

WHY DO WE PREACH THE GOSPEL?

1 CORINTHIANS 15:1 • TV-012B

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By

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“Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand.”

My text today will be taken from the book of **1 Corinthians chapter 15: verse 1.**

I’m speaking on this subject: **“WHY DO WE PREACH THE GOSPEL?”**

Paul said, *“Brethren; I declare unto you the Gospel which I preached unto you, which also you have received, and wherein you stand.”*

Now, preachers and preaching are not very popular today. And there’s a good reason for this bad reputation. Most preachers do not preach the message of their Master. And most preachers do not manifest the character of their Master, and therefore, they’ve earned a bad reputation.

And preachers and preaching are not popular. And it’s deserved in many cases and this is the reason; they don’t preach the message of their Master and they don’t manifest the life and character and behavior of their Master. It was said of the apostles that people took note of them that they had been with Jesus. They acted like Christ and they talked like Christ.

And then I hear people use this cliché; “Don’t preach to me, don’t preach to me.” When they feel like someone is dealing with a moral issue, a religious issue, or a righteous theme they say, “Don’t preach to me. I don’t like to be preached to.”

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And then many churches have played down the role of the preacher. They have played down the place of preaching; they've replaced it. They've replaced preaching and the preacher with Sunday school programs, musical programs, religious organizations, social work, and all of these other things.

Back in New Testament days the church was built on the preaching of the Word, in the days of the Reformation, in the days of Edwards, Whitfield, Luther, Spurgeon, Calvin, and these men. The church was built not on organizations, not on entertainment, not on music, but on preaching the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

You can take the average television program and if it's an hour program it'll be 45 minutes of music and entertainment and asking for money and giving away prizes and about 15 minutes of preaching.

Do you see how that they've played down the role of preaching? You can turn on your radio and listen to a religious radio program and they'll sing for 25 minutes and maybe they'll have five or six minutes left over for preaching.

Now what I'm saying is true; they have played down the role of the preacher and the place of preaching, and good reason for some of it. Preachers aren't saying anything. They aren't preaching the Word of God and they're not walking like preachers ought to walk and living like preachers ought to live.

Some of them are religious hucksters; they're making merchandise out of the people, using the people. It's like Jeremiah said, "*They eat the fat of the lambs and they wear the wool of the lambs but they don't feed the lambs*" and that's not right.

But in the Word of God the preacher is a dominate figure. In the Word of God the preaching of the Gospel is the most important work in the Bible; that's right.

For example; the one sent to prepare the way of Christ; John the Baptist was a preacher. The Scripture says in **Matthew 3**: "*In those days came John the Baptist preaching in the wilderness of Judea and saying repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*" John the Baptist, the fore-runner of Christ was a preacher.

Our Lord himself was a preacher. In **Matthew 4:17**, "*From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*" Christ was a preacher.

And then in summing up our Lord, in summing up His Messianic mission, when He was down at Nazareth on the Sabbath Day preaching to that group of people in **Luke 4**, when He summed up His mission, His Messianic mission; this is what He said; "*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because He hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor, to preach deliverance to the captives, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.*"

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In those two verses, summing up His Messianic mission, three times He uses the words, *“To preach; the spirit of the Lord is upon me. He has sent me to preach, to preach, to preach.”*

In **Mark 3:14**; the first work given to the apostles; listen to it, was to preach; *“He ordained 12 that they should be with Him and that He might send them forth to preach, (not to sing, to preach).”*

And then in **Mark 16:15** the great commission when our Lord had been crucified, buried, and risen, He spoke to His disciples before He ascended to the Father for the last time, and He said to them, *“Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel. And he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. He that believeth not shall be damned.”*

In **2 Timothy 4:1-2** Paul charged young Timothy; *“I charge you before God; preach the Word.”*

And then in **Romans 10:15**; *“How beautiful are the feet of them that that preach the Gospel of peace, the Gospel of peace. How beautiful are the feet of them that preach it,”* that dare to preach it, that are bold to preach it, that are courageous to preach it, that are studious in preaching it, rightly dividing the word of truth. *“Study to show thyself approved unto God.”*

So I declare unto you and I know the opinions of this world regarding preachers and preaching and as I said, they deserve it. They’ve earned that bad reputation. They deserve every word that’s been said.

But I say the opinions of this world have not lessened the importance of God’s true preacher, if you can find one. And it has not lessened or dimmed the glory and the necessity of true preaching, if you can find any. It’s still important. The preacher is a dominant figure in the Word of God and preaching is the important work.

You know, the song writer says:

**“Change and decay
All around me I see
O thou that changest not
Abide with me.”**

People say, “Time changes everything.” There are some things time doesn’t change. Time hasn’t changed the fact of sin. Man’s still a sinner before God. Time hasn’t changed the way of salvation. Christ is still the sinner’s only hope.

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Time hasn't changed God's Word. God's Word is still the same from Genesis to Revelation. God's way of saving men through the cross, the way of Calvary, has not changed. The Gospel is still the power of God unto salvation.

Why have we changed our approach? Why have we quit preaching it? Why have we quit studying? Why have we quit going forth declaring the Word of God to men? Why are we trying to entertain sinners on their road to hell and we've quit preaching?

"God chose by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." Why have we tried to change God's way? It's still the way of God, to send His people forth to preach.

Now, I'm a preacher and I'm going to give you four reasons today why I preach the Gospel. I have four reasons why I preach the Gospel. Now this may surprise you, the order in which I put them. But now this is the order in which I feel they're put in God's Word. This is the order of importance as far as preaching is concerned and the Word of God is concerned:

First of all: I preach the Gospel for the glory of God, for the glory of God!

The old catechism used to say (you Lutherans out there and you Presbyterians; look at your catechism) the first question on those old catechisms reads this way; "What is the chief end of man?" The answer comes back, "To glorify God, to glorify God."

Listen to the Word of God; *"Whatever you do in word or deed; do all for what, the glory of God. I am the Lord, that is my name and my glory I'll not give to another. He that glorieth let him glory in the Lord."*

"Let not the rich man glory in his riches nor the mighty man glory in his might. But let him glory in me, saith the Lord, that he knows me, that no flesh should glory in His presence." I'm challenging you; whatever we do, whether it's singing, or preaching, or teaching, or praying, or whatever, it must first be motivated by a desire to glorify God or it's selfish and sinful.

And we're trying to build a large Sunday school for our own glory in order that we might report our big numbers, if we're trying to build a large building in order to attract the attention of the multitude and say, "Look what a fine auditorium, a fine building."

If we get up to sing before a congregation and say, "Now hope they like my voice. I love to hear people brag on my voice. I love to hear them tell me what a beautiful voice I've got and what a fine preacher I am and what a good church we have;" that's sinful. We're to sing for the glory of God. We're to preach for the glory of God. We're to give for the glory of God.

Do you give your offerings in order to see your name in the church bulletin or do you do it for the glory of God? Are you kind to your neighbor in order to hear somebody say, "You sure are a

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fine man,” or do you do it for the glory of God? Whatever we do, if it’s not for the glory of God it’s sinful.

They went out there to hear John the Baptist in the wilderness and somebody said, “*Who are you?*” He said, “*I’m a voice.*” Well now he could have said a whole lot; he could have said that:

First of all: He was supernaturally born. His mother and daddy both were way past the age of bearing children when he was born.

Secondly: He was the anointed fore-runner of the Son of God. He could have said that.

Thirdly: And then Christ said of him, “*There’s no man born of woman greater than John the Baptist.*” But he didn’t say that.

“*Who are you?*” If you give preachers today an opportunity to tell you who they are and they will, you pick up the newspaper, “Here’s the greatest messenger of the hour.” Here’s some fellow that’s been in prison and now he’s in the pulpit. Here’s a dope addict, drug peddler, and now a preacher of the Gospel. All these credentials we’ve got.

John, who are you? “Just a voice in the wilderness crying make way for the Lord.” Well John, “Are you the Christ?” “No, I’m not the Christ. I’m not worthy to stoop down and unloose the laces on His shoes. I must decrease and He must increase.”

When Isaiah, that great prophet, saw the glory of God he said, “*Woe is me; I’m undone. I’m a man of unclean lips.*” I wonder how many folks we can get come out and hear us preach if they put in the paper, “Here’s a man of unclean lips is going to preach for you next Sunday?”

And then when Daniel saw the Lord he said, “*My beauty melted into corruption.*” They did what they did for the glory of God. Paul called the Gospel, “The Gospel of His glory, His glory,” not the glory of the church, the glory of God, not the glory of the minister, the glory of God, the Gospel of His glory.

In the Gospel His love is glorified; “*Herein is love, not that we love God; He loved us. God commended His love toward us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.*”

**“Could we with ink the ocean fill?
And where the skies of parchment made
Where every stalk on earth a quill
And every man a scribe by trade
To write the love of God above**

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**Would drain that ocean dry
Nor could the scroll
Contain the whole
Though stretched from sky to sky.”**

Oh love of God; the Gospel glorifies His love; “*God so loved the world that He gave His Son.*” That’s what we’re preaching, that His love might be glorified, that His mercy might be glorified. Moses said, “*Lord; show me your glory, show me your glory.*” And God said, “*I’ll make my goodness pass before you; (that’s my glory, my goodness) I’ll be merciful to whom I will be merciful. I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious.*”

God’s mercy is glorified in the Gospel. When we preach the Gospel we preach the glory of His love and the glory of His mercy and the glory of His righteousness and the glory of His justice. In the Gospel we see how God can be just and justify the ungodly.

Why do we preach? We preach for the glory of God. And in that way, if you’re preaching to 10 or to 10,000, it doesn’t matter because you’re there for the glory of God.

If God puts you down in a pagan mission field surrounded by a few native ladies or if he puts you in the First Church of New York City; it really doesn’t matter because where you are you are there for the glory of God. You’re not looking for any praise or any glory. You’re doing what you’re doing for God’s glory. That’s why we preach.

All right, here’s the second reason; now listen to me, why do we preach? Paul said, “*I’ve preached the Gospel to you.*”

Secondly: I preach God commanded me to preach!

The Lord said in **Mark 16:15** to his disciples; here they are gathered about Him. Judas has committed suicide. There are 11 of them, Peter, James, John, and the rest of them. And Christ before He ascended to the Father He looked at them and He said, “*Now you go into all the world and preach the Gospel.*” That’s my commandment; that’s your orders.

I heard a preacher say one time, “If I couldn’t win a soul to Jesus every week I’d quit preaching.” Well I wouldn’t. Old Noah went 120 years and couldn’t win a one. But I bet he didn’t quit preaching, because my friends, the results have nothing to do with the commandment. I’m commanded to preach whatever the results. I’ve got a commandment from God to preach the Gospel.

He said in **Ezekiel 2:3**; listen to this, God said, “*Ezekiel I’m sending you to the children of Israel. You will preach to them thus saith the Lord, whether they hear or whether they refuse to hear, they’ll know that a prophet has been among them.*” That is your orders!

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Listen to **Ezekiel 3:4-7**; *“Ezekiel; go to the house of Israel and preach to them. They will not listen to you for they will not listen to me but you go preach to them.”*

Now that’s why I preach. God said, *“You go and preach the Gospel to every creature.”* What if you’d been the preacher Ezekiel at that time and God had come to you and said, *“Now you go and preach to those people over there. They’re not going to pay any attention to you. They’re not going to hear a word you say but you go preach to them.”*

Are you a faithful servant? If you are you’ll go preach. You won’t ask your Master to tell you the reason behind His plan and His purpose and His will. You’ll just say, *“Lord; you command me and I’ll obey.”*

One time Samuel; the Lord came to Samuel, and He said, *“Eli’s two sons have violated my law and I’m going to kill him.”* And Eli came to Samuel and said, *“Samuel; the Lord’s been talking to you hasn’t he?”* Samuel said, *“Yes sir.”*

“What did He say to you?” *“I’d rather not say.”* *“Samuel, what did He say to you? Well, Eli I’d rather not say.”* *“Well now, you tell me what God said, or whatever God said will happen to you.”* And Samuel looked at him and said, *“Well Eli; God said that he was going to destroy your sons.”*

Do you know what that old man said? Now we better learn to talk this way, *“It’s the Lord; let Him do what He will.”* The ability or inability of the sinner does not stay the preacher. We’re commanded to preach.

One day God led Ezekiel out on top of a mountain and let him look down in a valley. And there in that valley; that had evidently been a great battle because there were a lot of bones there. It happened a long time ago. The bones were bleached and parched and burnt in the sun and covered with sand and picked dry by the birds.

And God said, *“Ezekiel; do you see the bones?”* This is in **Ezekiel chapter 37**, I believe. *“Do you see the bones, yea, Lord? Can they live? Well Lord, you know. I can’t make them live. They can’t give themselves life. Well Ezekiel; preach to them.”* Now that’s a strange commandment isn’t it?

But do you know what Ezekiel did? He started preaching. He cried, *“O you dry bones; hear the Word of the Lord.”*

That’s why we preach, we’re commanded to preach. Do you know why? We’re commanded to preach because what we preach is a command. All men are commanded to praise God. **Psalms 150:6** says; *“Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord.”*

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You out there listening to me this morning or this evening, (when the program is heard in your area) you're commanded to praise God. In **Acts 17:30**, "*All men are commanded to repent. God hath commanded all men everywhere to repent.*"

All men are commanded to honor the Son. Listen to **John 5:22**: "*The Father judgeth no man but hath committed all judgment to the Son that all men should honor the Son as they honor the Father.*"

"All men shall stand before the judgment seat of Christ. All men shall give an account of themselves before God." Therefore, what we preach, we preach to all men and we preach by divine commandment, whatever the results, whatever the results, whether men hear or don't hear; we preach for the glory of God and because we're commanded to preach.

Thirdly: We preach also that sinners might be saved!

Now listen to **Romans 10** beginning with **verse 9**; "*That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus to be Lord and believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.*"

My friend; if you believe that you're a sinner and that God by grace sent His Son into this world; born of a woman, born under the law, made under the law, to redeem you from the curse of the law, and His Son went to the cross and bore our sins in His body on that tree, and there He died that God might be just and justify the ungodly, and He was taken down from that cross having suffered death and hell and judgment for all who believe and was placed in a tomb and rose again and ascended to the right hand of God, if you confess, "*If you believe in your heart and confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord, thou shalt be saved.*"

Well there's no difference between the Jew and the Greek. The same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him. "*For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.*" If you're in need, call. If you're a sinner, call. If you want mercy, call on God, on the name of Christ.

Now watch it: "*How shall they call on Him in whom they've not believe and how shall they believe in Him of whom they've not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?*" That's why I preach.

It says in **1 Corinthians 1:21**; "*It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.*" We preach the Gospel of Christ, for without the Gospel a man is not going to be saved. You can't trust an unrevealed Christ.

You say, "I believe Christ died for my sins." How'd you find that out? You heard somebody preach it or somebody teach it or somebody read it. You say, "I believe Christ died on the cross,

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was buried, and rose again, ascended to the right hand of God where He is our Mediator and Intercessor.” How do you know that?

Well, you heard somebody preach it. “*God hath chosen by the foolishness of preaching,*” not the preaching of foolishness now, “*but the foolishness of preaching.*” And why’s it called the “*foolishness of preaching,*” because it’s foolishness to them that perish?

“*The preaching of the cross is foolishness to them that perish, to them who are perishing.*” What I’m doing is foolishness. “*But to those who are saved, what I’m doing is the power of God*” because what I’m doing had an effect upon you. You heard it, not because I said it.

Paul said, “*Knowing brethren, beloved, your election of God.*” This is in **1 Thessalonians 1:4:** “*Knowing brethren, beloved, your election of God. For our Gospel didn’t come to you in word only but it came to you in power.*”

Now that’s how the Gospel must come if you’re going to be convicted of sin, converted to Christ, if you’re going to see Christ as the Redeemer.

The Gospel has to come to you, not in my arguments. That’s the reason it doesn’t do any good to debate the Gospel. People write to me and want to debate. There’s no use in that. Debating is argument. We’re not here to convince men of anything. We’re here to proclaim the Word of God and depend on the Holy Spirit to convince men of the truth of it.

Christ said, “*When He is come, the Holy Spirit; He will convince the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment.*” I can’t do it and you can’t do it; the Holy Spirit; that’s His work to convince people.

May He not pass you by. May He not leave you to your own reasoning and logic and arguments and your own thoughts. But may He reveal to you this Word. We preach that sinners might be saved.

We know that the Word of God is necessary; “*Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. How shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed and how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? How shall they hear without a preacher?*”

It’s the Holy Spirit who gives life. It’s the Holy Spirit who quickens this Word and makes it more than just words but makes it the seed of life, the Word of life: “*Of His own will begat He us with the Word of truth.*”

“*We are begotten again unto a living hope, not by the corruptible seed, but the incorruptible seed, the Word of God.*” That’s how we’re begotten. The Holy Spirit is the agent. The Word of God is the seed. Christ is the life.

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We preach for the glory of God; we preach because we're commanded to preach. We preach that sinners might hear the Gospel and be saved.

Fourthly: And we preach that the believer, you the believer, might grow in grace and in the knowledge of Christ. You don't know how important honest, sincere, true, God-sent preaching; you don't know how important it is to you, you believers, that you might grow.

And you don't know what a sin it is, my preacher brethren, not to feed God's sheep. You don't know what a sin it is. Can you imagine a mother starving a child? Well you say, "They ought to put her in jail if she doesn't put food on the table and feed her child that his bones might grow and his body mighty grow," she should be punished.

What about preachers that don't feed God's sheep? They get up in the pulpit with no preparation, no study, no courage, no boldness, and will not teach the Word of God, who don't even read the Word of God on the Lord's Day.

Could we say they're not feeding the children of God and they are the shepherds? Can you imagine a shepherd not taking the sheep out to the pasture to eat? And we're the shepherds of God's people and we're not giving them the Word of God?

Somebody said in one of my messages one Sunday; I used 55 verses of Scripture. I hope I can use that many every message because it's the Word of God that God uses that you might grow.

Listen, in **1 Peter 2:2**; "*Desire the sincere milk of the Word that you may grow thereby.*" Paul exhorted the elders at Ephesus; "*Feed the church of God, which he purchased with His own blood.*"

And God put apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers, in the church that the believer might grow and develop and mature. And after he's been saved 10 or 15 or 20 years he might be a young man or an elder in Christ, having a foundation to stand on, knowing what he believes in his heart; he's been taught through the Word of truth, the gospel of Christ!