

THE HIDDEN GOSPEL

Text: 2 Corinthians 4:1-5

Introduction:

1. The gospel of Christ is God's power to save men from their sins.
2. The reason the gospel saves is because it *"reveals"* what we must know (**Romans 1:16**).
 - a. It reveals God's righteousness (**i.e. God's plan of becoming righteous**).
 - b. It reveals the unrighteousness of man.
 - c. It reveals the wrath of God upon the unrighteous.
3. The gospel of Christ has:
 - a. Facts to be believed (**1 Corinthians 15:1-4**).
 - b. Commands to be obeyed (**2 Thessalonians 1:7-9**).
4. While there are many reasons why men do not obey the gospel, Paul cites several reasons in this context - (**2 Corinthians 4:1-5**).

I. FAILURE TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN THE COVENANTS

- A. (**2 Corinthians 4:1**).
- B. The Old Covenant has been replaced with the New Covenant (**Hebrews 8:7-13**).
 1. Paul's *"ministry"* discussed in (**4:1**) is discussed in (**3:6-16**).
 2. But many failed, and many continue to fail to learn this lesson.
- C. Failure to recognize the abolition of the Old Covenant threatened the early church.
 1. (**Acts 15**).
 2. (**Galatians 1:6-9; 5:4**).
- D. The Old Covenant, with all of its commandments was abolished (**Ephesians 2:15; Colossians 2:14**) according to God's will (**Hebrews 10:9-10**).
- E. A failure to distinguish between the covenants leads men to pursue avenues of salvation that are no longer available.

II. GOD'S WORD IS HANDLED DECEITFULLY

- A. (**2 Corinthians 4:2**).
- B. There are men of such a corrupt character that they will intentionally prey upon others.
 1. (**1 Timothy 4:1-3**) Speaking lies in hypocrisy.
 2. (**Jude 16**) Flattering people to gain advantage.
 3. (**1 Timothy 6:5**) Godliness as a way of gain.
- C. Men have used the Bible in an attempt to *"prove"* just about every doctrine imaginable.

III. SATAN HAS BLINDED SOME

- A. (**2 Corinthians 4:3-4**).
- B. Notice that the gospel is addressed to the **MIND**.
 1. Emphasis must be placed upon hearing and learning (**John 6:44-45**).
 2. Some place too much emphasis upon emotions and feelings become the criterion for proof of salvation.
- C. Satan uses many devices to keep people blinded to the gospel and bound to sin.
 1. Pleasure (**Hebrews 11:24-25**).
 2. Approval of men (**John 5:44**).

3. Lies (**John 8:44**).

IV. MEN PREACH THEMSELVES

- A. (**2 Corinthians 4:5**).
- B. People often blindly follow religious leaders (**Acts 17:11-12**).
- C. A preacher is to be a minister of the **WORD** (**2 Timothy 4:1-5**).
- D. Paul's emphasis was on the *feet* of the preacher, not his *head* (**Romans 10:13-17**).
- E. Allegiance to any man except Christ is divisive (**1 Corinthians 1:10-13**) and to preach any man except Christ is arrogant and vain (**1 Corinthians 2:2**).

Conclusion:

1. Because of its saving power, Jesus commanded his disciples to teach others about the gospel (**Mark 16:15**).
2. Those who obey it will obey it to their salvation, and those who reject it will reject it to their condemnation (**2 Thessalonians 1:7-9**).