

correcting carnality

1 CORINTHIANS

Sermon Series Notes



"The Problem With Pride" (I Corinthians 1:18-31)

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Intro: Last week we learned that God's cure for carnality is the cross. We specifically talked about carnality that causes division in the body of Christ. As we look a little further today, we learn the root of carnality that caused disunity and division in the church at Corinth read from v.13.

I. THE TEXT (1:18-31)

v.19 The context of Isaiah 29:19; The Assyrian army was poised on Israel's border to invade and destroy them. Instead of humbling themselves & turning to God for help, they instead formed an alliance with Egypt (II Kings 17:4). Relying on human force and wisdom brought about tragic results, but in the end Hezekiah and the people of Israel humbled themselves, and God brought about a tremendous victory.

* God says to Sennacherib, whose confidence is in the size of his army his abilities in battle, "I will show you how wise you are to boast of your own strength and God says to Israel, just humble yourself and trust me

v.22 One says do something impressive, the other says be something impressive.

v.25 Hyperbole: Obvious and intentional exaggeration, not to be taken literally.

v.26 Most of us will never be in "Who's Who in America." We are rather a part of the "Who's He in America."

v.28 This ministry is a tremendous example of this verse. If I had a doctorate degree, was six foot two, a great orator, had a full head of hair, was a great organizer & administrator, then not only might I be tempted to glory in the work God is doing among us, but the world (& the church) would be tempted to do so as well. But God has done and is doing a work here that only He could get the glory for. Doesn't that make you feel good, that you, along with me, are the foolish things of the world?

v.31 Jeremiah 9: 23 This is what the LORD says: "Let not the wise man boast of his wisdom or the strong man boast of his strength or the rich man boast of his riches,
24 but let him who boasts boast about this: that he understands and knows me

II. LESSONS FROM THE TEXT

A. The Simple Message Of The Cross

* It is not the impressiveness of the presentation in sharing the gospel, but rather the message itself. It is not "eloquence" or "superior wisdom" that determines the impact of our ministry in sharing the gospel

* "The poor, cheap noisy substitutes which the church has tried in place of that message are being exposed for the paltry, futile things they really are. Along with all the so-called progress there is the most alarming spiritual decline. The church has never had better machinery, neither has the church ever been so helplessly ineffective in meeting the problems of the day."

* The message of the cross calls me to lay down my logic, my pride, my position in life, my worldly merits. The message of the cross removes all glory from me and places all the glory upon God. Any glory I have is but a reflection of His glory. The message of the cross is a message of power through weakness, life through death, resurrection through crucifixion.

* I Cor.3: 18 Do not deceive yourselves. If any one of you thinks he is wise by the standards of this age, he should become a "fool" so that he may become wise.

19 For the wisdom of this world is foolishness in God's sight.

B. The Simple Messengers

* Not only is it not the impressiveness of the presentation, it is also not the impressiveness of the messenger making the presentation. Certainly we want to share it clearly, but we must never forget that God uses the "foolish" in the world's eyes to share his truth.

* One of the greatest revivals of the nineteenth century began in England at Cambridge University. The entire university was in an uproar that a backwoods preacher named Dwight L. Moody would dare to preach at the cultural center of the English world. One of the chief complaints was that Moody murdered the King's English. So the plan was to jeer Moody off the chapel stage. But that never happened. Ira Sankey sang a song before Moody stood to speak. The song quieted the audience. Then Moody stood and, looking the students right in the eye and said, "Young gentlemen, don't ever think that God don't love you, for He do!" One student who recalled the moment said "We were so dumfounded we didn't know how to respond - and we forgot to jeer him!" Every few minutes of Moody's sermon he would repeat his opening statement, "Don't ever think that God don't love you, for He do!"

* A history of the men and women God has used throughout history Gideon, Jephthah, David (tell the story), the apostles

* Acts 4: 13 When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus.

* Story on company considering hiring the apostles

* Isa.53: 2 He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him.

C. Why Some People Miss The Message Of The Cross

1. They **demand** miraculous signs

* 154. aiteo, ahee-teh'-o; of uncert. der.; to ask (in gen.):--ask, beg, call for, crave, desire, require. Comp. G4441.

* Israel was looking for a Messiah who would come and deliver His people by way of miraculous power. And so to hear a message about a suffering Messiah was not only shocking, but a blow to their pride.

* They took pride in miraculous displays of power. They had a history of "demanding" God deliver them from their physical problems by miraculous means

* John 6:30 So they asked him, "What miraculous sign then will you give that we may see it and believe you? What will you do?"

* Note: For people whose hearts are not open, and who are not willing to humbles themselves and have their hearts changed, they demand greater displays that will tantalize their emotions and satisfy their fleshly appetities

* Matthew 12: 38 Then some of the Pharisees and teachers of the law said to him, "Teacher, we want to see a miraculous sign from you."
39 He answered, "A wicked and adulterous generation asks for a miraculous sign! But none will be given it except the sign of the prophet Jonah.
40 For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

* Luke 16: 31 "He said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.'"

* Signs do not change hearts. Signs may make someone believe in God, yet those same people who now believe in God, may fail to submit their lives to Him, and apart from that submission, God is not able to meet their greatest need

* The ten lepers who were cleansed believed in God? But only one came back to give thanks. He was not only miraculously healed physically, but his heart was changed as well. The thousands who were fed miraculously by Jesus believed in God, but despite this miraculous provision, continued to work for food that spoils, and demanded from Jesus greater miraculous signs. The millions who experienced the supernatural manna from heaven during 40 years of wandering in the wilderness believed in God, yet never humbled their hearts before Him

* The cross requires that I stop looking for God to simply deliver me from my physical problems while a more eternal problem needs to be dealt with - the deliverance of my soul, the squashing of my self, my pride that is the message of the cross

2. They seek human wisdom

* The Greeks loved great orators. They would not have been impressed with D.L. Moody. They were into human reasoning, arguments, logic. They exalted man as god

* "In the beginning God created man in His own image. The competition began when man insisted on returning the compliment."

* When we make God into our own image, we become gods. That's what is meant in Psalm 82: 5 "They know nothing, they understand nothing. They walk about in darkness; all the foundations of the earth are shaken. 6 "I said, 'You are "gods"; you are all sons of the Most High.' 7 But you will die like mere men; you will fall like every other ruler."

* Brilliant astronomers chart the orbits and shapes of the planets, but their telescopes never lead them to God. Astronauts, some of the finest specimens of humanity, explore other planets, but never discover God. Scientists peer through microscopes and record the details of a world invisible to human eyes, but they never see God. Intellectual educators, in all their research, never find God.

* II Tim.3:1-8

* Romans 1: 22 Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools 23 and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles 25 They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator--who is forever praised. Amen.

* Deut.8: 17 You may say to yourself, "My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me."

* Who we are, what we possess, both in intellect, ability, and riches are gifts from God. We would be nothing, have nothing, apart from Him.

* Joke: Go and get you own dirt

D. The Overall Issue: Pride

* Prov.6: 16 These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him:

17 A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood,

18 An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief,

19 A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.

* Prov.16: 5 The LORD detests all the proud of heart. Be sure of this: They will not go unpunished.

E. The Only Way To Boast

- * We were made to boast in God. We were made to give him credit for all good. We were made to rely on his power. We were made to magnify his glory and his all sufficiency in our weakness.
- * He loves the heart that boasts in the Lord. He loves the heart that gives him credit for what he alone can do. He loves the heart that relies on his power. He loves the heart that wants him to get the glory in all things and that wants the power of his Son to shine in our weakness.

* This is the source of all ultimate joy and satisfaction. Pride diverts our capacity for exultation from the galaxies of God's glory to the gutters of our puny achievements. It is a decorated dead end street.

CONCLUSION

* The message of the cross calls me to reject human logic for heaven's logic (Isa.29:14; II Kings 18), to depend/trust in God and not man (Isa.29:14; II Kings 18). It calls me to death in order to have life (Luke 9:22-24). It strips me of my pride in order that my only boast is in the Lord.

* Gal.6: 14 May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.