

## **A Gospel Preacher Is...** By Roelf L. Ruffner (1990)

Above all a gospel preacher is a simple **Christian**. He has no titles or a special suit to wear. He fights many of the same battles with Satan, every day, other Christians fight. He gets sick on Sunday. He can be exhausted on Wednesday evening. He even visits the sick, when needed.

A preacher is also a **proclaimer** of God's word. He tells the old, old story of Jesus and His love. The story may be tarnished and pitted to some, but as fresh as rain in the desert to him. He loves to plant God's Word in men's hearts. He is extremely careful in what and how he preaches. And occasionally he sees the most thrilling thing of all---the seed sprouts and bears fruit.

The gospel preacher is **an exhorter** of the brethren. He tries to show them the straight and narrow way that leads to eternal life. Along the way, he encourages many and may even snatch a few from the fire. In so doing he constantly returns to the freshness of God's Word to encourage himself and stimulate others.

A preacher is a **defender** of God's truth. In some way he must have a steel hand inside a velvet glove. He must be like Jeremiah the prophet by being a defending wall to his people. It may often be a lonely position but he must realize he is never alone.

A preacher must be a **rebuker** of false teachers and doctrine. With firm gentleness he stops those who sow confusion, by power of the Scriptures. This requires much study, prayer and the overcoming of fear and dread. But he realizes Jesus would not do less for him.

The gospel preacher is a **builder** of dreams. He has in his hands and heart the blueprint and pattern---God's Word. He must rightly divide it and not be ashamed when the Lord returns.

A gospel preacher is a **student** of God's Word. He pores over it daily trying to learn some new insight. He is constantly being renewed by it. Every sermon and Bible class impresses on him the fact that it is truly inspired. He sees it resurrect people's lives. The more he learns the more he realizes his purposes in life. God's purpose for man becomes his purpose.

\*I composed this while a student at the Brown Trail School of Preaching as an in-class assignment for the late brother Johnny Ramsey.