

OLD UNION BAPTIST MINISTERS SCHOOL

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"THE MAN OF GOD"

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In the Old Testament God inspired men in their writing sometimes to refer to His prophets and servants as "the man of God." Also in the New Testament Paul was inspired of God to refer to Timothy as the man of God (1 Timothy 6:11, 2 Timothy 3:17). As a God-called minister today, as a man of God, what an awesome responsibility falls upon us. Alas, I am not worthy to be called that.

Men and women try to find a profession in life that they enjoy and one that can afford them a living salary. They prepare for that by study, on the job training or perhaps by "chance" they discover a work they really enjoy. The man of God does not choose his work. God does the choosing.

A true man of God must be born again and called of God to preach. (Romans 1:1; Titus 1:3; 1 Timothy 1:1.). (John 15:16)-ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruits.

Romans 1:14-18

Paul said, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth - -." This word power means the effective ability to accomplish an intended purpose. It is not the man of God's power but it is the power of the gospel, wielded by the Holy Spirit. "Take - - the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." (Ephesians 6:17). "For the word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart." (Hebrews 4:12). Such awesome power that is available to the man of God through the Spirit's wielding the Word into hearts of mankind.

The man of God should pray earnestly for God's blessings on the preached Word. As a young preacher an older preacher told me this, "If I only had a 10 minute notice before I had to preach and was given the choice either to study for 10 minutes or to pray for 10 minutes, I would choose to pray for the 10 minutes." We could get some good scriptures together, and they are

all good, but we need to find what God knows is needed for each particular occasion and God's power is needed to go along with the words in the message so that they will be effective down in the heart of the hearer.

There is a difference between just putting words together in order to have something to say and having something that you **MUST** say.

When the man of God goes into the pulpit he is going there in Christ's stead. Therefore he needs to go into the pulpit full of God's Spirit of love and compassion. The wrong spirit in the pulpit will not move the hearers in the right way. Jesus' audience often saw Him "moved with compassion" (Mark 1:41). The congregation should see that in the preacher.

The preacher should believe every word that he preaches. If he does not truly believe what he preaches no one else will. He should preach with authority. One meaning of authority is "a person with much knowledge or experience in some field, whose opinion is hence reliable."

My brothers we must study prayerfully and diligently. We need to know "thus saith the Lord." We need to continually ask God for leadership and guidance in preparing to preach and then yielding completely unto the Lord when we stand in the pulpit.

No doubt the Apostle Paul was standing before King Agrippa filled with God's Spirit under complete leadership of God in that great sermon about the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 26:28). Because Agrippa answered Paul, "almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." The man of God has to be prepared to be used of God.

Jesus' answer concerning the "great commandment" is "Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul and with all thy mind" (Matthew 22:37) applies to all saved people. Also the description of pure religion as found in James 1:27 applies to every man, woman, boy and girl. However the God-called man of God is subject to all that plus an even higher standard. Because he is standing in Christ's stead in the pulpit and also in his daily life. The man of God should never forget this.

The book of 1 Kings, chapter 13 relates an experience of a man of God who after doing God's will was persuaded to go against the instructions of the Lord. And because of this he met a tragic death.

When Saul was saved and called to preach the Lord said to Ananias, "For I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake" (Acts 9:16). The Lord did not tell me that I would have to suffer horrible things in serving Him as He did Paul. He deserves the very best of our time and service.

In 1 Timothy, 3:1-7 only one intellectual qualification is listed for the preacher, but there are many moral qualifications noted by God's inspiration. That seems to show me how important God considers the need for the man of God to live a life void of offense toward God and man.

One of the moral dangers listed in verse 6 is pride. Evidently pride is a very bad sin. Pride brought down Lucifer and he became the devil (Isaiah 14:12-15; Ezekiel 28:13-18).

God not only calls men to preach but He will also lead the man of God into certain places and certain work (Acts 22:21; Acts 13:2).

The example left for us in (Acts 13:2) will still work today. The Lord's church is the authority for sending out missionaries, not a board or a convention.

Some preachers serve as pastors, some have a radio ministry, some are called as missionaries, either home or foreign or other work. Some serve in more than one of the above mentioned works. All of God's work is extremely important.

Paul warned Timothy to be careful in his life and in his work for the Lord in 1 Timothy 6:11-14. That warning is still needed today in our generation.