

This is an excerpt from Chuck Smith, *Pastoral Ministry*. I *think* this is an internal training manual or possibly lecture notes they use for the pastors/church planters they are training. I believe some of our people received this after visiting Calvary Chapel many years ago. This material has been helpful to me (Scott) over the years. This is chapter 5, which relates to preaching the word. Although it's aimed at traditional preachers who speak from a pulpit, we believe there are principles which apply to us as home church leaders/teachers.

## 5. The Pastor as Preacher/Teacher

### A. The nature of preaching

#### 1) The primacy of preaching

a) According to Martyn Lloyd-Jones

If you want something in addition to that I would say without hesitation that the most urgent need in the Christian Church today is true preaching; and as it is the greatest and most urgent need in the Church, it is obviously the greatest need of the world also.

Well now the great question is --what is our answer to all this? I am going to suggest, and this will be the burden of what I hope to say, that all this at best is secondary, very often not even secondary, often not worthy of a place at all, but at best secondary, and that the primary task of the Church and of the Christian minister is the preaching of the Word of God.

I have simply skimmed the argument, the statement of it, in the New Testament. All this is fully confirmed in church history. **Is it not clear, as you take a bird's-eye view of Church history, that the decadent periods and eras in the history of the Church have always been those periods when preaching had declined?** What is it that always heralds the dawn of a Reformation or of a Revival? It is renewed preaching. Not only a new interest in preaching but a new kind of preaching. A revival of true preaching has always heralded these great movements in the history of the Church . . . So my answer so far, my justification of my statement that preaching is the primary task of the Church, is based in that way on the evidence of the Scriptures, and the supporting and confirming evidence of the history of the Church.

(all three quotes from *Preaching & Preachers* by Martyn Lloyd-Jones, pages 9, 19 and 24-25 respectively; I highly recommend this book to every student and pastor)

b) According to the New Testament Scriptures

Now in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a murmuring against the Hebrews by the Hellenists, because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution. Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, .It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables. Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business; but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word. (Acts 6:1-4)

I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort,

86

with all longsuffering and teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to

fables. But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry. (2 Timothy 4:1-5).

As we can easily discern from these two sources, the ministry of preaching should be the primary focus of every pastor. Indeed, he has many other responsibilities, but these are truly secondary at best, and he will never be effective in them beyond his own pulpit ministry. In other words, all he does should be directly related to what is preached from the pulpit, for that is where he will bring forth the mind and wisdom of God to guide his ministry.

## 2) The purpose of preaching

### a) What it is not

The purpose of preaching is not for the pastor's benefit; it is not for the pastor to entertain; it is not for the pastor to testify of his Christian experience and personal life; it is not for the pastor to lecture or merely inform people about Biblical truth. It is not the public forum where the pastor can share himself or his ideas and opinions. This is not the setting where the pastor can impress others with his profound knowledge or oratory skills. As Dr. Packer so aptly states,

A Christian communicator has to learn that he cannot present himself as a great preacher and teacher if he also wants to present God as a great God and Christ as a great Savior. There is a pair-of-scales effect here. Only as one's assertion of self sinks will God be exalted and become great in one's estimate. Self-effacing humility before God is the only way to uplift him. (from Hot Tub Religion by J.I. Packer, page 56)

### b) What it is

Proper preaching and teaching is nothing less than sharing the divine oracles of Almighty God! It is declaring God's truth to:

\* inform the ignorant

\* enlighten the mind

\* stir the emotions=

\* challenge the will

It is declaring the whole counsel of God in such a manner that everyone

87

who listens is aware of the divine message and the divine presence. Proper preaching might also be known as bridge building (from John Stott) between the Biblical world and the modern world!

## 3) The preparation for preaching

### a) Preparation of the preacher

The common emphasis in the church, both in the training of preachers and in life of the typical preacher, is that of sermon preparation. I do not deny the necessity of sermon preparation at all, but I think the greater emphasis should be placed upon the preparation of the one who is going to preach the sermon. And this is sadly neglected in the church today!

‘some men prepare their sermons; other men prepare themselves’ (W.H. Griffith-Thomas, Ministerial Life and Work, page 139)

There is much to do to prepare oneself for preaching. For example, the preacher should be in current fellowship with God, knowing the reality of all sins forgiven. But probably the single greatest means of by which the pastor can prepare himself is that of prayer. Note the following wise advice from an experienced pastor:

We cannot feel too deeply the importance of this part of pulpit preparation [prayer]. To study and meditate much, and to pray little, paralyses all. On the other hand (as Doctor Doddridge found by experience) ‘the better we pray, the better we study.

Nothing will give such power to our sermons, as when they are the sermons of many prayers. The best sermons are lost, except they be watered by prayer.

(both quotes by Charles Bridges in The Christian Ministry, pp. 212 & 215)

#### b) Preparation for the preaching

During the process of preparing himself, the preacher must also prepare the actual sermon. This will take very diligent, thoughtful and careful planning in order to construct a sermon that will be both Biblical and relevant to the hearers.

The preacher must of necessity be a great student of the word, and additional helpful Christian study tools, if he is going to prepare timely and

88

effective sermons. Thus he must study continually, and pray unceasingly.

The following advice is most appropriate:

You must think yourself empty . . . read yourself full . . . write yourself clear . . . pray yourself keen. (adapted from Ministerial Life and Work by W.H. Griffith-Thomas, pages 142-145)

## 4) The method of preaching

### a) The responsibility of the preacher

The preacher, if he is true to his divinely ordained task, must preach the Word, only the Word, and nothing but the Word! The preacher is simply the spokesman for God, standing .in the gap. to say to God’s people and the world what God would want said. The point is this: God has already preached His message in the Scriptures . thus the preacher has been given the task to simply say again to his culture and his generation what God has already declared! Nothing else matters but a clear exposition of what God is actually saying in the inspired text. Period!

### b) The common types of sermons

\* topical . this is a sermon that is based upon a particular topic, theme or subject that has been selected by the preacher; he then selects supporting texts from Scripture.

\* textual . this is a sermon that is based upon a specific thought that is drawn from a particular text; the preacher then expounds and elaborates upon that thought.

\* expository . this is a sermon that is based upon a selected text of Scripture; **the intent of the preacher is to bring forth the intended meaning of the biblical author.** It is my contention that the expository preaching method is by far the most Biblical, the most effective, and should be mastered by every preacher. It is the best approach in keeping with the goal of the preacher in his attempt to bring forth what God has declared.

89

## DEFINITIONS OF EXPOSITORY PREACHING

Westminster Directory, 1945

‘the preacher should become the mouthpiece for his text, opening it up and applying it as the Word of God to his hearers, speaking in order that the text may be heard, and making each point from his text **in such a manner that his hearers may discern the voice of God..**

Haddon W. Robinson

.Expository preaching is the communication of a biblical concept, derived from and transmitted through a **historical, grammatical and literary study of a passage in its context, which the Holy Spirit first applies to the personality and experience of the preacher, then through him to his hearers..**

Stephen F. Olford

.Expository preaching is the historical, grammatical and contextual examination and presentation of scripture, in the power of the Holy Spirit, with a homiletical pattern and an evangelical purpose..

Charles H. Spurgeon

.Not a lecture about Scripture, but the Scripture itself, opened up and enforced..

James Doane

.Expository preaching is setting forth neither more nor less than the truth of the biblical text . . . The task of the person in the pulpit is to preach the Word, to say again . through one’s own personality and language . what the Word says in the text selected..

Ray C. Stedman

.Expository writing or preaching derives its content from the Scripture itself, seeking to discover its divinely intended meaning, to observe its effect upon those who first received it, and to apply it to those who seek its guidance in the present..

The Committee of Biblical Exposition (COBE)

.Expository preaching is communicating the full meaning of a text or passage of Scripture in terms of our contemporary culture, with the specific goal of helping people to understand and obey the voice of God..

90

## THE VALUE OF SYSTEMATIC EXPOSITION

In the context of the preacher’s need for courage I commend the practice of systematic exposition, that is to say, of working steadily through a book of the Bible or a section of a book,

either verse by verse or paragraph by paragraph. The first benefit of this scheme is that it forces us to take passages which we might otherwise have overlooked or even deliberately avoided. I well remember some years ago preaching through the Sermon on the Mount, and coming in due course to Matthew 5:31, 32, in which our Lord deals with the subject of divorce. I have to confess that, although I had been in the pastoral ministry for twenty-five years, I had never previously preached on this topic. I am ashamed to have to admit this, since divorce is a burning contemporary issue and many people are wanting help in this area, but it's true. Of course I could have made a number of cogent excuses. .It's a very complex subject, and I do not have the necessary expertise.. Besides, I'd be sure to offend somebody.. So, because of the difficulties, I had steered clear of the topic. But now I was leading the congregation through the Sermon on the Mount, and here staring me in the face were Matthew 5, verses 31 and 32. What should I do? I could not possibly skip those verses and begin my sermon, .Last Sunday my text was Matthew 5:30; today it is Matthew 5:33.. No, I was obliged to do what I had so long shirked, and I clearly recall the hours I had to spend in study and thought before I dared attempt to handle those verses.

The second benefit of systematic exposition is that people's curiosity is not aroused as to why we take a particular text on a particular Sunday. If I had suddenly, out of the blue, preached on divorce, church members would inevitably have wondered why. They would have asked themselves, .Who is he tilting at today?. But as it happened, their attention was not distracted by such questions. They knew that I was seeking to expound Matthew 5:31, 32 only because they were the next consecutive verses in the sermon series.

The third benefit is probably the greatest. It is that the thorough and systematic opening up of a large portion of Scripture broadens people's horizons, introduces them to some of the Bible's major themes, and shows them how to interpret Scripture by Scripture. P.T. Forsyth put this point well,

We need to be defended from his (The preacher's) subjectivity, his excursions, his monotony, his limitations. We need, moreover, to protect him from the peril of preaching himself or his age. We must all preach to our age, but woe to us if it is our age we preach, and only hold up the mirror to the time.

Again, one of the greatest tasks of the preacher is to rescue the Bible from the contextual idea in the minds of the public, from the Biblicist, atomistic idea which reduces it to a religious scrapbook, and uses it only in verses and phrases . . . He must cultivate more the free, large and organic treatment of the Bible, where each part is most valuable for its contribution to a living, evangelical whole, and where that whole is articulated into the great course of human history.

(Taken from BETWEEN TWO WORLDS by John R. Stott, pp 315, 316)

91

## EXPOSITORY PREACHING: THE NEED OF THE HOUR

God has designed the church to be the greatest and most powerful organization in the world today. Tragically, however, this work of God lies enmeshed and entangled by humanism and sluggishly wanders in a world largely void of its divine call. One obvious reason for this sad situation is that the people of God are not well fed, i.e., biblically taught; thus the local church falters, and the body designed of God to be a potent force in the world presents a sad commentary on its high calling. God's people must hear from God through Bible exposition. Let us give God back his voice . in the pulpit and wherever his Word is taught.

## The Problem

Preaching, in the latter decades of the twentieth century, exhibits a strange contradiction. On the one hand, there is acknowledgement of the need for great preaching, usually defined as expository preaching. But on the other hand, good expository preaching has seldom been more lacking. Evangelical seminaries exhort their young men, .Be faithful in preaching . . . Spend many hours in your study poring over the Bible . . . be sure you give the people God's Word and not merely your own opinions.. But in practice these admonitions are usually not heeded, and often ministers who emerge from the seminaries . whether because of a lack of expository instruction, a low view of the Bible's authority, social pressures, or a failure of commitment . fail in this primary area of responsibility.

The people who sit in the pews Sunday by Sunday know what they want: a minister who will make it his primary aim to teach the Bible faithfully week after week, and embody what he teaches in his personal life. But ministers like this are hard to find, and are apparently getting harder to find all the time. Consequently, the sheep are not fed and the kingdom of God limps forward.

The Committee of Biblical Exposition (COBE), formed in 1982, believes that it is time to address this dilemma head-on. The Committee includes several widely-recognized expositors, such as Stephen Olford, Howard Hendricks, Chuck Swindoll, John Stott, James Boice, and Ray Stedman, as well as lay leaders and spokesmen. It has issued a call for a return to biblical exposition in the churches. James Boice states the Committee's goals as follows: .We solemnly commit ourselves, with our time and talents, to use every means at our disposal to instruct and encourage others in their essential discipline of biblical exposition. To this end we will use conferences, essays. Books, articles, tapes, etc. Our goal is the restoration of biblical exposition to its primary position in the cause of church revival and its support of aggressive evangelism in communities through-out the world..

To make clear what biblical exposition is, the Committee has formulated this definition:

Expository preaching is communicating the full meaning of a text or passage of scripture in terms of our contemporary culture, with the specific goal of helping people to understand and obey the voice of God.

## ***B. The preparation of the sermon***

Give them something striking, something a man might get up in the middle of the night to hear, and which is worth his walking fifty miles to listen to. (Spurgeon).

92

Since this section is covered in great detail in the course of Sermon Preparation, I will simply outline with brevity the essential steps that comprise the construction of a sermon.

### **1) Preparing the sermon itself**

#### a) The choice of the text

Text selection can be one of the most difficult and frustrating tasks in the sermon preparation process. There are two basic principles to follow:

- \* the best choice is to preach expositively through various Bible books
- \* if selecting texts at random, the principle is .let the text choose the preacher.

#### b) The outline of the text

The discipline of outlining is essential to good sermon preparation and must be mastered by every serious preacher. The outline should contain balance, unity, clarity and progression. The outline is first exegetical and then homiletical.

#### c) The gathering and arrangement of information

The gathering of information is accomplished by the serious and diligent study of all available research material. The preacher must research, record what he discovers, and then classify it properly. The arrangement of information is the further classification process of determining what is essential to the sermon and what is irrelevant to the sermon. All the information gathered may be excellent material, but it may not all be relevant to the purpose of the sermon under construction.

#### d) The body of the sermon

The next step is to prepare the body of the sermon. This is the actual content of what the preacher has to say. The body must always reflect what the text says, in a manner that is logical and clear to the listener. The body will be constructed by developing several main points; explanation and substantiation of the main points; illustrations of the main points; some type of conclusion to each point; and then a proper transition between each of the main points.

#### e) The conclusion to the sermon

The conclusion is extremely important to the entire sermon. It should be brief and proportional to the whole sermon; it should be conclusive in nature; it should present a review of what has been said; and it should be persuasive and challenging.

93

#### f) The introduction to the sermon

The introduction is extremely important to the entire sermon. The purpose is to introduce and prepare the audience for what the preacher has to say. It should be striking, captivating and interesting, for this is where people decide to listen or not.

## 2) The characteristics of a good sermon

- \* it should be clear and easy to follow!
- \* it should be precise and logically developed!
- \* it should be forceful in terms of thought and delivery!
- \* it should be interesting and never boring!
- \* it should be beautiful and eloquent!

## **C. The act of preaching**

### **1) The delivery of the sermon**

#### a) The preacher's personality

.What is preaching? The communication of truth by man to men.

(Phillips Brooks).

Above all else, BE YOURSELF, allowing your personality to come through. This will make you vulnerable before your audience, but it will also make you most effective. Don't imitate the style or model of another preacher -- develop your own unique style!

#### b) The preacher's voice

Brethren . . . ring the whole chime in your steeple, and do not dun your people with the ding-dong of one poor cracked bell. (Spurgeon)

The voice is your greatest tool in preaching. Some preachers are especially gifted and blessed with a great voice, but for the most part, most of us will have to work diligently at developing this tool!

#### c) Unction in preaching

What is this? It is the Holy Spirit falling upon the preacher in a special manner. It is an access of power. It is God giving power, and enabling, through the Spirit, to the preacher . . . . (Lloyd-Jones)

Unction is hard to define, but it is essential for effective preaching. This is the special anointing of the Holy Spirit, which should be noticed in the study first, and then in the pulpit secondly. In other words, don't expect much anointing beyond your personal study.

#### d) Freedom in preaching

'the element of freedom is all important. Preaching should be always under the Spirit . His power and control . and you do not know what is going to happen. So always be free. (Martyn Lloyd-Jones).

This is one of the greatest keys to effective preaching, and unction makes it happen. You will find yourself confined and restricted at times, with no flow to your preaching. The only solution is this freedom, freedom to express yourself clearly and forcefully.

#### e) Authority in preaching

'the message which the Christian preacher proclaims is a given message. He does not have to create it. It has been revealed. (John Broadus).

The authority in preaching comes directly from God and His word. The preacher must stay in and under the word in order to have this authority. The personal authority of the preacher is worthless and must never be relied upon.

#### f) Enthusiasm in preaching

Nothing will avail if you go to sleep while you are preaching . . . Many ministers are more than half-asleep all through the sermon; indeed, they never were awake at any time . . . (William Romaine).

The word .enthusiasm. is a compound word from the Greek .en. meaning .in. and ‘theos. meaning .God. . hence the idea of .GOD IN YOU!. In preaching this would mean that the message of the text has truly gripped the preacher’s heart, to the point where he is vitally enthusiastic and zealous concerning it. This truth is then communicated to others with passion and power.

g) Seriousness in preaching

.I preached as never sure to preach again, and as a dying man to dying men. (Richard Baxter).

I think it is most appropriate that a seriousness should accompany our pulpit ministry. I am not saying that the preacher should be somber or morbid, but he should certainly be sober and serious, and any humor should not be forced but a natural part of the preacher’s personality. The point is simply this: remember the nature of the task at hand! Don’t get frivolous, too light and merry, or use the pulpit for your comic routines!

95

## 2) The preacher’s audience

a) The need for intense audience awareness

The preacher must never forget that he is preaching to people! Therefore, he should look at them; be intensely aware of them; relate to them; and exchange with them. Don’t just speak to them or at them; but speak in such a way that you interrelate with them, for there should be an exchange that takes place, even though they do not talk back to you. Thus the preacher should know his audience to the best of his ability, and he should be keenly aware of them!

b) The disciplined art of listening

The preacher should take some responsibility in training his people to be effective listeners. Teach them how to listen properly, what to do to maintain attention, how to think logically with the sermon to sit still for 45 minutes. Don’t make assumptions that this is what they should do; rather preach in an interesting manner and then train them how to listen properly and you will gain their attention.

## ***D. The difficulties in preaching***

1) Dealing with personal fears and feelings of inadequacy

2) Dealing with the many demands upon the pastor’s time

3) Dealing with the need for long term. study and preparation

4) Dealing with the satanic opposition both in and out of the pulpit

5) Dealing with the lack of response that the preacher expected