“I Don’t Like The Idea, But…

I’ll Go Along With It Anyway”

The compromise of convictions may, and often does, lead to complete apostasy. Consider the causes of compromise and how this device of Satan works among brethren to capture their souls for eternal destruction.

The successful Christian life involves an intense struggle, a battle, which the apostle Paul describes as “the good fight of faith.” Victory in this fight is “eternal glory” (2 Tim. 4:7). His victory was “a crown of righteousness” (v. 8), which is also available to other good fighters.

The main theme of the Book of Revelation is a depiction of a struggle between the forces of good and evil, with victory assured to those who do not give up the fight for our Lord’s way, the way of right. This was reason enough to stand fast in the struggle until the end.

We call attention above to the prize of victory to help us realize the tragic loss for those who compromise their convictions, and face the great day of judgment in that condition.

Our Definition Of Compromise And Conviction. Due to the varied use of many words we shall define these words as we will for the most part be using them.

**Conviction.**

Webster defines it as: “a fixed or firm belief.” It is in this sense that we use the word. It is sometimes the case that people profess to have “firm … convictions are not what they should be in the first place. Their “belief” is not a true belief, but a compromised one.

**Compromise.**

We are using this word as variously defined by Webster: “to weaken or give up (one’s principles, ideals, etc.) as for reasons of expediency”; or another definition by Webster is: “to make a dishonorable or shameful concession: to compromise with one’s principles.”
The recent election has been very encouraging from the standpoint of people awaking to the stark reality of moral values. This showing of concern for moral values, without doubt, was a very major factor in the outcome of the election. It is no less than frightening to God-fearing people, that the losing party had staked its hopes for winning on the propagation and encouragement of the rejection of moral values.

The battle between acceptance of God or ungodliness is still very much alive. The fight is still on. Those who are willing to compromise their convictions and engage in error should stop and think seriously.

To me, the most frightening compromise is that of those who are religious, claiming to believe in God. In the first place, the conviction thing is involved which is not in harmony with the individual’s belief, based on the teaching of God’s word. “But,” the person reasons or thinks, perhaps based on a variety of reasons, in view of this or that reason or reasons, “I’ll Go Along With It Anyway.” This is where the compromise of convictions sets in.

Later in our discussion we shall give attention to several things which may precipitate a decision to give-in, to the compromise of convictions based on the teaching of God’s word. The extent of these “things” or reasons had not fully occurred to me until I began to give more serious attention to the matter and realize just how widespread the problem is.

THE EXTENT OF COMPROMISE

Compromise is in the air of society. Moral convictions, in the widest form, have been seriously and dangerously compromised. A great many seemingly morally conscious people now do things which two or three score years ago would have been considered unthinkable. Now, with so many, anything goes. Even laws against many immoral acts are often ignored, or severely watered down until they are virtually meaningless.

II. THE EXTENT OF COMPROMISE

Readers’ Response. We greatly appreciate the response we receive from our readers. We reserve the right to publish that response, unless we are asked not to do so. We receive considerable response that we do not publish, due to a lack of space. We do publish both positive and negative responses.

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Do Send Us Names. If you know of those who would want to receive Banner of Truth, do let us have their names and addresses. Every month we delete quite a few names due to a failure to send us a change of address. We are now running about 7,600 copies of the paper each month and would like to increase that to 8,000 during the New Year of 2005.

B.O.T. Financial Report

Sets in.

Continued from page 1.

Our lord does not allow the compromise of convictions, “fixed or firm belief,” in any shape, form, or fashion. The word compromise is often used to mean the giving-in or concession on the part of both parties in a dispute or difference. In spite of the fact that many of our brethren are now giving-in or giving up their convictions, this will never have God’s approval. God’s word will remain unchanged regardless of how many disbelieve it.

I. THE TOPIC OF OUR DISCUSSION EXPLAINED

The topic came to mind as a result of actual cases I have seen over many years and in many different places. Brethren are quite often faced with a decision, about which they have serious reservations. This may be expressed by the following statement or a similar one: “I don’t like the idea.” That is, there is a recognition that some-
Saved By Grace—When?

That man is saved by grace is clearly stated by the apostle Paul: “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast” (Eph. 2:8-9). Grace, as it is here used, means God’s favor toward undeserving man. That which Paul refers to as, “not of yourselves: it is the gift of God,” is the salvation which is by God’s grace. It is not faith, which many erroneously believe.

There is, then, no question that salvation is by God’s grace, but when does that salvation by grace become a reality? This is a most important question, and one about which there is much lack of understanding. But thankfully, we can look to God’s word and come to a clear understanding.

From the above passage it can be seen that salvation is not by “grace alone,” that is, in the sense that no conditions involving man are involved. We are saved by grace “through faith.” God’s grace, then, would not save in the absence of faith. Faith, on the part of man, is a necessary condition of salvation. And even though God has given sufficient evidence for faith, it is still up to man to believe. God does not give man faith, only the basis or evidence for it, and the capability of man to believe. If God gave faith to man without any conditions on man’s part, he would be a “respecter of persons” (Acts 10:34), if He did not give to all men alike.

Grace will not save “through faith” until that faith has been demonstrated through acts of obedience to God. Faith “without works is dead” (Jas. 2:20). James even says, “Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only” (Jas. 2:24). Jesus said, “This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent” (John 6:29). Therefore, belief or faith is a work. Further evidence that salvation is through the faith which obeys God is seen in the Hebrew writer’s statement that Christ is “the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him” (Heb. 5:9). Christ said entrance into the kingdom of heaven was limited to “he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven” (Matt. 7:21).

Grace saves when its “teaching is obeyed.” Paul said, “For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men. Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world” (Tit. 2:11-12). It would not make sense to believe that God’s grace will bring salvation if the teaching of God’s grace is not respected and obeyed.

When are people saved by God’s grace? The Bible answer is: When they have obeyed God’s will with respect to faith (Heb. 11:6). When they have obeyed God’s will with respect to repentance (Acts 17:30). When they have confessed their faith in Christ as the Son of God (Rom. 10:10). When they have obeyed the Lord in baptism (Acts 2:38, 22:16, Rom. 6:3-4). When one’s faith has led to obedience to God’s will in the above matters, it is then that one is saved from past sins by God’s grace, His unmerited favor toward undeserving man.

It was grace on God’s part that the gospel of Christ, “the power of God unto salvation” (Rom. 1:16), was given unto man or made available unto him. The “gospel of Christ” must be obeyed by man, or he will suffer the vengeance of God in the sense of “everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power” (2 Thess. 1:7-9).

What a sad day the Judgment will be for those who have been led to believe that God’s grace will save those who refused to obey His will. God’s grace will save, only when man does what which God requires of man.
Even “Sound Brethren” May Fall For Compromise. We all realize that brethren who are weak in the faith are more likely to succumb to error. But brethren who are considered to be sound and who would not engage in such sins as the “works of the flesh” or teach outright false doctrines, are some times known to “go along with” something or an idea which they “don’t believe is right.” This involves a compromise. The action of such brethren may have a strong influence in the encouraging of others to engage in compromise. We are responsible for influence we have on others.

How sad it is when brethren who have learned the truth and served faithfully for years, allow themselves to be led from their steadfastness. People expect the unfaithful to engage in things which are wrong, but error on the part of those considered faithful is somewhat different. The same may lead some to turn away from the truth, when those unfaithful in general would not have so influenced them.

IV. THE DECEITFULNESS OF THE SIN OF COMPROMISE

The writer of Hebrews warns against “an evil hearer of unbelief, in departing from the living God” (Heb. 3:12). To guard against this deadly condition, he warns in verse thirteen: “But exhort one another daily, while it is called today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.”

That compromising the truth is indeed sin, no one can deny. That sin is “deceitful” no one can deny. God’s word says so.

When considering the deceitfulness of sin our minds should be turned to the warnings of Paul. To the Corinthians he wrote of Satan, “...for we are not ignorant of his devices” (2 Cor. 2:11). Paul instructed the Ephesians to “put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil” (Eph. 6:11). The “devices” and “wiles” of the devil represent devices or means by which the devil goes about deceiving people. Therefore, we shall note a thing or two which can be employed by the devil to lead people to engage in the sin of compromise.

Compromising Convictions “Just Once.” It may be that some think: “If I compromise my convictions just this one time, it will not be so bad.” Such thinking could hardly be more dangerous. Once one has engaged in compromise there is no way of knowing where it will lead. For example, the drunkard would never have become a drunkard without taking that first drink. One who is a true believer will not become an apostate without first compromising a conviction of truth.

Who could be planting the idea that just one compromise is not so bad? Could it be the Lord? Of course not. Our Lord never fights against himself. Who, then, could it be that plants this evil idea in the minds of men? It can be none other than the “father of lies,” the devil himself. The wise will heed the warnings.

When one item of truth is compromised, it would be easier to compromise another, and another. There seems to be something about violating one matter of truth that leads to another. It opens the gate. Growing up on a little farm in Tennessee, we had several sheep. If those sheep were confined to a fenced-in lot and one of them discovered a hole in the fence, the whole flock would follow. Many have been the cases where brethren violated one item of truth and it opened the gate to violate many others.

Small Errors Grow To Be Larger Ones. Error is error, but brethren some times tend to consider one “small” error less dangerous than a “large” error. But it is the very nature of error to begin in a small way and then grow larger. What may be thought of as a “large” error seldom happens overnight, but grows from a “small” error over a period of time.

Most of our brethren, who have any knowledge of God’s word to speak of, will agree that one of our duties as a Christian is

Questions About Sunday Night

Our loving God has been so very, very good to us, By His inspired word revealing things wrong and right. And, it is from this important spiritual standpoint, That we pose these questions about SUNDAY NIGHT.

Living the Christian life requires one’s honest efforts! It is a faithful action described as a most valiant “fight.” And, if we would stand with the conquering victors, Can we fail our Captain, even on a SUNDAY NIGHT?

Serving the Lord is a most gracious Christian privilege, In which all God-fearing people will certainly delight. But that serving is not limited to only Lord’s day morning! Don’t you agree that it also includes each SUNDAY NIGHT?

The Lord’s day must be a very special time to all of us, And the assembly of the saints is well pleasing in His sight. But why would anyone who claims to truly love the Lord, Stay away from His assembly when it is SUNDAY NIGHT?

The church of our Lord is God’s living spiritual family, In which the lasting bond of kinship should be very tight. And if our Master only commanded assembly Sunday morning, Wouldn’t our love also bring us together on SUNDAY NIGHT?

Think of the influence upon countless others you are having, When you as a Christian light so often fail to shine bright. Aren’t you as a living example to many others saying, The Lord isn’t worth my time, no, not on SUNDAY NIGHT?

Beloved, the solemn day of judgment will some day appear! With the lost on His left hand and the faithful on His right. My dear friend, where will you stand on that great day, If in cold indifference you forget the Lord on SUNDAY NIGHT?

—Walter W. Pigg
Editor—very thankful. that we cannot do as we used to do, but we are We used to send more Thank You notes to con-tributors, but our work has grown to the point and words of encouragement, are to be thanked.
support the work financially; those who donatelabor to help get the paper out, contribute articles, people have some part in our work. Those who have been asked that received no response, please re-
address their followers by pleasing them. If we would
please men rather than God. With a great many, a “Thus saith the Lord” is no longer the standard by
people to compromise relative to truth, there are some more direct causes in which deceit is evi-denced. We shall note a few examples.

V. CAUSES OF COMPROMISE

If Others Do It, Why Can’t I? If we would abide in the truth, then we must not base our ac-
ions upon what others are doing. To the Corinthians Paul said, “For we dare not make our-
seleours of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves…” (2 Cor. 10:12).
Though it is in no sense of the term justified, some seem to think that if other brethren do something, it is alright for them to do the same. This is one of the great harms which is encouraged by improper influence.

The above is one of the reasons why brethren who are used in the services of the church should be faithful men who set a good example for oth-
ers. If those who are not faithful, in word and deed, are used, it may leave the impression with some that it is not a serious thing to be unfaithful in various things.

To please the Lord we must realize that we are held accountable for our own deeds, not the deeds of others. The Israelites were told, “Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil…” (Ex. 23:2). It makes no difference how many people are doing something wrong, we are not justified in doing the same. Christ warned that, “the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch” (Mt. 15:14). Only the Lord knows how many will be found unfaithful at the day of judgment because they followed in the steps of some preacher of error, because they thought if he could compromise the truth, they could do likewise. That we are accountable for our own actions could not have been made clearer than what Paul made it when he said, “For we must all appear before the judg-
ment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad” (2 Cor. 5:10).

To Gain The Favor Of Men. It is my opin-
ion that one of the greatest causes for comprom-
ise of truth among our brethren is the desire to please men rather than God. With a great many, a “Thus saith the Lord” is no longer the standard by which things are taught and practiced. This is in spite of what Paul said to the Galatians, some of whom he said would “pervert” the gospel of Christ. Paul asks: “For do I persuade men, or God? or do

us. I some times lose things and at times forget things. I try hard to keep up with my work

The truth of the matter is this. People had better begin reading and believing the Bible instead of some elegant pie-id-piper peddling a damnable doctrine of profit. The “wages of sin is death” (Rom. 6:23), and the gospel is “the power of God unto salvation” (Rom. 1:16). Christ is the head of the church which is His body (Eph. 1:22-23). How many “heads” and “bod-
ies” do the Scriptures say there are? One. The church of our Lord was purchased with His blood (Acts 20:28). One must after obeying the gospel and be-
coming a Christian worship in spirit and truth (John 4:24).

Truth must be preached before people will see the need to change. If truth is believed, repentance and confession of Christ occurs, then one can be immersed into Christ. Let us never be ashamed of the Lord’s church or His glorious gospel.

—P.O. Box 975, Rowlett, TX 75030

Editor’s Note: The two articles above have been carried because of their relation to each other. I knew of a person in Taiwan who was talked into being bap-
tized, but when he was told about the church and his de-
des, etc. he rebelled. A fellow worker in Ukraine said he would not preach from Ephesians to non-
Christians. He didn’t believe in informing the non-
Christian about the church. Therefore, I know some-
thing of what brother Weir discusses in the articles. If one is “converted” without facing and believing the truth, to what has that one been converted? Not to the truth for sure.

Personal Matters And Others

For the past several weeks I have had some physical problems. I’ve had severe pain in my left leg. After having two tests done I’ve learned nothing as to the cause for the pain, though I was assured that I had no circulation problem or muscle disease. After having a colon exam I be-
gan to have stomach pain. It turned out to be an ulcer [preacher’s disease]. I’m taking medicine which is supposed to cure that problem. I have been able to keep going with my work, though I have been hindered a little at times.

OUR PERSONAL SUPPORT. In the September HOT, I made a request for personal support. We are sincerely thankful that several have responded to our request. I don’t know at this time the exact amount of monthly support we have been prom-
ised, but several have sent one-time contributions.

REMEMBRANCE. If our readers have sent us names to

be included in our mailing list, or questions have

been asked that received no response, please re-

mind us. I some times lose things and at times forget things. I try hard to keep up with my work

while their religious experience, then we should accept them. Have you not read, “Judge not, that ye be not judged” (Matt. 7:1)?

Our sincere appreciation. A great many people have some part in our work. Those who support the work financially; those who donate labor to help get the paper out, contribute articles, and words of encouragement, are to be thanked. We used to send more Thank You notes to con-

Contributors, but our work has grown to the point that we cannot do as we used to do, but we are very thankful.

—Editor

Personal Matters And Others

To attend the services of the church. However, some tend to think that missing just one of the services is not all that bad.

We’ve seen brethren who were generally faith-

ful in attending the services of the church miss just once, perhaps for some special occasion. This seemed to be just a small error. But missing just one service makes it easier to miss another, and then another, etc. I’ve had different people tell me that once they started missing services it became easier to do so.

It may go something like this: A faithful mem-
ber starts missing Wednesday evening Bible

classes. After a while of missing Wednesday night, Sunday evening services are missed. As that hap-
pens more often, even a failure to attend Bible classes on the Lord’s day may be expected. The end result is — one who attends one service per week. When this state is reached, that is a “great big error,” so big that one cannot be considered a faithful member of the church by any means. Christ said, “He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad” (Matt. 12:30). When people care not enough to attend the services of the church, by stretch of whose imagi-
nation can it be said that they are “with me [Christ],” and not against Him?

Although deceit plays a big part in leading people to compromise relative to truth, there are some more direct causes in which deceit is evi-
denced. We shall note a few examples.
The Lord and Savior came to earth "to seek and save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10). He did not use soothing terms that pleased the religious leaders of His day. Neither did the Lord camouflage the words He spoke so that false teachers and those worshiping incorrectly would not feel threatened. To His apostles He said, "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. 28:19-20). If one is to become a New Testament Christian and a member of the Lord’s church there are certain truths that he must be taught. A person cannot submit to and obey that which he does not know. This damnable practice of disguising worship and the church so that they will not be recognized must be refuted and rejected by those who love the Lord. The apostle Paul reminded the Corinthians that he was “to preach the gospel: not in wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made void” (I Cor. 1:17). The Bible makes it abundantly clear that “the word of the cross is to them that perish foolishness: but to those who are saved it is the power of God” (I Cor. 1:18).

Can you conceive of one attempting to convert an atheist without ever mentioning God? Perhaps all non-believers can be converted by suggesting that they allow some anthropologists to study their religion so that they may gain a clear understanding of it. A great many are just as far out as these two but they save that which was lost” (Luke 19:10). He did not use soothing terms that pleased the religious leaders of His day. Neither did the Lord camouflage the words He spoke so that false teachers and those worshiping incorrectly would not feel threatened. To His apostles He said, “Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world” (Matt. 28:19-20). If one is to become a New Testament Christian and a member of the Lord’s church there are certain truths that he must be taught. A person cannot submit to and obey that which he does not know. This damnable practice of disguising worship and the church so that they will not be recognized must be refuted and rejected by those who love the Lord. The apostle Paul reminded the Corinthians that he was “to preach the gospel: not in wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made void” (I Cor. 1:17). The Bible makes it abundantly clear that “the word of the cross is to them that perish foolishness: but to those who are saved it is the power of God” (I Cor. 1:18).

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How many faithful congregations of the Lord’s church make the headlines of the religious section of a major newspaper? The news media will, however, gladly assist in portraying the Bible and unauthorized religion as boring, out-of-touch, and obsolete. An “action-packed ministry” is the rare today, and most young families are willing to let their children select what appeals to them in the religious realm. How in if one is going to sell his soul? A great point is made by Christ in the parable of the great supper. When all things were ready, those invited began to make excuse: be to trade our souls for the whole world, much less some of the trivial things for which people want to compromise of the truth. We have ways of measuring the cost of earthly things, but not those heavenly things of a spiritual nature. The ultimate cost is just beyond our comprehension. The cost of compromise involves our souls. Nothing even compares in value with one soul. Our Lord makes a comparison when He said, “For what is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or shall he gain any thing for his soul?” (Matt. 16:26). The world, in spite of its great value, is only temporary. It is going to perish (2 Pet. 3:10-12). Our souls are eternal. What a foolish thing it would be to trade our souls for the whole world, much less some of the trivial things for which people want to sell their souls. A great point is made by Christ in the parable of the great supper. When all things were ready, those invited began to make excuse: one had bought a piece of ground; another had bought five yoke of oxen; and, and another one had married a wife. The point is, they turned down the invitation, just as many are turning down the Lord’s invitation to salvation and eternal life. The cost of compromise measured in souls of the unfaithful is both staggering and frightening. In many communities where a congregation has existed for a number of years — it might surprise some at the number of unfaithful members of the church which would be found if a survey was taken. Some would be found who were at one time considered faithful. What happened? Chances are that the downfall of many started when they went ahead and did something which did not believe to be right. They just went along with it anyway.

VI. THE COST OF COMPROMISE

There is no true way to measure the cost of compromise of the truth. We have ways of measuring the cost of earthly things, but not those heavenly things of a spiritual nature. The ultimate cost is just beyond our comprehension.

The cost of compromise involves our souls. Nothing even compares in value with one soul. Our Lord makes a comparison when He said, “For what is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or shall he gain any thing for his soul?” (Matt. 16:26). The world, in spite of its great value, is only temporary. It is going to perish (2 Pet. 3:10-12). Our souls are eternal. What a foolish thing it would be to trade our souls for the whole world, much less some of the trivial things for which people want to sell their souls. A great point is made by Christ in the parable of the great supper. When all things were ready, those invited began to make excuse: one had bought a piece of ground; another had bought five yoke of oxen; and, and another one had married a wife. The point is, they turned down the invitation, just as many are turning down the Lord’s invitation to salvation and eternal life.

The cost of compromise measured in souls of the unfaithful is both staggering and frightening. In many communities where a congregation has existed for a number of years — it might surprise some at the number of unfaithful members of the church which would be found if a survey was taken. Some would be found who were at one time considered faithful. What happened? Chances are that the downfall of many started when they went ahead and did something which did not believe to be right. They just went along with it anyway.

VI. PREVENTION OF COMPROMISE

Paul said, “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me” (Phil. 4:13). To the Corinthians he said, “There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation bear it” (I Cor. 10:13). Does this not prove that we can overcome any temptation to compromise God’s truth?

We must not, however, think that the ability to overcome temptation is without conditions. Peter considered himself faithful. What happened? Chances are that in many communities where a congregation has existed for a number of years — it might surprise some at the number of unfaithful members of the church which would be found if a survey was taken. Some would be found who were at one time considered faithful. What happened? Chances are that the downfall of many started when they went ahead and did something which did not believe to be right. They just went along with it anyway.

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Put Not Thyself Forward

Alan Adams

Having said it before, “so say I now again”: The trickiest part of the life and work of the preacher falls in the general area of what I broadly and fondly call public relations. The concrete, objective aspect of the preacher and his work is the Bible. This part of our lives is only precarious as it relates to our efforts to study, ascertain, make appoint, and proclaim; it is not however precarious from the perspective that it is a closed universe of ideas, it never changes.

I suppose there is not a preacher who has never wryly reflected that he loves everything about his work except dealing with people, which of course is impossible. Preaching is all about people; and people are fickle, temperamental, moody, inconsistent, sometimes obtrude and so on. Frustration sometimes prompts preachers to boldly affirm, “I don’t care what people think of me.” Then again, upon quiet reflection, we are forced to admit that 1) that is not really true, and 2) it is not really practical. We do and should care about people and their perceptions of us as preachers. It is in this area of cultivating perceptions that preachers can be their own worst enemy.

This is particularly true when the preacher focuses his perception cultivation toward those whom he deems “reputed to be somewhat.” The wise man gives great advice in this matter: “Put not thyself forward in the presence of the king. And stand not in the place of great men.” Too many young preachers get their wings melted by trying to fly too high. Put not thyself forward.

The Total Product

Many BOT readers are also supporters and encouragers of the preacher training work of the Milestone church of Christ (Pensacola, FL) via the Northwest Florida School of Biblical Studies. This noble work continues to go forward with both its trials and its triumphs.

As to triumphs, we have several that we both savor democrically, but when we hear of these generally younger brothers showing poise, class and maturity as they deal with the inevitable challenges of preaching, we are “bound to give thanks.”

As to trials, you see, they stem mostly from what seems to be the least under our control: ego, character, temperament, demeanor, civility, politeness and so on. Frustration sometimes prompts preachers to boldly affirm, “I don’t care what people think of me.” Then again, upon quiet reflection, we are forced to admit that 1) that is not really true, and 2) it is not really practical. We do and should care about people and their perceptions of us as preachers. It is in this area of cultivating perceptions that preachers can be their own worst enemy.

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