mattered was the Gospel and the power of God — not the person performing the baptism or the person who was preaching. All too often our ministry becomes about the people and their gifts rather than the One who has made it possible. Paul admits he did not speak eloquently, but how many times do we follow someone because he or she is well-spoken and charismatic? We think there is more power to the words when the person speaking is educated and articulate, but even the devil can make a twisted lie sound true.

The Jews believed that they were made right with God by their acts of worship, by their sacrifices and their offerings. The Gentiles felt there was no need to be made right because they were good by nature. Unfortunately, many today still believe that righteousness is either earned or innate. But even in this great weakness there is hope, for Christ came to save us from ourselves.

That is why Paul brought the focus of the Corinthians back to the work of Christ. The truth is, Paul, Apollos and Cephas (Peter) were, no doubt, great preachers. They were well-spoken and charismatic. They were sincere and articulate. But that doesn't matter. In the end, it was never about them. Christ himself is the one in whom we are saved.

To believe that the Son of God came to die so that we might be forgiven, is to die to ourselves and our own merits, and instead to trust that Christ alone is the power and wisdom of God (1 Cor. 1:24) in our lives!