

The Tanner St Church of Christ meets each Lord's Day beginning with Bible classes at **9:30 AM**. We continue with our worship at **10:20 AM** and again at **5:00 PM**. We also meet each Wednesday evening at **7:00 PM** for Bible study and worship. Our meeting place is located about ¾ of a mile from I30 at 1512 Tanner St in Malvern, AR.

If you have questions about what we believe and teach, please visit our website, **TannerSt.com** to listen to sermons or read past articles from our bulletin. Or you can contact us and we will be glad to find a convenient time to study with you.

Phone: (501) 332-8806 Email: preacher@tannerst.com

Needed News

Phyllis Jackson is dealing with continual knee pain. She is wearing a brace and staying off of it as much as she can.

Chris Wright is back home and recuperating from his surgery. The surgery was successful, but he has a few more doctor visits in the next few weeks as he recovers.

Ricky Ragsdale will be beginning physical therapy again soon.

The **Simpson** family is in Star City this weekend.

What can we as a congregation do to reach the community in which we live? Are there community events where we could present the Gospel to area residents? If not as a congregation, maybe there are opportunities for us as individual Christians to let our community know that we are here and want to help them know God and His plan for men. Are we trying to reach the lost with the Gospel or are we satisfied with just continuing to increase our own knowledge? Which has God commanded we make our focus? Let us not focus on our own salvation to the exclusion of trying to help others know the joy of a life in Christ.

Seeking His Righteousness

"...seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.." Matthew 6:33

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Are We Allowing Modern Technology to Take Us Too Far?

R. J. Evans

The career of one of our church members has taken him to all parts of this country, as well as, different countries around the world. He and his family have been members of a number of congregations, and he has visited many local churches over the years. He enjoys talking about the Word of God and the Lord's work. In a recent conversation, he made the comment to me that he had concerns about some of today's gospel preachers. I asked what he had in mind and he told me that it appears that a growing number of preachers seem to be spending more time and placing more emphasis on PowerPoint, than on the Word. My response was that I have had similar concerns over the past few years.

In my nearly 50 years of preaching (it will be in March, 2016), I have used a chalk board, a white board, charts, an overhead projector, and for the last 15 years, I have used a PowerPoint projector. I believe all of these can be effective aids and good tools in preaching the gospel. But, I must also say that at times I have heard great preachers preach great sermons with just the Bible in their hand---and many never opened their Bible, they quoted scripture after scripture.

I believe we can effectively use visual aids in our preaching and teaching. Jesus used "visual aids" such as lilies, a coin, etc. to teach lessons on certain subjects. He also used parables in some of His teachings.

This brother's concerns reminds me of what happened

many years ago when I first started using an overhead projector. We had a brother who had deep concerns about using it. He feared preachers would start using images of some of the paintings of Jesus in their preaching. I remember assuring him that I would not do that. He also expressed that he was afraid that the overhead projector would be just the beginning of what he called "having picture shows in church." Perhaps, his concerns were more "prophetic" than any of us realized at that time.

In having used the PowerPoint for so long, I can see how it would be very easy to get caught up in using a lot of beautiful, colorful scenes, pictures, animations, videos, cartoons, etc. Please don't misunderstand, I am not saying that using pictures, graphics, background scenes, maps or charts in our presentations is wrong. No, not at all! But I am saying that we must guard against allowing what we present to become a type of entertainment. In the entertainment world, if we go to a concert, not only do we see the artist on stage, we also see large screens behind and above him with colorful scenes, videos, animations, etc. My barber is a member of a large denominational church. In some of our discussions, he has spoken of how entertaining preachers have become in using animated, video PowerPoint presentations in their sermons. Unfortunately, he thinks entertainment provided by preachers and churches is great. Thus, in our preaching of the gospel we must guard against succumbing to the entertainment craze of our present culture. As speakers, or as listeners, we need to be cautious. In our Bible classes and worship assemblies, it is the Word of God that is to be taught and preached (2 Tim. 4:1; Rom. 1:15-16; 10:14-15; 1 Cor. 1:21). When we turn our PowerPoint presentations into entertainment, it then occupies a similar place of entertainment as does unscriptural instrumental music. I did a little research on effectively using PowerPoint and here are some points that I believe are worth

considering: If used incorrectly, it can become more of a distraction, than a helpful aid. For example, if it is "busy" with too much information, it becomes a distraction. In presentations, it is best to leave animations out. In the business world, Steve Jobs was known for giving some of the most audience captivating presentations, but he never used animations in any of his slides. Some studies advise against using cartoons, which can also be distracting. With this I believe we run the risk of taking away from the seriousness that should characterize any Bible subject. Hence, PowerPoint slides should be used to supplement and reinforce the preaching of the Word of God, and not serve as a "crutch" or source of entertainment. It is a tool or aid---it isn't content. So as gospel preachers, do we want to be known for faithfully preaching and teaching the Word of God, or known for our colorful, slick, sensational PowerPoint presentations? Someone described a preacher to me once by saying, "He is not much of a preacher, but his PowerPoint presentations are beautiful and impressive."

If we have gotten to the point where the audience is sitting there waiting for us to entertain them with our beautiful, colorful, pictures, scenes, videos, animations, etc., more than they are interested in hearing the Word—have we preachers and teachers contributed to this problem? Are we allowing modern technology to take us too far? While visual aids can be helpful, let's avoid any tendency to make them entertaining, and becoming too dependent on them—thinking we have to have them in order to effectively "Preach the Word!" Surely, whatever aids we use, the focus should always be on Scripture. For whatever these thoughts are worth—something to think about, brethren!

The Reflector - October 2015

(While Brother Evan's message is focused on those presenting the Gospel, we must each be careful to avoid a 'satisfy me' attitude in our assemblies. DLH)