

Trends

A large majority of American adults say the amount of hate crime and hate speech has changed in the past five years: 70% think its increased, 22% believe it has stayed about the same, and only 3% say it has decreased. Most attribute the increase to politicians encouraging this trend (65%). Similar majorities say social media/internet have amplified it (62%) or it is driven by America's increasing division as a country (61%). Only 16% say religious organizations amplify hatred (16%).

- via Barna Group

Colossians 4:6: "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man."

Sentence Sermons

"Darkness cannot drive darkness; Light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; Love can do that."

—Martin Luther King

Proverbs 15:4, 7: "A wholesome tongue is a tree of life, but perverseness in it breaks the spirit. 7 The lips of the wise disperse knowledge, but the heart of the fool does not do so."

News & Notes

Please pray for Zachary Wallace. He is not faithfully attending services as he should (Heb. 10:24-25). "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." (Jas. 5:16)

Please keep sister Wilma Cardwell in your prayers. She is an encouragement to all of us!

Pray for all our members who do not attend regularly. Try to encourage them!

Pray for all the lost souls, especially those in the greater Bloomington area. Pray that Westside might be an influence for good in this community.

Pray for the all of our students: elementary, secondary and college. Our young people face many trials and temptations at school.

There are many needy saints, including preachers! Can you help? Let me know.

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Words of Life

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"Lord, to whom shall we go? You
have the words of eternal life."

John 6:68

"Does 'Hard' Preaching Pay?"

Fanning Yater Tant (1908-1997)



For several years there has been a discussion within the brotherhood as to the relative merits of "hard" preaching in comparison with "persuasive" preaching. By this latter is meant the type of preaching that never refers to a denominational church by name, uses the Dale Carnegie "method of approach" psychology, seeks never to shock or offend anybody, and in general tries to "love" sectarians into Christ rather than to teach them by a stern contrast of truth and error.

Lately, there has grown up a rather definite school of thought in certain sections that a "new era" is dawning among the churches of Christ. In this new and enlightened age, the emphasis is to be put on worship, work, love, and fellowship. The old "doctrinal" emphasis, it is felt, was all wrong. We must seek a new way of winning people to the Lord. Men who emphasize the old "doctrinal" teachings must give way to men who preach "love" and "fellowship."

Well, we've had occasion recently to see some "hard" preaching results close at hand. Down at Lufkin, Texas, the church of Christ has had a daily radio program for many months. The radio stations there (two of them) have put no restrictions on the brethren. In the matter of calling the names of denominational churches and preachers, Roy Cogdill, William Thompson, Jr., and Luther Blackmon have not been at all hesitant. They have read from Baptist manuals, Methodist disciplines, Catholic Catechisms, over these stations, telling the people exactly who it was in Lufkin that taught such doctrines. They have referred to these denominational churches by name, and, have read the Bible in direct contradiction of the teachings of these churches. Now that is about as "hard" preaching as even the "hardest" among us have ever desired or attempted. So, we were grateful to have a chance to weigh the results.

We found the town of Lufkin in a seething ferment because of such preaching. Men on the street-corners were discussing the matter; denominational preachers were preaching about it in their pulpits: the Assembly of God "pastor," after consultation with the other sectarian preachers in town, went on the air over both stations to try to prove that "the so-called church of Christ was started by Alexander Campbell after he had been withdrawn from by the Baptists." He warned all the

denominational people to stay away from the services of the church of Christ, and to ask their own “pastors” rather than those “hard” preachers any questions they might have in mind as a result of the sermons of “these Campbellites.”

And the result?

In about one year’s time, something like a hundred people from denominational churches have become obedient to the gospel of Christ. The Lufkin church has held eight gospel meetings within the town and its immediate environs within that year, most of them being conducted by local preachers. These people who have been baptized into Christ are taught; they have not “cast their lot with the church of Christ” because they were friendly with the local preacher nor because they enjoyed the “fellowship” of members of the church. They are Christians because of a deep and overwhelming conviction of the truth as it is taught in the New Testament.

We merely cite this as a case in point. We believe there is ample evidence from all over the world to show that the preaching that is truly effective is “doctrinal” always, all ways, and forever!

Note by Jarrod M. Jacobs:

“I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; 2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. 3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; 4 And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.”

2 Timothy 4:1-4

This article was written in the *Gospel Guardian* by brother Tant on May 26, 1949. I think he makes some excellent points, don’t you? In fact, as I read this article, I wondered if some of these compromisers brother Tant talked about were still alive! Certainly, the attitude of softness has not died! It was evident during Bible days, as it is evident today. Why is this? What is it that

makes people so nervous or upset when the truth is preached and error is rebuked and renounced (Eph. 5:17; 2 Tim. 4:2)? I have a few ideas:

- (1) Perhaps such preaching upsets those who really don’t believe the truth anyway, and thus they are not willing to defend the truth.
- (2) Perhaps some are nervous because they have very little Bible knowledge. Therefore, if a friend or neighbor asked them about something that had been taught, they would not know how to answer (See: 2 Pet. 3:15; Col. 4:6).
- (3) Perhaps it is because some do not love the truth as they claim; and as a result, they do not want to hear all of the truth taught (2 Thess. 2:10-12).
- (4) Perhaps some have not truly “forsaken all” as Christians, and instead love father, mother, son, daughter, or self more than Christ (Matt.

10:35-38). Thus, when the truth is taught, it bothers them because a loved one, or even they themselves, are caught up in sin.

Whatever the case may be, it is a sad day for God’s people when we see Christians who do not want to hear all the truth preached! Brethren, do not mistake compromise for love! The love that Christ has for men is that which looks out for their best interests! Yes, Christ suffered, endured ridicule, pain, and then died on the cross for sins (Matt. 27; Mk. 15; Lk. 23; Jn. 19)! He did so willingly. He was also the One who cleansed the Temple and drove out the moneychangers on two occasions (Jn. 2; Matt. 21). He called the scribes and Pharisees exactly what they were—hypocrites (Matt. 23)! He warned His apostles specifically about the Pharisees and Sadducees, telling them to beware of their doctrine (Matt. 16:6-12). The motivation for all that Christ did was love—love for lost souls (Lk. 19:10)! Friends, we cannot say we truly love anyone if we get nervous or embarrassed at the thought of them hearing all of the truth of God’s word preached from the pulpit, the radio, the bulletin, the internet, etc.!

Let us examine ourselves and see if we truly want the truth preached, proclaimed, and promoted here! Let us not be satisfied to hear “part” of the truth, or just the portions of that which makes us comfortable. Let us demand to hear “all things” commanded by God (Acts 10:33)! Paul said, “I am not ashamed ...” (Rom. 1:16). Are you?

SWORD TIPS #1749

JULY 9, 2019

Joe R. Price

But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry. (2 Timothy 4:5, NKJV)

What is the work of an evangelist? Many, including some evangelists, either do not know or fail to appreciate what is his work. As a result, unscriptural, unrealistic expectations and demands are put upon him. This ought not be so. There is a work he must do, and for which he is accountable. An evangelist is a herald, a “bringer of good tidings” (Thayer, 257). He is a gospel preacher. Paul explained this in 2 Timothy 4:1-2: “I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: Preach the word!” The evangelist’s work is not to entertain an audience with comedy and storytelling. His work is not measured by his eloquence (1 Cor. 1:17; 2:1, 4, 13). The work of the evangelist is not to be the church’s social coordinator. Preaching the gospel is about feeding souls, not feeding stomachs (Jno. 6:26-27). To do his work he must devote himself to “reading, to exhortation, to doctrine” (1 Tim. 4:13). He cannot preach what he does not know. Do not expect that of him. The evangelist must go into the pulpit and Bible studies prepared to proclaim the word of God. The work of preaching the gospel is not about filling time, it is about filling the time you have with the word of God. That is how the seed, God’s word, is planted into hearts (Lk. 8:11-15). That is your work, evangelist. Be sure you do that work. Do not be deterred and distracted by false definitions and expectations of your work.