

## Things to Know - About the Purpose of Preaching (1)

When looking at the title for this message, someone might first wonder if this is supposed to be a message for ministerial students. However, it is just as important to know about *receiving* preaching as it is to know *how* to preach. The preaching of God's Word is as important now as it was in the days of Noah when people ignored it to their doom. It is as important as in the days of the prophets and kings for the rise and fall of nations and empires. It is as important as in the days John the Baptist who prepared the hearts of the people to receive the King of kings.

There are many things we need to know in order to prepare *our* hearts for receiving the preaching of God's Word. For today, we are going to consider three of the things we need to know about the *purpose* of preaching.

- Preaching is not for theatrical purposes.
- Preaching is God's method for reaching the world.
- Preaching is for training the saints for ministry.

### 1. Preaching is not for theatrical purposes.

There are things we need to do to be interesting, but that is not the point of the sermon. Preachers don't want to be boring when they preach, but neither is it a theatrical performance.

There is a tale told of that great English actor Macready. An eminent preacher once said to him: "I wish you would explain to me something." "Well, what is it? I don't know that I can explain anything to a preacher." "What is the reason for the difference between you and me? You are appearing before crowds night after night with fiction, and the crowds come wherever you go. I am preaching the essential and unchangeable truth, and I am not

getting any crowd at all." Macready's answer was this: "This is quite simple. I can tell you the difference between us. I present my fiction as though it were truth; you present your truth as though it were fiction."  
— G. Campbell Morgan

Actors try to communicate what sincerity looks like, but a *true* preacher of the Gospel is not acting. Simply believing the truth and sharing it does not need *artificial* sincerity. Paul wrote to the Corinthians and reminded them that he did not come with oratorical skill, but with the sincerity of the truth of God's Word.

1Cor 2:1 And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God.

1Cor 2:4 And my speech and my preaching *was* not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power:

1Cor 2:13 Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

Col 2:8 Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.

When a charlatan preaches for his own glory, he is no better than Herod speaking before Blastus and his company from Tyre and Sidon.

Acts 12:20-23 And Herod was highly displeased with them of Tyre and Sidon: but they came with one accord to him, and, having made Blastus the king's

chamberlain their friend, desired peace; because their country was nourished by the king's *country*.

21And upon a set day Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat upon his throne, and made an oration unto them.

22And the people gave a shout, *saying, It is the voice of a god, and not of a man.*

23And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost.

We might not think that we have seen a preacher ever receive such judgement for arrogance in the pulpit, but it is as though worms have eaten away their conscience.

The influential pastor, Oswald J. Smith, said, "The world does not need sermons; it needs a message. You can go to seminary and learn how to preach sermons, but you will have to go to God to get messages." When he said *sermons*, he was referring to those in seminary learning about preaching as a mere academic exercise as opposed to delivering a message from God.

1Cor 1:26-31 For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, *are called*:

27But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty;

28And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, *yea*, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are:

29That no flesh should glory in his presence.

30But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and

redemption:

31 That, according as it is written,  
He that glorieth, let him glory in  
the Lord.

## 2. Preaching is God's method for reaching the world.

The apostle, Paul, declared the purpose of preaching when he wrote to the Romans. It is by the preaching of the Gospel that our faith is transferred from one to another.

Rom 1:14-17 I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise.

15 So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

17 For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.

Rom 10:13-15 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

14 How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?

15 And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!

The power of preaching is not the eloquence of the preacher but the content of the Gospel.

1 Cor 1:17-18 For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of

words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.

18For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.

1Cor 2:1-5 And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God.

2For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

3And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling.

4And my speech and my preaching *was* not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power:

5That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

In the history of mankind, it never occurred *naturally* to man that salvation would be by grace. It never occurred *naturally* to man that God would send His Son to become man and die for us. God *supernaturally* gave us His Word and then sent preachers out to deliver that message. To the world, preaching is foolish. The world likes to portray preachers as ignorant, out of touch, unrealistic, bigoted, wild eyed, buffoons. Truly, it is not your ordinary every day thing to have people walk up to each other and just start talking. While the world is mocking preachers, it shows its hypocrisy by all the activists, product evangelists, and self-help gurus hawking their issues. Not only does the world think preaching is foolish, but to the world, the Gospel is foolishness. Man has imagined all kinds of things to try to redeem himself, but never the Gospel. The world will tolerate every cockamamie New Age nonsense but will treat the Christian faith as dangerous. On our own, we never would have figured out what we need to be saved. We need

the Gospel itself.

1Cor 2:7-14 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, *even* the hidden *wisdom*, which God ordained before the world unto our glory:

8Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known *it*, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

9But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

10But God hath revealed *them* unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

11For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.

12Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

13Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

14But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned.

2Pet 1:16 For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

3. Preaching is for training the saints for ministry.

Another purpose of preaching is to train others.

2Tim 2:2 And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.

We have to be ready to speak up for the Lord at any time.

1Pet 3:15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and *be* ready always to *give* an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:

2Tim 4:1-4 I charge *thee* therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom;

2Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.

3For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;

4And they shall turn away *their* ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

Why do we need preaching? Consider these reports<sup>1</sup>:

A Muslim mob beat and burned to death a female Christian student in Nigeria. She was apparently accused of 'blasphemy.' A brief video clip shows a massive fire against a wall, where the hapless woman was likely driven and cornered, and Muslims jumping around it and crying 'Allahu Akbar.' One man, dressed in traditional Muslim attire, triumphantly jabbars while waving around a box of matches--perhaps the

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<sup>1</sup><https://www.wayoflife.org/pdf/fcnn-23-20.pdf>

same used to ignite the fire. The Christian girl had apparently challenged a group of Muslim students spreading Islamic propaganda, thereby rousing their ire, in a nation where Christians are being purged in a genocide.

In some places, people are still martyred for the faith. However, compare this to what we can now find in churches in America, today:

Drag Queen Story Hour has been a perversion plaguing public libraries and schools around the nation for several years, but what about Drag Queen prayer time for children during Sunday morning worship at church? In a recent spate of pulpit perversion, churches have been inviting drag queens to come in to address the children as parents willingly hand their kids over ... In December, a church [in Chicago] hosted a drag queen to have a 'prayer time' with children. Earlier this month, another church [in New York] hosted a drag queen to hold a dance party in lieu of biblical exegesis from a qualified pastor. And a Canadian 'church' recently hosted an online event with a drag queen posing as God answering prayers. Another church [in Florida] will be hosting a 'Youth Pride Conference' on May 21 featuring a drag show for ages 12 to 18.

How is this possible in America? We might think that we are so much more enlightened than some other places in the world, but the fact that such "prayer" times can be so acceptable speaks to the need of *more* preaching that is delivering a *true* message of God.

Paul declares plainly in Ephesians 4 that the purpose of missionaries, preachers and evangelists, pastors and teachers, is to prepare us for the work of the ministry.



Eph 4:11-14 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

12For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

13Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

14That we *henceforth* be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, *and* cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

2Tim 2:15-17 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

16But shun profane *and* vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness.

17And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus;

We are all called to preach. The Great Commission in Matt 28 was given to the whole church.

Matt 28:18-20 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

19Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

20Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen.

There are constraints in the Bible concerning ministry, but make no mistake about it, we *all* have a duty to preach the Gospel. I don't mean that we

are all supposed to imitate a caricature of a preacher from the TV. In the Bible we read of men, women, children, and even a mule, who delivered messages from God. Anytime anyone shares the Word of God, it will be preaching because the Word of God will not return void.

Isa 55:11 So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper *in the thing* whereto I sent it.

When Jesus spoke of teaching, it is not in the ordinary sense of merely imparting knowledge. When that knowledge is the knowledge of God and His will, then it is teaching with a Thou shalt emphasis added on. That is what preaching is.

Preaching is not just what goes on in the pulpit. When you come across the word *conversation* for the first time in the Bible, you have to learn that it is referring to more than just chatting with people. It refers to your whole lifestyle. Before you think it strange to say *conversation* instead of lifestyle, we should consider that our lifestyle *speaks* volumes about our us and the faith. The entire way we live *communicates* what it means to be a child of God.

Phil 1:27 Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;

1Pet 1:15 But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation;

1Pet 2:12 Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by *your* good works,

which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.

Jesus' criticism of the Pharisees was that they taught what seemed good to them. They honored God with their lips, but His Word was not in their hearts.

Matt 15:7-9 *Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying,*

8 *This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with *their* lips; but their heart is far from me.*

9 *But in vain they do worship me, teaching *for* doctrines the commandments of men.*

We need a holy conversation, not just lip service. What the world needs is people who will hear the call of the Gospel, to turn from the insanity of this world, and to turn in repentance to the God Who we have offended. We need to surrender our sin, our judgment, and our selves to the One Who loved us and died for us. It is at that point that we can be ready to make the difference that this world needs. Without preachers who are truly in tune with God, there would be no message delivered. Hollywood is not going to do it. ABC, CBS, NBC, PBS, and the alphabet mob are not going to do it. Washington D.C. is not going to do it. God called preachers to do it. But don't just feel that your part is to go to church to hear the preaching. Your part is to take the message and spread it. To do that, *your* heart must be in tune with God and not just giving Him lip service.

1. Preaching is not for theatrical purposes. 1Cor 2:1,4,2:13, Col 2:8, Acts 12:20-23, 1Cor 1:26-31
2. Preaching is God's method for reaching the world. Rom 1:14-17, 10:13-15, 1Cor 1:17-18, 2:1-14, 2Pet 1:16
3. Preaching is for training the saints for ministry. 2Tim 2:2, 1Pet 3:15, 2Tim 4:1-4, Eph 4:11-14, 2Tim 2:15-17, Matt 28:18-20, Isa 55:11, Phil 1:27, 1Pet 1:15,2:12, Matt 15:7-

