

Preaching or Foolishness

Introduction – This paper was written by a high school and college mathematics instructor. It was not written or produced by any particular denomination, cult, or religious leader. It is provided free of charge as an expression of God's love for mankind.



In a popular news blog, someone recently referred to the Bible as a Bronze Age legend. In fact, millions of people have been reviling the Bible long before the advent of the Internet. Modern technology simply allows common people the opportunity to express their ideas to a much larger audience.

The Bible clearly predicts the response of mankind to the preaching of the Gospel. Most people will reject the truth of God's Word. ¹⁸For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. ¹⁹For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. ²¹For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe" (1 Corinthians 1:18-19, 21 KJV). Preaching is God's chosen method of reaching the lost.

President Abraham Lincoln once said, "When I hear a man preach, I like to see him act as if he were fighting bees!" While drama and oratory can certainly be entertaining, the focus of our preaching should not be on an enjoyable performance. ³For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; ⁴And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables" (2 Timothy 4:3-4 KJV). Unfortunately, many preachers and pastors focus too much attention on comedy, storytelling, and showmanship.

The Apostle Paul had a very different perspective on preaching. ¹And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of

speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. ²For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. ³And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. ⁴And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: ⁵That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God" (2 Corinthians 2:1-5 KJV). In Jeremiah chapter one, the Old Testament prophet felt that he was too young to declare the Word of the Lord. Moses also said to the Lord, "'Pardon your servant, Lord. I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor since you have spoken to your servant. I am slow of speech and tongue'" (Exodus 4:10 NIV). The preaching of the Gospel is more than style and delivery.

What is the Good News of the Gospel? What is the preaching of the cross and why is it necessary? Man was created in the image of God. "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them" (Genesis 1:27 KJV). We were created for God's glory, fellowship, and love. "Even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him" (Isaiah 43:7 KJV). "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ" (1 John 1:3 KJV). Sadly, man rebelled against God, sin entered the world, and man was separated from God, so far that some people even doubt or deny God's existence. Why do so many people reject God's love and fellowship? From the very beginning, man has sought to reject and question God's instruction and authority. "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good" (Psalm 14:1 KJV). "For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved" (John 3:20 KJV).

Many people see God as an angry judge. They have been blinded by Satan. "⁴In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. ⁵For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. ⁶For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the

knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Corinthians 4:4-6 KJV). We preach Christ Jesus the Lord. Always remember to look at Christ. Don't look at your neighbors or religious leaders. Don't look at any mortal man. They are all imperfect. The Bible says that man is like an old clay pot. "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us" (2 Corinthians 4:7 KJV). Christ is the treasure; we are the clay pots. Evangelism is not an expression of being "holier than thou." Evangelism is similar to a beggar telling other beggars where food can be found.

Psalms 103 gives us some idea of what God is really like. As we look at His benefits, we should be thankful. ¹"Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name. ²Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: ³Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; ⁴Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies; ⁵Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's. ⁶The Lord executeth righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed. ⁷He made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel. ⁸The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy. ⁹He will not always chide: neither will he keep his anger for ever. ¹⁰He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. ¹¹For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him. ¹²As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us. ¹³Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him" (Psalm 103:1-13 KJV).

¹⁶"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. ¹⁷For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. ¹⁸He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. ¹⁹And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (John 3:16-19 KJV). "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Corinthians 2:14 KJV).

If the Spirit of God is speaking to you today, then today is your day of salvation. Second Corinthians 6:2 says that at just the right time, God heard you. If you cry out to God, He will hear you. On the day of salvation, He will help you. He will send the Holy Spirit to guide you and draw you to Him. Certainly, the "right time" is now. Today is the day of salvation! There is no guarantee of tomorrow. Your heart may become hard and your ears deaf to His call. Today, if you are fortunate enough to hear His voice, I urge you to say yes to Christ and His love.

You can experience a spiritual rebirth today. Romans 10:9 (KJV) says, "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."

Will you pray today and begin your journey with Christ? "Lord Jesus, I confess with my mouth today that You are the only begotten Son of the living God. I repent and turn from my sins. I believe that You died on the cross to save me from my punishment and I receive You as Savior and Lord of my life. Please help me to grow in Your fellowship and serve You all the days of my life. I ask these things in Jesus' name. Amen."

If you prayed that prayer today from your heart, then you have become a child of God. You have been born again and your adventure with Christ begins. Read the Bible each day, beginning with the book of John. Talk to God each day and ask for His help. Find a church that loves Jesus, loves people, worships God with enthusiasm, and teaches the Bible. They will help and encourage you on your journey with Christ.

May God bless you,
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