

Thank God for Frank

“But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the Gospel.” Philippians 1:12

I suppose every pastor has had a Frank. Who? You know – a **Frank**. The individual who approaches the preacher after every sermon and “corrects” the message by pointing out the numerous “mistakes.” Early in my ministry, as a young 23 year old pastor, I had a man named Frank who did just that. Let me tell you how God used Frank, this thorn in the flesh, to change my ministry.

When Frank would enter the church building, I would greet him with mixed emotions. *Gladness* because he was a warm body to preach to (we didn’t have much people), and *dread* because I just knew he would take me to task about something after the service. One occasion particularly stands out in my mind.

I had preached a red-hot message naming all kinds of sins and evils. Frank was at his post. He asked, “Can you prove these things are wrong?” I replied, “Everyone knows those things are wrong.” He then got right to the point. “You didn’t show **from the Scriptures** those things are wrong.” I came across as an opinionated preacher who preached **about** the word of God **without preaching THE word of God!**

The next week, while still not admitting Frank was right, I thought, “I must put him to silence.” So, I determined I would back up every statement I made with a Bible verse – just so Frank wouldn’t have anything to criticize me about. Well, it worked. Frank had nothing to say about the message firmly grounded in God’s word. I then began to preach all my messages as Bible based and Bible backed. Something amazing happened. I observed that my preaching had new **authority**. I was not merely preaching what I thought about the Bible; I was preaching the word itself. “*Preach the word!*” (II Timothy 4:2). Christ “*taught them as one that had authority, not as the scribes*” (Mark 1:22). The preacher who “*rightly divides the word of truth*” (II Timothy 2:15) and speaks as “*thus saith the LORD*” has **all the authority of Heaven** behind him.

God uses all kinds of people and circumstances to mold us and prepare us for His service: some pleasant, some unpleasant, but all for our good (Romans 8:28). You may wonder, “What ever happened to Frank?” Well, shortly after God used him to change my ministry, he moved on to another church – I suppose to “help” another preacher...

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