

THE KIND OF PREACHING WE NEED

Bible preaching. “Preach the word” is Paul’s command (2 Tim. 4:2). The Bible must be the content and focus of our preaching, for such alone can be called “sound [healthy, health-giving] doctrine” (v. 3). If we hear only jokes, amusing anecdotes, personal experiences, and “nice little talks” instead of God’s Truth, our souls will die from spiritual malnutrition. So much of what is being heard in our pulpits currently is not at all distinctive, which true Gospel preaching always is. Instead, many pulpits are platforms for brief popular psychology lectures or religious “pep rallies.” 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 Tim. 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 hear) the Bible, why preach (or listen) at all?

Powerful preaching. Preachers need to take Paul’s words to heart: “Be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of his might” (Eph. 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 Tim. 1:7). R.N. Hogan was right: “The brethren have heard so much sweet-talk preaching that most of them have spiritual sugar diabetes.” If the Gospel teaches it, do not be afraid to preach it with authority (Tit. 2:15). The world and

the church are in great need of men who will courageously preach against sin and error 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. Preacher, raise your voice and shout, lower your voice and whisper, slap your hands together, pound the pulpit, stamp your feet--emphasize appropriately what you are preaching. 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.

—Dub McClish

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