

Series: 1 Cor
Title: Established by God
Text: 1 Cor 1: 15-20
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As we go, we will see false preachers had arisen **from among the Corinthians**. In another place, Paul described false preachers by these three fruits:

- 1) *Acts 20: 30: Also of your own selves shall men arise*—They once sat under the faithful preaching of Christ amongst God’s saints.
- 2) *Acts 20: 30...speaking perverse things*—In order to differentiate themselves from those they once called brethren, they must change a few points of doctrine so their message is a little different from the truth they claimed to have been saved under.
- 3) Their purpose is *Acts 20: 30: ...to draw away disciples after them*.—Their motive is not Christ’s glory, nor the good of God’s people, but themselves. “They lead captive silly women” by appealing to their various lusts and ill desires.

In our text, we see three more fruits of false preachers. First, false preachers attacked Paul’s character. They accused him of lying to the Corinthians concerning his plans to visit, of using rashness, of leaning on the arm of the flesh. Paul corrects this false accusation:

2 Corinthians 1: 15: And in this confidence [the confidence of a clear conscience: that the true saints at Corinth believed the gospel, that they thoroughly knew Paul and rejoiced in Paul and he in them] **I was minded to come unto you before, that ye might have a second benefit; 16: And to pass by you into Macedonia, and to come again out of Macedonia unto you, and of you to be brought on my way toward Judaea. 17: When I therefore was thus minded, did I use lightness? [was I reckless or rash] or the things that I purpose, do I purpose according to the flesh, that with me there should be yea yea, and nay nay?**

False preachers discredited Paul’s character accusing him of lying, of leaning on the arm of the flesh and so on because he said he would visit then did not.

Brethren, one of the first things false brethren do is try to get you to agree with them concerning a fault in the character of God’s preacher. If anyone ever tries to get you to agree with them, when speaking against the character of one of God’s faithful preachers, do not do it. Here is why.

Secondly, after attacking his character, they used it that they might accuse him of preaching a false gospel. They said, “If he lied in his daily dealings, he lies in his preaching.” And they made this accusation toward the faithful preachers Paul associated with. Paul corrects this false accusation:

1 Corinthians 1: 18: But as God is true, our word toward you was not yea and nay. 19: For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, even by me and Silvanus and Timotheus, was not yea and nay, but in him was yea. 20: For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.

The third thing false preachers did was accuse Paul and true brethren of being converted by men and following men rather than Christ. Paul corrects this false accusation as well.

2 Corinthians 1: 21: Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; 22: Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.

Brethren, Christ said we will know false preachers by their fruits. Here are six of those fruits:

- 1) They usually arise from within
- 2) They alter their doctrine to differentiate themselves
- 3) They do it to lead away disciples after themselves
- 4) They malign the character of God's faithful preachers
- 5) They accuse God's preachers of preaching a false gospel.
- 6) They accuse God's people of following men rather than Christ.

Christ said that we are to beware of such men who bear these fruits! They are wolves in sheep's clothing.

We will see in our text, God gives his witness an honest character and preserves us to declare the gospel in truth because it is God who establishes and anoints us, not men.

Our subject is "Established by God."

GOD MAKES CHARACTER TRUE

2 Corinthians 1: 15: And in this confidence I was minded to come unto you before, that ye might have a second benefit; 16: And to pass by you into Macedonia, and to come again out of Macedonia unto you, and of you to be brought on my way toward Judaea. 17: When I therefore was thus minded, did I use lightness? or the things that I purpose, do I purpose according to the flesh, that with me there should be yea yea, and nay nay?

Since God is true, God makes the character of his witness true. God creates a new heart making us a partaker of the divine nature. He purges our conscience from dead works so that the character of his witness is true like God.

Therefore, God's preacher conducts himself as Paul stated before, "*in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, [and such is our conduct] in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward.*" (2 Cor 1: 12) Paul's motive for going to Corinth was selfless—"that they might receive a second benefit"—that they might be grown in grace by God through the preaching of the gospel of Christ. God makes his minister walk according to God's will. Paul did not make plans after the flesh. He wrote, "*I will come to you shortly, if the Lord will.*" (1 Cor 4: 19)

Since God is true, God only sends those who are true in character. God sent his Son who is the Truth and came to bear witness of the true God.

1 John 5: 20: And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, *even* in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.

God the Holy Spirit is true. Christ said,

John 16:13: Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.

Likewise, God only sends men to preach who God has made true by making us one with him in the new heart he has created.

Jeremiah 3: 15: And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding.

Brethren, because God is true and will have his word delivered to his people in truth, the one he sends to declare his name will be honest in character. God makes him so.

GOD MAKES HIS WITNESS SPEAK TRUTH

2 Corinthians 1: 18: But *as God is true*, our word toward you was not yea and nay. 19: For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, *even by me and Silvanus and Timotheus*, was not yea and nay, but in him was yea. 20: For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.

God does not send men who speak lies. God makes his witness declare only the truth according to God's word.

The truth is essential because salvation is by God's promise. And God cannot lie!

Hebrews 6: 13 For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself, 14 Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. 15: And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. 16: For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation *is* to them an end of all strife. 17: Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed *it* by an oath: 18: That by two immutable things, in which *it was* impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: [Christ Jesus at God's right our great High Priest!]

The truth that God's preacher declares is not a gospel of "maybes" because not a single promise of God is dependent upon the sinner but all are performed by Christ, "*For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, [who we preach, is] not yea and nay, but in him was yea.*"

It is impossible for the Son of God to fail to perform one work God gave to him to do in saving his people. God said of his Son,

Isaiah 42: 1: Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, *in whom* my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles....4: He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law.

All who have been made to know that salvation is impossible for us to accomplish, delight that beginning to end our salvation is by Christ Jesus who shall not fail!

God's true preacher declares God's promises are sure, "*For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.*" Every need we have as guilty sinners, God provides by Christ Jesus according to his promise, "*But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.*" (Phil 4: 19) We lost all righteousness in Adam. But God promised to provide his people perfect righteousness in Christ and he has:

Jeremiah 23: 5: Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. 6: In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this *is* his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

We lost all holiness and became corrupt inwardly by Adam. But God promised to create a new heart within by Christ.

Ezekiel 36: 25: Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. 26: A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh 27: And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do *them*....31: Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that *were* not good, and shall lothe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations.

His true preachers do not bring believers back under the law or declare any part of salvation is to be performed by us. Because if you and I add to Christ's work, salvation ceases to be by God's promise.

Galatians 3: 16: Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. 17: And this I say, *that* the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. 18: For if the inheritance *be* of the law, *it is* no more of promise: but God gave *it* to Abraham by promise. [So we continue declaring "the just shall live by faith in Christ."] 22: But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.

God promised to continue his work in his people unto the end and bring all his people home to glory.

Psalm 138:8: The LORD will perfect that which concerneth me: thy mercy, O LORD, endureth for ever: forsake not the works of thine own hands.

Jeremiah 32:40: And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.

1 John 2:25: And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life.

1 John 5:11: And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.

All these promises bring us to one end, "*unto the glory of God by us.*" God has put his salvation in Christ's hands so that no sinner can boast in anything we do (1 Cor. 1:30-31; Titus 3:5). Redeemed sinners give God our Father and his Son Jesus Christ all the praise and glory (Psalm 115:1; Gal. 6:14; 2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Peter 3:18; Heb. 9:12-14).

NOT ESTABLISHED BY MEN BUT BY GOD

2 Corinthians 1: 21: Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, *is* God;

The reason God's witnesses are true in character, the reason we preach Christ in truth without changing our doctrine is because we are not established by men but by God.

False preachers who once sat under the truth were only following men when they did so. They prove it by changing their doctrine at the time when it benefits themselves. And they change their doctrine to line up exactly with other men, with the false preacher and people that will benefit them.

But God's preachers and people are established by God in Christ, "*Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God.*"

1 John 2:27 But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.

Another reason we do not change our gospel or fall away is because God seals us, "*Who hath also sealed us,...*" We are sealed by the Holy Spirit so that we are preserved like vegetables are sealed and preserved when we can in Mason or Ball jars. Christ said of himself, "*For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him.*" (Jn 3: 34) Therefore God promised Christ and God promises us with this sure promise, "*As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the LORD; My spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the LORD, from henceforth and for ever.*" (Is 59: 21) Our sure hope that God has and shall finish making good on all his promises is because God gives us assurance by the Holy Spirit in our new heart, "*and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.*"

Notice, Paul spoke the true character of God our Father—the true and certain mediation by Christ—and the establishing operation of the Holy Spirit. All three persons in the Godhead are work so that the promises shall be sure to all the seed, to the *glory of God* (2Co_1:20)

So rest assured, God creates in his witness an honest character, God keeps us believing and declaring the gospel in truth, and it is because God establishes and anoints us, not men.

Amen!