

PREACHER'S FRIEND
We Speak What We Have Heard

Acts 4:20 "For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard."

Proverbs 13:20 "He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed."

What we read does matter, whether it is a blog or someone's twitter feed we follow. Why do they write if not to influence? Why would someone go to the trouble of posting articles if not to 1) share events with friends or 2) influence the thinking of others?

Ask yourself, what is the author trying to influence me to change? Which path will I take if I follow this person?

Acts 2:42 "And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers."

Hebrews 10:24 "And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:"

To "consider one another" is to push each other to stay right. To "provoke" one another is that shove in the right direction. This kind of behavior is as biblical as anything we could imagine. We will be influenced by the company we keep, and we ought to be a good influence to those around us.

Proverbs 27:17 "Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend."

We should sharpen one another for the glory of God. Yes, we need to be very careful who we allow to influence us. I want no one around who will dull my edge; that will happen when I am on my own. I need someone to sharpen me and to make me better. I need no one to urge me to lower my standards; the devil does that daily. I want people around me who will push me to be better, cleaner, and more holy.

I have watched the worldly churches for forty years. I have seen their products, their ministries, and their next generation, and I want no part of them. I am not against those churches, for they are doing what they think is right; but I am different. I read books by soul winning, separated, Independent Baptist authors — because what I read will affect me. I am not a Southern Baptist, therefore, I do not read their material or take their advice on ministry subjects. Long ago, the Southern Baptists allowed evolution into their colleges, and the pastors in their pulpits stopped preaching on separation, soul winning, and holiness. Long ago, the Southern Baptists, as a whole, ceased to win the lost and to baptize converts. So, no, I do not want their books, their conferences, or their music to influence me or my church. I am not against them, I am just removed from their company.

I am careful which conferences I attend because if I am not careful, I will find myself changing. I have seen good pastors change their companions and then drop invitations after preaching because it makes their people uncomfortable. If God makes someone uncomfortable, I want them to take care of the problem right then, in the service, whether it be to get saved, to confess sin, or to pray for victory or help! I will keep my invitation, and my hymnal, and my choir, and my separated youth department, and my weekly soul winning.

Have you noticed once-a-month soul winning being promoted in churches? I have yet to see someone build a great church by only going soul winning once a month. We better get more soul winning opportunities into our churches — not less. When we first started our church, soul winning began with just me going soul winning. I then added Saturday soul winning, inviting any men who would join me. We ate breakfast together, I taught them about soul winning, and then we went and did it. Later we added ladies soul winning, teen soul winning, rest home services, jail services, and more and more and more. We did not cut back — we added! We must all guard who we allow to influence us.

If I start reading the wrong material from evangelicals, I will begin to question holiness, separation from the world, and many other doctrines. I limit my reading options to sound, fundamental material; I came from the Independent Fundamental Baptist church, and that is where I want to stay and grow.

Judges 17:6 “In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes.”

Judges 21:25 “In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes.”

Just because I **think** something is **right does not make it right**. Right is carefully found as we trust the Bible and the wise counsel of seasoned believers. Many things may seem okay to me; but if an older man who has already finished his course did not think those same things were okay to do, I am always safer trusting his judgment. Trusting the older men and their wisdom rather than trusting my own heart or the hearts of those around me is sure to be safer.

I do not keep company with those who cast doubt on my spiritual heritage. Some men use subtle comments, cutting phrases that assault my spiritual heritage. I will not read books or articles from authors who try to defame Thomas Jefferson or slander older preachers like Dr. Jack Hyles. Those men will find I avoid them and their company. There may be some good material in some of their conferences, books, or sermons, but I may also find good food in the garbage at McDonald's. I am not going to eat from that venue for fear of whatever else might get into me via the "good food."

I do not want the germs of dangerous teaching subtly infiltrating my mental food. I will stick with tried and true books, conferences, and lessons. Who cares how stylish the blog or twitter comments seem to be! I must protect the purity of my spiritual diet, FOR “...we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.” (Acts 4:20)

It will affect me.

Pastor Goddard