

“THE MESSAGE OF THE APOSTLE PAUL IS OUR MODEL”
1 CORINTHIANS 2:1-5

INTRO: In our study through 1 Corinthians we have learned that, FROM GOD’S PERSPECTIVE, **HE HAS CHOSEN THE “FOOLISHNESS OF PREACHING” TO SAVE LOST SINNERS AND INSTUCT BORN AGAIN BELIEVERS IN THEIR SPIRITUAL LIFE.** That mandate from God has NEVER CHANGED down through the years. In other words, GOD HAS NOT CHANGED HIS MIND ABOUT HOW TO REACH PEOPLE WITH BIBLICAL TRUTH. The Apostle Paul was committed to PREACHING THE WORD OF GOD, not because he was a great preacher or orator, but because in the will of God he could do nothing else (1 Corinthians 9:16). When we come into the second chapter of 1 Corinthians we see that the Holy Spirit led Paul to give a greater explanation of the message he was called to preach. This explanation was not just for the believers at Corinth, but FOR US TODAY! We all will do well to take heed to this explanation because in our modern day many pastors and churches seem to DEPART FROM THE PRECHING OF THE GOSPEL to some other METHOD OR MESSAGE that may be adverse to the will of God. So, let’s observe the MESSAGE OF PAUL about the emphasis he placed on preaching and pray that it will become THE MODEL OF PREACHERS AND CHURCHES TODAY.

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OBSERVATION: In verse one of the text we find an interesting phrase which says, **“DECLARING UNTO YOU THE ‘TESTIMONY’ OF GOD.”** This is extremely significant because it shows that what is about to be said IS NOT PAUL’S TESTIMONY, but rather GOD’S OWN TESTIMONY on WHAT HE EXPECTS of the MESSAGE WE PREACH!

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I. THE POWER OF PAUL’S MESSAGE – VSS. 1,3,4

A. Paul’s Message was not accomplished through Human Power – Vss. 1,4a

1. Not with “Excellency of Speech” – Vs. 1a - The philosophers of Paul’s day were very eloquent. But that was not Paul’s goal in preaching.

2. Not with personal “Wisdom” – Vs. 1b – The humanistic secular philosophies of the day.

3. Not with personal power – Vs. 4

a. Paul had come to Corinth after being beaten and imprisoned in Philippi, run out of town in Thessalonica and Berea, and scoffed in Athens. So he was extremely weak!

b. Paul used no THEATRICALS or TECHNIQUES to manipulate response from people.

c. Paul’s “FEAR” and “TREMBLING” was not because he was afraid of the persecution he faced, but rather because **HE UNDERSTOOD THE SERIOUSNESS OF HIS MESSAGE! WOW!!!**

4. Not with “Enticing Words” – Vs. 4a – Fleshly appeals just to get people to respond.

NOTE: HAD PAUL USED SPECTACULAR SPEECH AND PHILOSOPHY, HE WOULD NAVE EXALTED HIMSELF AND HIDDEN THE VERY CHRIST HE CAME TO PROCLAIM!

ILLUSTRATION: The little girl who said, “Where is the man who hides Jesus?”

B. Paul’s Message was with Holy Spirit Power – Vs. 4b

“DEMONSTRATION OF THE SPIRIT AND POWER.”

1. It was not Paul’s experience or ability that gave his message power.

2. It was the work of the Holy Spirit through his life that gave power.

a. According to the text Paul’s preaching was NOT a “PERFORMANCE” of his own ability to prepare and deliver a message.

b. Paul’s preaching was a “DEMONSTRATION” of the power of God.

1) The word “DEMONSTRATION” means “LEGAL PROOF PRESENTED IN COURT.”

2) The Holy Spirit used Paul’s preaching to change lives which PROVED that his message was from God!

NOTE: Preaching that “tickles ears” doesn’t changes lives for God’s Glory.

NOTE: Paul was not allowing for “shoddy” preaching, but saying that PREACHING is not to be empowered by human strength, wisdom or philosophy.

ILLUSTRATION:

II. THE PERCEPTION OF PAUL'S MESSAGE – VS. 2

A. Paul always preached the WHOLE COUNSEL OF GOD. Acts 20:28

B. Paul always centered his preaching on “JESUS CHRIST AND HIM CRUCIFIED.” That is, **THE CROSS! What does that involve?**

1. Christ secured forgiveness for our sins through His shed blood on the cross.
2. Christ paid the penalty of our sin through His death on the cross.
3. Christ guaranteed eternal life for us through His resurrection from the grave!

NOTE: **THIS IS THE MESSAGE OF THE CROSS WHICH A LOT OF PREACHING HAS AVOIDED IN OUR MODERN ERA!**

NOTE: **ONLY THE MESSAGE OF THE CROSS WILL CHANGE LIVES!**

ILLUSTRATION:

III. THE PURPOSE OF PAUL'S MESSAGE – VS. 5

A. That the FAITH of his listeners did not stand in Man's Wisdom - Vs.5a

1. Paul did not want his listeners to trust in the arguments of a man!
2. Had Paul depended on human wisdom and presented the plan of salvation as a “philosophical system” the Corinthians would have put their trust in human explanation and argument....not God!

B. That the FAITH of his listeners stood in the Power of God – Vs. 5b

-Faith that stands in the POWER OF GOD changes lives!

NOTE: **TOO OFTEN PEOPLE PUT MORE TRUST IN THEIR PREACHER THAN IN THE MESSAGE PREACHED. THAT FOCUS WILL LEAD TO SHALLOW CHRISTIANITY.**

ILLUSTRATION:

APPLICATION:

WHAT DOES ALL OF THIS MEAN TO ME?

- 1) Preachers must ALWAYS avoid their own wisdom and strength in preaching and seek God's direction and depend upon God's strength to communicate the message. Members of congregations MUST PRAY that the preacher ALWAYS preaches in the Strength of God alone!
- 2) Christians must use discernment as to what messages they listen to.
 - a. Is the message biblically based?
 - b. Does the message give clear biblical interpretation?
 - c. Does the message exalt Christ and His work on the Cross?
 - d. Is the message filled with sound biblical content?
 - e. Does the message use words of eloquence that appeals to the flesh rather than the Spirit?
 - f. Does the message end with clear Holy Spirit led application?