

Day 21 ~ JESUS CHRIST AND HIM CRUCIFIED

*"I determined not to know anything among you, except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.
... And my preaching was in demonstration of the Spirit and of power."
1 Corinthians 2:2, 4*

This text is very often understood of Paul's purpose in his preaching: to know nothing but Jesus Christ and Him crucified. But it contains a far deeper thought. He speaks of his purpose, not only in the matter of his preaching, but in his whole spirit and life to prove how he in everything seeks to act in conformity to the crucified Christ. Thus he writes (2 Corinthians 13:4,5): *"Christ was crucified through weakness, yet He liveth through the power of God. For we also are weak in Him, but we shall live with Him through the power of God toward you."* His whole ministry and manner of life bore the mark of Christ's likeness — crucified through weakness, yet living by the power of God.

Just before the words of our text, Paul had written (1:17-24): *"The word of the cross is to them that are perishing foolishness; but unto us who are being saved it is the power of God."* It was not only in his preaching, but in his whole disposition and deportment that he sought to act in harmony with that weakness in which Christ was crucified. He had so identified himself with the weakness of the cross, and its shame, that in his whole life and conduct he would prove that in everything he sought to show forth the likeness and the spirit of the crucified Jesus. Hence he says (2:3): *"I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling."*

It is on this account that he spoke so strongly: *"Christ sent me to preach the gospel, not in wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made void"* (1:17) — *"My preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power"* (2:4). Have we not here the great reason why the power of God is so little manifested in the preaching of the gospel?

Christ the crucified may be the subject of the preaching and yet there may be such confidence in human learning and eloquence that there is nothing to be seen of that likeness of the crucified Jesus which alone gives preaching its supernatural, its divine power.

God help us to understand how the life of every minister and of every believer must bear the hallmark, the stamp of the sanctuary: Nothing but Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. ♥