

The Preacher's Attitude

by Connie W. Adams

I have known a number of instances in which brethren at various places have tried to get rid of a faithful preacher, not on the ground that he preached unsound doctrine, or that his life was unclean, but that his "attitude" was bad. I have heard that song and observed the actions of enough who sing it to be pretty well conversant with the tune.

The Bible charged preachers to "*preach the word, in season and out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine*" (2 Tim. 4:2). Certainly a preacher of the gospel must exercise patience, be longsuffering, kind, considerate, and not manifest a carping, hypocritical spirit. All the counsel of God must be proclaimed. This should be done with dignity befitting the sacred message, with the best judgment possible so as to accomplish the most possible good from the efforts expended.

But the trouble comes often when a preacher points out sin and error and calls on his hearers to make amends. There is an old saying that there is more than one way to skin a cat, but anyhow you do it, the old cat is not going to think much of it. Likewise, brethren who are guilty of sin and who intend to persist in it are not going to take too kindly to having their sins pointed out. And it wouldn't matter to them if the preacher grinned or frowned when he said it. If their hearts were right they would see the value of the truth presented and seek to profit by it. But being bent on having their way they decide the preacher has a bad "attitude." I have often wondered how a preacher is to react toward ungodliness, in the estimation of some. Can he grin it away? Can he give it an affectionate pat on the head, say "Now, you be good," and hope to bring the needed reform?

Some diseases require strong medicine to cure. Others can be treated with light remedies. While I am sure that many times preachers make a poor choice of words, and perhaps could improve on their approach to various problems, more often than not, there are some brethren whose toes are being stepped on, can't stand the pain do not aim to change, and who lament that the preacher has a bad "attitude." Brethren, think on these things.

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