

The Old Paths

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“Godly Characteristics Of Preachers”

Jarrod Jacobs

Knowing that the preacher, due to the public nature of his work, is subject to public scrutiny and criticism from time to time, I thought it would be good for us to examine what God considers godly characteristics of a preacher of the gospel. Many are sometimes confused as to the nature of a preacher’s work, and how he ought/ought not be. Let us simply take the Bible, and learn what ought and ought not be a part of the preacher’s life. While we could study this in a number of ways, I have chosen to focus this article on I Thessalonians 2:1-12. Please read that section of Scripture, and then study with me. Godly characteristics of the preacher include:

Boldness (v. 2)

Boldness is missing from much of our preaching. Yet, this was characteristic of Paul’s preaching (Acts 13:46, 14:3). In fact, this attitude is encouraged some 31 times in the Scripture. It is imperative that we be “bold,” (i.e., “to be frank in utterance, or confident in spirit and demeanor to venture plainly,” Strong’s) in our preaching.

“Speaking the gospel in much contention” (v. 2)

Let no one deceive himself into thinking that preaching is “easy” or “free from worry.” A reading of Acts 17:4-8 shows some of the contention (“an effort or anxiety:--conflict, fight, race,” Strong’s) Paul faced! Preaching the gospel is not for the faint-of-heart, nor the

thin-skinned!

Not deceitful (v. 3)

Paul had no intention of misleading people, but spoke the truth (Rom. 9:1; II Cor. 11:31; Gal. 1:20). Any man who wishes to preach must be of an honest character (Rom. 12:17; II Cor. 13:7-8; Eph. 4:29; Col. 3:9). Dishonesty/Deceit will ruin a man’s reputation and his effectiveness in the gospel.

“Not as pleasing men, but God Nor of men sought we glory” (v. 4, 6)

Let the preacher never forget who he is serving! Paul told the Galatians, “if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ” (Gal. 1:10). Preachers work FOR the Lord, and WITH the brethren! Let there be no mistake about that. Reversing this order is the recipe for apostasy.

Not using flattering words (v. 5)

Flattering words do nothing to help a lost soul. Christ taught His apostles not to use such words (Matt. 23:7-12). Even Elihu knew not to “accept a man’s person” nor “give flattering titles unto man” (Job 32:21). Let us learn that lesson!

Not covetous (v. 5)

A preacher preaching for money will not preach for the Lord (I Tim. 6:10)! God said this was idolatry (Col. 3:5). Yes, may every preacher be paid according to his work (I Cor. 9:14), but let God defeat every man preaching for money. I thank God for men like Paul who sacrificed in years gone by so that the gospel was preached in our country and souls were saved.

“Gentle” (v. 7)

Preachers must remember to be gentle in dealing with people. Men, like sheep, must be led to the living water (Jn. 4:10, 14). Let us care for those who are lost, as well as the saved. There is a time for having “compassion, making a difference” and a time to “save with fear, pulling them out of the fire” (Jude 22-23). “Boldness” and “gentleness” are not contradictory terms (v. 2, 7). A preacher must be both!

“Labor and Suffering” (v. 9)

A stereo-type often joked about is the “lazy preacher.” A preacher mustn’t be guilty of contributing to the stereo-type! Preaching God’s word is work from beginning to end (II Tim. 4:5). When we forget this, we open ourselves up to covetousness, i.e., just preaching for the money! (see: v. 5)

Behaving “holily and justly and unblameably” (v. 10)

How necessary it is that our behavior reflect what we preach! What Paul taught is what he practiced (I Cor. 9:27). Ezra of old did the same, as did Jesus (Ezra 7:10; Acts 1:1). Preachers, do our actions match our preaching? Some need to repent!

Exhorting, Comforting, and Charging (v. 11)

This is the final responsibility noted in this section. Notice please that the preacher is to “exhort,” “comfort,” and “charge” that men and women, “walk worthy of God who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory” (v. 12)! Paul’s prayer for the Colossians was that they might do this as well (Col. 1:9-10). How this type of living is needed today. Christians need to be reminded at times of who they are serving! Let us all walk worthy of God that we might see Heaven one day.

Conclusion

Is the preacher here obeying Paul (I Thess. 2)? If not, he needs to repent today!

“Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk

Our Members Write

“The Spiritual Value Of A Website”

Scott Gentry, Owensboro, KY

All my life, I have always enjoyed fishing in the pond on my parent’s farm. I would dig a few worms, take up my old cane pole, and fishing I would go. I would spend hour upon hour standing on the bank of that pond, fishing for anything that came within the reach of my pole. Aside from digging a few worms and walking back to the pond, the experience required only a small effort on my part. This method was quite effective for the small farm pond of my parents.

With my first fishing experience in a larger body of water, I soon realized that standing on the shore and hoping the fish would come my way was often less than fruitful. I soon realized what all true fishermen have come to know. If you want to catch the greatest number of fish, or any fish at all in some instances, you have to go where the fish are. While fishing close to the shore can be productive in some situations, many times one must go out into the lake.

Spreading the Gospel message can be analogous to fishing in many respects. Matthew 4:18-21 tells of four fishermen who were called to be Disciples: Peter, Andrew, James and John. Upon seeing Peter and Andrew casting their nets into the sea, Jesus called out unto them “*Follow Me and I will make you fishers of men.*” The account in Luke 5:1-11 records Jesus’ instruction to Peter to “*Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch.*” Upon following these instructions, the catch was so great that it began to sink not only Peter’s boat, but a second boat as well. Again we find Jesus’ instruction to Peter. “*Do not be*

afraid. From now on you will catch men.”

The Great Commission of Mark 16:16 instructs: “*Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved, but he who does not believe will be condemned.*” Jesus has instructed us to spread the Gospel to “*all the world.*” While certainly our area of greatest effectiveness is probably our own community, we can have an influence on the entire world.

For many years congregations have produced bulletins and correspondence courses to spread the Gospel. With the Internet becoming so pervasive in our world, another door has been opened to preaching the Gospel. Southside’s website is available at no cost to anyone in the world with Internet access. Why is this important? It is available 24 hours a day and 7 days a week. Sometimes the hardest part of spreading the Gospel to someone is in reaching him or her. Our website allows for the review of articles and study of the Bible within the confines of one’s home, and at the hours they choose. This might be the individual who does not or would not attend a worship service, or who lives in an area without a faithful congregation of Christians. The denominationalist is given the opportunity to study the errors of their doctrine in their own home, and at their own pace. It provides easy means for anyone to contact us, request a correspondence course, ask questions, or request further

study.

Since the inception of our congregational website, we have truly reached into the world. We have had contact from visitors to our site from several states in the U.S., as well as Malta, India, Haiti, and the Philippines thus far. Just as Jesus instructed Peter to cast off from shore to let down his nets, when fishing, one must often use a boat to reach the greatest number of fish. Our website is but one “boat” used to spread the Gospel to the entire world.

Editor’s Note:

Perhaps a few words of explanation are in order. Though I am editing this bulletin, I want none here to think for some reason that this is “my” bulletin, and not a work of the congregation here. This bulletin is but one tool/“boat” (just as our website, radio program, correspondence courses, etc.) for spreading the gospel, and edifying the brethren. With this in mind, I asked brother Gentry to write an article concerning our website (of which he is the webmaster). I have asked a few other brethren as well to write, whom I hope will be contributing an article to me in the next few weeks.

I plan on asking others to contribute, but don’t you wait until asked. If you would like to contribute a Bible-based article which you have written, please submit it to me, and I would be glad to consider it for publication that the brethren may be edified and instructed in the ways of the Lord.

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Come and meet with the church at Southside.

Our address is: 2920 New Hartford Rd. Owensboro, KY 42303.

MEETING TIMES:

Sunday Morning Bible Study _____ **9:30 am**

Sunday Morning Worship _____ **10:20 am**

Sunday Evening Worship _____ **6:00 pm**

Wednesday Evening Bible Study _____ **7:00 pm**

Don’t forget the call-in radio program on **WBIO, FM 94.7**, Sunday afternoon from 12:30-1:00 pm. **Call: 683-9246** or **683-5200** with your Bible question.

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