



**WORLDVIEW MADE PRACTICAL**  
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**Fool's Gold or Real Gold? - Part 2**  
***"The Superiority of Speech" Versus the Power of God***

By Tal Davis

**I want to live  
I want to give  
I've been a miner  
For a heart of gold  
It's these expressions  
I never give  
That keep me searching  
For a heart of gold  
And I'm getting old**

**I've been to Hollywood  
I've been to Redwood  
I crossed the ocean  
For a heart of gold  
I've been in my mind  
It's such a fine line  
That keeps me searching  
For a heart of gold  
And I'm getting old**

***Heart of Gold* by Neil Young**

Neil Young wrote that song way back in 1972. It expressed his frustration about not being able to find a truly good person who could, and would, tell him the truth about life. Sadly, I don't think Neil ever found it. Probably because he was looking in all the wrong places. He tried music, drugs, money, sex, fame, and pagan religion. I believe he is still searching (he is now 77 years old). Maybe someday, before it's too late, he will quit mining in empty holes full of "Fool's Gold" and find the "Real Gold" of the only Man with a true heart of gold: Jesus Christ.

In the previous installment of this two-part biblical analysis, we discussed how many people in the past were driven to try to strike it rich by searching for gold. In several periods of American history, discoveries of gold drew thousands of prospectors to dig and pan for nuggets. From the Georgia mountains in the 1830s, on to California in the 1840s, and in Alaska in the 1890s, people were stricken with "gold fever." We indicated, however, that many of them deceived themselves when they inadvertently dug up worthless counterfeit rocks like Iron Pyrite, better known as "Fool's Gold."

Paul wrote his first letter to the Corinthians (i.e.: 1 Corinthians) as a stern warning to the believers in the church of Corinth. It was a body riddled with conflict and confusing ideas. As a consequence, Paul counseled them to avoid the "Fool's Gold" of the false philosophies of the world. Instead they should favor the clear truth, which he had taught them, of the "Real Gold" of the gospel of Jesus Christ. In part one, we focused on his contrast of the foolish and fallacious worldly "wisdom of the wise" ("Fool's Gold") to the truth of the word of God and the gospel of Christ ("Real Gold"). (To read part one go here: <http://www.marketfaith.org/2023/02/fools-gold-or-real-gold-part-1-tal-davis>)

In this part two of the study, we look further at Paul's contrast between human knowledge to divine wisdom and what he declared, again in his first letter to the Corinthians, was the key to finding the truth.

**1 And when I came to you, brothers *and* sisters, I did not come as someone superior in speaking**

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**ability or wisdom, as I proclaimed to you the testimony of God. 2 For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. 3 I also was with you in weakness and fear, and in great trembling, 4 and my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, 5 so that your faith would not rest on the wisdom of mankind, but on the power of God.** (1 Corinthians 2:1-5 NASB)

Paul reminded the Corinthian believers (his "**brothers and sisters**") that when he first came to them, he "**did not come as someone superior (or with excellence) in speaking ability or wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony of God.**" (1 Cor. 2: 1) He had not evangelized them by depending on glib public speeches or by giving penetrating lectures full of irrefutable rhetoric. Paul knew that people can be manipulated and deceived by skilled orators.

Consider this. Who do think is regarded as the greatest orator of 20th century? Billy Graham maybe? He certainly presented powerful sermons that brought thousands to Christ. How about Winston Churchill? His radio speeches to the British people during World War II emboldened them to stubbornly resist the German blitzkrieg. What about John F. Kennedy? His speech challenging Americans to "ask what you can do for your country" inspired a whole generation. And then, of course, there was Ronald Reagan, known as the Great Communicator, who, standing in front of the Berlin Wall, demanded, "Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall!"

All of them were honorable men who spoke profound truths. But as fine as those orators were, experts

actually agree that the most skilled speech maker of the 20th century was none-other than Adolph Hitler. He even trained with opera singers and drama coaches to hone his powerful delivery. His speeches transfixed huge audiences and enticed a whole nation to follow him to its utter destruction. Nonetheless, no one today would hold him up as an honorable, virtuous, or veracious person.

This is the essence of Fool's Gold. Just because someone can speak well does not prove anything about his moral character, spiritual condition, or the truth of his propositions. Some of history's greatest speakers, like Hitler, were frauds and led many well-meaning people astray. This seems most evident in the case of religious faith. Guileful persuasive preachers and cult leaders deceive many people to believe their counterfeit doctrines and donate money to their sham movements. Skilled speakers like Joseph Smith, Jr., Charles Taze Russell, Rev. Sun Myung Moon, Rev. Jim Jones, Elijah Muhammad, L. Ron Hubbard, and numerous others, were able fool even some intelligent people to believe their lies and followed them into the darkness of their delusion. Even now unscrupulous television preachers entice naive viewers to send them their hard earned money in order to get financial "blessings" in return.

So, if glib speech is not the essential ingredient to effectively proclaim the "Real Gold" of the gospel message, then what is? The answer, Paul asserted, was nothing less the truth of the gospel message itself and the power of the Holy Spirit. Paul made it clear to his readers that he had not preached to them as a great orator or brilliant purveyor of human wisdom (although he certainly was exceptionally intelligent) [v. 1]. Rather, he told them he had been "**determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified**" [v. 2]. In other words, his message had

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not been cloaked in scholarly terminology that they probably could not understand, but he presented the gospel to them in plain and easily comprehensible words.

Furthermore, he said he had come to them **"in weakness and fear, and in great trembling."** He had not come to preach and teach to them with an arrogant attitude, but with humility. He knew it was not his impressive words or persuasive arguments that had brought them to faith in Christ. Rather, it was **"in demonstration of the Spirit and of power (*apodeixei Pneumatos kai dynamos*), so that your faith would not rest on the wisdom of mankind, but on the power of God."** [vs. 3,4]. Therefore, their **"faith would not rest on the wisdom of mankind, but on the power of God (*dynamamei Thou*)."** It was the dynamite message of the gospel of Christ's sinless life, death on the cross, and resurrection from the dead, and the convicting work of the Holy Spirit in their souls, that had convinced them of its truth.

The power of the gospel is not in the messenger, but in the message. As great and gifted a preacher as was Billy Graham, he would tell you that it was not his eloquence that drew people to walk down the aisles at his crusades. It was the plain and powerful message of salvation he preached, and the force of God's Spirit working through him and his listeners' hearts, that was the key to his evangelism. God always uses the gospel

message in the power of Holy Spirit. It penetrates the sinner's heart and convicts him or her of sin.

So do we now rely on "Fool's Gold" or "Real Gold?" As we have seen, the Apostle Paul clearly stated that false spiritual "Fool's Gold" is based on worldly wisdom and is disguised by deceptive words. We would call them false worldviews and worldview systems. So where do we go to mine for "Real Gold?" The Real Gold is the power of God found in the gospel message and the dynamic of His Holy Spirit!

As Paul later said in another of his letters,

**"For I am not ashamed of the Gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek."** (Romans 1:16 NASB)

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