

Crucial Reminders Regarding Biblical Preaching in An Era That Mocks It.

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I'm a preacher and I love to preach. I love and breathe preaching. God has called me to preach and I praise Him for the inestimable privilege more royal than ruling as a king over an empire. I am acutely aware, however, that biblical preaching has fallen on hard times in our day. In fact, not only is expository preaching rejected by so many but even religious leaders and ministers *mock* faithful, authoritative, expository, biblically-saturated preaching. Some may say it's antiquated or for those in bygone eras. It was how people learned *long ago* but nowadays people are different. Others may quip that people won't come to church if they're not entertained with a pithy and relevant message about God that is a little 'dose of God' to get you through the upcoming week. Further, some may have the audacity to say that this kind of preaching is boring and people *can't* sit for an hour-long exposition anymore. I don't buy any of those arguments as they're just excuses that men make so that they aren't confronted with the power of God's Word, the sinfulness of their own hearts, their condemnation before a holy God, and the absolute necessity that God demands upon them to repent of their sin entirely, trust in Christ completely, and walk in holiness of life fervently. So with all that said, faithful, expository preaching is mocked in our era. So this essay seeks to provide some crucial reminders for us preachers.

1. The **PRIMACY** of preaching

The greatest mandate given to ministers of the gospel comes in 2 Timothy 4:2 to "preach the Word (which is after a verse [v.1] full of solemn declarations and authoritative reasons which underscore the importance of the imperative command in verse 2). Every faithful local church must place the central emphasis of the ministry on the proclamation of divine truth from the Bible. Everything else supports and undergirds and fleshes out this key ministry. Whatever a church may have, if it does not have preaching, it is an impotent and faithless gathering of professing religious people. Preaching must have primacy in the church because this is how believers are established in the gospel (Rom 16.25). This is why ministers must prioritize prayer, study of the Word, and preparation for the heralding of *God's message*.

2. The **POWER** of preaching

I believe that nothing is more powerful in all the universe in our age than the biblical preaching of Truth. Why is it powerful? Not because of the messenger's charisma, personality or rhetorical skills, but because of the Truth of the message that is preached. When faithful preaching happens, *God's power* is unleashed. God's power is mighty, majestic, authoritative, unstoppable, and effectual. Biblical preaching is *the* primary means through which Christ speaks to His people as they gather to hear from Him as His Word is accurately preached. After all, it is the preaching of *God's Word*. And the Word is living and active, sharp, and powerful, and effectual. Always remember that even when you can't see power at work visually, it is *still* at work invisibly, supernaturally, internally, and providentially.

3. The **SERIOUSNESS** of preaching

One of the greatest burdens on my heart at the present resides in the lack of sobriety in pulpits all across our land. So-called "pastors" are more described as entertainers than expositors. They better fit the job description of a CEO of a corporation than an undershepherd of Christ's institution (the Church). They live as man-pleasers rather than God-fearers. They spend more time endeavoring to be culturally relevant than biblically faithful. So when men stand up before the hearers, they speak as if they're at a circus to get laughs, to win the emotions, and prompt many goats to *feel* themselves to be sheep because of an experience, a decision, or a prayer that they've prayed. What we so

desperately need now are men of God who fear nothing but God and these men will change the world for Christ. We need men who pray on their knees, who intercede for their congregations by name, who evangelize courageously and who suffer joyfully, who preach as if standing before an audience of One preaching God's message, fully, faithfully, fervently, and fearfully. O let God's men regain a sobriety in the pulpit as they open their Bible and speak *for God* to men and declare *God's message* to all who have gathered as if souls depend on it -- because they do.

4. The **NECESSITY** of preaching

God told Ezekiel "you shall speak my words to them" (Ezek 2.7). Paul told Timothy to "give attention to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation and teaching" (1 Tim 4.13). The Apostle himself affirmed the necessity: "I am under compulsion -- for woe is me if I do not preach the gospel" (1 Cor 9.16). These Scriptures prove the absolute necessity of preaching. This means that every faithful minister of the gospel -- every biblical shepherd who serves Christ and His blood-bought sheep -- *must* primarily and necessarily be a preacher of the Bible. He may be a leader, a guy with lots of visionary ideas, a man who delegates well, a persuasive communicator, and a winsome person but if he is *not primarily a preacher* then he is not fulfilling his God-given role. Every elder must be able to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict (Titus 1.9). Far better would church services be to shorten the music time, fire the drama team, and eliminate the media clips and put the absolute necessity of the preaching of the Word of God in the center of the worship gatherings. I am under compulsion, I can and I *must* preach. Is that your passion?

5. The **CONVICTION** of preaching

Faithful ministers of the gospel don't preach because it is *an* option or just *another* vocation for their lives. No! Men of God preach because they stand toweringly convinced that God has called them to *this* life of service for His ultimate glory. Thus, no clever argument, no persuasive theory, no cunning allurements could draw them away from the highest privilege God could bestow upon a mortal: to be a spokesman for God's glorious gospel. Lots of people have opinions about life and hobbies and preferences and circumstances, but the man who rests unswervingly in the conviction that God has ordained preaching as the primary means both for the converting of the lost and for the sanctifying of the saved is the man who lives with indomitable joy. So we preach as servants of the King who are absolutely convinced that God will receive glory as His Word goes forth. He will use His Word through His people.

6. The **REWARD** of preaching

All true believers who endure will receive the crown of righteousness on that final day! Men of God who speak for God by heralding His Word must frequently remember that when the Chief Shepherd appears, He will bestow the unfading crown of glory upon His own. In fact, faithful pastors who shepherd the flock of God among them who have exercised oversight voluntarily, who have served with eagerness, not for sordid gain, and who have provided to be examples to the flock and not lorded it over those allotted to their charge will receive heavenly rewards. We serve and preach, we labor and strive, we run and agonize to receive the imperishable wreath. Yes, God is a rewarder of those who seek Him and those who served Him by faith and labored with integrity are men of whom the world is not worthy and they'll stand on that final day and hear: "well done, good and faithful servant; enter into the joy of your Master" (Matt 25.21). So brother-pastors, labor on and labor hard. Christ's full reward is sure to come!