

CLASS NOTES - PRACTICAL PRINCIPLES IN THE LIFE OF THE GOSPEL PREACHER

Taught By Robert Stapleton



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PRACTICAL PRINCIPLES IN THE LIFE OF THE GOSPEL PREACHER

Robert Stapleton

CLASS DESCRIPTION:

1. This class seeks to give a proper perspective to various principles related to being a gospel preacher.
 - A. Class time will be used to discuss and practice principles related to the actual work of the gospel preacher.
 - B. The material for this course is, for the most part, material I have gathered over the years of which I have put together in this format.
2. The following points will be covered:
 - A. God's Preacher - Page 3
 - B. On Preaching – Bill George – Page 5
 - C. An Open Letter To My Fellow Ministers – Maurice W. Lusk, III - Page 6
 - D. Ethics For Preachers – Curtis A. Cates - Page 10
 - E. The Burdens of a Preacher – John Waddey - Page 23
 - D. Ten Tips to Young Preachers – Willard Collins - Page 25
 - E. To Be An Effective Preacher – Neal Pollard - Page 28
 - F. The Preacher's Private Life: Study Habits – Wendell Winkler - Page 29
 - G. How To Improve Your Preaching – J.J. Turner - Page 34
 - H. Speech Preparation in the Restoration Movement – David Walker - Page 37
 - I. Why Preachers Move...Or Quit! – Bob Barnhill - Page 41
 - J. The Preacher and His Family – Bobby Liddell - Page 44
 - K. The Role of the Preacher as a Counselor - Robert Stapleton - Page 47
 - L. Baptism – Practice the act of...
 - M. Open discussion on matters pertaining to how to handle certain situations.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS:

1. During the quarter each student is to read one of the books in the Recommended Reading List below along with the book *The Preacher and His Work* by Dan Flournoy. A reading log is to be kept on both books.
 - A. The book from the Recommended Reading list should be a different book than the one read for the course on *The Preacher, His Life, and His Preaching*.
 - B. Instructions concerning log.
 1. Keep a typewritten log of your reading, with dates and chapters read.
 - A. Your log should be turned in to instructor no later than the beginning of class day during the finals week – late papers count one grade per day off.
2. In connection to this each student is to prepare a typewritten critique of the chosen book consisting of at least five double spaced pages, Times New Roman 12 Font. Critique should be turned in to instructor no later than the beginning of class day during the finals week – late papers count one grade per day off. Critique will count for 20% of your total grade. Watch for misspelled words and check your grammar. A log should be kept.
3. Tests:
 - A. Two scheduled test will be administered.

1. Each test will account for 40% of your total score.
 2. Additional credit will be at the instructor's discretion.
4. Recommended reading:
- A. The Life And Work of A Gospel Preacher, Maxie B. Boren.
 - B. The Work of The Gospel Preacher, Thomas B. Warren.
 - C. How To Make It As A Preacher, J.J. Turner.
 - D. Thirty Minutes to Raise the Dead, Bill Bennett
 - E. Why Johnny Can't Preach, T. David Gordon
 - F. The Preach and His Work, Jack Meyer, Sr.
 - G. Preaching to Preachers About Preaching, John Waddey
 - H. Bigger Men for Better Churches, Cleon Lyles
 - I. A Manual In Non-Boring Preaching, Jerry Moffitt
 - K. Training Men to Preach, Claude A. Guild
 - L. The Minister and His Work, Micael R. Weed
 - M. On Death And Dying, Elisabeth Kubler-Ross

PRACTICAL PRINCIPLES IN THE LIFE OF THE GOSPEL PREACHER

God's Preacher – Adapted From Christianity Today

“Make your preacher a minister of the Word. Fling him into his office, tear the office sign from the door and nail on the sign: Study: Take him off the mailing list, lock him up with his books -- get him all kinds of books -- and his Bible. Slam him down on his knees before texts, broken hearts, the flippant lives of a superficial flock, and the Holy God. Force him to be one in the community who knows about God. Throw him into the ring to box with God till he learns how short his arms are; engage him to wrestle with God all the night through. Let him come out only when he is bruised and beaten into being, a blessing. Set a time clock on him that will imprison him with thought and writing about God for 60 hours a week. Shut his big mouth forever spouting 'remarks' and stop his tongue always tripping lightly over everything non-essential. Require him to have something to say before he dare break silence. Bend his knees in the lonesome valley, fire him from the PTA, and cancel his country club membership; burn his eyes with weary study, wreck his emotional poise with worry for God, and make him exchange his pious stance for a humble walk with God and man. Make him spend and be spent for the glory of God.

Rip out his telephone, burn up his ecclesiastical success sheets, refuse his glad hand, and put water in the gas tank of his community buggy. Give him a Bible and tie him in his pulpit and make him preach the Word of the living God. Test him, quiz him, and examine him; humiliate him for his ignorance of things divine, and shame him for his glib comprehension of finances, batting averages, and political in-fighting. Laugh at his frustrated effort to play psychiatrist, scorn his insipid morality, ignore his broadmindedness, and compel him to be a minister of the Word.

Make your minister a preacher of the Word. Form a chorus and raise a chant and haunt him with it night and day: 'Sir, we wish to see Jesus.' When, at long last, he dares assay the pulpit, ask him if he has a word from God; if he does not, then dismiss him and tell him you can read the morning paper, digest the television commentaries, think through the day's superficial problems, manage the communities fund drives, and bless assorted baked potatoes and green beans better than he can. Command him not to come back until he has read and re-read, written and re-written, until he can stand up, worn and forlorn, and say: 'Thus saith the Lord.' Break him across the board of his ill-gotten popularity, smack him hard with his own prestige, corner him with questions about God, corner him with demands for celestial wisdom, and give him no escape until he is backed against the wall of the Word; then sit down before him and listen to the only word he has left: God's Word. Then feel privileged to sit at his feet.

Ask him to produce living credentials that he has been and is true father in his own home before you allow him license to play father to the flock. Demand to be shown that his love is deep, strong, and secure among those nearest and dearest to him.

Make your preacher first a preacher. Mold him relentlessly into a man forever bowed but never cowed before the unconcealed truth that he has labored to reveal, and let him

hang flung against the hard destiny of almighty God; let his soul be stripped bare before the onrushing purposes of God, and let him be lost, doomed, and done that his God alone be all in all. Let him, in himself, be sign and symbol that everything human is lost, that grace comes through loss; and make him the illustration that grace is amazing, sufficient, and redemptive. Let him be transparent to God's call. And when he is burned out by the flaming Word that coursed through him; when he is consumed at last by the fiery message blazing through him, and when he who was privileged to translate the truth of God to man is finally translated from the earth to heaven, then bear him away gently, blow a muted trumpet and lay him down softly, place a two-edged sword on his coffin and raise a tune triumphant, for he was a brave soldier of the Word and e'er he died he had become a spokesman for God."

PRACTICAL PRINCIPLES IN THE LIFE OF THE GOSPEL PREACHER

On Preaching – Bill George

“When I was in his class on *Preparation for the Ministry* at David Lipscomb College, Batsell Barrett Baxter shared his thought with his students: ‘The tyranny of preaching is that Sunday comes once every seven days.’ I think of that statement often - at least once a week. No matter how experienced a preacher is, no matter how many hours a week he puts into study, Sunday still comes every seven days.

This is the greatest enemy of the preacher in his preparation of each week's messages. A chapel speaker at Harding Graduate School several years ago spoke on the need for more expository preaching - the most difficult type of sermon to do well. Afterwards one of the students asked him, ‘Why is it that there were so many great expository preachers in England and America during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and so few today?’ With only a moment's pause the speaker replied, ‘Because they had studies and we have offices.’

Yet the demand for excellence in preaching is probably greater today than ever before. Because of the ease of travel, more members have heard more great gospel preachers today than in any previous generation. And how many times is a preacher unconsciously compared to a TV personality in terms of his ability to speak, persuade and even entertain?

Dub McClish recently published an article that illustrates well the preacher's plight:

‘The average sermon contains 5,000 words. Most preachers deliver at least 90 sermons per year. This totals 450,000 words per year. An average full-length novel contains 50,000 words, so this means that a preacher is producing the equivalent of nine full-length novels each year.’

Whew! No wonder I feel tired! In twenty years a preacher produces the equivalent of 180 full-length novels. In fifty years that would be a whopping 450!

How many authors do you suppose could produce nine full novels each year for twenty (or forty) years, using the same basic theme and “plot”, without sinking to the depths of repetition and boredom even if he could do it at all? Can you imagine the study, preparation, research, time and effort that would go into such a project? Neither can I! But it does answer a question that sometimes bemuses brethren concerning what preachers do. One thing for sure, preaching is no place for the lazy, unmotivated person who is looking for a soft way to make a living.’

In light of Dub's article, perhaps brethren will forgive us preachers if every so often a sermon “drags” a bit in spots or lacks the emotional punch or scriptural depth here and there it ought to have. Preaching and the sermon preparation required to do it well is difficult. If you doubt it, just try it sometime. . .”

PRACTICAL PRINCIPLES IN THE LIFE OF THE GOSPEL PREACHER
An Open Letter To My Fellow Preachers – Maurice W. Lusk, III
The Southeastern Evangelist – June, 1981

Some time ago this writer was told by a member of the board of one of our Christian colleges that less than 2 % of the graduates of Christian colleges are Bible majors who enter the ministry. I have no way of verifying this figure but if it is true, one can easily see a crisis for the church developing in terms of qualified ministry. It just may be that the crisis is in its beginning stages at the present time.

The State of the Ministry in the Churches of Christ

Several reasons may be cited as to why there are not more men entering the ministry than there are. We could discuss the abuse many ministers experience: from low pay, to impossible congregational expectations, to unjust and unreasonable criticism from the brethren; many men simply leave the ministry from a broken heart. Then there is the success syndrome. Waylon and Willie suggest that mammas and daddys ought not let their boys grow up to be cowboys; we would suggest that in the church mammas and daddys don't want their boys to grow up to be preachers. People want their children to be successful. But this raises the question of how one spells success: is it "success" or "Succes\$?" In our present world it is clearly the latter, and it is a fact that a minister will never be a Succes\$\$ in this sense of the word.

We could also mention the growing lack of respect for the ministry. At one time, and not that long ago, the minister was one of the most respected men in the community, at least within the community of believers. Such is no longer the case.

One of the major reasons, however, for the decline of the ministry in the churches of Christ, and perhaps the most current reason, is that many ministers come to the realization that they are not as qualified or competent in their profession as they need to be to adequately address themselves to the overwhelming task and/or challenge of the Christian ministry. Such a feeling of inadequacy hides within many ministers, but it eventually surfaces, and usually in an hour of crisis which results in driving him from one of the greatest works of this life. What a pity! What a heartsickening state of affairs we've created for ourselves!

The reasons for this inadequacy are varied and numerous. An unrealistic and/or immature concept of the ministry is the cause in many cases. A young man has no idea of the awesomeness of the responsibility the minister assumes in serving a local congregation of God's people. Inadequate preparation is another factor, perhaps the most significant factor. Many people think that all one needs to be a preacher is a copy of the KJV, the ability to quote Scripture, and the gift of gab. He must also be a fair comedian and learn to talk funny; e.g., pronounce God as "Gawd," Bible as "Biabull," and Jesus as "Jasusss." Of course, he can learn these things later after attending a few brotherhood lectureships. This is an extremely sensitive area to this writer. I very deeply resent such a concept of the minister as well as those who help to create such a concept. Such a concept smacks of artificiality and ignorance. The man entering the ministry in the times in which we live needs to be as genuine and knowledgeable as any man entering any profession of our society.

Essential Areas of Knowledge for the Minister

The first step in improving the lack of competency and/or quality in the pulpit is to improve the quality of, as well as our concept of, ministerial education. There are areas of knowledge which are absolute "musts" for the present-day minister, that is, if he is going to adequately address himself to his world, and particularly his brethren. Let me suggest ten areas of knowledge and/or proficiency as essentials for any and every minister who desires to be the best he can be.

First of all, he needs to know that God exists and be capable of offering adequate evidence in proof of God's existence to the unbelieving challenger. Many ministers will only affirm that they "believe" that God exists, but they cannot say they "know" or are "sure" or "certain" that he exists. We suggest that such a man has no business in the pulpit of the Lord's church. How can he lead others to a sure knowledge of God if he is not even there himself.

Secondly, he needs to know that the Bible is the inspired word of God and have a concept of inspiration that is provable and/or rational and in complete harmony with the characteristics of the document he is claiming to be inspired. A naive, irrational, irresponsible concept of inspiration can be counterproductive in leading an intelligent truthseeker to a true concept of the Bible as a body of "guaranteed truth." More people are rejecting Christianity at this point than at any other point of doctrine. Intelligent people are not going to believe that the Bible came floating down, page by page, out of the sky, nor that men wrote in a dormant state what God dictated to them, not even knowing what they were writing.

In addition to and in conjunction with this, the minister should know how we came to possess a correct text of these ancient writings. How do we know that these documents we call "canonical" are truly from God and have been faithfully preserved and transmitted through the centuries to us? Basic and essential introductory matters such as authorship, dating, recipients, and purpose of each book of Scripture should be familiar areas of knowledge to the minister.

Thirdly, the minister needs to know all that he can about the one we believe to be the Son of God. "Who" and "what" was Jesus of Nazareth? What does it mean to confess Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God, the Lord and Savior of all men? What do these christological titles mean? How can it be that he was a being who was both "deity" and "man" in one and the same being? How can such a thing be? Was God actually here in the person of Jesus of Nazareth? Here is, perhaps, the area of greatest compromise within the modern theological community, and the greatest area of challenge to Christianity as we know it today.

Fourth, the minister needs to know the NT doctrine of salvation. This involves such issues as the nature and meaning of sin. What is meant by the term "salvation," and how can the death of Jesus of Nazareth effect salvation for others? How one may receive this salvation is, perhaps, the most essential and probing area of this whole discussion.

Fifth, the minister must possess the ability to "search the Scriptures" (i.e., exegete the text) in order to understand their original meaning and be able to make correct and appropriate application of the message of the ancient text to men and women of the twentieth century. Such a capability or proficiency demands skills in exegetical research, which, in turn, demands a working knowledge of the languages (Hebrew and Greek) in

which the Scriptures were originally penned.

It is at this point that the greatest resistance is voiced by the current ministry of the churches of Christ. It seems that many of our brethren are persuaded that dependency on (or better "faith in") English translators is a more preferable way of being sure of the message of the first century text. We have issued a plea to our age to return to first century Christianity. It would seem, however, that we are only willing ourselves to return to 1611 AD for our Scriptures, rather than to the first century. From what some of our brethren say one would think that the King James translators were inspired of God in their work and incapable of translation error. Those brethren who are most vocal in this persuasion are usually those who have no proficiency in biblical languages and are not in a position to speak with any kind of authority on the matter. One must be capable of examining and evaluating the data from which such a conclusion must be drawn before such a conclusion can be called rational and responsible. If one is to evaluate the accuracy of a given translation, he must be capable of comparing it with the Hebrew and Greek text from which it is translated; comparing it with the KJV or ASV is a completely illegitimate procedure. For those thinking that it is not necessary for the minister to know Greek in order to be sure of his message, we would suggest that he compare the following verses of NT Scripture in the current English translations and see if he knows which translation is correct: Titus 2: 13; Heb. 11:1; I Cor. 14:2,4,13,14; I John 3:6,9. For those who see no erroneous theological bias in the English translations, explain why the "s" is capitalized in the word "Spirit" in John 3:3-5 while there is no exegetical justification (neither lexical, grammatical, nor historical) for such a translation. This text has been used for over three hundred years by Calvinists to prove their doctrine of Holy Spirit regeneration. And for those convinced that all exegetical matters may be settled by the English text, explain the seeming contradiction between Acts 9:7 and 22:9 using only the English text. It is a curiosity how we have allowed ourselves to become so dependent on scholars who know the biblical languages, both from the denominational community as well as the brotherhood, where we, as ministers of Christ should be as competent in our exposition of Scripture as they, and could be if we would only give up our tenacious resistance to the study of the exegetical disciplines such as languages, hermeneutics, exegesis, logic and etc. Perhaps we would rather place more faith in the King James translators and denominational commentaries such as Barne's Notes, Pulpit Commentary, Linski and Adam Clarke than in ourselves; after all, it is easier, but not nearly as rewarding.

Sixth, not only should the minister know the Word of God, he must be able to effectively communicate it to others, by both tongue and pen. The ability to address an audience and hold their attention has become a sophisticated art in our times, especially with the development of the television and radio media. Whether the preacher realizes it or not he is in competition with Walter Cronkite, Dan Rather, John Chancellor, Paul Harvey, William Buckley, and Phil Donahue, only to mention a few of those accomplished in persuasive speaking, whose voices are with us always. Our ministers are simply not being prepared to compete with such as these, especially when the stand-up comedian enters the picture. This is, however, what the local preacher is up against. If this constant barrage of eloquence is all around us, how can we not, in our minds, compare the preacher's communicative effectiveness to those others we constantly hear?

Seventh, the minister must possess the ability to help people deal with their everyday problems and perplexities, recognizing that counseling is a skill which must be learned We are not suggesting here that the minister needs to be a psychologist, professional therapist or counselor. Rather, we are suggesting that he, as an astute and accomplished minister, have a clear understanding of himself, his family and others. He needs to know his limitations and what he can realistically expect to accomplish with individuals, thus, lowering his frustrations and increasing his sense of accomplishment. In essence, we are suggesting that he needs to know how to identify "needs" in people, including himself, and how to address himself most effectively to the needs of those around him. Helping people, after all, is his business. One cannot address himself to people's needs, whether in his preaching or personal work, if he doesn't know their needs nor how to identify their needs. In all of this, however, he should never forget that he is a minister not a professional counselor.

Eighth, he should possess an understanding of the first century church as identified in the NT and historical data of the first century era. In addition to this there should be an understanding of the progress of the church from its pristine state in the first century to the confusing maze of denominationalism common to the twentieth century religious scene: from the ancient apostasy, through the reformation, to the restoration movement of which the twentieth century church of Christ is a part.

Ninth, the minister should have a good exposure to successful methods and programs of church growth. This would involve programs and methods of evangelism, as well as Bible school organization and other programs related to the life and growth of the local church. Good programs and methods are essential to successful growth. The "do-something-even-if-its-wrong" philosophy can destroy a congregation.

The tenth and final area concerns the minister's personal life: he should be schooled in the management of his personal affairs. Nothing can ruin a minister quicker than mismanagement of his affairs. From time management to management of his financial affairs, the minister should be a good steward. This is often one of the greatest areas of deficiency for the minister. Impractical, irresponsible spending, the "buy-now-pay-later" mentality can lead to financial suicide. Equally as important is the management of time. With a multitude of matters waiting to be attended to, the constant demand on his time from his brethren, not to mention his family, a minister can find himself in a total state of frustration, exasperation, and exhaustion. These matters, however, needn't get out of control; managing one's affairs is a discipline which can be learned.

Conclusion

We would remind the reader that we are not suggesting that one must be proficient in all the above mentioned areas to be a minister. What we are suggesting, however, is that these are areas of proficiency for the minister who wants to be as accomplished, proficient, effective, and professional as he can be. It all depends on how good he really wants to be and what price he is willing to pay to instill real "quality" into his ministry.

PRACTICAL PRINCIPLES IN THE LIFE OF THE GOSPEL PREACHER

Ethics For Preachers – Curtis A. Cates

Yokefellow – July 23, August 18, September 15, October 12, 1993

INTRODUCTION

“Of all the fields of labor in which a person may engage; perhaps few are as misunderstood as the work of preaching the gospel. ‘With many it is the only calling wholly free from care--a life of rest, of dignified ease, and painless luxury. Nothing could be more erroneous than this,’ said Moses E. Lard. (Moses E. Lard, ‘Our Mode of Preaching,’ *Lard’s Quarterly* 4 (July 1867): 253.) He continued,

No other calling pursued by man imposes burdens more numerous, none burdens so weighty. No responsibilities are so heavy as those of the preacher; and where else can duties be found of a nature so delicate, and requiring in their performance so much skill? (Ibid).

Therefore, it requires special men to be evangelists of the Lord. Roy H. Lanier, Jr., wrote, ‘It is an insult to all gospel preachers of all ages to believe that just anyone can be a faithful gospel preacher. The work of preaching the gospel is special work, and it takes special people to do that work.’ (Roy H. Lanier, Jr., ‘Can Just Anybody Be a Preacher?’ *Gospel Advocate* 124 (November 18, 1982):683.)

The New Testament church exists today throughout the world because the pure seed of the kingdom (Luke 8:11) has been proclaimed, being planted into the hearts of honest, truth seeking men and women who ‘obeyed the gospel’ (Rom. 10:16). God has given evangelists a very vital role in carrying the gospel to the far corners of the earth, and doors are being opened where the gospel heretofore was unwelcomed. We need men who will preach the pure Word (II Tim. 4:2; I Pet. 4:11), whose influence is not nullified by an ungodly life. ‘Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an ensample to them that believe, in word, in manner of life, in love, in faith, in purity’ (I Tim. 4: 12). Preaching the gospel and preachers have a special place in the heart of this writer; he has worked for several decades in training ‘men of the Book,’ Many more faithful evangelists are needed to enter the fields that ‘...are white already unto harvest’ (John 4:35). He does not wish to discourage any worthy person who has the potential from entering the pulpit, but rather encourage. Realistically, though, ‘...it is not the life for everyone. God needs many members of the body, workers in his vineyard, and not all of them should be preachers.’ (Ibid.). And, unfortunately, some who are preaching should either repent and reform their lives in certain areas or get out of preaching entirely. Brother H. Leo Boles warned that the faithfulness of a preacher is critical, since, ‘No member of the congregation has greater influence in the congregation than the preacher. He has more influence over the congregation than the elders.’ (H. Leo Boles, ‘Bad Preachers,’ *Gospel Advocate* 85 (December 3, 1943):683.) Often, that is the case. He continued,

If the power and influence of the preacher in the church are for good, all is well; but if it is evil, woe be unto that church. There is scarcely a trouble in the church, and especially a

faction or division, but that some preacher has had something to do with it. (Ibid.)

Some preachers in the New Testament went bad, such as Judas (Acts 1:25); Demas (II Tim. 4:10), Hymenaeus and Philetus (II Tim. 2: 17), doing much harm to the cause of Christ. Since preachers are still partakers of flesh and blood (Heb. 2:14) and are thus still subject to temptation by Satan, it is appropriate to study Ethics for Preachers.

The word 'ethics'[ethos, Greek] means a custom (Acts 6:14) or manner (Acts 15:1; Heb. 10:25), or habit (Luke 22:39). It could designate '...contextually, **usage prescribed by law, institute, prescription, rite:** Lk. i.9; ii.42; Acts xvi. 21;...' (Joseph Henry Thayer, *Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1976), p. 168. Thus, one can understand the definition given by *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*: 'The study of the general nature of morals and of the specific moral choices to be made by the individual in his relationship with others; the philosophy of morals.' (As powerfully and devastatingly proven by Thomas B. Warren in his debates with universally noted atheists Antony G. N. Flew, Wallace I. Matson, and J. E. Barnhart, the very existence of ethics [a higher, universal moral law] demands the existence of the God of the Bible, upon whose very nature ethics [morality] is founded.) (Thomas B. Warren and Antony G. Flew, *The Warren-Flew Debate* (Jonesboro, AR: National Christian Press, 1977); Thomas B. Warren and J. E. Barnhart, *The Warren-Barnhart Debate* (Jonesboro, AR: National Christian Press, 1980); and Thomas B. Warren and Wallace I. Matson, *The Warren-Matson Debate* (Jonesboro, AR: National Christian Press, 1978).

God's command for the preacher is the same as for any other Christian. 'For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world' (Tit. 2:11,12).

It is an awesome thought for preachers that the effect of their sermons depends very much on who they are. Every preacher is giving two messages at the same time: one is what his words say, the other is what his personality is saying. If the congregation has the feeling that the preacher is in earnest, that he deeply believes what he says, that he cares about the people he is talking to, and that he is essentially a happy man, this will all be a part of the sermon. Exactly the same words would have an entirely different effect if the preacher gave the impression of being pompous, egotistical, melancholy, or soft. (George E. Sweazey, *Preaching the Good News* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1976), p. 294.)

Very much depends upon a preacher's character, or ethos. 'In no other profession is personality so important. Are not the ministers who have done the most for you those you felt were the best persons, quite apart from whether they were the ablest?' (Ibid). The apostle Paul urges, 'For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified' (I Cor. 2:20; he did not preach himself, but '...Christ Jesus the Lord' (II Cor. 4:5). On the other hand, Paul also realized that his personal life could wreck his faith and render his work ineffective, were it not exemplary (I Cor. 11:1; 9:27; I Thess. 2:1-6).

This article will examine the following aspects of preacher ethics: having proper

motives for preaching, working diligently in the vineyard, possessing the attitude of a Christian, dealing righteously and with integrity, being morally pure in heart and life, and handling finances wisely.

PROPER MOTIVES FOR PREACHING

A first consideration is that a preacher must be characterized by scriptural motives. In a chapel speech delivered by J. W. McGarvey, president of the College of the Bible, he condemned preaching just to fill an appointment, just to practice for one's life work, to have an easy time, to get rich, or to be popular. He urged upon the students the only justifiable purpose of the work of preaching. (John William McGarvey, *Chapel Talks* (Lufkin, TX: The Gospel Guardian Company, 1956), pp. 17-20.) Paul wrote to the young preacher Timothy, 'But thou, O man of God...' (I Tim. 6:11); thus, the preacher must know that he is God's man and that he is to do His bidding. 'The task we accomplish is not ours, but His. The results of our ministry are not ours, but His.' (Don Dewelt, *If You Want to Preach* (Joplin, MO: College Press, 1957), p. 19.) Very appropriate are the words of J. W. McGarvey:

The foundation for this training must pre-exist in an ardent desire to become a preacher, not for the ease and respectability which may be attained by it, but for the good of men and the glory of God. A young man who begins to prepare for the ministry with only half a heart, is not likely to become more than half a preacher. He must undertake it from [a] deep sense of duty and [a] longing for the salvation of men...' (J. W. McGarvey, 'Ministerial Education,' *Lard's Quarterly* 2 (April 1865):241.)

Brother E. A. Elam wrote, 'The very greatest consideration of life is the salvation of one's soul; the most fearful consideration is the loss of one's soul.' Paul's one thing was to save his soul (Phil. 3:8-15). Brother Elam continued, 'But Paul could not be saved without trying to save others (I Tim. 4:16.) So, we cannot be saved--no one can be saved--without trying to save others.' Then he warned, 'Any motive in preaching the gospel except to save souls to the glory of God, whatever it is, is wrong. Hence, to reach the greatest number of souls with the gospel is the greatest desire and the greatest effort of every true preacher.' (E. A. Elam, 'Preachers Must Set a Good Example,' *Gospel Advocate* 82 November 14, 1946):1084.) 'Well, what is it for? The apostle Paul gave the purpose of the work of the preacher when he wrote to Timothy. He said, 'By doing you will save both yourself and them that hear you.' (McGarvey, *Chapel Talks*, 9.)

Moses Lard expressed concern that some preachers would not place enough emphasis upon preaching the Word and upon urging Christians to study the Word.

Now your first concern will be enlightenment. By every means in your power, not forbidden by Christianity, must you carry forward the education of the disciples in the holy scriptures. Your failure to do this will be fatal. Neglect here is the great ruining sin of the age. As soon as the children of God begin to neglect the minute and exhaustive study of his Word, their theory of Christianity will become dim. This dimness will first show itself on the far outer edges of the kingdom. Gradually it will extend toward the center. As this neglect increases, the dimness will deepen. The shadows of night, thin at first, will imperceptibly thicken as they grow longer. If the neglect still go on, on still will grow the shadows. Thus, an eclipse of

the glorious light of the gospel becomes not a violent future improbability. Already it has once occurred. We look for it again.' (Lard, p. 260.)

Speaking of the danger of attempting to please men rather than God, brother Barton W. Stone said,

Some are tempted to please men by ostentatious show of learning and talents. This is to preach self, not the Lord Jesus--it is to advance self, and not the cause of Christ--it is to gain the applause of the world, not to save souls from ruin--it is to be popular, not useful. Vain, presumptuous mortal! How despicable in the view of heaven! (Barton W. Stone, 'To Young Preachers,' *The Millennial Harbinger* (April 1859):212,213.)

Hugo McCord wrote, 'It was important to Paul to be able to say "neither at any time were we found using words of flattery" (I Thess. 2:5). Some preachers are people pleasers, scratching itching ears (2 Tim. 4:3), and very popular.' (Hugo McCord, 'The Ethics of Preaching,' *Ethics for Daily Living* (Henderson, TN: Freed-Hardeman College, 1986), p. 206.) Unfortunately, 'Many in this generation berate and downgrade the man who preaches the Bible,' brother B. C. Goodpasture observed.

They want something that 'sounds' scholarly and philosophical. Such were not the preachers of apostolic times. On Pentecost, Peter, an inspired preacher, delivered a great sermon, more than a third of which was composed of quotations from the Old Testament. Paul, in his great speech in Pisidian Antioch, drew heavily upon the same source.... Peter, Paul, and Jesus.... They were 'Bible preachers.'

He later stated, 'Our ministry cannot pillow its head on the lap of sectarianism without being shorn of its power.' Commenting on these quotations, Noel Merideth correctly urged, 'Let no preacher dare to stand before an audience and be a mere promoter of human philosophy; let him be a powerful proclaiming preacher of the power of God--the gospel!' (J. Noel Merideth, 'Preachers, Churches, and Spirituality,' *Gospel Advocate* 117 (May 1, 1975):273.)

DILIGENCE IN PREACHING

A second consideration is that a preacher must be diligent and steadfast in the work of the Lord. Brother McGarvey asked,

Why do you expect to make preaching your life work? What is that for? Is it in order that you may have an easy time in life? If that is the case then you are a lazy fellow. And as soon as you get into the work and the people find out that you are in that work just to have an easy time they will not ask you to come and preach for them any more. (John William McGarvey, *Chapel Talks* (Lufkin, TX; The Gospel Guardian Company, 1956), p. 18).

Regarding the preacher and Paul's command to Timothy to 'Be diligent in these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy progress may be manifest unto all' (1 Tim. 4:15), Roy Lanier, Jr. commented, 'The work of an evangelist ought not to be a hiding place for lazymen.' (Roy H. Lanier, Jr., 'Can Just Anybody Be A Preacher?' *Gospel Advocate* 124 November 18, 1982):685). Brother McCord wrote that 'A lazy preacher is

a thief.' He further spoke of the preacher's 'ethic of willingness ('of his own accord,' 2 Cor. 8:17; Rom. 1:15; Acts 21:13) [as] one of the greatest of all virtues,' in contrast with one's refusing to make hospital visits or to render other such loving assistance! (Hugo McCord, 'The Ethics of Preaching,' *Ethics for Daily Living* (Henderson, TN: Freed-Hardeman College, 1986), p.207). McGarvey said that a preacher's education should include the following:

He should be impressed with the necessity of constant industry. He should be taught that his field of labor is not confined to the pulpit, but extends from house to house throughout the community, and reaches down to all the little children; and knowing this, he should be fully advised as to the most successful method of cultivating the entire field. (J. W. McGarvey, 'Ministerial Education,' *Lard's Quarterly* 2 (April 1865);p.242).

A CHRISTIAN ATTITUDE IN PREACHING

A third consideration is that a preacher be characterized by a humble, loving spirit. With soundness in the faith goes soundness in spirit 'Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong. Let all things be done with charity' (I Cor. 16:13, 14). Being members one of another in the one body (Rom. 12:4, 5; I Cor 12:25-27) rules out bitterness, strife, harshness, and meanness. Contrast the attitude commanded in Romans 12:9-21. Those who please God in the kingdom (including preachers) are those with dispositions of lambs, calves, and little children - not of leopards, bears, wolves, lions, and snakes. Mean-spirited children of God are self-deceived; they are not among the faithful (Isa. 11:6-9). God's man is humble (Prov. 18:12; 16:18; Jas. 4:6), is considerate of others (I Cor. 10:24; Matt 7:12), and is a servant (Mark 10:43-45; Rom. 1:1; Acts 20:34, 35). 'The minister is called upon to regard every person in the congregation with equal love and concern. It is a ministry of impartiality and utmost discretion...'

Though the preacher 'is supposed to be living at the fountain source,' he can still have spiritual and attitudinal problems. (George E. Sweazey, *Preaching the Good News* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1976), p.306). The writer has heard it illustrated thus: though the sun's rays which pass through a lens and are focused upon a leaf cause the leaf to become so hot that it burns, the lens remains cool. So likewise can the truth be proclaimed by a preacher, yet his heart be unchanged by the spirit and message of the Word. This may in part explain the mean, vicious heart or the lack of zeal characteristic of some preachers, though they be doctrinally sound. Regarding this very real problem, Sweazey observed:

Being a religious technician is a spiritual hazard for a minister. When he attends a worship service, he has a notebook where his heart should be, and even in his private prayer a homiletical self is looking over his shoulder, watching for thoughts and phrases for the Sunday service. His Bible is a working tool, to be read with one eye out for likely texts. His daily devotional reading easily becomes more appraisal than appreciation. [Sunday] is a day of work. It is hard to see a rose as a poet does while you are studying for a botany exam. It is hard to take the kingdom of heaven as a little child if you are schooled in ancient heresies, modern structures, and the manipulations of ecclesiastics. A geologist may be less

awed by the Grand Canyon than are most visitors.

The minister has a problem with familiarity; he gets so used to sacred things he may scarcely notice them. His failure is not that of the hypocrite, who lives contrary to his pretensions, but of the professional, who lives alongside them. His religious reactions are conditioned reflexes that no longer require thought or will. It is quite possible to handle the truth of God in a way that will be helpful for other people without being aware of it for oneself...

Repetition may make a minister lose his sensitivity. We get used to experiences that for nonprofessionals are still fresh and exciting. This was the fault that Jesus saw in the ecclesiastics, and he was 'grieved at the hardness of their hearts.' Hardness, in the New Testament Greek, is porosis, which means to be covered with a callous. The Pharisees had with time become insensitive; the frequent rubbing caused them to grow a hard covering. There is a danger that our hearts will lose their feeling and our brains will become machines for turning out sermons: (Ibid., pp.307, 308.).

Brother Stone warned, 'In vain we attempt to preach in the spirit, unless we have the spirit and experience the force of that truth we deliver to others. A man may preach the truth in the letter without the spirit. Such preaching is vain – useless to saint and sinner.' (Barton W. Stone, 'To Young Preachers,' *The Millennial Harbinger* 11 (April 1859): 212). Very critically needed, indeed commanded, is the preaching of the truth, the-pure gospel (John 8:32; II Tim. 4:2; et al.); but also critically needed and commanded is that pure heart and loving tenderness which mourns over the sins of the world and makes every sacrifice to "rescue the perishing" (Matt. 5:4; Gal 6: 1; et al.). The preacher must never become insensitive to the inspired message to him, not only in matters of practice but also in matters of his attitude, compassion, humility, and integrity of heart. Meanness is not soundness! He must allow the Scriptures to speak to him, reading and meditating on the Word for his own good. He must pray genuinely and regularly, for he never can outgrow the need for wisdom and for God's help. And, he must never allow himself to become bitter; 'notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known and the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever' (II Tim. 4:17, 18).

INTEGRITY IN PREACHING

A fourth consideration is that a preacher must be characterized by judging 'righteous judgment' (John 7:24) and by dealing fairly. The preacher must be a man of integrity; he must be absolutely honest and genuine. 'Preaching can survive countless honest errors; it cannot stand insincerity.' Williard L. Perry, *We Prophesy in Part* (New York: Harper Brothers Publishers, 1938), p. 306.) Batsell Barrett Baxter wrote of the necessity 'of demonstrating or exemplifying the life which he [the preacher] would have others attain.' Batsell Barrett Baxter, *The Heart of the Yale Lectures* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1947), p. 31.) It must be said that the power to save is in the gospel, not in the preacher no matter how great his oratory, pleasing his personality, or persuasive his pleading (Rom. 1:16; John 6:44, 45; 12:32). But, one's prejudice, dishonesty, bitterness of spirit, perversity of and meanness of heart can neutralize, even destroy his effectiveness.

There exist numerous areas in which the preacher must guard his attitudes and actions. First, 'The person is called to maintain integrity and honesty in study and not play to [his] audience.' (Heins, p. 22.)

Integrity of character also demands straight talk with everybody. Speaking the 'truth each one with his neighbor' (Eph. 4:25) forbids flattery. It was important to Paul to be able to say 'neither at any time were we found using words of flattery' (I Thess. 2:5) Some preachers are people pleasers, scratching itching ears (2 Tim. 4:3), and are very popular.' (McCord, p. 206.)

Second, the preacher is to use integrity with the Word (II Tim. 4:2; Jude 3; II John 9-11; I Pet 4:11; Gal. 1:6-9).

When a gospel preacher has lost his conviction about the relevancy of the restoration plea or biblical inerrancy and still continues to preach he is not a man of integrity. If he cannot continue to 'stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel' (Phil. 1:27), he is not being fair with his hearers and he is taking money under false pretenses. Honesty demands that he quit preaching. (Ibid.)

Rubel Shelly urged those 'who no longer believe the basic doctrines of the gospel,' whose 'views are contrary to the convictions which have characterized our brethren from Pentecost to the present day,' who seek 'to stay within the body of believers as a subversive[s],' to be 'honest enough to break with us openly and quit their unmanly treason.' (Rubel Shelly, 'Oh, For an Honest False Teacher,' *Gospel Advocate* 113 (May 6, 1971):283,284.) [Unfortunately, brother Shelly has parted from numerous doctrinal truths which he once faithfully affirmed.] (Curtis A. Cates, "A Brotherly Appeal for a Public Discussion on a Crucial Matter,' *Yokefellow* 18 April 15, 1991): 1. (This issue contains the details of a loving appeal to the elders of the Woodmont Hills Church of Christ and to their preacher, Rubel Shelly, made by the elders of the Knight Arnold church of Christ, that brother Shelly and brother Garland Elkins debate the issue of salvation by grace. Brother Shelly said in *Love Lines*, the Woodmont Hills bulletin, October 31, 1990, 'It is a scandalous and outrageous lie to teach that salvation arises from man's activity. We do not contribute one whit to our salvation.' Though brother Elkins signed propositions denying the above, brother Shelly has steadfastly refused to sign propositions affirming his averments. It is our fervent prayer and desire that brother Shelly will repent and therefore will not see the need to follow his own advice herein quoted.)

Third, the evangelist is to beware of preacher jealousy. It causes envy and strife; it impedes the spread of the Word and hurts good men (especially the ones eaten up by this envy). 'Jealousy among preachers has often been the source of parties and cliques, and men who read the Bible know that the Holy Spirit condemns such,' brother J. Roy Vaughan wrote. '...the greatest preachers are those who live humbly and preach Christ and not themselves. Such a man may not even know he is a big man in the church, but the church knows, and, best of all, God knows it.' What happens when a preacher begins to think he is big? 'The possibility is: the moment he finds out he is a big man, he immediately becomes a little man. Danger lurks here for all of us.' Beware of worldly

ambition! (J. Roy Vaughan, 'Preacher Jealousy,' *Gospel Advocate* 89 (November 27, 1947):962.

Fourth, the preacher is to 'play the game fair,' said H. Leo Boles, citing such scriptures as Deuteronomy 16:18, 19; Micah 6:8; Philippians 4:8; Colossians 4:11; and John 5:30. He included such violations of ethics as quoting a person out of context or just a part of a sentence, bearing false witness against a brother, and carrying gossip. (H. Leo Boles, 'Play the Game Fair,' *Gospel Advocate* 73 (January 8, 1931):36. Batsell Baxter wrote,

None of us would have much respect for a preacher or other religious leader who fought with fists or physical weapons, but he can use his tongue as much as he pleases in public or private; and no matter how much damage he does, many of us seem not to mind. And he can be immune, because most of us are committed to the principle not to go to law against 'a brother.' Some preachers will go through the rest of their lives crippled because they got into somebody's way and got 'murdered.' No, not a shot was fired; no one used a knife; no one swung a club. No, not that. But someone exaggerated a fault, or capitalized upon a situation, or took advantage of prejudice, or in some other way repaid a real or fancied wrong to get a rival out of his way. The hurt in some cases has been fatal. (Batsell Baxter, 'Two Preachers in a Fight,' *Gospel Advocate* 62 (October 14, 1920):995.)

He observed that preachers have very often been able to settle differences between and among brethren in various congregations, enabling them to worship God together in love and harmony, with former hatred and bitterness forgiven and forgotten. Then he asked, 'But when preachers have a difference, it seems that nothing will work. Everything fails. Why is it?' (Ibid.) Brother Boles said, 'Men in the legal or medical profession often have a higher code of honor and a greater respect for other members of their profession than do Christians and preachers of the gospel.' Indeed, not only do false charges and slanderous reports do injustice to those attacked, but 'something of good will toward the ministry as a whole is lost.' (H. Leo Boles, 'Clerical Monopoly of Slamming,' *Gospel Advocate* 62 (October 4, 1920):995.)

Some wiseacres go to the opposite extreme and would seek to condemn the exposure of false teachers (Rom. 16:17; Gal. 2:4, 5; Jude 4; I Tim. 1:20; II Tim. 2:17; et al.) and to condemn anyone who is 'set for the defense of the gospel' (Phil. 1:17). Brother Baxter warned against such cowardice and extremism:

Let us not condemn a good, clean fight for principles. There are times when the safety of the church demands it; times when 'grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock'; times when from among your own selves 'men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.' In such cases every loyal servant of God must fight for 'the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints.' **God's servants must fight for sound doctrine, fight for humble Christian living, fight for the faith and practice revealed in the New Testament.** (Batsell Baxter, p. 1196.)

MORAL PURITY AND PREACHING

A fifth consideration is that a preacher must be pure in heart and life (Matt. 5:8; I Cor. 9:27; II Tim. 2:20; I Tim. 4:12). 'It is unethical for a minister to jeopardize his own reputation [or] that of any woman member of his church by engaging in questionable acts and visits, terms of endearment, or evidences of partiality.' (Heins, p. 25.) Citing a survey by *Leadership*, a magazine read by evangelists, Tim LaHaye pointed out these alarming findings. This confidential survey, was sent to 300 sectarian 'pastors.'

Approximately 33 percent of the pastors surveyed had confessed to 'sexually inappropriate' behavior with someone other than their spouse. Another 18 percent admitted to 'other forms of sexual contact with someone other than their spouse, i.e. passionate kissing, fondling, mutual masturbation,' while in the ministry. Of the ministers polled, 12 percent acknowledged having had sexual intercourse with someone other than their spouse since they've been in local church ministry. When asked about the person with whom they had 'sexual intercourse or other forms of sexual contact,' 52 percent of the adulterous pastors said it was someone on the church staff or in their congregation; another 17 percent said the other person was a counselee. Of the pastors who admitted to illicit sexual contact, only 4 percent indicated that their congregations had uncovered their infidelity. (Tim LaHaye, *If Ministers Fall, Can They Be Restored* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1990), pp. 14, 15.)

Because of the unbending adherence to the moral principles of the Word in years past, we could speak of how few marriages between Christians who were students in our Christian colleges end in divorce, as contrasted with the general populous, of how few cases of divorce took place among Christians, and of how rarely divorces occurred with gospel preachers. However, even among some of 'our' professors and preachers today, God for all intents and purposes does not even have a law on marriage! Even some of the sectarians are having to take a 'back seat' to some of 'our' preachers, as they 'restudy' marriage, divorce, and remarriage and discover additional 'scriptural grounds' for infidelity and immorality. With them, adultery is no longer a 'heinous crime' {Job 31:9-12). God no longer hates 'putting away' (Mal. 2:16), adulterers are no longer to be disfellowshipped (I Cor. 5:1-11), the adulterer must no longer repent and get out of his adulterous relationship in order to be scripturally baptized (I Cor. 6:9-11; Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38), and adulterers are no longer subject to hell fire (Rev. 21:8). With this heresy, dear reader, congregations and, yes, even the pulpits are being more and more filled with adulterers. Then, what happens when the elders finally wake up and realize that the command still exists to 'Preach the Word' and to come out from the world, be separate, touch not the unclean, and cleanse ourselves (II Cor.6:17-7:1)? The problem has long existed, but it is being greatly exacerbated. Brother Lard warned in 1867,

Some preachers are very fond of kissing one sex of their flock; but it is very curious that, though moved to their affectionate act purely by their love for Christ, they never kiss the other sex, nor do they ever thus fondly greet the aged sisters. These men, no doubt, are very amorous and very suspicious, and are quite right in evincing how in Christ they do love certain sheep of the fold. Still I would advise all such preachers to refrain from kissing, and all churches of Christ to refrain from such preachers.⁴³ (Lard, p. 259.)

If one has preached very long, he has been shocked and saddened on numerous occasions to hear of the fall of some of his fellow preachers to the lust of the flesh, Brother Jack Meyer, Sr., wrote, 'Right here, in preachers' relations with women, is where some of the biggest names--in and out of the church--have tripped. It is tragic, but true.' (Jack Meyer, Sr., *The Preacher and His Work* (Shreveport, LA: Lambert Book House, 1960), p. 87. [Cf. *Fallen Shepherds, Scattered Sheep* by F. LaGard Smith]). Brother Rex A. Turner, Sr., gave us preacher students more than thirty years ago very sage advice: 'Men, be careful in your relationships with women and money, the two greatest pitfalls of preachers.' My preacher father gave me the same advice. As the writer has attempted to train faithful preachers, 'men of the Book,' for more than two decades, he has urged these same warnings upon his students. Still, he has had a number of former students who have succumbed to the smooth and deceitful wiles of Satan and, in so doing, jeopardized their very souls, their marriages, their preaching, their self-respect, etc., etc. It can happen to any of us; as Paul, the wise man of God 'buffets his body.' One does not get too strong to fall (I Cor. 10:12)!

Why has the attitude toward divorce changed? **First**, the attitude toward God's authority and toward the authority of His Word has changed. Many preachers and professors are now questioning whether one can even know the truth (John 8:32), and many thus have assumed an existential, situation ethics stance. Thus, God's Word is no longer, with some, held to be absolute in its doctrinal and moral demands. **Second**, the loose environment has had its influence.

As the stigma of divorce has diminished, the media has glamorized the image of unfaithfulness. We have been led to believe that everyone is involved in it and that only a few uninformed religious fanatics see anything wrong with it. We have even developed new terminology to describe it. We call it a 'fling' or an 'affair,' The Bible calls it 'adultery' and labels it 'sin,' Sexual unfaithfulness is an unspeakable act of betrayal. It disparages the love and trust one's partner has invested in his or her mate and it is a violation of the covenant that we made on our Wedding day.⁴⁵ (Gary Hundley, 'Affair; A Fling; Affliction,' *Hill Country Herald* 9 (April 28, 1991):2.)

Brother Hundley listed as possible contributing factors to infidelity the following: 'discontent with one's mate'; 'wife isn't meeting emotional or physical needs'; 'someone [else] willing to and be sympathetic'; 'grow tired of fighting. . . long for escape'; 'seeking affirmation...want to prove that you haven't lost your youth.' He then said, 'Then comes rationalization and compromise.' 'In time of war,' writes Boake Carter, 'the first casualty is truth. That's when a person becomes vulnerable to temptation and failure.' (Ibid.) Steve Williams lists: if he 'finds himself in the false image of a preacher [that preachers are wimps, sissies, lacking in masculine traits (unlike sportsmen, those who work with their hands, those who drink, etc.)], there is the subtle temptation to prove himself a man, to affirm his maleness,...; finding oneself 'needing his maleness affirmed' counseling women who need the 'femininity ratified.' Steve Williams, 'Ministers and Sexual Immorality,' *Gospel Advocate* 133 (April 1991):34, 35.) LaHaye lists: 'the power of seductive women...' They 'are unfulfilled in their marriage or are in some way

emotionally and sexually starved.’ Fantasizing about the preacher, ‘before long their lust becomes aggressive. And unless a [preacher] recognizes her conscious or unconscious intentions, he becomes vulnerable’; an ‘emotional bonding’ with another woman, which often is the ‘first step toward infidelity’; allowing oneself to develop a pride which ‘subtly implies that we are above the law’; developing a resistance to the fact that one is accountable, that he is above the law; being angry toward one's mate; being a workaholic and thereby undermining his relationship with his wife, leading to finding fulfillment elsewhere; not controlling one's lust, which might be made more severe by pornography. (LaHaye, pp. 35-61) However, the preacher must remember that though these are situations which make one more vulnerable to temptation, he **remains** a free-moral agent, and the infidelity results from choice--his own. He is responsible and accountable to God; God will not hold him guiltless (John 12:48; Gal. 5:16-24). LaHaye correctly affirms: ‘The bottom line is **sin**. Plain, old-fashioned sin’ (Ibid., p. 63.)

The preacher must, like everyone else, honor and live by the Scriptures (Matt. 19:9; Rom. 7:1-4; et al.). He must maintain a pure mind (Matt. 5:8; 28; Job 31:1ff). He must respect the strength of sexual temptation and flee from it, as did Joseph. He must work to have a healthy marriage (Song of Solomon; Eph. 5:22-23; et al.). He must spend quality time--time--with his mate and family. And, he must be genuine in heart, as well as in life--no hypocrite, united with his wife in pure, true Christian spirit and work.

ONE'S FINANCES AND PREACHING

A sixth consideration is that a preacher must be characterized by the honest, wise handling of his finances. The Apostle Paul stated that a gospel preacher has a right to be paid (I Cor. 9:6-13). Indeed, Paul wrote the Lord's decree: “Even so the Lord ordain that they that proclaim the gospel should live of the gospel” (9:14). A preacher worth his salt deserves to be paid; otherwise, he deserves to be fired! Brother Boles said,

Sometimes the congregation fails to give the preacher the support that is due him. The preacher, as a result of a lack of full support, cannot meet his obligations with his grocer and others who have been kind enough to credit him. Soon the report is out that the preacher will not pay his debts. Who is responsible for such condition? (Boles, ‘Play the Game Fair,’ p. 37.)

He was speaking of some withholding their contribution because of one's preaching the truth of God. But, it could apply also when brethren do not try to keep a preacher up with the cost of living, when the congregation does not fulfill its commitment to the preacher, etc. [Incidentally, where does this breaking of the original contract, giving a man one month or one day to vacate the house (both of which the writer has heard recently), or cutting off one's salary in less time than that formerly, formally agreed fit into ‘playing the game fair’? Both the preacher and the congregation are commanded before God to fulfill their commitments (Rom. 12:17).] The preacher is responsible to God's command in I Timothy 5:8, as is every other Christian: ‘But if any provideth not for his own, and specially his own household, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.’ Please, brethren, do not put him in a situation which violates the command.

The preacher is to be a faithful steward. And, he must have enough sense not to preach for money. Brother McGarvey correctly observed that, ‘...if there was a man thinking that he was going to be a preacher in order to get rich, he is too big a fool to be a preacher.’ Further, he said,

And as soon as the people find out that that is even one of your motives for preaching that will be the end of your preaching. There is not a man, woman, or child in the country who wants to hear a preacher who is preaching for the money, and that one of his chief aims. (McGarvey, *Chapel Talks*, p.18.)

Brother Lanier wrote, ‘It [preaching] never offers complete financial security; it offers most of the time a security that can last until the next business meeting.’

Further, it never offers family stability, for the preacher is most often the expendable one in serious controversy. And how often do the children grow up similar to Paul with ‘no certain dwelling place’? (I Corinthians 4:11). The hardships are able to be borne by qualified men, even with grace and dignity, certainly no complaining. The tragic loss of men to our pulpits has been disastrous, and it would be interesting to know just how much their inability to suffer hardship has been involved. (Lanier, p. 685.)

One not counting the cost should not seek to become a gospel preacher.

Are most evangelists doing well in handling their finances? George DeHoff said,

As a whole, preachers are honest. Indeed, they have to be. While the brethren may get into debt and stay that way without much commotion being raised about it, one preacher in debt can cause a tempest in a teapot and a report the ‘preachers do not pay their debts,’ which will be echoed for twenty years. ... Every bill the preacher owes is a matter of public gossip; every salary check or royalty check (or what-have-you check) is a matter of public comment. Living thus in a goldfish bowl, it is no wonder most preachers have a good sense of humor--they must have to save what little religion they had to start with. Some preachers are good pay because they are being watched; others, because they just naturally are decent and honest sort of folks. (George W, DeHoff, ‘This and That,’ *Gospel Advocate* (November 5, 1942).

God has not promised the preacher that He will provide for him in spite of his lack of honesty, or his lack of business sense, or his extravagance. Most preachers are paid a living wage. Preachers, like others, are ‘under sacred obligations to use the money carefully and discreetly, making it go as far as possible; for it is a trust from God.’ Also, ‘Character, for the most part, is determined by one's relation to money. Find out how one gets, saves, spends, gives, lends, borrows, and bequeaths money, and you have the character of the man in full outline.’ (Price Billingsley, ‘The Extravagant Preacher,’ *Gospel Advocate* (January 27, 1910):99,100.) E. Claude Gardner quoted brother N. B. Hardeman thus: ‘...if one is not just as anxious to pay a debt as he is to make a debt he is not honest.’ (E. Claude Gardner, ‘Preacher Debts,’ *Gospel Advocate* (September 25, 1975):613.)

Brother Stone advised preachers, ‘Beware of an avaricious or covetous spirit. Read Paul to Timothy, I Epistle, vi:6-11. Having food and raiment, let us therewith be content...’ (Stone, p. 212.) Brother Lipscomb spoke of the mercenary:

The whole plan of a preacher's putting himself up to the highest bidder, shifting about from place to place for the sake of a little higher salary, is at once a degradation to Christianity, demoralizing to the man, and the worst of policies for his support. It makes merchandise of the Christian religion, supplying the preaching of the gospel to the rich because they are rich. . . . preach earnestly, not for favor or money, but for souls. When the brethren aid you, be thankful and preach the gospel: when they neglect you, work and toil and preach the gospel. Do not grumble or complain. (David Lipscomb, ‘The Mercenary Preacher,’ *Gospel Advocate* 91 (July 7, 1949).

The preacher ‘...must never sell his talent on the block to the highest bidder...’ (Claude A. Guild, *Training Men to Serve and Preach* (Fort Worth, TX: Guild Publications, 1968), p. 148.)

CONCLUSION

Being a gospel preacher can be the greatest life in the world, one of the happiest and most fulfilling. It can bring great rewards to the man, his wife, his children and all those about him. It can be a life so rich and so useful. But it is not the life for everyone. God needs many members of the body, workers in his vineyard, and not all of them should be preachers. Happy is the man who can use some sanctified common sense when making this decision. (Lanier, p. 685.)

God's plan for saving man is by the preaching of the gospel (I Cor. 1:21). No work is more noble. Let each of us think, live, and serve humbly and with the full assurance that a crown filled with many stars awaits the faithful man of God (Rev. 2:10; Dan. 12:2; II Tim. 4:6-8). What great dividends are vouchsafed to the preacher of the Word!

PRACTICAL PRINCIPLES IN THE LIFE OF THE GOSPEL PREACHER

The Burdens of a Preacher - John Waddey

Gospel Advocate – November 20, 1980

There is no greater, grander work on earth than preaching the glorious gospel of Jesus. (Romans 10:15). No vocation is more grueling and demanding than that of a gospel minister (2 Timothy 1:11-12). There is no worker that Satan hates more than God's servant. The evil one will use every conceivable trick and tool to disrupt the preacher's work and discourage his efforts (2 Corinthians 2:11).

Every man who enters the ministry of Christ should know full-well the awesome weightiness of the task and the battle he must wage. Most men are prepared to pay that price (Luke 14:28-33).

Many a man has died with a crushed and broken spirit because those who should have stood by his side in the conflict fled and deserted him.

There are some additional burdens often laid on preachers that become unbearable for some.

1. There is the burden of working with a non-supportive congregation. It is strange but true that many congregations employ a man to work as their evangelist and then refuse to support the work he attempts to do. Many a preacher is burdened by a general apathy in the church towards their own needs and goals. Often the man in the pulpit is confronted with hostility and negative criticism from the very folks who asked him to help them serve God. Paul was broken hearted by such ungrateful treatment by his Corinthian brethren (2 Corinthians 11:7-9). Even more distressing is the desertion of a minister by his congregation when the war with sin and sinners grows hot and deadly. Many a man has died with a crushed and broken spirit because those who should have stood by his side in the conflict fled and deserted him. Jesus knew this bitter cup as did Paul (Mark 14:50; 2 Timothy 4:16).

Another such burden for God's man is a lack of appreciation for his work and welfare by his brethren. It is a basic human need to realize some sense of appreciation from those we serve. Ingratitude is inexcusable. Yet many a church has shown such disdain for a brother's efforts that he walked out of the pulpit never to return. While we would not excuse his abandonment of his post neither can we excuse this ingratitude for one who faithfully taught them God's truth (Acts 20:27).

2. There is the burden of a non-supportive eldership. Elders ask a man to work with them so that God's will can be done in their congregation and community. They have their work of over-seeing the flock (Acts 20:28), he has his of preaching the divine Word (2 Timothy 4:2). Often, however, we see elders who expect their preacher to do their work and his also. This is a job too big for a single man. Besides it is contrary to God's plan.

Preachers are often burdened by elders who refuse to back them when carnal members resist the teaching of sound, healthy doctrine (2 Timothy 4:1-3). It is especially painful when a man is left standing alone when personal attacks are made against him. Space would fail us if we began to list the case histories of good men thus deserted by

their elders. God give us leaders of integrity who will not allow a worldly element to crucify a good man! Give us elders who will not sacrifice a preacher because of financial pressures or threats of powerful men or groups in the church. May they hold up their arms as did Aaron and Hur for Moses (Exodus 17:12).

3. There is the burden of a non-supportive wife. A married man can never do his best for the Lord without the loyal support and help of a godly wife. Many an average preacher has been credited with a great work for God because of the dedicated help of his wife. Pity however, the brother who labors to serve God with the burden of a mate who cares nothing for his ministry. Even more to be pitied is the preacher whose mate is antagonistic to his career for God. We have seen good men shamed and embarrassed by a mate whose love for God and the church had grown cold and calloused. Occasionally, a man succeeds in spite of his mate, rather than because of her. But if he did a good work with that burden, how much more could he have done with her loving, enthusiastic help. Surely any woman who loves Jesus and hopes to live in heaven would gladly help her husband in whatever honorable profession he serves, how much more if he be privileged to serve the Lord's church as a proclaimer. If he should honor her as the weaker vessel, surely she should honor him as her husband (1 Peter 3:5-6), head (Ephesians 5:23) and a man of God (1 Thessalonians 5:13). A wife that makes her preaching husband ashamed is as rottenness in his bones (Proverbs 12:4).

Conclusion: We live in a day when gospel preachers are in short supply, when hundreds of men are dropping out of their gospel work. At no point in history has there been a more desperate need for evangelists to preach the word to lost souls, strengthen the saints and oppose the works of darkness. Let each of us daily pray that God will help us bear the burdens of preaching brethren rather than be a burden to them (Galatians 6:2).

PRACTICAL PRINCIPLES IN THE LIFE OF THE GOSPEL PREACHER

Ten Tips to Young Preachers -Willard Collins

Gospel Advocate - April 22, 1971

Gus Nichols became the regular preacher for the Sixth Avenue church in Jasper, Alabama, on January 1, 1933.

At the age of 79, he is preaching on two radio stations each day in Jasper, preaches for the regular services of the congregation, and is in great demand for meetings and lectureships. He and his wife are a great source of encouragement, not only to their immediate family, but to thousands of Christians who know and love them.

During a meeting with the congregation in March, I asked this man, who has been averaging five hours of Bible study each day since 1919, to give me ten tips which would be of benefit to young preachers. On the last day of the meeting, he prepared the following material.

1. In view of encroaching liberalism, preach the word-as the verbally inspired and infallible guide in all matters of faith and revelation (Psalm 73:24; Jer. 10:23; 2 Tim. 3:15-17).
2. Rightly divide the word - In view of radicalism, distinguish between *specific* and *generic* authority. Recognize the fact that there is a realm of human liberty where the way to do some things is under a specific command, as to the thing to be done, but at the same time generic, as to how to do the thing specified. Matters of expedience come under this type of authority (2 Tim. 2:15). Don't change *specific* Bible authority into *generic* authority; nor *generic* authority into *specific*.
3. Don't under-estimate the spiritual power of the word of God (Heb. 4:12; Rom. 1:16). The Bible can keep you from sin, and nothing but sin can keep you from the Bible-from studying, believing and teaching the Bible (2 Tim. 2:15; Isa. 34:16; 1 Tim. 4:12-16). Don't let the world and the things thereof crowd out hours of Bible study every day.
4. In order to be fit for study and work, you must guard your health and practice self-control. Don't live to eat, but eat to live. Sleep seven hours daily. Eat proteins-milk, vegetables, lean meats, fish, cheese, eggs. Of course, as a Christian, you will abstain from "alcohol, tobacco and drugs" altogether (Prov. 20:1; 23:29-35; Luke 1:15; 1 Thess. 5:22). Face your problems and solve them, if possible. If need be, counsel with those capable of giving scriptural advice and instruction. Stay happy every minute and live longer. Love to do your work each day. Trust God by fixing your mind upon him continually, and he will keep you in perfect peace (Isa. 26:3; Phil. 4:4-9). He who would love life and see good days must live wisely and well (1 Pet. 3:8-12). You will live longer wearing out than if on the shelf rusting out.
5. Make a total commitment of your whole soul and body unto Christ and his service. You can't half-heartedly preach the gospel and succeed (Matt. 22:37-41; Rom. 12:1-2; 2 Cor. 8:1-4; 1 Chron. 29:5; Eccles. 9:10). Christ is *worthy* of more than our best. "Be fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." "Be zealous for good works."

6. Provoke and stir up the churches to good works (Heb. 10:24). Get them to support you in trying to see that the gospel is preached to every creature in all world in our generation (Mark 16:15-16, 20). Don't seek to preach only to the best churches, and to the best moral people you can find. A good doctor treats all kinds of patients. He does not leave town when health problems arise and during epidemics when diseases are taking a heavy toll. Don't leave a church, nor ignore a country, city or people because they are sin-sick. Christ came not to those well, but to those sick (Luke 5:29-32).
7. Don't lecture to the people, but preach unto them the full gospel of Christ. Sinners cannot be saved by pretty little flowery speeches. Keep back nothing that is profitable unto men, don't shun to declare the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:20-27). It is possible for you to preach from the Bible a lifetime and never preach a single gospel discourse, just as it is possible for a doctor to prescribe drugs from the drug store for a lifetime and never give that which is essential to the healing of those sick.
8. Preach by the life you live - practice what you preach. Don't be a hypocrite. While trying to preach to save others, also preach so as to save yourself. Aim your sermons at yourself - preach to the preacher. He should be a good learner, and student (Rom. 2:21-24). If you can't further convert and strengthen him, your efforts to convert others and build them up in the faith and hope of the gospel will be largely in vain.
9. Be agreeable - be fit to live with, and fit to live. Contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints, but don't be contentious (Jude 3; Rom. 2:11). Contend for the truth, but don't cause trouble by contending for some opinion about some matter of expediency. Don't make laws for God by either adding to his law, or in any way changing it; and don't make either positive or negative laws for God in the realm of liberty under generic commands. Whatever is commanded of us is bound, and must be done (Matt. 16:18-19). But there is a difference (in some instances) between what is commanded and what is authorized otherwise. Christians are commanded to observe the Lord's supper (1 Cor. 11:17-34). But individual containers are authorized without being commanded. Their use is optional, and not bound. The thing to be done is commanded and bound. But the method and means of doing it are left to human judgment. Whatever number of containers we choose to use are authorized by the generic command to observe the supper, which is specific as the thing to be done, but generic, as to how to do it. Make no laws in this realm, where God makes none. Leave men liberty where God left them liberty. Make no law saying, "Thou shalt," nor "Thou shalt not." God's law is sufficient.
10. Don't be impatient and high-tempered. Love people and have compassion for them when they are ignorant and in the wrong-even for *brethren* in this class. "Condescend to men of low estate." And don't be weary in well-doing-don't get tired of going right. If the word of God and the scriptural way seemingly have failed, don't try, or experiment with anything else. "Preach the word"-*"preach the gospel."* Preach it if you fare well, and preach it if you don't. Preach the gospel when it seems to get good results, and preach it when it seems to be ruining

everything. Don't resort to human wisdom as a substitute for the gospel of Christ... (Rom. 1:16).

PRACTICAL PRINCIPLES IN THE LIFE OF THE GOSPEL PREACHER
To Be An Effective Preacher - Neal Pollard
Power – June, 2004

Don't:

1. Play Politics (Local or Brotherhood)
2. Ride Hobby Horses
3. Forget Your Family
4. Look For The Perfect Church
5. Saddle Yourself With Debt
6. Be A Slave To Your Passions
7. Be Lazy
8. Be Cliquish
9. Move Into A Glass House
10. Allow Indiscretions With The Opposite Sex
11. Be Satisfied With Your Level Of Competence
12. Cater To Your Audience

Do:

- BE GENUINE
- BE BALANCED
- BE RESPONSIBLE
- BE CONTENT
- BE SENSIBLE
- BE DISCIPLINED
- BE PRODUCTIVE
- BE FRIENDLY
- BE YOURSELF
- BE PURE
- BE HUNGRY
- BE CONVICTED

The Effective Preacher Should:

1. Pray Fervently!
2. Encourage (Acts 4:36)
3. Visit
4. Prepare For Retirement
5. Be Organized
6. Study With *Diligence*
7. Learn To Love People
8. Be Patient – It Takes Time
9. The Work Of An Evangelist
10. Have Hobbies
11. Take Family Vacations
12. Keep His Heart Right
13. **Always Be God's Man!!**

“But watch thou in all things, endure affliction, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.” (2 Timothy 4:5)

PRACTICAL PRINCIPLES IN THE LIFE OF THE GOSPEL PREACHER
The Preacher's Private Life: Study Habits – Wendell Winkler
Christian Courier, March 1, 2004

Introduction

In the nature of the case, the preacher has certain peculiar challenges, opportunities and responsibilities. In this presentation we will discuss his study habits. Thus, as we begin, let us observe:

The Preacher Is to Study

Dry wells cannot give forth water. Brethren will not long come to stagnate pools to drink. We cannot teach what we do not know any more than we can come back from where we have not been. A part of our cranium is not so arranged that it can be detached and knowledge deposited. There is no royal road to learning. Shallow, repetitive preaching is inexcusable. The preacher, and the congregation for whom he preaches, is no stronger than the diet he consumes and he correspondingly feeds the local church. Each of these observations simply emphasizes the indispensable importance of the preacher being a serious student of the Word.

1. *"What saith the scriptures?"* Though Timothy was a constant companion of the apostle Paul, and though the apostle's hands had been laid on him, resulting in the impartation/reception of some spiritual gift(s) (2 Tim. 1:6), Timothy was still instructed, "Study to show thyself approved unto God" (2 Tim. 2:15).
2. *Paul is an example.* Though winter was fast approaching (2 Tim. 4:21), and Timothy was encouraged to come shortly (2 Tim. 4:9) and bring Paul's cloak that he had left at Troas, he was instructed to bring "the books, but especially the parchments" (2 Tim. 4:13). Yes, here we have study above necessary clothes.
3. *Other illustrations.* Alexander Campbell, David Lipscomb, Hugo McCord and Franklin Camp are additional examples of great Bible students.
4. *A word of caution.* Though his primary work is studying/delivering the sacred message, the preacher must avoid closeting himself to where he is never out by the river Kebar sitting where they are sitting. To do otherwise would render his preaching irrelevant and non-receptive, along with him being rendered insensitive and socially maladjusted.

The Preacher Is to Study with Proper Attitudes

1. *The preacher is to study "eagerly"* (Mt. 5:6; 2 Pet. 2:12; Ps. 42:1; 119:20, 40, 131).
2. *The preacher is to study "reverently."* With David he should say, "But my heart standeth in awe of thy word" (Psa. 119:161).
3. *The preacher studies the Bible "purposely."* He never studies the Bible from such shallow motives as to find curiosity items, to merely win an argument, to just "get

- up a lesson,” to try to find sanction for an already-espoused position, or to satisfy a proud ego in being known as some great Bible scholar. Rather, he studies the Bible to learn, to obey, and to teach (Rev. 1:3; Jas. 1:22-25; 2 Tim. 2:2).
4. *The preacher studies the Bible “regularly and frequently”* (Mt. 5:6; 1 Pet. 2:1-2; Heb. 5:12-14).
 5. *The preacher studies the Bible “unprejudicially.”* He engages in exegesis and not in eisegesis. He will not study the Bible to merely sustain a position but, rather, to form his position. He will prove all things, holding fast only to the good (1 Thess. 5:21).
 6. *The preacher will study the Bible “thoroughly.”* He will “search” the Scriptures (Acts 17:11-12; John 5:39), seeking to know the totality of the Bible’s teaching on any subject.
 7. *The preacher will study the Bible “discriminately”* (Heb. 5:14; Phil. 1:9-10, ASV). He will study the Bible discriminating between aids and additions, custom and law, essentials and nonessentials, law and expediency, etc.
 8. *The preacher will study the Bible “hermeneutically.”* He will become very familiar with the laws of biblical interpretation and will avidly apply them in his personal studies. He will be convinced of the absolute necessity of biblical authority and he will know how to establish the same, not being swept off his feet by the new hermeneutics now appearing on the horizon, fully well knowing that such does not constitute a valid hermeneutic.

The Preacher Is to Be Balanced in His Study

1. *His study will be balanced because of the design of his sermons.* Some lessons will be instructional, others convicting, some corrective, additional ones will be comforting in nature while others will be inspirational.
2. *His study will be balanced because of the nature of the content and subject matter of his sermons.* He must preach sermons from every major subject and category (the Godhead, the Holy Scriptures, the church, Christian living, the home, last things, sin, salvation, religious error, attitudes, apologetics, etc.).
3. *His study will be balanced because of the methodology of his preaching.* Some will be topical, others will be textual, while others will be expository.
4. *His study will be balanced because of the applicability of his preaching.* His sermons will need to be delivered to each and every age group, covering each and every spiritual developmental level, and each and every changing vicissitude of life.
5. *His study will be balanced because every book/section of the Bible will be covered.*
6. *His study will be balanced because the Bible will be covered from every angle and approach.* He will study the Bible testamentally, dispensationally, periodically, schematically, bibliographically, biographically and prophetically.
7. *His study will be balanced because there will be a blend, an amalgamation, an appropriate measure of emphasis on/or between contrasting emphases.* Using

accommodating language, there will be the contrasting emphasis between the devotional and the doctrinal, the positive and the negative, the meat and milk of the word, the theological and the practical, the goodness and severity of God, the human and the divine side of salvation, etc.

The Preacher Is to Employ Proper Assistance in His Study

1. *A genuine love of the truth is necessary* (2 Thess. 2:10).
2. *An appreciation of prayer is necessary.* Like the Psalmist, the preacher will pray, “Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law” (Psa. 119:18).
3. *An understanding of his primary mission is necessary.* He is primarily an evangelist, a herald, a preacher, a proclaimer of the good news. Thus, Paul exhorts, “Preach the word” (2 Tim. 4:1-2). Study also 1 Cor. 1:21; 9:16; Tit. 1:3; Rom. 10:13-17. And, since he is not inspired, study for the preacher is most evident.
4. *A time is necessary.* And, this will usually be in the mornings when his mind is fresh and unencumbered. And, concerning the necessary time for study, such will largely be governed by the eldership under whom he works.
5. *A place is necessary.* Great expositors were present in generations past, in contrast to the present, because they had studies and we have offices. Alexander Campbell, George Bailey and others had special places to study.
6. *Tools are necessary.* The preacher will need
 - a. a good study Bible,
 - b. a non-fading ink pen, such as used by draftsmen,
 - c. a good, varied library with representative books, especially reference tools, in each area of discipline,
 - d. tapes,
 - e. a pocket notebook for constant note taking,
 - f. a dictaphone,
 - g. a copy machine, and
 - h. files (illustration file, card catalog file, topical or general file, church building idea file, writing file, working file, sermon idea file, record file, scrap book file, track file, visitation file, sermons file, funeral file, sermons from periodicals file, Old Testament file, New Testament file, etc.)
7. *A schedule is necessary.* Though a basic schedule is absolutely necessary, there must be flexibility; for, the preacher will have interruptions and modifications resulting from family and congregational matters. Concerning scheduling, he must also remember that each day has three parts: morning, afternoon, and evening; and, no man can work in all three, day after day. Preachers will have goals; and, schedules are simply vehicles to help them reach their goals. The preacher may choose to study for his sermons and classes from 8:00 am. to noon each morning. Then, in addition to afternoons being used for visitation and local church planning and promotion, he can also extract from the afternoon an additional one or two hours, if he is a good time manager, for special

studies/research/writing.

8. *A plan is necessary.* He must plan his work and then work his plan.
 - a. The preacher's plan must include personal-profit Bible study,
 - b. sermon/class preparation,
 - c. memorization of passages and biblical information, and
 - d. a study of a variety of subjects and material (problem passages, brotherhood concerns, great biblical themes, restoration material, religious error, apologetics, church prophets, etc.).

The Preacher Will Realize Great Dividends if He Maintains Proper Study Habits

1. *He will experience his own life being more and more changed into the image of Christ.* Study carefully (2 Cor. 3:18; 1 Pet. 2:21-22). We are what we eat.
2. *He will be balanced in his preaching.* He will have 20/20 vision; that is, seeing matters, and responding accordingly, as Paul taught in Acts 20:20: "I shrank not from declaring unto you anything that was profitable" (ASV).
3. *His preaching will be rich and full.* He will have dug rich nuggets from the treasure house of God's word. He will preach from the overflow, always "just quitting but never getting through."
4. *His preaching will be as fresh as the morning dew.* In other words, he does not feed the church warmed over vituals.
5. *He will avoid frustration.* Batsell Barrett Baxter used to speak of the tyranny of preaching in that every week had a Sunday; and, on that day preachers had two sermons to deliver. Without proper study habits, and with these precious but sobering responsibilities coming so frequently, the preacher will constantly stay frustrated.
6. *His work will be the subject of commendation, rather than criticism.* He will hear, "I have been enriched, I have been instructed, I have been helped, that answered my questions, etc.," rather than "he preaches too long, his material is too fragmented, he is shallow, etc."
7. *His preaching will always be relevant.* Much of the civic-talk-type sermons being preached in our pulpits today result from preachers not studying the Bible; and, not knowing their Bibles. Congregations need more than mental health or interpersonal relationship type sermons. Additionally, they need sermons on sin, the saved, and sanctification. This is relevant preaching. However, such requires study.
8. *He will keep himself in the pulpit.* Rex Kyker penned, "Often, we hear of men leaving the ministry. I think one of the major reasons for this exodus is that men, thoroughly capable of delivering a masterful sermon, simply cannot find time to properly prepare them. We have never discovered short cuts that enable men to prepare a great message in a short time."

Conclusion

Our great need today is “prophets,” not promoters, pushers, psychologists, and pleasers.
The answer to the need? Study!

PRACTICAL PRINCIPLES IN THE LIFE OF THE GOSPEL PREACHER
How to Improve Your Preaching – J. J. Turner
Gospel Advocate, April 19, 1973

Recently I heard a wonderful comment about an older gospel preacher. After the brother had finished his sermon, and the service was dismissed, as we were going to our car, I overheard the following conversation between two persons: "He is amazing, isn't he? He is better now than he was twenty-five years ago." "Yes," was the reply, "he surely has continued to improve." What a great compliment! As I overheard this, I could not help but wonder if this could be said about all preachers. Unfortunately, it cannot. Many preachers seem to be content to stay on the same plateau in their preaching year after year. Therefore, instead of becoming better with age and experience, some become stale and even grow worse. It should be made clear, however, that one does not have to be an older preacher to fall into this rut; it can happen to any of us--young or old.

Every gospel preacher, whether young or old, should be concerned with improving his preaching ability. He must never be content with his present level of attainment, or think that he has arrived. Queen Christiana was right when she said, "It is necessary to try to surpass one's self always; this occupation ought to last as long as life." Preaching is a life-time of preparation which requires much prayer and hard work. All of us, if we think seriously and prayerfully for a moment, will agree that we can, and should, improve our preaching.

First, you must have a positive desire to do so. Without this, you will never take the first step toward improving. Until a cook realizes the need for improvement, her meals will continue to have the same taste and her dishes will be lacking in variety. This is also true of sermon preparation and delivery. Until you make up your mind that you want to improve, rest assured, you will not. There is another point that should come before desire; and that is there, first of all, must be a recognition of one's need for improvement. Once this is acknowledged, the desire should come.

Second, formulate a positive plan for improvement. This will take planning, prayer, and study. The first step in your planning should be an evaluation of your present study habits, sermon preparation habits, outlining procedure, and delivery in the pulpit. This can be done by carefully observing your weekly work routine in preparing your sermons. How original are your sermons? Does your preaching cover all the major doctrines of the Bible? Would you call your Bible study for sermon preparation an in-depth study? Do you know how to outline a sermon? These questions and others will help you evaluate your work habits. A good way to evaluate your pulpit delivery is to tape your sermons; and then, at a set time during the week, listen to them and evaluate them as objectively as possible. Remember, you must be honest and critical with yourself. You may also want to enlist the help of several brethren to listen to your sermons and evaluate them for you. It would be good to let them do this out of your presence. After this evaluation, you should now be aware of several areas that you need to work on. Attack them head-on!

Third, you should engage in an in-depth study of sermon preparation and delivery. This will help you brush-up on the mechanics of outlining, illustrating, delivery, etc. In this study, you will also learn some new facts that will be of great benefit in your quest to improve your preaching. You may even want to take a refresher course in Homiletics or Speech at a nearby college or school of preaching. There are also courses available by

correspondence, and on tape, that you can use in refreshing your sermon preparation ability.

Fourth, try practicing your sermon before delivery. Also, by taping it, you will be able to listen for any weaknesses or changes that may need to be made. This will also give you a chance to learn your material before the actual delivery of the sermon on Sunday. Knowing your material will assure a better presentation. Remember the old adage, "Practice makes perfect."

Fifth, plan a series of expository sermons. To do this, you will have to dig down into the Word for those unique truths and make them applicable to today's needs. Remember, expository preaching is not just rambling comments on Bible verses apart from a well-prepared theme and outline. This is the hardest kind of sermon to prepare, but it is the most needful today. An in-depth preaching of the word will help your preaching to improve. It will also give the hearer a broader knowledge of God's word.

Sixth, study the sermon style and delivery of other preachers. This can be done by reading sermon books, listening to radio messages, or viewing various preachers on TV. This will help to broaden your thinking and concept in the area of sermon preparation and delivery. In your evaluation of others, try to determine the good points and why you think they are good; likewise, determine the poor and why you think they are poor, etc. Ask yourself, "What makes his sermon or delivery good?" Also, "What makes it weak or ineffective?" We can all learn from others. Goldsmith was right when he said, "People seldom improve when they have no other model but themselves to copy after."

Seventh, make it a point to observe all speakers. Listen and observe carefully the TV news commentator, the political speaker, the commercials, etc., and analyze their delivery. Like it or not, the preacher is compared to these professional speakers. People watch them hour after hour and then they come to hear you. Comparison is inevitable! Shouldn't the man with words of eternal life be as prepared as the TV announcer? Again, learn what you can from others.

Eighth, pray for wisdom and strength. The gospel preacher, above all men, should constantly remember his need for the Lord's help. He dare not preach the words of life without praying fervently about it. Also, the gospel preacher must constantly remember the need for humility. As God's spokesman, he is not trying to be "seen of men"; neither is his desire to impress people with his ability. As an earthen vessel, he is doing the best he can to preach the word with love and power. As an earthen vessel, likewise, he does not want to take away from the power of the gospel by being poorly prepared and taking the preaching event lightly. He wants to be the best he can because God demands it and the gospel is worthy of all that a man has. Prayer is a must for the preacher who wants to become a better earthen vessel for the gospel's sake.

Ninth, take care of your physical health. Contrary to what many think, preaching is hard work. Arthur S. Phelps has stated, "I have found a half-hour address equal to a day's work in the field." Another writer has suggested one hour of preaching is the equivalent of eight hours of physical labor, in the terms of the expenditure of nervous energy. We must remember that our bodies are made of dust, and not of steel. (Psalm 103: 14.) Our bodies are like an elevator—they can only carry so much stress and strain. Therefore, we should plan some program of exercise or physical activity to strengthen our bodies. A good, healthy body will help you preach the word more effectively.

Tenth, do not become discouraged. Rome was not built in a day, neither will habits of

years go away in a few weeks. I have known some preachers who have abandoned their improvement program because they didn't improve overnight. It takes time and hard work to improve anything worth while. Therefore, do not give up. With God's help and hard work you will conquer the problem.

There are other things that you can do to improve your preaching. These ten, however, will serve as a starting place. May God help all of us to be the best we can for the gospel's sake.

PRACTICAL PRINCIPLES IN THE LIFE OF THE GOSPEL PREACHER
Speech Preparation in the Restoration Movement – David Walker
Gospel Advocate – June 24, 1971

In this day of instant coffee, instant TV dinners, instant everything, we are often faced with listening also to the instant sermon - a sermon that shows all the earmarks of being hastily put together, with as little effort and study as possible. Speakers in the Restoration Movement, however, considered preparation a vital part of their speechmaking; we would do well to profit by their examples.

In the first place, these speakers believed in a program of diligent studies. Alexander Campbell was once asked how he possessed such a store-house of information for his sermons; he replied, "by studying sixteen hours per day." (Thomas Grafton, *Alexander Campbell*, p. 183.) An indication of his beliefs is seen also in a program he formulated for his own studies in the winter of 1810:

One hour to read Greek-from 8 to 9 in the morning. One hour to read Latin - from 11 to 12 in the morning. One half hour to read Hebrew - between 12 and 1 P.M. Commit ten verses of the Scriptures to memory each day, and read the same in the original languages, with Henry and Scott's notes and practical observations. For this exercise we shall allow two hours. These exercises being intended for every day will not be dispensed with. Other reading and studies as occasion may serve. These studies in all require four and a half hours. Church history, and divers other studies, are intended to constitute the principal part of my other literary pursuits. (Robert Richardson, *Memoirs of Alexander Campbell*, I, 278-279.)

Campbell believed that some acquaintance with the languages of the Bible was indispensable. He once wrote that the minister "must be well instructed in...the original tongues in which the Scriptures are written, for without them he can hardly be qualified to explain Scripture or to teach religion and morality." (Grafton, p. 64.) At a later time in his life, he modified this to the point where he indicated that those preachers who did not understand the language might utilize such aids as dictionaries, grammars, histories, and word studies. ("On the Laws of Interpretation, No. I," *Millennial Harbinger*, II, November 1831, 490.)

A preacher's program of studies must include the study of sermon-making itself, Campbell believed. In an article for the *Christian Baptist*, he contended that preparation for a sermon was "an art which requires much study, a general education, or else an extraordinary genius and much reading." He continued:

No man can make a good one without much study, training, and general reading....A sermon-maker, without education, and without much training, is to persons of discernment, one of the most disgusting performers, and one of the most useless speakers we can imagine. ("Sermons to Young Preachers, No. III," VII, pp. 184-185.)

Campbell was not alone in his demands that the Christian speaker be a student. Barton W. Stone cautioned young ministers to adopt the motto: "Learn and progress." He thoroughly studied most questions before he ever discussed them; he believed that if he

failed to do so, he would involve "other minds in perplexities." Study, Stone believed, included meditation. During one period of his ministry when he found it necessary to work daily on a farm, he said: "I always took with me in my cornfield my pen and ink, and as thoughts worthy of note occurred, I would cease from my labor, and commit them to paper." (Evan Ulrey, "The Preaching of Barton Warren Stone," [Ph.D. dissertation, L.S.U., 1955], pp. 161-164)

Elias Smith determined never to speak in public without having done everything in his power to prepare himself for that work; he made his Bible the chief object of his study, and continually carried it with him. (*The Life of Elias Smith*, p. 118.) Jacob Creath, Jr., in stressing the importance of study for the Christian speaker, recalled the advice which his uncle Jacob Creath, Sr., had given him:

"Endeavor to be a profound scholar in all your acquirements, both as a scholar and as a divine." (*Memoirs of Elder Jacob Creath, Senior*, p. 44.)

In addition to the belief in a general program of studies for the Christian speaker, the speakers in the Restoration Movement also suggested some specific instructions for specific speeches. The first of these specific steps was one unique to that of Christian speaking-prayer. According to Ulrey, Stone believed that the steps of preparation for preaching were in order: study, prayer, and practice. (P. v.) Before David Purviance preached on some important subject, he was in the practice of setting apart one day in the week to fasting, praying, reading, and meditation. (Levi Purviance, *Biography of Elder David Purviance*, p. 620.)

Next, the speaker must carefully analyze his audience. Joseph Badger wrote:

When you meet a congregation, you should reflect seriously with all the talent, judgment, and spirit you possess, on three things: 1st, what is the condition and capacity of this congregation? 2nd, What subject is the most appropriate to their wants? 3rd, How shall I deliver it to the best advantage? Ministers are apt to be mistaken relative to the state of their hearers, which causes them to make injudicious selections of subjects. ("To Young Ministers," *Christian Palladium*, I, October 1832, 144.)

Alexander Campbell, in discussing Peter's sermon in Acts 2, wrote:

1. The audience must always be regarded in its proper character before it is addressed, and before the propriety of an address to it can be correctly appreciated.
2. The object to be gained must always guide the speaker in the selection of his theme, and to this object all his thoughts and arrangements must be turned.
3. The theme proposed may sometimes be different from, and sometimes the same as, the object to be accomplished. But this the occasion of the discourse must always decide. ("The Christian Preacher, No. IV," *Millennial Harbinger*, III, July 1832, 308.)

In an article for the *Christian Baptist*, Campbell further stressed the need for audience analysis:

The first thing which a young preacher ought to consider in respect of any particular congregation which he is about to address, and indeed, old preachers had better also

attend to it, is to ascertain the stature of the mind, or the amount of information which his audience may be supposed to possess. What foundation he is to build upon, is the first question as respects the audience, which a prudent speaker proposes to himself. And here it may be noted, and it is at all times worthy of note, how much is taken for granted by almost every preacher. ("Sermons to Young Preachers, No. IV," VII, 213.)

After the speaker analyzes his audience, then he must select the subject upon which he will speak. Campbell exhorted young ministers to "choose such a subject as will make them forget themselves when they rise to address the public assembly, and then they cannot fail to be interesting." ("Sermons to Young Preachers, No. II," *Christian Baptist*, VII, December 1829, 107.)

Something of a debate raged as to whether a speaker should use a theme or a text. Most of the preaching seems to have been centered around a theme, as a reaction to the ways in which texts were often distorted. D. S. Burnet believed that the tendency of text - preaching lead one to practice what he call "scrap-preaching." ("The Present Order of Things, No. II," *Evangelical Inquirer*, I, September 1830, p. 94.) Although many of the speakers did use texts, they also were opposed to any distortion of a text. Alexander Campbell, for instance, related an example of a speech he heard in the District of Columbia, based upon the text: "Thou art an austere man." The preacher was not too well-educated, and he thought the passage read: "Thou art an oyster- man." Consequently, the speaker attempted:

- 1st. To show the coincidence or resemblance between his Saviour and an oyster-man.
- 2nd. To point out how suitably oysters represented sinners.
- 3rd. To demonstrate how beautifully the tongs which the oyster-man uses to take up oysters, represented "ministers of the gospel."
- 4th. To prove that the oyster-man's boat was a fit emblem of the gospel and of a "gospel church," into which the oysters or sinners are put when caught or converted.

Another preacher Campbell cited became irritated at the knots of ribbon on ladies bonnets. Accordingly, he took the passage "Let him that is on the house top come down." Out of this passage he selected four words and changed the spelling of one of them to read: "Top knot come down." He then declared in his sermon that it was a divine, command for these top knots to come down and that the disobedient would be denounced into eternal perdition. ("The Textuaries," *Christian Baptist*, III, December 1825, 105 - 107.) Walter Scott also opposed the text-distorter and charged about some texts he had heard used wrongly:

Such texts, I say, may afford the learned, subtle and seraphic preacher an opportunity of exhibiting his own pretty talents before a polite and fashionable assembly; but they were never written by the Holy Spirit to establish the gospel fact, but for quite a different purpose; and the dry heathenish harangues spun from them are as dissimilar from the grand, certain, and divine evangelical narration, as the fabulous cosmogony of Epicurus is from the Mosaic history of the creation. ("On Teaching Christianity, No. III," *Christian Baptist*, I, January 1824, 111.)

Whether the speaker used a text or a theme, there the Christian speaker must be one who did not distort his text, but used it in the manner intended.

Having selected a subject, the speaker next had to develop it. In his preparation, it was unusual for the Restoration speaker to write out his sermon. Campbell recalled that he did write his sermons during the early part of his preaching career, but he gradually abandoned the practice for an extemporaneous presentation; writing sermons even became irksome and distasteful to him. The frontier audience to which these speakers delivered their sermons preferred the speaker who could "shoot without a rest," a more suitable style to extemporaneous speaking than to one which encouraged the writing of sermons. (Archibald McLean, *Alexander Campbell as a Preacher*, pp. 8-9.) Elias Smith, speaking in New England, criticized himself as he looked back at part of his preaching career during which he was speaking to a relatively fashionable audience: "Being so respectable, I began to write my sermons, but never carried them to the meetinghouse, This was being so lame as to need one crutch." (*Life of Elias Smith*, p. 248). Although the Restoration speakers did not write out their sermons, they did construct outlines which guided them in their preparation. Examples of these may be seen in Richardson's *Memoirs of Alexander Campbell*, Alexander Campbell's *Memoirs of Elder Thomas Campbell*, the Alexander Campbell Australian manuscripts in the Disciples of Christ Historical Society in Nashville, or in a rare sermon outline of Stone on Ezekiel 33:11, contained in the Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis.

In summary, then, one can see that speechmaking to the Restoration speaker entailed great responsibilities. Not only must the Christian speaker be involved in a program of general studies on his part, but for any specific sermon, guidelines were established involving prayer, audience analysis, selection of a theme or text, and development of the sermon. If we could do more in following this rich legacy given us, perhaps we could more nearly achieve the results which they saw.

PRACTICAL PRINCIPLES IN THE LIFE OF THE GOSPEL PREACHER

Why Preachers Move...or Quit! - Bob Barnhill

In surveys of hundreds of preachers and elders five basic factors can be given for frequent preacher turnover. (It also appears the five reasons preachers move may also be the five reasons preachers leave full - time work!) Wise leaders will recognize these reasons. Steps should be taken to offset them. Since the length of “stay” of a preacher is related to church growth, a recognition of the “causes of turnover” might help toward solving the problem.

1. *One reason preachers move is the opportunity for personal development.* This is not necessarily a bad motive. In fact, it’s a Biblical one. Paul moved because “a great door of opportunity” was opened to him (1 Corinthians 16:9). There are times when, because of backward non-spiritual leadership and a constant “sit-tight-in-the-boat” attitude of brethren, a minister spiritually outgrows a congregation! Barnett observed that a preacher will quit or move under such circumstances. Sometimes, however, he will, conform and adopt a “why-fight-it” attitude. Dedicated, aggressive leaders tend to go where brethren sacrifice and work.

Most well-versed brethren, who know a wide number of ministers, can name at least five preachers this year who left the ministry! These are not always malcontents. Often they have great ability, and they prove it by their later success in some profession. These men become discouraged by a lack of commitment and sacrifice by many in the church. They were not content “to keep house” for the brethren who would not work for the Lord!

2. *Pressure of supply and demand is the most obvious factor for preacher turnover.* With an estimated eighteen thousand churches and less than five thousand preachers, the pressure to move is always great. Usually the longer a preacher stays with a church the more contacts he receives from other churches. The longer he stays, the more offers to move he receives. A mediocre preacher can usually move any year he wants to. (It appears preaching is like coaching football--it is becoming an occupation where the “new man” coming in with no experience with a group receives more benefits than the older, experienced man!) Many congregations lose their minister only to discover hiring another one of equal ability requires more support. They were not aware of what was happening in salary increases in other congregations during the preacher’s successful ministry with them. Because they did not make businesslike adjustments in his support, they lost the effective worker they loved. Moreover, they had to hire a new man they didn’t know for substantially more support. How tragic!

3. *Preachers also move because of laziness.* While it is sad to contemplate, this is sometimes true. It has been suggested, like the teaching profession, there are only two kinds of preachers--either the dedicated and hard-working or the lazy who can do little else. Some preachers, unfortunately, build up a two-year supply of sermons. They learn these can be “reused” every two years at a new congregation without further preparation or study!

In all fairness, by moving every two years and using the same sermons, some preachers find they can do a more effective job of wearing the “many hats” expected of them! Since the stereotyped role of the modern ministry includes visiting hospitals, visiting members, being a community participant, office management, counseling, etc. there may be some merit in a preacher’s moving frequently. Since he has little time left for study, moving on enables him to have the sermons ready and do all other things expected of him, too.

Few have considered how this discourages tenure. After a few years, in a sense, the preacher ends up competing with himself! Unthinking church members reason--if the church has a slump one year and doesn’t grow as it did the previous year, “perhaps we need a change”! (The thought never occurs to them that the same preacher was there last year when the records were set! It also never dawns on them church growth is the responsibility of all!)

Generally speaking, the longer a preacher stays, the more jobs he is saddled with. Usually, old responsibilities the preacher has are never reassigned by elders when new jobs are added to his work. The load builds up. A move becomes the only way he can alleviate the increasing burden.

4. *Economic factors have also caused ministers to move.* Inflationary pressures are present in today’s society. A minister has as much responsibility to provide for his family as a deacon does to provide for his (1 Timothy 5:8). Preachers’ families have the same needs other families have. A preacher has to educate his children, feed his family, and provide for retirement like anyone else does. *The idea that he should not consider finances, while every other member of the church considers their finances, is both unfair and false.* In spite of customs of brethren to the contrary, 1 Corinthians 9 suggests that a preacher should not be “muzzled” but should be supported adequately.

Many church leaders who consider themselves “spiritual,” allow years to pass without making adjustments in the support of their minister. They are in violation of 1 Corinthians 9. In such a situation it never occurs to them if the preacher decides to stay with them, another year, he has, due to inflation, elected to “give” an extra five hundred to one thousand dollars in lost buying power for the “privilege” of staying! Sadly, many preachers have moved to keep up with inflation. A raise each year would have been far less expensive than moving costs of a new preacher. The “children of light” are not very wise compared to the “sons of men.”

Paradoxically, in an age when preachers are paid well (often far better than many brethren), dropout rates are higher than at any time in the history of the church. If “money” were the motive to preach, then there should be more entering the ministry. Instead there are fewer who want to preach. The dropout rate increases every year. This problem goes deeper than the dollar.

Economically, perhaps the greatest single factor that encourages preachers to leave the ministry is the problem of retirement. At the Abilene Christian University Lectureship

each year, the preacher-elder fellowship dinner recognizes elders and preachers who have served the longest period of time. First-time attenders are startled to discover less than a dozen preachers in attendance with forty years of preaching experience! In the business community, someone with forty years of experience is usually at the peak of his profession, with several years of leadership remaining. In the church, many full-time preachers have disappeared by the time this milestone is reached. They haven't died. Instead many entered some business. They often continue to preach part time, but the specter of facing retirement years without a home or income has removed them from full-time service. Somehow, churches have narrowed 1 Corinthians 9 to a point where they see no responsibility to the ox who has "trodden the corn" for an entire lifetime. It ought not to be so.

More and more, wise elderships are including retirement programs for their ministers (much like any wise businessman does) to encourage tenure and to fulfill a responsibility which has been given them.

5. *The cause most often given by church leaders for a lack of tenure is "a lack of effort by all to develop a long-term philosophy."* In light of the proven growth connected to the church-preacher-tenure relationship, it is past time these views are reassessed. Growth potential through long tenure is too great to lose.

It takes years to build up rapport and influence in the church and community. The impact of becoming involved in the lives of people only comes with time.

Further, sheer economy is an issue. Waste through moving costs, running annually in the hundreds of thousands of dollars, should demand a reappraisal of the policy of mobility. Like the husband and wife relationship, there must be give and take on the part of elders, preachers, and congregations. All must adopt the attitude of "we must work together longer because of all that is involved!"

PRACTICAL PRINCIPLES IN THE LIFE OF THE GOSPEL PREACHER
The Preacher and His Family - Bobby Liddell
Location Unknown

One of the greatest challenges facing a preacher is the challenge to fulfill all of his God-given responsibilities to his family. Due to the nature of his work, he faces potentially greater demands and dangers, as husband and father, than do others. Yet, God has greatly favored him with the opportunity to have a family (Luke 4:38; 1 Cor. 9:5; cf. 1 Tim. 4:3), and the blessings far outweigh the costs (Gen. 2:7-25; Psa. 128; Pro. 18:22; Mat. 19:3-8).

No greater, more fulfilling, human relationship is possible than marriage (1 Cor. 7: Heb. 13:4; cf. SoS.), and no earthly joy quite compares with having children (Psa. 127:3-4). But, in spite of all this, there is the possibility a preacher might lose sight of his commitments in this area and neglect his family. How could this happen?

Faithful preachers gladly give their time and energy, often make financial sacrifices, and expend themselves mentally, emotionally, and physically in order to preach the Gospel, reach the lost, and build up the saved (2 Tim. 4:5; 1 Cor. 16:15). Preaching is, in many ways, the hardest work one could ever undertake, and demands one's best efforts and most fervent devotion. Therein lies a danger - that one may neglect his family to devote himself more to preaching. Especially do younger, less experienced preachers, with almost boundless zeal, need to realize the danger of neglecting their families. But they are not alone in facing this temptation. What does a preacher's family need?

His Family Needs His Time

Time is the preacher's valued possession, constant consideration, and most tenacious enemy. Some men have devoted so much time to doing good things (i.e., to church work, Bible studies, visiting, meetings with elders and members, participating in social and civic groups, and to preaching appointments out of town) they have hardly any time left for their families. Thinking they were doing right, they came home one day to find children who did not know them, and wives who no longer loved them.

Too late, they learned the lesson: A preacher's family needs his time. What a needless tragedy! A man can do the work God expects of him as a preacher, and also be the husband and father God expects him to be. God does not require one to neglect one of His commands in order to keep another.

A preacher's family deserves its portion of his time. Therefore, the preacher must set aside time for his loved ones, and guard it like a bulldog. As a husband, he should take the time to please his wife - to do for her what she wants, just because she wants it, and he loves her (Eph. 5:25-33; Col. 3:19). She is not asking too much to want her portion of his time. If he does not demonstrate that she has it, after a while she may grow tired of being without him and doubt his love for her, causing serious problems to lurk just around the corner. She did not marry him to become - essentially - a widow. She longs to be with him, and they need time together—to share in interests and engage in them

together (SoS. 7:10-8:3). As a father, he should take the time to be with his children, because they are his children and he loves them. He did not bring them into this world that they might be as orphans, without a father to love and care for them. They need the instruction only a father can give (Eph. 6:4; Col. 3:21) and the praise, which counts only when a father gives it. For this reason he should make time to be with them, pray with them, listen to them, play with them, and to go to their ball games and school functions.

The initial disappointment of looking for one's father in the audience at a child's performance, and not finding him, soon turns to resentment of whatever kept him from sharing this important time. Many children whose Fathers are preachers have confided their bitterness over being robbed of their father's time. They confess to "hating" the fact that their father was a preacher, and that they would never be a preacher or be married to one. Others have gone astray because - at least partly - of neglect (even though unintentional) by their fathers. While the preacher was trying to save the world, he lost his children. Clearly, neglect of one's family is a problem that can have eternal consequences.

The preacher may have to plan better, rearrange his schedule, and learn, to say, "no" to some things. He may have to overcome being tired, needing sleep, or facing a deadline in order to be with them. Truly, there are so many other places he could be, and so many other things he could do, but none is more important, at the moment, than being with his family. Jethro saw that Moses was overwhelmed because of judging the matters of the people from morning to evening, and said.

"The thing that thou doest is not good. Thou wilt surely wear away, both thou, and his people that is with thee: for this thing is too heavy for thee; thou art not able to perform it thyself alone" (Exo. 18:17-18).

Moses was doing good, but it was not good for him to try to do it all by himself and neglect his family. Moses was not superman, and neither is any preacher. He can expect too much of himself, and brethren can expect even more! He must take the time to "do the work of an evangelist," but he cannot do all the work of all the church by himself (1 Cor. 12:20).

Sometimes therefore, lest he steal time from his family, he must refuse to be diverted, and he must deny some requests and invitations. He has a prior commitment, an important appointment with his family, and he dare not miss it. If he is too busy to be the husband and father he should be, he is too busy. Yes, a preacher's family needs his time, but that is not all.

His Family Needs His Provision

A preacher must provide for his family (1 Tim. 5:8), which includes the necessities of life, but it also involves much more. He must provide spiritual leadership for his family (cf. Gen. 18:19; Acts 21:8-10). Compassion for souls should begin with one's family, for of all the people on earth, the preacher should love his family and want them to be saved.

After all of Noah's preaching, he was able to save his family only (Heb. 11:7: Gen. 7:13). Did he fail? No, he was a great preacher, enshrined in the "Hall of Fame of the Faithful" (Heb. 11)! However, sometimes compassion for the lost and interest in the welfare of others is so all-consuming that the preacher loses sight of his responsibilities to provide spiritual direction to those dearest to him.

He must provide the right direction as head of the house (Eph. 5:23ff). This direction includes his example as well as his authority (1 Sam. 3:13-14). What example does he give of one's relationship to the Lord and His church? Although pressed with duties, burdened with cares, frustrated, and fatigued with effort, he still must not allow himself to complain and disparage his brethren or his work to his family.

Rather, he casts his burdens upon the Lord (1 Pet. 5:7), and from time to time weeps alone, out of consideration for his wife and children. Often things are not as bad as they first appear. Why worry his loved ones needlessly? Why adversely affect their attitudes by telling them all he knows about the brethren (some of which is confidential)?

A preacher should also strive to provide his family with stability. The wise preacher will think of his family and choose carefully where he goes to preach. He will also act wisely so he can stay there for awhile. Sometimes preachers jump into situations without considering sufficiently if the pay is adequate, if the work is suited to his ability and personality, and if the brethren want to hear the Truth preached. Soon he is looking again. Once more, his family is packed up, on the road, upset, discouraged, afraid, and dreading the next time this will happen.

His Family Needs Him

There is no substitute for him. He may not be handsome, brilliant, or rich, but he is Daddy, the one with whom they want to laugh, cry, play, and talk. In his arms, they feel secure. He is the one they love, and they need him to love them. His children need him to love their mother, and his wife needs him to love their children. They need the assurance and protection only he can give. A little girl, terminally ill and facing death, talked with her father. She told him she was not afraid to die, for she knew Heaven would be a wonderful place if God were like her Daddy.

His family needs him to praise them. They deserve it. He could not preach without them! While he often gets public acclaim and approval, he must be sure to give credit to his wife and children, for it is a team effort. He should praise them privately and publicly, letting the congregation know how much he loves his family. Of all people, he should know how important praise is.

If the preacher is what he should be, he will give himself to his family, and not neglect them. There is no excuse for him to fail his family. His success in serving others can never compensate for such failure. He must present to them the picture of what a Christian man really is, and, if he does, they will know he is a man of God - a good man, a good husband and father, and a good preacher. He will be their hero, and he and they will be blessed now and eternally.

PRACTICAL PRINCIPLES IN THE LIFE OF THE GOSPEL PREACHER

The Role of the Preacher as a Counselor - Robert Stapleton

INTRODUCTION:

1. One area that the preacher often finds himself in is the area of counselor.
 - A. Most are not academically prepared for such, but we must do the best we can under the circumstances.

BODY:

1. What is counseling and how are preachers involved?
 - A. To make full proof of the ministry involves counseling – 2 Timothy 4:5.
 - B. Many preachers have the wrong conception of counseling.
 1. Many think generally in terms of advice giving.
 2. Ethical advice is useful in a teaching situation-but-most neurotics have been preached to several times
 - C. What is counseling?
 1. It is an attempt of the preacher to help the client gain a better understanding of himself, and the ability to utilize this understanding
 2. “Counseling is not merely the use of certain techniques. It is first of all the counselor’s use of himself in a manner that helps the counseled to do something constructive about his trouble. The key is not so much the techniques employed, important as they are, as it is the total attitude of the counselor, how he feels about people, what he believes about them and about himself.” (Johnson).
2. Counseling is taking care of souls
 - A. Participating in a helping relationship
 1. Definition: “A relationship in which both of the parties have the intent of promoting the mental growth or improved coping with life of one.”
 - B. Personal qualifications of a preacher—counselor
 1. Jesus: not judging, but loving and understanding
 - A. Sensitive to human relationships
 - B. Objectivity (controlled empathy)
 - C. Respect for the individual, including a willingness to accept him as he is
 - D. An understanding of self
 - E. Basic psychological knowledge
 - C. Dangers to be avoided
 1. Becoming too emotionally involved in the person’s problems (being sympathetic, instead of empathic)
 2. A failure to guard his own example and influence (Counseling with someone of the opposite sex under conditions that may lead to temptation or criticism)
 3. Betraying confidences
 4. Not recognizing individuals who have deep-seated emotional problems and who should, therefore, be referred to a mental health professional for expert help.
3. Process and techniques of counseling
 - A. The client—centered process—more effective in promoting growth

1. Emphasizes non—directive counseling, which aims at helping the individual become more deeply and fully himself
 2. Emphasizes fundamental belief in the integrity of the individual
 3. Individuals with a strong drive toward health generally move toward better adjustment provided there is adequate atmosphere for this growth
 4. Regardless of his past or present, the individual is accepted as he is, free to grow without pressure or coercion
 5. The individual feels warmth, acceptance, and understanding from the counselor
 6. Valuable work can be done by proper handling of silence - if silence does not embarrass, confuse or threaten
 7. The counselor is responsive to everything the client says - even though his responses are seldom put into words
 8. Carl Rogers: “Generally, as a person finds someone willing to listen acceptingly to his feelings, he little by little becomes able to listen to himself!”
- B. Some dos and don'ts for the counselor
1. Do:
 - A. Be understanding
 - B. Have respect for people and their interest at heart
 - C. Relax and be yourself
 - D. Help the person to help himself
 - E. Respect things told in confidence
 - F. Let the counseling relationship be client - centered and non - directive
 - G. Be sympathetic, yet not necessarily agreeing or disagreeing
 - H. Be empathic and try to establish a reciprocal relationship
 - I. Be friendly - reduce barriers to self - expression
 - J. Be a good listener (often difficult for preachers)- let the person do most of the talking
 - K. Reflect the person's attitudes back to him
 - L. Clarify from time to time
 - M. Remain non - directive unless highly trained and widely experienced
 - N. Remember that everyone is different
 - O. Be flexible and remain emotionally calm
 - P. Make use of religious resources (prayer, confession, scripture) as appropriate
 - Q. Be prepared for relapses and disappointments
 - R. Leave the door open always
 2. Don't:
 - A. Become involved in religious arguments
 - B. Preach
 - C. Judge
 - D. Try to impose your feelings and convictions
 - E. Diagnose mental or physical ills
 - F. Rush the person to acceptance
 - G. Criticize
 - H. Generalize

- I. Take sides
- J. Try to counsel in areas that are emotionally charged for you
- K. Use leading questions
- L. Feel you have to defend against attacks
- M. Pry
- N. Assume points which have not been stated
- O. Disregard the person's convictions
- P. Minimize the person's beliefs or feelings
- Q. Take a leading part in committing patients to mental hospitals
- C. What can the preacher do?
 - 1. Come to know and love the congregation
 - 2. Reduce barriers between self and others so they can, if they wish, reveal themselves more fully
 - 3. Set office hours during which others can feel free to visit him and communicate their feelings or private worlds to him
 - 4. Reflect a positive, tolerant, optimistic attitude in the presence of others
 - 5. Remember that attitudes are changed little by advice, persuasion or threat-but that the positive, tolerant attitudes of the counselor seem to go a long way in changing attitudes of others.
- 4. Counseling the dying patient
 - A. It has been said, "Fear not that your life may come to an end, and rather fear that it may never have a beginning." Newman
 - B. All of mankind is terminal.
 - 1. Death is as much a part of life as is birth – Ecclesiastes 3:2; Hebrews 9:27.
 - 2. Each of us must give account of ourselves to God – Romans 14:11, 12; 2 Corinthians 5:10.
 - 3. Thus it behooves us to "prepare to meet" God – Amos 4:12.
 - C. Stages through which the terminally ill often progress as identified by Dr. Elizabeth Kubler-Ross in Death and Dying.
 - 1. Denial – as manifested in such statements as "This can't be happening to me!"
 - A. It is difficult for many people to accept the reality of their own finiteness and that death is imminent for them.
 - 2. Anger
 - A. This stage is often manifested by violent outbursts towards hospital staff, family members, or even the minister.
 - B. Often the patient becomes deeply withdrawn, which is even more serious of a problem.
 - 3. Bargaining – As manifested with such statements as, "Lord if you will only let me get well, I will be a changed person." Or "Lord, if you will just let me live another year, I will be a faithful church member and do whatever I can for you."
 - A. Hezekiah's life was extended by God 15 years - 2 Kings 20:1-15.
 - B. Abraham bargained with God for wicked Sodom and Gomorrah - Genesis 18:23-33.
 - C. Moses pleaded with God on Israel's behalf - Exodus 32:7-14; Numbers 14:11-39.

4. Depression
 - A. The patient is getting weaker and weaker — hope is running out.
 - B. This is often the reason many turn to “miracle workers” as a last resort.
 - C. Dying persons are often more afraid of the process of dying than they are of death itself.
 1. They fear progressive isolation, and they fear being forced to go it alone.
 2. Herman Feifel, after commenting on the relief some of his patients expressed when given an opportunity to share their feelings, says. “There is almost nothing as crushing to a dying patient as to feel that he has been, abandoned or rejected.”
5. Acceptance
 - A. The one who is a faithful servant does not have to fear death.
 1. Death is as John Donne has said, “The golden key that opens the palace of eternity.”
 - B. The Lord has promised that he will not leave us nor forsake us - Hebrews 13:5; Psalm 23:4.
 - C. Paul could face death with confidence as it approached - 2 Timothy 4:6-8.
 1. It is the counselor’s desire to help others also face it with a calm assurance and inner peace - 2 Corinthians 4:16-5:1.
- D. How can we help the dying reach the acceptance stage?
 1. Minister to their primary spiritual needs as soon as possible, i.e., encourage every accountable person to obey the gospel as soon as possible after they have been taught the truth.
 - A. Do not hesitate to baptize them in the hospital if they are willing and if the hospital will grant permission.
 2. Pray with them - James 5:14-16
 - A. See my paper on Anointing With Oil – Appendix # 1, page 55.
 3. Visit them regularly
 4. Be a friend to them and the family
 5. Be honest with them - be supportive but not deceiving.
 - A. When asked, tell patients the truth concerning their condition.
 6. Listen to them - as they grow weaker they may not care about jokes, the weather, how the local sports team is doing, etc.
 7. Care for them genuinely.
- F. Life after death – see my papers on The Biblical View of Death and What To Expect After Death – Appendix # 2, page 54.
5. Review Dan Flourney’s book The Preacher and His Work.

APPENDIX # 1 – ANNOINTING WITH OIL

Robert Stapleton

Anoint, to apply oil to a person or thing, a practice common in the East. (Pictorial Bible Dictionary) Use of oil on the head or any object to be honored, (Smith's Bible Dictionary)

1. A distinction was made by the ancient Hebrews between anointing with oil in private use, as in making one's toilet, and anointing as a religious rite.
 - A. Religious use:
 1. Anointing as a religious rite was practiced throughout the ancient East in application both to persons and to things.
 - A. Things:
 1. The primary meaning of “mashah” seems to have been "to daub” or “smear,” – I.S.B.E., Vol. 1, pg. 138.
 2. See Jere. 22:14 (painted); Isa. 21:5; Ex. 29:36; Gen. 31:13; Ex. 30:30-33.
 - B. People:
 1. The most significant uses of “mashah” are found in its application to certain sacred persons.
 - A. Kings: Jud. 9:8, 15; 1 Sam. 9:16; 10:1; 2 Sam. 19:10; 1 Kings 1:39, 45; 2 Kings 9:3, 6; 11:12.
 - B. Prophets: 1 Kings 19:16 (Only occasion of the anointing of a prophet.)
 - B. Ordinary use:
 1. The native olive oil, alone or mixed with perfumes, was commonly used for toilet purposes, the very poor naturally reserving it for special occasions only – Ruth 3:3.
 2. It was applied freely to exposed parts of the body, especially to the face - Psa. 104:15.
 3. This practice was in vogue before David's time, and traces of it may be found throughout the O. T. - Deut. 28:40; Ruth 3:3; 2 Sam. 12:20; 14:2; 2 Chron. 28:15; Ezek. 16:9; Micah 6:15; Dan. 10:3.
 - A. Also found in the N.T. - Mt. 6:17; Jas. 5:14.
 4. To abstain from it was one token of mourning - 2 Sam. 14:2; Mt. 6:17.
 - A. To resume it was a sign that the mourning was ended - 2 Sam. 12:20; 14:2; Dan. 10:3.
 5. It often accompanied the bath - Ruth 3:3; 2 Sam. 12:20; Ezek. 16:9.
 6. It was a customary part of the preparation for a feast – Psa. 23:5.
 7. It was also used as a mark of hospitality - Mt. 26:6-13 (also used as preparation for burial, as seen by this text); Mk. 14:3-9; Lk. 7:36-40; Jhn. 12:1-8, Psa. 23:5.
 - C. Medicinal purpose:
 1. Luke 10:34 - Note wounds, note poured, no mentioned of anointing.
 2. Isaiah 1:6 - Mollified, soften; note wounds.
 3. If oil was to be used for a medicinal means it must come in contact with the

- injury, i.e. wound.
4. Would only be useful under certain circumstances.
- D. Occasion of anointing by Jesus - Jhn. 9:6-11.
1. Applied - The Interlinear, Greek English, N. T.
 2. Put - N.I.V.
 3. Applied - N.A.S.V.
 4. Applied - Phillips
 5. Spread - N.E.B.
- E. Occasion of anointing by disciples - Mk. 6:13.
1. The anointing was not done because there were any healing attributes to the oil, but to make preparation for these who had been sick to assume the normal role in society.
 2. Note that the actual healing came after the sick had been anointed, and was done by the disciples.
 - A. "... and healed them."
 3. The anointing was done as a token of faith by the disciples that the sick were to be healed.
2. James 5:14:
- A. First note that the text speaks of the sick, and not the injured.
 1. Remember oil would be of some value to an injury if it could come in contact with it - Isa. 1:6; Lk. 10:34.
 - B. Secondly, note that they were to call for the elders and they were to do the anointing
 1. Note 1 Tim. 3:1-7; Tit. 1:5-9.
 2. Elders, not doctors, were to be sent for.
 - A. Had the healing art, through usual means, i.e. anointing with oil, been intended the instruction would have been, "Call for the doctors and let them diagnose his case and prescribe the proper treatment..."
 - C. Thirdly, note that the healing came about because of the prayer of faith - Jas. 5:15.
 1. Thus it was not prayer and oil; nor prayer and medicinal treatment; nor prayer and laying on of hands; but the prayer of faith.
 - D. If this practice were applicable in our day, and the elders did their duty, none in the church would ever die, thus contradicting - Heb. 9:27.
 - E. Evidently, for a limited time, and for a special purpose, God ordained that when the foregoing conditions were met healing, in the apostolic age occurred.
 1. That it was not widely followed, or even intended to apply to all saints, is clear from the fact that many sickened and died, and others suffered affliction - Acts 9:32-43; Phil. 2:19-30; 1 Tim. 5:23; 2 Cor. 12:7.
 2. It follows, therefore, that James 5:14 was applicable to a situation, and not all situations, existing in the day of miraculous gifts and terminated with those gifts - 1 Cor. 12:28-31; 13:8-13; Jas. 1:25; Eph. 4:11-16.
 3. It seems quite clear from all the facts involved that the elders, under consideration in James 5:14, were miraculously endowed through the laying on of the apostle's hands (Acts 8:18) and were, thus, able to participate in miraculous acts of healing in the manner described.
 4. Today it is as foreign to God's plan to expect miraculous healing independent

of means as it is to expect Him to feed us as Jesus did when he multiplied the loaves and the fishes - Mt. 15:32-39; Mk. 6:34-44.

5. It is right and proper for us to pray for the sick, but we must realize that God works through means today such as medicine, surgery, and all other approved techniques.
3. The allegation that anointing with oil is a necessary action along with prayer for the healing of the sick does not follow from an induction of passages dealing with such healing – Isa. 38:1-5; Mt. 8:5-13; Mk. 5:35-43; Lk. 9:38-43; Jhn. 4:47-54.
 - A. There are many more occasions of people being healed apart from the use of oil than those who used it.

CONCLUSION:

1. Thus it seems evident, then, that the anointing with oil in James 5:1.4 was for the purpose of getting this person ready to assume his regular role in society, thus taking its normal place in the daily toiletry. It seems that it served in a similar manner, as would the getting ready of a person's clothing so that they could assume their regular role in society today (See references on page one concerning this). There are, by far, more passages that deal with the use of oil for these purposes than for the using it as a means of healing.

APPENDIX # 2 - THE BIBLICAL VIEW OF DEATH

Robert Stapleton

INTRODUCTION:

1. Death - not something we necessarily like to talk about.
 - A. Yet it is a reality - as much a part of life as birth.
2. Some have said that "we are born to die" but I believe that to be wrong.
 - A. We are born to live and serve God.
 - B. We die because of sin.
3. I'd like for us to give some thought to the Biblical View of Death.
 - A. And then consider What to Expect after Death.

BODY:

1. The Bible is quite clear in relation to exactly what death is and isn't.
 - A. Yet even with that clarity there seems to be some mystery surrounding this important subject in man's mind.
 - B. The Psalmist expressed what seems to be the sentiment of humanity as they have faced the prospect of death - Psalm 55:4, 5.
 - C. Job characterized death as the "King of terrors" - Job 18:14.
 - D. While the Hebrew writer speaks of those who possess a fear of death - Hebrews 2:15.
 - E. Perhaps we will never reach the faith that Paul had relative to this - Philippians 1:23.
 - A. Yet we can face the so-called mysteries of death a little calmer when we better understand what it is.
2. **DEATH IS A SLEEP**
 - A. Paul spoke of those that had "fallen asleep in Jesus" - 1 Thessalonians 4:14.
 - B. We should understand that in Paul's usage of the term "sleep" that it is used to describe the state of the body in death.
 1. There is no Biblical basis for the concept of "soul sleeping."
 - C. As a matter of fact, the term "sleep" is used throughout the scriptures to describe this state of the body.
 1. Only that part of man "sleeps" in death - Daniel 12:2.
 2. Notice that only the part of man that is placed in the earth "sleeps."
 - A. Only man's body is placed therein.
 - B. Therefore, it is only the body that "sleeps" in death, not the spirit.
 - D. The word "sleep", in the Greek, is derived from the Greek word meaning "to lie down."
 1. Asleep - KOIMAOMIA - from KEIMAI - "to lie down."
 - E. The Greeks used the word KOIMETERION in regards to a place where traveling strangers could stop for sleep.
 1. It is from that word that we have our word "cemetery" which is a place where the bodies of the dead sleep.
 - F. Certain scholars have suggested that the use of the word "sleep" for death conveys the idea "that, as the sleeper does not cease to exist while his body sleeps, so the dead person continues to exist despite his absence from the region in which those

who remain can communicate with him, and that, as sleep is known to be temporary, so the death of the body will be found to be..." (Vine & Hogg, Notes on Thessalonians, p. 172)

3. DEATH IS A DEPARTURE

- A. Death occurs when the spirit leaves the body - James 2:26.
- B. At Dorcas' death certain Christian widows stood near and showed the garments she had made "while she was with them" - Acts 9:39.
 - 1. Her physical body was there, but she (the spirit or personality) was gone.
- C. Paul spoke of death as a departure - Philippians 1:23.
 - 1. Herein he uses the term ANALUO which simply meant to "loose up."
 - A. The idea is to "loose up" in order to go to another location.
- D. Notice what happened to Lazarus' spirit at his death - Luke 16:22.
- E. It is interesting to note, in certain locations in the N.T., that the word "exodus" is used in revealing death as a journey - Luke 9:31; 2 Peter 1:15.
 - 1. This is the same exact word as used of the Israelite's departure from Egypt - Hebrews 11:22.
 - 2. From this we can see that as the Hebrews continued to consciously exist, following their "exodus" from Egypt into Sinai, so do we when our departure from earthly regions to the realm of disembodied spirits happens.

4. DEATH IS A REUNION

- A. For the Christian it is a reunion with righteous loved ones.
 - 1. Genesis 25:8 – Abraham.
 - A. This cannot, as some would say, refer to the interment of Abraham's body.
 - B. He was buried near Mamre in Palestine.
 - C. While his ancestors had been buried hundreds of miles away in distant lands.
- B. The expressions "gathered to his people", "going to his fathers" (Genesis 15:15), and "gathered to his fathers" (Judges 2: 10) constantly denote a reunion with loved ones in Sheol.
 - 1. Sheol being the Hebrew equivalent to the Greek Hades which is the location of the departed spirits of man awaiting judgment.
- C. Jesus' suggestion that many would sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob was an implication of a reunion - Matthew 8:11.

5. DEATH IS A UNION WITH THE LORD

- A. For the faithful child of God death is a union with the Lord - Luke 23:43; Philippians 1:23; 2 Corinthians 5:8.
 - 1. The expression "to be at home", is used in the Greek of "one among his own people" in contrast to "one away from home." (A.T. Robertson, Word Pictures, Vol. IV, p. 229).
 - 2. The phrase "with the Lord" implies being in the presence of the Lord.
- B. So what we see, then, is a closer relationship being established with the Lord than ever held while in the physical realm.

6. DEATH BEGINS AN ETERNITY OF SUFFERING

- A. The doctrine of hell is still a vital part of the Bible.
- B. At death, those who lived in rebellion to God will enter a state characterized by pain, sorrow, and trouble - Psalm 116:3.

- C. These will be immersed in shame and contempt - Daniel 12:2.
- D. It will be a realm of anguish, suffering, and torment - Matthew 22:13; 25:46; Luke 16:24; Mark 9:48.

CONCLUSION:

1. One cannot live wrong and die right.
 - A. After death there is no more opportunity for repentance and salvation.
2. Therefore, we encourage you to learn the will of Christ and obey it now - Hebrews 5:8, 9.

WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER DEATH

Robert Stapleton

INTRODUCTION:

1. The subject of death is of such a nature that, unless one turns to the Bible, they can know very little of it.
 - A. To a vast number of people today death and the hereafter are of vital interest - Job 14:14.
 1. God has spoken on the subject.
 - A. He has revealed through His word the meaning of death and the state that follows it.
 2. We want to consider, in this lesson, that interim period between death and the resurrection.
 - A. In our previous lesson we noted the Biblical view of death.
 - B. In this lesson we want to pick up at that point and follow the spirit as it leaves the body.
 3. We have seen that at death the spirit leaves the body and maintains a separate, conscious existence.
 - A. The question that we want to deal with now is where does the spirit exist consciously after death?
 1. There is no transmigration or reincarnation of souls taught by the scriptures.
 - B. So what happens to the soul upon its separation from its temporal tabernacle?

BODY:

1. Souls do not enter their eternal state, either heaven or hell, at the moment of death.
 - A. This is something reserved until following the second coming of Christ, the resurrection, and judgment - John 5:28, 29; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9.
 - B. Those saints who lived during the time of the O.T. are still awaiting entrance into the abode of the eternal home.
 1. David serves as an example of such - Acts 2:34.
 2. The place prepared by God for all disembodied spirits between death and the resurrection is an intermediate abode referred to as Hades in the N.T. - Luke 16:23 (ASV); Acts 2:27, 31 (ASV) – see Appendix # 3, page 61.
 - A. When man dies, the body goes to the grave and is said to "sleep."
 - B. It is at this time that the spirit goes to Hades.
 - C. Hades (or the Hadean realm) is divided into two distinct "compartments".
 1. Paradise (or Abraham's bosom) - the abode of the righteous dead.
 2. Tartarus (or Torment) - the abode of the unrighteous dead.
 - D. The original word Hades is translated "hell" in the K.J.V. and, in the passages just cited, leaves the wrong impression.
 1. Actually there are three Greek words and one Hebrew word that have been translated into the one English word "hell."
 2. Hades, Gehenna, Tartarus, and Sheol.

- A. Hades is that one place to which all spirits go after death.
 1. It primarily means "the unseen, or invisible world."
 2. It is distinct from the word grave which denotes only the place receiving the physical body after death.
 3. Thayer says that it is "the common receptacle of disembodied spirits." p. 11
 4. It is found ten times in the original text of the N.T. - Matthew 11:23; 16:18; Luke 10:15; 16:23; Acts 2:27, 31; Revelation 1:18; 6:8; 20:13, 14.
 5. The A.S.V. never translates the word Hades to mean hell.
3. Gehenna is used to denote the final abode of the wicked.
 - A. In both the K.J.V. and the A.S.V. it is always translated hell.
 - B. Gehenna occurs 12 times in the Greek N.T. - Matthew 5:22, 29, 30; 10:28; 18:9; 23:15, 33; Mark 9:43, 45, 47; Luke 12:5; James 3:6.
 - C. The rich man of Luke 16:23 did not lift up his eyes in Gehenna.
 - D. Neither did Peter say that the soul of Jesus was left in Gehenna.
 - E. At the time of the translation of the K.J.V. (1611) the English word hell meant both the unseen place of the dead (Hades) and the place of eternal punishment (Gehenna).
 1. Later, though, at the time of the translation of the A.S.V. (1901), the word had taken on a different meaning.
 2. Therefore the need to understand both words.
4. Tartarus occurs only one time in the Greek N.T. and is translated hell in both the K.J.V. and the A.S.V. - 2 Peter 2:4.
 - A. This, of course, is in reference to the fallen angels and their abode at the then present time.
 1. See also Jude 6 on this.
 - B. Tartarus would be the "compartment" in the Hadean world occupied by wicked spirits.
 - C. It would be the same as "torments" in Luke 16:23, in reference to the rich man, although the word "torments" comes from a different word altogether.
5. The Hebrew Sheol parallels the N.T. Greek word Hades.
 - A. Therefore it refers to the unseen realm of departed spirits.
 1. It does not refer to Gehenna, nor to the literal grave.
 - B. However, the K.J.V. translates Sheol into three words (grave, hell, and pit) which causes some confusion.
 1. On this, though, keep in mind the changing of the meaning of words from 1611 to 1901 in the English language and you won't have a problem.
6. There is one other word that I want to look at before we move on and that is the word Paradise.
 - A. Paradise refers to the abode of the righteous spirits of the dead in Hades as it relates to this subject.
 - B. It is that "compartment" of which Christ spoke relative to the thief on the cross - Luke 23:43.

- C. It is that "compartment" of Hades that Peter spoke of concerning Christ following his death - Acts 2:27, 32.
 - D. Paradise and Abraham's bosom are one and the same place.
 - 7. Therefore, we see that the Bible teaches two divisions in Hades.
 - A. Paradise (Abraham's bosom) and Tartarus (Torment).
 - B. Both the good and bad go to Hades at death.
 - 1. Their condition, though, is not the same.
 - 2. Some are in a state of happiness.
 - 3. While others are in a state of misery.
 - 8. It should also be clearly seen that there is no way that Paradise could refer to a state of unconsciousness or heaven.
 - A. Christ did not ascend to heaven until forty days after his resurrection - Luke 24:50, 51; Acts 1:3-11.
 - B. Jesus said "today thou shalt be with me in Paradise" - Luke 23:43.
 - 1. Therefore if Jesus and the robber were together in Paradise - and they were.
 - 2. And if Jesus, following his death, went to Hades - and he did - Acts 2:27, 31.
 - 3. We must conclude that Paradise and Hades speak of the same thing in the sense that Paradise is a "compartment" of Hades as we have said.
 - C. Since the word Paradise primarily means "a pleasure garden, a place of delight" it could not possibly speak of a place of unconsciousness or non-existence.
- 3. The question is sometimes asked in regards to whether departed spirits are conscious of the events of the present material world.
 - A. It should be understood that the Bible doesn't, as far as I know, speak explicitly on this matter.
 - B. It seems that we have to stop and do a little bit of thinking.
 - 1. And maybe ask a question or two.
 - C. First, does death erase one's memory of those left behind?
 - 1. I don't think so.
 - 2. In Hades the rich man remembered many things.
 - A. He recognized Lazarus - Luke 16:23.
 - B. He remembered his station in his past life - Luke 16:25.
 - C. He remembered his "father's house" - Luke 16:27.
 - D. He remembered his "five brethren" - Luke 16:28.
 - E. He remembered their lost condition - Luke 16:28, 30.
 - 3. Since one's destination is sealed at death Hades serves as a type of the anti-type to come - heaven or hell.
 - A. At the death of David's child it appears that he expected to some day join him - 2 Samuel 12:23.
 - 1. I would think this implies recognition.
 - 2. And if recognition and remembrance in heaven, I believe, also such in Hades.
 - B. Paul spoke of future happiness, on his behalf, at the knowledge of some of those he had converted - Philippians 2:16; 4:1; 1 Thessalonians 2:19, 20;

2 Corinthians 1:14; 4:14.

1. Therefore he knew that memory would not be annihilated.
 2. If so in heaven I believe we can conclude also in Hades.
4. Secondly, does the Bible teach present knowledge of existing events, by the previous departed, of those left behind on earth and their activities?
- A. Here, again, the Bible has no plain and clear teaching on this matter.
1. But let me tell you what I believe to be the case and why.
 2. It would be my conclusion that they do not possess such knowledge due to the following reasons:
 - A. There is no implication that either Lazarus or the rich man knew of present earthly events after their death.
 - B. The concept of continued communication with the departed dead is known as Spiritualism or Spiritism.
 1. This concept is condemned by the scriptures - Leviticus 19:31; 20:6, 27; Deuteronomy 18:10-12; Acts 19:18, 20.
 - C. The word death, itself, designates a separation of more than just body and spirit.
 1. It implies a separation from everything pertaining to the material or physical except for remembrance.
 - D. We might also ask the question of what benefit would such knowledge serve?
 1. How would the departed Christian mate feel being able to see his wife or her husband resume active sexual relationship following a second marriage?
 2. How would they feel seeing their children become unfaithful to the Lord?
 - A. Or maybe their previous mate?
 - E. Since it is evident that they can't speak to us then what would be the purpose?
 1. If the rich man could have conversed with his brethren left behind why would he have asked Abraham to send Lazarus?
 2. At this present time we are not receiving warnings from Hades to obey.

CONCLUSION:

1. I hope this hasn't muddled up anything but has helped you see what death and the hereafter are.
 - A. The question then is, are you ready?

APPENDIX # 1 - HADES CHART



