

christian faith, is lowercase. wikipedia tells me, and we all know it would never have untrue information, that the terms lowercase and uppercase were derived from the fact that the “capital” letters, were often kept in drawers above the lowercase letters.

i remember back when i was in grade school, learning how to write on enormous looseleaf like paper. there was blue lines along it, and in the middle was a dotted blue line, the idea was that it would help me as i wrote all these letters, to make sure the middle of the uppercase letters would meet the middle part, and be aware that most lowercase letters never reached above that middle point.

i say again, christian faith is lowercase.

the apostle paul writes in first corinthians, in the first chapter, brothers think of what you were when you were called. not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were influential, or of noble birth. but g-d chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, the weak things of the world to shame the strong. chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things, the things that are not to shame the things that are.

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in biblical greek, the language the bible used, there was no capital letters, no punctuation or spaces even, a biblical book was basically a string of alphas and betas, zetas, and psis, epsilons, sigmas, (two types of those) and others. it’s funny that g-d would choose to use a language that would read to anyone today as little more than a string of characters. indeed, i think this is a grand metaphor for the church.

christians, are lowercase people.

i first heard the term lowercase people in a switchfoot song called company car. and i like it. think for a second, brothers, sisters, what were you when you were called? when were you called? do you even know that you’re called? anyone here of exceptionally noble birth? influential? are any of you the sort of people, who could convince anyone to throw their heart into the ring and really give it a go? now i’m sure, if we could say that brad pitt, was going to be here every sunday night, or that the emotionless chick that played seven of nine on star trek was gonna be here, i’m sure a good number more people might show up. but we, we my friends are lower cased.

in scripture, you do not find christ most comfortable with those of high power, those who stand proudly stretched out over that middle line on the page. oh sure he spends time with a rich guy named who climbed into a tree just to get to see him, and he’d regularly debate with some guys with some pretty fancy threads. but when it comes down to it, jesus tends to prefer, lowercase people. scripture says, he chose the things that are not, the weak, the base, the unwanted.

look at a sentence, i'm sure most of you can remember what one looks like. what is the first thing that you think of? for me it's often actually that letter that starts it all, the big one, it stretches far out over that middle dotted line i had in grade one. it is beautiful, proud, almost majestic if the font is right. but does that letter make any sense, without a string of smaller unassuming letters that will follow it? indeed take out that letter, and you will probably still understand everything that sentence meant, though you may have to pause for a slight second to figure out exactly what that letter was. now try taking away all those smaller, less impressive looking letters, all you have is a short sound that dies on it's own.

i may not be a television star, nor am i a famous author, or musician, but i am capable of being quite loud, the residence life department after i came out learned to avoid angering me because typically i could rant loud enough if need be that it would embarrass them. nothing like being called pinko commie nazi bastards on my blog to get them to stop making thinly veiled threats toward me! i often wish i was a capital letter, strong and uppercase. but, i am not. i may on occasion reach the tip of myself up over that middle line, but most of me is under it. and really, that is for the best.

because christianity, is the faith for lowercase people. christianity is not for the rich, powerful, and beautiful. the words of our faith talk of how those who live by the sword will die by it. those who wish to know how they might find eternal life are told to give away all their money that which gives them power, to the lowercase people. in christ you will find people who have no stature of their own, who recognize that they are not in control of everything. in christ you find those that by their own virtue, or by virtue of their own inability, are not able to lord over their own power, or prestige over anyone else, but instead wrap a towel around their waist and wash someone's feet.

each week we celebrate the eucharist, also known as communion. before our g-d ate with his friends, and gave the words that have been repeated countless times over the centuries in hundreds of languages, he took off his respectable appearance, and knelt to clean those who followed him. indeed, we serve a lowercase saviour.

i shared with a friend earlier this week, that he did not need to be angry with himself over the fact that he hadn't talked with g-d in a few days, he felt awful, as if he was wasting his time, that he was empty. i told him he needed to remember that jesus was still human, he is divine, and human as well. our g-d is still the man who knelt to clean his friend's feet. he is still the man who reaches through out the world to wash the feet of all those who would follow him.

christianity is lowercase faith.

first corinthians 12 states, that the eye can not say to the hand, i don't need you. the head can not say to the feet, i don't need you, the parts of the body that seem weak, we can't do without. the parts of the body that we might think are shameful, we honour, and the parts that

we're afraid for others to see because they won't understand, we hold gently to our heart with tender care. g-d has combined the members of this body and given greater honour to the parts that lacked it.

i have heard the gift passages preached on more times than I care to remember, and nobody has ever made such a big deal about the gift of service. which is tragic. i have heard people regularly say they want to speak as a prophet, because to hear g-d and relay a message, oh my that would be a capital idea! i've heard charismatics pray that they might have the gift of tongues, because my that would be capital! in my teens i was sure i'd be an awful pastor, some of you might agree with my teenage self, so i prayed for wisdom and knowledge, because that would make me capital! i thank g-d that it did not.

christian faith, played out in the lives of it's people is unassuming, it is beautifully natural. when faith is shared, it is as if a warm handshake and a gentle speech. sometimes it may rumble like a summer storm, but more often it is a afternoon autumn breeze. my friend from earlier, still sees his devotional times, as capital times, times when he is intentional, waiting, bent and determined for g-d to evidence himself. long ago that stopped being the time i found g-d in. don't get me wrong, i have nothing against separated time for study of the word, think it's great, wish i could remember to do it more often. but frankly i've learned, god talks to me in some of my most lowercase moments. a walk to the gym, sometimes in the times when i dipped bellow that line that most letters rest on, jesus met me there.

the christian church, is lowercase people. we can not be represented by fools raving on the radio, begging on tv for donations. we are not found in the pages of the most recent book by today's hack christian authors who might not recognize scripture if not for the verse numbers. we are not a purpose driven faith with a food court outside our sanctuary, nor are we mighty cathedrals towering over fearful partitioners. but we can be found in those situations.

we are a grand story, penned by a wondrous author with millions of protagonists, and amazing supporting characters. ours is a story that makes war and peace look like a children's book. we have plot twists, and foreshadowing, language that rolls off the tongue of the divine. together as we hold hands across the ages, we spell out the most beautiful love narrative the world will ever know. and each and every one of you is a part of that. some of us stay safely below the middle line, others have to reach out and stand tall, but we are all, a lowercase people. we follow in the tradition of a saviour that humbled himself to be found as a man, we kneel and wash each other's feet, we recognize our connection with each other.