# Neat But Negative (The Other Manger) – Part 2

**Tony Mauck** · Proverbs 14:4

## INTRODUCTION

- I'm talking about the manger of Proverbs chapter 14 and verse 4 that says, where there are no oxen, the manger is clean, but abundant crops come by the strength of an ox.
- If you want a clean manger, there's a price to that. Because oxen make a mess.
- They just want to keep everything neat and tidy in their little world. But the end result of that is not good for them or good for others. It's neat, but it's negative.

## 1 Practicing Hospitality

- Sometimes you got to put up with a little mess for the end result of things.
- We talked last week at some length about practicing hospitality and how important that is, and how that involves a little bit of work, a little bit of stress, perhaps, rolling up the sleeves, cleaning the house.
- Vacuuming, cleaning up after the company leaves, especially if they're kids. But it's worthwhile to do that work.

## 2 The Cost of Leadership and Involvement

**1 Timothy 3:1; Acts 22; Ephesians 3:20**

- Too many people want to sit on the sidelines and let somebody else do the hard stuff in the kingdom.
- It's a fine work that an individual aspires to do. Paul says in 1 Timothy chapter 3 and verse 1.
- The more people we get in the local church who are willing to make that kind of an expenditure, to make those kinds of sacrifices, the stronger and more vibrant this work will be.
- You put yourself in a visible position that can be criticized. Even if you're one of the best people that there are.
- If you excel, I should rejoice in it because God's cause is advanced.
- It is never about the glory of men. It is always about the glory of God and the advance of his cause. So whatever the cost, it's okay if the manger is dirty.

## 3 Growing a Growing Church and Maintaining Unity

- When a church grows, there are some growing pains that go with it. And there's a lot of things that have to be worked out.
- But isn't it great that there's a bunch of kids here? Isn't that awesome?
- Paul didn't sing any of these hymns that we sing. They were all new once upon a time.

- Some of the newer hymns that we sing, some of the songs that Dean led tonight, are songs that our young people enjoy singing.
- Our singing may be one of the most impressive things that we leave with a visitor.
- We want to do it in a way that honors Him and takes people to the very throne of God.

## 4 Speaking the Truth in Love to the Lost

- One of the reasons why we shy away is we know that the minute that we introduce faith into the discussion that there could be a disconnect, there could be a rejection.
- But what about the potential cost to souls? But is your comfort more important than their eternal salvation? Don't worry about the manger. Let's do the work.
- We don't have to convert people on the spot.
- Confess your relationship to Christ. Confess your faith.
- We've got to get out of our comfort zone to try to reach people while there's time and opportunity.
- We just need to plant the seed. They may not be ready for it now, but maybe somewhere down the road.

THE CHALLENGE

And it is indescribably rewarding to know that you have contributed in the greatest cause on this earth. Focus. Stay the course.

MY NOTES