

"CALLED TO PREACH?"

By Dr. Hoyt W. Allen, Jr.

Every so often a boy or a man will ask the question, "How does One Know When God Is Calling Him To Preach?". To answer this - there is no easy way to respond. One might say that one is being called to preach when he is not content to do anything else except to preach. This seems like a reasonable answer to the question in hand. No doubt many men have heard a still small voice calling them to preach and did not know if it was God or the devil.

We probably have many men serving as preachers today that should not be preaching and likewise there are many others who are not preaching that should be preaching.

There have been some men ask me about the question and have alluded to the "Pulpit Ministry" as an easy way of life, a clean job, one where a man could regulate his own hours, a respectable job, and one with great eternal benefits. When a man desires to preach with this in mind - then he is dreaming and not a "called man".

Now, one needs to sense that God is personally calling him to serve as a preacher, and be willing to make whatever sacrifices that are needed to be made in order to equip for the modern day "Pulpit Ministry". To begin - a) A Spouse who is one's backer is a MUST. One can be in many vocations without his wife's backing, but when involved in the "Pulpit Ministry" this is an absolute. b) Education is a MUST. A minister is looked upon and is expected to be an expert in many areas. Not only should he have a good working knowledge of the Scriptures, but also have the ability to deliver lessons and sermons.

In today's world of specialists - people are desirous of a preacher who not only knows the Bible but one who truly cares about Servanthood. Thus, one must have a good Bible knowledge, by studying each Bible Book in depth, and have an understanding of life and human behavior itself. One needs classes in: Sermon Preparation, Christian Doctrine, Theology, Hebrew, Greek, Counseling, Education, Methodology, Administration, Evangelism, Church - History, Government and Leadership, as well as History Of Mankind and America, Christian Missions, Typology, Archeology, Bible Lands and Customs, World Religions, etc..

Not that one can not preach without an institutional degree, but it certainly is a tremendous help in today's educated and specialized world. People do not want to go to a dentist who has not been to dental school or to a surgeon who has had his training on animals, nor to a "back-yard" mechanic with his expensive computerized auto. Likewise, they want a preacher who first of all: loves God and His Church; secondly is able to be counted upon as a specialist in the Word; and thirdly is a hard worker for the sake of the Kingdom.

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