

## Hearing and Doing

Ponder: What to do with a good sermon

Scripture: “Indeed you are to them as a very lovely song of one who has a pleasant voice and can play well on an instrument; for they hear your words, but they do not do them” (Ezek. 33:32, NKJV).

That was a great sermon, preacher!

What constitutes a good sermon? Ads in brotherhood papers invariably seek a “dynamic speaker.” Some people seem to have been born with a “wordsmith” gene tucked away in their DNA. But is that really what makes a sermon good?

Who knows whether Ezekiel would pass muster in 21<sup>st</sup>-century America as a dynamic speaker? His fellow captives in 6<sup>th</sup>-century BC Babylon certainly were impressed with him. He was the talk of the town! People were telling their neighbors about him and urging them to come and hear him. What preacher wouldn’t appreciate that?

Unfortunately, that’s as far as it went. You can almost hear it: “Fine sermon, Ezekiel! Be sure to let us know when you’ll be speaking again. Bye!” With rare exception, however, they continued in the same sinful attitudes and behaviors that got them sent into captivity in the first place! They admired his delivery, but didn’t even try to put his words into practice.

Jesus warned about this very thing in His parable of the wise and foolish builders (Matt. 7:24-27). The foolish man heard His words but didn’t do them; disaster resulted! The Lord’s brother echoed this point: “Be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves” (Jas. 1:22).

If your preacher does well, tell him so! He’ll appreciate it. But, better yet, show him so by doing what he said from God’s word. He’ll appreciate that even more.

Hymn: “Savior, Teach Me”

Prayer: Mighty God, we thank You for Your word and the freedom we have to learn it. May we always remember that we are also free to obey it. Please help us to do just that. In Jesus’ name, Amen.