

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit *be* with you all. Amen.

God the Holy Spirit had these words recorded for our instruction in righteousness. They are found in the second letter to the Corinthians, chapter four, verse five through seven.

5 For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bondservants for Jesus' sake. 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. 7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us.

So far our text. Dear fellow redeemed.

Have you ever heard the phrase “He is his father’s son”? Or “She is her mother’s daughter”? If you haven’t they simply mean that in a child one can see in either physical appearance or in attitude a resemblance to one specific parent.

If you were able to meet my parents this last Sunday you may have well said that I was one of the two.

In the short time being here, as I’ve begun to meet you all I can do the same thing. In children I can see family resemblances. There are times as with my sister when one might say ‘where did she come from’ but when you get to know the family tree a little better you can even see that she takes after the women on my father’s side.

There’s a great familiarity that one can have even in the first meeting of a sibling or relative of someone you know very well. The physical appearance might be much the same. The way they carry themselves can be allot alike. The phrases and habits learned by children from their parents can be similar as well.

But does that always tell the full story? Can we say that a child of a certain set of parents will be like them 100%? Is it impossible for someone to pick up their own unique characteristics? Of course not. Although many parents do pray that their children would not turn out like them. Trust me, I’ve prayed for that often.

But there is someone in whom we can rejoice that they turned out to be the exact representation of their Father. That is our Lord Jesus Christ.

And today we find how important it is for a preacher of the Word to declare Him that way. Truly, not only for called servants, but for all who witness to the mercies of The One true Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

That is why our theme for today is, **“The knowledge of God is in the face of Jesus Christ.”**

First the knowledge of God is in the face of Jesus Christ, and not of ourselves. The very beginning of verse 5 reads, **“For we do not preach ourselves.”**

The apostle Paul was dealing with a very specific issue in the church at Corinth when he said that we do not preach ourselves. There were people who came into the congregation and were stating that the apostolic office of Paul was invalid. They were trying to destroy Paul so that they may in turn destroy the Gospel which he preached.

But what is the importance for someone to not preach themselves? Titus 1:10 **“For there are many insubordinate, both idle talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision, 11 whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole households, teaching things which they ought not, for the sake of dishonest gain.”**

If someone preaches themselves that is the outcome. It might be done for different reasons but the outcome is the same. We are by our very nature are completely corrupt and utterly lack the righteousness of God. By nature our father is the Devil. When we preach the wisdom of man, we end up subverting whole households and teach things we ought not to teach. And the result is the destruction of souls.

But when Paul goes on to say that he was preaching Christ Jesus the Lord as our text states then we know that we will never subvert and cause harm to anyone. Acts 4:12 12 rightly testifies of this, **“Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”**

And no matter what comes from faithful preaching be it loss of friends, family, jobs or being shunned by co-workers we cheerfully continue preaching his name.

Because we preach **“The knowledge of God in the face of Jesus Christ”** as bondservants. The preacher must not become prideful and think himself above those who called him. For indeed, he has been called by God Himself. Every pastor is the slave of the congregation in the Gospel of Christ and not vice-versa. We are a slave in the sense that we are required to fulfill our duties faithfully.

And the preaching of **“The knowledge of God in the face of Jesus Christ”** is done for Jesus sake. Paul, myself and you preach because of the conviction of our sins being forgiven. Paul said this of himself.

“And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me, because He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry, 13 although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; but I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. 14 And the grace of our Lord was exceedingly abundant, with faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. 15 This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.”

What preacher of the word cannot put himself in the place of Paul? In fact none of us can say that we were any different than Paul. Our sinfulness by nature and the sins which we commit daily show overwhelmingly that we are in desperate need of the **“The knowledge of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”**

And the preaching of **“The knowledge of God in the face of Jesus Christ”** is by the command of Christ Himself.

Paul knew that what he preached in Corinth was not only the truth, but that He had the right to do it. As it is for me, I have been called by God through you. And that has given me the right to proclaim the **“The knowledge of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”** And because of that I may have confidence to know that He will be with me.

1 The. 2:13 **“For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe.”**

And so it is for you. We have all truly been called to preach the word. The world often recoils when you preach the reconciliation of God through Jesus to them. But do not be discouraged. You know that Jesus has said to go forth into all the world and preach the Gospel.

And what an amazing thing it is to think that the **“The knowledge of God in the face of Jesus Christ”** is preached through man. Our text says that, **“light to shine out of darkness.”** And that this treasure is **“found in earthen vessels.”** But we ourselves are total darkness. Psalm 51: 5 **“Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me.”**

Excuses can be made by all of us. Certainly scripture has examples of those who tried to make excuses. **“Then Moses said to the LORD, “O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither before nor since You have spoken to Your servant; but I am slow of speech and slow of tongue.”**

But none of us have anything to fear because our text says that **“For it is the God who commanded.”** Just as we have confidence when God says Christ died once for all because He said it, we have confidence that Light will shine out of man because He said so.

Now God commanded light to shine from darkness for a specific reason. A pastor and every one of us who have faith in Jesus are here for one purpose. To GIVE the light of the knowledge of God that He has given us. Matt 10:8 **“Freely you have received, freely give.”**

Not for the sake of ourselves. But for God’s glory. If we go back to preaching for our own gain we will be leading those who hear us astray.

1 Cor. 3:12 **“Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, 13 each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is.”**

And all of these things culminate to one final goal. **“The knowledge of God is in the face of Jesus Christ.”**

The way of speaking is a little different from culture to culture. When our text says “the face of” it is a way of saying Christ reveals the Father. Just as it is that I reveal my parents and you yours, Jesus reveals God the Father.

So then who is Jesus? And does He in fact reveal the knowledge of God the Father? Mankind from the fall until now has rejected Jesus as being the Son of God. There are an endless amount of reasons for rejecting Jesus as the Son of God. The Jews themselves struggled with it since they considered the Messiah to be some kind of Earthly bread king.

But Jesus does in fact reveal the Father. 1 John 1:1 **“That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life.”**

Jesus was before He created the heavens and the Earth with the Father. So everything that has taken place the Son has known. Jesus declared of Himself, **“I and the Father are One.”**

Therefore everything the Father desired of the Son was completed perfectly. **“And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel.”**

When the Father declared the desire of His Son in the first Gospel message there was never any waning on behalf of Jesus. Even when the time was drawing near and Jesus was stating that He must go and be crucified some tried to stop Him. But even then Jesus revealed the Glory of God when He said, **“Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men.”**

And thank God that **“The knowledge of God is in the face of Jesus Christ”** because without His steadfastness these words would’ve never been spoken. **“Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?”**

Without **“The knowledge of God in the face of Jesus Christ”** we would still be in our sins. Jesus’ faithfulness in everything was required for His sacrifice upon the cross to be sufficient for us.

Just as I don’t want my daughter and future kids to have much of me in them, I am thankful that Jesus is the exact representation of His Father. Without it we would have no confidence in our future with Him forever in heaven. We would be left to wonder whether Jesus lived a perfect life. We would doubt that someone really rose from the dead. Therefore let us be thankful that we do not need to doubt because **“The knowledge of God is in the face of Jesus Christ.”**

And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Amen.