

SEEING BEYOND

I do not know if I can express the importance of the truth I desire to share with you at this time in such a limited space, but try I will. The reason I have chosen such an odd subject as this may appear to be, is because of the widespread abuse that I myself have noted within ministry. Consider carefully the following statements.

The preacher is a minister of the Word of God. He is not a person who has a full and free right to choose a verse and distort the text. It may sound good, and even move someone with some emotion, but it is not of God. If he is a true minister of God, he is bound to the ministry of the Word of God. He has only one claim to the right to preach and demand decision, and that is that he is declaring the truth of God.

He must realize preaching is not his opportunity to express his religious views. His fundamental task in preaching is not to be clever, or profound, but to communicate the truth of God as clearly as he possibly can. Then let God express His views, which will be life changing.

The apostles were called ministers of the word (Luke 1:2). Their task was to preach what they heard and saw with reference to the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The elder (pastor) is to labor in word and doctrine (I Timothy 5:17). What Timothy is to hand on to others is not apostolic succession but the truth of Christianity which he heard from many Christians (II Timothy 2:2).

The New Testament servant of Jesus was not one free to preach as he wished, but one bound to minister the truth of Christianity, to preach the Word of God, and to be a witness of the Gospel. This is very far removed from much of our contemporary preaching which is hardly more than popular, superficial, and personal discourses on religious themes.

We must see beyond man in our preaching and our hearing, we must see God.

By: Jerry W. Arnold
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