

**Lesson #9**

*<sup>1</sup>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.*

*<sup>2</sup>For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.*

*1 Corinthians 2:1-2*

**1. A brief review of Paul's ministry**

- a) His coming to Corinth was recalled
- b) He had ministered in Thessalonica, and he had been successful
- c) But he was persecuted and had to flee from Thessalonica
- d) He ministered briefly in Athens and spoke at the Aeropagus Acts 17
- e) He reached Corinth and began a ministry that lasted for 18 months

**2. A candid declaration of Paul's approach to ministry**

- a) His ministry in Athens
  - i) It was the most recent one
  - ii) It was freshest on his mind
  - iii) There were lessons learned there
- b) His determination to not come with "excellence of speech"
  - i) This does not mean that Paul spoke poorly
  - ii) He was not disdaining eloquence
  - iii) He was just not going to be like the philosophers he had met at the Aeropagus

- iv) He was not going to focus on oratory as his means of speaking
- c) He was also determined not to speak with "(human) wisdom"
  - i) He had already written on this subject about the limitations of human wisdom
  - ii) He had devoted time and energy in the first chapter of his epistle
  - iii) He would focus on the wisdom of God and not rely in human wisdom

### **3. The Testimony of God**

- a) The word translated "testimony" is an important one to note
- b) The original text in Greek has this word "mysterion"
- c) Literally it means "mystery"
- d) But what does this word mean?
  - i) It is reference to what God reveals
  - ii) Till God reveals a truth, it would remain as a "hidden mystery"
  - iii) Paul's focused determination was to proclaim and to declare what God has revealed to the Apostles
  - iv) The NKJV translators chose the word "testimony"

### **4. Returning to what Paul had written earlier**

- a) Paul declared that his focus was to preach the message of the cross
- b) His focus has not changed
- c) He now speaks even more plainly

### **5. Paul's determination**

*For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified. 1 Corinthians 2:2*

- a) This does not mean that he chose ignorance
- b) To Paul the message of the Lord Jesus Christ and His crucifixion was a glorious "mystery"
- c) There were many deep truths that may be derived from the message of the Lord Jesus and His crucifixion
- d) This was what he determined
  - i) To fathom
  - ii) To declare
  - iii) To manifest in his life

### **OUR CHALLENGE**

1. To know the "mysteries" of God
2. To stand fast in the revelation of the message of the cross
3. To share the Gospel with greater wisdom