

Preachers Need To Hear Preaching Too

I have been extremely blessed over the past several years to have the opportunity to prepare and preach sermons from God's Word. Perhaps even more edifying has been the opportunity to hear sound gospel preaching as well. Since the time this new congregation began assembling together, I have truly enjoyed listening to the best Wednesday night devotions that I have ever heard. I cherish each opportunity to listen to and apply the Biblical principles to my life as expressed by those who present the devotions. This time of devotion is important to my growth as a Christian and a young preacher. Though I grow daily through my own Bible studies as I prepare to present two sermons each Sunday and a Bible Class on Wednesday, it is from the lessons and sermons presented by others that reach the deepest depths of my heart where perhaps my own personal studies have fallen a bit short. We've all heard statements and reflected, "I've never thought of that before." Thus, it makes sense that the experiences and studies of another can fill in the gaps that exist in our own.

Perhaps, one of the biggest problems among preachers in our brotherhood may be that they preach too much and listen too little. Some men, contented by the fact that they've been preaching for 30-40 years, have become "at ease in Zion" (Amos 6:1). They are at ease because they think they know all they need to know. This being the case, they do not consider themselves to be in need of sound, gospel preaching. Many preachers, for many years, have only heard what they, themselves have preached. These men have found the preacher they want to hear and are content to stick with him. These men do not have a preacher to "step on their toes" and if one try to correct them, they immediately dismiss such as wrong because it is not what they hear (or want to hear) from the pulpit on Sundays. Such preachers have allowed themselves to become their own standard of right and wrong. Because they have not heard anything in the pulpit adverse to what they preach (since they are the ones preaching), they are convinced that they are faithful and anything contrary to that assessment is disregarded.

Let us never be so enthralled with ourselves and the knowledge we possess that we forget **Who** it is we are to please (Acts 5:29) and by **What** it is that determines right and wrong (Psalm 119:128; John 8:31-32; 12:48; 17:17). "The statutes of the LORD are right" (Psalm 19:8); "the ways of the LORD are right, and the just shall walk in them" (Hosea 14:9). We must place ourselves in front of the mirror that is God's Word and do whatever necessary to ensure that our lives are reflective of what God teaches (James 1:22-25). As preachers and teachers, let us acknowledge our dependence upon **hearing** the Word of God that we may continue to grow in the Faith (Romans 10:17; 2 Peter 3:18). We must put ourselves to the test to make certain that we are living in harmony with God's Will. "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves" (2 Corinthians 13:5).

– *Brad Green*