

# *Frankly Speaking...*

*Published as time and opportunity permit,*

*By*

*Oldpathspulpit.org*

*Ed Smithson, Editor - [buttermilki@mac.com](mailto:buttermilki@mac.com)*

## **SO YOU'RE GETTING A NEW PREACHER**

Editor's note: "Its moving time." Summer is always moving time for preachers, although not exclusively. In 1969 an elder in a church in Shawnee, Ok called me and said they were getting a new preacher but he wouldn't arrive for another week. Could I preach for them the next Sunday, and could I say something about getting a new preacher. Few preachers have that opportunity. Most would not say the thing I did because it would be regarded as self serving. The following is basically what I said then.

Getting a new preacher is both exciting and stressful for most in the congregation. He is a stranger, even if he has visited, most of the congregation does not know him, his likes or dislikes and also his family. Does his wife take an active part, or does she stay in the background. I've known both kinds. There is newness, a learning curve, if you will, and an anticipation of what things will be like. But there are things you can do that will help him and his family and make you feel better about his coming.

### **No. 1 – THIS NEW PREACHER IS YOUR PREACHER**

As to the old preacher, you may have liked him, loved him and may have been his bosom buddy, but he is gone. Let it stay that way. That is in the past. He may have been a good preacher, a great preacher, but for whatever reason, yours or his, he decided his service would be better in another place and he has moved. Now you have a new preacher. He is there to do what the old preacher did.

There is a tendency on the part of some to compare the new preacher to the old one. DON'T!!! It is unfair to both men. Listen to the new preacher as you listened to the old. He won't speak like the old preacher. He won't have the same taste in friends or clothes or cars. He won't dress like the old preacher. He won't look like the old preacher. He won't speak like the old preacher, but he is your preacher, listen to him and give him respect.

You will honor your old preacher by loving and respecting and supporting your new preacher.

Also don't compare the families involved. Just as preachers are different in style, personality and presentation, so is the preacher's family. Don't look at them with a critical eye. Accept them as they are. They are his family and he loves them dearly.

Don't be critical of his family, his wife, his children or his dog. Be gracious and kind. That is the Christian way.

**NO. 2 – YOUR NEW PREACHER NEEDS TO FEEL WELCOME; THAT HE IS COMING INTO A CHURCH THAT IS EAGER TO SEE HIM AND WORK WITH HIM.**

Remember he and his family have lived among another group for some time. They may have hated to leave the last place as much as you hated to see the former preacher go.

Write them a note, or send them an email. You can get their address from the church office if you don't have it.

In the note you can let them know that you are happy they are coming, that you appreciate their dedication and sacrifice, and that you appreciate Bible preaching. If you like, you can let them know you loved the former preacher and appreciated him, but you know that you are going to love and appreciate the new preacher and his family as well.

Also let them know that you are willing to do whatever you can to be helpful to them in their move and after they arrive. Tell them how good the church here is and how much they are going to enjoy this work.

When they arrive be among the first to meet and greet them. Offer your services, whatever they may be, great or not. Let them know that you are there to give them a hand, whatever it may be.

Oh, and repeat your name when you speak to them the first few times. It will make it easier for them to remember you.

**NO. 3 BE THERE TO HELP THEM UNLOAD IF THEY NEED IT.**

Many preachers today are forced to move themselves instead of hiring a mover. It is hard work they are in a strange place and a friendly face and helping hands are very welcome.

I have known congregations that form groups each time they move in a new preacher to help unload, take care of utilities, be sure they are fed so they don't have to hunt for food, and any other things they need. Members of the local congregation are already familiar with the things they need and therefore can be a great help to a new family in town.

#### **NO. 4 AND MOST IMPORTANT, ENCOURAGE HIS PREACHING OF THE WORD OF GOD.**

A few years back, just after leaving the pulpit at Highland, Ca. and moving to Texas, I attending a church near my home for several months. During that time I heard no doctrine, absolutely none.

While there are certainly a lot of things in the Bible besides doctrine, doctrine is there and must be preached if we are preaching the "whole counsel of God." (Acts 20:27) Preachers are to "preach the word," (2 Tim 4:2) and while some are dedicated to doing just that, they need your encouragement. You don't have to say "great sermon" every time he preaches, but you can say other things. Put your mind to work.

When the word is preached completely, it is going to upset some folks for there are many today that do not want to be "disturbed in their comfort." Preachers need people in the congregation to hold up the preacher's hands, to encourage that kind of preaching regardless, and that is where you come in. You will make a life long friend and feel good in the doing.

Preach The Word Brother,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ed Amthor". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

[www.oldpathspulpit.org](http://www.oldpathspulpit.org)  
[buttermilk1@mac.com](mailto:buttermilk1@mac.com)