

Who Cares What They Say

2 Chronicles 18:13 *"And Micaiah said, As the LORD liveth, even what my God saith, that will I speak."*

Jehoshaphat was meeting with Ahab because Ahab desired to join forces in battle with Jehoshaphat. Jehoshaphat, being a godly man, wanted direction from God whether or not he should enter into such a venture. He had already learned that he should not be joining hands with Ahab, but for some reason felt he could side-step the clear lessons of separation he knew, and go to battle as long as the cause pleased God.

(2 Chronicles 21:6) His reasoning is not the point; the point is, although this decision to associate with Ahab did not destroy Jehoshaphat, later it did destroy his son. (This really is not a part of this lesson at all, but it is a good lesson.)

Micaiah, the preacher, was imprisoned because nothing he said made King Ahab happy. The guard who came to take Micaiah to Jehoshaphat and Ahab, urged him to say the same things that the other preachers were saying.

2 Chronicles 18:12 *"And the messenger that went to call Micaiah spake to him, saying, Behold, the words of the prophets declare good to the king with one assent; let thy word therefore, I pray thee, be like one of theirs, and speak thou good!"*

This is the message of so many pastors today. We, as preachers, are urged to speak pleasing words, or to speak words that fit with our society's way of thinking. Our old-fashioned, leather-lunged preaching is challenged. We are urged to be "teachers," not preachers of the old-time Gospel.

The young preacher of today is going to have to preach what God wants him to preach, and he will have to graciously, yet firmly stand against the pressures of society, on purpose. We are surrounded by teachers with "itching ears" as Paul wrote to Timothy. Large congregations are built with music that pleases the flesh, preaching that pleases society, and a lifestyle that denies nothing.

The only problem with those churches is that God is sadly left outside. Such was the Laodicean church of Revelation 3:20 where we find Jesus outside the church, knocking at the door, hoping to be allowed inside.

John the Baptist warned the people who came to him in great crowds that they should "bring forth fruits worthy of repentance." Our Lord spoke of a generation of vipers. (Matthew 12:34)

The stories are told of the great preachers of old like Sam Jones, who was told he was petting the cat in the wrong direction. He graciously suggested that someone turn the cat around.

If we are to please God, we can not be men pleasers. If we are to preach the message of the Scriptures, we cannot get our message from a politically correct or socially correct society around us.

The young preacher will face tremendous pressure, and people will come with wisdom and logical suggestions for modifying the message or the preacher's method of delivery. But Paul made it very clear that their way was not the way he wanted to preach, nor the way any preacher should live.

1 Corinthians 1:21 *"For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God..."*

1 Corinthians 2:6-7 *"Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought: But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory:"*

Paul summarized his thoughts in I Corinthians 3:19 by addressing this reasoning and "wise admonition" to be acceptable and to bring messages that are palatable to a godless, carnal, and lewd society.

("For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.")

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