

Standing in the Gap

Written by Mackie Bounds

"And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none" (Ezk. 2:20). Standing today is not very popular folks, but it is with God. We wouldn't be faced with all the problems we are faced with in the Lord's church today if men would have stood in the gap and the members of the Lord's church would respect and support those who are willing to stand there in the gap. If we don't stand in the gap we're not going to be able to preach fast enough in the future. When you stand up and preach against sin and you call sin by name, people get mad! They get upset at you. They say you're old fashioned, you're old fogey. Brothers and sisters, this Book is old, okay? The Lord's church has been around since AD33, so it's old. From the depths of my heart I'm able to tell you, I don't care how old it is, it can save our souls, and I want to be saved! Truth! ...the same yesterday, today, and will be tomorrow.

I sometimes tell the story of a digressive church that had lost their preacher. There was a young group there and they wanted something a little different than they had in the past. They said, "You know, that last preacher, he would get down on sin too much and we don't want to run our young people off. We don't want to lose our young people." So one old man (one of the elders) thought he would turn in a resume from the apostle Paul. Well, they got all the resumes out and came across this one that said, "I preach what God wants me to preach, I hold back nothing that's profitable for the audience. I declare the whole counsel of God. If you have sin in the church, I'm going to tell you, you need to get it out. And if you have problems in the church I'm going to tell you, you need to correct them. If you're weak, I'm going to try to help you. If you're feeble I'm going to try help you, but if you are unruly, we're going to deal with it!" All of them just looked at each other and kinda laughed and said, "Well, that's the last one we want."

I'd like to have the apostle Paul here. I would like for him to stand up and preach what he knew we needed. He saw idolatry at Mars Hill and he preached against idolatry at Mars Hill. Brothers and sisters, and you young people as well, there's nothing wrong with this, in fact, it's scriptural for a man to stand in the pulpit and preach against the sins of this world. He loves our souls and he wants us saved. He wants us to be different from this old sinful world we're living in. If you're wondering why we look so much like the world today, I'll tell you why. Preachers (and I'm one of them) kinda shy away sometimes because we don't want to hurt people's feelings. But I have made up my mind...I'm not trying to get rescheduled for a gospel meeting. I preach because I love your souls, and I want people to be saved. I'm going to preach what I think the Lord's church needs because I'm going to have to stand before God one day, and give an answer for what I preach and how I preach, and I don't want anyone's blood on my hands.

I hear people say, "Well we need to talk about the good things of the Lord's church." We do! But you know, if we don't teach against sin those good things are not going to happen. I tried to raise my children in such a way that when they grew older, they wouldn't depart from the Lord's church. No doubt I made mistakes, and I will make mistakes. But if I hadn't put forth the effort, if my wife hadn't put forth the effort, and we allowed them to do things and act ways and go places that did not promote Christianity, why would I be alarmed-why would I be alarmed? I would only have myself to blame.

We need preachers who are willing to stand in the gap. Just listen to those old tapes. You go back and pull tapes of brother H.E. Robertson, you go back pull tapes of brother Kirbo, you go

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back and pull tapes of my Dad and others who preached long ago. Folks, I'm telling you some-thing, I'm not sure those men would be wanted in some of our pulpits today. These men shucked the corn down to the cob. They stood in the gap, and we need men today who are willing to stand in the gap.