

Untempered Zeal

by John Hames

The sermon emphasizes the importance of using wisdom and love when sharing the Gospel, rather than approaching others with rash zeal or argumentative methods.

Scripture: Proverbs 15:1, Matthew 10:16, Colossians 4:6, 2 Timothy 2:24, James 3:17

Topics: "Effective Evangelism", "Christian Discipleship"

Description

John Hames emphasizes the importance of wisdom and tact in sharing the message of Christ, cautioning against being overzealous and driving souls away rather than drawing them to Christ. He shares personal experiences of unwise approaches in evangelism, highlighting the need for instruction and discernment, especially for newly converted souls. Hames advises against engaging in fruitless arguments and instead encourages a more thoughtful and considerate approach in conversations about religion, aiming to produce conviction rather than strife.

Transcript

"Behold I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents and harmless as doves." (Matt. 10:16)

One of the many things which furnished material for shame and regret in the early part of the writer's Christian experience was the rash and unwise way we approached and dealt with the souls we were trying to help. We sincerely thought it was our duty as a Christian to exhort about every person we met on the street to get religion. As a result, we became a public nuisance. We considered it almost a sin to be in conversation with a person more than ten minutes and not to speak to him on the subject of religion. It was not a great while, however, before we discovered the fact that we were driving souls away rather than winning them to Christ.

This is a point where newly converted souls need much instruction. They are so happy and full of joy that they try to talk religion into nearly every one they meet. If they should continue this unwise action they would talk themselves clear out of employment and out onto the sidewalk.

I hope the reader will not mistake my meaning. It is perfectly right to speak to people on the subject of religion; however, it is not using the best wisdom to buttonhole every person you meet, neither is it wise to speak to the same man on the subject every time you meet him.

We have found it more harmful than helpful to argue on the Scriptures with sinners and carnal-minded church members.

We were once accustomed to awkwardly approach people with the following question: "Do you live without sin?" This method, of course, called forth an argument wherever we went. Our intentions were good but our judgment was tremendously faulty.

We were also accustomed to putting the following question to strangers on the street: "Are you saved?" "Are you a Christian?" This method tended to stir up strife and the devil rather than produce conviction. The question was alright but we did not properly put it. We should have first prepared the way for our question by saying, "Good morning; how are you today?" etc., and after passing a few brief remarks on the general topics of the day then put our question.

Should we have adopted this method no doubt the people would have accepted our question in a better spirit and been profited thereby.

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