

HOW DID YOU LIKE THE SERMON ?

This question may be asked of others as we inquire about their impression of the worship service. The likes of individual listeners may vary considerably and amazingly. It is good and fine to like a sermon, but is that the most important thing about it?

Sermons should be preached not necessarily to be liked, but to be accepted and lived. Suppose you did not like the sermon? What of it? Suppose a hypocrite sitting next to you went away in a rage? Does that mean that the sermon was not good? John the Baptist, Jesus, Peter, John and Paul were not anxious that their sermons should be liked (Gal. 1:10; 1 Thess. 2:4; Jas. 4:4). The crucial question is not, "Did you like the sermon?", but rather, "Did it bring you any nearer to the Lord? Did it give you a new vision of your duty?"

A sermon should not be measured by how much we might like or dislike it, but by whether or not it conforms to the truth of God's Word, and encourages us to seek the will of the Father and to do His will with all the strength of our being. We may not like to be told of our duty, but remember abiding is better than liking.

ARE YOU OPEN-MINDED OR NARROW-MINDED ?

Well now, I have heard that open-minded is better. I have also heard it said (It might have been me. {?}), that one should not be so open-minded that all the trash floating around makes it a receptacle. But, surely, one should not be narrow-minded, I have heard that is bad. It has been said (That wasn't me.), that narrow-minded people are judgmental, egotistical, arrogant and condemnatory. Well that doesn't sound good, now does it?

I think we should let the Lord address the question, don't you? Read on.

¹³When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, "*Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?*"

¹⁴So they said, "Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." (Mat. 16:13-14 NKJV)

The people were confused concerning Jesus. The above passage shows they were divided over who He was. There is no reason to believe they were not honest and sincere in their convictions. **Yet, they were wrong!**

Peter responded correctly, "*You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.*" (Mat. 16:16). This was the only true answer. Jesus is the Son of the living God. Jesus said, "*... Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, ...*" (Mat. 16:17). This blessing was bestowed because of Peter's confession of truth about the person of Christ. Peter was convinced because of the evidence provided by God concerning Christ's deity.

God provides people today with the necessary evidence to produce faith (cf Rom. 10:17). Well now, that means, it seems to me, that **religious truth is narrow**. When God gives an answer, it is the right answer, the **only** right answer. People may differ as the Jews differed over the identification of Jesus. But, only one conclusion could have been reached that was and is based on truth. Do not be frightened or ashamed of the accusation of others that, "**You are narrow-minded.**" Just remember, **TRUTH IS NARROW!** Jesus said, "*... I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.*" (John 14:6). **That last sentence sure sounds narrow to me.** I think I will try to be as narrow-minded as the Lord. **WHAT ABOUT YOU?**

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