

Powerful Preaching #5

Who Today?

In our previous articles we have seen powerful preaching from several different persons in the Bible. We looked at John the Immerser, Jesus the Christ, Peter the apostle, and Stephen the martyr. All of these preached the word in simplicity and truth! Our question is: Who will fill their shoes today? Who will step up and bravely and boldly proclaim the truth (Acts 4:31)?

In our times, the enemies of truth and righteousness abound! The devil uses any and all means he can to deceive and destroy the souls of men, and of his devices, we are not to be ignorant (2 Cor. 2:11). The devil has very effective ways to infiltrate the church and corrupt the souls of brethren. Let us briefly look at a couple of them.

Worldliness is a great problem among Christians. The Lord told us of those who would be taken in by the cares and affairs of this world (Matt. 13:22). Some are taken in by covetousness and conceit (Col. 3:5; Phil. 2:3). Others are overwhelmed by lusts and lewdness (Gal. 5:19). Still, there are those who use filthy and unfit language (Eph. 5:4). Will there be men who stand against such worldliness, expose the sin, and call upon the sinner to repent and "be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable, and perfect will of God" (Rom. 12:2)?

False doctrine is rampant. Some men are teaching that Jesus had both a human and a divine spirit while on earth (contra Lk. 23:46). Others say that the new testament of Christ is not new, but a continuation of one covenant (contra Heb. 8:6-7). Likewise, and even more prominent, are the issues of fellowship and marriage, divorce, and remarriage. Many men are teaching people, in one way or another, that the Bible does not condemn their adulterous marriages (contra Matt. 19:9). Still other men teach that Romans 14 will allow us to continue in fellowship with those who teach error on marriage, divorce, and remarriage (contra 2 Jn. 9-11). Will there be men with enough fortitude and love for truth to openly and unashamedly denounce such error? Will preachers faithfully "preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, [and] exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" (2 Tim. 4:2)? Will elders dutifully "take heed therefore unto [themselves], and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made [them] overseers, to feed the church of God, which

he hath purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:28)?

Again, we ask: Who will step up to the battle for souls to imitate and duplicate the powerful preaching of the Lord and his servants (1 Thes. 1:6, ASV)? Too many are shirking and shying away from their duty in order to placate the fancies of men (2 Tim. 4:3-4). Whether it be for love of men or an anemia to controversy, we know not, but one thing is for sure, they do great harm to the cause of the Savior and bring reproach upon his blood bought body! To love men more than Christ and his gospel is plainly sinful (Matt. 10:34-37; 1 Cor. 4:6; Gal. 1:10). To lack strength and courage in battle is to be unmanly and infirm (1 Cor. 16:13; 1 Thes. 2:2; Eph. 6:10; Jude 3). These are enemies to the cross of Christ (Phil. 3:18). The Lord said, "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad" (Matt. 12:30).

Some do not like plain, straight-forward preaching, nor do they like controversy, but if they were to take a good honest look at the new testament of our Lord and Savior, they would see that it is filled with such (Matt. 3:7-12; 23; Acts 8:18-23; 17:17; Rom. 2:1-11; 2 Cor. 13:1-3; Gal. 4:16; etc.). From the very beginning the Lord was embroiled in controversy because he plainly taught the truth (Lk. 4:16-29). At one point, the Savior even became "physical" in his indignation for unrighteousness (Jn. 2:13-17). Truthfully, he would not be welcome in many churches today! Who today will exhibit this same zeal?

Let us not kid ourselves into thinking that if we turn a blind eye or sweeten our speech that the error and sin will simply go away--it will not! Error is like a cancer and will spread until it kills the whole body (2 Tim. 2:17). Let us be determined to stand firm in the truth and resolute in our demand that men leave sin and submit to the gospel. "Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle" (2 Thes. 2:15). "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor. 6:17-18). Let us support those who faithfully serve the Lord. "Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God" (2 Tim. 1:7-8). Who today will "speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority" (Tit. 2:15)? Will you?

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