

Series: 1 Corinthians
Title: We Speak Wisdom
Text: 1 Cor 2: 6-8
Date: September 10, 2015
Place: SGBC, New Jersey

Some in the church at Corinth exalted certain preachers over other preachers. Their reasons for doing so were carnal. It was not the wisdom of God that made them do so. It was due to their focus being on the preacher—on something positive or negative about the preacher.

So writing under the power of God, the apostle Paul made it clear that on purpose, God chose a foolish means—“the foolishness of preaching”; on purpose, God chose foolish, weak, infirm men to preach; on purpose, God chose for his gospel to be preached NOT with excellency of speech or of wisdom, NOT with enticing words of man’s wisdom—but with great simplicity and great plainness of speech, according to the scriptures.

We find an example of NOT using the enticing words of man’s wisdom in the way Peter answered the rulers. He did not say that he healed the lame man by Jesus. That would have been true but it would have been the wisdom of words. It would have taken the offense out of the cross. It would have spared Peter. Peter made it clear he was speaking of Christ whom they had crucified. (Acts 4: 7-14)

Christ preached the truth using simple illustrations. Men had no ability to believe. But Christ made certain his disciples understood what he said. God could speak far above our heads. Yet, the whole Bible is full of metaphors, similes, pictures and types that are easily understandable. The entire old covenant—political Israel, their government, the tabernacle, the priesthood—was a picture that God used to declare the gospel of God with great simplicity. True preaching proclaims the truth of Christ and the total inability of sinners with clarity that cannot be mistaken.

On purpose, God chose that only God would reveal the gospel and make his child believe on Christ. His servants are not to use the harsh, rebuking tactics of self-righteous Pharisees to force sinners to repent—that is vain pride. His preachers are not to use the high-pressure tactics of self-willed, self-made religious men to force sinners to believe—that is vain pride. His preachers are not to preach over men’s heads. His preachers are not to take the offense out of the cross. God’s preachers are to preach the word in truth, with clarity, with simplicity, then wait on God to work in his children in God’s time. This is the meekness God gives his servants.

The reason Moses is called “meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth” is because when Korah led a rebellion against Christ by rejecting Moses, Moses declared Christ’s word, not his own. Moses bowed to Christ, waited on Christ to call and correct his children and subdue their enemies rather than taking matters into his own hands.

So Paul says God’s preachers are not wise before men, our means—preaching itself—is not wise to men, we do not preach with our wisdom or our power, even our subject—our message itself—is not wisdom to worldly men. Here is our text.

1 Corinthians 2: 6: Howbeit...we speak wisdom...among them that are perfect:...yet not the wisdom of this world,...nor of the princes of this world,...that come to nought: 7: But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom,...which God ordained before the world...unto our glory:...8: Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

The gospel of Christ is wisdom to those who have been made wise by Christ.

WISDOM TO THOSE MADE WISE

First, the gospel is wisdom only to those that are come to Wisdom—“Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect : yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought.” (1 Cor 2: 6)

The word “perfect” means “them that are come to maturity or them that are come to the end.” This is brought about through the preaching of Christ and him crucified—through this one wise means God has chosen to use. Through the preaching of Christ crucified, God brings his child—this one all-wise, all-powerful God brings them. Through the preaching of Christ crucified, God alone has brought them, “to the end” of the gospel—to Christ our Wisdom.

Those who are “perfect” are not sinless. But they have been given the knowledge of Christ so that in Christ they are perfect. They have been grown up into Christ in all things. It was done by Christ, through the truth of his gospel, through the preaching of the word by the vessel Christ himself sent!

When we behold Christ who is Wisdom, who in Wisdom does this whole work for us, that is when of God, ye are in Christ and of God is Christ made unto us Wisdom. That is when the gospel will become wisdom to you.

Now, understand, this work is Christ’s resurrection glory to perform in his church, not our glory to perform.

Ephesians 4: 11: And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; 12: For the perfecting [the maturing] of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: 13: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: 14: That we *henceforth* be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, *and* cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; 15: But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, *even* Christ. 16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working [by Christ] in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

To them that are brought to Christ, to this end, to be no more children but grown up in Christ, to them we speak wisdom. Their focus is Christ, not the vessel. The apostle Paul had many infirmities in the flesh. But when God made the Galatian’s to believe on Christ they did not regard Paul’s infirmities. He wrote,

Galatians 4: 13: Ye know how through infirmity of the flesh I preached the gospel unto you at the first. 14: And my temptation which was in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected; but received me as an angel of God, *even* as Christ Jesus.

A few times in my life I have been really, really thirsty. I can still tell you how cold and good the water was that quenched my thirst. But I don’t remember the vessel that carried the water; I did not even notice it!

Men reveal much about what they have or have not experienced of God’s power and grace—by their regard for the preaching of Christ crucified. Do they take matters into their own hands and use other wisdom and power, other means and other methods? Or do they delight in the preaching of Christ crucified and wait on Christ to work?

To those in whom Christ is made Wisdom, we preach wisdom. We believe Christ is sovereign. It is not simply a doctrine. We prove it by waiting on Christ to work repentance and faith in whom he will through his gospel in his time. God’s wisdom in saving by this means is “That no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.” (1 Cor 1: 29-31)

NOT THE WISDOM OF THIS WORLD

Through the gospel, all God’s elect shall be brought to this end, to Christ our Wisdom. But this is not the wisdom of this world. The wisdom and power of this world shall come to nothing. Notice the contrast, “Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought.” (1 Cor 2: 6)

“Wisdom” and “princes” shows their man-made wisdom and man-made power! To the believer, Christ is Wisdom and Power. The fear of the LORD gives his child the maturity and understanding to depart from the evil of using our

wisdom and our strong hand. We depart from that evil and we preach Christ and wait on God to work in his child because God has given us the fear the Lord! “Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil *is* understanding.” (Job 28: 28) Christ is Wisdom speaking in Proverbs 8: 13-16:

Proverbs 8: 13: The fear of the LORD *is* to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate. 14: Counsel *is* mine, and sound wisdom: I *am* understanding; I have strength. 15: By me kings reign, and princes decree justice. 16: By me princes rule, and nobles, *even* all the judges of the earth.

But the world thinks their wisdom and force is better. But they do not have true wisdom! So Christ, who is Wisdom and Power, who brings his child to bow, is also the Wisdom and Power who brings this world’s wisdom and power to nothing.

Most of us are old enough to have seen changes with each generation. One generation said eggs were bad for you; the next said eggs are good for you. One said milk is good; now they say milk is bad. Every 4 years we have a new politician with a new solution because the old one came to nothing. That is man’s gospel and man’s means. It keeps changing—becoming more contemporary—because it keeps coming to nothing.

If our wisdom is of us then it shall perish when we die. But the Wisdom that is of God is eternal and everlasting.

Amen!