

Earning the Right to be Heard

Joe Slater

Truth is truth no matter who speaks it. But the fact remains that people are far more inclined to give truth a fair hearing when the one speaking has earned the right to be heard. Having exhorted the young preacher Timothy to “*be an example to the believers*” (1 Timothy 4:12), Paul further instructed him to “*take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you*” (4:16). Timothy needed to earn the right to be heard.

Everything Peter said in his first letter about enduring persecution and trials would be correct even if he had lived the most sheltered and pampered life imaginable. But the truth is that Peter had earned the right to be heard. When it came to enduring persecution and trials, he could say, “Been there, done that!”

Earning the right to be heard applies to congregations as well as to individual Christians. Brother Rob Whittaker, in his lessons on personal evangelism, teaches how to make the local congregation attractive to the community. Rather than just talk about loving everyone, what if we showed that love by sending a card to a sick neighbor to let them know we’re praying for them? What if I sent one today, you sent one tomorrow, and another member sent one the next day? What if you took a casserole by the house when the neighbor got home from the hospital? We ought to be doing these things anyway, but think about the impact they would have on a lost soul!

What if we practiced hospitality instead of just talking about it? What if a visitor to our services couldn’t get out the door without being invited to lunch? Would it be worth the inconvenience and expense to take a first step toward presenting the gospel?

If we expect people to hear and obey the gospel, we must earn the right to be heard!

In 2025 | Challenge You To...

⌘ **Pray like Nehemiah.**

⌘ **Obey like Daniel.**

⌘ **Lead like Moses.**

⌘ **Serve like Martha.**

⌘ **Believe like Mary.**

⌘ **Fight like David.**

⌘ **Educate like Paul.**

⌘ **Build like Noah.**

⌘ **Love like Jesus.**

--Winston S. Chambers (via Facebook)

Consumer Christianity

Imagine a church where the worldly and the sporadically attending stick out like a sore thumb to the degree that they’re wildly uncomfortable. That discomfort would drive them either to conform to God’s standard or to get out. While we would clearly prefer the former, occasionally they will choose the latter. In either case, the flock is strengthened as the average commitment level is raised through either their renewed commitment or their desertion.

Instead, we have chosen to cater to the mediocre because mediocrity means better numbers. The strong are going to keep coming no matter what, so if we pander to the weak, we can have both the weak and the strong. It’s more people; that’s simple math.

But this tradeoff costs us. Complacency is normalized, and therefore consumer Christianity rules the day. But consumer Christianity us useless Christianity that will die out. In fact, it already is.

--*Transformed Faith* (Brad Harrub/Jack Wilke) p. 5

Do Not Read This Article!

The HOP Shops Food Marts and Truck Plazas in northern Kentucky is a popular destination for visitors. Specifically, their restrooms! Select locations feature a button on the bathroom wall with a “Do Not Push This Button” sign. Those who push it are bathed in bright colorful lights reflected in a mirror ball with upbeat disco music playing over the PA system. The “Home of the Famous Disco Bathrooms,” HOP Shops boast online of their status as “America’s Cleanest Restrooms” (hopshops.com). Their attraction is built on the proven strategy that the best way to get some people to do something is to order them NOT to do something.

It is significant that the New Testament closes with a dire warning to not twist and transfigure God’s inspired word (Revelation 22:18-19). It is a huge “Do Not Push This Button” sign that is ignored by many professing Christians in a multi-denominated religious world.

Biblical Christianity is under siege in a modern world that rejects God’s truth for human desires. This is the very thing Paul warned about in 2 Timothy 4:3-4, “*For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires ... they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth.*” Jude recognized our need to possess, proclaim and preserve the one, only and forever “*common salvation*” (Jude 3) presented in God’s inspired word. That is the truth God wants us to preach and practice.

--David Bragg (via *Bulletin Gold*)

EVERY FLOWER THAT HAS EVER BLOOMED HAD TO GO THROUGH A LOT OF DIRT TO GET THERE.

--Jon Rowe (via Facebook)