

When Presentation Supersedes Doctrine, Part 3 - 1 Corinthians 2:6-8 – April 27th, 2014

- Today's teaching will be part three of a series we began a few weeks ago now titled, "When Presentation Supersedes Doctrine."
- What's becoming rather clear in our study of this, and the previous chapter, here in first Corinthians, is we can be a danger to the Gospel.
- More specifically, our personality, our intellect and the wisdom of this world have the propensity to get in God's way and steal the spotlight.

- However, this does not mean that we as followers of Jesus Christ should never have a personality, or assassinate our God given intellect.
- It's not a matter of whether or not we have a dynamic and charismatic personality or brilliant mind and intellect, instead its does it have us.
- Perhaps better said does what I possess, possess me, because if it does, it may have the potential to supersede God's wisdom and Word.

1. It comes at the expense of the Gospel (Verses 1-2)

- The reason Paul didn't come with eloquence or superior wisdom was he resolved to know nothing except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

2. It empties out the power of the Gospel (Verses 3-5)

- He says he came in weakness and fear with much trembling in his preaching so their faith wouldn't rest on men's wisdom but God's power.

3. It competes with the wisdom of God (Verses 6-8)

- v6 He says he presented God's wisdom not man's wisdom, and it was among the mature, because the world's wisdom is coming to nothing.
- v7 Paul speaks of God's wisdom as being a secret, a wisdom that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began.
- v8 He takes it a step further saying, none of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord Jesus.

- What Paul is communicating is that the wisdom of this age, presented by the rulers of this age, is bringing them to nothing but emptiness.
- In other words, man's wisdom, the wisdom the world has to offer, actually has nothing at all to offer us, expect emptiness defeat and doom.
- Paul even presents evidence of why worldly wisdom comes to nothing with "Exhibit A," if you will, which is the rejecting of the Lord of glory.

- I suppose in all fairness one could argue the wisdom of the rulers of this age didn't have a chance, given God's secret wisdom was hidden.
- Furthermore, one could reach the conclusion, had they known of this secret wisdom perhaps they wouldn't have crucified the Lord of glory.
- And they could further reason, because they didn't understand God's wisdom, they naively and innocently crucified the Lord unknowingly.

- While that may sound right, it is wrong on every level for a number of reasons not the least of which is that it's the total opposite that's true.
- They didn't reject and crucify Christ because God's wisdom was hidden; God's wisdom was hidden because He knew they'd reject Christ.
- We'll see this more clearly Lord willing, next week, but for now suffice it to say God won't reveal His wisdom to those He knows will reject it.

- The reason being is were He to reveal His wisdom to those He knows will reject it He could, in effect, become party to their disobedience.
- I'm of the belief that it's for this reason, God in His sovereignty and grace will withhold revelation of His wisdom from those who will reject it.
- Lest you think this is cruel and unjust, again, it's the opposite that's true by virtue of how God in His mercy is sparing them of more stripes.

Luke 12:47-48 NKJV And that servant who knew his master's will, and did not prepare *himself* or do according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. (48) But he who did not know, yet committed things deserving of stripes, shall be beaten with few. For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more.

- In other words, because God knew He would be rejected by them, He withheld from them that which would've meant more stripes for them.
- This is why God is not cruel in hiding this secret wisdom from them, rather, He's being merciful foreknowing it would be rejected by them.
- Some have suggested that the reason Jesus spoke in parables was because of God's mercy to the Jews knowing they would reject Christ.

Matthew 13:10-13 NIV The disciples came to him and asked, "Why do you speak to the people in parables?" (11) He replied, "The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them. (12) Whoever has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him. (13) This is why I speak to them in parables: "Though seeing, they do not see; though hearing, they do not hear or understand.

- Here's where I'm going with this, our not understanding of the wisdom of God comes vis-a-vis our acquiescing to the wisdom of the world.
- This because, the wisdom of the world is at enmity with the wisdom of God and as such is in direct opposition, which creates competition.
- This is what happened to the Corinthian church such that they lost the competition as it were, and acquiesced to the wisdom of the world.

- This opposition from the world gave way to competing with the world, which led to a crossbreeding of their Christianity, creating a hybrid.
- The end result of this hybrid Christianity is any understanding of the wisdom of God would remain hidden and lacking, they'd never mature.
- By the way, this may explain why it is that some people will say they've tried the whole "Christianity thing," but it just never worked for them.

- I submit that they never tasted from the cup of true Christianity and instead they have drunk from the hybrid Christianity man has to offer.
- Could this be why we need look no further for the reason so many people doubt, and are tossed about, in their double-minded instability?
- Could lacking the wisdom of God, not receiving or understanding wisdom from God be the result of this double-minded hybrid Christianity?

James 1:2-8 NIV Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, (3) because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. (4) Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. (5) If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him. (6) But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. (7) That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord; (8) he is a double-minded man, unstable in all he does.

- In closing I'll provide two real-time examples of what this hybrid Christianity looks like. Sadly, this hybrid Christianity is alive and well today.
- First, it's in Catholicism via the hybrid of Mary and Jesus. Secondly it's in denominationalism via the hybrid of legalism and God's grace.
- Simply put, Mary is a crossbreed of man's wisdom with God's, just as legalism is birthed out of man's wisdom, and grace is out of God's.