

Scripture: 1 Cor. 2:1-16

Singing: 257:1-3 – 337:1-4 – 87:1-3 – 390:1-3

The Condition and the Cure of Unbelief

I. THE CONDITION OF UNBELIEF IS BOTH OFFENSIVE AND DESTRUCTIVE

A. The *importance & blessings of faith* by default points out the *curse of unbelief*

1. Sobering truth: *if living in unbelief, you are an offence to God!* Matt. 11:24

2. Devastating truth: *if living in unbelief, it seals your death* (John 8:23-24)

B. Clinging to your *inability to believe* is a false comfort

1. meditate upon solemn truth in John 15:22, 24 & Is. 63:10

2. challenge yourself to think *along Scriptural lines of truth*

a. God never softens His call to repent and believe

● Mark. 1:15; John 8:23-24; 10:37-38; 12:35-36; 12:44-50

● Act 2:37-38; 16:30-31; 17:30; 20:21

C. What is the *arrow point* God is driving home in this teaching?

1. Gospel preaching is to drive us further into despair about ourselves

2. Our misery is not in our *inability to obey the Law & the Gospel*

3. Nowhere does Divine Revelation give us a break about our condition

a. Jonah 2:8 *“They that observe lying vanities, forsake their own mercy*

For reflection ...

A. *Blunting* the sword of the Spirit will feel more comfortable to unbelievers!

1. Be aware that many preachers & teachings have done/are doing this

a. either minimize the guilt of unbelief

b. or teaching all you can and need to do is *wait for God to act*

2. God forbid any preacher *ever blunt the edge of God's Word* (Ezek. 33:1-9)
 - a. He called us to preach to dead bones (Ezek. 37:1-8) while He promised to open graves and bring life (Ezek. 37:9-14)
 - b. This is God's ordained way to bring faith: Rom. 10:17; 1:17

- B. The 'cure of unbelief' is the Gospel preached which God has promised to use
 1. The cure of our *unbelief* is in God Himself (Eph. 2:8)

 2. Therefore, if any respond to the preaching of the Law and the Gospel with *faith and repentance*, the response bears witness of God's Work in you!
 - a. 1 Cor. 2:14 *Natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God*
 - b. 1 Cor. 2:12 *We have received ... the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God*
 - c. John 1:12-13 *But as many as received Him ... which were born of God*

 3. Observe this teaching in Catechism q/a 21 & Canons III/IV, art 17
 - a. True faith ... which the Holy Ghost works by the Gospel in my heart
 - b. ... the supernatural operation of God (in regeneration) ... is conferred by means of admonitions (preaching): and the more readily we perform our duty, the more eminent usually is this blessing of God working in us, and the more directly is His work advanced, to whom alone all the glory both of means and of their saving fruit and efficacy is due forever.

- D. Those burdened & lamenting the *bondage of their unbelief*, hear Is. 42:3

I know not how the Spirit moves,
 Convincing men of sin,
 Revealing Jesus through the Word,
 Creating faith in Him.

But I know whom I have believed,
 And am persuaded that He is able,
 To keep that which I've committed
 Unto Him against that day.

D. H. Whittle.

