

# No Flesh Glorifying in His Presence

by Mike Attwood

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**Scripture:** 1 Corinthians 1:26, 1 Corinthians 2:1, Psalm 19:7, John 3:30, Jeremiah 9:23, Acts 4:13, Romans 1:16, 1 Corinthians 1:18

**Topics:** "The Power of the Cross", "Humility in Faith"

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## Description

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## Transcript

I'd like you to turn with me, please, this evening in your Bibles to the first epistle of Paul to the Corinthians, and we're going to look at chapter 1, and we're going to begin reading in verse 26, and into chapter 2, down to verse 5, and I'll explain why in a moment, but let's just read the passage to begin with. We're going to be reading from the Authorized King James Version, and beginning in verse 26, he says, for you see your calling brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called, but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty, and base things of the world, and things which are despised hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to note things that are, that no flesh should glory in his presence, but of him, i.e. in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption, that according as it is written, he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. And I brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God, for I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified, and I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling, and my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God.

Again, God will bless that reading from his precious word to us this evening. Well, Mark mentioned that he had been asked to do something at rather short notice, and I might add that I was asked to do this at rather short notice. I got indication yesterday from Brother Mark, yesterday morning, that I would be up to bat today, and there's a reason why I'm picking this particular passage.

In fact, there's two reasons. I had, prior to going on our trip to Ireland and Norway, I had been doing a series at Brockview Bible Chapel up there in Ontario, in the early messages in 1 Corinthians, and I'd got as far as verse 25, and I enjoyed, at four sessions to get to verse 25, enjoyed that series so much that I thought, well, I'm going to dig back into 1 Corinthians, because I was being blessed by it, and so that's one of the reasons, and the other one is that when you look at this little portion from 26 to 31, I'm also going through the book of Judges on a Friday morning, and I've been doing that for quite a while, and I think I've done 31 messages so far on the book of Judges, and it really illustrates what this passage is saying, the fact that God chooses the weak and foolish things of this world to confound the wise, and so it kind of illustrates it very well. But anyway, I want us to think about this passage, and as we think about the assembly in Corinth, one of the problems is that God had done a great work in Corinth, and he had saved people out of Corinth, and so they'd been gloriously saved, but sometimes you can save people out of Corinth, but it's hard to get Corinth out of the people.

There's still a lot of baggage that is hanging on to the Corinthians, and some of that baggage is to do with the general culture at large was still kind of clinging onto them in many ways, and one of the things about the culture there was there was a tremendous love of wisdom, human wisdom. They were enamored with human wisdom, they were enamored with rhetoric, they were enamored with people, personalities, powerful personalities, and that had found its way into the assembly, and so we see in chapter 1 that he says in verse 12, now as I say that every one of you says, I am of Paul, and I have Apollos, and I have Cephas, and I have Christ, and they tended to glory in men and be kind of enamored by different individuals, and I'm sure that our culture is not immune from the same fascination with men, with worldly wisdom, with all those things. In fact, if you look at chapter 3, verse 21, he says, therefore let no man glory in men, but that's what they were doing.

They were glorying in men. I'm a Peter. I'm one of Peter's men.

I'm of Paul. I'm of Apollos. I'm of Christ, and they loved this kind of thing, and so he wants to combat this cultural baggage, and in doing so, he wants to show the folly of human wisdom, and we're going to see that very clearly.

By the way, I think in our day, I don't think I've ever sensed as clearly as today how utterly bankrupt human wisdom is. You listen to the pronouncements made on the media in our society in general, and you have to come to the conclusion that human wisdom is bankrupt. Here are people who don't even know how to define what a woman is anymore, and yet highly educated.

I mean, university educated degrees and all the rest of it, and the simple thing that a normal child could tell you the difference between a man and a woman, they can't do it, and so what we see is wisdom is totally bankrupt, and it was bankrupt in Corinth as well, and he wants to show how foolish all these things are and how foolish it is to, as it were, be enamored with men, with rhetoric, with wisdom, with all these things, and so in order to combat that, he begins this amazing little section. He says, you see your calling brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called. It's interesting how it says not many.

There was a famous female member of the English aristocracy. She was called Selina, Countess of Huntington, and she was a wonderful woman. If you have a biography reader, if you get hold of the biography of Selina, Countess of Huntington, it will thrill your soul.

This sister, she was gloriously saved. She basically bankrolled the Methodist revival. So many people have been saved through the labors of Wesley and Whitfield and their men that they could hardly find buildings or build buildings, and most of the ones that were being saved were the poor, the poor classes, and so she would basically build their buildings for them, and so quite a lady, and yet she said, I thank God every day for the letter M. You see it says not many.

It doesn't say not any, and she was one of the those of noble birth, if you like, that came to know the Savior, and I was just thinking about that yesterday evening. I was speaking about the early days of the brethren movement, a kind of church history sketch I was doing, and the amazing thing about that period of history, it seemed like there were many nobles that were being saved during those early days of the 1800s. A lot of them were earls, the Earl of Carrick, were dukes, were counts, were all kinds of things, and it was an amazing move of the Holy Spirit at that particular time, and many of those nobler classes came to know the Savior, and it was a tremendous work of God, but generally speaking, throughout the history of Christianity, it has not been those of noble birth that have come to Christ, and even at the time of this epistle, the vast majority of Christians in the Roman Empire were most likely converted slaves.

You see it wasn't many of these of the higher classes, and so he says, you see it, Colin, how there are not many wise men after the flesh. Again, when he says wise men, he's talking about human wisdom, because human wisdom never finds out God. In fact, he's going to show us that in chapter 2, that actually God reveals himself through the Holy Spirit and divine revelation, not through man's cleverness, and so not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, the strong, the powerful, not many noble, those of noble birth, but then he contrasts it, and verse 27 is an amazing contrast with verse 26, but he says God hath chosen the foolish things as opposed to the wise.

He's chosen the the foolish things of the world to confound the wise. God has chosen the weak things in contrast to the mighty, and God has chosen not only the weak things of the world to confound those that are mighty, but the base things, the base, the people of insignificant birth rather than those of noble birth of the world. Things which are despised have God chosen, yea, and things which are not to bring to note things that are, and so he wants us to recognize this, and for them to recognize, and they would know that, that the vast majority that would have been in fellowship amongst them would have been of the poorer classes, and why is that? But why is it God that God doesn't want the nobles, the mighty, those kind of people to come to Christ? No, it's just that they're so self-sufficient that it's hard for them to see their real need, and you see that's part of the problem, is it? The Lord Jesus said that unless you become as little children, you will never enter into the kingdom of God, and so there's this, there has to be a humility and a simplicity to see our need of the gospel, and usually people of noble birth and people of high intelligence, they feel they're too smart for this Christian thing.

They don't need this kind of stuff. They can figure everything out themselves. They don't need divine revelation.

They're smart enough to figure the world out themselves, and so generally speaking, we could say that God is saving people who are just those that are the ordinary, and yet these ordinary people who recognize their need, they recognize, I need a savior. I can't figure these things out. I can't fix this myself.

I need divine help. It says God will take those people, and he's going to use them to confound the things that are mighty. He's going to take human frail instruments, and he's going to use them for his purpose and his glory.

Now, I want us to just see something back in the book of Acts, and we see how this is played out in Scripture, and it's just a beautiful thing. We could have gone all over the book of Judges to show this as well, the weak, the despised, the things that are nothing God has chosen, but in Acts 4, it says in verse 13, now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marveled, and they took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus, and what they were amazed at is these people hadn't been to the right schools. They hadn't been to the right seminaries.

They hadn't been through the right training. I mean, they were fishermen of all things, and yet these men unlearned according to their standards. They'd been taught by the Spirit of God, but as far as they're concerned, they're unlearned.

They haven't been to the right schools. They're ignorant. They haven't sat at the feet of the great rabbis, unlearned and ignorant men, but he says they perceived that they'd been at the feet of the greatest rabbi.

They'd sat at the feet of Jesus, and they could see this, and they could see that they had a boldness, and so we see this general principle, and it's a very important thing for us to remember that God delights to take the weak and foolish things, and why is that? Why does he take things that are nothing and things that are despised? Why does he do that? To bring to note things that are, he says in verse 29, and here's the reason, that no flesh should glory in his presence. You see, at the end of the day, if God uses ordinary people like us to accomplish anything, we just say, but look what God has done. On the other hand, if we think we're super smart, and we're the, you know, kind of, it's a British phrase, we're the bee's knees.

I don't know if you have that over here, but you know, you should be so fortunate, God, to have me on your team, because I have such an IQ, and I'm so brilliant, and then if we accomplish something, then we'd say, see, look what I accomplished. But when God takes up ordinary people, like you and I, and does something through us, we're so quick to say, Lord, what wonderful things you have done, and it's all about him getting the glory. No flesh should glory.

You see, God will not share his glory with anyone, and sometimes our thinking is all wrong. Sometimes we think, oh, wouldn't it be wonderful if Bill Gates got saved? Well, of course it would be wonderful. We want everybody to be saved, but you know, he's smart, he's started his computer, but you know, whoever, we tend to think, wouldn't it be wonderful if this individual got saved, or that individual got saved, because look at what they could bring, and that's not the way it is.

In fact, what we find is that the apostle Paul had a great education, sat at the feet of Gamaliel, but he had to count it all done, so that God could make him usable, and we find that with many of the, I have a friend in England, he went to seminary, and he got his degrees, and all the rest of it, and it was full of higher criticism, and all this kind of stuff. It was a miserable experience to get this degree, and it said, as soon as the day that he got it, he took all his notes, and all his papers, he found the nearest public trash can, and threw them all in, and said, thank the Lord, I'm done with that, and he just ministers the word in biblical simplicity, and so it's just interesting, isn't it, just to think about these things, the wise, the wisdom of the world, natural reasoning versus the foolish things of this world that God delights to use, and of course, the reason is that he will not share his glory with anyone. I want you to look at a verse in Jeremiah, please, just for a moment, Jeremiah chapter 29, Jeremiah 29, verses 23 and 24, it says this, look at it, Jeremiah

29, and that's why it's not reading properly, Jeremiah 9, verse 23, thus saith the Lord, let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches, but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord, which exercises loving kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth, for in these things I delight, saith the Lord, so he's not delighting in wisdom, and might, and riches, but what the Lord delights in is somebody that understands and knows him, that walks with him in humility and simplicity, this is what delights the heart of God, and I really believe that Paul being someone who cut his teeth on the Old Testament scriptures, that Jeremiah 9, 23 and 24, is running through his mind as he writes this section of scripture, and he wants to know flesh of glory in the presence of God, we have nothing to boast in except the Lord Jesus, that's all we have to boast in, that he's our Savior.

I want to just take up this idea of glory for a moment, we're just going to get sidetracked, but I want to just kind of run quickly through the epistle, and notice that the emphasis on glory, because this is what's the problem in the assembly here, they're glorying in the wrong things, and so he says no flesh should glory in his presence here, and then he says in verse 31, that according as it is written, he that glorieth let him glory in the Lord, okay, that's where the glory should be, in the Lord, verse 7, but we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world unto our glory, he's got a purpose to glorify us, ultimately, none of the princes of this world knew, for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory, again that's a wonderful description of him, the Lord of glory, verse 21, chapter 3, therefore let no man glory in then, chapter 4, verse 7, for who maketh thee to differ from another, and who hast thou that thou didst not, what hast thou that thou didst not receive, now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it, and again speaking of any kind of giftedness or usefulness that we have, well where do we get it from, from the Lord, so who gets the glory, the person who exercises the gift, or the one who gave the gift, surely it has to be the one who gave the gift, why do you glory as if you had not received it, as if it was something innate in you, no it was something you got as a gift from God, chapter 6, please, and verse 20, it says, for you are bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's, so again this great theme of glory, and we're not done yet, get to chapter 9, he says in verse 16, for though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of, the necessity is laid upon me, yea, woe unto me if I preach not the gospel, again this is a burden the Lord had put on his heart, and so he can't glory in it, the Lord has put that burden upon it, he has no option, and then chapter 10, verse 31, and this is a great verse to think about every single day, everything we do, he says, whether therefore you eat or drink or whatsoever you do, do all to the glory of God, can you see this resounding theme that's going through this epistle, and it continues into chapter 11, and again there's the theme of glory, but again it's the idea of God's glory having the preeminent place, and so he says for instance in verse 7, man indeed ought not to cover his head for as much as he is the image and glory of God, and so the idea is that when the assembly comes together, what is to be seen is the glory of God, that's what we want to see in the assembly, and so because man represents the glory of God, he's to not be covered, because we want to see a representation of the glory of God, the woman is the glory of the man, do we want to see the glory of the man in the assembly, everything we've read in first Corinthians up to now would say we do not want man's glory in the assembly, we want God's glory alone, and so notice verse 15, if a woman have long hair it's a glory to her, her hair is given her for a covering, so again we get this wonderful idea that she's the glory of the man, but we don't want man's glory on display, her hair is given her for a covering, so it covers her the glory of the man, the woman's long hair it's a glory to her, it's given her for a covering, the problem is that as well as being a covering, covering the glory of the man, it's also her personal glory, so what does she do, she takes an additional covering and she covers her personal glory, so that the only glory seen in the assembly is the man with the uncovered head, which is

the glory of God, and so as you go through this epistle you will see that one of the marvelous themes that runs through the epistle is the whole issue of the glory of God, and it's an amazing theme, and there's more we could say on it, but we must get back to our text, and so he says again in chapter one that God indeed has chosen, yea, the things that are not to bring to naught, the things that are, verse 29, that no flesh should glory in his presence, and this was a big lesson the assembly in Corinth needed to learn, and then he talks about the fact that what we should glory in is the Lord, verse 31 he says according to his written, he that glorieth let him glory in the Lord, our only boast should be in the Lord, that should be what we glory in, now why, what reason should we glory in the Lord, and in him alone, well verse 30 he says no flesh should glory in his presence, verse 29, verse 31 he that glories let him glory in the Lord, verse 30 gives us reason, wonderful reason to glory in the Lord, there was a British preacher of years ago Harry Bell of Jarrow, and he left behind a wonderful commentary on the book of Daniel, but he was a very interesting man, he was born almost blind, not completely, but he had an incredible memory, and he had memorized much of the scriptures, he was able to preach at a moment's notice on just about any topic, in fact his handwriting they said was so abysmal that at one particular conference he had, they'd asked him to write down what he was going to speak on, and he'd said David, he'd written David in on his handwriting, and they announced it as Daniel, and so he just preached on Daniel, even though he was planning to preach on David, but such was his ability in the scriptures, and he says that verse 30 he said I want to take you on a tour of Corinth with verse 30 in your mind, he says but of him are you in Christ Jesus who of God is made unto us wisdom, so he says the first place we're going to go is the university, and we're going to see there the wisdom of the world, but then we're going to say this, that you Corinthian believers, Christ has been made unto you wisdom, far greater wisdom than you'll ever get at the university, and isn't that true? He's able to make wise the simple, Psalm 19, right, and the wisdom that you get from the word of God, from a living relationship with a living savior, is better than you get in any university, and so he says the first stop is the university, we'll go there, and we'll see, and we'll say okay they're going to offer you wisdom, but of him are you in Christ Jesus who of God is made unto us wisdom, our wisdom is Christ, it's knowing him, it's knowing his teachings that gives us real wisdom, and then he says second place is the courts, he said let's go to the courts, and of course in the courts there's a legal declaration made, and that is you're either guilty, or you're declared righteous, and so what's our place in Christ Jesus, yes we're guilty, but because of Christ we've been declared righteous, being justified, declared righteous by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, and so we've gone to the university, we've gone to the law courts, and we've got a legal declaration that says this man for all his faults and failings has a standing of perfect righteousness before God, he's declared righteous, how could that be, because he that knew no sin was made to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him, and so it's in Christ we have that righteousness, and then he says the next place we're going to go is to the temple in Corinth, and of course there were a lot of people who were set apart, there were a thousand temple prostitutes who were set apart to the deities of Corinth, but he said in Christ you have been set apart to a relationship and intimacy with the living God, he is our sanctification, he has set us apart for himself, and then the final place we would go on our visit to the city of Corinth is to the slave market, and we were once slaves, but he says Christ is made unto us redemption, and of course that language of redemption is being bought out, isn't it, being redeemed, being bought out of the marketplace of sin, never to be put up for sale again, and so because of all that we have in the Lord Jesus, we have this wisdom, we have this righteousness, we have this sanctification, we have this redemption, and none of it is of our own, it's all because of Christ, and he said this is who we are, this is our position, and so that according as it is written, he that glories, let him glory in the Lord, is there anything you could glory in the Lord for this evening, well I think there is, isn't there, of who you are, who you are today, everything you

are today is because of him, it's because of Christ, and because of that we must glory in him, in him alone. J.R. Caldwell in his excellent commentary on 1 Corinthians says this, he says Satan's aim has been to get Christianity as it is called, allied with the wisdom, philosophy, and science of the world. That's Satan wants us to do that, wants us to be allied with these things.

He says he wants us to be allied with the state, and with the crown, thus to strip it of its Christ-like garb of lowliness, and to give it a standing of respectability among men. In other words, it's designed, our involvement with all these things is designed to take away the reproach of the cross for Christ followers. And you see it again and again in church history, that when they got connected and sucked into the philosophies of the world, and began to try and merge them with Christianity, it was always a disaster.

And so you had people using the wisdom of Aristotle to try and figure out biblical ideas and truths, and so they were constantly bringing in the philosophies of the world, and mixing them with Christianity, and it was an unholy mixture, and it weakened Christianity. And we see it today, evolutionary thinking, psychological thinking being brought in. You know, it's a sad thing, that every liberal Ivy League school began as a school for preachers, training men to preach the gospel.

And yet what happened? The wisdom of the world came in and made the cross of no effect. And that's what he's warning about. Beware of the infiltration of philosophy and human wisdom, marketing methods, psychology, higher criticism, all of these things are devastating to the simplicity and the power of the gospel.

So we get into chapter two, and we want to just look at these first five verses, and I want you to notice the personal pronouns in the first four verses, because this Paul's been very personal here in reminding them of how the gospel came to them in the city of Corinth. And so notice he uses I on four occasions and my on two occasions. And so he says, And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or wisdom, declaring to you the testimony of God.

For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified. I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling and my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the spirit and of power, that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. Chapter two is an interesting chapter.

The key words that you'll see over and over again is wisdom. You'll find that eight times, and then you'll find the Holy Spirit mentioned seven times in this chapter. And so it's kind of contrasting, as it were, the wisdom of the world, which the Corinthians were fascinated with, with the revelation that comes through the spirit of God.

And so, for instance, in verse four, it talks about my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the spirit and of power. Again, talking of that revelation from the spirit, verse 10, but God has revealed them to us by his spirit. But the spirit searches all things, yea, the deep things of God.

Verse 11, what man knoweth the things of man, save the spirit of man that is in him, even so the things of God knoweth no man but the spirit of God. Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God. Verse 13, which things we speak not in the words which man's wisdom teaches, but which the Holy Ghost teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

Verse 14, the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, but their foolishness unto him. It's just interesting, again, when I go through chapters, one of the things I like to do, first task is to look at the repeated words and phrases that the Holy Spirit has sought to constantly repeat. And when I look at those, often it opens up to me the whole chapter.

This chapter is contrasting human wisdom with the revelatory ministry of the Holy Spirit. And we've said, human wisdom will never find out God. It's a revelation.

It's a revelation from the spirit of God. That's how we find out God, right? God reveals himself. He's in the business of revealing himself to us.

And he uses the word. He uses his son. He uses creation.

But the spirit of God is the one who brings these things and applies them and brings them to the hearts of the saints. So he says, I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom. Corinthians would have liked it.

Remember, they were fascinated with rhetoric and with wise sayings and speeches and all of this kind of stuff. But he says, when I came to you, I deliberately avoided that. Now, it's not that he couldn't have done that, because elsewhere, he sometimes quotes the Cretan poets and Greek poets.

And this guy was, you know, he was well educated. But when he went to Corinth, he didn't want to display his human knowledge. He came without all that excellency of speech.

Because, you see, it doesn't reach the heart. It maybe affects the emotions. It might even affect the head, but it doesn't really reach the heart.

So he said, I didn't come with that kind of stuff. Declaring to you the testimony of God. And that's the important thing, isn't it? See, when we preach, what we're doing is we're declaring the testimony of God.

What God has revealed, what God has shown. And so there's no room for human cleverness here. All we're doing is as simple ambassadors declaring, this is what God has said.

This is his testimony. This is what he has said. And so he says, I determined, there was a deliberate, conscious determination in the heart of the Apostle Paul, not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified.

What was his ministry? He said, I'll tell you what I preach. I preach the person, and I preach the work of the Lord Jesus. Who he is? Jesus Christ.

What he did? Him crucified. He said, that's my ministry. That's what I come to do.

I'm not getting sidetracked with all these philosophical debates. I'm a man who has a message. It's the testimony of God.

The message is concerning this, that I want you to know Jesus Christ and him crucified. And I'm determined. That's what I'm going to preach.

Oh, what a message to preach, isn't it? We never run out of subject matter. If we confine ourselves to Jesus Christ and him crucified, because the whole of the scripture is about him, right? You search the

scriptures for in them, you think you have eternal life or everlasting life, but these are there which testify of me. And so Christ is the center of the book.

He's the theme of the book. And so Paul says, that's what I preach, Jesus Christ. And I preach him crucified.

And that was his message. That was what he preached with passion, with conviction. But he wants us to know that he's not some super Christian.

Sometimes we can get that impression. He says, I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling. Now there's some debate about this weakness and fear and trembling.

Perhaps certainly, if you think of how he ended up in Corinth, where he had been before, he certainly had experienced tremendous rejection and hostility towards his own person. Remember in Philippi, beaten and with rods and put in the inner prison, other places prior to that. This man has suffered tremendously.

And here he's in this incredibly wicked city. And the Lord appeared to him, which is wonderful, and told him that nobody will lay any harm upon you, which would have been really encouraging to him after what he's been through. But I believe that there's a sense too of realizing his own inadequacy.

And they're in weakness. I'm not, I don't have any confidence in myself. And they're in weakness and in fear and in much trembling.

And we know that some of us that preach, we know what it is to be nervous. We know what it is to, I remember many times preaching in the open air, knees knocking, just teeth chattering, really in fear and trembling. And so he says, this is how I was, I was with you in weakness and fear, much trembling.

My speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but it was in demonstration of the Spirit and of power. And it is a marvelous thing, isn't it, that the simple gospel message. I listened to some preachers that God has used tremendously.

And I listened to their messages. And I think, you know, they're really simple. I remember going to the Billy Graham Center.

I think it was in Wheaton. And they had this kind of mock stadium where you could go in, and you could listen to him preaching the gospel. And I was thinking, I've heard probably better gospel messages than he gave.

But boy, did the Lord use him in the reaching of many, many souls. Whatever we think of some of his movements and associations, God used that man greatly in the gospel. And his message was exceedingly simple.

And I believe that God often uses the simple gospel message. I was thinking as well about, even in our own circles, men like Bill McDonald. You know, you listen to him speak.

It was always simple. The Lord used him tremendously. But it was a simplicity.

And, you know, it was an avoidance of the appearance of cleverness. He just communicated the Word of God in a clear, simple way, so everybody could get it. And so he says, I wasn't preaching with enticing words of man's wisdom.

He wasn't trying to wow them with his eloquence. But what was being demonstrated was the Holy Spirit was using the Word of God, was using the message of Christ and Him crucified. And the Spirit of God was saying, and again, I really believe this, that when we go and we preach Christ, the Holy Spirit loves to testify of the Son.

And he said, I'm with you, sign me up. I'm coming. You're going to preach Christ and Him crucified.

I'm right there. And the Spirit of God was demonstrated through the preaching and power, there was authority in the message of the cross. Now, why is that so important? Well, he says, so your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men.

Because if their faith was based on clever human arguments, but what if somebody came along later with a cleverer human argument? See, there's always that danger. But this is the power of God. This gospel is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth.

And it changes lives, it transforms lives. And so he said, he wanted their faith to not in the wisdom of men, but instead, the power of God. Over the centuries, God has done this over and over again.

John Owen, who was a highly educated man, he was the chaplain of Oliver Cromwell. But he said, the man that he envied most was John Bunyan, the Tinker of Bedford. And he said, for all my learning, he said, I wish I could preach the gospel like John Bunyan.

Isn't that interesting? This humble man who made his living by fixing pots and pans, but he could preach Christ in a powerful way. I remember there was a man in Northern Ireland, his name was Harry Andrews. And Harry Andrews was a delivery man for a bread company.

He used to do that so that he could deliver the bread early in the morning, and then he'd be done for the day. But there was no greater gospel preacher in the whole of Ireland in his day than Harry Andrews. He could preach the gospel with great power.

And sometimes he remember being at a conference, and there was plenty of very highly educated people. And they were saying, I'm Dr. This and Dr. That. And so Harry Andrews stood up and he said, I'm Harry Andrews, LLDD, LDLD.

And everybody said, what's LDLD? We've never heard of that. He said, long distance lorry driver. That's what he was.

A lorry is a semi just in case you didn't know the exact translation. But that's what he was. But he was greatly used in the gospel.

We certainly today need men who can preach Christ and him crucified, and preach it in simplicity, and in the power of the Holy Spirit. Oh, yes, the gospel is powerful. I'm sure that the power of prayer is seen in these verses, because he says, I was with you in weakness and fear and much trembling.

And I know what I do when I'm feeling weak, and trembling, and fearful, I pray. And I'm sure that there was a power of prayer. And then there was the power of the Holy Spirit on display through the preaching of the Apostle Paul.

And again, may God raise up a new generation of men who can preach that gospel message in that simplicity. In the meantime, let us not glory in men. In fact, he that glories, let him glory in the Lord.

May God encourage us with these thoughts. Let's pray. Our Father, we're thankful for this marvelous epistle.

And we're thankful, Father, for using Paul to speak to not only the Corinthian culture with its enamored nature with human wisdom, and human eloquence, and cult of personality. And Father, we sense that we're living in a day very much like that. And Lord, we pray that we would, like Paul, determine in our hearts not to know anything among them, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

And we'll give you the glory, in Jesus name. Amen. Amen.

Thank you, Mike. We'd like to leave just a few minutes in case you have any comments or any questions that you would like to ask Mike. This would be the time to do it.

Not long, just brief. But if you do have a question or two you want to ask Mike, feel free to do that right now. I'm glad to take care of that.

Maybe if you put the recording off, Mark, you might be more inclined to do so. It's up to you.

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Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/qQa4j3nKVcE.mp4>

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