

GOSPEL HUCKSTERS

*"We are not fraudulent hucksters of God's Message."
2 Corinthians 2:17 (Weymouth)*

HUCKSTERS! PEDDLERS! The words echo with the street cries that float in at our windows. Paul shouts--- "I am no peddler of God's message." (Goodspeed.)

What graphic words! Words most meaningful in our day of unbelief and gross charges made against Paul's ministry...

Paul was no traveling salesman of adulterated goods, trafficking in the name of Jesus for what he could gain out of it. Paul had no T.V. show, advertising himself. He was no peddler of second-hand religious stuff which he had picked up at a cheap price... Passing it off on the public as a great bargain. Paul was no religious hustler!

Instead: Paul was an Apostle of Christ by the call and will of GOD--- One 'sent' on a great purposeful mission at peril of his own life. Preaching the 'full' uncorrupted Apostolic Gospel. Paul, a 'servant' of Christ. He 'learned' the 'message' in a desert place. Have we?

These words...HUCKSTER; PEDDLER, which Paul throws so scornfully from out his lips, are most uncomfortable words to hear today for every representative of religion in America. Preacher, have you ever asked yourself... am I just a cog in a highly religious wheel? An organizational man?

Weymouth's translation is careful to attach the adjective 'fraudulent' to the noun 'huckster'. It is the peddler of corrupted, adulterated goods which Paul had in mind...For the peddler did not have a very high reputation for honesty in the Roman World. They often made mighty big claims!

These words of Paul give us fair warning of a sudden unsuspected abyss, of the process by which a prophet and apostle may quickly degenerate into being a religious huckster, peddler, self-deceived. BEWARE!

I can still hear the fishmonger 'blowing his horn' way down the street inviting the house-wives to come buy his catchy assortment from out the sea...How 'strange' they looked to me as a child. All staring at me with cold glassy eyes!!

Luke carefully points out what Paul preached--- "Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ..." Acts 28:31

How do preachers become 'fraudulent hucksters'? Blurring God's Message?

It is not often done by deliberate choice. We become sloppy in our interpretations. Institutional, self-assured in our learning. Our failure is far more subtle and insidious than these and more.

We become "GOSPEL HUCKSTERS" when we cannot be taught. When we substitute anything else or anything less than the message God has given...IN HIS WORD...

*"For who hath stood in the counsel of the LORD, and hath
perceived and heard his word? who hath marked his word
and heard it?"*
JEREMIAH 23:18

Wherever Paul went, and whenever he spoke he declared the real thing...