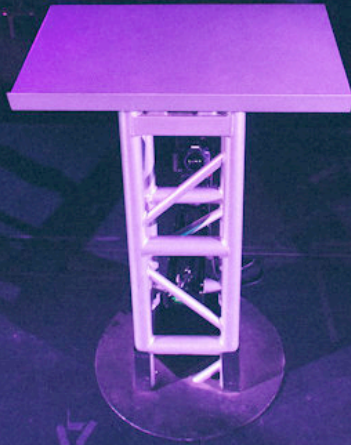


# PREACH THE WORD!



## PREACH THE WORD!

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“Moreover, He said to me, ‘Son of man, take into your heart all My words which I will speak to you and listen closely. Go to the exiles, to the sons of your people, and speak to them and tell them, whether they listen or not, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD!’”

— Ezekiel 3:10–11

# 1. The MANDATE to preach.

In some of the most stirring words in all of Scripture, God speaks through the pen of the Apostle Paul as he charges Timothy — and all ministers of the gospel to follow — to follow divine orders in the proclamation of the gospel. Men cannot change the preaching of the gospel. Preaching is a mandate from God to the man of God to set forth the Word of God plainly, clearly, and accurately. This essay will examine a few general headings surrounding 2 Timothy 4:2: “Preach the Word; be ready in season and out of season.” Men of God must understand this mandate to preach!

## 1. The mandate is CLEAR.

The mandate from God to the minister of the gospel cannot be ignored. God speaks with clarity. The message from the Lord in His Word is lucid and understandable. The clear imperative in 2 Timothy 4:2 is to *preach the Word*. The words cannot be rearranged or revisited or revamped. The mandate for all men of God serving in the ministry of the Lord is to preach God’s Word.

## 2. The mandate is BINDING.

The reason this command binds the man of God is because of the weighty and majesty way that Paul sets the stage for the command to preach the Word. Second Timothy 4:1 begins with the solemn charge in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead. And this same Jesus will soon appear and He has a kingdom. And it is this solemn setting of the stage that brings forth the binding reality for the minister of the gospel to preach the Word. It cannot change because God doesn’t change. The call to preach cannot be altered because Christ’s judgment and appearing and kingdom doesn’t change. Thus, the mandate is binding.

## 3. The mandate is SOLEMN.

The way Paul begins the section speaking to Timothy to preach the Word brings in the solemn, courtroom, judicial, serious implications. This mandate from God solemnly drives every man of God to the text of Scripture so as to preach God’s Word faithfully and boldly. In other words, no man of God should make a joking matter out of the solemn act of preaching the Word of God. No higher calling, no greater responsibility, no weightier duty could ever be put upon a man!

## 4. The mandate is RELEVANT.

This calling to preach the Word never needs to be updated or revised. Never does a church board or a church leader need to vote on whether preaching works or if it’s relevant. Because God, who is unchanging, has put the man of God under oath to preach God’s Word the relevancy of preaching is always a reality. Never does preaching expire or fade away. Let God’s men preach!

## 5. The mandate is UNARGUABLE.

The mandate to preach is unarguable and undeniable because the text so clearly explains what the duty is and how the duty must be performed. The preaching of the Word is so pervasive throughout the entire corpus of biblical revelation that the preaching of His Word is unarguable.

## 2. The MANNER of preaching.

This refers to the *how* of preaching. The kind of preaching that God blesses is very singular and biblical. The manner of preaching follows the divine template precisely. No other kind of preaching does God promise to attend with His power.

**2 Timothy 4:2** — *“Preach the Word: be ready in season and out of season! Reprove! Rebuke! Exhort with great patience and instruction...”*

### 1. Readiness.

The preacher must always remain ready to herald God’s truth. He lives ready to preach. God has prepared him to preach not just a few days in his study but for his entire life. He lives prepared to proclaim divine glories! He has one burning passion for the glory of God through the salvation of sinners and the sanctification of believers and this causes him to always live in readiness to preach. He must be ready in season and out of season. No other time exists. When it’s wanted or not, the man of God must burn with perpetual readiness to herald God’s truth with power!

### 2. Reproving.

This word, reprove, has the idea of convicting, exposing and pointing out sin. It can carry the idea of correcting and censuring for something bad that has been done. The preacher must have his eye toward the glory of God and courageously reprove sin by pointing out errors.

### 3. Rebuking.

When the preacher is called to rebuke, this implies that he calls out specific sin and calls the sinner to turn from his sinful ways. It means to chide and compel the hearer to forsake sinful errors and to replace those erroneous ways with holy conduct.

### 4. Exhorting.

The pastor has a voice to reprove sin and he also must carry the voice of urging pastorally and compelling the hearers to live God’s way. It can refer to one comforting someone and pleading with someone to do something or live a certain way in a combined tone of urgency and tender-love.

### 5. With Patience.

God tells all preachers to preach the Word and to reprove, rebuke and exhort with *all* patience. Preaching does not change a church overnight. The man of God must patiently endure the happy and the hurting times as a soldier of the cross and as an ambassador for the King! He must be so tenaciously committed to Christ and to His Word that he preaches and instructs with all patience.

### 6. With Instruction.

All of the minister’s instruction must come with biblical instruction. He must not just *tell* people what to do but he must instruct them by *showing* them in the Word what and why they must act accordingly. Let the man of God instruct patiently, tenderly, boldly, and humbly as God’s servant.

### 3. The METHOD of preaching.

Preaching is the procedure for accomplishing the God-given task of imparting His Word to His people. It's the orderliness of thought and the systematic approach of declaring God's truth. Without the faithful preaching of God's Word, a man of God is not a faithful shepherd.

For this, we must understand what preaching really is.

**Definition of preaching:** *Preaching is the proclamation of God's truth from God's Word with appropriate application for the hearer to understand how to live in light of that revealed truth.*

Each phrase should be examined in turn.

#### **1) Preaching is proclamation...**

The word that the biblical writers often use to refer to preaching speaks of the lifting up of the voice and the crying out as the herald (=messenger) relays the King's message. The duty incumbent upon the herald is quite simple. He must take the master's message and deliver it faithfully to the audience. He must not change, adapt, edit, add to, or eliminate content. He is merely the spokesman for the sovereign. Thus, preaching is not dialogue nor is it optional. The minister of the gospel is on mission from the Master and the duty is to impart that message fully.

#### **2) Of God's Truth from God's Word...**

The content of what the preacher says derives solely and exclusively from the Bible. The Bible is God's Word so that when the Bible speaks, God speaks. The preacher does not need to recreate or redesign what he says. He needs to take his Bible, open it, read it, explain it, apply it, close it, and go home. Then he is to study that Word for the next sermon where he will do the exact same thing. The content of what is proclaimed must derive from Scripture, not a man's own ideas. He is not to be a clever, charismatic, innovative entertainer. If he does this, he has abdicated his role and is unfit for the title of preacher. He is to take God's revealed Truth in Scripture and declare it.

#### **3) With appropriate application for the hearer to understand...**

Jesus was the master teacher and the perfect preacher. He taught truth and applied it pointedly and directly to his audiences. Whether he taught in a synagogue, in a house, in the Temple precincts, or in the open fields, he provided appropriate application so that his hearers would understand the truth and know what they must do in light of what was said. The minister's job is not complete when he expounds the background, meaning, and theology of a text. He must apply it. He must tell the people the '*so what*' of the text. Preaching instructs the mind and woos the heart and compels the will. Preachers always preach toward change. Application is the '*so what*'?

#### **4) How to live in light of that revealed truth.**

The goal of preaching is praise! The goal of the declaration of God's Word is the delight in God's person! The purpose of heralding is to foster holiness. Trusting the Spirit of God to use His Word in the hearer's hearts, the preacher tells the audience how to live in light of the preached Word.

## 4. The MAJESTY of preaching.

No loftier calling could ever be placed upon a man than to preach the Word of God. God has given His own very truth to His servants so that they would faithfully relay His message — with faithfulness, passion, and courage — to a particular audience. Tremendous weight rests upon the man who has the ‘burden’ of God’s Word that he must share with people. Why is preaching so majestic?

### **1. Preaching is majestic because GOD ORDAINED IT.**

In one of the lengthiest and most weighty statements in Scripture, the Apostle Paul instructs pastor Timothy to preach the Word and he frontloads all of it with this prelude: “I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom...” God has ordained the man to preach; thus it’s lofty.

### **2. Preaching is majestic because CHRIST MODELED IT.**

God has one Son and He made Him a preacher. Christ the Lord came to His own and preached the Word from village to village to vast multitudes of people. Christ declared that He came to preach the kingdom of God. The purpose of His life was to declare and preach the gospel and call men to repent and believe. Christ Himself, as the God-Man, modeled preaching.

### **3. Preaching is majestic because THE SPIRIT BLESSES IT.**

The Spirit of God blesses true, biblical, Christ-centered preaching. The Spirit of God blesses the going forth of the Word of God to accomplish His sovereign ends in the world. God never promises to anoint a program or bless a building or a committee. But he does bless faithful, biblical preaching. Therefore, preaching towers above all other components in life and ministry.

### **4. Preaching is majestic because GOD USES IT TO CONVERT SINNERS.**

It was through the preaching of the Apostle Paul that God sovereignly opened up Lydia’s heart to respond to the things that were spoken by Paul. God ordained that sinners would be saved as they hear the gospel and are summoned to believe and follow the truth. God uses preaching to everlastingly save souls from hellfire. Thus, preaching is majestic, lofty, and non-negotiable.

### **5. Preaching is majestic because GOD USES IT TO SANCTIFY HIS PEOPLE.**

The primary means by which our blessed God sanctifies His people is the preaching of the Word of God. As our Shepherd speaks to His people through His Word, true believers feast upon that Word, find strength and sustenance from the Word, and receive consolations in sufferings and afflictions to persevere from the promises in that Word. God grows His people from the milk of the Word just as a newborn baby steadily grows by drinking the mother’s milk.

### **6. Preaching is majestic because IT DECLARES GOD’S WORD WITH AUTHORITY.**

Preaching is declaration. Preaching is not dialogue. Preaching is a monologue as God addresses people from His Word through the mouthpiece of His messenger. Thus, the Word is authoritative, powerful, supernatural, and effectual to accomplish His ends. Preaching is undeniably majestic!

## 5. The MESSAGE in preaching.

The Apostle Paul spoke to the Romans and affirmed that “I have fully preached the gospel of Christ” (Rom 15:19) and again to the Corinthians: “I determined to know nothing among you except Christ and Him crucified (1 Cor 2:2). Later in writing to the Church in Colossae, Paul wrote: “We proclaim Him” (Col 1:28). And earlier to the Corinthians, he said: “We preach Christ crucified” (1 Cor 1:23). Paul had a mission. And that mission was the conveying of a message. It was a spoken, verbal message from God that must be heralded. What was that message?

*1 Corinthians 1:23 — “We preach Christ crucified...”*

### 1) We.

The Apostle Paul and Sosthenes and others who were with him on his traveling journeys had committed themselves to the preaching of the Word of God. Paul affirmed that *we* preach the Word. Preachers are ordinary men. They are sinners saved by grace. They have received the sovereign love, electing grace, sufficient atonement, and glorious gift of faith and repentance so as to trust in Christ for salvation. Additionally, God has called them to declare His Word. The message must be communicated through faithful messengers. The message must flow through a clean channel so that the message is not diluted, altered, or powerless. God uses men to preach!

### 2) Preach.

The message that God has given concerning Christ is to be preached. To preach is to herald, to declare, to announce, to command, to summon, to beg someone to act and make a decision. Paul’s heralding of Christ was ridiculed in Corinth with all the scholars and philosophers. Indeed, Jews asked for signs and miracles and the Gentiles longed for lofty wisdom. Yet worldly curiosities and pagan desires did not determine *how Paul gave the gospel*. Only God did. And God told him to preach the gospel. The mandate to convey God’s message is to preach with power.

### 3) Christ.

The message in preaching is concerning Christ, what God has accomplished in Christ, through Christ, and for Christ. The glory of God brilliantly comes to the forefront as God humbled Himself and enfleshed Himself in the person of Jesus Christ, the God-Man, who lived under the Law and who obeyed the Law perfectly. Sinless, spotless, and entirely blameless in His life, He was rejected by those for whom He came to save and they ridiculed Him, condemned Him, crucified Him, and despised Him. Paul’s message concerned Christ, His person and His work!

### 4) Him crucified.

God had sent His only Son into the world as the Passover Lamb to pay for the sins of His people and atone for their transgressions. Christ appeased the Father’s wrath by swallowing it all up for His elect. Christ’s crucifixion accomplished redemption for His people. This gift of salvation from divine wrath comes to sinners through faith and faith alone. This was Paul’s message and His only message. He preached a crucified, risen, ascended, exalted, interceding Savior! Believe!

## 6. The MANNERISMS in preaching.

Like a faithful servant who fulfills his duty from the master, the minister of the gospel seeks to relay the Master's message faithfully without detracting in any way from its force, potency, and urgency. Preaching is persuasion. The preacher must carefully guard his mannerisms and employ them so that he is himself preaching and yet he must not distract his audience by his mannerisms.

### 1. Mannerisms are to **ENHANCE** the message.

Preachers preach truth that has already gripped their own souls. A faithful minister does not stand to relay information. He bleeds from his heart and passionately proclaims the love of Christ and the gospel of grace that has already captured his own affections. As the man preaches God's truth, he must diligently work at using his mannerisms to enhance the message and not to detract from it. Mannerisms concerns not only *what* is said but *how* it is conveyed. Mannerisms come out in eye contact, in a facial expression, in hand gestures, in tone fluctuation, in the loudness or quietness of his speech, or in the place or manner in which he stands or his movement around the pulpit. The main point, in this essay, is not so much *what* is said but *how* the conveys God's message. He must employ his mannerisms so as to enhance the message before the audience.

### 2. Mannerisms are to **FIT** the message.

A minister who preaches on the congregation's corporate praise of God from Psalm 100 should allow himself the freedom to extend his arms fully to reach and summon and invite the entire flock to worship God Almighty! The preacher who exposit the Prodigal Son text should tell the story with a gripping tone, with excitement, with terror, with joy, and with sobriety as he progresses through the narrative. A man who preaches on eternal hell should employ sober mannerisms and his voice must be earnest, his arms must be outstretched inviting sinners to come, and his demeanor must be serious, urgent, and inviting as he summons sinners to repent to escape coming damnation. There should not be a boring tone or a motionless, monotone lecture when preaching of the doctrine of God's sovereign adoption! Let the manners *fit* the message.

### 3. Mannerisms are to **ENGAGE** the audience.

The preacher of the Word must always remember that the mannerisms, though not supremely important, do serve to engage the audience and bring them into the message at hand. One who heralds Psalm 95 should continually engage the audience with the phrase: "Come, let us..." Mannerisms, hand motions, the location of the speaker, the tone fluctuation, deliberate and lengthy pauses, and the like can aid the preacher in engaging his audience as he teaches.

### 4. Mannerisms are to **FIT** the preacher.

Every preacher must be himself. The minister should not try to be his hero that he has read about in church history. Rather, he must be himself and disallow himself from impersonating another.

### 5. Mannerisms are to **BRING ATTENTION TO CHRIST, not the messenger.**

All of this serves to heighten the simple truth that manners must enhance the message which centers on Christ! Mannerisms shouldn't spotlight the messenger but always & only the message.



## 7. The MOTIVES of preaching.

Why preach? Why labor in the study to speak in the pulpit? Why spend a week alone with God, sweating over a text, earnestly seeking God's blessing? Why does a man quiet himself with his God and with his Bible and refuse to indulge in worldly time-wasters? What are his motives?

### 1. For the GLORY OF GOD.

The first motive to preach the Word of God is always and preeminently for the glory of God. Preaching exalts God. Preaching extols Christ. Preaching communes with the Spirit. A minister of the gospel has a supreme love and is himself captivated by the great grandeur and the magnificent majesty of the Triune God that he cannot *not* speak of Him! The minister preaches so that God's fame and His glory and His renown and His splendor will be seen and and savored!

### 2. For the MAGNIFICATION OF CHRIST.

The second motive to preach comes to light from the example of Paul who heralded with boldness so that Christ would always be exalted in his body. One great reality so gripped Paul that he served as an unstoppable force for God, namely, the exaltation of and magnification of Jesus Christ, the Lord, who lived a perfect life and died the substitutionary death for sinners.

### 3. For the WORK OF THE SPIRIT.

The third motive to preach is so that the Spirit of God would use His Word to save the lost and to change the converted. Paul preached not only in words but also in power and *in the Holy Spirit* and with full conviction (1 Thess 1:5). So preaching engages with the Spirit and allows the Spirit to utilize His Word and to regenerate the dead and to conform the sheep to the image of Christ!

### 4. For the SAVING OF THE LOST.

The fourth motive to preach is to that the lost would hear the gospel and trust in Christ and confess Him as Lord to be saved. How will the lost hear without a preacher (Rom 10:14)? Regardless of what Jew or Gentile may ask for, the minister preaches Christ and Him crucified! For faithful preaching presents God's holiness, man's vileness, Christ's righteousness, & the need to repent and believe the gospel. The preaching presents Christ and calls for a decision!

### 5. For the GROWTH OF THE SHEEP.

The fifth motive to preach is so that the people of God will hear from God and grow with God and love their God and obey their God! Preaching engages believers with their Savior! Sheep need to eat. And preaching serves as the feeding of the sheep of God with God's Word so that they are equipped, strengthened, and gladdened as they live for and speak of Christ in this world. Paul preached the gospel to the Corinthians repeatedly and reminded them of it. He told believers in Miletus that he did not cease to admonish them for three years. This food grows God's people.

### 6. For the PLEASURE OF GOD.

The sixth motive to preach is so that God would rejoice as His Word thunders forth. God loves to hear His Word & He takes great pleasure in Himself & in His revelation. Preach for His pleasure!



## 8. The CENTRALITY of preaching.

Nothing serves the people of God as much as the central place that preaching must have. A church that is to be faithful to God must be a church with preaching at its core.

### 1. Centrality in the CHURCH.

Paul told pastor Timothy to “preach the Word” (2 Tim 4:2). In the context of the local church ministry, Paul told Timothy in his first letter to give attention to “exhortation” (1 Tim 4:13). *The* central ministry of every local church must be the preaching of the Word of God. The hub, the nucleus, the center-point of the local church must be hearing from God through the preaching of His Word. It must be central in the public gatherings. Even, it should be argued, in the other gatherings (e.g., discipleship, small groups, home studies), the teaching of the Word should be primary and preeminent. Why? Because God’s people gather to hear from God!

### 2. Centrality in the SOUL.

Preaching must take the central place in the Christian’s soul. Every true Christian is a new creation by God’s grace and through His Spirit. The once dead sinner is now made alive by God and has a beating heart after the Savior and a pursuit of the Savior. To be made alive is to breathe and grow and serve this God. Thus, the believer who lives in Christ wants to live for Christ and thus he must hear from Christ in the Word of Christ. So, preaching takes preeminence in the soul.

### 3. Centrality in the HOME.

Even in the sphere of the home, the preaching of the Word of God must be priority. This does not mean that fathers need to preach a well-crafted sermon, from behind a pulpit every day in the living room! Rather, it means that every family should be led by the father and husband to prize the corporate gathering to such a degree that everyone knows that *the climactic event* of the whole week and of every week is the gathering of God’s people to hear the preaching of God’s Word. The head of the home leads his family in the preparation for worship *before* they arrive at church and he helps in applying what is heard when corporate worship is finished. Thus, preaching takes center stage even in the home as the family considers, meditates upon, prays for, and prepares for the preaching of the Word on Sunday.

### 4. Centrality in the AFFECTIONS.

Normally, people enjoy eating. It is a great means of enjoyment to bite into a delightfully tasting dish. Indeed, a person even looks forward to enjoying a particular food that he knows is coming soon. So should it be with God’s Word. The inner affections—the heart and longings—of the child of God is for God *Himself*. God reveals Himself in the Word. So, Christians love preaching.

### 5. Centrality for SANCTIFICATION.

“O that I may know Christ” is a constant heart-refrain from a blood-bought child of God. “O to behold Him in His beauty!” “Make me like Christ!” These are passionate cries from God’s children to the Father so as to be sanctified. Preaching sanctifies the saved, it strengthens the weak, it consoles the downcast, it grows the newly-sprouted, it edifies the soul. Grow in Christ!

## 9. The POWER of preaching.

God promises to attend and to empower the going forth of His Word so as to accomplish His eternal decrees. God's Word is mighty and powerful. It cannot be resisted, quenched, stopped, or overpowered. In the faithful heralding of God's Word, great power is unleashed.

### 1. This power is SUPERNATURAL.

Faithful preaching declares a word from God. Thus, because it is God's Word that is revealed in the Scriptures, the word that goes forth from His Word thus has God's power. And, in so far as the herald accurately conveys the meaning of the text and is utterly desperate for the power of God to work through him, the divine power -- the everlasting, Almighty power -- goes with it.

### 2. This power is EXTERNAL.

Nothing in the man contributes to power in preaching. A man may have the finest exegetical research and findings, with the most well-crafted outline, with clever illustrations to captivate any audience but without the external, necessary workings of the Spirit, all is in vain. Thus, a man preaches the gospel and desperately longs for a power *outside of him* to unstop the ears of his audience, to quicken the souls of the lost, and to sanctify the saved. Only the Spirit does this.

### 3. This power is EFFECTUAL.

When God commands ocean waves to come thus far and no farther, they obey Him precisely and entirely. When God spoke light into darkness, His power proved to be effectual -- that is, unstoppable. It always accomplishes its purposes. When the man preaches God's Word, God *always* effects His purposes. His decrees cannot be thwarted. This gives confidence to the herald.

### 4. This power is SANCTIFYING.

God's Word is very pure and thus every servant of God loves it (Ps 119:140). The truth of God exposes sin, comforts the fainthearted, chisels away sinful crevices, and conforms the child of God into the likeness of Christ. It is through the preaching of the Word that the power of God goes forth as it is faithfully conveyed biblically that brings about greater Christlikeness. Thus, as the power of God goes forth in the preaching of Holy Scripture, it prompts repentance, it propels holiness, and it points to Christ.

### 5. This power is ESSENTIAL.

No man of God should ever dare stand behind the sacred desk and open God's Word in his own strength, with his own power, and through his own capabilities. Every faithful minister of the gospel speaks with absolute desperation that the Spirit's almighty power must attend the going forth of the Word if it is to accomplish any good whatsoever. So the preacher desperately prays!

### 6. This power is NOTICEABLE.

The believers in Thessalonika received the preached Word not as the word of men but for what it really is, the Word of God which performs its work in all believers (1 Thess 2:13). When the Spirit attends the Word, it is noticeable that it's not merely a human show, but divinely powerful.

## 10. The AIM of preaching.

Preachers herald the gospel for one purpose -- to bring about change. The goal of preaching is transformation. Men of God take the Word of God and through much prayer to God anticipate real change for the glory of God. Thus, the aim of preaching is to serve God by effecting change.

### 1. Instruct the mind.

The grand object of preaching must be the written Word of God. Never must preachers herald their own ideas, opinions, cute stories, clever anecdotes, or entertaining pep-talks. Men of God must seriously engage the gathered congregation by connecting them with the voice of God as He addresses them through the preacher. Thus, preaching aims at instruction. Faithful preachers must instruct with sound theology. Men of God must study the Word deeply, know Jesus Christ intimately, and preach expositionally accurate sermons. The Bible must be pressed into the mind and it must seek to shatter the unbeliever's worldview and strengthen the believer's grid through which he views and processes everything. The aim of preaching is to effect change by instructing the listener's mind with God's unchanging and eternal truth. The sum of God's Word is truth.

### 2. Enflame the heart.

As important as biblical fidelity is and the necessary instructing of the mind, it cannot stop there. Preaching goes beyond instructing. It presses truth home to the heart. It seeks to engage with the inner man of every listener. Preaching is logic on fire. Preaching is to take the truths of Scripture and instruct the mind and enflame the heart, enlarge the heart, enrapture the heart, envelop the heart. This happens when the man preaches passionately the Word of God and faithfully applies the spoken Word so that every listener is *forced* to gaze upon the holiness of God, the wretchedness of himself, the atonement of Christ, and the glory of grace. Lecturing is not preaching. There is teaching and instructing in preaching but true biblical preaching goes beyond mere instruction (faithful exegesis and diligent exposition) to make a direct connection between the text being preached and the listener's heart. The preacher wants to preach an irresistible Christ and woo the heart to Christ and win the heart to serve Christ and desire this Christ.

### 3. Direct the will.

The instruction of the mind and the enflaming of the heart is necessary in faithful preaching but all of this still cries for one additional feature in biblical preaching, namely, to direct the will. The gospel going forth from Holy Scripture should force a *change*. It should compel the hearer to make a decision. True, faithful preaching must demand a decision. It should call for change. It ought to captivate the hearers so that they feel themselves filled full with biblical truths, enlarged at heart with Christ's beauties, and pressed down to make a decision. How will the biblical truths that are expounded affect the hearer? What will the listeners do in light of these texts? What will every person do in light of what has been required (by Scripture)? The aim of preaching is transformation and change into Christlikeness. Instruction is necessary. Winning the heart is essential. But all of this leads to the congregation's willful resolve to love Christ enough to repent of sin, grow in faith, mortify sinful tendencies, and walk in earnest obedience. With these combined goals, the preacher's aim is to effect change by the Spirit's grace & for Christ's glory.

# 11. The MAN to preach.

## 1. A converted man.

The preacher must know Christ intimately and he must have received the saving grace of God that transformed his soul. If a man preaches to others that which he himself does not possess, he is the utmost example of arrogance and hypocrisy. The man to take God's Word and preach it must have received the new-birth by God's grace and he must have the new, beating heart after Christ and His glory. An unconverted preacher will breed an unconverted, unholy congregation.

## 2. A holy man.

A holy minister is the most powerful weapon in the hand of God. The congregation of believers must desperately needs a holy minister. More than the seminary degrees and the multitude of programs, the church of the Lord Jesus requires the man of God who speaks for God to be holy, washed, consecrated, set apart, and distinct from the world for the Master's use. He must be holy.

## 3. A family man.

To preach and shepherd a flock at large demands that a man demonstrate himself to be capable of such a task by teaching and shepherding his flock at home. He must have a singular love for his wife. He must demonstrate that by leading her spiritually, by being sexually pure for her and sexually intimate with her alone (including his heart, eyes, and body). Then he must disciple, discipline, & instruct his children in the Word and ways of God. He must pastor his family well.

## 4. A self-controlled man.

The minister of the gospel must control himself in his conduct. He must be above reproach, blameless, not given to anger, and show himself to be gentle, temperate, and mild-mannered. If he cannot do these things and control himself then he is unfit and unqualified for pastoral work.

## 5. A humble man.

The man to preach God's Word must be humble. He shows this by how he exalts Christ in his preaching and how he reverences the Word in his teaching. He submits himself to the Word and applies it to his life first. He doesn't need to be noticed or seen. He serves humbly & joyfully.

## 6. An evangelistic man.

God calls men to preach His Word who have a love for God, a knowledge of the truth, a sight for eternity, and a burden for the lost. If a man is unaffected by lost multitudes plunging into hell he isn't called. God's heart is to gather the lost & the minister's heart must beat after the same goal.

## 7. A fearless man.

With great love for people, the man who preaches must fear God alone and not be swayed by the fear of man. The heart-craving for man's approval & applause has destroyed many ministries.

## 9. A desperate man.

God uses men desperate and unashamedly dependent on Him in ministry. Thus, God's men pray!

## 12. The SERIOUSNESS of preaching.

Nothing could be more frightening for a human being than being a mouthpiece for the living God. Such a calling terrified Isaiah (Isa 6) and caused Moses to tremble (Ex 3-4). A great weight rests upon the man who speaks for God. For God has serious words for false prophets -- that is, those who take God's truth and alter it. Thus, to rightly present God's truth is a serious matter.

### **1. Seriousness in the preacher's HEART.**

A man must be a serious man deep in the invisible roots of his heart. If the roots are dry and unhealthy, a tree will soon wither and die. Similarly, a man must seriously know his God and God's Word and hide it in his heart with utmost seriousness before he can preach it well.

### **2. Seriousness in the preacher's STUDY.**

Being a mouthpiece for God requires a man to do diligence privately in the study to have something to say in the pulpit publicly. The man must sit his rear in the chair and not come out till he has something good to say and till he can confidently declare: "Thus says the LORD!" This requires hard work, many hours, theological study, examining the Word, and fervent prayer.

### **3. Seriousness in the preacher's PRAYING.**

A man is serious when he mortifies all self-confidence and catapults himself fully and entirely upon the grace of God and the power of the Spirit. A man's seriousness about his task is directly related to the amount of time and his desperate pleas in prayer with God. Men who don't take God seriously don't pray frequently. They don't need to. For they think they can handle the Christian ministry their way. On the contrary, the man of God handles the Word of God with sobriety, humility, and with authority. When the Bible speaks, God speaks. A serious man prays!

### **4. Seriousness in the preacher's CONVERSATIONS.**

A man serious about God and thus serious about God's Word will speak seriously in his conversations since out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. Thus, a man will speak much and often about soul-matters, biblical truths, men's eternal destinies, repentance, & Christ. God's man will not content himself in speaking of trite matters; he wants to deal with the soul.

### **5. Seriousness in the preacher's PREACHING.**

The Apostle Paul uttered words of sober truth when he stood before Festus and gave a defense of the faith (Acts 26:25). All of this seriousness in the heart and study and in the prayer and conversations will manifest itself most fully and publicly in the preaching event. The pulpit provides no occasion for stories, anecdotes, and clever entertainments but for letting God speak.

### **6. Seriousness in the preacher's PERSPECTIVE.**

Seriousness comes from a proper perspective of what the preacher is to preach, namely, God's Word and Christ crucified. But seriousness also comes from knowing that eternity is fast-approaching and that all hearers will soon meet God -- to enter heaven or to be cast into hellfire.

## 13. The URGENCY of preaching.

No task performed, no thought pondered, and no conversation had can be of greater urgency and importance than hearing the God of all creation address one's soul specifically, individually and invitingly. Preaching is urgent for it demands a decision. Crying out for God calls for a choice.

### **1. Preaching is urgent because DEATH IS COMING.**

Unless the Lord tarries, every person will die. Death is the inevitable monster that no mere man can overpower. Death is merely an instantaneous transition from physical life here to everlasting eternity in one of two destinies -- heaven or hell. Preachers must be urgent because death is coming. And the uncertainty of *when* that moment is coming makes heralding very urgent.

### **2. Preaching is urgent because HELLFIRE IS REAL.**

Countless multitudes of souls now scream and rage in agony and torment in hell's flames. At this very moment, innumerable churchgoers and religious people occupy the outer darkness, hell's agonies, and the unrelenting fury of God. Hell is real and it is sure to come at the instant a nonbeliever dies. Let every preacher consider and cry out with earnestness because hell is real!

### **3. Preaching is urgent because CHRIST IS INVITING.**

No preacher has ever lived that was more inviting and willing to receive sinners than Christ Himself. The worst of society, the dirty outcasts, and profligate wretches came to Christ and were welcomed to Him for He offered Himself to any and all who would repent and believe.

### **4. Preaching is urgent because PROCRASTINATION IS SIN.**

The Bible most clearly demands that all must repent and believe, otherwise, they will perish (Luke 13:3). Indeed, today is the day of salvation (2 Cor 6:2). Now is the acceptable time (2 Cor 6:2). Today is God's day; tomorrow is the Devil's day. God invites sinners *now*. To reject God and to disbelieve God only compounds one's sin and guilt before God. Preach with urgency!

### **5. Preaching is urgent because WARNING IS LOVING.**

To warn is to love. To remain silent is to hate. Better are the wounds of a friend than the kisses of an enemy. To speak often of hell, to warn of perdition and to awaken men to God's hot wrath that will descend upon him in hell is loving. For, it is only then that the sick patient wants the remedy.

### **6. Preaching is urgent because CHRIST IS RETURNING.**

Promises abound in God's Word of the soon-coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. He shall come as a Lion and a vengeful King. Because He is soon-coming, preachers must urgently address men.

### **7. Preaching is urgent because CHRIST IS GLORIOUS.**

Men of God should preach with triumphant urgency because Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, is worthy to be trusted. Christ deserves to be believed in. Preachers must preach with serious urgency and confident earnestness because Christ Himself deserves to be praised and worshiped by all mankind. The glory of Christ motivates the herald to speak of the gospel with urgency!

# 14. The EVANGELIZING in preaching.

God tells all men who preach the Word to “do the work of an evangelist” (2 Tim 4:5). No man can faithfully discharge his God-given responsibility if he is not seeking souls. Preachers plead for conversions! How does this *gospel-preaching*, evangelizing, show itself in gospel preaching?

## 1. WHY evangelize?

To evangelize simply refers to the declaration of the gospel-message, the good-news, of God’s salvation in Christ for believing sinners. To evangelize is to tell the message of how a sinner can be rescued from God’s righteous wrath and be made righteous before God’s holy judgment throne. This is man’s greatest need. Nothing could be more important than urgent evangelizing.

## 2. The gospel FOR WHOM?

A tragic notion that can sometimes creep into the minds of preachers is that the gospel is a good message for the *lost* and that once someone is saved there are bigger issues to deal with. Absolutely not! The gospel is for everyone! The gospel is most certainly for unbelievers for there is no way to be saved without the knowledge of and belief in Christ alone. And also, the gospel is for believers as this good news comforts the believer, reminds him of grace, and stimulates piety.

## 3. The CHRIST-LESS sermon.

Jesus Christ must be preached if souls are to be saved. No soul can ever be saved if Christ is not the object of a sinner’s faith. A man who preaches a *Christless* sermon should not preach again till he has something worthwhile to say. A sermon without Christ is a body without a heart, a car without an engine, a universe without a sun. Preachers must thunder Christ repeatedly!

## 4. The INDOMITABLE burden.

God gives to his messengers desires to win the lost. Holy men don’t want to go to heaven alone. They have an indomitable burden, an unquenchable passion -- to win souls. Prideful and selfish is the redeemed man who goes to heaven alone. The minister of the gospel heralds because he has a burning zeal deep in his soul for the lost to repent of sin, and turn to Christ in faith alone.

## 5. The TRAINING of the congregation.

Preachers must proclaim the gospel of Christ in every sermon so that the congregation receives training. In other words, the congregation of believers learns to evangelize by observing the minister. As he loves souls and beckons them to embrace Christ and forsake sin and as he relentlessly proclaims Christ from all of Scripture, so believers are trained to do likewise in their lives. To preach the gospel is *the* most powerful way to equip the flock to evangelize regularly.

## 6. The GRIPPING of the hearts.

Whatever text of Scripture a preacher may expound, he can get to Calvary. To present a glorious Christ, a sufficient Christ, a redeeming Christ, and a willing Christ to sinners in every sermon from any portion of Scripture enhances the hearer’s love for Christ and it reminds them of the endless rays of mercy. Hearts are gripped as listeners are ravished by God’s love in the gospel!



# 15. The PASSION in preaching.

Someone once said to the Scottish skeptic of Christianity, David Hume, when he went to listen to George Whitefield preach: "You don't believe a word Whitefield preaches," said the man. "No," Hume answered, "but he does!" *This* is passion. Passion is when a man not only has and holds the Word of God but when the Word of God *has and holds him*. This is essential to preaching.

## 1. Passion evidenced in the **SERIOUSNESS** of the preacher.

This passion will show itself as the minister of the gospel carries himself in his daily life and regular conversations. He will be a serious man for he deals with serious issues and is dealing with a serious Enemy. He preaches with passion for he is serious about his mission and purpose.

## 2. Passion evidenced in the **TONE** of the message.

Preaching with passion does not equal a loud tone in the sermon. But the tone in a message will demonstrate passion. To have passion does not mean a man must be loud or entertaining or boisterous. The tone far transcends the trivial matters of the mundane since eternity is at stake.

## 3. Passion evidenced by the **PATHOS** of the messenger.

The pathos of the messenger can be used to persuade the hearers to listen intently. This is the congregation's perception of the man as he seeks to influence them and convince them of a truth by driving everything toward a response. The herald wants to move and woo the hearer's heart.

## 4. Passion evidenced by the **PERSUASION** toward a decision.

The Apostle Paul endeavored to persuade King Agrippa to believe the gospel (Acts 26:28). He earnestly sought to corner Agrippa with his testimony and the proclamation of Christ Himself as he uttered words of sober truth. Thus, a preacher's passion will show itself by seeking to persuade the audience to make a decision about what is said from the text -- to trust in Christ.

## 5. Passion evidenced by the **PRESENCE** of the Spirit.

Passion by itself without being aided and carried along by the Holy Spirit is worthless and can accomplish nothing. But passion manifests itself as the man of God is immersed in the Word of God and can't shut his mouth to the truth of God so he heralds with the authority of God to all who gather. This kind of faithful mouthpiece for God will be empowered by the Spirit as he preaches Christ and pleads with sinners to know the text, feel the text, and apply the text to their lives. So, faithful preaching includes passion as it is demonstrated by the Spirit's power upon him as a messenger and upon the audience as they hear and obey the declared truth.

## 6. Passion evidenced by **PREOCCUPATION WITH ONE**.

True passion finds its apex when a man of God fills his heart full with God *alone*. Nothing but God. No one in addition to God. With David, the preacher says: "one thing I desire...to behold the beauty of the LORD" (Ps 27:4). This preoccupation with God alone will stir the man's heart so that he will preach with passion, plead with urgency, shepherd with patience, & glorify Christ.

# 16. The ANOINTING in preaching.

Jesus quoted Isaiah 61 in Luke 4:18 when he said that the Spirit of the LORD is upon me because He has *anointed* me to preach the gospel to the poor. Indeed, Peter's preaching to Cornelius and his guests mentioned that Jesus of Nazareth was anointed by God with the Holy Spirit and with power (Acts 10:38). The Apostle Paul mentioned to the Corinthian church that God who establishes us with the believers in Christ and anointed us is God (2 Cor 1:21). So what is this anointing from God that came upon Christ and upon the Apostle Paul as they preached?

## 1. Anointing FROM GOD.

The Bible makes very clear that this anointing comes only from God. There is only One who is the legitimate source of the anointing that comes upon a man who serves God and speaks for God, namely, God. Preachers today must desire this anointing from God as the Apostle Paul made mention of God who both establishes and anoints us to do His work for His glory.

## 2. Anointing to SPEAK FREELY.

Part of the mission of Christ is spelled out in Luke 4 as He spoke in Nazareth regarding the purpose of His coming. He explained that the Spirit of the LORD rested upon Him and that God had anointed Him to preach the gospel to the poor. So there is an inseparable connection between the anointing of God and the proclamation of God. Like twin sisters the anointing of the Spirit and the preaching of the Word go hand in hand. This anointing from God empowers a man to do humanly-impossible tasks, it encourages a man to persevere in the face of sharp-oppositions, it lifts a man far above the earthly world of temporariness, and it drives a man to speak God's Word energized by His Spirit and for His glory. Every preacher of God should ask for God's anointing to speak and preach the Word faithfully, accurately, compellingly, & doxologically.

## 3. Anointing to ACCOMPLISH SPIRITUAL GOOD.

Peter preached before Cornelius and all his households guests and made mention of the fact that Jesus of Nazareth came anointed by God with the Holy Spirit *and with power* (Acts 10:38). Christ's ministry was empowered by God the Spirit. At the baptism of Christ, the Spirit of God came and rested upon Him for the specific work that the Father had given Him to accomplish. If there is to be any spiritual good that comes from the preaching of the living Word, the preacher must rely confidently and completely on the Holy Spirit to give his words wings so that they may fly fast and penetrate deep into the souls of the hearers. To effect any good, the Spirit must help.

## 4. Anointing FOR A SUPERNATURAL MOMENT.

The act of preaching the word of God consists of a supernatural moment. It is supernatural because God Himself addresses the hearers with His Word. Only God can break a sinner's stony heart. Only God can melt the icy-heart. It is the Spirit that establishes believers to do God's work in ministry, united to Christ and for His glory. It is the Spirit who anoints believers to speak His truth with confidence, with gladness, with passion, with urgency, and with unstoppable power. Thus, let every minister of the gospel seek God for this Spirit-anointing to rest upon him.

# 17. The UNCTION in preaching.

When Peter preached on the Day of Pentecost, the Spirit of God tells us that the hearers were 'pierced to the heart' (Acts 2:37). How did this happen? How can one explain the going forth of man's word and penetrating the deepest recesses of a person's soul but by the Spirit's unction.

## 1. DEFINING unction.

To define unction is sort of like defining the Trinity. It really exists yet it's hard to put a human, finite definition upon a supernatural, infinite reality. Unction is a kind of undefinable power that comes solely from God and upon a man who imparts His Word to accomplish the divine ends that God has already foreordained. Unction is supernatural power, a real & necessary power.

## 2. DESIRING unction.

The faithful minister of the gospel who heralds God's Word publicly earnestly desires this unction. The unction can be found when Paul said that the word came with power and with the Holy Spirit (1 Thess 1:5). The faithful ambassador for Christ earnestly desires this unction for he knows that in and of himself his words are to no avail; but with God's help, anything is possible!

## 3. OBTAINING unction.

Men wonder how they may obtain this unction. And there is no formula for obtaining it. There's no magic steps to earn it. Unction comes to a man simply by prayer and it is kept by prayer. A man reaches for God in utter desperation and finds himself empowered with the Spirit to preach. Just as water must travel through a clean vessel so the power of God travels through a clean messenger. An unholy man will never receive divine unction. A prideful, arrogant, unstudied man will not find himself blessed by God in speaking for God. But a pious, prayerful, Spirit-permeated man will be the one who is filled with the Spirit and speaks words like divine arrows.

## 4. SENSING unction.

A man senses this unction as he preaches when there is a power that is with him, the Lord that stands with him, a freeness in his delivery that is made available to him, and a very real awareness that the congregation is gripped by God's truth as God's servant lays the word before them. Unction cannot be measured nor can it be easily defined. But when it is present all know that it exists for no one can overpower the Spirit as He aids the penetrating force of His gospel.

## 5. EVIDENCING unction.

The true power of the Holy Spirit manifests itself when people in the assembly are gripped by the Living Word. When a nonbeliever enters the assembly of the redeemed, he is the one who falls on his face, with his sins being exposed, and cries out: "God is certainly among you!" since the gathering of God's children is so unlike anything he has seen before. Unction gives the preacher authority and quickens his words to be God's words to save souls & sanctify believers.

## 6. SOURCE of unction.

This unction has only one source, namely, the sovereign power and glorious grace of the Spirit.

## 18. The WORK in preaching.

The Apostle Paul speaks of elders who rule well as giving themselves to the hard work of preaching and teaching (1 Tim 5:17). Preaching is work, labor, sweat, toil. But what is this work? The word Paul uses is *kopiaō* [κοπιᾶω] which speaks of labor, growing tired, weariness, hard exertion of energy. It is full-blown, undying, committed sweat and toil to accomplish a task.

### 1. A GOD-GIVEN work.

Preaching is a work that is given by God. The Almighty has prescribed that men of God take the Word of God and labor hard to get His Word in their hearts so as to convey it to the listeners. Labor is not only required in the study but also in the act of preaching. It is a God-given work. God has graced men with the bountiful blessing of laboring for souls & heralding His truth.

### 2. A CHRIST-EXALTING work.

Preaching is a work that exalts Christ. Nothing is more taxing on a man's energies and nothing can be more physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually draining than the laborious study of God's Word. And it's in these moments that Christ is exalted, souls are saved, sheep are fed.

### 3. A SPIRIT-ENERGIZED work.

This work can only happen as the chosen man walks in the Spirit and works in the Spirit. The energy that man can muster up falls short of accomplishing the divine ends. But the Spirit-energized, God-graced, and supernaturally-given diligence is what is needed for the minister.

### 4. A RELENTLESS work.

A preacher relentlessly works hard. He finds himself tirelessly and insatiably committed to the glorious art of studying God and His gospel. He never wishes to stop diving deep into the infinite well of divine beauty & grace. So he swims deep in the Almighty ocean of infinite truth & grace.

### 5. A FOCUSED work.

Like a watchman keeping his eyes peeled on the surrounding hills for invaders so the minister of the gospel is focused on gospel-work, exegetical-work, Christ-exalting work. Like a laser-beam that is aimed at one target, so the preacher focuses his heart and aims his affections on the work of the gospel, the good of souls, the joy of his heart, the magnification & beauty of Christ.

### 6. An ETERNAL work.

Men whom God has chosen to do His work in the gospel-ministry know that these are no ordinary, trite matters up for debate. He deals with eternal souls for he has studied the eternal truth from the eternal God & knows that each preaching event is an eternally significant moment.

### 7. A JOYOUS work.

Nothing so joyfully fills the heart of God's chosen instrument to preach the Word than to hold the Bible in hand and speak saving and penetrating truths to people. It is work -- grueling work, toilsome work, private work. Still, it's this work fills the preacher's heart with indomitable joy!

# 19. The MOODS in preaching.

A mood is a state of mind or a feeling. It refers to the frame of a mind of someone. When the man is preaching, what is to be his mood, or his 'frame of mind'? It also speaks to his demeanor, tenor, spirit, or his disposition. How should a preacher's mood show itself?

## 1. The TEXT drives the mood.

The mood of the preacher should be driven by the mood of the text from which he preaches. He is not to be an entertainer but he is, nevertheless, to speak God's word clearly and in a captivating, clear, and compelling way. So the manner with which the minister heralds should be guided and driven by the text itself. For instance, if he preaches 2 Chronicles 36 on the destruction & burning of the Jerusalem Temple, his manner should reflect this. If, on the other hand, he preaches the glory and supremacy of Christ in heaven, his mood should be exuberant!

## 2. The OCCASION drives the mood.

With all this, the mood of the preacher must always be framed by the magnitude of the occasion. The preaching event is *the* most solemn, serious, sober, and spiritual occasion that could ever occur. It is nothing less than the infinite Sovereign addressing His creatures through His ordained mouthpiece. The occasion of preaching demands seriousness, *gravitas*, importance, a sobriety!

## 3. The AUDIENCE drives the mood.

Another factor that preachers must remember includes the people to whom he preaches. If he preaches to 3<sup>rd</sup> graders in a local school chapel, the tone and mood of the message may be different than if he preaches on a street corner at a bustling marketplace to thousands of passers-by. The mood of a funeral of a nonbeliever will be different than that of a Sunday corporate gathering when God's people come together to worship Christ with joy and unity. The importance of the event, the seriousness doesn't change, but the audience must be borne in mind.

## 4. The PURPOSE of the moods.

The message comes from the Word of God and the message is also conveyed through the medium. The channel through which the Bible is presented is important. Thus, the purpose of the preacher's demeanor is to enhance the sobriety of the occasion, grip the attention of the audience, and add persuasiveness to the message being delivered. The mood brings life to the textual genre.

## 5. The COURAGE in the mood.

When a preacher comes to texts such as Revelation 20 on the Great White Throne judgment or Matthew 25 speaking of eternal hell, it takes courage on the part of the preacher to have a sober, serious mood that doesn't shrink back or shy away from declaring the full truth. When he speaks on leadership, financial giving, sexual purity, marriage matters, he must have courage in spirit.

## 6. The EXAMPLES of different moods.

John the Baptist called approaching Jewish leaders a brood of snakes. Christ preach with fiery urgency and earnest love. Amos preached with zeal. Jeremiah with tears. Indeed, moods matter.

## 20. The APPLICATION in preaching.

Biblical preaching always includes application. Application in preaching is the *so what* of the message. *So what* does the text demand of the listeners? What is it that God wants the congregation to hear, understand, learn, change, do, incorporate, think? It's not only giving a *command to do something* but application should also lead to implementation as to *how to implement* and flesh out the application points. All preaching calls for change!

### 1. REASONS for application in preaching.

Application must be included in faithful, expository preaching because God's Word is meant to change the people of God. Preachers preach for change. Biblical preaching demands a verdict. It drives people to a decision. Thus, application is demanded so that it's not a lecture but a divine encounter where the triune God calls the hearer to hear and heed the things that have been taught.

### 2. FINDING applications in preaching.

The applications come out in the Word itself. The imperative (command) verbs serve as application points. "Be watchful!" "Make the most of your time!" "Love one another!" "Grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ!" Even in narratives and other genres, the preacher can elucidate principles from the text and herald them forth in calling for action!

### 3. CONVEYING applications in preaching.

The herald may convey applications in many ways. He may forcefully exclaim a point near the end of a main heading: "So, beloved, pray fervently and frequently!" He may also convey application by his reading and repeating of the text as the imperatives come from the Scripture. He may provide 4 or 5 helpful ways that flesh out the command, for instance, to pray always.

### 4. FORCEFULNESS in applications in preaching

Applications are to be forceful and clear. They are to be clear and in the 'you' (second person), imperative form. Applications do not negotiate or seek to find a compromise. The preacher is to take God's Word and authoritatively present the truth from God with clarity as God, from his Word, through the messenger, calls the hearers to hear, heed, and act upon the truths declared.

### 5. ILLUSTRATIONS of application in preaching

Jesus constantly preached with application as He called the hearers to "repent and believe the gospel." He would say: "let him who has an ear, hear!" John the Baptist cried: "Flee from the wrath to come!" Isaiah heralded: "let the wicked man forsake his way!" Steven applied the text by saying: "How long will you resist the Spirit!" Peter said: "Be saved from this crooked and perverse generation!" Yes, the biblical preachers applied the truths forcefully and powerfully.

### 6. DEPENDENCE on application in preaching

In providing application throughout the message, the preacher of the gospel depends entirely on the sovereign work of the Spirit to give grace to the words and grace to the hearer to bring about change. The minister depends on God to take the Scripture and drive it home into a man's soul!

## **21. The PERSUASION in preaching.**

Preachers persuade. Preaching informs the mind and it seeks to woo the heart. It also endeavors, however, to affect the will. Preaching presents truth and gives instruction. But biblical preaching goes beyond the mere presenting of facts to the compelling of the hearer to take action in light of what has been shared. Thus, biblical preaching always seeks to persuade to a decision to action.

### **1. WHY to persuade**

Biblical preaching always has a goal to persuade because a herald, by definition, is one who conveys the king's message and calls the audience to action! Thus, no preacher who rightly understands his calling wants to stand and merely convey head-knowledge without calling every hearer for a decision and change of action. Persuasion must occur because men preaching calls for change. Faithful heralding of God's truth always seeks to accelerate the Christian's sanctification and it endeavors to glorify God by bringing the lost to repentance and faith.

### **2. HOW to persuade**

Faithful preaching persuades by reaching the heart. Preaching is not merely affecting the intellect. It seeks to woo the heart and captivate the will to the Word of God so as to compel change. Thus, as ministers of the gospel apply the Word and show how God's truth, in God's Word, must be believed and obeyed, the Spirit of God uses it deep in the listener's heart. Application and implementation are helpful ways to persuade. Each of the senses can also be utilized in persuasion. The preacher wants the hearers to see in their minds the truths that are conveyed. Painting vivid pictures with clear word pictures, simple biographical illustrations, cross references, and warning hearers of delaying obedience can also be utilized in persuading the audience. The preacher depends on the Spirit's effectual work in using His Word to change.

### **3. EXAMPLES of persuasion**

No greater example exists of a preacher who has mastered the art of persuasion than the Lord Jesus Christ. He warned of hellfire. He preached against procrastination. He extolled the supremacy of God and the sufficiency of the gospel. He rebuked the legalists and self-righteous. He forced people to make decisions so as to not ride the fence. Isaiah was also a mouthpiece for the Lord who utilized graphic language, word pictures, warnings, and encouragements to draw a wayward people back to the Lord. Faithful preachers will learn from these examples and do likewise.

### **4. DEPENDENCE in persuasion**

No mere man can effect any faithful and long-term change in the congregation without the sovereign Spirit's divine power. Every minister of the gospel depends wholly upon the Spirit of God to use His appointed means — the preaching of the Word — to change a sinner's heart.

### **5. GOALS of persuasion**

The goal of persuasion is to produce Christlikeness in the people of God. The herald wants to draw the people of God to the Word to obey it earnestly. And, he endeavors to convert the lost.



## 22. The TRANSCENDENCE of preaching.

Preaching is transcendent because it far surpasses the normal or physical level of dialoguing. Preaching, rightly defined, is the man of God who speaks the message sourced in the living God who has conveyed it through the written Word of God and thus it always is a transcendent event.

### 1. Transcendent MOMENT

Preaching is transcendent specifically in the moment of the heralding act. The moment rises to enormous significance because it is at that time that God Himself, with His sovereign voice, speaks through His Word as it is read and through His mouthpiece as he faithfully conveys the meaning of the text. No man could ever experience a greater & more weighty moment than this.

### 2. Transcendent GOD

The preaching of the Word of God towers high above all other occasions and events simply because it is God who addresses the audience through the herald. And God *must* be listened to. God is the transcendent God. There is none that can compare with Him. He alone is God and He shares His glory with no one. Thus, ministers preach a transcendent, triune & sovereign God!

### 3. Transcendent GOSPEL

To preach the Word of God faithfully means that a man will always preach the gospel -- Jesus Christ and Him crucified. Every text of Scripture will always lead to Calvary. This gospel of salvation from divine wrath is the transcendent message that *must* be heard by the audience.

### 4. Transcendent ACCOUNTABILITY

All who hear the Word of God preached will give an account to what they heard and how they acted in light of what they heard. This accountability proves to be a transcendent reality because it far surpasses anything of this life since everyone will personally and assuredly stand before God and find himself accountable to *all* that he has heard preached in the Word of God.

### 5. Transcendent LIFE

The life of the Christian is transcendent because the man of God lives far beyond this realm. He knows his citizenship is in heaven and he sets his eyes on things above and follows Him alone.

### 6. Transcendent POWER

The power in preaching never comes from a man's charisma or winsomeness or entertaining abilities. Rather, the power in preaching comes from the Spirit alone as He anoints the man. A herald of the gospel knows this, begs God for His power, and desperately pleads for this unction.

### 7. Transcendent SUFFICIENCY

There is in the act of preaching a great sufficiency in that the preaching of the Word of God is sufficient to save and to sanctify. It is a glorious means of grace that God has given to His people for growth in godliness. The preaching comes from the sufficient foundation of the Word of God and it remains the primary means that God has given for conversion and for Godly change.

## 23. The RELEVANCE of preaching.

Preaching always is important to the matter at hand -- any matter at hand. That means that a man who has God's Word and faithfully gives its meaning and a proper application is conveying pertinent and apropos material. Preaching is never *irrelevant*. It's never *out of date*. It's never *outdated* or *passe*. The man who sees preaching as irrelevant does not know God or His Word.

### 1. The relevant WORD.

Preaching is relevant because the Bible itself, the source of preaching, is relevant. The Word of the living God in the 66 books of Scripture always is pertinent to any and every situation. So as long as the Word is the source and guide of the message, preaching always is relevant.

### 2. The relevant METHOD.

The method of preaching is the God-ordained means to impart His message to His people. God never said in the Bible that preaching would come to an end. He did, however, warn that many people would turn away from the faithful preaching to what their itching ears long to hear. Regardless of the audience, or the reception of the message, or the longing for or detestation of preaching, it still is relevant because *God Himself* declares it so to be.

### 3. The relevant MEANS.

How will men and women hear the gospel without a preacher? Preaching the Word of God is God's most common means of converting the lost. Personal evangelism, tracts, TV programs, movies, books all are used by God to accomplish great and glorious purposes but God has designed the preaching of His Word to be the primary means of converting the lost. This, never changes, since the gospel never changes.

### 4. The relevant GOD.

God never changes. He promises this all through the Bible. He always is pertinent and germane to any and every situation in life. He never is irrelevant. Whether someone is struggling in marriage or rejoicing in the happy blessings of God, He still remains the same and is pertinent to any and every situation. Everything is decreed by Him and thus He is involved in everything.

### 5. The relevant GOSPEL.

Because God is relevant, the gospel is by necessity relevant also. Man's nature shall never change because all men everywhere are born with Adam's sinful nature and are lost in sin and helplessly and hopelessly lost in himself. Thus, the gospel of God's grace in providing Christ as the only sufficient substitute is relevant at all times, in all cultures, for all people, for all ages.

### 6. The relevant NEED.

Situations change and specifics may change but the human heart is the same in every person. All are lost. None are good. All stand condemned together under the unswerving righteousness of God. Thus, the gospel is always relevant to provide the only hope for the human, lost condition. So, biblical preaching presents the need for Christ and then offers the balm of His righteousness.

## 24. The OPPOSITION to preaching.

Merely surveying the history of preaching will reveal one constant theme: sinful men living in opposition to God hate the proclamation of gospel-truth. It's not as though rebels remain apathetic to God's words. They hate them and cannot (& in some cases, *will not*) tolerate the heralding of divine truth. From Noah, to Jeremiah, to Jesus, to men today, opposition abounds.

### 1. Opposition from OUTSIDE the church.

Sinners love their sin. And when God breaks in and exposes it for what it really is and warns of the sure penalty that will come upon the unrepentant, the unsaved hate the Light for they love the darkness. Jesus exposes sin. The Word exposes hearts. The preachers who faithfully preach the written Word and the Living Word will expose sin and compel sinners to forsake sin, die to self, and come by faith alone to Christ alone for deliverance from hell. Opposition will most surely come. It came to Christ! It came to the Apostles. It came to the early centuries of Christianity as the Emperors resisted the exclusivity of biblical Christianity. Mark it: opposition from outsiders, nonbelievers, governmental officials, and media *will* inevitably occur.

### 2. Opposition from INSIDE the church.

Opposition comes not only from the outright rebels but it also comes from *within* the professing Christian circles. Paul told the Ephesian elders that from *within their own midst* evil men would arise. God's preachers know and suffer the pain of such opponents (false teachers in Corinth, Diotrophes). Indeed, Christ Himself was rejected and hotly pursued by professing believers in God (i.e., the Pharisees) who chanted unashamedly to crucify the Son of God, their Messiah, because they understood His claims and they gloried in their self-righteousness and hated the grace of God. Whether it's a churchmember who rises up and spreads division, or a fellow elder who stabs the pastor in the back, or false teachers that arise in the church, opposition *will* come.

### 3. Opposition from THE MINISTER HIMSELF.

Another form of opposition comes from the minister's own sinful heart. Sometimes it is overlooked that opposition from the evil one doesn't need to come from outside the walls of the church but opposition can often come from the man himself as he might find himself conflicted over a decision, tempted to fear man, swayed by influential churchmembers, struggling with a lifeless and cold heart toward Christ, lukewarm in his love and zeal for the flock of God. Opposition to the faithful heralding of the Word can even come from the *pastor* & his own heart.

### 4. Opposition from GOVERNING AUTHORITIES.

Christians must obey, submit to, and pray for the governing authorities. But there are many times when hostile governments oppose the preaching of the Word and they may try to snuff it out and prevent the Word from going forth. Imprisonment, laws, fines, death sentences, threats may arise.

### 5. Opposition from SATAN HIMSELF.

Satan, the arch-enemy of God and hater of all that exalts Christ, opposes ferociously and tenaciously the preaching of truth. He'll distract, deter, discourage. Even still, preach the Word!

## **25. The REWARDS of preaching.**

Believers are to serve the Lord with all their heart knowing that from the Lord each child of God will receive the reward of the inheritance (Col 3:23-24). Ministers of the gospel preach out of love for God, passion for the lost, hunger to grow, and the passion to be faithful. And for all faithful servants of the Lord, God promises to give heavenly rewards. Indeed, each man will receive his own reward according to his own labor (1 Cor 3:8). Godly pastors will be rewarded.

### **1. The rewards NOW FOR THE PREACHER**

Some of the rewards that God may grant to the faithful preacher of the gospel will include a deep joy for the things of God and a growing pursuit of God Himself. The more a preacher learns as he studies the Word, communes with God, repents of his sin, and shepherds his flock, the more he will find himself caught up with awestruck wonder at the kindness of God in lavishing saving grace upon him in salvation and entrusting to him the responsibility of caring for a local church. Furthermore, faithful preachers may rejoice with God as sinners are brought to repentance and faith through the biblical heralding of the gospel. This will greatly bless the preacher's heart!

### **2. The rewards IN THE SOUL OF THE MINISTER**

Faithful ministers who preach God's Word will find their souls unstoppably growing in Christlikeness. It's like the Apostle Paul who affirmed: "I want to know Christ and the power of His resurrection" (Phil 3:9). The man of God who faithfully pours deep into and pours himself out over the written Word so as to know it, obey it, and teach it will be the man who finds his soul overflowing with satisfying rivers of living water. Christ is the true Bread. And the herald to feasts on this Bread of Life will find himself wanting more and ever so satisfied in his Christ!

### **3. The rewards IN ETERNITY FROM THE LORD**

Jesus spoke and said that there is a reward in heaven that is great for those who live for Him and receive mockings and ridicules (Matt 5.12). Life in heaven will be a time when God dispenses generous rewards to His people who have faithfully served Him and preached the Word with power. Perhaps the rewards are related to privileges of service and responsibilities that God will grant to His people in heaven, but whatever the rewards may specifically be, they will be lavish, perfect, joyous, and they will serve to magnify Christ and His supreme work in saving His people and sanctifying their souls. Let men of God who herald remember to preach for eternity.

### **4. The rewards AS A PROFITABLE MOTIVATION FOR FAITHFUL GOSPEL PROCLAMATION.**

The future rewards that shall come should serve to motivate men of God to preach the Word now with fidelity, power, and passion. Servants of the gospel will look to Christ, long for heaven, and anticipate heavenly rewards as a legitimate motivation for studying and preaching the Word!

### **5. The rewards FOR THE GREATER MAGNIFICATION OF JESUS CHRIST.**

The true passion for receiving rewards does not rest in the exaltation of the preacher but rather it entails the indomitable passion for Christ to be magnified to the fullest, in glory, for endless ages.

