

Why the World Mocks Christians, Part 2 - 1 Corinthians 1:19 – March 9th, 2014

- Today's teaching will be part two of a new series we began last week titled, "Why the World Mocks Christians."
- If you were to ask me what I thought one of the biggest problems for Christians in America was, it'd have to be Christianity's unpopularity.
- Actually, this is one of the reasons Christians and even pastors will capitulate to the lowered bar of carnality under the banner of popularity.

- In other words, Christians and pastors alike are prone to cave into the peer pressure in order to be cool so that they fit in with the crowd.
- It's a rare Christian who is secure enough in who they are in Christ, they stand up against the crowd under the banner of a godly character.
- In a sense, this becomes the litmus test of sorts such that the world will hate you if you're not of this world, but they'll love you if you are.

John 15:18-19 NIV "If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first. (19) If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you.

- It's for this reason every believer in, and follower of Jesus Christ is at the crossroads of decision every day of our lives in this fallen world.
- Let me explain, every day, we face the decision as to whether or not we will live for ourselves, or pick up our cross and die to ourselves.

Luke 9:23-26 NIV Then he said to them all: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. (24) For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it. (25) What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit his very self? (26) If anyone is ashamed of me and my words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his glory and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.

- Often times, the refusal to die to self and instead live for self will come by way of our being ashamed of the gospel, in front of the world.

Romans 1:16 NIV I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.

- The reason one will be ashamed of the gospel is that they are man pleasers who want to be liked by the world, and friends with the world.

James 4:4 NIV You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God.

Galatians 1:10-11 NIV Am I now trying to win the approval of men, or of God? Or am I trying to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a servant of Christ. (11) I want you to know, brothers, that the gospel I preached is not something that man made up.

- We're seeing a striking example of this in our study through 1st Samuel on Thursday nights by way of a contrast between Saul and Samuel.
- Namely, Saul's pride as a man pleaser in the strength of his flesh, and Samuel's humility as being a God pleaser in the power of the Spirit.
- The point being is that Saul was full of himself and as such living for himself whereas Samuel had picked up his cross daily and died to self.

- You'll forgive me in advance for the morbidity of this quote, but it's been said that dead men don't flinch when they're stabbed in the back.
- Perhaps better said, when we daily pick up our cross and die to our self, there won't be any self to hurt, and as such, no pride to wound.
- This is why Samuel mourns the fall of Saul and not the wounds of self; he laments Saul's sinfulness, he's not gloating in his blamelessness.

- I realize this is a longer introduction than usual but I do think it necessary to lay this foundation because it's germane to our understanding.
- Perhaps better said, when we understand the "why" behind the "what" it helps us to wrap our minds around the reality of our unpopularity.
- When we accept this reality, we'll be more apt to see how the world's hatred of us says more about them than it does about us, enter v. 18.

1. They are perishing (Verse 18)

-v18 Paul says that the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

2. Their human wisdom is brought to naught (Verse 19)

(19) For it is written: "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise; the intelligence of the intelligent I will frustrate."

- v19 Paul quotes Isaiah 29:14 which says that God will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and He will frustrate the intelligence of the intelligent.
- What Paul is saying here is those who fancy themselves as being intellectual and wise will be so full of them self and it's to their own peril
- This because man's wisdom puffs up, which is why he postures self as his own god, knowing more than God, or deciding there's no God.

The story is told about how one day, the students in one of Albert Einstein's classes, were saying they had decided that there was no God. Einstein asked them, how much of all the knowledge in the world they had amongst themselves collectively, as a class. The students discussed it for a while and decided they had 5% of all human knowledge amongst themselves. Einstein thought that their estimate was a little generous, but he replied: "Is it possible that God exists in the 95% that you don't know?"

- Here's the bottom line, the world sees people who are seen as smart, or wise, by human standards as being the brilliant minds of the day.
- Conversely, the world sees Christians as being ignorant and stupid by those same human standards and as such they write off Christianity.
- However, unbeknownst to these brilliant minds of the day, their human wisdom will actually be dismantled and destroyed by God's wisdom.

Henry Morris - "This section from verse eighteen through the end of chapter two is a sobering indictment of supposed human wisdom, as opposed to true wisdom in Christ."

- In closing, allow me to simply say along with what Henry Morris wrote, we are in for quite an indictment of our supposed human wisdom.
- We may wish to fasten our seat belts because it's going to be a bumpy ride for those who are inclined to cater to the carnality of popularity.
- Conversely, it's going to be a pleasant ride for those who have picked up their cross, died to self, and the popular friendship with the world.