

Call to Worship: Daniel 4:34b

Scripture Reading: Ezekiel 33:1-11

Sermon: "Preaching the Kingdom and Counsel of God" Acts 20:22-27

Benediction: Philippians 1:6

What should we preach?

I. Paul preached the kingdom of God

A. in testifying the gospel of the grace of God, this is what the church of Jesus Christ preaches

1. this is what John the Baptist preached

Matthew 3:2 "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!"

2. this is what the Lord Jesus Himself preached

Luke 4:43 He said to them, "I must preach the kingdom of God"

3. this is what the Lord commanded His servants to preach when He sent them out

Luke 9:2 He sent them to preach the kingdom of God

4. this is what Philip the evangelist preached

Acts 8:12 they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ

5. this is what Paul preached to the lost

Acts 19:8 he went into the synagogue and spoke boldly for three months, reasoning concerning the things of the kingdom of God

6. this is what Paul preached for the strengthening of those who had believed

Acts 14:22 "We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God."

7. this is the last thing we know about Paul from the book of Acts

Acts 28:30-31 Then Paul dwelt two whole years in his own rented house, and received all who came to him, (31) preaching the kingdom of God and teaching the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ with all confidence, no one forbidding him.

B. but what does it mean to preach the kingdom of God?

1. the kingdom of God is the spiritual rule of God (1 Cor 15:50) over His people by Jesus Christ, the man He has appointed

a. a person must be spiritually re-born to see it; a person must repent to enter it

b. the subjects of the kingdom must live lives of obedience, worthy of it

c. the kingdom was inaugurated when the Lord Jesus came preaching it

d. the kingdom will be consummated when the Lord Jesus comes back

2. preaching the kingdom of God to unbelievers, then, means preaching the good

news, the gospel of Jesus Christ---how He has died for sinners and risen again; declaring His rule, His kingship; and commanding sinners to repent and believe in Him, that they may be delivered from the power of darkness and conveyed into the kingdom of God's beloved Son

C. APPLICATION: If we, as a church, then, would testify to the gospel of God's grace, we must preach the Kingdom of God, both to unbelievers for their salvation and to ourselves for our comfort and strength.

Paul preached the kingdom of God, and

II. Paul preached the counsel of God, the whole counsel of God

-Paul said that he was innocent of the blood of all because he did not shun declaring to them the whole counsel of God

A. what does he mean by saying that he was innocent of the blood of all?

-he is referring to the scripture from Ezekiel 33 read earlier

1. if a watchman is on duty, and the enemy comes, and he does NOT call out, he is to be blamed for the people who die
2. if a watchman is on duty, and the enemy comes, and he DOES call out, people may still die, but he is not to be blamed; he has done his duty
3. this is the way with God's preachers; the preacher who warns sinners of their danger and tells them of salvation in Jesus Christ is innocent of their blood, even if they do not believe

B. what does he mean by saying he is innocent of the blood of all because he did not shun declaring to them the whole counsel of God?

1. word "counsel" or "will" is the Greek word *boonothymos*, and it means a plan, purpose, design, or program, especially when arrived at through counsel; the fact that the Greek word has the connotation of the plan having been arrived at through counsel is, I think, why the old translations have the word translated as "counsel"; this is not the normal use of this English word; even the old 1828 Webster's notes that the idea of "plan" is the definition of the word "counsel" only in biblical usage

- a. Luke 23:50-51 "their *decision*"
- b. Luke 27:42-43 "soldiers' *plan*"

2. so, then, the "counsel of God" is God's plan, His purpose, His will, His program for bringing glory to Himself by the work of the Son, Jesus Christ, saving His beloved people from their sins, and causing them to live in worshipful obedience to Him

- a. Acts 2:23
- b. Acts 4:28
- c. Ephesians 1:11

3. the most enlightening way I have found to understand this is to examine the preaching of John the Baptist, as he preached the whole counsel of God, and the response of the people to this counsel of God

- a. first Luke 7:28-30

-the most obviously sinful people had received the counsel of God, as

shown by their baptism

-the most religious people had rejected the counsel of God for themselves, as shown by refusing baptism

b. compare this with Luke 3:2-18 to see what is meant in this case by John having preached the counsel of God

i. listen to the word of God preached (2)

ii. repent for remission of sins shown by baptism (3)

iii. believe in the Lord coming to earth for your salvation (4,6)

iv. recognize your sinful state (7)

v. flee the wrath of God to come (7)

vi. bear fruit worthy of repentance (8a)

vii. do not trust in human relationships (8b)

viii. seek to know what conduct is right in God's eyes, so you can do it (10-14)

ix. look, even as you are baptized with water, to the greater baptism by the Holy Spirit (16)

C. APPLICATION: So, let us, in our preaching, and in our speech of all kinds, both to believers and to unbelievers, proclaim the whole counsel of God, the whole plan, the program by which God is glorified in the salvation of sinners through Jesus Christ

III. APPLICATION: Let us, as a church, preach the kingdom and the counsel of God, the whole counsel of God

A. let us resist the temptation for it to be other things

B. let us desire to hear these things

C. let us determine to preach these things regardless what pressures are brought to bear

Renihan

-preaching thoroughly about the person and work of Jesus Christ

preaching the kingdom of God

Poole

the gospel, by which his kingdom is set up in the minds and hearts of men

Calvin:

the doctrine of the gospel is called the kingdom of God now and again, which doth begin the kingdom of God in this world, by renewing men after the image of God, until it be made perfect at length in the last resurrection

Gill:

the Gospel, the things concerning the Messiah, his kingdom and glory, and the meetness of the saints for, and their right unto the heavenly inheritance, prepared by God, and given by him to all that love him:

Henry:

preaching down the kingdom of sin and Satan, and preaching up the authority and dominion of God in Christ, preaching the kingdom of glory as the end and the kingdom of grace as the way.

Barnes:

Making known the nature of the reign of God on earth by the Messiah

Malone:

OT

- "kingdom of God" or "kingdom of heaven" are not found verbatim

- God king over the whole creation

- God sits as king

- Psalm 29:10

- Israel His special kingdom by covenant Ex 19:5

- kingdom promised through David

- both Israel and Judah broke kingdom covenant

- Daniel 7 "Son of Man"

- maybe before incarnation

- maybe before foundation of the earth

- Matthew 27:11

- at the end, the Son gives the kingdom back to the Father

- Isaiah 9:6

NT

- Jesus came preaching the kingdom---repentance began the kingdom of God
 - not just national, but personal
- Jesus came preaching that the time is fulfilled

Jesus speaking to Nicodemus

repent to enter

born again to see/understand

born again to enter

-”a spiritual change by the power of God working in the heart of man”

John 18:33

“where God’s power rules over the hearts and lives of his people, bearing fruit”

Romans ?? “righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit”

established in the resurrection

innocent of the blood of all

declare to you the whole counsel of God

counsel

-G1012 *boulee* (boo-lay’) from G1014 *boulumai* “to will”

-Strong: volition, advice, purpose, counsel, will

English word “counsel” 1828 Webster

7. In a scriptural sense, purpose; design; will; decree.

What thy counsel determined before to be done. Acts 4.

To show the immutability of his counsel. Heb 6.

JRY: a plan, purpose, design, program arrived at through counsel

JRY: It is something that can be rejected or despised (Luke 7:30)

JRY: It can be known by people (Paul declared the whole of it)

JRY: It is immutable (Heb 6:17)

JRY: It cannot be overthrown by men (Acts 5:38-39)

What would it mean for us to accept or obey or follow God’s counsel? The bible does not put it exactly like that, but there is one place where the Bible specifically says what it is to reject God’s counsel---not to be baptized by John the Baptist was to reject the counsel of God

Luke 7:28-30 For I say to you, among those born of women there is not a greater prophet

than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he." (29) And when all the people heard Him, even the tax collectors justified God, having been baptized with the baptism of John. (30) But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the will [counsel] of God for themselves, not having been baptized by him.

What does it mean, that they rejected the counsel of God, against themselves, not having been baptized by John? Surely it does not mean that being baptized by John is the whole counsel of God? No, but John preached the counsel of God, and these Pharisees and lawyers rejected that counsel.

Luke 3:2-18

- listen to the word of God preached (2)
- repent for remission of sins shown by baptism (3)
- believe in the Lord coming to earth for your salvation (4,6)
- recognize your sinful state (7)
- flee the wrath of God to come (7)
- bear fruit worthy of repentance (8a)
- not trust in human relationships (8b)
- seek to know what conduct is right in God's eyes, so you can do it (10-14)
- look, even as you are baptized with water, to the greater baptism by the Holy Spirit (16)

God, counseling within Himself, has this program, this plan.

Acts 2:23

Acts 2:22-24 "Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know-- (23) Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death; (24) whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it.

Acts 4:28

Acts 4:27-28 "For truly against Your holy Servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together (28) to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose determined before to be done.

Acts 5:38

Acts 5:38-39 And now I say to you, keep away from these men and let them alone; for if this plan or this work is of men, it will come to nothing; (39) but if it is of God, you cannot overthrow it--lest you even be found to fight against God."

Acts 13:36

Acts 13:36 "For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell asleep, was buried with his fathers, and saw corruption;

Acts 27:42

Acts 27:42 And the soldiers' plan was to kill the prisoners, lest any of them should swim away and escape.

Luke 7:30

NIV: "God's purpose"

NKJV: "the will of God"

ESV: the purpose of God

Luke 7:29-30 And all the people that heard him, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John. (30) But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him.

Luke 23:51

Luke 23:51 He had not consented to their decision and deed. He was from Arimathea, a city of the Jews, who himself was also waiting for the kingdom of God.

1 Cor 4:5

1 Corinthians 4:5 Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts. Then each one's praise will come from God.

ESV: purposes

NIV: motives

Heb 6:17

Hebrews 6:16-18 For men indeed swear by the greater, and an oath for confirmation is for them an end of all dispute. (17) Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath, (18) that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us.