

THE ART OF PAINTING
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“Be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord” (I Cor. 15:58.

No job is ever more important and no call ever greater, than preaching the Word of God. It is not for everyone as Eph. 4:11-12 reminds us, *“He gave some.”* My call came from God at age 15 and I am beginning my 66th year of evangelistic preaching. Let's compare the likenesses of painting and preaching. When I was a student at BJU, Dr. Bob Jones, Sr. often referred our preparation to painting a room. I was enthralled in the picture he painted and have found painting and preaching to have much in common. Service for God is very much like painting a room.

Both Are An Art: The Christian painter is to be very good at the job. With the Bible brush in his hand he is capable of great strokes that will change dull to a thing of beauty. The desire to beautify the room must come from God and be a lifetime challenge. I like to paint but I love to preach with every ounce of my body. We must develop our talents, totally develop our abilities and press the task with lasting devotion.

Where To Paint: Remember, it is God who chooses the room for you to paint. Hear the urging of I Cor. 16:9 where God promises, *“A great door, and effectual is opened unto me.”* There is no shortage of places to paint, but rather a shortage of dedicated painters to carefully apply God's solutions. God is more willing to show you where than often the laborers are willing to look. Size of opportunity is not important but the where is a matter to be settled on your knees before God.

Once the choice is made give it your best. Even seasoned believers need to be reminded, this is where the Lord put me. Instead of getting weary, mix up a fresh batch of Gospel paint and get on with the work.

Know Your Paint: This is vital to good spiritual painting. Inside or outside and every side there is no substitute for choosing the best for the coverage of the needs of men. The Word of God is of premium quality which must be applied with years of study and thought. Some painters are better than others and experience is a great teacher. Every believer is responsible for decorating right where you are. Sloppy application can keep even a great pigment from working its best in the lives of men. Careful stroking with the brush can apply a paint in lasting beauty. Dear believer, there is no greater need than strong, knowing, application of the Bible. His Word promises, *“He that hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ” (Phil.1:6).* Knowing the Word and how to apply it is our responsibility and God's paint will last eternally.

Assemble The Best Tools: *“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” (II Tim. 2:15).* Any great painter will advise you to use the best brush and select premium paint. Cutting corners, inadequate preparation and using worn tools will affect the paint applied. The personal life of each believer and his family will have great influence on the coverage sought. The failing, peeling, life of a compromising child of God is a tool God cannot use. Ungodly TV programming, along with questionable late night computer viewing has dulled many a worker. Lay out the tools before you for God's approval and then get on with the task.

Apply With Care: I Cor. 16:14 urges the Gospel painter to “*let all your things be done with charity.*” The sheep cannot be driven but must be led. Every servant of God will get frustrated at times with the hardness and rebellion of the flock. One pastor I heard writes the name of the deacon that gave him the most trouble on a golf ball. After whacking it through 18 holes he says he feels better. I guess that would be better than socking the deacon. Only Godlike love can get you up after words and deeds have knocked you down. Your outward actions in the stress of witness will affect the application of the Word. There is a Godly way to be about all that is required of us. How we apply the commands of God is so important to the painter of the Gospel leading to great results.

Do Your Best: The halls of Bob Jones University are filled with the great sayings of Dr. Bob, Sr. One of the best is the one saying, “It is a sin to do less than your best.” We live in a day of shoddy workmanship and careless construction. Automobiles are made to wear out fast and products to fail and need replacing. It must not be so in the work of God. We are “*for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.*” (Eph. 4:12). Anything short of our best shows our lack of love for Christ and a dwindled vision of our ministry. True, there are problems with other people, but don’t allow the wear and tear of daily living to tempt you to peel away from the job. A good paint job is bound together to last and beautify.

Finish The Job: Whatever job you hold in the church don’t even think of quitting.. From somewhere, I hear ringing in my ear, “Winners never lose, quitters never win.” “When the going gets rough, some just get going.” Be the best superintendent you can be or a trustee or deacon with no thought of quitting. The

greatest are those who have stuck to the task. There are other painters and places to paint, but why not finish the job where you are. “*Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit ye like men, be strong.*”(I Cor. 16:13). Someday our names will be called and our labors inspected by the King of Kings. Sometimes on earth, He whispers, “There’s a spot you missed.” We must dip the brush in His provided wisdom and apply more work. The painter is hired to do a job which is pleasing to the one who hired him. What we receive at the feet of Jesus depends on the stroke of the brush today.

Rejoice In The Task: Those who carefully spread the paint can change and beautify the world around us. Better still, those who spread the Word of God are engaged in a face-lifting of a downtrodden world. We are told to, “*Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.*” I Pet 5: 2-4. Nothing could be better than that. No labor of love goes unnoticed by the Master. One day we shall shine as the stars, in the kingdom of God.

Therefore, deacons, trustees, teachers and all members need choose the best brush and with the best of paint be assured there is no job we cannot do. His promise is clear, “*I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.*” (Phil. 4:13). Work tirelessly where you have been put, apply each day with wisdom and never give up. By God’s grace we must stroke by stroke apply the blood of Christ to the souls of lost humanity. Come to think of it, painting that benefits the souls of men is much better than a wall of a house.