

Navigating a World of ‘Spin’

1 Corinthians 2; Coast Community Church; Pastor Earl Miles; 10-17-21

Living in a World of ‘Spin’

“We shall soon be in a world in which a man may be howled down for saying that two and two make four, in which furious party cries will be raised against anybody who says that cows have horns, in which people will persecute the heresy of calling a triangle a three-sided figure, and hang a man for maddening a mob with the news that grass is green.” – G.K. Chesterton, *1926 Essay*

“The simple step of a courageous individual is not to take part in the lie. One word of truth outweighs the world.” – Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn

Paul had to deal with ‘spin’ in his day in the city of Corinth. The believers at Corinth were in the midst of a Greek culture filled with sophistry (wise-sounding error).

“[The classical tradition of rhetoric going back to Aristotle] had as its aim not only the art of persuasion but also the *effective communication of truth*. By contrast some provincial centers, especially Corinth, were influenced by a kind of rhetoric that was *more concerned with ‘winning’ than with truth*. (Thiselton)

1. **Jesus, Our Wisdom: Look at life through the lens of truth provided by the Bible. (1-5)**

He’s not talking about ‘dumbing down’ your sermons or not working hard at how you present the truth.

He’s not talking about only talking about the four Gospels just shy of the resurrection! (see 1 Corinthians 11:2; 15:3-5; Acts 18:4, 5, 11)

He’s talking about refusing to use worldly rhetoric and persuasion tactics instead of presenting the truth of the gospel as clearly and helpfully as possible.

2. **The Hidden Wisdom: Don’t expect the world to think and act and talk like believers. (6-9)**

He’s not saying that there is no wisdom in the Bible.

He’s not saying that everyone will understand the message because it’s so simple.

He’s saying the wisdom of God has been hidden to mankind both historically and individually.

And only God knows what he has planned for his people.

3. *The Spirit-Taught Wisdom: Depend on the Spirit to understand and apply the Bible to what you see and hear. (10-13)*

He's not saying that we still know nothing of what God has planned for His people.

But, rather, that what God has planned for those who love him has been revealed (to some degree) to his people by his Spirit.

And that the Spirit has revealed the thoughts of God in the words or categories that God wanted.

4. *The Mind of Christ: If you want to know what God thinks, open your Bible. (14-16)*

He is saying that sinners naturally see the truth of God as unacceptable and unreasonable.

He is saying that believers are able to evaluate what they hear and see in the world, but the world cannot evaluate properly what they hear and see in believers!

He is saying that what we have in the gospel and in the Scriptures is a revelation of the mind of Christ, of what God thinks is true and right and will happen!

The Lens of Truth vs The Lens of Propaganda: Thinking about What We're Thinking About

How do we need to be careful of 'persuasive words of worldly wisdom' that are not truth oriented?

Propaganda can be seen broadly as any form of communication that seeks to create a false reality through carefully crafted lies in order to achieve a particular goal. These lies can be out right falsehoods or half-truths or an intentional twisting of selected facts to support a particular interpretation of 'reality.'

"The function of propaganda is ... not to make an objective study of the truth ... and then set it before the masses with academic fairness; its task is to serve our own right, always and unflinchingly." – Adolf Hitler

You can't trust God as you should and believe lies. – John 8:31-32

You can't love others as you should and believe lies. – 1 Corinthians 13:7

When you walk away from truth, you walk away from God. – John 14:6

"I believe in Christianity as I believe that the sun has risen: not only because I see it, but because by it I see everything else." — C.S. Lewis