



THE **Spirit** OF
STRAWBERRY BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Gospel is Enough (1 Corinthians 2:1-5)

Rev. Brandon Palmer

Recently I have seen mixed research data about the state of religion in America. Some conclude that belief in Jesus and church attendance is rising, being led by young adults. Others conclude that faith levels have plummeted to the lowest on record. What are we to do with all this data? It is easy to read these and get stirred up high with excitement or low with despair, or to go to denominational events and leave feeling discouraged that we don't have certain programs or ministries others have. We hear the question posed constantly, "what makes your church different?" This sounds more like branding rather than Kingdom building. What we need is not something new, but ancient, something the church has been doing for 2,000 years: **preach the Gospel!** Programs and ministries are helpful, but they come and go, while the Gospel, the Word of God, stands forever, and we see that clearly in 1 Corinthians 2:1-5 in five ways.

First, the Gospel is simple (vs 1). When Paul came to the church in Corinth, he did not proclaim the Gospel with speech marked with high status or superiority. The Gospel can be as simple as the healed blind man's response in John 9:24-25, "One thing I know, I once was blind, but now I see." Just a chapter before this passage, Paul tells us that God uses what is foolish, low, and despised (simple) in this world, to shame the strong, so that our only boast is in Jesus Christ and Him crucified (1 Cor. 1:27-29).

Second, the Gospel is Jesus (vs 2). Paul resolved to know nothing except Christ crucified. Not that other aspects of theology are unimportant, but we must keep the main thing the main thing, because if we get the Gospel wrong, we get everything else wrong. If we build our house on faulty foundation, the rest of the house will be on shaky ground (Matt. 7:24-28). 1 Corinthians 15:1-4 lays out the simple Gospel: Christ died according to the Scriptures, was buried, and raised on the third day. Paul

did not come as a salesman or a philosopher, but a humble man who encountered the overwhelming love and grace of God.

Third, the Gospel is humbling (vs 3). Paul came to the church in Corinth as a weak and fearful man, so fearful that he is trembling. He was most likely weak from suffering physically for the faith, and fearful of the persecution. The Gospel humbles us by showing how we need the Lord and need one another. The Gospel humbles us by showing no matter how great the persecution is against us, our lives, our churches, are not our own, but the Lord's, and He will hold us fast until the very end. We will face hardships in this world, but we take heart, knowing our Lord and Savior has overcome the world (Jn. 16:33)!

Fourth, the Gospel is powerful (vs 4). Paul didn't want to use any sort of earthly tactics or persuasive language, to manipulate or win people to Christ. We don't need to either, because the Gospel is powerful and enough. If God can bodily resurrect Jesus from the grave, then He can overcome any cultural barrier or hardened dead heart. The power does not reside in the preacher, but in the Word of God, in the simple, powerful Gospel. Nothing can stop the power of God's Word (2 Tim. 2:9)!

Fifth, the Gospel is transcendent (vs 5). Paul didn't want the Corinthian's faith to rest in him, but in Christ alone. Our faith does not rest in our works or the intensity of our faith, but in Jesus Christ and His finished work on the cross. We are merely jars of clay that hold this glorious treasure, so people know the power belongs to God, not us (2 Cor. 4:7). Regardless of the times, the Gospel still saves and will never lose its power. We must remain faithful to the Gospel, to the ministry He assigned us, wherever He has placed us, continuing to entrust it to the next generation (2 Tim. 2:2), and we will see His glory proclaimed and His Kingdom advanced in more ways than we could imagine (Eph. 3:20-21).

Annie
Armstrong
Easter
Offering®

WEEK OF PRAYER FOR NORTH AMERICAN MISSIONS

March 1-8, 2026

ROANOKE



Noble Warriors Men's Conference

March 7, 2026

8:39 AM to 4:00 PM

Fincastle Baptist Church

Fincastle, VA

 **SBCVirginia**
You are not alone.



A FREE EVENT

KIDS MINISTRY CONFERENCE

MARCH 14 + 9:00 AM - 3:30 PM

Northstar Church, Blacksburg

Church News

Pastors & Church Clerks – We need a list of deceased member from 2025 by March 31st in order to list their names in the Program of the Annual Meeting.

Bedford – We started a 5-week Ladies Bible Study in February based on Max Lucado’s book, He Chose the Nail. There is a morning session at 10:00 and an evening session at 6:30. The study is open to the community.

Our Faithful Chargers Mission group will hold a Mental Health Educational Session with Dinner on March 22. Proceeds from the meal will benefit the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering.

Our Missions Groups are partnering with Spring Oak on the first Sunday of each month at 2:00 pm to provide entertainment for the residents. There is usually a sing-along and sometimes they enjoy creating simple crafts.

We continue to work with the Fellowship of Christian Athletes from LHS to host a Thursday Morning “Breakfast & Bibles” at 7:00 am in the Fellowship Hall. Attendance has been overwhelming, and the fellowship is amazing.

A couple of early April events include a community “Good Friday Service” on Friday, April 3rd and on Saturday, April 4th, we will have a community Easter Egg Hunt from 10 until Noon.

We are planning our Annual Plant Sale on April 25 at the church pavilion. We hope you will mark your calendars.

Trinity – If anyone is interested in a free Wurlitzer console piano, please contact the church office at 540-586-8010.



Pecks - On February 21, we held a Happy Hearts Valentines Dinner where the men served the women, and it was well attended by many members of the church.

On February 28, our church held its annual AWANA Grand Prix. A great time was had by all, with all different age groups (kids, youth, adults) racing their carts.

Our church is preparing for a month-long **Who’s Your One?** campaign, starting on March 1 and leading up to Easter, of not only inviting people to church, but equipping and encouraging people in sharing the Gospel with their neighbors, coworkers, teammates, classmates, etc.

Our church is having our quarterly **Family Game Night** on Saturday, March 21, starting at 5:00pm. Dinner is provided. There will be several games (board games, cornhole, 9 square), and you can bring your favorite board game to play as well. This is a community event.

We are looking forward to hosting the annual SBA meeting, and encourage all to come (regardless of whether they are messengers or not) to eat, fellowship, worship together, and celebrate all that the Lord is doing in and through our churches!

Reminder

ACPs have been mailed. Please complete and submit them by March 31st. You can fill them out by hand and return mail them, by hand and bring them to our office or submit them online.

Strawberry Baptist Association
P.O. Box 91
Bedford, VA 24523

March

- 1-8 Annie Armstrong Easter Offering and Week of Prayer
- 3 Pastors' Prayer Meeting
- 7 Noble Warriors Conference, Fincastle Baptist Church
- 8 Daylight Savings begins
- 11 BGAV Fresh Expressions Incubator: Rural Church, online
- 14 Kids Ministry Conference, NorthStar Church, Blacksburg
- 17 St. Patrick's Day
- 29 Palm Sunday