

The Problem with the Preacher

2Corinthians 4:5-7

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- “For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bondservants for Jesus' sake. 6 For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. 7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us.”

The Problem with the Preacher

- Paul defends himself against those who question his apostleship. He speaks of what it meant for him to be a minister of the gospel.
 - Preachers don't preach themselves, but Christ Jesus.
 - Preachers are merely servants of Christ.
 - The gospel of Christ is glorious.
 - Preachers have the gospel within themselves, as a treasure that is kept in a clay jar.
 - This manifests that the excellency and power comes from God and not the preacher.

Preachers Are Human Beings

- All Christians, regardless of their role in the local church, are equal before God
 - 1Peter 2:5 - “You also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.”

Preachers Are Human Beings

- When one becomes an evangelist, he doesn't stop being a human being; preachers are vulnerable to the same temptations as everyone else.
- They empathize with the human condition
 - 2Cor. 11:29 - “Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to stumble, and I do not burn with indignation?”

Preachers Are Human Beings

- Preachers are subject to the same needs and limits of the body as everyone else
 - 1Cor. 9:4 - “Even so the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should live from the gospel.”
- Preachers experience the same emotions as everyone else: happiness, sadness, fear, worry, courage, tranquility, turmoil, etc.
- They have hopes, desires, dreams, aspirations, goals, favorites, dislikes, interests, etc.

Preachers Are Human Beings

- Some preachers also engage in secular work
 - Acts 18:3 - “So, because he was of the same trade, he stayed with them and worked; for by occupation they were tentmakers.”
- Preacher's need prayers
 - 1Thes. 5:25 - “Brethren, pray for us.”

Preachers Are Human Beings

- Preachers often marry and have families
 - 1Cor. 9:5 - “Do we have no right to take along a believing wife, as do also the other apostles, the brothers of the Lord, and Cephas?”
- Preachers’ wives have the same life needs as non-preachers’ wives
- Preachers’ children are just like other non-preachers’ children

Preachers Are Human Beings

- Preachers' family life is no different from other people's family life.
- Preachers can make the same mistakes in their homes as other men.
- Preachers have to live with the consequences of their choices and actions just like everyone else.

Preachers Are Human Beings

- Peter the evangelist was married
 - Matt. 8:14 - “Now when Jesus had come into Peter's house, He saw his wife's mother lying sick with a fever.”
 - 1Cor. 9:5 - “Do we have no right to take along a believing wife, as do also the other apostles, the brothers of the Lord, and Cephas?”

Preachers Are Human Beings

- As an elder, he had children
 - 1Peter 5:1 - “The elders who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder...”
 - Titus 1:6 - “If a man is blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination.”

Preachers Are Human Beings

- Peter and Paul worked secularly on occasion
 - John 21:3 - “Simon Peter said to them, I am going fishing. They said to him, We are going with you also. They went out and immediately got into the boat...”
 - Acts 18:1, 3 - “After these things Paul departed from Athens and went to Corinth... 3 So, because he was of the same trade, he stayed with them and worked; for by occupation they were tentmakers.”

Preachers, As Human Beings, Have Problems

- People expect their preachers to be free of problems. Many preachers think that, in view of these expectations, they must be flawless in judgment and perfect in example.
- This puts unnecessary pressure on the preacher and family
 - 2Cor. 12:13-14 - “For what is it in which you were inferior to other churches, except that I myself was not burdensome to you? Forgive me this wrong! 14 Now for the third time I am ready to come to you. And I will not be burdensome to you; for I do not seek yours...”

Preachers, As Human Beings, Have Problems

- Preachers are subject to the human predicament; they make mistakes; they sometimes use bad judgment and occasionally sin. When they do, they fall under the same instruction as every other Christian
 - 1John 1:6-10 - “If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. 7 But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. 8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.”

Preachers, As Human Beings, Have Problems

- Preachers sometimes say things they shouldn't
 - Eph. 4:29 - “Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers... 5:4 neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks.”

Preachers, As Human Beings, Have Problems

- Preachers sometimes have family problems.
- There may be problems in a preacher's marriage.
- Preachers aren't perfect parents.
- A preacher's family, marriage, and children aren't perfect just because he's a preacher.

Preachers, As Human Beings, Have Problems

- Was Peter perfect?
 - Matt. 16:23 - “But He turned and said to Peter, Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men.”
 - Mark 14:72 - “A second time the rooster crowed. Then Peter called to mind the word that Jesus had said to him, Before the rooster crows twice, you will deny Me three times. And when he thought about it, he wept.”
 - Matt. 26:74 - “Then he began to curse and swear, saying, I do not know the Man! Immediately a rooster crowed.”

Preachers, As Human Beings, Have Problems

- Was Peter perfect?
 - Gal. 2:11 - “Now when Peter had come to Antioch, I withstood him to his face, because he was to be blamed”
 - Acts 10:13-15 - “And a voice came to him, Rise, Peter; kill and eat. 14 But Peter said, Not so, Lord! For I have never eaten anything common or unclean. 15 And a voice spoke to him again the second time, What God has cleansed you must not call common.”

Preachers, As Human Beings, Have Problems

- Was Peter perfect?
 - John 21:7 - “Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, It is the Lord! Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his outer garment (for he had removed it), and plunged into the sea.”
 - Acts 12:5 - “Peter was therefore kept in prison, but constant prayer was offered to God for him by the church.”

Preachers Preach The Gospel

- Regardless of how the preacher or his family behaves, the gospel is still the same; it doesn't change.
 - Gal. 1:6-10 - “I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, 7 which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. 8 But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. 9 As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed. 10 For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ.”

Preachers Preach The Gospel

- The preacher shouldn't be believed simply because he is the preacher, but because he preaches the truth.
 - Acts 17:11 - “These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so.”
 - 1John 4:1 - “Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world.”
 - 1Thes. 5:21 - “Test all things; hold fast what is good.”

Preachers Preach The Gospel

- Expect a preacher to be a Christian, but don't expect him to be anything more than just that.
- A preacher ought not to be a Christian because he is a preacher, but a preacher because he is a Christian.
- Everyone will sin
 - 1John 1:8 - “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.”
 - Rom. 3:23 - “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God”

Preachers Preach The Gospel

- A preacher has an obligation to examine his life to make sure he is living what he is preaching
 - 1Tim. 4:16 - “Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.”
 - 1Cor. 9:27 - “But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.”
 - 2Cor. 13:5 - “Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you? --unless indeed you are disqualified.”

Preachers Preach The Gospel

- A preacher's life should be an open book; but then, so should yours.
- Preachers are people.
- Preachers, as people, have problems.
- Preachers preach the gospel.
- If we remember this, we will not put our faith in man, but in God and His word.