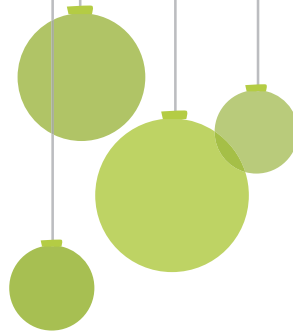


## “ He Chooses the Foolish Things... ”



Sometimes I just have to chuckle as I look around the room at Scum. The truth is, we are a bizarre little group of people — a “motley-crew” to be sure. And, yet, I love that this is the way Scum is—that these are the people who make up our little segment of the Body of Christ.

There’s me and Zach, missionary kids and products of the Evangelical tradition, but there’s also Ann, whose father is a shaman yet found Jesus while reading the gospels and searching for Truth. There’s Tina who spent a year living in a 24/7 prayer community in England, and Grace who’s spent the last decade of her life living on the streets. There’s Andy, Dan and Dave, three young guys who moved to Seattle to start a band (and accidentally began leading worship at Scum), and Bill, in his 60s, having survived multiple brain tumors, who tutor’s japanese students and loves to jam with the three band boys on his clarinet during worship. There are Jason and Erika, both med-school students, and Bill Jr., who likes to interrupt sermons with questions like “So, do you think Paula Abdul will ever visit the Tacoma Dome again?”

Honestly, sometimes Zach and I find ourselves laughing to tears, remembering some of the bizarre events that have happened when so many people from such varied walks of life meet in one place to seek God

— like the time Lindsey was preaching a sermon on Jesus being the Good Shepherd, and randomly asked if anyone had a funny story about sheep. That night there was a group of clean college students visiting from a local church, but unfortunately, another one of the people who had joined us that night was a little high, and took the opportunity to tell us a joke about bestiality. Without blinking an eye, Lindsey quickly transitioned back to her sermon, but the rest of us laughed about it for days.

Because the truth is, Scum is a place where things like that happen, and you don’t always know what the evening will bring. Sometimes

a friend will come in having overdosed, sometimes someone will freak out and cuss at everyone before leaving in a storm. But, sometimes, Grace shares stories with us about how God provided her with water when she was thirsty and reminds us that God will provide for all our needs. Sometimes we get to pray for someone who is hurting and going through a hard time. Sometimes we have powerful discussions, about things like the Joseph story and what it's like to feel like the un-favored son—and how that compares to what God sees when He looks at us. Sometimes Scum is exhausting, and sometimes it's awesome. Sometimes it's both.

Mike Sares, the pastor of Scum of the Earth Church in Denver, was out here last month, and he preached the sermon for Sunday night.

I love that he reminded us that God seems to do everything backwards. He gave us a Savior who *died*, and then built his church with the most unlikely group of people.

We may look like a mess and a mistake to the world—and sometimes to ourselves too—but, God uses the foolish and lowly things of this world to shame the wise.  
(1 Corinthians 1:18-31)

As Christmas approaches I've been reflecting on this again. And, I think you see this same "backward-ness" in the way Jesus entered the world. There's no triumphant entry—just a baby (surely the lowliest of human forms) born in a stable to a young homeless couple. And, who

does God call to come and be the first to greet His son? Outsiders—a trio from the Middle East—not children of Israel, and outcasts—shepherds, the lowest class in the social order.

The truth is, God *chooses* us—the outsiders, the outcasts, the scum of the earth and the refuse of the world—and he uses us to build his kingdom.

You gotta love a King like that!

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***Deep thanks for all your prayer, support, and encouragement over this last year at Scum.***

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*My superiors ask me to remind you that Scum is a great non-profit for those of you looking to make a year-end contribution!*