



# TRUTH APPLICATIONS

Articles

## “Let Me Repeat That”

David Anguish

A visiting preacher in our congregation impressed one listener with his mastery of his material. In multiple lessons presented over several days, he never used notes. What the listener had apparently not taken into account was that, in addition to the speaker’s initial study in preparing the material, he had at the time he presented the series to us delivered it more than sixty times—in lectureships, seminars, special meetings, retreats, and multiple graduate-level courses.

Of additional interest is the fact that, at the time of the seminar in question, I had an excellent idea of what he was going to say next. I had heard him present the series at least four times and had read version of the material he published in a book twice. I didn’t know it like he did, of course, but I certainly knew (and still know) it better than the content of the article I read for the first time last week.

A few people have extraordinary memories that allow them to recall large amounts of information after reading, seeing, or hearing it just once. Some are not blessed with that ability to recall, but are willing to act on something they hear and recognize as truth almost as soon as the awareness sinks in. I somewhat envy the first, and wish I was always more like the second. But, like most people, I need to have things repeated to really learn and act on them. Fortunately, I’ve been blessed with some good teachers who’ve made sure I had the chance to review.

Those teachers were following a method God used. Moses recorded the Ten Commandments in two places (Exod 20:3-17; Deut 5:6-21) and other inspired writers repeated at least part of the list several other times (cf. Hos 4:2-3; Matt 19:18-19; Rom 13:9). Jesus told his disciples at least three times what would happen to him when they got to Jerusalem (cf. Matt 16:21-23; 17:22-23; 20:17-19). Even those repetitions were not enough for them to comprehend what he was saying.

Good teachers know that we need to press on to things not yet learned. But they also know that we need to hear important things again and again so we will really

grasp and act on them. So, they sometimes repeat things—sometimes the same way, sometimes from different angles—always in the hope that truth will be learned, internalized, bear fruit, and yield a hundredfold, or sixty, or thirty (Matt 13:23).

Thank God for good teachers.

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