

THE BELLEVILLE MESSENGER

April 16

2023

NOW THAT THE MEETING IS OVER

Friends, what will we do with the truth that was taught to us? May I suggest we do the following with the truth we have learned ...

Water The Seed

The seed that was planted last week is the word of God (Lk. 8:11). Just as water is necessary for physical life, so also water is essential for our spiritual lives. This is one of the reasons that we read, "I planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase" (I Cor. 3:6). After the apostle Paul had planted the seed (word of God), Apollos encouraged these brethren by teaching them even more about the will of God and encouraging them to continue in the truth. To further illustrate this, remember that Christ encourages us to drink of the "living water" so we will never thirst (Jn. 4:10, 14, 6:35; Matt. 5:6). Therefore, let us water the seed that has been planted so that it can take root and grow strong in the minds and lives of all who hear the truth!

Practice What We Have Learned

Our efforts in this gospel meeting will be in vain if we do not practice what we have learned. With this in mind, consider Ezra. Ezra stands as an excellent example of practicing what he learned. The Bible says, "Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the Law of the LORD, and to do it and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments" (Ezra 7:10). Notice the order in this verse:

- 1) Ezra prepared his heart for the work.
- 2) Ezra studied the law of the Lord.
- 3) Ezra did it.
- 4) Ezra taught Israel God's statutes.

Ezra got the order right! He did not try to practice or obey something he had not learned. Nor was he disobedient to what he had learned! Ezra first learned it, and then he did it. May we do the same! Once we know what God's word says, let us do it. Let us not be hypocrites! Now that we have heard God's word in this gospel meeting let us practice it!

Teach Others The Truth

Notice that Ezra did not stop at simply practicing what he had learned. He also taught others the truth he had learned (Ezra 7:10). He did not teach what he did not know. He did not teach others to do something that he refused to do. He obeyed God and then taught others to do the same!

The greatest example of teaching (and everything else) in the New Testament is Jesus. Notice that He not only obeyed God but also taught the truth. Luke wrote, "The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach" (Acts 1:1). We have a responsibility to teach others the truth that we have learned.

Paul wrote, "and the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses the same commit thou to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also" (II Tim. 2:2). Jesus told His disciples to "teach all nations" (Matt. 28:19) and "preach the gospel to every creature" (Mk. 16:15). Is there any doubt that Jesus thinks teaching others is important?

Pray

Prayer is a powerful weapon in the arsenal of the Christian. It is a vital part of one's armor (Eph. 6:18). Are we using it as we should? Let us do as Paul says and "pray always." Let us pray to God for an open door to spread the truth we have learned last week (II Thess. 3:1). Pray that we might take the things we have learned and apply them to our lives, so that we are not like the Hebrews who had learned, but needed to be taught again (Heb. 5:12-14). Pray for opportunities to speak with others about the truth we learned last week so we can bring more lost people to Christ. Let us spend time in prayer thanking God for His word, and for the fact that it is understandable to men (Eph. 3:4). Put simply, let us "pray without ceasing" (I Thess. 5:17).

Now that the meeting is over, WHAT WILL WE DO WITH THE TRUTH?

Preach The Whole Counsel of God

In Acts 20:26-27, the apostle Paul said, “*Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God.*” Simply put, Paul says, my conscience is clear. Why? Because, he had declared the whole counsel of God.

Sadly, there are too many preachers in the Lord’s church today who are failing to preach the whole counsel of God. Unfortunately, there are some preachers in the Lord’s church today who flat out refuse to preach on certain topics such as: (marriage, divorce, and remarriage, homosexuality, abortion, gender identity, drunkenness, etc.) out of fear to offend or upset someone.

Therefore, due to this cowardly, man pleasing disposition of some preachers in the Lord’s church today, there are some preachers who are always choosing to crack jokes in the pulpit, in an attempt to always make people laugh. There are some who are constantly making reference to the philosophy and thinking of men today, instead of referencing the all inspired word of God, as an attempt to keep up with the times, and there are some who always preach smooth and soft things that could be preached in any denominational church in the world, instead of preaching the whole counsel of God, in an attempt to always make everyone feel good, or happy.

However, preachers who avoid or refuse to preach the whole counsel of God are not worth their salt, and they need to get out of the pulpit! All gospel preachers worth their salt will never be ashamed to preach the whole gospel of Christ

(Romans 1:16), they will never shun to declare the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:27), they will always preach the word, in season and out of season (2 Timothy 2:4), and they will always speak as the oracles of God (1 Peter 4:11).

You see, it has been said, “A church is only as strong as the preaching it demands.” Therefore, the Lord’s church is in need of more preachers preaching the whole counsel of God, and less comedians, philosophers, and ear-ticklers in the pulpit.

Knowing this, may all gospel preachers always seek to preach the whole counsel of God, and may every local church of Christ demand that the whole counsel of God is always preached!

✍ Brad Phillips

Belleville church of Christ

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Schedule of Services

Sunday Bible Study	9:30 a.m.
Sunday Morning Worship	10:30 a.m.
Sunday Evening Worship	4:00 p.m.
Wednesday Bible Study	7:00 p.m.

Evangelist

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