

THE BIBLE VIEW

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Theme: Preaching

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He Was Right!

Bill Brinkworth

Although I was saved at 12, I did not live right and for the Lord. A spiritual change did not occur until I was 28, in the late 70s.

When I finally got right with the Lord, I looked for the right church. After about six months, I found the one I knew God wanted me to attend. The pastor was Paul Fedena, a wise, godly man who knew the Word of God well.

His preaching often touched on current events and how Christians should react and spiritually examine them. Pastor Fedena touched on many "hot" topics. Many people were glad about the warnings; others got mad and pouted off, never to change their life nor darken the ministry's doors again.

One sore spot for many was the time spent watching television preachers. The pastor warned that their doctrine was often unbiblical, and many were in it for the money. He cautioned not to send them tithes and offerings as the money would go to the continuance of false teachings and often their personal bank accounts.

"(For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: 19 Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.)" Philippians 3:18-19

Many got very mad when their favorite television "pastor" was pointed out for doing wrong. Some stormed out. However, it was not long before the pastor's discernments proved true. Some evangelists were found out, and some were sent to jail. Others had their scams revealed, as were the large amounts of money absconded for personal use. The preacher was right!

There was also preaching against the charismatic movement. Well-researched information was given to the congregation about how the spiritual gifts for the early church were not for today's believers who were to live by faith and not sight.

"Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away." I Corinthians 13:8

Scams of some false teachers were revealed, yet many Christians got mad and stormed out of the church when unbiblical teachings and deeds were exposed. Again, the pastor was right!

Another very sore spot was touched upon. The preacher repeatedly revealed what the Bible said about the dress and appearance of men and women.

At that time, women were beginning to wear pants publically which were worn by men only for centuries. He also exposed men's hair-styles as not biblical as men were not to appear "effeminate" and not to have the "hair of a woman."

"The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do so are abomination unto the LORD thy God." Deuteronomy 22:5
"Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him?"

I Corinthians 11:14

His admonitions included that the respect and distinction of the sexes would be confused. He warned men would be doing what God assigned and prepared women to do, and women's roles and abilities would also be changed and abused. The sin of homosexuality was discussed, and that changes in men's and women's goals and standards would cause that sin to be more prevalent.

People strongly disagreed with the preacher's discernments, as "so many were doing it, so it could not possibly be wrong." The pastor was mocked for his stand. Many ignored his warnings. Women wore pants in defiance, and men strutted their long hair. Pastor's warnings from the Bible were disregarded by many.

Now, look at what has happened to society. The sexes are confused. Men are often not the leaders God desires them to be. Women wear the "apparel of man," and men wear their hair however they choose. Family values and structures have changed, and divorces are at an all-time high.

Homosexuality and transsexuality, recognized as mental illnesses during that time, are now prevalent and even encouraged in some circles. Many are now angered when those practices and sins are mentioned and spoken about negatively. Again, the pastor's warning against breaking biblical taboos came true. He was right!

Separation from ungodly living and worldliness were also preached against. It was made clear to the congregation that when Christians get too close to sin, they would soon become desensitized about it, would no longer be convicted by iniquity, and would soon be no different from the ungodly.

"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you," II Corinthians 6:17

Slowly preaching in other ministries caved into the pull to be more like the world "to get more to come to church." They encouraged rock music to replace biblical-based hymns. Dress standards were removed. The reliable, preserved King James Bible was replaced with modern perversions of what God saved to direct His people.

Eventually, many churches became places of entertainment rather than stalwarts of the truth. Faithful and bold preaching of God's Word was replaced by watered-down opinions and soothing

sermonettes. Refusal to separate from sin and worldly places of fellowship stopped many churches from being healing institutions for sin-sick souls.

Again, the preacher's warnings sadly came true. To the surprise of the modern preachers, church attendance diminished significantly, the Gospel was not emphasized, and the power of God was off many ministries.

Although we should heed what comes from the pulpit, not all preachers' predictions and discernments come to fruition. However, when the Word of God is believed, trusted, and used as the only illuminating light, it will expose many sins, wrong doctrines, and guide one through the maze of temptations and iniquities.

The Bible's exposing wrong activities, teachings, and behaviors is not limited to a preacher's discernment. Any Word-of-God-grounded Christian can also determine what is of God and what is not.

Do not let popular beliefs and actions be your compass for finding God's truths. Often, the majority is not right.

Dive into and diligently study His Word for yourself. Use it to direct your path in this sin-sick world, and you, too, can discern right from wrong and His will and way.

"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." II Timothy 2:15

"To love to preach is one thing; to love those to whom we preach is quite another." — Cecil

The Preacher's Advice

Bill Brinkworth

In giving pastoral advice to another preacher, Titus, Paul showed us we could often face what the early church had to be wary. Churches had to be careful of false teachers undermining the work of God.

Paul's warnings to Titus can help us identify some false preaching and teaching in pulpits today. Some of the telltale signs of a "false preacher" include:

- They are preaching things that should not be preached or taught. Perhaps some of what came from the pulpit was not even biblical, as happens in many ministries today. Somehow, what was said was often motivated by the preacher's desire to make more money for himself (Titus 1:11).
- Much of what was said ruined families. Perhaps unwise preaching brought division rather than unity in families and caused problems (Titus 1:11). It may also have been teachings that encouraged families to leave the church.
- Their having their own prophets (Titus 1:12) that supposedly got a "new message from God" and added their thoughts and philosophies. Today, we see this with Muslims following the teaching of their prophet, Mohammed, and the Mormons following their "prophet," Joseph Smith. It also is seen in other religions and denominations throughout the world.

- Their teaching of “fables, and commandments of men” (Titus 1:14). Instead of “thus saith the Lord,” it was “thus saith the preacher” or “thus saith our religion.” Today, we see this with many false religions having their own books and teachings that receive more credence than the Word of God.
- Their works proved they were not from God (Titus 1:16). They claimed they were from God with their mouth, but their involvement in sin and ungodly actions was contrary to their profession.

Many claim that they will not “judge” others, and we should not. However, we must discern right from wrong and avoid what God does not approve. False religion is one danger we need to recognize as not being of God. It must be avoided before damage is done to our thinking, testimony, and Christian walk.

“There are only two types of religions: those that “do” to get God to overlook their sin and those that know that Jesus paid for their iniquities on the cross.”