

THE FINAL PAGE

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By Warren E. Berkley

## IS WHAT IS PREACHED (or written) IN THE BOOK ??

Fortunately, I have learned some things in 26 years of preaching. Here's one ---> THE WELL-ORGANIZED AND VIGOROUS PRESENTATION OF SOME PROPOSITION IS NO GUARANTEE THAT THE PROPOSITION ITSELF IS TRUE!

**In simpler terms: THE FACT THAT THE PREACHER IS CONVINCED HE IS RIGHT, DOESN'T MEAN YOU SHOULD BE CONVINCED!**

And, it seems difficult to get this point across. After listening to a well-organized, vigorous presentation, that's given with obvious interest and conviction on the part of the speaker --- there are some in virtually every audience who are willing to conclude: "WELL, HE MUST BE RIGHT! He seemed so sincere, so convinced, and he presented his material so well."

What's happening here is: LISTENERS ARE DRAWING CONCLUSIONS ABOUT THE CONTENT OF SERMONS, BASED ON EVERYTHING BUT THE CONTENT. When listening to a preacher, your primary attention ought to be focused on WHAT IS SAID. And, the primary question is: IS THIS IS THE BIBLE!!

Everything else that might capture your attention is secondary to this!  
The following factors are all secondary:

The age of the speaker.  
His experience.  
How much you like him as a person.

The number of people he has baptized.  
Past accomplishments in the Kingdom.  
Number of years formal education.  
Speaking ability.  
Charming personality.  
How many meetings he holds.  
How good his kids are.  
The fact you agree with him on vital issues of the day.  
His personal kindness toward others.  
His knowledge of the Scriptures and recall.  
Eloquence.  
IBM or MAC Computer.  
Vigor and volume in the pulpit.  
Debating skill.  
Writing skill.  
Preaching skill.  
Personal evangelism skill.  
Dress.  
Beauty (or absence of) in wife and children.  
Number of hours he works.  
Number of churches where he has worked.  
Display of emotion.  
Political views (same as yours).  
Perseverance.  
Number of enemies he has.

NO! I'm not suggesting that these aspects of a preachers life are entirely irrelevant to his work, and that these things just don't matter. I'm saying: ALL THESE THINGS ARE SECONDARY TO THE PRIMARY MATTER AT HAND WHEN YOU LISTEN TO THE MAN.

And that is: WHAT IS HE SAYING & IS IT IN THE BIBLE? The preacher's job in the pulpit is: "PREACH THE WORD" (2 Tim. 4:2). YOUR JOB, IN THE AUDIENCE IS: "Take heed what you hear," and SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES, TO SEE IF WHAT IS PREACHED IS THERE (Mrk. 4:24; Acts 17:11). And everything above applies equally to the writings of men, like EXPOSITORY FILES.

We are a new medium, and when folks first look at an electronic magazine they may be impressed. "Take heed what you read!"

Search the Scriptures to see if these things are so!!

