



Preparing Souls To Serve The Lord

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Preachers

When you hear the word "preacher" what comes to mind? It is not easy to be neutral about preachers and/or preaching. Do you have an opinion? Why do you feel the way you do towards preaching? The Bible says some consider it to be an exercise in foolishness and others hold an opposite view, "how beautiful are the feet . . ." (I Cor. 1:18, 21; Rom. 10:15).

We are not saying honor and respect should be given all who are classified as preachers. We can not be more generous and accepting than the Bible permits. As long as people have free-will we may expect them to be selective in the message they choose to hear. If they are selective in the message they will be selective in their messenger (II Tim. 4:1-5).

I have a vested interest in preachers. I am one. I am giving my life to training preachers. I want to encourage faithful preachers in every way possible. Many do not know the purpose or value of preaching. Let this

not be true of us.

Importance

1. God Appointed

Christ came to this earth as a preacher. While here He chose men to become preachers. He set evangelists/preachers in the church to establish it (Eph. 4:11). He taught those whom He chose to set the world an example of what preachers are to be (I Cor. 11:1; Phil. 3:17). He taught men that were preachers to train others to do the same work (II Tim. 2:2).

2. God Regulated

Some preachers may be classified as nothing more than hirelings. God does not approve preachers who are hirelings. He did not appoint preachers to preach their own selves but the truth of the Gospel. He did not leave preachers to choose their message but demands that they preach the Word, the gospel, the truth, the Way of life in Christ Jesus.

Servants

I know a preacher that does not like to be called a minister. He does not see himself as a servant. In his words he is not going to be "a brotherhood slave." Needless to say he is always on the move—disappointed most of the time. Few brethren can give him the "place" he has visualized in his own mind, nor should they.

Do preachers that will not serve as preachers do more harm than good? Do they hurt both themselves and the congregations that must endure them? When viewing the conduct of some do you wonder if they are venting their own personal frustrations upon the brotherhood?

1. Servants To the Lost

Preachers are important to lost souls. Some one must call attention to sin. I know that one may do this who is not in full time preaching but most of the

time it will be faithful preachers in the forefront of the battle. God intended it to be so.

2. Servants To Local Congregation

I know that elders are to be developed to oversee the congregations of God's people. This is true when we have mature men who are willing to serve. When we do not have such, and there are far more congregations that do not have elders than those that do, preachers are going to toil under greater difficulties until these souls can mature to adult spiritual life.

Evangelism and the growth of local congregations go together. Many works have not succeeded because time and energy have not been given to developing congregations to maturity. It may take a preacher a lifetime to accomplish this task. How many are willing and patient to do so? Preachers are needed.

3. Servants To Elders

Faithful preachers can be of great service to elders. Most preachers have had some formal training for their task. They should know where to locate help in understanding the Bible and how to deal with difficult passages. Many preachers keep up with what is happening beyond the immediate congregation. On the other hand, many elders must work full time at secular jobs. Many have not had the opportunity to have the formal training of a preacher. They must make

decisions relative to the good of the local congregation and this must be seen in the context of the brotherhood and world.

A faithful preacher who understands the joy of serving can be of untold value to Godly elders. They can turn to him for assistance in obtaining needed facts and they should be able to depend upon him to stand with them in the issues of truth. Good elders know the value of a preacher who is not ashamed to be their helper, serve them and the congregation. Preachers are needed.

Do You Understand The Work Of a Preacher?

Paul called upon Timothy to do the work of an evangelist, to make full proof of his ministry (II Tim. 4:5). Let us consider thoughts along this line in view of what we have said earlier. Please read Ephesians 4:11-15.

1. Developing Saints

We need to understand that the preacher is not only to teach and baptize souls but to help them mature in the grace and knowledge of the Christ (II Peter 3:18).

If someone is not there to help souls mature they will return to the world as fast as they left it. Is this why the Holy Spirit chose Barnabas and Saul for the work of spreading the Gospel from Antioch (Acts 13:1-3)? Preachers are important if Christians are to grow.

2. Work of Ministry

There are tables to

serve. There are services to be rendered in the body of Christ. Souls must be developed to serve. Jesus says the greatest in the kingdom are those who serve (Matt. 20:15, 22-28). Deacons are special servants to churches (I Tim. 3:3-13; Phil. 1:1). Deacons must be mature Christians. Preachers are essential if the congregations are to become the salt of the earth and the light of the world.

People must be developed, if they are to serve as teachers. If you are familiar with the many tasks of a local congregation you will know of the need for people to be motivated and trained to fill the various rolls of service that need to be rendered. Preachers must be willing to serve and to encourage others to do so.

3. Building up The Body of Christ

A congregation of the Lord's Church is not a small denomination. We are to be one in doctrine and teaching. Freedom comes only in expedient matters. Are some more interested in their own congregation (or pet project) more than they are building up of the body of Christ? Do you know of some who would

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TRAINING PREACHERS SINCE 1969

fight you to the last breath for an orphan home, a school, a bus ministry, et al. but have little to offer in defending the body of Christ against false teaching? Do you know of anyone who might make great sacrifices for a camp, a "workshop" a "Jubilee" of some brand or another but would do little to help train a preacher to build up the body of Christ?

There is a shortage of preachers who are dedicated to building up the body of Christ. There are too many preachers who are devoted to "ear tickling" projects.

If you are a preacher, which kind are you? Do you know the difference? If you are a congregation looking for a preacher, what do you expect of him? What will he have to promote to please you? Preachers must help all to be concerned with building up the body of Christ.

4. Protecting

An honest study of the Bible as well as history will reveal the load carried by preachers in defending truth and opposing error. Jesus prepared preachers for these pressures by warning them of what could be expected when truth was taught. We have only space to cite the passages, but, if you are not familiar with the following passages please read them. Matthew 5:10-48; 10:11-42; John 15:18-25; 16:1-4. Paul had no greater burden than his concern for the churches that were under constant bombardment from within and from without (II Cor. 11:28). Preachers are needed.

5. Speaking Truth In Love

Truth must be the central component of the people of God. It is to be bought and never sold (Pro. 23:23). It is that which sets us apart from all others (John 17:17). It is to be loved, believed and obeyed (II Thess. 2:9-11). The church is to be its pillar and ground—that which upholds and supports it (I Tim. 3:14-15). It is to be known and by this knowledge, and in no other, are we to be free (John 8:31-32).

This truth is to be spoken in love. This love is not a mere melancholy sentimentalizing of syrupy sweetness. Jesus preached the truth in love. They hung him on a cross for doing so. Paul loved and preached the truth. He was hunted like a criminal and often driven from town to town. Love has as its goal the elevation of souls spiritually in faithfulness to the Christ. It is possible for those who do not understand what Biblical love is to falsely accuse preachers of not loving.

When the preacher has as his goal the salvation of souls, when he knows and loves the truth, and he knows that the only way that they may be saved is faithfulness to the Christ he will preach the truth in love. When preachers do this and souls reject this preaching it is not the fault of the preacher. Faithful preachers know the soil may be deficient.

Conclusion

Many problems the world is facing today are

related to false religious ideas or the absence of true religion. "How shall they hear without a preacher" (Rom. 10:14)?

Many are lost in sin and do not know where to turn for help in understanding the ways of the Lord. How can they, except some one guide them (Acts 8:31)?

Sodom was lost because it lacked the preserving influence of righteousness. "If the salt has lost its savor. . . (Matt. 5:11)?

The Lord's cause needs preachers. We are proud to be a preacher, we are dedicated to training preachers. "How beautiful are the feet of them that bring glad tidings of good things!" (Rom. 10:15). How sad is the trail left by hirelings, those who sow discord among brethren, and hinder the truth in unrighteousness (Rom. 1:18ff.).



June 7, 1994

Dear Brethren:

In reading the June edition of The Harvesters, the front page is very interesting, asking numerous questions about surveys.

Yes indeed it is a very good idea that we question brethren in various circumstances as to their beliefs and teaching. I also believe most brethren will gladly respond with their beliefs truthfully—maybe I am too trusting in this belief—

We are seeking to secure a preacher to work with us here, we do send out a questionnaire when we contact



a man and most return them, however some have not, which speaks for itself, others have given answers that indicate need for more study and conviction of their beliefs.

We all ought to be able to answer Biblical questions as to doctrine, I'm always happy to do so—besides, we want to hire a preacher that can be happy here, as well as one who meets the needs and approval of the congregation—

These questions are of utmost importance

/s/ R.F. Sandh
Wildwood, FL



June 1, 1994

Florida School of Preaching
Dear Bro. Stearsman,

Fairy and I would like to make this "faith in your work" donation.

I've just returned from a month's stay in Syktivkar, Russia where I taught for six hours per day in the school of preaching established there by SCU, Montgomery, Alabama. The three courses I was assigned to teach were: The Life of Christ, Christian Evidences and Church History. We had twelve to fifteen students who are preparing for spreading the gospel to their fellow Russians. The training

of male leadership is essential for the church in that culture, since women, generally, are leading in most everything else. There are 60 to 80 faithful Christians worshipping regularly in Syktivkar and about that number in Moscow where I was privileged to worship last Sunday.

Our prayers are for you and the work at Lakeland.

I've a great deal of "catching-up" work here in Deltona—being away for such an extended period.

Fraternally in Christ,
/s/ Bert & Fairy
Bert & Fairy Brown



May 20, 1994

Florida School of Preaching
Dear Jackie Stearsman:

First, we commend you on the fine work you are doing preparing young men for spreading God's word through preaching. As we all know, there has been a decline in the desire to preach God's word.

Florida School of Preaching has definitely done an excellent job preparing Anthony Weeks for the ministry. Brother Weeks conducted a week long Gospel Meeting April 3-8, 1994 at the Park Street Congregation in Columbia, South Carolina. The

theme for the meeting was entitled "The Year of the Youth." We thought it would be a great idea to get a young man to conduct such a meeting. Anthony Weeks was an excellent choice. He selected topics (A different World, That's the Way Love Goes, Emergency 911, Oops There It Is, You Got the Right One Baby Uh Huh) that related to issues the youths are facing today.

Many of our youths and adults gained a great deal from his lessons. We are grateful and thankful to you for allowing Anthony the time to spread the good news among our youth in Columbia, South Carolina.

Keep up the good work and continue to train young men in the way that Anthony has been trained. May God continue to bless you in all your future endeavors.

Sincerely,

/s/ Jack McNeil, Minister
Columbia, South Carolina



**Classes Begin
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