

Non-Negotiable Features of Faithful Preaching.

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1. Faithful

Faithful preaching must be faithful. By this, I simply mean that true preaching must derive from the text of Scripture. The man of God must rightly divide the Word through proper hermeneutics so that the message he speaks is the message out of the text. When this happens, the man of God preaching then Word can say: “Thus says the Lord!” The barometer for all true preaching must be how faithful it is to the text of Scripture that He expounds. True preaching is faithful preaching to God’s Word.

2. Theological

When faithful preaching occurs. And when biblical preaching goes forth, it will necessarily be theological preaching. It will touch upon and expound theology as it arises in the Word of God. Every text will teach something about God (theology proper) or man (anthropology) or sin (hamartiology) or salvation (soteriology) or Christ (Christology) or future things (eschatology). Of course, there are other categories and many sub-categories of theology that Scripture teaches. But all true preaching must present clear, crisp, and cohesive doctrine. That’s why Paul exhorts Pastor Timothy to give himself to the reading of Scripture, to exhortation and to doctrine.

3. Central

Biblical preaching of the Word of God must take central place in the life of the local church. Every local church can have many ministries and areas of service and parts of the corporate worship service, but the central, non-negotiable, preeminent distinctive of every faithful church is the preaching of the Word of God. It should, thus, take up the majority of the time when the church is gathered to worship God. The preaching of the Word is the occasion when God speaks to His people. Thus, it should take up a majority of the time when the church assembles. It should be a momentous event, a lofty and majestic event when there is utmost reverence for God and for His revealed Word. Thus, faithful preaching must be central in the biblical church.

4. Joyful

Biblical preaching must flow out of a heart that bubbles forth with true, Spirit-given joy as the minister opens His mouth to speak God’s Word to the people. This is far from a show, it is a man on fire with affectionate love for Christ who joyfully preaches God’s Word. This is the heart of a man who does not need to be forced into a pulpit. He does not need to be pressed and obliged and remunerated in order to preach. Rather, his heart is so full of God, so full of Truth, so full of Christ, and so hungry to pour this out to serve God and His blood-bought people, that He preaches with a steadfast confidence in God and in His Word. This kind of preaching becomes obvious to the hearers that the man preaches out of *love for God and His people* rather than out of obligation of simply fulfilling of “job”. Biblical preaching oozes out of a joy-filled heart!

5. Emotional

Biblical preaching must be emotional. By this, I do not refer to a man who seeks to manipulate people by tugging at their emotions only. No! Rather, this kind of biblical preaching must come forth from the man's *inner being*. That is to say, true preaching comes *from the heart of the man* rather than just out of the *mind of a lecturer*. Anyone can stand and speak behind a lectern. A preacher of the gospel preaches with his whole heart, from his whole being, with all his emotions because he has been overwhelmed at the glory of God, the grace of the gospel, and the goodness of Christ. He has compassion for lost sinners, just like Christ does. He invites lost sinners, unconverted children, wayward church members, and unknown visitors to come and behold Christ. He trembles and shudders when he preaches on the realities of everlasting punishment that will come upon all rebels. He preaches to woo, to win, to persuade, to invite, to summon people to behold Christ, bow the knee to Christ, and bless Him for all His many benefits. True preaching involves the whole man pouring himself out as he heralds forth God's Word.

6. Purposeful

Biblical preaching always aims at a goal. It has an intention. Biblical preaching has a singular purpose: the ultimate glory of God. And faithful ministers long for the Word to comfort and edify the saved, convert and warn the lost, strengthen and fortify the weak, build and mature the church, and magnify and extol Jesus Christ. Every faithful preacher knows that he preaches *with an end goal*, and this purpose is to faithfully expound the Word so that the church is built up in Christlikeness by the Spirit sovereign enablement. The man preaches to save. He preaches to mature. He preaches to help. He preaches to counsel. He preaches to warn. He preaches so that God may be glorified through the primary means that He has appointed to save and sanctify men and women — the heralding of the gospel of Jesus Christ.