

Message #6**I Corinthians 1:18-25**

This apathetic attitude toward preaching is not a new problem for the Church; in fact, this attitude is as old as Corinth.

Paul was totally convinced that God's powerful work was accomplished through preaching (Titus 1:3; II Tim. 4:2). But there were many in Corinth who didn't believe it. Paul actually had to defend his preaching ministry and his cross message.

PREACHING JESUS CHRIST AS CRUCIFIED IS GOD'S WISE AND POWERFUL SYSTEM OF MAKING AN IMPACT ON ALL PEOPLE.

The system that God has put together to jar people is not one of gimmicks or games, not one of programs or plays, not one of movies or music; it is one of preaching. The message God uses to jolt people is a message of crucifixion, and people who are spiritually wise will always recognize this reality.

REASON #1 – Because preaching Jesus Christ crucified will influence all people. **1:18**

The conjunction “for” introduces why Paul DID NOT come baptizing or philosophizing but DID come preaching—because preaching is what God uses to influence all people.

In this context there are two different Greek words used for the verbal communication of God’s Word: 1) The noun “word” (**1:18**) refers to speech that organizes and teaches the doctrinal instruction of God (G. Abbot-Smith, *Greek Lexicon*, pp. 270-271); 2) The verb “preach” (**1:21, 23**) refers to a verbal declaration and proclamation of the Word of God (*Ibid.*, p. 246).

Reaction #1 - The reaction of those who are lost. **1:18a**

The word “perish” is a word that refers to those on the path of eternal damnation and ruin. This particular participle is present tense, meaning this is their present, continual path.

To those on the path of damnation, they believe they can work it out so God will eventually give them everlasting life and when you systematically show them that their righteousness is as “filthy rags” and their works are as “dung” in God’s sight and that God will only allow one a relationship with Him who will believe in His crucified Son, that message is a joke; it is moronic.

Preaching a non-works salvation message is stupid to one on his way to hell.

Reaction #2 - The reaction of those who are saved. **1:18b**

For those who are presently saved or are in the process of being saved, the organized, systematic, instructive proclamation of the Word of God, as it relates to Jesus Christ, is the power of God.

Part of the proof of the Corinthians carnality was their failure to recognize the importance of preaching and their inability to grasp Biblical instruction.

REASON #2 – Because preaching Jesus Christ crucified will accomplish all purposes.
1:19-25

Jesus Christ personally commissioned Paul to preach (1:17). Paul personally commanded other men to preach (II Tim. 4:2). Preaching, then, is God's method of accomplishing His purposes.

Purpose #1 - Preaching destroys the wisdom of men. **1:19-20**

God is not interested in flattering the ego of men and preaching Jesus Christ crucified is not designed to impress men; it is designed to save men.

The word “wise” refers to one skilled in his mental intellect (**1:19**). The word “clever” refers to one skilled in his intelligence (**1:19b**). The word “scribe” refers to one skilled in religion (**1:20a**). The word “disputer” refers to one skilled in debate. In Corinth, these types of people made a positive impression, but in heaven these types of people would be eternally damned.

Preaching sets forth the Word of God. Preaching the cross of Christ sets forth the salvation of God. This IS NOT subject to man’s wisdom, man’s religion or man’s debate. Preaching is God’s way, it is God’s Word and God fully intends to DESTROY those who will not respond to His Word as it relates to His Son, Jesus Christ.

God will send you to hell if you refuse to trust in the finished work of Jesus Christ on Calvary, and He will use preaching to communicate that to you

Purpose #2 - Preaching pleases the wisdom of God. **1:21-22**

Notice carefully **verse 21**; it is God who saves people, not people who save themselves.

The thing that would impress and please a Jew would be a miraculous sign. **1:22a**
The thing that would impress and please a Gentile would be intellectual philosophy. **1:22b**
The thing that pleases God is preaching.

Purpose #3 - Preaching impacts all the people of world. **1:23-25**

Impact #1 - Preaching will hinder some people. **1:23**

The preaching of Jesus Christ will prevent some people from being right with God. God isn’t going to change it so some will be appeased.

Impact #2 - Preaching will save some people. **1:24-25**

When the Word of God is preached, the power of God is unleashed and there will be some who will be saved and who will be developed for the glory of God.

Jesus Christ went to the cross of Calvary because NO man was capable of earning his own salvation. What He accomplished on the cross is so powerful that it can take away your sin and eventually take you to live with God forever.

What will you do with Jesus Christ this day? How do you view this cross message?

Will you respond to the preaching of God's Word today?

If you are lost—will you believe in Jesus Christ and accept His work as being sufficient for your salvation? Believe and you will be saved.

If you are saved—will you get excited about hearing the preaching of the Word or will you be carnal like the Corinthians?