

2 Corinthians 4:1-6 We Preach Jesus

The Bible says that we are to rejoice with those who rejoice, and to weep with those who weep.

A) Yesterday there was some rejoicing going on in this Sanctuary – **Dave M & Monique Boone** – were united in Marriage. Celebrating Love / marriage

B) This afternoon there will be **some weeping** going on in this Sanctuary

1) We meet for the Memorial service for little Noah Carter.

C) Celebrate His life / The gift that He was – there will be tears – sadness –

D) The only consolation is we know that Noah is in heaven. **He is with the Lord – Alive in Jesus.**

1) His parents and brothers will see him again.

E) Christ in you is your Hope of Glory – that is the hope that we stand on today.

But what about someone who is not a believer, not a follower of Jesus Christ?

A) That is what concerns us doesn't it? – How many of you have friend or loved one right now who doesn't know Christ?

B) The thought of that person perishing – being lost forever – suffering – hearts unsettled

In our Passage today Paul shares some important insights concerning those who are lost and what is the key to reaching them.

A) Therefore: That always takes us back to what was being said previously.

B) In the Previous section Paul has been talking about the Glory of the NC. **By way of contrast.**

1) The message of the OC – the law was one of condemnation and death –

C) THE OC Showed the problem: We are sinners – lost – we are doomed.

NC presents the Remedy: Christ came – died/ rose

A) NC is a message of life.

B) The OC revealed the bondage that pp are in to sin and guilt and fear of death and eternity

C) **NC brings life and freedom in Jesus**

D) OC pp veiled to the truth: They couldn't see!

E) In the NC the veil has been lifted – We see that the **Answer is Jesus -**

1) As we simply behold Him – transformation takes place in our lives – becoming more like Jesus

F) So that has been the focus of the previous section

That is what Paul is referring to when he says.....

Therefore we have this ministry: - Our ministry is pointing pp to Jesus preaching the word – Jesus said to Peter if you love me feed my sheep –

A) Note he didn't say **if you love me COUNT my sheep!**

B) IF you love me **ENTERTAIN my sheep** –

1) If you love me **DRAMA my sheep** - { Not the priority

C) The goal, the message is the same as it was 2,000 yrs ago when Jesus commissioned Peter – **if you love me – FEED MY SHEEP**

Paul is saying that is our ministry: Pointing pp to Jesus by preaching the Word

A) This is our goal here at CCV – Pointing pp to Jesus - Connections class – this is what I want you to know.

B) If you don't know Christ today: Everything that we do here is aimed at pointing you to Jesus – We want you to meet Him and know Him as your **Savior & Lord!**

C) As your king and your God- as your best friend and shepherd – Our goal is for you to know Him –

1) that is what eternal life is all about.

D) And if you already know Jesus – we want you know Him better – to fall more in love with Him –

1) to worship him passionately – to serve Him with whole heart – to pursue Him with intensity.

E) And we want to be a people that is obsessed with making Jesus known! –

1) Preach Christ – that is the Vision of CCV.

Therefore, since we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, {As our lives have been touched and impacted by Christ} we do not lose heart.

A) Why would there be a temptation to lose heart?

B) Answer is because: Not everyone believes! – that is discouraging.

C) C. H. Spurgeon, in his classic *Lectures to My Students*, in the chapter properly titled “**The Minister's Fainting Fits,**” describes the pressures upon the Christian minister to lose heart.

“Our work, when earnestly undertaken, lays us open to attacks in the direction of depression. Who can bear the weight of souls without sometimes sinking to the dust?”

CH Spurgeon

D) The enormous weight of souls is overwhelming!

1) Pp are perishing – Eternity is real – loved ones lives hang in the balances –

E) That should weigh heavy on our hearts

That is why I like this passage so much. Concerning those who are lost.

A) Paul tells us what not to do/ Then he gives us insight into what is **at the root of the problem**

B) And then Paul reveals to us what is the answer. - Break it down today in that.

#1 What we are not to do? V.2

2 But we have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness {Gimmicks to get pp to the meeting} nor handling the word of God deceitfully,

A)Note that last phrase **we are not handling the word of God deceitfully** – literally adulterously

B)It was a word used of a merchant who would **water down the wine** – in order to make more money. - He would dilute it

C)Paul would say we are not diluting the word – we are not watering down the message.

1)Paul believed in the Power of the message.

Romans 1:16

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes.”

But there was that temptation in Paul’s day as we are seeing in our day: Try to make the message more palatable.

A)Lighten it up – go soft on sin!

B)We are not making excuses for the truth – try to make it fit into pp’s lives or culture.

C)There is too much at stake to do that.

D)You wouldn’t like a doctor who told you – you only had a cold when in reality you have cancer

1)So why would you like a preacher who tells you, you are fine – God loves you – when really lost in sin

Paul is saying: We are not going to water down the message to make pp comfortable – that is adulterating the word of God.

A)Not going to shrink back from talking about the reality of **Sin / of Hell / of Judgment** – but we want to share those things in light of God’s love and salvation

B)Can’t appreciate the good news unless you know the bad news.

1)Interviewed: What would you say to younger guys

So Paul declares we have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by the manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

“We refuse to wear masks and play games. We don't maneuver and manipulate behind the scenes. And we don't twist God's Word to suit ourselves. Rather, we keep everything we do and say out in the open, the whole truth on display, so that those who want to can see and judge for themselves in the presence of God.”

The Message

Another translation:But by the open proclamation of the truth we commend ourselves to everyone's conscience before God.

A)It is the manifestation or the unveiling of the truth that impacts lives!

B)It is the unveiling of the truth that impacts the conscience.

C) See that is where the offense is – the word of God challenges the conscience!

Hebrews 4:12-13

“For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul {the conscience} and spirit, and of joints and marrow, {The physical} and it is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. 13 And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.”

The PT is God’s word divides

A) It exposes the conscience it impacts on a spiritual level.

B) A person can come into a setting like this thinking they are pretty cool – they have it together they are a great person

1) Doing great especially when we measure ourselves by each other { Not the Standard – Jesus is

C) Suddenly the word of God pierces their conscience – they realize I am not so great – I am in trouble – that is a part of my heart I didn’t see

D) Now they have to do something about it – they have to repent – Change their behavior – change their attitude 1) **Turn from Sin { Turn to Christ**

E) So first Paul says – not going to turn to gimmicks – not trying to water down the message.

But why wasn’t everyone getting saved?

#2 The root of the problem.

3 But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, 4 whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.

If I were to say to someone – Give me your junker – for a Jag – straight up – sure!

A) Your **one bedroom apt** for a 10 bedroom mansion- Sure

B) Every penny I will give you a \$100.00 bill – Sure

C) But when I say: you can have Jesus / heaven / life / forgiveness/ hope/ instead of sin despair / Hell/ heartache –

D) They say let me think about it – Why? – Paul answers.... Satan has blinded their eyes.

Paul is revealing that the one of the devil's main tools is the veil.

A) PP we are in a spiritual battle: A spiritual war!

Aa) Must not forget this – unseen realm – battle going on for souls. Sci Fi – true

B) Satan is called the god of this world or the god of this age. What does that mean?

C) **Remember Satan’s main objective** – what motives him is a hatred for God.

1) Angel who was Cast out of heaven – because he wanted to run the show – wanted to be God

D) In His mind – if he can persuade more pp to reject Christ than those who accept Christ – he wins

E) His goal is that In the end there are more pp suffering in Hell – than rejoicing in heaven.

So Satan has created a system in this age that panders to man's depravity – fallen nature.

A) A system panders to man's flesh/ man's pride / A system that deepens the darkness.

B) So Satan is the god of this age is the one who controls the thoughts, the ideas, the opinions,

1) the ideals, the maxims, the hopes, the impulses, the aims, the goals, the views current in the world,

C) He is the one who reigns in the world's philosophies and the world's psychologies and the world's education

1) the world's commerce and the world's labor and the world's sociology.

D) In every enterprise he is the monarch.

And in every corner his goal is to push out God and get men to think – They don't need God.

A) He blinds by trying to convince pp that they are the captain of their own Destinies

B) He blinds pp by making them think – that this life is all there is. – { No eternity.

C) He blinds pp by making them think – they have plenty of time to think about things like God.

1) Live for the moment

D) But the Bible says that tomorrow is promised to know man!

E) Satan wants pp to think there is no hurry!

1) **And there are many who are blinded.**

So what is the Answer? –

#3 The Answer: Preach and pray! V. 5-6

5 For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bondservants for Jesus' sake.

A) The antidote for blindness is lifting up Christ!

B) Come on – It can't be that easy! – How combat darkness ? Yell scream – rant – rebuke

1) **TURN ON THE LIGHT!**

C) Guys this brings us back to the power of God's word to transform lives!

1) **There is power in that message** – God loves fallen man – sent Jesus – Died – Rose – Lives – forgives

D) Do you believe that? Give yourself to studying the word

1) **Share the word – The gospel – The power is in the message.**

The way that we deal with the Blindness is we Preach Jesus!

A)Note: **We do not preach ourselves.** Not about pointing you to ourselves – not followers of Rob – Lord have mercy – trouble

C)**Watch out for this today:** there are those preaching themselves

1)So much of them in the picture they don't see Jesus

Subtle: Too much personality – Miss the message

A)We live in a day and age where we probably have the best communicators ever in pulpits

B)Men who can make you laugh/ cry / touch every emotion and entertain you to death –

C)But in many of those pp {many not all} – **there is an incredible lack of Power**

1)Because what you are getting is a lot of the messenger and not much of the word.

D)Take out all the fluff not much to the message

1) I am getting ahead of myself here

E)Little boy **“Mommy where is the man who never lets us see Jesus”**

Not so subtle: Those who cast doubt on the Scriptures { What if Jesus wasn't born as a virgin

A)Can we really define what is sin? – Is the Bible really 100% accurate

B)Here is what they are saying in their arrogance – You can't trust the Bible so trust me –

1)We will figure this out together. - Watch out

C)**Parents of young adults** don't just be satisfied that your kids are going to Church some where

–
1)Dangerous stuff going on. – Undermine faith in a big time way.

But when the unadulterated truth of Christ and God's plan for mankind is preached – It has a way of penetrating the darkness – invading the blindness

A)Piercing the conscience and the heart. { The light goes on!

B)**Paul's own life was a testimony of this** – Paul was blinded by religion

1)He thought if he was just good enough – God would accept him

C)He heard Stephen preach the truth about Christ

1)Paul was incensed – He consented to the murder of Stephen.

D)But that message plagued him – it pierced the darkness and the blindness in his heart

Paul fought against it at first – Until that day – He met Jesus on the road to Damascus

A)Paul quit fighting –it is hard for you to kick against the goads – A goad? Sharp stick –

B)The message of the gospel is like that – it pricks the heart –

C) Paul in sharing his testimony in Acts 26 – says this is what God has commissioned me to do

1)Share the gospel in order

....to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.' Acts 26:18

V.6 Paul explains what happens when a persons eyes are opened and they receive Jesus!

6 For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Creation is a picture of the incarnation & Salvation

A)In Creation God said let there be light – it was meant to illuminate – to reveal the Glory of God in Creation

B)At the incarnation God said let there be light

1)He sent His son – to reveal the glory of God in Redemption

C)Jesus came Shining as the Light of the world – shining in the darkness of humanity and sin

D)And when a person opens their heart up to the message of the gospel –

1)Jesus by his spirit lives in their hearts – He begins to shine in their lives

E)Now God has chosen to have His light shining in His bride the Church – so that His glory is seen in His grace mercy and love being manifested in His pp.

More about that next time:

Close today: Believers – Ask ourselves – do we still believe in the power of the word ?

A)What priority does it have in your life?

B)We need to share it / Point pp to Jesus!

Here today: Truth right now is pricking your heart

A)Sinner – need a Savior – in darkness – not good enough

B)God loves you sent his son – receive Him

C)Forgiveness / freedom / Hope inheritance