

“THINK ON THESE THINGS”

Philippians 4:8

A Preacher Who Wouldn't Do!

Author unknown

A church was in need of a preacher. One of the elders was interested in finding out just what kind of a preacher the church wanted. In order to do this, he composed a letter as though it had been received from a preacher and read it to the committee appointed to select the new preacher. The letter read like this:

“Gentlemen:

Understanding that you need a preacher, I would like to apply for the position. I have many qualifications that I think you would appreciate. I have been blessed to preach with power and have some success as a writer. Some say that I am a good organizer. I have been a leader in most places I have gone.

Some folks, however, have some things against me. I am over fifty years of age. I have never preached in one place for more than three years at a time. In some places I have left town after my work caused riots and disturbances. I have to admit that I have been in jail three or four times, but not because of any wrongdoing. My health is not too good, though I still get a good deal done. I have had to work at my trade to help pay my way.

The churches I have preached in have been small, though located in several large cities. I have not gotten along too well with the religious leaders in different towns where I have preached, and I am sure that they will not recommend me. In fact, some of them have threatened me, taken me to court, and even attacked me physically. I am not too good at keeping records. I have been known even to forget whom I have baptized. However, if you can use me, I shall do my best for you, even if I have to work to help with my support.”

The elder read this letter to the committee and asked if they were interested in the applicant. They replied that he would never do for their church. They were not interested in any unhealthy, troublemaking, contentious, ex-convict; and were insulted that his application had ever been presented! But one of them did ask the preacher's name, and the elder replied, **“The Apostle Paul.” — Selected ■**

[Edited, and widely circulated in church bulletins and publications in the 50's.]

McGarvey Quote

By Larry Ray Hafley

Like all other classes of men, preachers can be notorious troublemakers. Sometimes though, like Elijah of old, they are falsely accused of it. Wicked Ahab said to Elijah, **“Art thou he that troubleth Israel?”** (1 Kgs. 18:17)? The very fact that unrest and contention follows the preaching of the gospel does not necessarily prove that the preacher is at fault. J.W. McGarvey recognized this. Said he:

“The fact that angry excitement follows the preaching of a certain man...is no proof...that the preaching is improper, either in matter or manner. When men are willing to receive the truth, and to reject all error, the preaching of the gospel can have none but peaceful and happy effects. But otherwise, it still brings ‘not peace but a sword,’ and is the ‘savor of death unto death.’ The apostolic method was

to fearlessly preach the truth, and leave the consequences with God and the people” (J.W. McGarvey, Original Commentary On Acts, p. 215

Paul was widely regarded as *“a pestilent fellow,”* as a member of a *“sect that is everywhere spoken against,”* and as one that troubled entire cities, turning *“the world upside down”* (Acts 16:20; 17:6; 24:5; 28:22). While it is true that violence, civil strife, and riots often occurred following his preaching, he was not the cause of it. The same is true today. Therefore, let us not conclude that because a certain preacher is mired in controversy that the fault is all his own. — **Selected** ■

One Preacher Advises Another

By Greg Gwin

An older preacher was giving some advice and counsel to a younger one. His own preaching work had been marred by several incidents where folks had rejected his teaching, opposed him publicly and caused him a fair amount of grief and hardship. Still, though, he continued to proclaim the truth, and he encouraged his young friend to do the same.

He warned the young man that there would be times when his preaching would not be well received. People would not like to hear “hard” preaching. They would prefer to listen to things that were more pleasant and less demanding. Teachers that played to their whims and fancies would be more popular. More “positive” and less “negative” preaching would be their wish, and they would insist that it be so.

But despite all this, the older preacher urged the younger one to press on with his work. It wouldn’t always be easy, but it was ultimately important.

Who were these two preachers? Where and when was this advice given from the older to the younger? It could have been almost anywhere and anytime, but we have reference to the encouragement penned by the apostle Paul to the evangelist Timothy. Some of the final words Paul ever wrote were these: *“Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry”* (2 Tim. 4:2-5). – *Collegue church of Christ Bulletin*, May 7, 2017. ■

Convenient Preaching

By Robert Harkrider

Convenient Preaching Christians are being tried and tested for their love of truth. Many are courageously standing for that which they know to be right, while others, not studying the Bible for themselves, are swept away by the pleasant and fair speeches of teachers and preachers who seek only to scratch itching ears with *“great swelling words, showing respect of persons for the sake of advantage”* (Jude 16, ASV). Myriad of Christians are confusing the difference between convictions and conveniences. They conveniently stand for doctrine which is most popular, receiving the *“praise of men,”* rather than standing for doctrine of Christ by conviction, being rewarded with the *“praise of God”* (Jn. 12:43). Such an attitude is manifested by the failure to teach against worldliness, looseness and laxity in moral living, and by putting emphasis on number and size rather than spiritual stature. Many seem afraid to condemn anything; but stand ready to praise everything. We have watered down our convictions, sweetened our dispositions, and become so sophisticated with worldly wisdom and intoxicated with our “place under the sun” of prominence in the religious world that we stand powerless in the face of error and evil. – *Collegue church of Christ Bulletin*, September 4, 2016. ■

Service Times - Sunday: 9:00 & 10:00 AM; 6:00 PM - Wednesday: 7:00 PM

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