

THE PERSON OF CHRIST
II. Cor. 4:5.

Paul wants these people to know that the the Gospel which he and his fellow preachers are proclaiming does not have a selfish motive under it but that the moving motive in and under it is Jesus. Now, he says, if we were going around here preaching a man made gospel we would faint. But having the ministry which we do we faint not. Our ministry comes since we have renounced the hidden things of shame. Now as little as we think about it that is something which has to come not only as a prerequisite for a minister, but also as a prerequisite for a bench member. Some people get the idea you know that a minister is to be clothed with some kind of supernatural garment while the member sitting out there may be clothed in any kind of filthy rags. But we must remember that Jesus gives the same kind of salvation to the humblest person that He gives to the king bishop or any body else.

We are to commend ourselves to the consciences of people in the sight of God. Let people see our lives and judge whther or not we are Christians. If they find us living Christians our gospel will be veiled only in those that perish. Those whose eyes have been blinded by the god of this world.

Now what is he leading up to? He leading up to what I must lead up to and what you must lead up to and what every Christian must lead up to and that is Jesus. Christianity was a new faith and connected with it were many victories. How were these victories won? They were won not by proclaiming a finer form of philosophy. They were won not by proclaiming a more searching form of ethics. But these victories were won by preaching CHRIST.

Aggressive faith? Yes, and here was the leading apostle of that faith indicating the main content of his message. What was it? " We preach not our selves but Christ Jesus the Lord and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake." " We preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block to the Gentiles foolishness, but to them who are called, the power of God and the wisdom of God." " I determined not to know any thing among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified." " I am ready to preach the gospel to you at Rome-----I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one who believes." This is the sum and substance of what he ahd to offer for the moral needs of the world.

How was Paul to preash Christ? How are we to preach Him? It would mean the giving of a clear cut statement of Christ's earthly career. The setting forth of His principles of His teachings, and the portrayal of His life as an example for the conduct of men. But these my dear friends are just historic facts. There was vastly more than that in the preaching of Paul. Christ to him was not merely a teacher and example, but was The Redeemer and Lord. This brings us up to the age long question which Jesus Himself put to His own disciples, " Whom say ye that I am." Whether you want to or not you are going to answer that very question. You are giving your answer every day. And your friends may be saying that you say He is not much.

There are two views given among men to day as to Who Christ was. The Lower view and the higher. The first reads like this: " How could one born of a woman, subject to the laws of growth, tempted in all points like as we are, compelled to learn obedience by the things which He suffered, destined to die upon the cross, be any thing but a man and only

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a man?

The higher view goes like this: "Why should this man have such things said about Him as that 'in Him all things consist; that in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily,' that He was 'the express image of the divine person, (unless He indeed had made such an impression upon the apostles as no lower terms could?'" In other words one crowd makes Him a great teacher and another crowd cries out, "My Lord and my God." One says that He was a good man and His influence lives in our lives like that of Luther, Knox, Wesley, and others. Another says that He is more than man that He indeed is the Son of God and that He lives to day to make intercession for us at the right hand of God. Why do we hold to this higher view?

I. Because of the central and commanding position assumed by and accorded to Jesus Christ in the work of human redemption. Several things converge to give Him this place.

a. Miracles that He wrought.

b. Prophecies in O.T. concerning Him.

c. His estimate of Himself. "Come unto ME all ye that are heavy laden and I will give you rest--take MY yoke upon you and ye shall find rest to your souls---The Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins---follow ME---He that hath seen me hath seen the Father--I am the way the truth and the life, no man cometh unto the Father but by me--I am the Bread of life he that eateth this Bread shall live forever--I am the Light of the world-- I am the True Vine---I am the Door--- I am the Resurrection and the Life-he that believeth on Me, though he were dead yet shall he live."

Why could He say all these things and get by with it? Because He had power on earth to do what He taught. And best proof of all was that when He was killed and laid in the grave as each of us knows, He walked out and was seen by many for days afterward.

II. In the second place we rest our faith in the higher view of Christ's person upon the history of the Christian church for nineteen centuries. Arianism, Socinianism, and Unitarianism take the lower view and what have been their fruits? One illustration. The Congregational church divided about one hundred years ago and each wing had about the same number of members. One held the lower view of Christ the other the higher view. Consequently the one holding the higher view now out numbers the lower ten to one. The spiritual vigor for world-wide missionary evangelism has been the monopoly of the people of the higher view. We might call a few of its men on the witness stand to give you a sample of the fruits of the higher view that Jesus is the Son of God with power on earth to forgive sins. David Livingstone, Adoniram Judson, Jno. G. Paton, and Bishop Lambuth.

III. We rest our faith in the higher view because we find it spiritually satisfying. When men find themselves sinners, feel the need of salvation, renewal and reenforcement, they find that in some mysterious way faith in Jesus as the Son of God and the Savior of men meets their wants. The Rel. which we profess was not at its inception a mere human impulse. When men looked up, making their appeal for help, feeling after it if haply they might find it, they were made aware that the effort had received sanction and reenforcement from above.

From above, think of it! I love to think of that store house above. Whether it is yonder, or yonder, or over yonder it is above me and in it there is help for me and I know it because I have received it. And I have seen my fellows when they would draw nigh to God, they found that He had already been drawing nigh unto them. He had done this supremely in the person of His Son. In real and definite fashion He had been seeking after them if haply He might find them. God so loved the world that in His greatest redemptive effort on their behalf, He gave His only begotten Son to the end that believing on Him, they too might have eternal life. This supreme historical manifestation which God had made of Himself represented His utmost endeavor on their behalf. And believing on Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord they had life through His blessed name. This I am sure you will say is a fairly accurate characterization of the prevailing type of Christian experience which has resulted from faith in Him as a divine Lord and Savior.

In this day when so much is written, heard, and seen to hold up the lower view, may God forbid that one precious soul be deceived and drawn from that higher view of Jesus as our only divine Savior and Redeemer. In this estimate of Jesus only can we sing:

THOU MY EVERLASTING PORTION MORE THAN LIFE OR FRIEND TO ME
ALL ALONG MY PILGRIM JOURNEYS SAVIOR LET ME WALK WITH THEE.

NOT FOR EASE OR WORLDLY PLEASURE NOR FOR FAME MY PRAYER
SHALL BE
GLADLY WILL I TOIL AND SUFFER ONLY LET ME WALK WITH THEE.

LEAD ME THROUGH THE VALE OF SHADOWS BEAR ME OVER LIFE'S
FITFUL SEA.
THEN THE GATE OF LIFE ETERNAL MAY I ENTER LORD WITH THEE.