

## “PREACHING WITH MORE LOVE”

By Keith Greer

One of the phrases that I've seen printed lately in many articles and papers is the need for preachers to "**preach with more love**".

"But, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head; Christ." {Ephesians 4: 15}

No preacher I know would disagree with this suggestion. Preaching needs to be firm, but also in the attitude of love for the souls of men. Still, I wonder what so many mean when they continually use this statement. Could what they are saying hide our true meaning by means of some kind of "hidden agenda?" Maybe...

What kinds of preaching are many demanding today? Uplifting, positive, less combative, encouraging, and by no means should there be any personal applications made. We live in a "supply-demand" society. In the religious world this also occurs. Many gospel preachers today mold their preaching around what pleases the masses. Is this correct?

"Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God." {Acts 20:26,27}

"And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. "{1 Corinthians 2:4,5}

Did Paul preach with love when he spoke to the people in Ephesus? "Moreover you see and hear that not only at Ephesus, but throughout almost all Asia, this Paul has persuaded and turned away many people, saying that they are not gods which are made with hands. "{Acts 19:26}

How about Peter when he spoke to those Jews who were gathered on the Day of Pentecost? "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ. "{Acts 2:36}

When Paul wrote his first epistle to the church at Corinth, did he display "more love for them" in that letter? "Deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Your glorying is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us. " {1 Corinthians 5:5-7}

When Jesus addressed the Pharisees, during His public ministry, did He use "more love"?

"These people draw near to Me with their mouth, And honor Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me. And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men. ""{Matthew J5:8,9}

"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you devour widows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayers. Therefore you will receive greater condemnation. Woe to you, scribes and

Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel land and sea to win one proselyte, and when he is won, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves. " {Matthew 23:14,15}

What do all these examples have in common? Could any charge them with failing to "preach with more love?" All of these men, including our Lord, preached and taught what was needed, not what men wanted! They were preachers who loved the souls of men more than they cared about personal popularity. Preachers who wanted to save men from the fires of eternal torment! Can we do less and help those lost in sin today? \*\*\*