



leads us to do good or we fear the consequences of doing wrong.

These two factors are absolutely essential for a healthy balanced life. We should do right out of an intense love for God and others, combined with an understanding of the great love He has demonstrated for us. Yet, to overcome the weakness of our flesh we must also spend a healthy amount of time meditating on the consequences of rebellion. No matter how much our society promises to spare us from the immediate consequences of sin, we should listen to the word for Lord spoken ages ago, **“if you do not do so, then take note, you have sinned against the LORD; and be sure your sin will find you out”** (Numb.32:23, NKJV).



or the absence of good reasons to act lawfully? Why does *anyone* ever do *anything* that is good, right, and moral? People don't behave simply because their environment is as it should be and they have all that they need. We do what we should either because we find a higher motivation that

Faithful Sayings Issue 19.2 January 8, 2017

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ISSUE

19.2

BULLETIN OF
THE OLSEN
PARK CHURCH
OF CHRIST

Faithful Sayings

January 8,
2017



Services

Sunday: 9:00 AM
10:00 AM
11:00 AM
Wednesday: 7:00 PM

Elders:

Pat Ledbetter
Jeff Nunn

Deacons:

Steve Dixon
Ryan Ferguson
Arend Gressley
Ben Hight
Blake McAlister
Brady McAlister
Walker McAnear
Sam Nunn
Lance Purcell
Rusty Scott
Justin Smiley
Trevor Yontz

Evangelist:

Kyle Pope

Making the Cross of No Effect

By Kyle Pope

Paul was a most unusual character. Though his writings are some of the most forceful and eloquent the Holy Spirit led any man to write, there's every indication that his demeanor was somewhat less impressive. Quoting from his critics, Paul states of himself, **“for his letters, they say, are weighty and powerful but his bodily presence is weak and his speech contemptible”** (2 Cor. 10:10, NKJV). Apart from the critics, Paul himself claims, **“And I, brethren when I came to you did not come with excellence of speech or of wisdom declaring to you the testimony of God”** (1 Cor. 2:1). And further, **“I was with you in weakness, in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power”** (1 Cor. 2:3-4).

Why would Paul be described this way? How could such an evangelist make so great an impact on the ancient world? Paul was not an uneducated man. He had been trained at the feet of the great teacher Gamaliel, **“according to the strictness of our father's law”** (Acts 23:3). Further, coming from Tarsus



(making him a Roman citizen), he was familiar with Gentile knowledge and philosophy (see 1 Cor. 15:32; Acts 17:18). Yet his preaching was not built up on human wisdom or knowledge, but instead on one simple concept—Christ crucified (1 Cor. 1:23).

Perhaps the key to this paradox is revealed in a statement found in First Corinthians 1:17. As Paul discourages divisions over who had taught or baptised a person, he declares, **“for Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach**

the gospel, not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of no effect.” Notice the thrust of the statement—**“wisdom of words”** makes the **“cross of Christ”** of no effect.

Paul tells us something very important here. It is possible for the gospel message to be so overshadowed by eloquence, education, and a polished presentation that it is robbed of its power to affect the human heart. God’s power to save rests in the content of the message that penetrates the heart and convicts us of sin (Rom. 1:16-17; Heb. 4:12). It is a message that divides the proud from the humble. The latter perceive it as **“foolishness,”** while the former as “the power of God and the wisdom of God” (1 Cor. 1:23-24).

May God help modern-day preachers and teachers to heed Paul’s example of hiding himself behind the cross. May those who hear them seek not **“wisdom of words,”** but the wisdom of God that, “faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God” (1 Cor. 2:5).



Sin Without Consequence

By Kyle Pope

Most of Satan’s victories are won by deception. His first triumph over mankind was gained by convincing the first couple, **“you will not surely die”** (Gen. 3:4). What a grand promise—sin with no consequence!

This false promise is still proclaimed today. Among those who, **“set their minds on the things of the flesh”** (Rom. 8:5), their grand hope is to devise ways to enjoy the pleasures of sin without ever having to face its penalties. Think about it for a moment—why does our society push abortion on demand, distributing birth control in schools, or no fault divorce? Is this truly out a love of freedom and personal choice? No. It stems from a desire to do whatever the heart desires without consequence.

It used to be that those who violated laws of sexuality risked pregnancy. It used to be that society demanded that those who behaved in this way assumed the responsibility to care for and provide for the children born from their sin. Under the

Old Law a man who defiled a virgin who was not betrothed was obligated to pay the girl’s father and was never permitted to divorce her (Lev. 22:28-29). While this was clearly not the best way to start the loving relationship God intended in marriage, it served as both a deterrent for immorality and an encouragement toward personal responsibility. As it stands today our society does neither.

This false promise is not only promoted in the area of sexuality. Why is it that crime of all varieties is rampant? Is it because of poverty or injustice,

