

You in the Presence

I. Slide#1 Intro:

- A. Slide#2 Title: *You in the Presence*
- B. Slide#3 Outline: The Word of God; The Churches of God; The Hope, Joys, & Crowns from God.
- C. Suppose a great doctor discovers a cure for cancer. Once that cure is found, it is there. **But** before it can become available for everyone, it must be taken out to the world. Doctors and surgeons must **know about it and be trained to use it**. The cure is there, but one person cannot take it out to all the world; **A corps of doctors** must be the agents whereby it arrives to all the world's sufferers.
 1. **The church** is to be the same to the world, with **the good news**.

II. Slide#4 THE WORD OF GOD (13)

- A. (13) They had an **appetite** for the word of God (**received & welcomed**); **& put it to work** immediately (**works in you**).
 1. **receive** refers to the **ear** - **welcomed** refers to the **heart**.
- B. Slide#5 **1st** God delivers His word through ordinary men in terms we can understand (via the H.S.)
 1. The word came to **Jeremiah** like a burning in his bones; to **Elijah** as a still small voice; to **Daniel** in visions & dreams; to **Moses** face to face like a man speaks w/his friend (ie. so clear it was as though God spoke directly to him)
 - a) 2 Pet. 1:20,21 **knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation**(origin), **for prophecy never came**(never came into being) **by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved**(nautical term, to be bore along) **by the Holy Spirit**.
- C. Slide#6 **2nd** the word of God **changes** people & makes them **different**. (**effectively works in you**)
 1. To merely **memorize** or **mentally accept it** doesn't **change** anyone.
 2. Slide#1 2 Tim.3:16,17 **All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine** (what is rt), **for reproof** (what is not rt), **for correction** (how to get rt), **for instruction in righteousness** (how to stay rt), **that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work**.
 3. When His word is **effectively working in you** it is in the *present continuous sense*.
 4. Heb.4:12 says **the word of God is living and powerful**.
 - a) **Living** - ζάω/zao **and Active** - ἐνεργέω/energeo (our words here, **effectively works**)
 - b) Like a **seed** - the word bears **life & power** *within itself*.
 - c) Like a **fire & hammer** - read Jer.23:28,29
 5. Slide#7 (27) Humans love the sensational.

- a) It distracts the mind from reality, as effectively as any heresy.
- 6. (28b) Gain nourishment from the **Wheat of the Word**. "Wheaties"
 - a) You can **chew on chaff** but it gives no nourishment.
 - (1) **Like chewing wax** – [Remember those little 1" wax bottles. You bit into them & it had a little liquid squirt inside]
- 7. (29) **Hammer** – Tear down/build up. Break the hardest rocks.
 - Fire** – Consumes waste, purifies what it touches.
 - a) Jeremiah had the wood burning in his **heart**(20:9) & on his **lips**(5:14).
 - (1) *No wonder false teachers are so popular. The sinful heart does not want to be burned & broken by the fire & hammer of the word.* (www)
 - (2) **Slide#8** A rabbi was asked a question by a pupil, referring to Deuteronomy 6:6 "And these words, which I command you this day, shall be **upon** your heart." "Why is it said this way?" the pupil asked. "Why are we not told to place them **in** our heart?" The rabbi answered that it is **not within man's power** to place the divine teachings directly **in** his heart. "All that we can do is place them **on** the surface of the heart **so that** when **the heart breaks** they will **drop in**."

III. Slide#9 THE CHURCHES OF GOD (14-16)

- A. (14a) **The Churches of God**
- B. Let's differentiate between **the Church & the churches** in Scripture.
 - 1. We can use the terms **Local & Universal**.
 - 2. **When we talk about Church Universal**, we mean *the Body of Christ, bride of Christ*.
 - a) **Christ loved the church & gave Himself for her.** Eph.5:25
 - 3. **When we talk about The Church Local**, we mean the individual churches that meet, whether in houses or buildings, small or large.
 - a) *Any where the word is preached & the sacraments are administered. It is also a place where God preaches people into heaven.* Michael Horton
 - b) You'll recognize it as a church by the things **God** is doing, **not by** the multitude of things **man** is doing.
- C. **Slide#10a** We can understand **the purpose of the church** in terms of *ministry to God, ministry to believers, ministry to the world*.
 - 1. **God/worship** - worship is not a prep b4 something else. Eph.5:19 calls us to **sing & make melody to the Lord w/all our hearts**.
 - 2. **Believers/nurture** - build up & equip the saints. Paul's goal was to **present every man mature** in Christ.
 - 3. **World/evangelism**(*make disciples of all nations*) & **mercy**(towards the poor, the ethnic or religious minorities, & injustices...**even if they don't respond to the gospel**)

(these adorn the gospel) - Lk.6:35,36 *love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High. For He is kind to the unthankful and evil. Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful.*

D. Slide#10b Lean on **only one** of these & you'll have many problems:

1. **Worship God only** - remain shallow & experiential.
 - a) With **inadequate bible teaching** we'd be immature in our Christian lives.
 - b) **Neglect evangelism**, church will cease to grow.
2. **Nurture saints only** - Know much & dry out spiritually.
 - a) Again, with **inadequate bible teaching** we'd be immature in our Christian lives.
3. **Evangelize & show mercy only** - Immaturity. They usually beat 1 drum (salvation).

E. Slide#10c Balance all 3. Why?

1. Each is a **command** & therefore must be **important to God**.

F. Slide#11 So, this is the **mission** of the church & regarding the **message** of the church...

1. When **we** Christians share our faith(gospel message), **we do not merely** give our particular viewpoint on life, **as one among the endless variety of human theories**. **We** announce the divinely revealed truth of God, a word from God.
 - a) Remember the word/seeds **power & potential** in a heart!

G. Slide#12 (14b-16) **Every generation & in every century this has happened.**

1. **Believers have been tortured & killed in so many ways:** human torches; burnt alive; bound in animal skins & left to shrink in the hot sun; thrown to the lions; isolated on islands; placed in a log & sawn in ½.
 - a) **Yet, no man** has ever rendered a message *inoperative* **by** slaying the messenger who brought it.
 - b) **Like the missionary** that went to a **primitive tribe**. After explaining the gospel & heaven & hell on a chart, the message so disturbed the tribe. Not wanting it to be true, they burned the chart & thus thought...*all was well*.

H. Slide#13a **3 reasons** the Gospel arouses such violent opposition: *They say...*

1. **The Gospel is too Narrow-minded** – Yep, Verizon insists you push the right buttons **in the right sequence**. **You** do not have the liberty to arrange them as you please. **You** must get them exactly right. *They are so narrow-minded*.
 - a) There is only 1 way to be reconciled to God.
2. Slide#13b **The Gospel brings Sin to the surface** – Here's where human pride immediately draws its sword. We'd rather try to **cover** our evil.

- a) We run like Adam & Eve trying to **cover** our same with fig leaves of excuses.
 - b) We are stubborn people.
3. Slide#13c The Gospel forgives **blatant sinners** – Those that richly deserve hell & death.
- a) The Pharisees were very offended when Jesus received *prostitutes, adulterers, sinners*.
 - b) *Blatant sinners* - What if on Monday, **Aaron Alexis** didn't die in the Washington Navy Yard? Lets say he surrendered after killing those 12 people. **Then 24 hours later had a real prison house conversion? Have a problem with it? What if one of your relatives were one of the 12?**

IV. Slide#14 THE HOPES, JOYS & CROWNS OF GOD (17-20)

- A. We've already seen **opposition** from the **State** (2); from **Society** (14); & here from **Satan** (18).
- B. Remember 2 things:
 - 1. **Opposition is permitted by God** – (Job)
 - 2. **Opposition is His method of training** – To overcome trouble, to rise above it.
- C. **Hindered** (lkgnt) “to cut in”
 - 1. **Orig. use** of breaking up a **road** to make it *impassible*.
 - 2. **Later used** in a **military** sense of making a *break thru* the enemy's line.
 - 3. **Also used** in the **athletic** sense of *cutting in* on someone during a race.
 - 4. **It is Satan's job to throw obstacles in our way...it is Our job to hurdle them.**
 - a) Slide#15 “Obstacles are things a person sees when he takes his eyes off his goal”.
 - b) Since the 1st moment when **goodness** came into conflict w/**evil**...it has never stopped. *Satan hinders us.*
 - (1) **How?** You start to pray/the phone rings; start to share with someone/ interruptions; you start serving the Lord/the family or marriage gets major attacked; Everywhere *Satan hinders us.*
 - (2) **When?** From when we're 1st saved & still today, he especially desires to hinder our **completeness** of **our personal character**.
 - (3) **Remember** – **We** are on the Lord's side. **We're** doing the Lord's work. **And In God's strength we shall win the victory & triumph** over our adversary.
 - (a) Rom.16:20 *And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly.*
- D. Slide#16 (19,20) What is our hope, joy, crown? It's **YOU in the presence of our Lord J.C. at His coming. For YOU are our glory & joy.**
 - 1. **Crown** (*stephanos*) - the Victors crown, a reward, a prize. [not *diadema*, imperial dignity]
- E. **5 Crowns:**

- F. **Crown of Life** - Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive **the crown of life** which the Lord has promised to those who love Him. James 1:12
1. Describes the **permanent** nature of the reward, **in contrast** to the **transient** experience of a trial/temptation in which it is won.
- G. **Crown Incorruptible** - And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an **imperishable crown**. 1 Cor.9:25
1. A general description to all rewards promised to those who stand at the Bema seat of Christ.
- H. **Crown of Rejoicing** - Here in 1 Thes.2:19,20. **Your converts/disciples at His presence.**
- I. **Crown of Rt** - Finally, there is laid up for me the **crown of righteousness**, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing. 2Tim4:8 [character of the award, corresponds to the character of the giver]
- J. **Crown of Glory** - **Shepherd the flock of God** which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock; and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the **crown of glory** that does not fade away. 1Pet5:2-4
1. *Slide#17blank* What is your hope, joy, crown? It's **your disciples in the presence of our Lord J.C. at His coming. For they are our glory & joy.**