



# Peddling the Word of God

Without a doubt, the apostle Paul was one who took his work seriously. Whether it was in persecuting Christians (Acts 8:3; 9:1-2) or in preaching the gospel after his conversion (Acts 9:19-20), Paul always gave it his best effort. With that in mind, consider his comments to the Corinthian Christians, *“For we are not like many, peddling the word of God, but as from sincerity, but as from God, we speak in Christ in the sight of God”* (2 Cor. 3:17). Apparently there were some whom Paul felt were not sincere in their teaching of the gospel. He felt compelled to tell them preaching the gospel is to be done with sincerity. Peddling the word of God is a serious charge and one that demands our attention, even today. Let’s look at some ways we can peddle God’s word if we’re not careful.

**When we don’t take seriously its commands.** The word of God is a book that must be taken seriously by all people, especially Christians. Sadly, too many in this world view the Bible as a book that **can** (and probably should) be obeyed, but **doesn’t have to be** obeyed. However, Jesus clearly stated that if we expect to be called a friend of His, we must do what He says, *“You are my friends, if you do what I command you”* (Jn. 15:14). The Bible is not a book in which we can pick and choose which commands we will follow and which ones we can’t. Unless we fully commit ourselves to following the Lord’s commands, we cannot be called His disciples (2 Jn. 9).

**When we don’t believe in its power.** This author knows of people who will not try and teach others simply because they think those people they are trying to reach won’t be affected by the message they bring. The apostle Paul knew how strong and powerful the gospel is when he said, *“For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek”* (Rom. 1:16). Paul knew it wasn’t in the presentation of the gospel, nor was it in his personal opinion for people to be saved, but rather the power was within the gospel that could change the lives of people. Another good example is found in Acts 2 at the establishment of the church. Over 3,000 Jews believed the things spoken by Peter and obeyed from the heart those things that were right, all because the gospel was spoken to them in such a way as for them to understand it. Being a good speaker is ok and using various means to get people’s attention is ok, but let us never forget where the true power of God comes from.

**When we don’t give it our best effort.** Being a Christian demands we give it our best effort in every aspect of our spiritual life. Especially in the area of living our lives by the commandments contained within the scriptures. Paul wrote, *“Not that I have already obtained it, or have already become perfect, but I press on in order that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus”* (Phil. 3:12-14). In order for Paul, and us, to reach that prize, he had to continually obey the commandments of the Lord. Without so doing, he would have no hope of spending eternity in heaven (Matt. 7:21ff).

Let us be careful in not treating the Bible as a casual suggestion to life, but rather as a serious look into the mind of God (I Cor. 2:10-12). It is a mind that will eventually judge each and every one of us in a coming Day. Prepare yourself now to stand before Him with confidence knowing you did everything He asked of you during your time here on earth.

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