

# THE MESSAGE PREACHED

## Introduction

- 1) **1 Corinthians 1:17-25** – "...it *pleased* God through the foolishness of *the message preached* to save those who believe" (v. 21b)
- 2) Paul contrasts the preaching of the gospel with the wisdom of this world, and affirms that God desires for His salvation to be made known through the preaching of the message
- 3) In our day, when many are questioning the effectiveness of gospel preaching (sermons, gospel meetings), we need to understand what God desires in communicating His message today

## I) **Importance of the Message**

- A) The message will save (v. 21b)
  - 1) The message is to be *preached* (2 Tim. 4:1-2)
  - 2) The message preached will save *those who believe* (Jn. 20:30-31)
- B) Importance of the work of preaching (1 Tim. 4:16)

## II) **Contents of the Message**

- A) The message is a message *of the cross* (v. 18)
  - 1) "Gospel" [good news] (v. 17); "Christ crucified" (v. 23; 2:2)
- B) Cannot preach the gospel without preaching the cross (suffering Savior; sin-sacrifice)
  - 1) Central point of the scheme of redemption – foundation of our hope
  - 2) To ignore the "message of the cross" in our preaching is to make the cross of Christ [Messiah] "of no effect" (v. 17b)
    - a) Jesus reduced to just a popular teacher who was executed by the Romans
    - b) Modernism = no special significance in the life and death of Jesus
    - c) Some are not comfortable with the cross of Christ highlighting their sinfulness
- C) One cannot believe or obey the new covenant without acknowledging the truth of the cross of Christ and His resurrection (1 Cor. 15:1-4)

## III) **"Foolishness" of the Message**

- A) The message of the cross is foolishness to "those who are perishing" (v. 18)
  - 1) These are those who do not "receive the love of the truth" and, therefore, will "not believe the truth" (2 Thess. 2:10, 12)
- B) Why the message of the cross is rejected (vv. 22-23)
  - 1) The Jews, who request a sign, consider it a stumbling block
    - a) Some want a "sign" instead of accepting truth (Matt. 12:38-39; Mk. 8:11-12)
    - b) Truth is a stumbling block because of unbelief (1 Pet. 2:4-8)
  - 2) The Gentiles, who seek after wisdom, consider it foolishness
    - a) Some seek earthly wisdom/pleasures and turn away from the truth (Phil. 3:18-19)
    - b) The message of the cross is rejected because it does not conform to finite, fallible, and flawed human wisdom (1 Tim. 6:20-21)
- C) It *pleased* God, through this "foolishness," to save those who believe the divine message
  - 1) God's power and wisdom in Christ is stronger and wiser than man (1 Cor. 1:24-25)

## Conclusion

The *message* that is foolish to some is God's saving power to others. The difference is whether you will reject or believe the message of the cross of Christ. It was first preached by the apostles and prophets of the first century, and it continues to be preached today by faithful preachers of the gospel in order to save men from sin. Will you hear, believe, repent of sin, confess your faith in Jesus, and be baptized for the remission of sins?