

## Worth of the Individual

"For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" I Corinthians 4:7

Paul asks three rhetorical questions: 1) - Who made you different from others? The obvious answer is "God." 2) - What do you have that you did not receive as a gift? Paul assumes that all agree that the answer is "nothing." 3) - If God gave it to you, why boast as though you earned it? Again, the obvious answer is "stupid pride."

When you objectively look at the apostle's questions, it becomes obvious that he assumes you are intrinsically worthless; **the only worth you have, or will ever have, God imputes to you.** If you consider your worth from the perspective of comparing yourself with others, you fail to see yourself as God sees you.

The world only sees your worth from the perspective of using you. As the songwriter states it: "You load sixteen tons, what do you get? Another day older and deeper in debt. Saint Peter, don't you call me, 'cause I can't go. I owe my soul to the company store."<sup>1</sup>

The Bible emphasizes this again and again. You are the slaves or chattel of God. The fact that He purchased you at the cost of His Son's life gives you a worth that you would not have otherwise. **For this reason, you boast only in the fact that you are the slave of the Lord.**

<sup>1</sup> "Sixteen Tons" - The song is usually attributed to Merle Travis, to whom it is credited on his 1947 recording.

## God's Will Executed by Man's Stupidity

"For they prophesy falsely to you - with the result that you shall be banished from your land; I will drive you out and you shall perish." Jeremiah 27:10

When Solomon died, his son Rehoboam became king. The national leadership sought relief from the oppressive policies of his father. Older, wise men encouraged him to listen to the people, while his peers encouraged the opposite. "The king did not listen to the people; for the LORD had brought it about in order to fulfill the promise that the LORD had made through Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam son of Nebat."<sup>1</sup>

**With that one decision, God destroyed the nation of Israel,** for it set them on a course from which they never recovered. To this day, we refer to the nation of Israel (the ten northern tribes) as "the lost tribes of Israel."

There are times when God intentionally leads people to make stupid decisions. **To those insisting on maintaining their autonomy, He gives a spirit of delusion.** As we see in passages like Romans 1, God punishes sin by giving people what they want. **The only way I know for a person to avoid this happening to him is to live a life of perpetual dependence, seeking to please only One Person in the universe.**

<sup>1</sup> I Kings 12:15