

## PREACHING

The heart of any ministry is solid teaching and preaching. Nothing can take its place in the church. It is the heart of the church. There is no substitute for Bible teaching and preaching. It is the common denominator that propels people to spiritual growth. Without it, proper growth for the child of God is not possible.

The preacher is one who heralds or proclaims, usually by delivering a discourse upon a text of Scripture. The temple, the synagogue and the church has been designed chiefly in Scripture as a place where the profession of preaching has been practiced, by man becoming the human agent through whom God sent His messages.

The preacher's task is to educate Christians in the Word of God and encourage them to change their behavior in accordance with it. However, this type of preaching is not popular today. There are two basic trends today that appear to be gaining ground within the Christian community, and both down-play biblical preaching from a contextual standpoint, which results in uneducated positions about God and man.

First, is the position that preaching should make everyone feel good. This position is not interested in truth from God, but it's deeply interested in feeling good, even when things are not good. They major on positive thinking. Emphasize the positive, never the negative, assume that everything is wonderful. This position is flawed from the beginning. Do they not understand that our entire world is dependent upon the fact of positive and negative for a wholesome balance? It has been said, "If all we do is come together and tell each other how wonderful life is, then we're lying."

Second, is the position that preaching should be geared toward helping people solve their problems. One preacher said, "We live in a world that is so psychology oriented that it seems as if some people can barely think without getting into clinical analysis." Problems are a fact of life and we must deal with them. Some run, some hide, and some absolutely refuse to deal with their problems. Therefore, they seek treatment, not a cure. Sure, I want to help, but I refuse to take a text and take it out of context to make someone feel that they're on the road to recovery.

A church pulpit isn't primarily designed to help people make decisions about the details of everyday living. It is meant to teach them the Word of God and identify sin so that they might change their behavior. A preacher telling you that you have a problem is not a miracle from God, we all as humans have problems. Nor, does explaining one's problems make a person feel better. Rather, confession, repentance, and changing one's life are what produce true joy and enable the individual to deal with one's problems.

The heartbeat of the church is a strong commitment to the truth of God's Word. And that commitment is seen in its preaching and teaching to educate the Christian community on what God desires from His people.