

# PROBLEMS IN THE PULPIT AND PREACHING THAT PLEASES GOD

## Lesson One

### Introduction:

1. We are not using "pulpit" as a literal place, we are using it as a figurative expression that represents the preaching or teaching itself.
2. Those who know anything about the church today are aware that we have preaching being done that is causing serious problems for the Lord's church.
3. Most of the blame for the current crisis can be attributed to the pulpit.
4. The expression often heard, "*As goes the pulpit, so goes the church*" is true.
5. If the preaching is wrong, the church will go astray.
6. When an eldership tolerates false teaching, it too becomes guilty of sin -- Acts 20: 28 - 32; Tit. 1: 9 - 11
7. Members of the church have a responsibility to demand faithful preaching -- Acts 17:11; II John 9 - 11
8. God has ordained the preaching of the gospel to save the soul of man -- Mk. 16: 15 - 16; II Tim. 4:2; I Cor. 1:21; I Tim. 4:16
9. The opposite is also true -- unsound doctrine being preached will cause men to be lost -- II John 9 - 11; II Thess. 2: 11 - 12; Matt. 15: 9; Matt. 23:15
10. We are living in a very crucial time for the survival of the Lord's church in the United States:
  - (1) This is no time for "uncertain sounds" from weak-kneed preachers.
  - (2) Many preachers have listened to the popular cry of those about us and have failed to stand upon the truth -  
- John 8:32
  - (3) Paul told the Corinthians when he came that he would preach what would be required for their good -- I Cor. 4:21
  - (4) It is sad to note today that we have many preachers in this present crisis who can only preach a positive message of love -- they are afraid to be NEGATIVE.
  - (5) Much preaching that is being done has caused problems and there are more problems ahead.

### I. PROBLEMS IN THE PULPIT:

#### 1. MEN PLEASERS

- (1) There are men who preach to please men.
- (2) Paul warned about preachers who would be men pleasers -- II Tim. 4:3
- (3) Paul said men pleasers cannot please God -- Gal. 1:10
- (4) When a preacher starts listening for PRAISE FROM HIS AUDIENCE he is in danger.
  1. He wants his ego built up.
  2. He cheerleads his audience and calls for frequent "amens".
- (5) Some preachers seem to be filled with pride and vainglory -- they can almost strut while sitting.

## 2. WORLDLY WISDOM

- (1) Preachers who value the wisdom of men above the wisdom of God -- I Cor. 1: 20 - 21
- (2) From some pulpits today we hear what some present day scholar has said--not the word of God.
- (3) Denominational preachers are quoted as though they were authorities.
- (4) Too many sermons are filled with current events or a discussion of some political issue.
- (5) Some preachers tell their personal experiences and give human testimony instead of preaching the word of God.
- (6) Paul did not do this kind of preaching -- I Cor. 2: 1 - 5

## 3. HIRELING PREACHING

- (1) When men occupy our pulpits because they are "hirelings", the church is in trouble -- John 10: 11 - 12
- (2) When a preacher begins to look on his work as professional he is of no value to God's people.
- (3) When a preacher gets the "big buck" syndrome, and hunts the big churches, he is not going to stand in face of error and preach the truth.

## 4. PREACHERS WHO BASH THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

- (1) They want to preach Christ and not the church, or the man and not the plan -- Acts 8: 4 - 12; Eph. 1: 22 - 23
- (2) They don't want "church of Christ" on the sign out front -- Rom. 16:16; Matt. 16:18
- (3) They preach about "Church of Christ" tradition
  1. What they are really attacking is the doctrine of Christ.
- (4) Some say, "The church of Christ has been guilty of teaching salvation by works"..
  1. God's people teach what the Word of God teaches -- we are saved by a working faith -- James 2:24; Eph. 2:8; Gal. 5:6
  2. We are saved by God's Grace and Man's Faith -- Rom. 5:2
  3. The grounds of our salvation is God's Grace and Christ's blood, the conditions of salvation are : hear, believe, repent, confess and be baptized.
- (5) Some want to have a gospel meeting and not advertise it as a meeting of the church of Christ.

## 5. DEFICIENCY IN DISTINCTIVE PREACHING

- (1) Problems are caused by pulpits where the preaching is always in broad generalities and never specific.
- (2) Many of the sermons heard could be preached in any denominational pulpit without raising any opposition.
- (3) Sin is rarely ever described by name -- no one ever feels guilty of doing wrong -- Acts 2:37; 7:54
- (4) The Holy Spirit came to "convict the world of sin" John 16:8
- (5) The preacher is to rebuke sin -- II Tim. 4:2; Heb. 4:12
- (6) New Testament, or Gospel preaching, is to be distinctive preaching.

## 6. DEFICIENCY IN DOCTRINAL PREACHING

- (1) Many pulpits have ceased to preach the very fundamentals of the faith.

(2) Sermons on the plan of salvation need to be preached.

(3) We need lessons on how to identify the church.

(4) We need lessons on acceptable worship.

(5) Every generation must be taught

(6) Tit. 2:1; I Tim. 4:16; I Tim. 1:3

#### 7. IMPROPER PREPARATION

(1) Lack of proper preparation of the preacher presents another problem that hurts the church.

(2) We have always had some who thought very little knowledge was necessary for one to preach.

(3) Men must prepare if they are to be effective in the pulpit.

(4) Paul told Timothy to

1. Study -- II Tim. 2:15

2. To read -- I Tim. 4:13

3. Take heed--unto the doctrine -- I Tim. 4:16

#### 8. IMMORAL MESSENGERS

(1) We must admit that there are men who preach who are guilty of moral sins over and over.

1. Some have problems with women -- adultery-- II Pet. 2:14

2. Some have problems with strong drink -- I Pet. 4:3

3. Some have practiced homosexuality

4. Some dress immodestly

5. Some are dishonest

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(Hebron Lane 1993; River Bend 1998)