“What Do You Do When Your Pastor Preaches Other People’s Sermons?”

What do you do when your pastor is preaching other people’s sermons week after week? No credit is given to the sermons he uses. I am starting to question the ease of obtaining other men’s work. This has been going on for at least two years; sometimes the sermons are almost word for word. I am at the point where I google every sermon. Places like Sermon Central and Saddleback offer many choices, I am not sure if they are providing a service/help or providing an excuse for no personal study. I don’t know where to go.

Thanks for your letter. This is an issue which (I suppose) would need to be taken up with the leadership of your local church. Since churches are governed differently, you would need to find out who the leaders of your local church are and take this matter up with them. Of course, you should first probably take the issue up with the pastor himself (Matthew 18:15-17).

Although the pastor should let the congregation know whose sermon he is preaching, there’s nothing inherently wrong with his preaching another person’s sermon. In fact, at various times in church history, when there have not been enough adequately trained leaders, men have read the sermons of others for the benefit of their congregation.

Charles Spurgeon tells how he was once away from his own congregation and attended a little country church only to hear one of his own sermons read from the pulpit! Of course, it’s also true (as you point out) that the pastor should not be neglecting personal time in the diligent study of the Bible. That, as I see it, is part of his job description!

At any rate, as I see it, this is a matter that needs to be discussed by the leadership in your local church. At the very least, however, the pastor should credit the author of the sermon he reads to the congregation.

Shalom in Christ,

Michael Gleghorn

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