

PREACHERS AND HEARING AIDS

(The following excellent article on preachers and those who listen to them was written a few years ago by Rodger Lane who preached for the Hannibal, Missouri church of Christ.)

My mother, Gertrude, is eighty-seven now and definitely needs a hearing aid. When she first got it, I reminded her teasingly that even though she could hear better now, nothing had really changed because she still wouldn't listen! We shared a laugh and enjoyed our visit much more via the small assistant in her left ear. Now I don't have to speak so loudly to Mom and the nurses' station doesn't have to plan the murder of her new stereo sound television. "Oh, what a feeling!"

A hearing aid must fill at least three major requirements in order to truly benefit the buyer. First, it must fit the physical dimensions of the prospective ear. Second, it must operate at the audio frequencies most beneficial to that ear's audio response curve. And third, it must have an adjustment volume-preference control.

The greatest challenge of attempting to preach can be for the preacher to remember everyday that he is not the issue, but He is! When I understand my designed purpose and accept it, is when God can communicate to folks via me, His small assistant.

God's providence is far beyond this preacher's ability, but I believe it is right to say that God has put us where He can use us for the greatest good. But, sometimes, we "aids" do not cooperate with our Almighty Engineer.

Just like a hearing aid, a preacher must fit well into his environment. He must love the brethren and the holy purpose of Christ's bride above any and all personal issues. The brethren know when you love them. All good brethren don't mind when the word of God makes them uncomfortable, but they do mind when their preacher makes them so. God must be heard before lives can be changed (Romans 10:17)! God forbid that I hinder the quality of the Spirit's voice to even one!

As a good hearing aid is tuned properly, so must the preacher's life and lessons. It takes close living with the church to start seeing where certain topics need to be emphasized more than others for a time. We must always course-tune all the gospel, but fine-tuning can mean everything to great communication for growth in lagging areas.

I love to preach and teach the word of God more than anything I've ever attempted. I try to do it well. And even when it "all comes together" on a particular occasion, I stand in awe of God, that He would use me as His aid! This privilege reminds me that the hearing is voluntary. I can be turned off! The preacher's job is to do his best to let the audience hear the Holy Spirit's word with volume and clarity. But it must be remembered that for some the aid cannot make a difference, because they won't listen any. Preach on!