

PREACHING THE GOSPEL  
I COR. 1:17-25

Introduction:

- A. The mission of Paul. v17
  - 1. "For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel."
  - 2. J.B. Phillips = "For Christ did not send me to see how many I could baptize but to proclaim the gospel"
  
- B. Paul's style of preaching.
  - 1. "not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect."
  - 2. Not with an orators cleverness or the cross of Christ might seem an empty thing. (An invention of a clever mind.)
  - 3. Sixty-five ways to give an invitation.
  - 4. Manipulation, maneuvering, tricking, intimidating, are all useless.

I. TWO VIEWS OF PREACHING. v18

- A. foolishness = moria - folly, absurdity.
  - 1. "to them that are perishing."
  - 2. What do you think of preaching of the cross?
  
- B. "power of God" - dunamis.
  - 1. The preaching of the cross is God's plan for revealing His power.
  - 2. Inherent power, not mere capability of power, but power in action.
  
- C. This is the "preaching of the cross."
  - 1. Not merits of preacher.
  - 2. Not merits of the church.
  - 3. Not merits of Christian life!

II. THE ATTITUDE OF THE PERISHING PREDICTED. V19

- A. Paul cites Isaiah 19:14
  - 1. The Bible is an accurate predictor.
  
- B. "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise."
  - 1. To destroy utterly, not annihilation but ruin.
  - 2. Homer = death in battle.
  - 3. sophos = wisdom = clever, skilled, one who has natural ability.
  
- C. "and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent."
  - 1. understanding = sunesis = intelligence, cleverness as shown in quickness of apprehension, used to describe reflective thought.
  - 2. nothing = atheteo - to displace, to make void, render null, abolish.
  - 3. prudent = discerning, sagacious, especially by nature.

III. GOD'S CHOICE TO REVEAL HIMSELF. V20

- A. What happened to world's way?
  - 1. "where is the wise?" Philosopher.
  - 2. "where is the scribe?" the Scholar.
  - 3. "the disputer of this world?" Subtle debater.
  
- B. God made them appear foolish.
  - 1. foolish - moron.
  - 2. God did not ordain that man, by wisdom of man, find Him. v21

IV. THE TWO WAYS MEN SOUGHT GOD.

- A. The Jews.
  - 1. "for the Jews require a sign."

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2. sign = a signal, an ensign, a standard; a sign by which anything is designated. Like a sign in a market that reads, "Potatoes."
3. ensign = commodore's flag.
4. Jesus = "the sign of Jonah."

B. The Greeks.

1. "The Greeks seek after wisdom."
2. The Greeks = an intellectual panacea!

V. THE WAY TO KNOW GOD. V23-24

A. "But we preach Christ crucified." v23

1. Jews = a stumbling block.
2. Greeks = foolishness = sheer nonsense.

B. The real truth. v24

1. "the power of God."
2. "the wisdom of God."

VI. GOD'S WAY IS THE RIGHT WAY. V25

A. "this so-called foolish plan of God is far wiser than the wisest plan of the wisest man."

B. "What seems feeble in God is stronger than men."

