

Unleashing the Power of God!

1 Corinthians 2:1-5 ¹ And I, when I came to you, brothers, did not come **proclaiming** to you the testimony of God with **lofty speech or wisdom.** ² For I decided to know nothing among you except **Jesus Christ and him crucified.** ³ And I was with you in **weakness and in fear and much trembling,** ⁴ and my speech and my message **were not in plausible words of wisdom,** but in **demonstration of the Spirit and of power,** ⁵ that your **faith** might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the **power of God.**

❖ Recap

❖ Introduction

➤ A lot here:

- Initially it seems as if we may be rehashing what was already said, but as is always the case with God's word...there is more here than we can imagine...
- We see an exhortation to Humility...
- And we see that the Power of God is unleashed in Christ's weakness...and ours as well....

➤ Don't forget the Divisions...

➤ Summary of Text

- What Paul Came doing...
- How He came
- His Goal

And I, when I came to you, brothers,

❖ When I came to you....brothers...

➤ He has been going on about divisions...and worldly wisdom...and trying to explain to them how to act...

- **Not to be prideful**
- **Gives a number of reasons why and how God's weakness and foolishness, is stronger than the worlds best....**
- **Now He is trying to use His example...**
- **Trying to get them to come together, stop fighting...**
- **Saying....I came to you like this....**

➤ Paul reminds them of His coming to them...

- Remember Paul's Journey to them...Bout AD 52
- He came preaching... in Corinth...
- **Acts 18.11 tells us he then stayed there a year and a half...**
- **His Journey**
 - Cyrus – Galatia – Macedonia – Troas – Philippi – Thessalonica – Athens
 - To Corinth...
 - ◆ We see him there in Acts 18 preaching right there in Corinth....
 - ◆ And people getting mad at him...
 - ◆ But...Jesus comes to him and assures him that there are many in Corinth that are the Lord's.
 - ◆ So He keeps on....
 - He establishes this church here...
- **Now its been...**
 - Bout 3 years since He was there...
 - He has been in Ephesus....
- **But he is writing back to Corinth....Why?**
 - Remember His amazing testimony of all the trouble he had been through...
 - Beatings, etc....
- **He still stay Anxious over the churches...**

- He cared deeply for them...
- And He was not going to let them have their own way
- Or allow Satan to have his way with them...
- So He is trying to right their wrongs, and do some correcting...

did not come **proclaiming** to you the testimony of God with **lofty speech or wisdom**.

❖ Proclamation

➤ Paul came Proclaiming the testimony of God

- John writes that He also was declaring the testimony of the Lord...

➤ Testimony of God (the Gospel)

- Common Denominator...
 - Big groups, small groups, in homes, in streets, in synagogues... Jews, Romans, ethiopoans, Greeks... etc etc....
- The Gospel was always the same...

❖ Lofty Speech or wisdom

❖ Jesus Christ and him Crucified

❖ Humility

- Weakness, fear and much trembling
- Why?
- Paul was afraid to do anything that might win people to him...anything to make people think higher of him....
- He wanted people to hear, see, understand, and be drawn only to Christ...

❖ Not by wisdom of men

❖ Demonstration of the Spirit and of power...

❖ Faith would rest in....

- Not wisdom of me...
- But power of God...

❖ False Preachers....Prideful Preachers... Preachers unlike Paul.

- Peddlers of the word of God?
- "Watch out for the slick preachers who never mention these things, for whom the cross is a mere token symbol, for whom the exceeding sinfulness of all our hearts is scarcely mentioned, who use power, wisdom, fame, and luxury to beckon the self-centered middle-class American to consider himself Christian at no cost to his pride and self-sufficiency. " – John Piper

❖ We are WEAK..... What can God do through our weaknesses...

- We are nobodies...
- We are frail and afraid and without power, or wisdom to change anything...
- Don't ask....What can I do FOR God...Rather, what can God do through me?
- 2 Corinthians 12:8 and following? Paul said about some special infirmity that he had: "Three times I besought the Lord about this that it should leave me. But he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for *my power is made perfect in weakness*. I will all the more gladly boast in my weaknesses that the *power of Christ* may rest upon me."

❖ Drawing Man's Attention to:

- Not ourselves...Or anything amazing about our church, or whatever...
 - We can not get caught up in....
 - Lets draw people in by the fact we have:
 - Casual dress or Formal dress
 - Contemporary music or traditional...
 - Laid back, or formal...
 - Outgoing people that are real friendly or
 - Introverts that let people have their space...
- To the preacher...
 - If He is exciting or eccentric, or smiley, or good looking

- None of these things matter....
 - We must draw people's attention to:
 - JESUS CHRIST...
 - It is the Lord they will have a saving relationship with....NOT THE PREACHER...
 - If I ever do that...forgive me...Say something to me if you ever think I take attention away from Christ in my preaching and try to win someone to the Lord by some other drawing Card...
 - That is, he had to draw people's attention not to his own power, wisdom, status or flair, but to the power of God made perfect in weakness.
 - ❖ We all want to be interesting and funny, and catch people's attention....
 - But the key that we must understand is that in teaching and preaching and sharing Christ with someone else....
 - He is the one who makes it interesting, and make sense...
 - It is Christ that is the power behind our words!
 - ❖ Now it begins to become really clear why merely human wisdom regards the cross of Christ as foolishness. The death of Christ on the cross is such a radical indictment of the hideousness of our sinfulness that human wisdom has to mount all its biggest guns to destroy the cross, lest it lose its ground for boasting.
 - ❖ There are two possible responses to the death of Christ for our sin: we can regard it as foolish and so maintain our self-sufficiency and pride, or we can regard it as wisdom and die with Christ. There is only one way that leads to life.
- Our goal or aim as Paul's was is to bring people to and strengthen their Faith... But it is to do it correctly, in truth, not by worldly wisdom....human wisdom...rather to...the power of God...

Unleashing the Power of God comes through Humility...

Why do we feel like we have to be right, or wrongs done against us have to be made right...we have to seek vengeance...or be vindicated while on this earth....

Remember Jesus telling us it is ok for us to be taken advantage of...it happens...and sometimes...let it happen...

Meditate on: The power of God was unleashed in the weakness of Christ...in being beaten and killed...Does this apply to us still?