

## Does "Hard" Preaching Pay?

For several years there has been a discussion within the brotherhood as to the relative merits of "hard" preaching in comparison with "persuasive" preaching. By this latter is meant the type of preaching that never refers to a denominational church by name, uses the Dale Carnegie "method of approach" psychology, seeks never to shock or offend anybody, and in general tries to "love" sectarians into Christ rather than to teach them by a stern contrast of truth and error.

Lately there has grown up a rather definite school of thought in certain sections that a "new era" is dawning among the churches of Christ. In this new and enlightened age the emphasis is to be put on worship, work, love, and fellowship. The old "doctrinal" emphasis, it is felt, was all wrong. We must seek a new way of winning people to the Lord. Men who emphasize the old "doctrinal" teaching must give way to men who preach "love" and "fellowship".

Well, we've had occasion recently to see some "hard" preaching results close at hand. Down in Lufkin, Texas, the church of Christ has had a daily radio program for many months. The radio stations there (two of them) have put no restrictions on brethren. In the matter of calling names of denominational churches and preachers, Roy Cogdill, William Thompson, Jr., and Luther Blackmon have not been at all hesitant. They have read from Baptist manuals, Methodist disciplines, Catholic Catechisms, over these stations, telling the people exactly who it was in Lufkin that taught such doctrines. They have referred to these denominational churches by name, and have read the Bible in direct contradiction of the teachings of these churches. Now that is about as "hard" preaching as even the "hardest" among us have ever desired or attempted. So we were grateful to have a chance to weigh the results.

We found the town of Lufkin in a seething ferment because of such preaching. Men on the street corners were discussing the matter; denominational preachers were preaching about it in their pulpits; the Assembly of God pastor, after consultation with other sectarian preachers in town, went on the air over both stations to try to prove that "the so-called church of Christ was started by Alexander Campbell after he had been withdrawn from by the Baptists." He warned all the denominational people to stay away from the services of the church of Christ, and to ask their own pastors rather than those "hard" preachers any questions they might have in mind as a result of the sermons of "these Campbellites."

And the result? In about one years' time something like a hundred people from denominational churches have become obedient to the gospel of Christ. The Lufkin church has held eight gospel meetings within the town and its immediate environs within that year, most of them being conducted by the local preachers. These people who have been baptized into Christ are taught; they have not "cast their lot with the church of Christ" because they were friendly with the local preacher nor, because they enjoyed the "fellowship" of members of the church. They are Christians because of a deep and overwhelming conviction of the truth as it is taught in the New Testament.

We merely cite this as a case in point. We believe there is ample evidence from all over the world to show that preaching that is truly effective is "doctrinal" always, all ways, and forever!

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