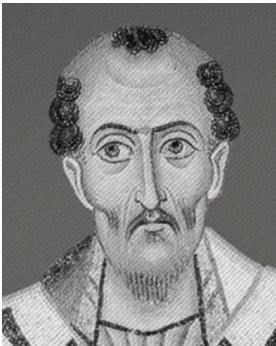


Do We Practice What We Hear Preached?

James 1:19-27

We are to be doers of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving our own selves (*James 1:22*). As we sit under the sound of faithful Bible preaching, our responsibility is to heed what is said and make it a part of our daily living to the glory of God. Our Lord said, “Blessed (happy) are they that hear the word of God and keep it” (*Luke 11:28*).



John Chrysostom (347-407) was a great preacher in Antioch in Syria, a city which early on was known for its emphasis upon a literal interpretation of the Bible. Chrysostom became a great preacher in this city, being a very eloquent speaker, and he was known as the “golden-mouthed” orator. He later ministered God’s Word in Constantinople before he was banished. He wrote many commentaries on books of the Bible, volumes which are of value even today for serious students of Scripture. He was known for his careful exegesis of the Bible and moral application, including unsparing condemnation of sin.

Today, there are churches which applaud for special music or even when a Pastor preaches. Sadly, such was also the case in Chrysostom’s day, and his sermons were frequently interrupted by noisy theatrical demonstrations of applause, which he indignantly rebuked as unworthy of the house of God (*1 Tim. 3:15*). The Greek custom of applauding the preacher by clapping the hands and stamping the feet was a sign of the secularization of the church after its union with the state. Finally, Chrysostom could take it no longer, and he delivered a powerful sermon against this worldly practice. When the message was concluded his audience was so impressed by his stirring message that they broke into enthusiastic applause! This is an extreme but clear example of not practicing what is preached.

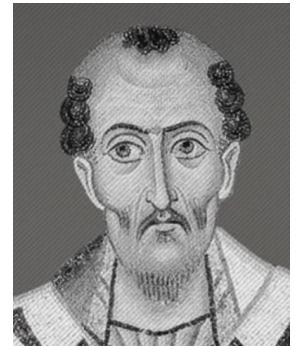
[Documentation: *History of the Christian Church*, Philip Schaff, Vol. 3, p. 938]

~George Zeller: www.middletownbiblechurch.org

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