

I Corinthians 1; Lord's Day 25

FAITH COMES BY GOD'S WORD

1. Wrought by preaching.

1. God is pleased to use certain instruments to convey grace to His children.

1. The preaching of God's Word is indispensable for coming to and maintaining a conscious faith in Christ.

2. Proof : Romans 10:14; John 5:24,25; 10:3,4,27; Ephesians 4:21; I Thessalonians 2:13.

- Preaching is the authoritative proclamation of the gospel by the Church in the service of the Word of God through Christ.

1. The content of the message is from the King in the Bible so He is heard (John 5:24; 10:3,4,27; Eph. 4:21).

2. It is authoritative: one of the Greek words for "preach" is "to herald" on behalf of the King.

- How is the preaching of the Word a means of grace?

1. The Spirit of God makes the preaching an effectual means (Westminster, Larger, q. 155).

2. Accompanying the external preaching must be the Spirit witnessing to the spirit of the elect (Romans 8:14-16).

- The Holy Spirit confirms faith by the sacraments.

1. The sacraments are signs, i.e., visible representations of invisible realities.

2. And they are seals, i.e., marks of ownership and authority, guaranteeing what is revealed in the sign.

1. They are a solemn pledge of God, guaranteeing what is revealed in the sign, assuring.

2. This seal is seen and received only by those exercising faith in Christ.

- How are they signs and seals?

- The clear implication is that we must use correctly the means God uses to give grace.
1. Scripture ascribes to nothing else the ability to work faith.
 2. We are bound to use them if we want grace and increasingly stronger conscious faith.
 3. Demand the right kind of preaching, i.e., that which gives exposition of God's Word.
 4. "It is required of those that hear the word preached that they attend unto it with diligence, preparation, and prayer."