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## *Preaching the Word*

In speaking with many people, I have found that God and the doctrine have little to do with the reason they pick a church to attend. I knew someone who said he picked his church because of the convenient location. He also raved about the amenities the church had to offer like daycare and other extraneous things. I looked online and saw several articles that had the same information about why people say they attend church at their current location. 7 percent of people choose a church based on location. 49 percent claim the friendliness of the members is swayed them to choose their current church, and 11 percent went because they liked the music. I believe it because I have heard the conversations myself. Someone told me that they didn't like particular messages of judgment or condemnation but instead preferred messages that made him feel good. He would rather hear flattery, a message of love and a message about how he is saved for seeking Jesus, than to have a reminder about the judgment befalling the world and those that have forsaken the way. All he wanted was to feel good about himself. That is not a reason to worship God. But he did bring up an interesting point. What is the Church's obligation to preach? What is the message that should be coming from this pulpit?

### The Importance of Preaching

*Acts 20:7*. The disciples came together on the first day of the week, establishing a precedent for the day of worship, to break bread and hear the word of God. This also establishes the important acts of worship of the Lord's Supper and our focus in this discourse, the preaching of the word of God. The ministering of the gospel is a required act in the worship service. What is the reasoning behind this? What major purpose does the preaching of the gospel every time we come together to worship serve? The first reason preaching is important is to spread the word throughout the world teaching and making disciples. *Matt. 28:19*. The apostles and by extension all disciples of Christ were commissioned to teach all nations and baptize them. It is our responsibility to inform the world about God and his work. *Rom. 10:14-15*. Without preaching the gospel, no one could hear and be saved. Preaching is therefore designed to convert the sinful heart to repent and serve the Lord.

*1 Pt. 3: 18-21*. Some people claim that this language insinuates the Jesus went to hell after his death for three days and preached to the spirits in hell that were present in Noah's day. How ridiculous a thought! What purpose would preaching to already condemned souls serve? We have established that one of preaching's main purposes is to convert the sinner. This is demonstrating the spirit of Christ that preached a message of coming judgment to a world that refused to repent and was utterly destroyed, a message we emulate today.

### For the Edification of the Saints

*1 Cor. 14:1-7. 1 Cor. 14: 12-19*. The word prophesy can really throw some people off but prophecy isn't always referring to the miraculous gift of foretelling, but can also refer to telling forth. Otherwise, if it only applied to miraculous telling of the future, how does it edify the assembly? Seeing it in this light we can understand that Paul is emphasizing the importance of edification in the church. Miracles and speaking in tongues were good if interpretation was available, but what good would it have done if there was none? The edification of the church through preaching is Paul's main concern. It is extremely important to Paul that the church actually get something out of what is being preached. I have seen many videos and heard lessons from people that have no

sustenance. They don't say anything and the people leave the assembly feeling good about themselves, but they gained nothing. This is exactly what Paul is opposing. If we come to the sacred assembly to be entertained then we might as well walk out right now. We gather together to server and to learn. *Eph. 4:11-16*.

The responsibility of the preachers in preaching the word is for the perfecting of the saints and the edification of the body of Christ, that is, his church. Edification is to the church like exercise to the body. It's healthy and makes a stronger body. The church as a body is the same way. Through constant edification, the individual members and the church as a whole become more solidified in the doctrine, not tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine, but becoming perfect man, that is, blameless in the doctrine.

### The Message Preached Today

*1 Cor. 9:16-18*. There are two points I would like to make in this passage. One is that preaching is not something that someone should do for the glory in it. That completely defeats the purpose of preaching to edify. The second, and what I want to focus on is Paul's assertion that a dispensation of the gospel was committed to him to preach. What does that mean that a dispensation of the gospel was committed to him? It means he was obligated to preach salvation through Christ. It wasn't for Paul to reveal and detail the events of the Second Coming. He didn't preach condemnation to the church and to the world. Instead he preached on salvation and our obligations as Christians to fulfill our requirements. While he did speak about Christ's Second Coming, it wasn't for him to reveal the antichrist and condemn the world because that time had not yet come. A dispensation of the gospel has been committed to us as well. Though salvation and grace are part of the scriptures, our dispensation committed to us is judgment and eschatology.

To paraphrase Paul as we read earlier, every instrument has its own distinct sound. So then, how will we know what is played if they all sounded the same? We don't come up here every week and speak about how great it is to be saved by Christ because it is our obligation to preach what God has committed to us. *1 Tim. 2:7*. If we, like Paul, speak the truth and lie not, we are obligated to preach the whole truth. *Col 1:25-29*. How can we present every man perfect to God if we refuse to teach what is commanded? The mystery that was hidden is now made manifest and this revelation, this new message must be preached or we are guilty by omission. *Titus. 1:2-3* Manifests his word *through preaching*, How else will anyone know about his judgment if we don't preach it? Manifests his word through preaching in due time. Now is the time to preach judgment.

We have been commission by God to preach his truth and today his truth consists of a message to the apostate church about condemnation. We preach what we are obligated to preach no matter how it makes anyone feel. We all like to feel warm and fuzzy inside but omitting God's proclamation won't make it go away. Our focus is not material things, to put on a great show or to entertain the masses. We care about the gospel and the truth and will continue to shout from the pulpit God's message of love and salvation, and his message of judgment and condemnation.

