

Light and Life

Excellence Of Speech

Paul wrote, “I, brethren, when I came to you, did not come with excellence of speech or of wisdom declaring to you the testimony of God” (I Cor. 2:1). He was not just being modest in his estimation of his own public speaking ability. Others also testified, “His letters are weighty and powerful, but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible” (II Cor. 10:10). How interesting that the apostle most responsible for the spread of the gospel throughout the civilized world was not known for his eloquence!

Even Moses, who served as God’s spokesman, struggled with his speaking ability! He told God at the burning bush, “O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither before nor since You have spoken to Your servant; but I am slow of speech and dull of tongue” (Ex. 4:10).

Peter and John were not recognized for their speaking ability when they gave their defense to the Sanhedrin. Rather, from their speech it was easy to perceive that they were “uneducated and untrained men” (Ac. 4:13).

Polished speaking ability can certainly be a good tool in persuading people of the truth, but it is far from necessary. On the other hand, these tools can also be used as weapons of unrighteousness! We are told that there will be false teachers who use flattering and deceptive words to draw people away from the truth (II Pe. 2:1-3; Rom. 16:17-18). Therefore, we must be careful to think beyond the clever turn-of-phrase and see the actual content of the message preached. Good preaching need not be entertaining – it simply must be true!

I am not just addressing what happens in the pulpit. This idea should be empowering to every Christian regarding evangelism! You don’t need to be educated or trained in oratory skills to preach the gospel (cf. Ac. 4:13). Just tell the truth!

- Sam Bunyard

Another Perspective

Golden Calf Moments

Like many of the elements of the tabernacle, the garments of the high priest were intended to make a visual impact, from the color of the robe to the design of the ephod with its breastplate, to the sash and the turban with its crown (Le 8:6-9). Moses publicly consecrated Aaron to his role as high priest and adorned him in these garments in the sight of all the people. Thus arrayed, Aaron must have cut quite an impressive figure. Here is the one man who can go into the throne room of God and offer sacrifice for the people – and his clothing marked him out as unique to such a role.

Yet Aaron, only a few months previous, was the one who commanded Israel to give him golden jewelry from which he made the idolatrous golden calf (Ex.32:22-24). We don’t know exactly why Aaron conformed to the faithless demands of the people on that occasion, but he did. And because of such, it’s difficult for me to think of him as worthy of the high priesthood. Yet, here he stands, bedecked in the glory of that role.

Aaron isn’t the only man in the Bible who made bad judgments yet was used by God in some significant way. Noah. Abraham. Jacob. Moses. David. Hezekiah. Elijah. Peter. Paul. All these, and others, had their golden calf moments. Yet God used them and adorned them to the work He wanted them to do. He did not hold their failures against them.

So with us. We know how unfitting it is for us to wear the garments of the King. But our failures do not disqualify us from God’s use. He uses the unworthy to show the world His glory, His grace, His mercy, His love, His character. We are His priests (Re 1:6), and it is ours to proclaim His praises. We may never look at ourselves without remembering our golden calf. But God fits us with robes of beauty, seeing what we can be – not what we were.

- Russ Bowman (edited for space)

ASSEMBLY TIMES

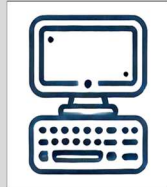
Sunday

Morning Bible Class 9:30
Morning Assembly 10:30
Evening Assembly 5:00

Wednesday

Evening Bible Class 6:30

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DOWNTOWN CHURCH OF CHRIST

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GOSPEL MEETING

with
Tommy Peeler

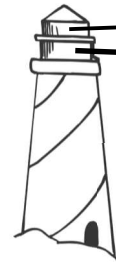
starts
**NEXT
WEEK!**

ELDERS:

Otis Hardin
Perry Johnson
Ken Parker
Alan Revier
GW Walsh

DEACONS:

TJ Burleson
Scott Hale
Jason Hill
Chris Johnson
Brock McKeel
Randy Potter
Tim Roberts
Randy Shell



DOWNTOWN GOSPEL BEACON

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ROGERS, ARKANSAS**

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You Can Do This!

“Do all things without complaining and disputing, that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world.” – Ph 2:14-15 (NKJ)

That’s one of my favorite passages from one of my favorite books in the Bible. It’s not theologically profound (like the book of Romans) or full of action-packed adventure (like the book of Judges) or full of pathos (like the crucifixion accounts found in the four gospels). But the book of Philippians is a simple book of practical encouragement. Every page says, ‘You can do this!’

And that may be more theologically profound than it looks. ‘You can do this’ because Jesus “became a servant... obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross” (2:7-8). He atoned for my sins – which gives me the courage to do whatever He asks me to do (4:13). And while the brief account of Epaphroditus (2:25-30) lacks the detail seen in the book of Judges, it is no less a story of courage and sacrifice – with the same ‘you can do this’ message.

Add to this the practical warnings found throughout the book (e.g., ‘stop complaining’) and Philippians becomes more than just another ‘feel good’ read. - *WKing*

FAMILY NEWS

PRAYER LIST –

Preachers we support: Japan, Philippines, Vietnam, Canada, Mexico, Peru, & U.S.
Sick: KFletcher, Swims, JMarshall, RStarr, MiBader, JTerrell, ACorder
Shut-ins: SCole, SWiese, VCarter, KHeiligenthal, AHopper
Military: Kyler Sullins, Sean Potter

IMPORTANT DATES: Mar 9-12 TommyP mtg; Apr 18 Stevens-Shepard singing; Jul 13-17 ColtonM VBS; Aug 1-3 ChuckD Youth Weekend

OUR SYMPATHY – Sympathy is extended to the family of Missy Corder whose dad recently passed away. Remember her and Alex in your prayers.