

## ***When the Pulpit Goes...***

The Lord knew what he was doing when he chose the method, namely preaching. Castro took Cuba with the method and Hitler took Germany-it was the message they proclaimed that led to much devastating consequences. Preaching can and should be powerful, but the message preached is so important.

We have long believed that in the growth of a local congregation there can be no substitute for a strong, sound pulpit declaring the truth in love. After all *“it pleased God through the foolishness of preaching to save those that believe”* (I Corinthians 1:21).

Of course we believe in a dynamic teaching program and a loving benevolent program for the poor, the homeless, and the down-trodden. And yet there can be no substitute for a pulpit that gives a clear sound for New Testament Christianity in its truth and simplicity.

When we hear from the pulpit strange language;

When we see in the pulpit a soft, compromising attitude toward the plan of salvation, the worship and organization of the church;

When we hear a confused sound on the doctrine of faith and grace;

When we have to ask if the preacher believes in the faith-only doctrine;

When we hear language leading us to believe the preacher is teaching the direct operation of the Holy Spirit-via such expressions as “God told me to pray at 1:30 a.m. this morning” etc.

When the preaching becomes tainted with sticky humility, dripping in pity and “oozing” with self-righteousness;

When we detect a disdain for the great restoration preachers who blazed the trail and made possible the fruitful New Testament churches we have today;

When it takes several typewritten pages for the pulpit to explain what it meant by some questionable statement;

And when it becomes more and more obvious that the preacher is really more comfortable with “Pentecostal” and other denominational preachers than with his own brethren;

Then we can expect it to be only a matter of time until the congregation goes digressive, the majority of elders accept mechanical instruments of music in worship, tongue speaking, and other sectarian doctrine.

Thank God a pulpit can be fresh, interesting, inspiring, positive, enthusiastic, loving, kind, and still be sound in its teaching, loyal and faithful to New Testament Christianity, and be filled with the love of the truth, the love of our fellow man, and the love of God.

But when the pulpit goes (giving an uncertain ring), can the congregation be far behind? Let us support our elders of the local congregation in their effort to keep the pulpit sound and solid. A trickle of unsoundness can soon become a torrent and we can see a divided eldership, a confused membership, and a lost congregation.

To put the matter in perspective, we rejoice that thousands of gospel preachers do “preach the word,” “contend earnestly for the faith once for all delivered to the saints,”

and are dedicated to restoring the New Testament church in name, doctrine, and practice free from the doctrines and commandments of men. Never in our lifetime have we had so many talented and faithful preachers who proclaim the Word and who see that the pulpit gives forth no uncertain sound.

Seven thousand have not yet bowed the knee to Baal and we must hold up their hands. If the congregation where you attend has a clear, helpful, sound pulpit, why not let the elders and preacher know how much you appreciate it.

—**Ira North**

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