

THE BELLEVILLE MESSENGER

January 11

2009

Preaching

In Romans 10:15 the Book of God says, *“How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace and bring glad tidings of good things.”* Paul said, *“For though I preach the gospel I have nothing to glory of, for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel!”* The Lord said, *“Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.”* Furthermore, the Bible says that through the foolishness of preaching (not through foolish preaching but rather what men consider to be foolishness) that the world is to be saved (1 Cor. 1:21). Therefore Paul could say, *“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.”* Now friends, you might need a blood transfusion to give you life, you might need an antibiotic to save your life, but the only thing in the world that has the power to save you is the gospel of Jesus Christ. And, I’d like to talk about the preaching of that gospel and about what some men say about it. Notice that some say...

1) **Preach the man not the plan.** The Bible says in Acts 8 that Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ unto them (Acts 8:5). Now he preached Christ, he did preach the man, but notice what the Bible says happened after Philip preached Christ unto them. The Bible says that, *“when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized both men and women.”* Friends, if we’re going to preach Christ we’re going to have to preach both the man and the plan of salvation.

2) **Preach the truth leave others alone.** This is the advice we’re

getting nowadays but let’s just notice what the Bible says. Notice what Peter said to those in attendance on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:36). I wonder if those who say we should just preach the truth and leave everybody else alone think Acts 2:36 should say this: *“God hath made that same Jesus both Lord and Christ”?* If he’d just left out *“whom ye have crucified”* he could have left them alone and not made them feel so bad about it. The Bible says that when men preached the truth they didn’t leave folks alone. They preached the truth and then showed them what the truth is.

3) **Preach Christ not the church.** According to Ephesians 2 being in Christ is the same as being in His church. You can’t separate the two. So don’t pay attention to these people who say we need less preaching about the church and more preaching about Christ because no such distinction is made in scripture. When men talk about the church of Christ they are preaching Christ!

4) **Preach positive not negative.** Notice what Jeremiah 1:10 says. Jeremiah was told, *“See I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms to root out, to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant.”* Notice that out of the six things listed four of them are negative (also read 2 Tim. 4:2). The Bible clearly teaches that preaching the whole truth involves talking about both its positive and negative aspects.

5) **Preach what’s right not what’s wrong.** Notice how old this advice is. Amos 5:10 says, *“They hate him that rebuketh in the gate, and they abhor him that speaketh uprightly.”* Should we just preach what’s right and not what’s wrong? Isaiah 58:1 says, *“Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.”* True gospel preaching involves telling men not only what is right but also what is wrong.

6) **Preach salvation not condemnation.** Notice what Jesus said in Matthew 7:13-14: *“Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat. Because strait is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life and few there be that find it.”* Do you reckon Jesus knew anything about preaching? What did he do? He combined the two, didn’t he. He said enter in at the narrow gate then he went right to the broad way which leads to condemnation. In Luke

13:3 he said, "Except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish." Is that condemnation? In Mark 16:16 Jesus said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved but he that believeth not shall be condemned." It is clear from these and other passages that when men in the Bible preached about salvation they also warned men about condemnation. As it was then so it is now. We must preach both to be pleasing to God.

✍ Ryan J. Thomas



OUR EXAMPLE

The Bible has much to say about individuals living such lives as to be the proper example to others. Peter said that wives could so live that they could accomplish by their example what talking could not accomplish (1 Peter 3:1,2). Just this past week I had the opportunity to visit a dear friend who is now in his 90's and his wife of about 70 years was lying on the sofa. With tears in his eyes, he told us of the faithfulness of that woman that had led him to obedience many years ago. This man wept as he spoke of what may have been his end had it not been for the wonderful example of that godly woman many years ago.

Contrast that story to so many others where those who professed to be Christians have lived in such a way as to "turn off" some to any thought they may have had to obeying the gospel. I have had different ones through the years, upon observing the conduct of some member of the church, say, "If that is what it means to be a Christian I don't want any part of it." Of course, the hypocrisy they refer to is not "what it means to be a Christian" but it is sad that such hypocrisy does exist.

We can talk all we want to about these people being wrong for allowing a hypocrite to keep them from doing right but this does not justify the hypocrisy of those who profess to be Christians.

Sometimes parents lament the fact that their children are not Christians. This situation occurs sometimes because the children reject the teaching and example of godly parents. However, many times it is the result of parents who profess one thing and live another way.

I recently read of a survey that had been taken of young people

who had become addicted to alcohol. One of the questions on this survey was, "How did you first become exposed to alcoholic drinks?" I was not surprised to learn that the number one answer was, "In my home."

Most parents would say they do not want their children to grow up to be drunks, drug addicts, deadbeats or "jailbirds." However, what have their children seen in their parents? They may have seen their parents attend parties where alcohol is consumed and laugh and joke about the "festive" party. They may see their parents addicted to nicotine and wonder why the parents are upset about their addiction to some other drug. They may have seen their parents fail to pay debts they had promised to pay, so, if it was OK for Dad and Mom it must be OK for me. After all, they are members of the church and are well received. Or, they may have seen parents who would do all they could to disobey the law (speeding, cheating on taxes, etc.) and not get caught. If its OK for them to break some laws then what is wrong with my breaking other laws.

The answer, of course, is very simple. It is not right for either parents or children to do wrong. But parents need to realize that it is their responsibility to set the example and to bring up their children "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4). If we want others to do right we must demonstrate how important doing right is in our own lives. What kind of example are you setting??

✍ James Hahn

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Schedule of Services	Elders
Sun. Bible Study. 9:30 a.m.	Charles Carpenter. . . (317) 839-3873
Sun. Morning Worship. . . . 10:30 a.m.	James Hahn. (317) 745-1507
Sun. Evening Worship. 5:00 p.m.	
Wed. Bible Study. 7:00 p.m.	
Evangelist	Deacons
James Hahn. (317) 745-1507	Leon Nevins. (317) 272-2966
	Don Perry. (765) 676-5825
	Alvin Stanley. (317) 831-3514