

Is There a Need For Specific Preaching?

Several years ago, I was delivering a lesson on "Distinctive Preaching." one young preacher in the audience took issue with some points that I made and said, "I just preach principles, I don't make application. I let each person do that for himself". I replied, "don't you think David was glad that Nathan didn't do that?" He wanted to know what I meant. I reminded him of Nathan coming to King David after David had taken another man's wife and later had that man put in a position to be killed. Nathan came to David and spoke of a rich man who had many flocks and herds and a poor man that had just one little ewe lamb that was like a child to him (2 Samuel 12). When the rich man had the opportunity to entertain a stranger he did not take from his many flocks and herds but took the poor man's one little ewe lamb. David understood the principle. In fact, the bible says, "*and David's anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said to Nathan, "as the lord lives the man that hath done this thing shall surely die and he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity."* (2 Samuel 12:5, 6). It was not until Nathan said, "*thou art the man*" that David made the application to himself and acknowledged his sin. (Look at Psalm 51). Yes, sometimes we must be very specific in our preaching if we expect people to understand and make application. Many will say "amen" when we teach that we must respect the authority of God's Word in all things but will get upset when we start examining various practices or doctrines in the light of God's Word. It is great, to them, to have you say that we need to reject the doctrines of men, but when you identify some of these (instrumental music in worship, church support of human institutions, church sponsored recreation and entertainment, etc.) they get angry as David did. I know from personal experience that just because preaching makes one angry doesn't mean that the preaching did no good. It may cause one to study and examine his life in light of the truth and make the necessary changes in his life. I personally know of some that have left denominational churches to serve the Lord as he requires. They have left adulterous marriages, etc. because I made specific application to them.

Sometimes people attempt to justify their sinful conduct based on "well everyone else is doing it." If everyone else is dressing immodestly, what are we going to do? If everyone else is going to a must-see R rated movie, what are we going to do? If everyone else is lying, stealing, or cheating what are we going to do? If everyone else is adding to and taking away from God's Word, what are we going to do?

In the days of King Nebuchadnezzar, everyone else was bowing down and worshiping his golden image (see Dan. 3:1-7). But what did Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego do? They said, "*let it be known to you, o king that we do not serve your gods.*" (Dan. 3: 18). These men loved the lord and courageously served him regardless of what everyone else was doing. may we too have the courage to be different. Brethren, Paul said, in Romans 12:2, "*do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*" God's children are not to follow in the sins of others but are to lead others out of darkness and into the light. So, yes there is most assuredly a great need for specific and distinctive preaching today. Error must be exposed no matter the cost.

Ephesians 5:11 -Paul said "*and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them. some will be offended by calling names or speaking the truth of the scripture.*"

Matthew 23:13-29 – Jesus said, "*woe to you scribes and pharisees.*"

Galatians 2:11... - Paul said, "*now when peter had come to Antioch I withstood him to his face, because he was to be blamed.*"

Acts 8:20-23 – Peter rebuked Simon, "*your money perishes with you, because you thought that the gift of god could be purchased with money. You have neither part nor portion in this matter, for your heart is not right in the sight of God. Repent therefore of this your wickedness and pray to God if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you.*" These all made specific application.

Galatians 4:16 – Paul says, "*have I therefore become your enemy because I tell you the truth?*"

Folks we need to wake up!