

Reference: VARIOUS

Church: GRACE

Date: WEEK 7

## Public Worship - Preaching

Purpose: To define preaching and show its place in public worship

### 1. Introduction

Continuing “Biblical Thinking” series on worship

How are the commandments relevant here?

What important principles did we see last time?

Now moving on to specific elements of public worship

Begin with the jewel in the crown - preaching

### 2. True preaching – what is it?

#### 2.1. *The nature of true preaching*

Main words in NT convey the following:

To be a herald, to proclaim as such, always with the suggestion of formality, gravity and an authority which must be listened to and obeyed

To bring or announce good tidings

True preaching is to herald, or proclaim, the Word of God.

It is authoritative in tone

It is to announce the glad tidings of the Gospel

#### 2.2. *The instrument of true preaching*

Who may preach?

Men appointed and equipped by God to do so:

- The elders of the church
  - 1 **Thessalonians 5:12** But we request of you, brethren, that you appreciate those who diligently labor among you, and have charge over you in the Lord and give you instruction,
  - 1 **Timothy 5:17** The elders who rule well are to be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching.
  - 2 **Timothy 4:2** preach the word; be ready in season *and out of season*; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction.
- Those anointed by the Spirit (not a separate category of individuals)

**Luke 4:18** “THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME, BECAUSE HE ANOINTED ME TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO THE POOR. HE HAS SENT ME TO PROCLAIM RELEASE TO THE CAPTIVES, AND RECOVERY OF SIGHT TO THE BLIND, TO SET FREE THOSE WHO ARE OPPRESSED,

1 **Corinthians 2:4** and my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power,

1 **Peter 1:12** It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things into which angels long to look.

### 2.3. *Who is heard in true preaching?*

**Luke 10:1** Now after this the Lord appointed seventy others, and sent them in pairs ahead of Him to every city and place where He Himself was going to come. .... **Luke 10:8** “Whatever city you enter and they receive you, eat what is set before you; **9** and heal those in it who are sick, and say to them, ‘The kingdom of God has come near to you.’ .....**Luke 10:16** “The one who listens to you listens to Me, and the one who rejects you rejects Me; and he who rejects Me rejects the One who sent Me.”

**Ephesians 4:20-21** But you did not learn Christ in this way, **21 if indeed you have heard Him** and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus,

**Romans 10:12-15** For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call on Him; **13** for “Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved.” **14** **How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher?** **15** How will they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news of good things!”

It is the Lord’s Word and it is He who speaks in true preaching

The true preacher is anointed by His Spirit

True preaching is very much a spiritual activity

And should have spiritual power

1 **Corinthians 2:1** And when I came to you, brethren, I did not come with superiority of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of God. **2** For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. **3** I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling, **4** and my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, **5** so that your faith would not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God.

**Hebrews 4:12** For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

Many would say that it therefore has a prophetic element – not new revelation but God speaking through His servant to His people.

## 2.4. The purposes of true preaching

- To declare the whole counsel of God  
**Acts 20:26** "Therefore, I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all men. **27** "For I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole purpose of God.
- To engender saving faith in the hearers – preaching is the primary means used in salvation  
**Romans 10:12-15** For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call on Him; 13 for "Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved." **14** How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher? 15 How will they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news of good things!"  
**1 Corinthians 1:21** For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not come to know God, God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.
- To build up the church – knowledge and holiness -  
"Sanctify them through the Truth – Your word is truth"  
**Romans 16:25** Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past,
- To add to condemnation of those who are lost  
**John 15:22** "If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin. **23** "He who hates Me hates My Father also. **24** "If I had not done among them the works which no one else did, they would not have sin; but now they have both seen and hated Me and My Father as well.
- To accomplish the will of God  
**Isaiah 55:11** So will My word be which goes forth from My mouth; It will not return to Me empty, Without accomplishing what I desire, And without succeeding *in the matter* for which I sent it.

## 2.5. The priority of true preaching

**Acts 6:2** So the twelve summoned the congregation of the disciples and said, "It is not desirable for us to neglect the word of God in order to serve tables.

Given a place of great importance in the church

## 3. Preaching – what isn't it?

True preaching never apologizes for the message

It is not lecturing. Why is this?

It is not simply recounting historical facts

Not simply teaching – although this is involved in preaching

Why not? – No imperative – no heralding

It is not simply explaining what scripture says

Why not? – no application

New Testament preaching was very applied

**Acts 13:38** "Therefore let it be known to you, brethren, that through Him forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you, **39** and through Him everyone who believes is freed from all things, from which you could not be freed through the Law of Moses. **40** "Therefore take heed, so that the thing spoken of in the Prophets may not come upon you: **41** 'BEHOLD, YOU SCOFFERS, AND MARVEL, AND PERISH; FOR I AM ACCOMPLISHING A WORK IN YOUR DAYS, A WORK WHICH YOU WILL NEVER BELIEVE, THOUGH SOMEONE SHOULD DESCRIBE IT TO YOU.'

It is not submitting ideas to the judgment of the congregation

Like proceedings in court of law where arguments are submitted to the jury for judgment

These may all be undertaken without the Holy Spirit

Preaching is authoritative, proclamatory, spiritual

## 4. What is Biblical evidence for its place in public worship?

It was clearly ancient practice among the Jews

**Acts 15:21** For Moses from ancient generations has in every city those who preach him, since he is read in the synagogues every Sabbath."

**Nehemiah 8:4** Ezra the scribe stood at a wooden podium which they had made for the purpose. And beside him stood Mattithiah, Shema, Anaiah, Uriah, Hilkiah, and Maaseiah on his right hand; and Pedaiah, Mishael, Malchijah, Hashum, Hashbaddanah, Zechariah *and* Meshullam on his left hand. **5** Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people for he was standing above all the people; and when he opened it, all the people stood up. **6** Then Ezra blessed the LORD the great God. And all the people answered. "Amen. Amen!" while lifting up their hands; then they bowed low and worshiped the LORD with their faces to the ground. **7** Also Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, the Levites, explained the law to the people while the people *remained* in their place. **8** They read from the book, from the law of God, translating to give the sense so that they understood the reading.

In many accounts, Christ & Paul enter synagogues to preach:

**Mark 1:39** And He went into their synagogues throughout all Galilee, preaching and casting out the demons.

**Luke 4:44** So He kept on preaching in the synagogues of Judea.

**Acts 14:1** In Iconium they entered the synagogue of the Jews together, and spoke in such a manner that a large number of people believed, both of Jews and of Greeks.

**Acts 18:19** They came to Ephesus, and he left them there. Now he himself entered the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews.

**Acts 19:8** And he entered the synagogue and continued speaking out boldly for three months, reasoning and persuading *them* about the kingdom of God.

It was an important part of the life of the early church

**Acts 2:42-46** And they continued stedfastly in the **apostles' doctrine** and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. 43 And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. 44 And all that believed were together, and had all things common; 45 And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. 46 **And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple**, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,

It was part of Lord's Day worship too

**Acts 20:7** On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul began talking to them, intending to leave the next day, and he prolonged his message until midnight.

## 5. How is preaching worship?

The Lord speaks to His people through His word

Can they listen in an attitude of worship? How?

Remember principles from last week...

With reverence and awe – He is a consuming fire!

With eagerness – hungering and thirsting

With humble submission and obedient hearts

With their whole being – mind, heart, body

This is the Word of the Living God!

## 6. Conclusions

We need to take these things to heart especially today

When preaching is being undermined

Charismatics receive their communications direct

Many seek their comfort in Christian Counselling

Many believe preaching can be done through music and drama

Many no longer recognize true preaching

Many schools no longer train people to be true preachers

We have a predominance of lecturers in our pulpits

This is a major reason for the weakness of the church today

We must maintain the primacy of preaching!

This has always been the means of God to the saving of His people

His means to the edifying of the church

We need to pray for our pastor and all who occupy our pulpit

This is a huge responsibility!

We should pray for the outpouring of the Spirit upon them

And upon us as we listen

And that we may see “signs following” – sinners saved and saints sanctified