

# REACTION TO THE PREACHED WORD

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## Introduction

1. I am of the opinion that there is no area of study needed more than the one we are going to study today.
2. HOW the gospel is to be preached and the REACTION to it is a misunderstood subject in the church.
3. All agree that the Word must be preached.
  - a. But HOW shall it be preached?
  - b. In a manner to SAVE or the SOOTHE?
    - i. Judah wanted the prophets to preach “*smooth things*” – Isa. 30:10.
  - c. Many today only want to hear “*smooth things*” – 2 Tim. 4: 1 – 5.
    - i. Man does not like God’s criticism – Heb. 4:12; I Thess. 2:13; 2 Tim. 3: 16 – 17; John 16:8.
  - d. There is no quicker way to destroy the Cause of Christ than to set aside the WAY, MANNER and APPROACH of the original inspired preacher in preaching the truth – Matt. 10:19.
  - e. We need to learn anew HOW they proceeded; with what BOLDNESS and PLAINNESS of speech they proclaimed the truth – 2 Cor. 3:12.
  - f. Many in the church have the idea that preachers should preach so as to “favorably impress” the world.
    - i. Preaching is NOT to impress the world; it is to “transform” the world – Rom. 12:2; Rom. 1: 16.
    - ii. The change is wrought by a RENEWING OF THE MIND.
    - iii. The renewed mind eliminates the evil and replaces it with good – I Pet. 1:14 – 15.
    - iv. People who want to impress the world with preaching want an INDISTINCT, UNCERTAIN, “MAY BE SO”, DEHORNED, CAMOUFLAGED, DILUTED gospel to “scratch the itching ears of those who will not endure sound doctrine” – 2 Tim. 4:1 – 5.
      1. This is the kind of preaching that produces quantity (number), but not quality.
      2. Such preaching is designed to soothe rather than to save.
  - g. The only kind of preaching that will do any good is preaching that will UPSET SIN and SINNERS.
    - i. Examples of this kind of preaching in the first century:
      1. It exceedingly troubled cities – Acts 16: 20.
      2. It turned the world upside down – Acts 17:6.
      3. It cut to the heart – Acts 7: 54.
      4. It was bold – I Thess. 2:2.
      5. It caused men to tremble – Acts 24: 24 – 25.
      6. It was uncompromising – Gal. 2:5.
      7. It was NOT to please men, but God – Gal. 1:10; I Thess. 2:4.
      8. It kept back nothing that was profitable – Acts 20:20.
      9. It was ALL the counsel of God – Acts 20:27.
  - h. Let us study the reaction to the preached Word as it was preached by the Lord and inspired men.

- I. JESUS REBUKED THE SCRIBES AND PHARISEES FOR TEACHING FOR DOCTRINE THE COMMANDMENTS OF MEN – Matt. 15:9.**
- a. The REACTION Jesus got from this teaching:
    - i. The Pharisees were offended – Matt. 15:12.
    - ii. He had exposed them to the people – Matt. 15:10.
  - b. When the fact that they were offended was called to Jesus’ attention, He did not back up one bit.
    - i. He told His disciples to leave them alone; that they were blind guides – Matt. 15: 13 – 14.
  - c. Today preachers must speak against the doctrines and commandments of men:
    - i. Men who teach these doctrines will be offended.
    - ii. But Christ wants their doctrines exposed – Eph. 5:11.
- II. THE BEREANS HAD THE WORD PREACHED TO THEM – Acts 17: 10 – 12.**
- a. *“They received the word with all readiness of mind”* – Acts 17:11.
    - i. They listened attentively to the message.
  - b. They then investigated what was said, trying it by the scriptures.
    - i. They did not reject and spurn it as unworthy of examination.
  - c. This is a noble attitude; the Bible teaches that ALL should have this attitude – I John 4:1; I Thess. 5:21; Matt. 7:15; I John 9 – 11.
  - d. You can convert people when they have this attitude – Matt. 13:15.
- III. STEPHEN’S SERMON BEFORE THE SANHEDRIN COURT IN ACTS 7: 54 – 60:**
- a. *“They were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth”* – Acts 7:54.
    - i. They were filled with anger and hate after the sermon.
    - ii. A man is better or worse as the result of hearing a gospel sermon – 2 Cor. 2:15 – 16.
    - iii. The PERSON and not the truth is responsible for different effects truth has on the person.
      1. Some do not love the truth – 2 Thess. 2:10; Psa. 119: 127.
      2. Some turn away their ears from the truth – 2 Tim. 4:4.
      3. Some resist the truth – 2 Tim. 3:8.
      4. Some *“hinder the truth in unrighteousness” (ASV)* or *“suppress the truth by their wickedness” (NIV)* – Rom. 1:18.
      5. Some *“will not endure sound doctrine”* – 2 Tim. 4:3; or *“will no longer listen to right teaching” (NLT)*.
      6. Some will hinder others from obeying the truth – Gal. 5:7.
    - iv. Members of the church get angry when they hear the truth on:
      1. “Unity-in-diversity”
      2. Mixed swimming
      3. Immodest dress
      4. The modern dance
      5. Forsaking the assembly
      6. Marriage and divorce for any cause – Matt. 19: 9

7. Gossip

8. The place of women in the church.

b. They stoned Stephen to death – Acts 7: 57 – 60.

i. We learn from this that character and preaching the truth will not save a man from harm and suffering – 2 Tim. 2:3.

ii. The preacher doing right may bring upon himself hardship and persecutions – 2 Tim. 3:12.

**IV. THE PEOPLE OF ANTIOCH IN PISIDIA – Acts 13: 45 – 46:**

a. They were filled with envy and spoke against what they heard . . . many do the same today – Acts 13:45.

b. They put the word from them.

c. They judged themselves unworthy of everlasting life – Acts 13:46.

**V. FELIX – Acts 24: 24 – 25**

a. Feared and procrastinated.

b. Many today are like Felix.

**VI. THE PEOPLE ON THE DAY OF PENTECOST:**

a. The sermon “pricked” their heart – Acts 2:37.

b. This means that they were “*smitten in conscience*”.

c. Preaching that does not cause a man’s conscience to smite him is not gospel preaching!

**VII. CONCLUSION**

a. I think you can see that there are many different reactions to the preached word.

b. God wants it preached in its fullness; MAN is responsible for his reaction.