

THE KIND OF PREACHING WE NEED

Dub McClish
Denton, Texas

Bible Preaching. “PREACH THE WORD” is Paul’s command (**2 Timothy 4:2**). The Bible must be the content and focus of our preaching, for such alone can be rightly called “SOUND [healthy, health-giving] DOCTRINE” (**v.3**). If people hear only jokes, amusing anecdotes, personal experiences, stories, and “nice little talks” instead of God’s Truth, their souls will die from spiritual malnutrition. So much of what is being heard in our pulpits currently is not at all distinctive, as true Gospel preaching always is. Instead, many pulpits are platforms for brief popular psychology lectures or religious “pep rallies” based on pop-psychology.

Sadly, many members refuse to listen to anyone who is determined to preach the whole counsel of God (**Acts 20:27**). Such debunk Bible preaching that cites book, chapter, and verse, labeling it “concordance” preaching. Even if some reject Bible preaching (as Paul prophesied, 2 Timothy 4:3-4), the preacher who is more serious about helping people get to Heaven than he is about keeping his job will pay the price to keep on preaching it (**v. 5**). Listeners who are more interested in going to Heaven than in satisfying their own selfish, carnal desires will support, encourage, yea, demand such preaching and will refuse any other kind as so much pulpit waste material. If one is not going to preach (or listen to) the Bible, why preach (or listen) at all?

Powerful Preaching. Preachers need to take Paul’s words to heart: “BE STRONG IN THE LORD, ARID IN THE STRENGTH OF HIS MIGHT” (**Ephesians 6:10**). The devil, not the Lord, makes us weak and cowardly: “FOR GOD GAVE US NOT A SPIRIT OF FEARFULNESS; BUT OF POWER AND LOVE AND DISCIPLINE” (**2 Timothy 1:7**). The late R.N. Hogan was right: “BRETHREN HAVE HEARD SO MUCH SWEET-TALK PREACHING THAT MOST OF THEM HAVE SPIRITUAL SUGAR DIABETES.” If the Gospel teaches it, preachers must not be afraid to preach it with authority (**Titus 2:15**). The world and the church are in great need of men who will courageously preach against sin and error (both “in general” and specifically) and uphold righteousness and Truth.

Emphatic Preaching. Many a pew-sitter has been sung to sleep by the perfectly-rounded, golden tones of the man in the pulpit. Preachers at times need to raise the voice and shout, lower the voice and whisper, slap the hands together, pound the pulpit, stamp the feet – emphasize appropriately what you are preaching. I’m not suggesting artificial theatrics, but preachers need to drive the point home.

Persuasive Preaching. Preaching that does not challenge us to deeper service, move us to greater faithfulness and prompt self-searching and rededication misses its mark. Preaching should stir up and touch our hearts. Paul was constantly beseeching, persuading the brethren, and so will God’s preachers in every age be ever seeking to do.