

Pleasant Valley  
Church of Christ

3317 Amidon  
Wichita KS 67204  
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www.letjesusleadus.org

## Schedule of Services

### Sunday

Classes . . . . . 9:30 am  
Worship . . . . . 10:30 am  
Evening . . . . . 6:00 pm

### Wednesday

Classes . . . . . 7:30 pm

The Pleasant Valley Church of Christ is a non-denominational group of believers who are committed to following Jesus in our attitudes, our relationships, and our worship. If you want the same thing in your life, please contact us. We'd like to help.

Unless otherwise noted, all scripture quotations are from the New King James Version Bible, Thomas Nelson Publishers.

# Wings



*"But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength;  
they shall mount up with wings like eagles" (Isaiah 40:31)*

February 7, 2010

## Preaching Christ, or ourselves?

by David King

"If our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them. For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bondservants for Jesus' sake" (2 Cor. 4:5).

One of the great challenges we face in doing God's work is getting people to listen to our message. Few seem interested. Why?

Paul points to "the god of this world" as the primary culprit. People are blinded by all the carnal distractions of this world, and see no value in spiritual things.

But before we place all the blame on the listeners, we should take a closer look at Paul's description of the problem. Perhaps there is a secondary issue here: Are we really preaching the same gospel Paul preached?

Notice that Paul took pains to define the message he was preaching: "Christ Jesus the Lord and ourselves your bondservants." There is a hierarchy of importance in this formula: The **primary** message was about Jesus and His authority; the **secondary** message was about the role of His followers as servants of others.

But Paul was even more explicit about this order. He declared, "we do not preach ourselves." In other words, his preaching was not intended to promote or exalt himself. He was not trying to get people to follow **him**, but to follow **Christ**. Paul was merely a sinner saved by grace; it was the crucified and resurrected Jesus that people needed to turn to.

There is a subtle but unmistakable message here that God's people today need to seriously consider. If we want to convert people to Christ, then our preaching needs to be about Christ, not us. If the bulk of our preaching deals with us, the church — e.g., the name of the church, the work of the church, the worship of the church, the organization of the church, the mission of the church, etc. — we run the risk of doing the very thing Paul said he would not do: preaching ourselves. To our target audience we come across as modern Pharisees, elitist and self-important. What people hear is a group who preaches "Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves as your superiors." People are turned off by that message, not attracted to it. And we can't blame their rejection on "the god of this world."

That is not to say we should avoid those topics. The church is the body of Christ, subject to His will in every detail, and people need to respect what He has revealed on all those subjects. But there is a time and place for dealing with them. People who are converted by preaching about "the right church" are not necessarily converted to Christ.

If first impressions are lasting impressions, then our message to the world should model Paul's: we should teach about (1) a resurrected Savior who deserves our respect and adoration, and (2) a people who are motivated by a spirit of gratitude and self-sacrifice. If people can see that in our message, they are more likely to turn to the Lord. Preaching ourselves may stroke our own egos, but won't save the lost.