

Preaching Deserves Priority¹

“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables”
2 Timothy 3:16-4:4 N-KJV

When I was a boy, preachers were respected. One of the greatest ambitions of Christian boys was to become preachers. However, when I had prepared myself to be a preacher and had just graduated from college, but before I went to preach at my first congregation, someone told me that preachers do not have much influence in this world, and that I ought to become a banker, a lawyer, a doctor, an admiral, or something else whereby I could make more money, and be more influential. But I didn't think so!

Many years later, when I mentioned this experience to an influential youth minister at one of the largest congregations in the brotherhood, he wasn't surprised. He said, “Many Christian parents tell me they don't want their daughter to marry a preacher.”

Why? Because preachers may not make much money, preachers may have to move a lot, preachers and their wives may not live close to either of their parents, and therefore their children may not see as much of their grandparents as all of them would like. They often live like goldfish in a bowl. Preachers may not have much privacy, etc., etc.

However, this kind of thinking focuses entirely upon temporal and earthly things. This kind of thinking does not consider the worth of that eternal, heavenly kingdom. When God's kingdom is in the forefront of our thinking, then “the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us” (Romans 8:18).

Consider the honorable role God has given to preachers. ***A preacher is God's spokesman to a troubled world.*** Old Testament prophets spoke to Israel when Israel needed to hear God's word. Jesus came with his redeeming message to save a world lost in sin. The apostles and others declared the saving message of Jesus and transformed the lives of millions. While these were all guided by the Holy Spirit, we now proclaim God's word which we learn from the Bible.

By the power of preaching, humanity may be reconciled to God. By preaching cannibals have turned from hate to love. By preaching, sinners have become saints. By preaching drunkards have turned to sobriety. By preaching families have been brought closer together.

Preaching is serious business. Preaching recognizes sin. While preaching sees trouble, it is basically optimistic because it presents a message of hope. Preaching presents God's solutions to human problems.

Nowadays, preaching seems to have fallen on hard times. In the world, preaching is becoming less respected because God is becoming less respected. Is preaching less respected in the church because worldly thinking is too much in the church?

We live in troublesome times. Now is the time for men of God to arise and proclaim God's message to everyone. To presidents, governors, and mayors; to congressmen, councilmen and commissioners; to husbands, wives and their children; to doctors, lawyers, journalists, television executives, bankers, and admirals. Everyone needs to hear God's word and make application of it to their particular stations in life. “And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, who bring glad tidings of good things!’” (Romans 10:14-15 N-KJV).

Parents and churches need to encourage young men to become preachers. And all Christians need to help preachers overcome whatever difficulties their preaching tasks may require. Preaching will again be respected when Christians return to greater spiritual thinking.

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