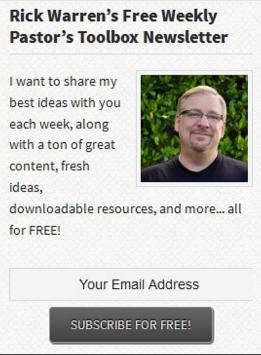
Sermons-R-Us, Pastors-R-Us And More! Fast Food Christianity

The modern church has made it nice and easy for pastors to prepare sermons, for people to become pastors, and congregations to be discipled. It's all done by lowering the standards. Rick Warren and others offer "off-the-shelf" sermons so pastors no longer need to bother reading and studying the bible:



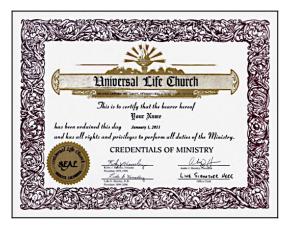
All they have to do is sign up for the "sermon of the week" and pay their subscription fee and voila! – they have a sermon ready to go, just add a few jokes or a few personal stories!

Then there is the infamous "Universal Life Church" who will ordain anybody – FOR FREE – to any spiritual office they desire:

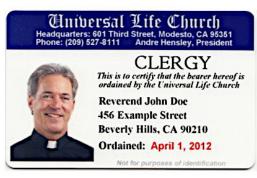


And if you are willing to pay a few bucks they will sell you a whole set of professional looking credentials:

Official Looking Certificate Of Ordination - \$5.00



Impressive Looking Photo Style Wallet Card - \$29.95



While I am not saying we should never study the materials of other Christian authors or preachers, we need to study the Bible for ourselves first and foremost, not get all our teaching from the writings of other Christians. Study Bibles can be helpful, but they also can have inaccuracies in their study notes. Bible commentaries are very helpful to doing your own personal bible studies, but those commentaries are not without some bias. The most accurate and most thorough Bible commentary I have ever used is John Gill's Bible Commentary. Also, I would say that Matthew Henry's COMPLETE Bible Commentary is almost on par with Gill's commentary.

A final note: Just as there are no "good" short cuts to studying the Bible and preparing lessons to share with others, we must also be wary of the institutional Bible school – seminary – Christian college "system". That system purposely leaves out certain fields of study such as ecclesiology (church structure/format/purpose), or the system presents a narrow or biased or even seriously inaccurate view of certain areas of Bible study, such as hermeneutics (Bible interpretation) or eschatology (end time prophecy) or even soteriology (the study of salvation). Here are some additional articles on this issue: Things They Never Told Your Pastor In Bible College Or Seminary. – *RM Kane*