

Preaching a Watered Down Gospel - Part 3

by Jeff Noblit

Christians have a duty to receive and grow in God's word, and shallow milk dependency is a spiritual problem that prevents us from grasping deeper truths and communicating them with others.

Duration: 8:58

Scripture: Colossians 1:9

Topics: "Spiritual Maturity", "Faithful Preaching"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the duty of both the preacher to faithfully deliver God's truth and the congregation to mature beyond basic teachings, diving into deeper truths of the Word. It highlights the responsibility for Christians to grow in knowledge and wisdom, being able to teach others and not remain milk-dependent. The importance of going beyond shallow understanding and embracing the deeper truths of the Bible is emphasized, urging believers to avoid shallowness and strive for spiritual maturity.

Transcript

When we come in here every week and I preach to you, I certainly have a debt to exercise my calling. I have a duty to give you, rightfully divided, the word of truth. But you have a debt and a duty to receive it, incorporate it, meditate on it, muse on it, pray through it, talk to your children about it, and grow in it.

It's a duty God gives you. So if I'm faithfully giving you God's truth, then you're without excuse if you're still milk-dependent. Now he says by this time you ought to be teachers.

He doesn't mean the office of teacher in the church, the pastor teacher. But he means you need to be matured by now to the understanding that you know enough about the word that you can share with others the things of God from the word of God. Now all that have the office of teacher in the church must have the ability to teach, but all that have the ability need not have the office.

So it's a duty of all Christians who have long stood under sound teaching to go beyond milk. You know, Jesus is God's son, I'm a sinner, Jesus died for sinners, if you believe on him you're saved, and you're not going to hell, and you ought to read your Bible and pray. It's pretty milky.

There's a whole lot to what Jesus did and how he did it and the reasons why he did it that the scripture teaches that we're to dive into and understand. Let me give you some cross-references here, Titus 2-3. We got any older women in the congregation? God gives you a job.

Older women likewise ought to be reverent in their behavior, not malicious gossips, nor enslaved to much wine. Now, God help us that church ladies run around gossiping, drinking booze. It's not a whole lot better to run around gossiping, drinking coffee either, though.

His point being, once you get your kids raised and your husband in the grave, you get some free time on your hands, be careful! God hadn't grown you to this point to waste it that way. Pour your energies into knowing the word of God concerning womanhood and teach the younger women the things of God. I tell our widows in our church that you get busy in the church.

Now, some of them have responsibilities in their families, and that's first, I know that. They don't neglect the church. But when all that's covered, keep yourself busy in the things of God.

Who needs some old man to marry anyway? Amen? Ladies, goodnight. But if you find one, I'll marry you. Go ahead.

Aquila and Priscilla is a great example of this. These are not preacher people. These are just mature lay leaders, if you will, in the church.

Acts 18, 26, and he began to speak out boldly in the synagogue. But when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately. Now, here's a policy God called preacher.

Aquila and Priscilla hear him and say, Man, God's got his hand on him, but he's a little shallow in some areas of doctrine. And I believe very reverently and humbly and respectfully and privately, they pull him aside and teach him. Not so that they'll be bragged on, but that he'll be more effective.

You know, I've had people do me that way. I've had retired preachers in my church that once or twice a month would say, Pastor, now when you said that, you were a little out of balance. And nine times out of ten, they were right, and it helped me.

They didn't make a big show of it. They were matured. They were used of God in that way.

Colossians 1, verse 9. Listen to Paul's prayer. For this reason also, since the day we heard of it, we've not ceased to pray for you. What's Paul going to pray? And ask that you may be filled, that means filled to the full, with the knowledge, deeper understanding that is, of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding.

So the text clearly points out the responsibility, the debt, the duty of the average Christian to grasp the deeper truths and then be able to communicate them with others. And how much more so the man of God. I can't challenge you if I'm not learning and growing myself.

That's why I'm so grateful for the strong conviction of this church that whatever else the teaching pastor does, he must study and pray to be ready to preach. Well, Roman numeral two. Not only is there milk dependency without excuse, secondly, their shallow milk dependency is pathetic.

Pathetic. And that's what he's getting at here. It's a pathetic thing.

And I want you to grasp what the text wants you to grasp. And that is, it's not just not preferable to stay immature. It's pathetic.

It's bizarre. It's ugly. Might even say grotesque.

And in the context of that, I see in evangelical Christianity and often from the pulpits of evangelical Christianity, a glorying in shallowness and even a condemnation of any effort to struggle with and wrestle with and grasp the deeper truths of the Word of God. And it's a trap of Satan. It's a lie of Satan.

Well, he says here in verse 12, he said, Here we are. By this time you ought to be teachers and you have need again. You require your ministers to have to start over again with those basic first principles of Christ and Christianity and you are far beyond the yearning years as a Christian.

1 Corinthians 3, verse 2 is a good cross-reference here. He says, I gave you milk to drink and not solid food for you are not yet able to receive it. Indeed, even now you're not able.

You're still on the bottle. And he says to the Hebrew Christians, he says to the Corinthian church, to keep you guys coming and satisfied, I mean, to keep it so basic. You'll walk out, well, he's just over my head.

No, you have shirked your duty to grow deeper and deepen your appetite because God gave us the whole counsel of God. I'm required to preach so that you will know all of Him that He wants you to know until you see Him face to face. And by the way, it's a pretty thick book.

And I'm not talking about facts and figures about Moses and Jacob and who was the fourth son and who married who. But I mean the spiritual dynamics and truths and principles behind the stories that we apply to our lives today. You know the Bible up and down, front and back, and all the facts and figures, and be full of hell and full of pride.

I'm talking about knowing it so that you can make it incarnational into your heart and life in a more deep way. Because you see, if you just stop at the first principles, you can make Christianity mean about whatever you want it to mean and still go to heaven. Not really, but that's the way it seems.

And that's why Baptists love it so. Amen. Am I getting in trouble because I tell you the truth? That's the truth.

That's why it's so popular. You can take the basic first statements of grace and say, well, I'm checking in on that, I'm jumping through the hoop, I'm getting my ticket punched, and the rest is just mine. Wrong.

It's not biblical. If you go deeper, you begin to see that. Well, Goal is a commentary writer that I'm using.

It's 400 years old. By the way, if you want to study the Word of God, study dead men. Serious.

The older guys are much, much richer.

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