

THE HIDDEN GOSPEL

(II Corinthians 4:1-5)

- Introduction:
1. The gospel of Christ is God's power to save men from their sins.
 2. The reason the gospel saves is because it "**reveals**" what we must know (Romans 1:16).
 - a. It reveals God's righteousness (i.e. God's plan of becoming righteous).
 - b. It reveals the unrighteousness of man.
 - c. It reveals the wrath of God upon the unrighteous.
 3. The gospel of Christ has:
 - a. Facts to be believed (I Corinthians 15:1-4).
 - b. Commands to be obeyed (II Thessalonians 1:7-9).
 4. While there are many reasons why men do not obey the gospel, Paul cites several reasons in this context - (II Corinthians 4:1-5).

I. FAILURE TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN THE COVENANTS

- A. (II Corinthians 4:1).
- B. The Old Covenant has been replaced with the New Covenant (Heb. 8:7-13).
 1. Paul's "**ministry**" discussed in (4:1) is discussed in (3:6-16).
 2. But many failed, and many continue to fail to learn this lesson.
- C. Failure to recognize the abolition of the Old Covenant threatened the early church.
 1. (Acts 15).
 2. (Galatians 1:6-9; 5:4).
- D. The Old Covenant, with all of its commandments was abolished (Ephesians 2:15; Colossians 2:14) according to God's will (Hebrews 10:9-10).
- E. A failure to distinguish between the covenants leads men to pursue avenues of salvation that are no longer available.

II. GOD'S WORD IS HANDLED DECEITFULLY

- A. (II Corinthians 4:2).
- B. There are men of such a corrupt character that they will intentionally prey upon others.
 1. (I Timothy 4:1-3) Speaking lies in hypocrisy.
 2. (Jude 16) Flattering people to gain advantage.
 3. (I Timothy 6:5) Godliness as a way of gain.
- C. Men have used the Bible in an attempt to "**prove**" just about every doctrine imaginable.

III. SATAN HAS BLINDED SOME

- A. (II Corinthians 4:3-4).
- B. Notice that the gospel is addressed to the **MIND**.
 1. Emphasis must be placed upon hearing and learning (John 6:44-45).

2. Some place too much emphasis upon emotions and feelings become the criterion for proof of salvation.
- C. Satan uses many devices to keep people blinded to the gospel and bound to sin.
1. Pleasure (Hebrews 11:24-25).
 2. Approval of men (John 5:44).
 3. Lies (John 8:44).

IV. MEN PREACH THEMSELVES

- A. (II Corinthians 4:5).
- B. People often blindly follow religious leaders (Acts 17:11-12).
- C. A preacher is to be a minister of the **WORD** (II Timothy 4:1-5).
- D. Paul's emphasis was on the **feet** of the preacher, not his **head** (Romans 10:13-17).
- E. Allegiance to any man except Christ is divisive (I Corinthians 1:10-13) and to preach any man except Christ is presumptuous (I Corinthians 2:2).

- Conclusion:
1. Because of its saving power, Jesus commanded his disciples to teach others about the gospel (Mark 16:15).
 2. Those who obey it will obey it to their salvation, and those who reject it will reject it to their condemnation (II Thessalonians 1:7-9).