

What Must I Do To Be Saved?

- BELIEVE – ACTS 16:31
- REPENT – ACTS 17:30; LUKE 13:3
- CONFESS – ROMANS 10:10; I TIMOTHY 6:12
- BE BAPTIZED – ACTS 2:38; MARK 16:16
- BE FAITHFUL – REVELATION 2:10

PRAYER LIST:

North Ridgeville Church of Christ
36364 Chestnut Ridge Road
North Ridgeville, OH 44039

www.nrcoc.net

Times for Meeting

Lord's Day

9:30 AM Bible Study (all ages)
10:30 AM Worship

Wednesday

7:00 PM Bible Study (all ages)

Elders

Bruce Dean
Mark Ullman

Evangelist

Steven Wallace

THE NORTH RIDGEVILLE CHURCH OF CHRIST

“But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only,
deceiving your own selves.” James 1:22

April 30, 2023

“I DIDN'T GET ANYTHING OUT OF THAT SERMON”

Rick Brumback

Stepping into the presence of the Lord to worship is both a tremendous privilege and a tremendous responsibility. In the presence of the Divine, all mundane affairs of life pass from view as Christians find themselves completely enraptured in the fellowship of the saints with our God. But sometimes someone will say, “I didn't get anything out of that sermon”. This might be because they didn't come ready to worship, ready to hear the Word, and be spiritually fed. Perhaps they don't appreciate the significance of the worship period. Perhaps they haven't prepared with good rest so that they may participate fully. In short, a worshipper may get little out because they have put little in.

But there may be another reason someone can say, “I didn't get anything out of that sermon”. It may be because the preacher didn't put anything into the sermon. Effective gospel preaching, the kind that penetrates deeply into the worshipper's soul with thoughts that educate, challenge, and

satisfy our deepest needs doesn't occur by accident. It's the product of diligent effort and planning. What are some hallmarks of effective preaching?

Biblical preaching is filled with gospel truth. The sermon isn't meant to be simply a presentation of social and psychological theories in place of Scripture quotations. As Paul could declare to his friends, the elders of the church in Ephesus, he hadn't failed to declare to them the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:27). And he acknowledged that it was God and His Word which was able to build up the saints (20:32). Gospel preaching needs to be filled with the gospel! Humanity's God hasn't changed, humanity's adversary hasn't changed, and humanity's need for salvation hasn't changed. It's the truth of the New Testament that must be offered for Jesus' work at the cross to be understood and utilized.

Biblical preaching isn't the telling of jokes and stories, although a sermon illustrated well may include humorous elements as well as the more serious ones. The key is that illustrations, of whatever nature, are meant to contribute to the appreciation of the biblical content and its application. The prophets of the Old Testament, Jesus, and the apostles all used material such as parables, historical notes, thought-provoking questions, and observations about their world in conjunction with their preaching and teaching. However, these illustrations didn't detract from nor replace the inspired content. To the contrary, they supported it.

Biblical preaching isn't simply rehashing the same old, worn-out sermon material. This isn't to say that the great gospel themes can't be revisited time and again. However, the repetitive, lifeless, and thought-challenged rehearsal of the canned sermon represents a dereliction of duty on the part of the preacher. In such instances, the opportunity to engage worshippers with wisdom from the Word has been

transformed into the drudgery of oft-repeated tasks. Like the scribe mentioned in Matthew 13:52, the preacher should be prepared from his own study and reflection to bring "out of his treasure things old and new". The canon from Genesis to Revelation overflows with material that needs to be presented in sermons and Bible classes. There are great sermons to be preached from the minor prophets. Habakkuk and Haggai need to be heard today! During worship and study, the congregation deserves to be fed a rich diet of biblical material.

Biblical preaching needs to show the practical value and application of Scripture! The worshippers listening to the words of instruction want to know how the principles of the sermon can be applied to the situations that they face from time to time. And so the effective preacher will not only present the biblical content within its historical context but consider how it is pertinent to the world of today. Consider that John the Baptist had those who heard his preaching and asked, "What shall we do then?" (Luke 3:10, 12, 14). To these he gave specific instructions about ways in which they could execute their daily business in a righteous manner. The letters of the New Testament taught their recipients how to live the gospel! Notice the application Paul made, using the example of Jesus' sacrifice, to the church in Philippi (Philippians 2:1-11). He was attempting to correct problems in that congregation due to egocentrism and strife. He showed the application of timeless principles to that body of Christians.

Yes, it is certainly true that all those in attendance must be ready to engage their minds and hearts to praise our God in worship. If they aren't prepared for this, they'll walk away without the joy and benefit of having worshipped with the saints. But it's also true that the preacher must make certain that he has invested the time and thought necessary to effectively proclaim the gospel and feed those who hunger and thirst for righteousness.