

DISCUSSION GUIDE

How to Get the Most Out of a Sermon

Last Letter - Week 9

ICEBREAKER: What's a sure way to detect when someone is lying?

OVERVIEW: Christians spend 35-45 minutes a week, 40-50 weeks a year listening to sermons, but most Christians have never been taught how to listen to a sermon. What is the purpose of preaching? What is a good sermon? What is a bad sermon? What are we supposed to do with a sermon? This week we are learning about God's plan for the sermon so that we can get the most out of the preaching in our church.

1. What insight, principle, or observation from this weekend's message did you find to be the most helpful, eye-opening, or troubling? Explain. (Or what was your key takeaway from Sunday's message?)
2. Read 1 Kings 22:1-9; 13-18; 26-17. The land of Israel at this time was divided into two kingdoms: Israel in the north, led by King Ahab; and Judah in the south, led by King Jehoshaphat. In this story, Ahab wanted to take the land of Ramoth-gilead from the kingdom of Aram, and King Jehoshaphat agreed to help.
 - a. What is the difference between Ahab and Jehoshaphat in this story?
 - b. How is Micaiah an example of what the church needs in a preacher?
 - c. Was this an easy or difficult situation to faithfully preach God's word? Explain.
 - d. What difficulties do preachers face today as they bear the responsibility of proclaiming God's message?

e. In light of these difficulties, how can you support and encourage your pastor to faithfully fulfil his calling?

3. What is the purpose of preaching? What are the wrong goals for preaching?
4. What's the wrong way to evaluate a sermon?
5. How is preaching dangerous for the preacher? How is it dangerous for the hearer?
6. Why is it tempting to seek preaching that tells us what we want to hear, rather than preaching that is Biblically faithful? What can you do to resist this temptation?
7. What are some things that you can do to get more out of the sermon each Sunday?
8. What are some ways that you can pray for your pastor as he bears the responsibility of preaching the Word?

The Last Word: "We are not like the many hucksters who preach for personal profit. We preach the word of God with sincerity and with Christ's authority, knowing that God is watching us." 2 Corinthians 2:17