

PREACHING IS GOD'S METHOD

*“But hath in due times manifested his word **“through preaching”**, which is committed unto me according to the commandment of God our Saviour;” Titus 1:3*

*For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, **“it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.”** 1 Cor. 1:21*

“Why our nation is crumbling, from the decadent rainbow White House to the pulpit. The pulpits are capitulating to Satan’s world system of counterfeits, same sex marriages, sodomy, homosexuality, divorce, fornication, adultery, lying, cheating and stealing, all the while marrying and baptizing unrepented sin in God’s house. Satan has sifted you as wheat. Sheep led to the slaughter, blind guides. Instead of teaching God’s Word, you teach the lies of a feel-good God, not the God of the Bible. Teaching error, in agreement with these sins, you make yourself as much of a son of hell as your members, blind guides.” Your silence is advancing the growth of a Sodomite culture and failure of opposition to the homosexual environment is expanding the gay social order destroying all that is decent in this world and its family habitat. Blind leading the blind is making two-fold more the children of Hell.

“For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begins with us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? 1 Peter 4:17

By Pastor Del Wray

Any sixth grader reading the Bible can understand that preaching was God’s chosen method for the proclamation of His Word and for instruction in righteous living. The OT prophets, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Apostles and the Baptist Church its self are examples showing us that the distribution of the Word of God is to be done through PREACHING! The Bible commands it literally to be God’s method! I am persuaded that the highest calling for the man of God is to preach the Word of God. Since preaching is God’s idea, and it is He who has put us in this business 1 Timothy 1:12, our greatest desire in preaching should be to please Him! I have no desire to be a “men pleasing” preacher, but I do have every desire to be a “Saviour pleasing” preacher. Today in many of our Baptist churches across this land the preaching of the Word of God is being subjugated to men’s inventions and some cases not even preached at all. God’s only way of speaking to man in our day is through His Word! His only way! Many voices are decrying that isn’t so but if heard in context with Scripture one can only hear the hiss of Satan in those voices clamoring to be heard. When the Bible says that God has chosen to speak to us “by His Son,” by His Word! That settles it! Unless you are of the sect of Pentecostals or under the dominance of evil-spirits! You prove yourselves to be the “bastards” God said you were when the Word of God is circumvented for anything!

“Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;” Heb. 1:2

Second Timothy 4 lays out the doctrine for that kind of preaching. Paul declared,

“I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.” 2 Tim. 4:1-2

God’s first and foremost method for communicating His Word to this generation is preaching.

“But hath in due times manifested his word through preaching, which is committed unto me according to the commandment of God our Saviour.” Titus 1:3

God has not chosen, singing, testimonies, emotions, dreams, visions, nor any of man’s inventions but He has chosen preaching as His primary means of revelation.

“It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.” 1Cor. 1:21

There is no question that preaching pleases God. The question is does your preaching please God? No doubt the two best books ever written on preaching are Paul’s epistles to Timothy. You might even entitle Second Timothy, “encouragement from death row” The faithful Apostle was preparing to die for his faith and the preaching of it when he wrote Second Timothy. I am convinced that his counsel to a young preacher in the first century is still valid for every preacher in the twenty-first century. He gives us a detailed description of preaching that pleases God.

PREACH WITH THE AWARENESS OF JESUS CHRIST PRESENCE!

“The eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.” Proverbs 15:3

“Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.” Ephesians 5:10

“For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.” Galatians 1:10

I’ll never forget the first time I preached in my home church, The First Baptist Church, Newport News, VA a Southern Baptist Church, it was crowded with many of my high school friends who had gotten their educations and gone into their various fields of endeavor. The pastor a very staunch professional man with his doctorate who had been there for many years was surprised with the crowd. A number of my friends came forward on the invitation call and three allowed me to present God’s plan of salvation to them, accepting Christ and a small revival broke out. The pastor had me come back in to his office and he cussed me out upset that I had even mention the name Hell in my message. They over heard him and the revival continued on that night in a restaurant where another fella got saved. Needless to say, my pastor showed his real spiritual condition that night and it awoke the church to its real spiritual need. What a night it was!

The awareness of Christ presence both inspired and intimidated me. He was my preaching hero and I definitely wanted his approval. How much more important is it to live in the constant

awareness that Almighty God is at every preaching event! If you were to go into the choir room in my home church, you would see plainly the sign that reads, "Sing for the audience of ONE." Preachers, we must preach for the audience of ONE. I often remind myself, "I have nothing to prove, I have one Person to please." Repeatedly I have announced to teenagers, "You can be a crowd pleaser or a Christ pleaser, but you cannot be both." I'm afraid that most preachers today do not practice the presence of God every time they stand to declare the Word of God? I'm afraid in reality if Jesus Christ is not the one doing the preaching through you it is vain and sin against a Holy God.

PREACH FOR THE APPRAISAL OF JESUS CHRIST NOT OF MEN!

Your ultimate accountability for the sermon is not to the deacons, congregation or anyone else but to Jesus Christ. It is Christ who enlisted you, empowered you, and will one day examine you. Romans is plain,

"So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God." Rom. 14:12

"That is, of his character and conduct; his words and actions; his plans and purposes. In the fearful arraignment of that day, every work and purpose shall be brought forth, and tried by the unerring standard of justice. As we shall be called to so fearful give an account to God, we should not be engaged in condemning our brethren, but should examine whether we are prepared to give up our account with joy, and not with grief."

The Apostle James cautions preachers,

"My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation"
James 3:1.

The judgment seat of Christ will be an astonishing event for every believer, but the strictest, strongest, and severest judgment is reserved for the preacher or teacher of the Word of God. Extreme caution must be taken to preach for Christ alone. Often I say to myself, "You are not preaching for them, but for HIM! Keep your eyes on Jesus Christ when preaching to others!"

The phrase, "at his appearing" was used of a Roman emperor who would come to visit a town. Months of preparation were made before his arrival or appearing. It was the event of a lifetime. The greatest event in the future of a preacher is the appearing of Christ and His assessment of the preacher. Paul put it this way,

"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire" 1 Cor. 3:11–15.

Years ago I preached a message entitled, "There is Fire in Your Future." There is not only the fire of Hell for the unbeliever, but the fire of the judgment seat for the believer. I have often wondered if the fire there may be the scrutinizing eyes of our sovereign Saviour examining our motives and methods of preaching. It has been my privilege to preach over three hundred times every year somewhere in this world. Rarely do I stand to declare the Word of God without thinking, "Will this message be fireproof?" Fellow pastors and evangelists, is your ministry fireproof? Oh my preacher brethren, we must preach accountably.

Second Timothy 4:2 says, "*Preach the word.*" The words preach means "to herald the truth." The idea is to "declare authoritatively." First, we are to preach accountably. Second, we are to preach authoritatively. Listen to the definition of a herald. He is an "imperial messenger who goes through the streets to announce the laws, government policies and decrees, or the appearing of the Emperor; he is commissioned to declare them in a loud, clear voice so they all can hear. He is not a negotiator but a proclaimer of the truths of the Emperor."

We have no right to dilute, delete, diminish, or dummy-down anything that God said in His Word. We are to declare it exactly the way He said it. A man stopped me one night years ago and said, "You are too dogmatic." I said to him, "Sir, do you know where the term dogmatic came from?" He said, "No." I said, "Well it came from the word dogma. Do you know what the word dogma means?" He said, "I am not sure." I said, "The word dogma literally is the word doctrine. The Bible is doctrine." He said, "I agree." I replied, "Then why would I give pious platitudes? Why would I simply suggest a truth that is a settled doctrine and ought to be preached with a sure declaration?"

In Jonah we read, "*And the word of the LORD came unto Jonah the second time, saying, Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee.*" Jonah 3:1-2

In other words, "Jonah, you tried to run from ME once. You ended up in whale seminary and got some good theology concerning MY omniscience, omnipotence, and omnipresence. Now that you understand ME, make sure that you go where I told you to go and say what I told you to say."

Matthew reads, "*In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*" Matthew 3:1-2

Repentance is not an option; it is an obligation!

"*From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*" Matthew 4:17

How are we going to do this? You will remember that when Jesus chose His twelve disciples in,

"*He ordained twelve that they should be with Him.*" Mark 3:14

There is a key to this verse: with Him, then for Him. You will be afraid to teach authoritatively unless you spend a lot of time with the Authority. You will be intimidated by the crowd unless you are spending intimate time with Christ. The Bible says,

“He ordained twelve that they should be with Him and that He should send them forth to preach.”

The word sent is recorded one hundred twenty-three times in the New Testament. It is a military term that was used for the commanding officer issuing orders to his soldiers. The King of the universe has commanded His preaching disciples to stand and declare the Word of God without fear or favor. In Matthew chapter seven our Saviour concludes the Sermon on the Mount. The Bible says that,

“The people were astonished at his doctrine, for he taught them as one having authority and not as the scribes.”

There are too many scribes in the pulpits today. We need more prophets. Dr. Harold Sighthler said, “There are so few prophets in our modern day Baptist churches that we can now declare the church a ‘non-prophet corporation’.” When we preach the Word of God we are not to imply or suggest; we are to declare, not arrogantly but authoritatively, what God said and the way He has said it. Some may say, “Well, preacher, you don’t understand the times in which we are living.” Let me remind you about the age in which Paul and Timothy were living. You could die for preaching authoritatively. That is what happened to Paul. You see, the Roman Empire hated authoritative preaching. The Jewish nation hated authoritative preaching. But God liked it because He is the Authority of all authorities. Somebody said to me, “Well, preacher, it is the twenty-first century, and I just don’t think you can confront like you used to.” The buzz word in some Bible Colleges today seems to be “connect.” Well, I would like for somebody to tell me through all of the connections we have made, where is revival? I think we better get back to authoritative preaching that confronts people exactly where they are, and tells them exactly what God said, if we ever expect to see God flow through our churches and into the lives of people.

May I ask my readers a thought provoking question: “When has it ever been acceptable to preach confrontationally with authority?” I don’t remember any place either scripturally or historically when strong, prophetic, confrontational preaching has been popular. Still others may argue, “It is my temperament. I just can’t stand and preach dogmatically as you might.” We are not comparing preaching styles, my friends. I am talking about principle not personality. There are some people who will be more demonstrative with authority and some a little more quiet. Some a little louder, some a little more subdued. But authority allows the people in the pew to know that the commands of God are not an option but an obligation. You see, Timothy had a different temperament than Paul. It appears that he may have had some kind of stomach trouble. The crowds may have intimidated him. He was a young man with older people sitting in the congregation, but Paul still wrote to him and said, “Preach the Word.” This God-hating, sin-saturated society needs authoritative preaching! As it was in the days of Isaiah,

“The wicked are like the troubled sea when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God to the wicked” Isaiah 57:20-21. It is time for all of us to heed the words of our Sovereign to the prophet,

“Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins” Isaiah 58:1.

When are the pulpits in America going to get back to preaching against sin as did the prophets of old? When are we going to see sin hated and preached against like Paul and Silas? Like Billy Sunday, Billy Kelly, Bob Jones, Sr. and like J. Frank Norris? Our pulpits have been invaded as I said in a previous article by evil-spirits and souls haven't got a snow ball's chance in hell of being saved. Our Baptist pulpits have been filled with lazy, no good, self-seeking, self-promoting preachers who live off the heroics of men like Carl Lackey, Bob Jones, Sr., and my dear friend of past days Jewel Smith. One friend of mine from Florida said our churches are nothing more than a shell of what they use to be. And how right he is!

While there are plenty of preachers today who claim to desire great adaptation in the churches, their desire seems to end as soon as the society and law is mentioned. The law is relegated to only personal and ecclesial uses, if any at all. When challenged, lip service is given to the importance of the law. But when detailed applications are called for, every denial of “the judicial code” and condemnation of “political correctness” that can be given *is*. Yet these curtailed pulpits. He condemns them openly. He proclaims the “true ministers of God” as ones who preach the whole counsel of God. In the context we've seen, that whole counsel includes the judicial law and its civil punishments, and for want of it, we have the degeneration that we see.

So where are these preachers today? Where is the call to today's pulpits to reclaim the same substance and boldness? It is time we renewed this call, and raised up our preachers again. Even if you don't like the tone and unbending, hard preaching of a man of God! The conclusions at which you arrive will have you fighting should-to-shoulder with Bible preachers, and you'll be looking back at several generations of our pulpits with the sense of the undertaking we have.

The churches today replace the preaching services with Gospel singers and some two-bit preacher who's living in sin and wouldn't know how to preach against sin if he were dangling over hell by a thin thread himself. His mind has been poisoned with flesh feeding emotions and his wicked heart reduced to thinking entertaining is as good as preaching! No wonder America has gone to hell in a bread basket and our pulpits filled with men drunk on love! No preaching on sin anymore! Churches living in their lifeless feelings and emotion and Hell ever enlarge itself. Preachers don't know what sin is anymore! I remember how Bob Jones, Sr. used to tell his preacher boys to get out of the ministry, to change their fields of study, if they hadn't been called by God to preach. Every day you could count on him telling you to leave, resign or quit if God wasn't on you, if He hadn't called you to preach. It used to irritate me then, now I know what he was saying, what he meant. Too many of the preachers today are not called by God! God's not on them, He's not using them. What is sin?

Sin is anything that is not of faith! *“...for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.”* Rom. 14:23b Sin is not what one does it is what one is, sin is not the outward sores on the body but the disease

within, the heart! You can be the best person in the world and still die and go to hell without Jesus Christ. Sin is not smoking, drinking, cursing, murder or adultery; those things are the results of having a sinful nature, a sinful heart. Sin is what condemns an unrepentant sinner, it's not the faults one has, it's inward, and it's the heart. Preacher do you know your heart as Jesus does? Will you too confess the potential sin that lies within? He wants to clean it up so He may be the preacher carrying on in His office work! He's the preacher! He's the soul winner! He's the teacher! Get out of the way and let Him preach!

GOD'S METHOD IS PREACHING!