



Choose Preaching Wisely

I don't know about you, but I really appreciate a good preacher. If you are reading this you more than likely do to. Can you readily recall the best preacher you've ever heard? Who stands out most of all in your memory? For me, there are names like Mack Lyon, Joe Beam, Rubel Shelly, Randy Harris and Buddy Bell. This doesn't take into account those able men in the restoration movement like Alexander Campbell and Barton Stone. Now, do we evaluate a preacher on the results of our response to his lesson? Did it motivate us to make changes as needed? That is the mark of an effective preacher!

Now, what would you say to the idea that we face an extremely effective preacher every day of our lives? And it is a preacher we have no business being influenced by! Peter calls him our adversary. Matthew calls him the tempter. The devil is very good at what he preaches, unfortunately, his message is one based on lies. Jesus tells us in John 8:44 "Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own {nature} for he is a liar, and the father of lies." (NAS) In Jesus' wilderness temptation Satan used scripture against Him with a twist (a lie) in an effort to achieve his goal. With us, should we expect anything different??? Lie #1 the devil preaches to us is that God's word is not true. If he succeeds at this, he can limit or remove our trust in its reliability. In his encounter with Eve in the garden he challenged God's verbal word when he told her she would not die if she ate of the forbidden fruit. No one has ever been able to take any portion of scripture and prove it false. Because it is a lie put forth by our enemy and adversary! Satan would also have us believe lie #2 in that the person sins will not die... this works if we have bought lie #1. If we haven't then we know from Ezekiel 18:20 that the soul that sins will die! Not for anyone's sins but their own! New Testament writer James shares the very same message (1:14-15). Many today consider their 'trivial' sins as safe, but without a 'broken and contrite heart' (Ps 51:17) we trample underfoot the blood of the covenant (Heb 10:29). Lie #3 attempts to convince us we can save ourselves... see Romans 5:6 and Ephesians 2:8-9.

Who preaches the lessons that guide your life? Are you following the words of God's Son or are you tripped up by the lies of the one who seeks your destruction?