

GOD WONDERS

Isaiah 59:16 "And he saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor: therefore his arm brought salvation unto him; and his righteousness, it sustained him."

While we sit listening to elected leaders shred our Constitution, most of us are amazed there is no one standing up and interceding on behalf of the Constitution.

While injustice reigns in our courts, decency is forgotten and shame is protected; yet we marvel that no one stands up and says "STOP."

I think a group of preachers ought to stand up and intercede for the truth of the Old-Time Religion.

God speaks frequently about the fault of change.

Hold Fast: 2 Timothy 1:13; Titus 1:9; 2 Thessalonians 2:15

Continue: 2 Timothy 3:14

Given to change: Proverbs 24:21

I believe God wonders why no men stand up and intercede for the things they were taught. I am not talking about fighting with those who never believed what we believe. That is their business. I am saying there are people out there who are trying to get us to change what we have been taught, to get us to join the modern, contemporary church movement. These are the times God wonders why no one stands up and intercedes for the ideals we were trained to honor.

James warns us about being double minded (James 1:8).

Jacob pronounces judgment on Reuben for being as unstable as water (Genesis 49:4).

May I interject a few thoughts? I would like to say to preachers: stand up for your training that you have received; stand true to the things you have been taught; stop meddling with those who chase every new idea, every new book, or every new conference.

Paul instructed Timothy to HOLD FAST the very form of sound words -- not just the general truth, but the form of the words themselves.

2 Timothy 1:13 "Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus."

Paul continues to tell Timothy to find men whom he can train and teach the SAME things Paul had taught him. Timothy was not to run an independent life, or go out and find his own way; he was instructed to do things the way Paul told him to do them and not to change anything.

Preachers, get back to the principles you have been taught. For me, that means 35 years of faith and trust in the church -- the independent, soul-winning, fundamental, Bible-believing Baptist church.

If you were trained at all like I was, then you need to stop hanging around preachers who build large crowds while tearing down the standards of holiness we were taught. I mean stop reading their books, stop going to their conferences, and stop going to them for ideas. Too many of our good young men who were trained right are reading and listening to men who think our training on dress standards is not only wrong, but destructive. Yes, their college girls wear dresses, but check out their high school activities; see what their staff wears on their day off. Now I do not care what another guy teaches his people, but I do care that he stands up and acts like the great training I received was evil and that Dr. Hyles and the great church builders of the 1900's were stupid and out of touch with society.

I am tired of men saying, "I have standards BUT..." or "I believe in modest apparel BUT..." When they add that three letter word, "BUT," it means they do not have standards and they do not believe in modesty.

Let me intercede on behalf of soul winning you. Crowd builders who train their people to pass out tracts and call it soul winning are entitled to their own opinion. It is their church and their business. But when those men teach against our training, I want to intercede. In our church, teenagers win souls; in fact, it was a teenager at a city park who led me to Christ. Teenage bus workers fill our buses every week. On our big days, it is faithful laymen who go "...forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them..." (Mark 16:20) The laymen in my church have preached in

parks, school yards, buses, and ball fields. It is our men and women who regularly visit the V.A. (veteran) Hospital, room-to-room winning veterans to Christ and loving on the faithful servants of our nation. The faithful laymen of my church hold services in a dozen jails and rest homes every week and give the Gospel to people who have been forgotten and unloved by the world. Soul winning is more than passing out tracts (not that I am against passing out tracts), however, I am against our forgetting to train our church members to be soul winners themselves. Even more, I am against men standing up and making themselves examples to younger preachers when the young men are likely to have more soul winners in their young church than that pastor does in his "Mega Church."

Do not criticize another pastor. What he does is none of our business. But when he attacks our soul winners and labels them as shallow and failing to disciple, I become angered. When I can count a dozen soul-winning churches that have passed their 20-year mark, and have built solid ministries of hundreds of people (some over a thousand), I will intercede for these men whom others call shallow.

Shallow describes a man who sets himself up as an example, and builds his conference by seeking out the young men who have been called to preach under men who had high standards. This "new kid" (*shallow* preacher) criticizes the standards of the men who have been vital in placing those young preachers into the ministry.

Dr. Jack Hyles put more men into the ministry than all of his critics put together. Most of the critics of Dr. Hyles got their staff from Dr. Hyles or from those who were trained by Dr. Hyles.

Stop changing! Call your church a Baptist Church! A Baptist church is the church God used to save and train you. Stay there! If those who trained you had decent standards of dress, then stay true to your training. The Old-Time Religion is working all over California, and California is about as liberal as any state in the nation. I do not need anyone to influence me to be softer; the devil will do enough of that. I need someone to keep me straight and strong.

Soul winning is the basis of the New Testament church. We were trained to go out and meet the guy in his chariot and preach unto him Jesus (Acts 8) -- going

everywhere and telling people “Jesus saves.” Inviting people to church is good, but do not call it soul winning, and do not call your church a soul-winning church.

May I intercede for professional looks for preachers? I am as comfortable in a tie as the surfer is on his surf board. What is wrong with preachers who find it necessary to walk around in shorts and flip flops to build a church? Stop trying to build a church of country club CEO's. (Many people in my church probably think I sleep with a tie on.) The office I represent is more important than any banker, any business man, or any corporate leader. I represent something so big, so first-class that it demands a sharp appearance. Just when is the last time you saw the President not wearing a suit or at least a tie? What we preachers do is far more important than the President! Appearance does matter!

With Jeremiah, let me ask, “Why gaddest thou about so much to change thy way?...” (Jeremiah 2:36)

I intercede for what you were trained to be. Do not forget your training or your calling, and do not let anyone move you from it.

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