

Small Group Discussion

Saints of God Covered in Mud - November 14, 2021

1. a) We learned that 'eloquence or superior wisdom' and 'wise and persuasive words' are phrases Paul is aiming at a very specific kind of rhetorical skill, a kind of flashy way of public speaking. It was already prevalent in Corinthian culture. People expected lots of style to be convinced and entertained.

b) In our time and culture – are there places and ways we also expect that in order to be entertained?

2. Paul could have used that kind of speaking style himself, but he deliberately avoided it because he was concerned that it might affect the roots of someone's faith. (NOTE: 1st Corinthians 2:1-5 is not saying that trying to communicate well is a wrong thing! There are many examples of ways Paul tried to use the language and culture of the people he was visiting to preach about Jesus. Preaching in Lystra in Acts 14 and in Athens in Acts 17 are two great examples. Jesus used brilliant parables and metaphors and popular phrases to draw listeners into greater curiosity of His nature and of the kingdom.) The crucial key is when it comes to faith: to be truly honest about where our faith is resting: in a messenger or in a certain style OR in the person of Jesus himself.

Are their ways we need to resist certain kinds of styles and habits when communicating the gospel of Jesus?

3. "Weakness and fear, with much trembling." Paul uses these words to describe his own state when facing the confident, glitzy, immoral world of Corinth and choosing to communicate a simple message. Can you give concrete examples of times that you have felt the same in today's world when trying to describe the gospel to anyone?

4. Considering God's message to Paul in Acts 18:9 and the birth of a church against all odds, what can we see about the Lord's leadership of the early church?

What comforts can we take when it feels like our message is too simple?