

# Repetition in Preaching

*By Roger Shouse*

[Editor's note: I took this from the January 12<sup>th</sup> edition of the *KSR Sower* and it had the following at the end—"This article originally appeared in *Jump Start*. I have supplied a title and edited it slightly – Allen Dvorak." Also, while Dave Ramsey has many good, practical things to say about finances, my use of this article is not intended as an endorsement of everything he teaches about finances—JRG.)

"Therefore, I shall always be ready to remind you of these things, even though you already know them, and have been established in the truth which is present with you." (2 Peter 1:12)

The other day while I was driving about, I was listening to my favorite daytime talk show on the radio, Dave Ramsey. It's all about finances. A guy called in. He was in a mess. He was between jobs. He was thinking of pulling out his retirement to pay for his bills. He then said three amazing things: "I know what you are going to say. Go ahead and say it. I need to hear you say it." I grabbed a pen and wrote that down. That's an amazing spirit. And, that takes us to our verse.

Peter had something to say. They already knew it. Yet, he was going to say it anyway. And, that takes us to sermons, classes and our conversations with each other. After a person has spent a while in the Bible, he ought to pretty much know what God is going to say. And when a person has spent decades and decades sitting in Bible classes and sermons, there's not much he's going to hear that is new.

Now all of that reminds us of a few important thoughts:

First, sometimes we preachers are always looking for something that no one else has ever discovered. We are not walking in new lands. We are not the first on the scene. After 2,000 years of preaching the Gospels, there isn't much that hasn't been preached, written or told. The search for the unique and the different can take us to places we shouldn't be. "Tell me the old, old story" ought to ring true with us. We can always look at passages and find truths that we haven't seen before. Others likely have, but maybe we haven't. Our work is not to find new things, but to preach the salvation that is found in Jesus Christ.

Second, each generation must be taught the core principles of the Bible. They need to hear lessons and have classes on authority, inspiration, the uniqueness of God's kingdom, on Jesus Christ, and on our walk with the Lord. These thoughts may be new to a younger generation. Those of us who have been around need to be patient, just as others were with us when we were learning these things. Teaching and teaching is the backbone of faith and stability within a congregation.

Third, we need to have the spirit as this Dave Ramsey caller had. Rather than arguing, looking for loopholes and trying to find a way to wiggle out of what we ought to be doing, we need to say, "I know what you are going to say. Go ahead and say it. I need to hear it." Could you say that? Could you say, "I know what the Bible is going to say. Go ahead and say it. I need to hear it"? There is comfort in a message that doesn't change. Our times change. Society changes. The weather changes. But God's word remains the same. Now, there are those who are trying to say God's word must keep up with culture, but they don't understand the unchangeable nature of God's word. Rather than changing the word, we must change ourselves. Culture comes and goes. Culture isn't the same all over the world. So, when folks start pushing for changes not found in the Bible, and they want to stand upon the platform of culture, which

culture are they appealing to? The culture of today certainly isn't the culture of the 1800's. The culture of America isn't the same as the culture of Iran. So, cultural changers are left with a Bible that doesn't mean the same for everyone worldwide. They have a Bible that may change in another decade. What's really behind the cultural platform is the agenda to change the church and a dissatisfaction with what God has said.

As Peter was writing his audience, he said, "You already know these things." These truths didn't change. They remained the same. And, they have remained the same, even for us.

I know what you are going to say. Go ahead and say it. I need to hear it. Sweet words.