

I Cor 4:20

SUBJECT: The Kingdom
in Power

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I Cor. 4:20ⁿ - not in word but in power...

NOT IN WORD BUT IN POWER

Context

- 4:16 Proposes himself to the X^{ns} as an example
- 4:15 as an argument that they listen, that he thus follows in X
- 4:16 Sent Timothy to remind them of his ways
- 4:18 But not clearly to conclude, as some of these teachers insinuated, that he did not desire himself to come
- 4:19, 20 Then draws a contrast between ^{rhetoric} eloquence and power. ^{with pomp} and ^{truth}

That contrast between ^{mere acquisition} empty, ordered ^{and the power of God} method, forms, ^{appearances, professions} external forms is constantly before Paul. So I Thim. 1:5; II Tim. 3:5, ^{Rom 14:17} Time fail to mention his references to the power of the gospel. Rom. 1:16; I Cor. 1:18, 24; 2:4, 5.

There is always that contrast between a religion of words, sound, forms - and a religion of the power of God.

1. The ancient Jew and the preaching of the prophets. mistaking the shadow for the substance.

Micah 6: 6-8

Jer. 7: 22, 23

Isa. 1: 11-18

Rom. 2: 28, 29

2. The ^{Roman} world of Paul, Corinth, Athens, Ephesus.

The gorgeous worship of Venus - Corinth
Pallas Athena (Minerva) - Athens
(Parthenon)
Diana (Artemis) - Ephesus.

The garlanded breasts for sacrifice, gladiators with the
The vestments, hymns, ritual ^{in their divine forms}

3. The empty forms in the historical development of the church.

(1) Intellectual.

Complications - Intellectual ascent, "I believe you" -
Baptizer

Unitarians - mystics, philosophical discourses
like the great rhetorical schools.

(2) Ritualistic

Empire forms, property, temples, basilicas

Paul's contrasting religion which is the power of God.
A gospel that produces effects ^{substantial}
^{important}
soul-saving
life changing.

No particular form

Elijah, not carnal

Disciples, praying, earthquakes

No particular place

Israel before you

Paul, Peter in jail.

But the moving of God.

Jesus at Bethel; These disciples at Damascus; Household of Cornelius.

One way for the real thing.

Not the husks of religion: the trappings, vestments, rituals, ^{words} ~~words~~
But the power, the moving, quickening, regenerating spirit of God.

Saves? who
Changes? what
Moves? how

(2) The son of the theological professor - "Dad, I saw the
real thing last night. Why not tell me about it before?"
"What, son?" "Down at the mission..."

God's answer when his children cry unto Him.

(2) Mission in Africa - faith - Tribal chief. "Renounce thy -
whom gods, heathen; now, misadventure? The mission story, says
write that. Answered broke out. Tribal chief began proudly.
This his response: "God is with us."