

Listen to Your Preacher – No. 3

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The hearer has no less responsibility than the preacher. Those who listen to a message concerning their souls must very carefully weigh it against what the Bible says. If it is not according to God's Word, they must reject it, for receiving it will cause them to be lost (2 The. 2:11-12). Only if the message is really the Gospel Truth will it save and free one from sins (John 8:31-32; Rom. 1:16; 6:17-18). Does your preacher respect the Bible as the Word of God? Perhaps so. Perhaps not. Only by carefully listening to him will you be able to know. Listen for the following attitude:

Does he preach as though the Bible is man's word about God instead of God's Word to and about men? Many of the modern pulpiteers have this matter totally confused. To some, the Bible is just a collection of human opinions and concepts about God. "So what if someone wrote that God created all things – that's just human opinion," they reason. By this view of Scripture, every moral or doctrinal principle of Scripture likewise becomes a mere human opinion with no more intrinsic authority than the bark of a dog. If the God described in the Bible is not the true and living God, then there is no God, except that of man's own creation. This low view of Scripture has the effect of making man into a god and demoting God to nothing. The pivotal issue at stake is whether we shall accept the Bible for what it claims to be – the verbally inspired message from the God and Creator of the universe and of ourselves. If we foolishly deny this, then we not only release our grip on the Bible as the Divine mandate for our lives, but we effectively destroy the concept of God as He is revealed therein.

The material in the Bible about man's origin, purpose, and destiny is unique. No other source contains such lofty concepts that challenge man to the highest plane of living. The very uniqueness of the Bible in this and other ways argues that it is not merely the opinions of uninspired men. The idea of God, His nature, and attributes, are constant in the Bible, from book to book, from author to author, spanning the sixteen centuries during which the Bible was being written. Surely, if the Bible were merely the ideas of men about God, the ideas of its approximately forty writers would have differed greatly. Surely the earliest writers would have had much more primitive concepts of God (even as present-day primitive people have) than do later writers, but this is not the case. It is tragic that mankind has largely rejected the only revelation of God's Will it will ever get!

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