

F. LaGard Smith answers the question: What's the danger of the Bible Department training our preachers and missionaries?

Discussion and study guides / questions / topics for your consideration.

1. What is a likely danger when a university Bible department trains – or is accepted to be the training ground – of the church's preachers, ministers, missionaries, etc?
 - a. In a general sense, what is it about a 'profession' that is good or not so good?
 - b. In a general sense, is academic distinction a real thing?
 - c. Why is academic distinction a danger when it comes to preaching or teaching the Word; the Gospel?
 - d. Given our previous about Christian education, who are the faculty in a Christian university bible department? What are their doctrinal convictions?
 - i. Do you trust them to teach your child the Bible?
 - ii. Have you prepared your child? (Deut 6.1-9; Prov 1.1-9; Luke 2.51-52; 2 Tim 1.5)
 - iii. Is that a fair question to us?
2. Did you notice the term "major?" How common is it for anyone, not just Christians, to refer to "what is your major" or "I majored in..."? Does this carry its own danger or challenges?
 - a. How do you react to a 'Bible major' when discussing biblical topics? Why?
 - b. How do you react to a 'non-bible major' when discussing biblical topics? Why?
 - c. To some extent, this video discussion is connected to the notion of "going to college". Why is this so important – to us – as people; as Christians; as Americans? Does it tend to unite or divide?
3. If the initial danger is accepting that a bible major is analogous to a 'professional', what is the next or larger danger to the church?
 - a. Do we have tendencies to defer to 'the preacher' because he has studied; he has a degree; he 'knows'?
 - b. Where does that path lead?

- c. In your experience or perspective, how close is the church (at-large) to this condition?
- 4. Is there a difference between the university Bible department and a school of preaching?
- 5. What do you think is the difference between what to preach versus how to preach?
 - a. What do think about form over substance?
 - b. Is technology a good or bad thing?
- 6. Discuss the difference between a calling and a profession.
 - a. Is there any type of pattern we see in the scriptures? (2 Tim 1.13; 2.2; 3.10-15; 4.2; 4.5)
 - b. The topic is preachers and missionaries. Should those who desire to pursue this work consider ALL that Paul writes to Timothy in both of his letters? (1 Tim 4.6-16; 6.6-14; 2 Tim 2.3-15; 24,25; 3.10-12)
 - c. As a child of God, we are all characterized as a bond-servant. Do you think there is a different aspect of 'bond-servanthood' regarding those that serve as preachers, missionaries, ministers? (2 Tim 2.24-26)