

THOUGHTS

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SPEAKER ON THE WORD TODAY

A GLORIOUS OFFERING FOR TWT'S 44TH ANNIVERSARY!

J God's grace and blessing be upon all those who participated in The Word Today's 44th Anniversary offering regardless of income and size of the gift! From those with little to those with a lot, we came together to do great work in Christ's name! The total of the offering was \$124,500! Praise God! This will undergird the 13 new dialects that are being prepared – actually, should now be underway with their initial broadcasts! As we hear back you will get updates! We are excited to extend the love of God in Christ to even more places around the world! Tell your family and friends about this positive ministry!

TOO POLITICAL?

U A congregation member met with me this week to express concern that I have been injecting too much politics into my sermons. We had a very productive conversation, and I truly appreciate that she brought her concerns to me versus simply leaving in a huff. One of her concerns was that I was not preaching enough from the Bible. Contrast that opinion to that of the woman who four days earlier told me that I read too much from the Bible, according to her, "the entire chapter," which is an exaggeration. Her point was that I'm doing too much from the Bible, and she likes how a local church just quotes a verse at a time. I recall Pastor Paul's exhortation to me, "If everyone is happy, you're doing something wrong."

N It's not that uncommon for pastors to receive conflicting messages from congregation members. There is a wide range of mindsets and experiences as well as expectations. The dumbing down of Christianity and social attention deficit disorder continues, with people wishing for less solid study of the Word and more stories and visuals. Now, many think 15 minutes is plenty of time spent on a sermon. The attention span of adults has eroded, and it is resulting in disdain for involved study of the Word of God.

E The concern of the woman that I was not preaching enough from the Bible was masking a more troubling concern. I had spoken publicly that I support capital punishment, and she felt it violated the fifth commandment, thou shalt not murder (Exodus 20:13). After a lengthy explanation detailing how personal revenge is addressed by the commandment and the government's task to constrain lawlessness is addressed in Romans chapter 13, she understood, and her concern was alleviated.

It also is not uncommon that the first concern related to a pastor is not the deepest concern, but the ice breaker. The churning under the surface must be reached if there is to be a resolution. That is simply too difficult for some, so they leave. It is best that they do,

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Today
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*The Bible is God's Word...Jesus is God's "Word" made flesh...
His death and resurrection, the message needed Today.*

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because in their lamenting, discontented demeanor they can infect a great number of people with a similar unhappiness. It is not unusual to leave one church for another, then find after a while, the grass is not greener. When a person leaves Our Shepherd, they are quite likely to enter a congregation with a lot of fiscal stress, less work being done for the Kingdom in terms of evangelism, and potentially a rift that is not immediately evident to the newcomer. Churches can be amazingly dysfunctional organizations, and it is rare that one is in harmony and getting a tremendous amount of work for the Kingdom accomplished!

TRYING TO IMPRESS

Suze Orman, who is known as a personal finance guru, said she once tried to impress someone she was in a relationship with by leasing a car that cost \$800 per month. She didn't have the net worth or income to do so, but she did it anyway, "There was a time that I was in a relationship with a very, very wealthy person and I wanted to impress this person and I didn't have money yet, so I went out and leased a car."

That is one of the more foolish things I have heard of lately. If a person is willing to do that to impress, what else are they willing to do? I wonder what other poor decisions followed on the heels of that faux pas. Also, it's scary how many people cannot judge character, or conversely, see through it when someone is snowing them.

WHEN THE RUSSIANS LEARN THEY HAVE BEEN DUPED

Russian citizens are being told the images of death of Ukrainian citizens are faked. Imagine the horror when they realize that is a lie. Consider the emotional agony they will feel when they realize that their young sons invaded a country under the pretense of self-defense. They will be an ethnicity scarred people by the hatred of the world, as were the Nazis.

The Word Today is on in Russian (pray that an alternate transmitter for the one destroyed in the war will be found). It will be needed as a salve, a consoling message for those who will face the ruin of their land due to the malfeasance of the oligarchs, the warmongering of Vladimir Putin, the sanctimonious approval of the Orthodox Church's Patriarch Kirill for the military action, and the appropriate sanctions against Russia.

The Word Today does not pursue politics on air. It rightly focuses on the Word of God and the call of the Gospel for people to come to Jesus, the Savior. There will be a lot of Russian people whose souls especially will need saving when they realize the horror their country has perpetrated.

Blessings,
Douglas W. Schroeder

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