

**SermonIndex Announcements :: How to make the most out of SermonIndex****How to make the most out of SermonIndex - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2010/7/17 22:33**

Saints,

This is an excellent post and well worth reading as you participate in this forum community and website.

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Brother Josiah777 wrote on 2006/3/28 9:36:

Brothers and sisters in Christ,

I have been very privileged to have had access to the materials of this website now for the past 2 1/2 years. My walk with Christ has been GREATLY enhanced, far beyond words can say; the precious fruits will only be fully realized in heaven. I want to pass along some practical advice to those who may be new and bewildered a bit, seeing all the names of people they've never heard of, names that mean about as much as looking at a telephone book. First off, I would hasten to say that listening to the sermons here should never be a substitute for being involved in a local church. If you are a disciple of Jesus Christ, God will place you in the body as it pleases Him.

1. Get to know Jesus Christ. Do you want to fill your head with more facts, or do you truly hunger to know Christ and be more like Him? If you seek Him, you will find HIM; but if you seek for lesser things (though they may be important), like blessings or power or ministry or whatever, you will get "how-to's" and not the richness of the Person of Christ. Seeking for knowledge instead of Life (John 14:6) will always have its end in death and spiritual decay.
2. Be led by the Spirit. The sons of God are led by the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:14). The times when I have cried out to the Lord out of my deep sense of need in childlike faith, I have had the quiet promptings of the Spirit direct me to the teacher on SI that I've needed at the time. According to your faith, be it unto you. Having the leading of the Lord will save a lot of wasted hours.
3. Be teachable. Realize that you will be encountering men of different theological backgrounds, culture, experience, spiritual insight and intimacy with Christ that WILL BE different than what you may have learned. Different is not necessarily wrong. You may be surprised that this person ACTUALLY has better insight of the spirit and application of a particular passage than you. A humble person can learn from others, from creation, even from lazy people whose thorns and weeds overtake their yards (Proverbs 24:30-34)!
4. Be a good Berean (Acts 17:11). Don't just swallow everything you hear without carefully examining the Scriptures for yourself. Proverbs 2 says that spiritual understanding comes to those who diligently seek for it like hidden treasure. God does not reward the richness of His Word to lazy people.
5. Live what you hear. Don't just be challenged; change. Don't be offended if what's being said is right. Be humble in your own opinion of yourself. If the truth is exposing shortcomings and lack in your life, be zealous to repent and let the Lord put you back together after His likeness. God delights to make us like Jesus, so there is always hope for life and light when our darkness is exposed.
6. Get to know the man, not just the sermon. If you listen to a sermon, you can know a message. But if you listen to a good number of sermons, you can get to know the man. You can learn a great deal about their spirit by what they talk about--or don't talk about. Usually what a person does not say says a lot more about them than what they do say. Does listening to this speaker make God bigger to you? Are you more passionate to pursue God? These are real effects you want to examine how fruitful this truly is to your walk with the Lord.
7. Try the tried and true. The audio sermons section is divided into "known" speakers (i.e., have a picture icon next to it) and miscellaneous speakers. The known speakers are there because in the wisdom and oversight of the SI webmasters, these are sound, edifying, instructive teachers. There are certainly sound, edifying teachers in the miscellaneous sections as well, but if you are new to SI, these selected teachers/preachers may be a way to more quickly introduce yourself

o powerful men and women of God to enhance your spiritual well-being.

8. Don't get in a hurry; listen. You are not in a race for knowledge, but to know God. If a sermon really blessed you, you may want to listen to it again or several times. You will find that you will pick up other nuggets you missed the first time. It will also reinforce what you heard before. I don't do that for every sermon, but there are ones that definitely speak to my heart more directly than others. I've gained a lot more of Him by taking the time to go back over that "field" one more time and gather up more "gleanings."

9. Take notes. You will retain a lot more by taking notes than by not. At least jot down the Scripture references so you can take time later on to search them further. I've found it well worth the time to stop the sermon, rewind, and jot down a particular one-liner or statement that really stood out to me.

10. Read the comments. Many sermons have comments posted by others who have listened. You may be able to gain some insight of whether you want to listen or not by what others have said. On the flip side, if a sermon has really blessed you, take a few minutes to post a comment. Someone coming after you may inherit a blessing they might have otherwise missed.