

OLD-FASHION PREACHING-A LOST ART?

By Keith Greer

Today, we live in a world that moves at rapid speed. Everything is geared to be done in such a way as "**to save time**". While it is true that all these little "extras" make our lives more comfortable, I'm not convinced that this means our lives are better.

"For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. " {1 Corinthians 1:21} Yes, God gave the method of preaching to inform men of salvation. Is this method still effective today?

Suppose it would depend on who you ask. Sadly, I must state that not all "**preaching**" is effective today. Did God make a mistake? No! Many reasons might be expressed but one is very evident to me. Preachers have forgotten what it is that saves men.

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek."{Romans 1:16}

"Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls."{James 1:21}

"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}

What do all these passages have in common? One thought—**the message is important, not the messenger or the method!** Whatever happened to "old-fashion preaching"? Book, Chapter, and Verse preaching?

Today, many of my preaching brethren think they have some better concepts: positive preaching, witty stories, common sense method, and, what I like to call, "coming in the back door" method. All these have something in common too. What is it? Simply put, they seek to please man rather than God.

In a meeting, I attended not long ago, the man preached for twenty minutes, before getting to one passage of scripture! During his hour sermon, he made many references to Bible passages, but did not tell us where they could be found in the book. Is this "**Bible-based preaching**"? Another time I heard a ten minute story that had no connection with the topic under discussion. Same congregation, different preacher-the man preached fifty minutes and made only one Bible reference! The local preacher commended the sermon!

Recently, I had a discussion with an older preacher about what topics to include in a sermon. Some topics others had suggested: divorce and remarriage, worldliness, and dancing. Then he

made a strange comment: "I don't preach on those subjects. Causes too much trouble, better left alone for private study." Please read Acts 20:27.

Personally speaking, old-fashion preaching is the only way to go. People need to hear what God says on all subjects. Problems of the world can be problems with brethren. Can a preacher just ignore the world and the direction which it is headed? Divorce at will, making sin seem pleasurable, and the "alternate lifestyle" as just another choice.

"Buy the truth, and do not sell it, also wisdom and instruction and understanding. "
{Proverbs 23:23} Sadly, some believe the day is past that effective preaching must center on God's word. One must seek to "**reach the person in the pew**" by appealing to their desires. Preachers are not in the entertainment business. Preach the word; it will always work. ***