

# “THINK ON THESE THINGS”

Philippians 4:8

## The Pattern of Sound Teaching and Preaching

Divine scripture reveals numerous patterns that are incumbent on those who wish to abide in the doctrine of Christ (2 Jn. 9-11). In this article, we intend to discuss the pattern for sound teaching and preaching as it is revealed in the Scriptures. Paul commanded Titus to, “... *speaking those things which become sound doctrine*” (Titus 2:1), and in the verses following, he told him the what and the why. In this passage, the word sound means uncorrupt, safe, or wholesome words—words that are true (1 Tim. 6:2-5).

**Sound teaching and preaching must be according to the oracles of God.** The apostle Peter wrote, “*If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God...*” (1 Pet. 4:11) All preaching must be based on divine revelation. Divine revelation does not involve men's opinions and doctrines. Preaching that pleases God has only one basis—His Word; hence, Jesus proclaimed, “*Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy word is truth*” (Jn. 17:17).

**Sound teaching and preaching must be for the purpose of edification.** The apostle Paul wrote, “... *Let all things be done unto edifying*” (1 Cor. 14:26). To *edify* means to build up or instruct in the faith. Therefore, all teaching must be for the purpose of building up the students' knowledge and confidence in the faith—the gospel of Christ. Hence, preaching and teaching must be Scriptural and to the point.

**Sound teaching and preaching must be based on God's wisdom.** Paul told the Corinthian brethren that his preaching was not according to man's wisdom. Said he, “*And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought*” (1 Cor. 2:4-6). Today, many who preach do not preach the truth as did Paul. They often preach men's doctrines and commandments, and a perverted gospel, even though we have numerous Divine warnings to shun and avoid (Matt. 15:7-8; Gal. 1:6-10; 1 Cor. 4:6; 2 Cor. 4:5).

**Sound teaching and preaching must be accompanied by love.** Paul instructed the saints at Ephesus saying, “*And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers. For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ*” (Eph. 4:11-15). Men's souls must be the focal point of all preaching. Paul preached that he might “*save some*” (Rom. 11:14; 1 Cor. 9:22). Preaching and teaching that addresses the spiritual good and welfare of those being taught exhibits Bible love. This preaching style (not a mushy, gushy whimpering preaching style) pleases God and displays love. True love puts God's commands first and instructs others to do the same. Unless we do this, no one can be saved (Eccl. 12:13; Matt. 22:37-40; Jn. 14:15, 21; 15:10; 1 Jn. 2:3, 4; 3:22, 24; 5:2, 3; 2 Jn. 1:6). Preaching and teaching cannot and must not be done to entertain or satisfy, and gain the praises of, men (Gal. 1:10).

**Sound teaching and preaching must be bold.** Christians are to live their lives in a bold manner; hence, we teach and preach by the manner in which we live our lives. The Hebrew writer said, “*Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for He hath said, 'I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.' So that we may boldly say, 'The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me'*” (Heb. 13:5-6). Paul instructed Titus, “*In all things showing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you*” (Titus 2:7-8). Paul urged the Ephesian saints to pray that he might open his mouth and speak boldly as he ought to speak. To speak boldly implies that preachers and teachers are not

to tickle the ears of those who do not wish to hear and accept the truth. It is interesting to note the boldness with which Paul addressed the Corinthians, especially in his first letter. The Corinthian brethren had many issues with which Paul dealt boldly so that they might be saved. Preachers and teachers today must do likewise, even when unpopular subjects, such as forsaking the assembly, attitudes, divorce and remarriage, proper giving, error and compromise, and marking false teachers, need attention (Rom. 16:17-18).

**Sound teaching and preaching must be without compromise or excuses.** In religion in general, there is more lying than in any other realm. Why? Because many religious preachers and teachers have compromised God's word so as to serve and please men. Paul wrote, *"For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ"* (Gal. 1:10). Gospel preaching should be without any *"in my opinion," "I think so's" or "maybe this or that."* Scriptural teaching and preaching must be forthright, direct, and without compromise. Many teachers and preachers have sold out and are fearful of teaching and preaching as they ought. Jesus warned His apostle not to fear other men when He said, *"And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell"* (Matt. 10:28). In Revelation 21:8 John warned, *"But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death."* The word *"fearful"* means timid or faithless. So, according to the inspired writer, those who wring their hands and compromise the truth because they are spiritual cowards are in the same class as those who buy a prostitute's services. Notice the classes of people John groups together in this admonition.

**Sound teaching and preaching requires that we defend the faith.** Jude exhorted the saints to defend the faith. He wrote, *"Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints"* (Jude 3). Why did Jude say this? He tells us in verses 4-19 and opens his dissertation in verse 4 by stating, *"For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ."* Paul was *"set for the defence of the gospel"* (Phil. 1:7, 17). Preachers and teachers must be ready to defend the gospel and their brethren from the attacks of false teachers, and to battle against every form of evil, such as cowardly and spineless brethren, luke-warm elders, spiritual softness, men-pleasers, political correctness, society's moral evils, and preachers and teachers who deny the faith (Acts 5:28-42; 6:9-10; 15:1-2; 17:17; 19:8; 1 Pet. 3:15; 1 Tim. 6:12; 2 Tim. 4:1-5).

**Sound teachers and preachers must, as did Paul, declare "all the counsel of God."** Paul explained to the elders in Ephesus, *"For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God."* Paul was not a graduate of Dale Carnegie's course on *How to Win Friends and Influence People*. His preaching and teaching was for the purpose of convicting and convincing sinners to obey the gospel so their souls would be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

**Teachers and preachers must not do as religious leaders did in Jeremiah's day—call good evil and evil good.** Isaiah pronounced a woe to those who did by saying, *"Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight! Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink: Which justify the wicked for reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him"* (Isa. 5:20-23). Paul realized his responsibility to boldly proclaim the truth, for he said, *"For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel"* (1 Cor. 9:16). Hence, he commanded Timothy, by the authority of Christ, to *"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine"* (1 Tim. 4:2).

**Conclusion:** Without any doubt or reservation, God's Book reveals a pattern for sound teaching and preaching. If your teachers or preacher are not soundly teaching and preaching the truth, demand that they do so. If they do not, then get ones that will. Let all who teach and preach God's word openly search their hearts and their teaching and preaching under the scrutiny of God's word, so that God's word will be glorified, declared, and soundly taught without excuse or equivocation. And may the hearers take heed to what they hear so that their souls will be saved eternally in the day of the Lord Jesus (1 Tim. 4:16). — *tgmc* ■

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

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