THOUGHTS ON SOULWINNING

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**DATE: 1/2/2019 Wed.**

**TEXT: I Corinthians 2:1-5; Acts 18**

**INTRODUCTION**

We now come to **Chapter 2** of **I Corinthians**

Let’s stand to read **vs. 1-5** (read)

There was a time in D.L. Moody's life that he purposed to witness to at least one soul every day. This became a practice that he kept until the end of his life. One day he asked someone if they were saved. The person looked at him and said, *"Sir, that is none of your business."* Moody looked at him and said very kindly, *"Sir, that is my business."*

A.C. Dixon tells a story about a New York pastor who became concerned about a certain banker. One day he went to the banker's office and asked to see him. The banker asked, *"Have you come on business, preacher?"* The pastor answered, *"Yes, business for God and for eternity. I would like to talk to you about your soul."* The banker looked at the preacher and said, *"I've been waiting 30 years for someone to tell me how to get saved."*

Might I say that it’s the business of every believer to share their faith, tell others about Jesus, and be a soulwinner

Mercedes Benz once had a TV commercial which showed their car colliding with a cement wall during a safety test. Someone then asks the company spokesman why they did not enforce their patent on the Mercedes Benz energy-absorbing car body, a design evidently copied by other companies because of its success. He replies, *"Because some things in life are too important not to share."*

The Gospel of Jesus Christ falls into that category

It’s too important Not to share

The eternity of the souls of lost humanity depends on those that are saved, sharing the Gospel

If a doctor discovered a cure for cancer, but refused to share his discovery,

There would be no words to describe how we would all feel about him

With millions that die each year of cancer he would be guilty of a crime against all humanity

And when we know the cure for what really ails society and we keep it to ourselves, we are no better

Soulwinning is our business

It needs to be our Divine business, our Daily business, and our Dutiful business

When it comes to soulwinning, the Apostle Paul, was no doubt, one of the greatest soulwinner that every lived

He is our Personal, Biblical, and Historical example of a soulwinner

As we look at our text, we find several lessons about soulwinning that can be gleaned from this master soulwinner

In our text this evening we are given insight into his thoughts on soulwinning

Let's consider our text and notice …

**“PAUL’S THOUGHTS ON SOULWINNING”**

**~~~Prayer~~~**

**I. PAUL’S “PRACTICES” – Acts 18**

**v. 1 - *“And I, brethren, when I came to you …”***

Paul speaks of his coming to Corinth

We read the account of his coming to Corinth in **Acts 18:1-18**

Now I’d like to ask this question

Why do you think Paul went to Corinth?

I believe the answer is simple

He went to Corinth to win others to Christ

He went with the Purpose to see people saved

Paul was Committed to seeing people saved,

Paul was Consumed with seeing people saved (and)

Paul was Concerned about people being saved

Let's look at **Acts 18** and **Paul's Practices** at Corinth

First, we see …

**A. Paul ‘Publicly’ Sought to Win Others to Christ**

We read in **Acts 18:4 –*****“And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks”***

We see here Paul's Public Ministry (at Corinth)

According to **v. 11** Paul spent at least 18 months in…

… Corinth and ***“every Sabbath”*** he preached in the Synagogue

In a Public act of evangelism, Paul told people about Jesus

The most important Practice of the Church should be its Public Ministries in Reaching others

Behind our weekly gatherings and all aspects of our gathering is a Public effort to Present the Gospel

Each Service, each Sermon, each Song, should have as our goal, the Reaching of lost people

Each Meeting, each Ministry, each Message associated with the Church, should be the objective of Reaching the lost

Even the keeping up of the Building and Grounds has as its objective the saving of Souls

I wonder how many people have gotten saved throughout the centuries because of Church Services like ours?

Someone’s salvation could be the result of the Public effort of this Church to share the Gospel

Next, we see …

**B. Paul ‘Privately’ Sought to Win Others to Christ**

Again, we read in **Acts 18:7, 8 – *“And he departed thence, and entered into a certain man's house, named Justus, one that worshipped God, whose house joined hard to the synagogue”***

***“And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized”***

Paul not only went into the Synagogue to tell others about Jesus,

But he also teamed up with others and went into Homes

 **v. 7** tells us how he teamed up with someone named Justus

Justus was someone who worshipped God and had the same goal as Paul (to see others saved)

And in **v. 8** we are told how they led people to Christ

In **Acts 5:42** it says – **“*And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ”***

Not only did he preach the Gospel in Church

But they also went into Private Homes telling people about Jesus

Our effort to win people to Jesus is not to be confined to the four walls of this building

We are to go into people’s homes, seeking to win them to Christ

I asked a moment ago how many people do you think have been saved by a Church Service like ours

Let me now ask how many people do you think have been saved in the privacy of their own homes

Soulwinning, whether Public or Private, was Paul's Practice at Corinth

Again, I want to say, that every believer is to be involved in the matter of soulwinning, the business of seeking to win others to Christ

This is a Team Effort!

Are you engaged in the matter of soulwinning?

Are you seeking to win others to Christ?

How are you going about it?

It’s a task we all should be involved in as believers

Not just a select few

**PAUL’S “PRACTICES” (should be our Practice)**

Next, let’s look at …

**II. PAUL’S “PROCEDURES”**

We not only learn Why Paul came, but also How he came

As we look carefully at How he came to the Corinthians,

We are able to learn something about Paul's Procedures for soulwinning

I have read scores of books and studied many different methods of soulwinning

And I’ve come to understand that the Bible is our best manual on how to win souls to Christ

Let’s look at **Paul's Procedures** for soulwinning

First, we see that he Did Not rely on …

**A. ‘Persuasive Arguments’**

**1.** Notice again **v. 1 – “*And I, brethren, when I came unto you, came Not with excellency of speech or of wisdom…”***

When Paul came to Corinth, he did not bring worldly philosophy

The phrase “***excellency of speech or of wisdom,”***

… Is referring to *human rhetoric and philosophy*

The Corinthians were used to hearing great orators

These orators were famous for their eloquent language and rhetorical displays

**2.** Notice **v. 4 – “*And my speech was not with enticing words of man's wisdom…”***

The word ***“enticing”*** speaks of the persuasive speech that was often used by these orators

We’ve all met that salesman that could talk anyone into buying something that they did not need nor want

In our minds, we thought, *“I don't care what he says, I am not buying anything”*

Yet, by-the-time they left, we bought the most expensive item they had

As the old saying goes, they could sell ice cubes to Eskimos

Or a Grape popsicle to someone in white gloves

Paul was saying that he had not used eloquent rhetoric or clever sale pitches to get someone to make a profession

Matter-of-Fact, he was not after *Professions* but *Possession*

Therefore, his methods were not those of Persuasive Arguments

The Corinthian Speakers were famous for their ability to mesmerize their listeners

They could stir up someone’s emotion

But Paul says that was not his Procedure

**3.** Notice **v. 2 – *“For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified”***

The word ***“determined”*** speaks of *a decision that he had reached*

Paul had made up his mind that he was not going to use Gimmicks or Clever Approaches,

But simply give them a Clear Presentation of Jesus Christ

Think of all the times he just shared is testimony

Just share your Testimony

I think about a cartoon I once saw that shows a Crusader riding a horse and carrying a big shield with a cross on it. He is thrusting a spear down on the throat of this fellow lying on his back on the ground who is saying, *“Tell me more about this Christianity. I'm terribly interested.”*

If we’re not careful, what we often call soulwinning is nothing more than a carefully designed plan …

To get a person to pray a prayer before they know what’s happening

Our soulwinning is not to be some Crafty and Clever way of getting people to pray a sinner's prayer,

But instead, simply telling them about Jesus and taking them to the Cross

Soulwinning is a Simple Presentation of the Person of Christ

Showing them how He died for their sins and how He can save them from the same

Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson went on a camping trip. After a great meal they lay down for the night and went to sleep in their tent. Some hours later, Holmes woke up and nudged his faithful friend. *"Watson, look up into the sky and tell me what do you see."* Watson replied, *"I see millions and millions of stars."* Holmes asked, *"What does that tell you?"* Watson pondered for a moment and then said, *"Astronomically, it tells me that there are millions of galaxies and potentially billions of planets. Astrologically, I observe that Saturn is in Leo. Horologically, I deduce that the time is approximately a quarter past three. Theologically, I can see that God is all-powerful and that we are small and insignificant. Meteorologically, I suspect that we will have a beautiful day tomorrow."* Then Dr. Watson asked, *"What does it tell you Mr. Holmes?"* Holmes replied, *"Watson, it tells me that someone as stolen our tent."*

I think sometimes we try to be too clever …

… when it comes to our soulwinning

Our task is to simply present Jesus Christ to the lost and tell them What He Has Done, What He Can Do, and How He Can Do it

Paul Did Not Rely on **‘Persuasive Arguments’**

Next, we see that he Did Not rely on …

**B. ‘Personal Ability’**

**1.** Notice **v. 3 – “*And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling”***

Paul speaks of his ***“weakness”*** and no doubt was referring to his physical appearance

Paul was a man that had several physical handicaps

And Paul knew that when it came to reaching others, he was physically limited

He also speaks of his ***“fear”*** and ***“much trembling”***

It was not a matter of Paul being afraid of the people or being afraid to talk to others about Jesus

Paul was speaking of the Awesomeness of the Responsibility he had of preaching the Gospel

There were over 700,000 people living in Corinth at the time and as far as he knew, there were only 2 other people in Corinth that were saved; Aquila and Priscilla

-- Physically Paul was *weak*

-- Mentally Paul was *fearful*

-- Emotionally Paul was *trembling*

He knew that within himself he did not have what it would take to reach the people of Corinth for Jesus

That’s probable true of us as well

**2.** But notice again **v. 4** - ***“And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and power”***

 Paul knew that his work was to Tell people about Jesus and it was the Holy Spirit's work to Save people

We read in **Acts 1:8 – “*But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto Me…”***

The secret to being a soulwinner is realizing that we cannot win others without the work of the Holy Spirit

Winning people to Jesus is more than clever and persuasive tactics, But a work of the Holy Spirit

It is the Holy Spirit that Convicts, Convinces, and Converts

It is not our soulwinning skills that will get the job done

It is the power of the Holy Spirit that Enables, Equips, Energizes, Empowers, and makes our witnessing Effective

To Paul, soulwinning was a Demonstration, not a Performance

It was a Heavenly work, not a Human endeavor

**‘Persuasive Arguments’** and **‘Personal Ability’** won’t cut it (won’t get it done)

**PAUL’S “PRACTICES”**

**PAUL’S “PROCEDURES”**

Lastly, let’s look at …

**III. PAUL’S “PRODUCT”**

Paul's coming to Corinth and his methods of evangelism among them had one goal in mind

Notice **v. 5 – “*That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God”***

**A. Paul Sought ‘Genuine Conversions’**

Paul speaks of their ***“faith”***

Paul was not after notches in his soulwinning belt

He was not after numbers to brag about at the local pastor’s meeting

He wanted Real Conversions

We are not after Professions of Faith

We are after Possessions of Faith

We want to do more than get people to pray a prayer

We want them to trust Christ

We are after more than baptisms

We are after births: genuine births into the family of God

We do not want people's faith to be that which is

accomplished by the wisdom of man, but by the Power of God

Unless God changes the heart, the Heart is not Changed

**Paul Sought ‘Genuine Conversions’**

**B. Paul Sought ‘Growing Christians’**

He wanted there to be a ***“standing”*** associated with their faith

**“*That your faith should … stand in the … power of God”***

He sought Genuine Conversions that resulted in Growing Christians

Real Conversion results in changed lives which results in spiritual desires

We all have known those who made Professions of faith, yet there was never any evidence of Conversion

I can't help but doubt whether that Profession was Genuine

Real Conversion will make a difference in a person's life

I believe that when a person really gets saved there is a Desire in their heart to live for God

You will not have a problem getting that person faithfully into church

This is what we are after in all our soulwinning efforts

This is the kind of conversions we seek

To reach people for Christ and see them live for His honor and glory

I think of the Hymn by Will Houghton

*"Lead me to some soul today,
O teach me, Lord, just what to say,
Friends of mine are lost in sin
And cannot find the way.
Few there are that seem to care,
And few there are who pray;
Melt my heart and fill my life,
Give me one soul today!"*

Like Paul, may we live to win others to Christ

Like Paul, may we adopt his methods and start truly winning others

**CONCLUSION**