

## **SELF-FLAGELLATION ALONE WILL NOT SAVE!**

**“We need some hard preaching, preacher!” “Really step on our toes!” “We ought to have more hellfire and brimstone sermons!” “You really hit me today, but I need it!”**

These and other similar exclamations are generally welcomed by gospel preachers. It often has the same effect as “Sic’em”. The average preacher will swell up and let the chastisement fly. I am not suggesting that members ought not to welcome plain and emphatic preaching. I am not intimating that preachers ought not to preach the gospel pointedly and let the “chips fall where they may.”

My concern is with the possibility that some feel the Lord is appeased when the preacher rants and raves and the conscience is pained. Those who sin ought to feel sorry they have sinned.

However, feeling sorry when we are not acceptable to God is not the conclusion of the whole matter. Godly sorrow must work repentance before it obtains salvation.(2 Corinthians 7:10)

The prophets of Baal cried aloud and cut themselves as was their custom, but to no avail. They were following a false direction. Elijah implored God to let the people know that he (Elijah) did what he did at His word. (1 Kings 18:19-39)

When the word of God is permitted its intended effect it will result in a changed life and a better person, not just a remorseful feeling. An Iranian Hostage Crisis took place in 1979-81 when Iranian students seized the US Embassy in Tehran. It lasted for 14 months. Fifty two hostages were held until January 20, 1981. During that time the American public was ill-treated to repeated scenes on TV of Iranian students en masse flailing their backs with short pieces of chain; first over one shoulder and then the other in an orchestrated and rhythmic fashion in an apparent attempt to show solidarity within themselves and with “Allah”. No doubt many of us thought, how pathetic and how meaningless. Yet, how pathetic and how meaningless when we welcome words which make us feel sorry for our sins, when there is no intention to correct our sins, and no correction is forthcoming.

Jesus said, “**But why do you call Me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do the things which I say?**” (Luke 6:46) Obedience to the Lord is necessary for salvation. (Heb. 5:9) Feelings are important, but one may be deceived to feel good when there is no good. Be sorry and do right. **Self-flagellation alone will not save, therefore, go thou and do the will of the Lord.**

CAB

Bible Study is Good for the Soul!