

## **Good Preaching**

One time, several years ago, when I was preaching a Bible Conference in another church, some kind soul said to me “That was sure good preaching.” Although such remarks are always appreciated, whether true or not, this time those kind words started a train of thought that is still going on in my mind to this very day. What is “good preaching”? Is it style, content, delivery, human interest, enlightening illustrations, humor, all of the above or none of the above? The more I thought of it, the more I became convinced that there is a very important element in “good preaching” that is overlooked and ignored, even by most preachers who think they are “good preachers”. (I know I’m not.) That missing element is to be found in those who hear. Preaching is only “good” if it is heard by eager and obedient hearts who truly want to know what God has said, what He means by what He said, and what He wants us to do about it. In short preaching is “good” only when it is heard in faith and when it results in God’s word making a discernible difference in the lives of those who hear. Apart from that it may be eloquent, amusing, well organized, emotional, informational, but it will not be “good”. I think that was the whole point of Jesus’ parable of the sower and the soils. The sower was just doing his job, the seed was the same all over the field, and the only thing different was the condition and preparation of the soil. So far as the harvest was concerned, the seed that fell on the hard ground, or the rocky soil, or the weed infested soil was wasted. It was the good, well prepared soil that made a good harvest. Jesus said, in effect, that’s what preaching is all about. So the next time you hear or think something like “that was sure good (or poor) preaching”, remember “good preaching” only happens when the speaker and the hearers are all prepared and eager to hear and do what God has said and can demonstrate in their lives that God’s word is making a discernable difference in how we live.