

A HARD-HEADED PREACHER

Bill Cavender

“And he said unto me, Son of man, go, get thee unto the house of Israel, and speak with my words unto them. For thou art not sent to a people of a strange speech and of an hard language, but to the house of Israel; not to many peoples of a strange speech and of an hard language, whose words thou canst not understand. Surely, had I sent thee to them, they would have hearkened unto thee. But the house of Israel will not hearken unto thee; for they will not hearken unto me: for all the house of Israel are of a hard forehead and of a stiff heart. Behold, I have made thy face hard against their faces, and thy forehead hard against their foreheads. As an adamant harder than flint have I made thy forehead: fear them not, neither be dismayed at their looks, though they be a rebellious house. Moreover he said unto me, Son of man, all my words that I shall speak unto thee receive in thine heart, and hear with thine ears. And go, get thee to them of the captivity, unto the children of thy people, and speak unto them, and tell them, Thus saith the Lord God; whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear” (Ezek. 3:4-11).

God’s people, the Jews,

were a rebellious and stubborn people. They turned from the Living God and His word to the idols and traditions of the heathen. Ezekiel was commissioned by God to tell these people His words. The people were already in captivity in Babylon for their sins, yet they still refused a faithful service to God. Ezekiel was to try to preserve a remnant of these people who would later be returned to the land of Canaan. These Jews would not receive Ezekiel cordially. They would reject him and the word of God he would try to teach them. Yet he was to tell them God’s will, whether they received it or not.

In order for Ezekiel to do this job, God told him He had made his head as hard as adamant or a diamond. Ezekiel would be butting heads with a hard-headed people and it was necessary that his head be harder than theirs. Therefore God made his head as hard as a diamond so that all of their resistance to Ezekiel would not deter him from duty.

Ezekiel was successful in God’s sight because he was hard-headed enough to do what God told him to do against all the opposition of the Jews. All faithful men of God have been hard-headed. Elijah, Jeremiah, Isaiah, Amos, Micah, John the Baptist, the apostles of Jesus, etc., were all hard-headed men. They knew not the meaning of

the word “compromise” when it came to setting forth truth, and exposing sin and error. Jesus our Saviour was the most hard-headed of all. He was unrelenting and unmerciful in His exposures of the lies, hypocrisies, traditions and opinions of the Pharisees and Jews of His day. Paul, the mighty apostle to the Gentiles, learned well the example of the Saviour. No man was more hard-headed than Paul, and he taught Timothy and Titus to be the same way.

Any preacher who would be faithful to God and save his soul must very early and very quickly learn to be hard-headed. People still will not hear the word of God, even the brethren, and will still oppose the truth with vigor. Almost every person everywhere is a self-appointed and self-instructed expert on preaching. They may have never given five minutes of serious thought to it, and may never have tried to prepare a lesson nor teach one soul the truth, but they know just how it ought to be done. Not caring for the Bible examples, and having filled their minds with Harry Emerson Fosdick, Norman Vincent Peale, Dale Carnegie, Billy Graham, etc., men know just how the preacher ought to preach. And some never call a name, never expose a false teacher, never unsheathe the sword of the Spirit and really get into a fight with the devil,

and if they hit error at all it is only a back-handed, glancing lick. They have no intention of “losing their influence” with people and “nullify their chances” of doing good. If you will look and read and listen right closely, you will find that a good many so-called “sound” preachers never really get in a scrap with the devil and his agents.

Those of us who preach ought to learn and fill our hearts with the word of God, with love of God and for the souls of lost men, and then teach it faithfully and plainly and boldly, whether they will hear it or not. We need to get hard-headed, stiffen our backbones, and butt heads with every person who opposes the truth of God.

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POWER IN THE BLOOD

John Edwards

We often sing of the power that is in the precious blood of Christ. Different song writers have written: “What can wash

away my sins? Nothing but the blood of Jesus”, “There is wonderful power in the blood”, “His blood can cleanse your heart and make you free.” Let’s investigate the “wonder working power” that is in the blood of the Lamb.

CLEANSING POWER. In 1 John 1:7, the apostle John revealed, “*But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.*”

FORGIVING POWER. Speaking of Christ, Paul said, “*In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace*” (Eph. 1:7, Col. 1:14).

PURCHASING POWER. During Paul’s farewell address to the Ephesian elders he instructed them, “*Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood*” (Acts 20:28).

JUSTIFYING POWER. In writing to the Romans, Paul informs us, “*Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him*” (Rom. 5:9).

SANCTIFYING POWER. The Holy Spirit directed the Hebrew writer to say, “*Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate*” (Heb. 13:12).

PURGING POWER. The Hebrew writer announces, “*How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?*” (Heb. 9:14).

WASHING POWER. In the final book, John said, “*...Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood*” (Rev. 1:5).

This precious blood was shed in Christ’s death (Jn. 19:33-34). When we reach the death of Christ, we contact His blood. We are “*buried with him by baptism into death*” (Rom. 6:3-4). Arise, and be baptized!

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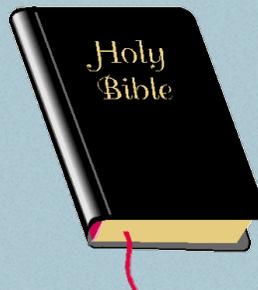
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