

**General Topics :: Help about critiquing a sermon**

**Help about critiquing a sermon - posted by richrock, on: 2012/5/14 16:04**

Hi all,

As I'm becoming increasingly concerned about our Church leadership, and last weekend rang loud alarm bells on me. However, I don't want to go off on just my own gut instinct, but would appreciate if there is anyone biblically sound who could critique the sermon.

My concern started with an incredible amount of positive 'feel-good' sermons, understandable considering our fellowship's recent history. Our previous pastor left to have an affair, completely out of the blue... I disregarded this opening series of positive themes, thinking it was going to help encourage and get us out of the doldrums we were in.

Now I am certain I heard some form of prosperity teaching... The whole positive confession thing got me really alarmed, time seemed to slow, it was an awkward moment. What can I do?

**Re: Help about critiquing a sermon - posted by roadsign (), on: 2012/5/14 16:29**

Hello Richrock, I see you have a blessed challenge. At least, that's how I came to view sermons that irked me. And there have been no shortage of annoying sermons. Actually these were the sermons that inspired me to grow. I know it sounds strange - but it got me digging into my Bible, doing my own study on the sermon topic - and even writing out my own notes. I would bring to church some paper, pencils, including coloured ones to color-code words in my bible. I'd use a Bible concordance/dictionary too. So my pew territory became a blessed study place. I know it's "countercultural". But I went home dancing as if on air because through it all God would teach me new delightful truths from his Word - with his Spirit's help.

You DON'T want to do what I did too much - at least, until I accepted the situation. I'd get so annoyed it would eat me up and rob me of my joy - until I decided to capitalize on that energy. You can choose to walk in the joy of the Lord, and avoid getting obsessed over how horrible the sermons are. Don't lose sleep over it. Let God do that for you. He can handle it better than you.

In this way you do what the Bible tells you to do - be proactive like the Bereans and study scripture yourself to see if what you are being told is truthful to scripture. but more: learn through it to benefit yourself.

If there's a time to leave the church, God will let you know, but if you leave too soon you miss a lot of growing opportunities. And you will merely encounter them later on.

How does all that sound to you?

Diane

**Re: Help about critiquing a sermon, on: 2012/5/14 16:33**

Quote:

-----I disregarded this opening series of positive themes, thinking it was going to help  
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Discernment is an essential gift which we all need, especially today when there are so many 'positive' presentations of the Christian life. I have a friend in the Lord who used to say to me all the time, this is positive, that is negative etc. One day I said, brother there is only one polarity of positive and negative effects appointed by God and it has to do with magnetism. He was gracious and stopped using the terms so loosely. However you may well be discerning something which is real, but which isn't really to do with positive and negative effects, rather more to do with determinations by the speaker or

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f those words. The reason why we discern these statements and encouragements as wrong is because we are discerning the source as coming from the man and not from his inner life in the spirit. Sometimes unclean spirits make use of the situation and then our discernment is even more disturbing.

My present pastor once used such speech all the time. He even once bound my words because I shared something which he saw as negative. I simply agreed with his binding and committed it to the Lord. After a few years my concern, which was in truth a discernment became so visible that he repented privately and today we are in agreement on just about everything. I would encourage you to take whatever position the Lord leads you in. You can't be harmed by mere words. The word of God on the other hand can straighten you out and produce real outcomes which are glorifying to Him. Hold your peace, keep yourself in love, and read the scriptures continuously with prayer. Support and pray for your pastor and elders. This will prove sufficient even if you don't do anything else or hear from God directly.

Andrew

**Re: - posted by richrock, on: 2012/5/14 16:36**

Sounds very good. I must admit, it has bothered me, hence the post. I'm not letting it rob me of my joy (which seems so very different from our fellowship's idea of it anyway).

It struck me as it seemed so out-of-context, almost like a testing to see what we would accept.... Maybe it wasn't, but it certainly seemed like it to me.

In these situations, I tend to go back to prayer, seeking God's will in all of this, that His truth would be made manifest in all preaching, teaching and we would, as you mentioned, be good little Berean's and study the word of God to check things out. This actually irritates my wife at the moment, who thinks I'm being over the top.

I enjoy the close fellowship I now have with our Saviour, and have inspired myself through other teaching to go seek Him alone.

Bless you for a response that has, to a large degree, helped settle something in my mind. It won't stop being cautious though :-P

@amrkelly - I hope you haven't misunderstood what I was trying to say there in the part you quoted. I merely thought the positive feel-good stuff was an introduction, to encourage us all - we did need that, and it was very timely. However, it's just going on, and getting stronger...

**Re: Yep, on: 2012/5/14 16:46**

Yep. I did misunderstand. Thanks

**Re: Help about critiquing a sermon - posted by DesertRose, on: 2012/5/15 7:32**

Something similar happened at a church I attended. I left (after much prayer and discussions with the pastor and elder board) because of unresolvable issues.

If we are breathing we will run into controversy. It is how we handle it.

I found the following to be helpful:

A fellow minister had written to Newton informing him of his intention to write an article criticizing another minister because of disagreement about some point of theological controversy. Newton's reply to this minister should be required reading for all who engage in theological writing or discussion, whether in books, journals, blogs, or back porches

The article can be found here:

<http://www.ligonier.org/blog/john-newton-on-controversy/>

**Re: Help about critiquing a sermon, on: 2012/5/30 4:35**

Quote:

-----I'm becoming increasingly concerned about our Church leadership, and last weekend rang loud alarm bells on me  
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How are you getting along RickRock. Have you made any progress in understanding your concern?

Blessings

Andrew