

# CHRISTIAN WORKER

“We are workers together with Him...” (2 Corinthians 6:1)

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## THE PRIVILEGE OF PREACHING

Allen Webster

The most important event that takes place in any city on any day this week is the work the Gospel preacher does. And this includes New York, Hollywood, and Washington. Work done in New York may affect world finances or fashion; workers in Hollywood may produce new entertainment which will be enjoyed by millions; and decisions made in Washington may change the world for better or worse, but what the Gospel preacher does will matter when the world is on fire and the NYSE and Rodeo Drive and Pennsylvania Avenue are no more.

The world does not see it this way, of course. They hardly notice what we do, and, if they do, they ridicule. This should not surprise anyone, for this has been the case since the church was new. Paul wrote, “For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God . . . For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe” (1 Cor. 1:18, 21). “Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God” (Luke 9:60). “But hath in due times manifested his word through preaching, which is committed unto me according to the commandment of God our Savior” (Tit. 1:3).

**It is a privilege because preaching is indispensable to Christianity.** Without the preaching of the Word of God, one cannot be a Christian. Paul said,

For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! But they have not all obeyed the

gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God (Rom. 10:13-17).

In this passage Paul uses what is called a regressive argument. That is, he argues from a conclusion to a cause. He says that everyone who calls upon the Lord in faith will be saved. But to call upon him, one must first hear about him. And to hear about him, one must first have someone tell him about the Lord. And that someone is a preacher. “How can you believe in one that you have not first heard about?” Paul asks. “And how can you hear about God unless first a preacher tells you about Him?” Preaching is indispensable to believing. And believing is a prerequisite to salvation. Preaching is the sine qua non—the “without which nothing”—of faith and everlasting life.

**It is a privilege to preach because preaching saves souls.** The church in the world is a lot like the story that E. Stanley Jones tells of the missionary in the jungle. He got lost with nothing around him but bush and a few cleared places. He finally found a small village and asked one of the natives if he could lead him out of the jungle. The native said he could. “All right,” the missionary said,

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# ON YEARBOOKS AND MODESTY

Cody Westbrook

Recently a Florida high school caused quite a stir when the yearbook coordinator digitally edited 80 yearbook photos. The edited photos were only of females and were altered to add more clothing to chests and shoulders. The School District's chief of Community Relations reported "The yearbook coordinator made the decision to edit the photos based on her assessment that the females were not in dress code."<sup>1</sup>

Many students and parents were appalled that the changes were made without their knowledge or consent. Some described the dress code as antiquated and discriminatory. Some even suggested that the act of editing the yearbook photos and the underlying dress code promoted shame and emotional problems for the young ladies whose images were digitally altered. One parent said,

You're telling my daughter that she should be ashamed of that part of her body, that she should be covering it up. I think that's the completely wrong message to give to young teenage girls who are already going through the body shaming era and trying to understand themselves and then be comfortable with themselves. She continued, I do worry about some of these other kids who might not be handling it as well... and how this could be really damaging for their mental health long term.<sup>2</sup>

Another parent argued that the yearbook fiasco is part of a larger problem. In the parent's mind there is an unfair and unequal standard for males and females regarding dress. She remarked, "It comes on the heels of a much bigger issue of gender discrimination and these girls being targeted and sexualized for being told that their clothes are wrong. There's inequality within their dress code."<sup>3</sup>

The parent is correct that the situation is part of a larger problem, but she is mistaken as to the nature of the problem. The real issue here is the societal rejection of God's standard for modesty and human sexuality. Our culture has promoted

<sup>1</sup> Zdanowicz, Christina. "Parents, Students Angered after 80 Yearbook Photos of Female Students Are Altered to Mask Cleavage." CNN. Cable News Network, May 26, 2021. <https://www.cnn.com/2021/05/25/us/florida-yearbook-photos-altered-trnd/index.html>.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid

<sup>3</sup> Ibid

self-actualization for so long that for many people, the only real standard of appropriate dress and behavior is their own feeling and personal preference. Ours is a world of sensuality and gratification and anathema to anyone who would discourage such thinking. Individuals regularly display themselves inappropriately in the name of freedom and fulfillment. In this culture of individualism and the tireless chase to be unhinged and free to say or do whatever one desires, without consequence, in the name of choice, freedom, or identity; there is a desperate need to point people back to God and His will for how we view and clothe our bodies.

Modesty is first a mindset. Paul defined modesty as "that which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works" (1 Tim. 2:10). Peter said, "Do not let your adornment be merely outward—arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel—rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God" (1 Pet. 3:3-4). Both passages indicate that modesty is foremost a condition of the heart. The state of our heart determines the modesty of our actions. "As in water face reflects face, so a man's heart reveals the man" (Pro. 27:19). One whose heart is determined to glorify God and conform to His will has no trouble submitting to dress and behavior which God deems appropriate (cf. Rom. 8:5; 29; 12:1-2). We tend to think that modesty is an issue of hemlines and tight pants, but it is much more than that. What we wear reflects who we are. Hemlines and tight pants are a symptom, not the problem.

Modesty also has to do with humility and restraint. Rich women in the ancient world dressed immodestly to declare their high status (cf. 1 Tim. 2:9-10). In contrast, modesty does not boast in or promote self (Rom. 12:3; Phil. 2:3-4). We live in an identity addicted and identity driven time. Everyone wants you to know about them—their accomplishments, ideas, opinions, etc. The immodest world says, "look at me!" but the modest Christian says, "Look at Christ!" Similarly, the world is overwhelmed with excess and the inability to control urges and ideas. Modesty demands restraint and self-control (Ps. 141:3; Jas. 1:26).

As it pertains to modest dress, it is helpful to first understand the purpose. What is accomplished by dressing modestly and why does God define it in the way He does?

God commands modest dress because it is inappropriate to dress in such a way as to draw attention to areas of the body that should not be available for public viewing. The goal of our clothing is to cover our nakedness. The bible defines nakedness as shameful. In speaking to Babylon Jehovah said, "Your nakedness shall be uncovered, yes your shame shall be seen" (Isa. 47:1-3; cf. Jer. 13:26; Nahum 3:5). God covered the nakedness of Adam and Eve (Gen. 3) and the nakedness of the priests was to be covered when they served (Ex. 28:42). The combined thought of these passages emphasizes that God wants us covered from shoulder to knee, and to leave that space uncovered constitutes nakedness which is shameful.

A sociologist offered her view on the yearbook situation and perfectly described the societal problem at hand. She remarked, "There's just so much ambivalence. On the one hand you're giving the message to pretty young girls that women need to be sexualized to have value in this world and then on the other hand we're punishing them for participating in this. You can't win."<sup>4</sup> Her description of the problem is correct. Our society does sexualize women and promote an impossible and ungodly standard for them to follow. But the answer is not to encourage further immodesty, the answer is to stop sexualizing young women and making them think that their value is wrapped up in sexuality. Our value is seen in the fact that we are created in the image of God, not that people find our bodies attractive. Our purpose is to glorify Him in all that we do, including our dress.

<sup>4</sup> Dastagir, Alia E. "Those Infamous Edited Yearbook Photos and Society's Obsession with Girls' Bodies: 'You Can't Win'" USA Today. Gannett Satellite Information Network, May 26, 2021. <https://www.usatoday.com/story/life/health-wellness/2021/05/25/sexist-dress-codes-and-altered-yearbook-photos-teach-girls-body-shame/7429562002/>.

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## THE LION WHO IS A LAMB

Tom Moore

One of the most exciting and informative ways to study the attributes of Christ is by giving close attention to the various figurative descriptions of our Lord set forth in holy Writ. For example, the Son of God, our Messiah, is called: Bread (John 6:35), Judge (2 Tim. 4:8), Shepherd (John 10:14), Passover (1 Cor. 5:7), Vine (John 15:1), Light (John 1:7), Way - Truth - Life (John 14:6), Door (John 10:9), Alpha and Omega (Rev. 1:8), and Word (John 1:14). For every dedicated child of God, these terms, when understood properly, will add to our knowledge of Deity and increase our desire to know more of the One who gave His life a ransom for all (1 Tim. 2:6).

In this study we will be considering Jesus - THE LAMB WHO

IS A LION. We will introduce our topic by considering Revelation 5:1-14.

According to Revelation 5:1, John saw in the right hand of God "a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals." The book contained a message from God to man - a message that explained God's eternal purpose (Eph. 3:10-11). A strong angel then asks, "Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?" (Rev. 5:2). "And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon" (Rev. 5:3).

As a result, John "wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon" (Rev. 5:4). But behold, an encouraging proclamation came forth out of heaven: "Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof" (Rev. 5:5). Then, as John looks up, he beholds that "in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth" (Rev. 5:6).

The Lamb - Who is worthy - then takes the book out of the right hand of God and the heavens rejoiced singing "a new song" (Rev. 5:7-10). And with a great voice the heavens declared, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing" (Rev. 5:12), and "Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever" (Rev. 5:13). In the following chapters of Revelation, we see the book being opened by the Lamb who is a Lion. Only the Lamb that is a Lion was worthy to open the book - the book that came from the hand of the Father.

The Lamb-Lion image is a wonderful paradox which gives us deeper insight into the only One who is able to bring salvation to man. That is why Peter avowed "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). A paradox is a seeming contradictory statement, but nonetheless true. Jesus truly is the Lamb who is a Lion!

Jesus is often referred to as a Lamb in the scriptures. When John the Baptizer saw Jesus coming to be baptized of him, he declared, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). Peter says, "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Pet. 1:18-19). Even in Old Testament times Jesus was spoken of as a lamb, "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth" (Isa. 53:7). When we think of Jesus as the Lamb of God we can't help but think of the supreme sacrifice He paid of the cruel cross for the sin of all mankind. The Lamb's blood was shed for the remission of our sins (Matt. 26:28). Thus, Jesus as the Lamb

implies that He is kind, longsuffering, loving, merciful, innocent and sacrificial.

Our Lord is also described as a Lion. Again, in heaven it was said, “Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof” (Rev. 5:5). Jesus as the Lion fulfills the prophecy of old, for Jacob declares, “Judah is a lion’s whelp: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up? The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be” (Gen. 49:9-10). This long-expected descendant of Judah, Who would possess the strength of a lion and bear the scepter of rule over the people, came in the person of Jesus, the Messiah. Jesus as the Lion implies that He is King, has authority, and is fierce and powerful.

The idea of the Lamb who is a Lion can be understood and better appreciated when we consider how Paul asked us to view God, “Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off” (Rom. 11:22). The scriptures teach that God is love (1 John. 4:8), and yet, He is a consuming fire (Heb. 12:29). Inspiration also declares that God is merciful (Eph. 2:4), and yet, God is just (Rev. 15:3). The actions of Jesus, the Lamb who is a Lion, are seen in these inspired words of Paul who says that Jesus “will render to every man according to his deeds: To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath” (Rom. 2:6-8). Jesus is the Lamb who is a Lion!

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## OUTDATED PREACHING

Trent Kennedy

**B**orn to a priestly family, set apart from birth, sent with the spirit and power of Elijah, and called the greatest among women, John the Immerser was a man among men. He was part prophet, part trailblazer, John was all preacher. The gospel account of Luke records more of the content of John’s preaching and specifics of his ministry than Matthew or Mark (Luke 3:1-21). When the word of the Lord came to John (Luke 3:2), like with other prophets, it was powerful. When he stood, he spoke, unshaken by the winds of apathy or tradition, as an oracle of the Almighty. To some, this type of preaching might be labeled old fashioned, outdated, and out of style. What can we learn today about the content of preaching from the life, lessons, and language of this great preacher?

### Preaching Should Be Doctrinal (Luke 3:3)

With a message that consisted of the unholy nature of sin, the necessity of repentance, and immersion in water unto the forgiveness of sins, John’s message was that of doctrinal substance. His sermons spoke of the coming Messianic kingdom (Matt. 3:2), the church of our Lord. Why would preachers today not want to follow this Biblical example and lessons based in sound doctrine? Certainly, the topics of sin, repentance, baptism, and the church have not declined in importance with the passing of time.

### Preaching Should Point the Way to Jesus (Luke 3:4-6)

John’s ministry, as we see from Isaiah’s prophecy (Isa. 40:3-5), was to be one of trailblazing for the coming ministry of Jesus. He was to prepare people’s hearts and minds to hear Christ and become obedient to the One who could save them from death. While John’s work was very particular in coming before Jesus (cf. Mal. 4:6), there is reverberation from John’s work to that of every faithful gospel preacher today: we want our ministry and message to point people to Christ. In fact, when people looked a little too hard at John, he pointed them even more forcefully to the Christ (cf. John 3:27-36; Matt. 11:2ff). Today we hold these words near to our hearts: He must increase but I must decrease.

### Preaching Should Confront and Rebuke Sin (Luke 3:7-9)

John’s preaching was very direct: he called his audience sons of snakes and warned them like a good watchman of the wrath that would come without a change of life. Sin is so vile and rotten that men of God throughout Scripture stood tall to tell those around them of the grave evil done, of the great disappointment caused to God, and of the coming destruction. Why would preachers today fold from this direct confrontation of and admonition against sin? John did not preach a come as you are, stay as you are gospel. Instead, he called his audience to create a change in their life based on a conviction in their mind; that is

repentance. Because, without repentance, no man shall be saved (Luke 13:3, 5). Sin and sinners must be confronted today. That does not mean that the preacher needs to spend his sermon telling the church about *other* sinners. While these warnings are fair and fine, people who hear us need to know when their lives are amiss. We need watchmen today to herald the dangers of sin to congregations across the world.

### **Preaching Should Be Consistent with the Bible (Luke 3:10-11)**

What would fruit worthy of repentance look like for the common person? It would look similar to the second commandment: love your neighbor as yourself (Luke 10:27, Lev. 19:18). We should not expect John's preaching to deviate from the Old Testament Scriptures, and it did not. So to with us today, our preaching must be filtered through and saturated with God's Word. When studying for our sermons, the Bible should be the first and the last resource considered on any given topic, on any given passage. No matter what other resource might be consulted, no matter what the religious elite of the day may say, no matter what oral traditions stand, the man of God will preach only those things consistent with Biblical truth.

### **Preaching Should Be Relevant and Practical (Luke 3:12-14)**

For some people, simple commands like "love your neighbor" are enough to spur them to immediate action. Yet, for many of us, we need help from time to time to see exactly how a simple passage like that applies directly and specifically in our lives. John found this same need in his audience. Questioners came from two groups that would not have been the most popular among the Jewish leadership: publicans and soldiers. When they sought to apply the direct preaching of John to bring forth fruits worthy of repentance and love their neighbors, John gave them relevant and practical advice. Vague preaching is not worth much. God's word is a standard, a plumbline, and it is often very direct. When the Scriptures are clear, let the sermon reflect that. There is no need to leave people wondering how the Bible applies to them. Preachers should know their audience whether publican or Pharisee, soldier or Sadducee, farmer or financier and bring relevant, practical messages.

### **Preaching Should Exalt Jesus (Luke 3:15-17)**

There was no place in the preaching of John for self-glorification, no place for the tribes of traditionalism, no place for the status of society, and no place words of human wisdom. John's work was to exalt Jesus. In John's eyes, he saw himself as unable to do the lowliest chore (loosening the sandal) of the lowliest, most incompetent bondservant. What humility! When the greatest among us sees himself in this light, God will be magnified, and Christ will be glorified. If people ever praise our good work or good words, may we have the attitude that says there is One who is mightier than me. When tempted to put on a show or bow to the popular opinion, may we ever remember the One who holds the winnowing fan in his hand and will thoroughly purge his threshing floor. And, perhaps more importantly, may those who

hear us preach notice that our preaching exalts Christ.

### **Preaching Should Give the Audience Hope (Luke 3:18)**

The message of John was that of good news ("good tidings" - ASV). Even when the faithful man of God confronts sin and the realities which follow, preaching should always leave people with hope. Until Jesus comes again and this world melts away, every living human has hope (2 Pet. 3:9). Even "hard preaching" should be hopeful; Isaiah's was (Isa. 1:13-20). Today, when men stand to preach, we set forth the unsearchable riches of Christ which will lead souls to salvation. It's no wonder that the tradition developed within the churches of Christ in the US to end every sermon with an invitation.

To some, John's preaching would be outdated (and Jesus and Paul for that matter too). However, when we examine the content of John's message and ministry, we see today a pattern for preachers, young and old to mimic in the pulpit, behind the lectern, and across the kitchen table. And we see the kind of preaching that elders and members should demand from the pulpit where they worship.

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# ENDLESS HYPOTHETICALS

Troy Spradlin

Over the years, I've had the privilege to discuss various points and particulars about God, Jesus, the Bible, baptism, faith and other spiritual topics with many people, from all walks of life. In a large portion of those opportunities, a rather interesting pattern emerged - a hypothetical scenario was introduced into the dialogue, at one point or another. Sometimes they were presented as questions and other times as arguments against a certain topic. Still at other times, it seems they were presented just to divert the conversation off in another direction. There are many common ones that have become the favorite pretext of almost every pessimist, naysayer, and atheist. Perhaps, you have heard some of these yourself:

- "If God is the creator and is all-powerful, could He make a rock so heavy that even He couldn't pick it up?"
- "If God is love and so good, why does He send people to hell?"
- "What if God has other people on other planets in other solar systems that we just don't know about?"
- "What if there's an undiscovered tribe somewhere and they've never heard the Gospel. What happens to them?"
- "What about the thief on the cross? He wasn't baptized!"
- "What happens if someone is in a desert and there is no water for baptizing someone?"
- "What if someone has believed, repented and confessed, but then dies in a car accident on the way to to the church building to be baptized. What happens to that person?"
- "What if there are only a man and a woman and they study the Bible and then want to obey the Gospel, who does the baptizing?"
- "What if someone is not able to speak or communicate, but they want to obey the Gospel?"

This list could go on and on, forever. Fortunately, most of these can be answered rather quickly, objectively, and with Scripture. There is also a common nexus found among most of these regarding what really needs to be addressed - that these are simply a way to avoid introspection and essentially, to remove any accountability from the one presenting the hypothetical. In other words, if the argument is true for the hypothetical scenario, then it must be true for them. Thus, they don't have to accept, or submit to whatever is being taught from the Bible.

The problem with hypotheticals is that they are conditional and the conditions are NOT always applicable for every individual in every scenario. It is only a hypothesis! Just because a scenario presented in a hypothetical might be true or logical, it does not mean it is true for the person presenting the hypothetical. More importantly (and this is the main point) it does not change our individual responsibility to submit to God's commands now, today (Matt. 7:21)!

Jesus frequently dealt with this same issue in His teaching. For example, in His encounter with the Samaritan woman at the well, (John 4:7-26) she asked a few questions and presented a few topics that Jesus did not answer directly. Instead of answering her interjections, He turned the conversation back to that which was more important, her spiritual needs. When His own disciples asked Him, "Who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" (Matt. 18:1), again, instead of addressing an hypothetical scenario, He turned the question back to their personal, spiritual needs (18:3-6). The same pattern is also seen in the dialogue with Nicodemus (John 3:1-15). In every case, the most important lesson is about how each individual must respond to God's commands personally, not appeal to some exceptional scenario or hypothetical for seeking an exemption.

Even if God did make such a rock, or no water existed for baptizing, or someone did die before making it to the baptistery, how does that remove YOUR responsibility to obey God's commands (Ecc. 12:13; John 14:15; 1 John 2:4)? If God has commanded us to hear, believe, repent, confess, be baptized, and live faithfully until death, then that is what we must be concerned about. We need to focus on getting our own selves into heaven (Phil. 2:12)!

CW

## BEING ABOUT OUR FATHER'S BUSINESS

Mike Batot

In Luke 2:41-50 we are told of the time "the Boy Jesus lingered behind in Jerusalem" (Luke 2:43) after the Feast of the Passover. Once His family realized He was not with them on their return journey home, they returned to Jerusalem to find Him. Three days later, He was found in the temple, listening and asking questions of the teachers. His mother questioned Him concerning His decision to stay behind and He told her in verse 49: "Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?" At the age of 12 years old, Jesus was aware of His responsibility to do His Father's will. Once He was out and teaching as an adult, He re-enforced this fact in John 9:4-5: "I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; the night is coming when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." We know that Jesus is our Savior, Teacher, and Encourager. He set the example in being "being about our Father's business. He wants us to:

- Have a desire in doing our Father's business (Matt. 17:24-27). He encourages us to put Him first and follow Him. If we are content with the things of this world, it will be at the expense of our soul. He wants us to focus our time on the spiritual things. The material things and blessings we experience now are to provide us with a measure of comfort in a sinful world. It is nothing compared to the heavenly blessings that await us if we have that desire to take up His cross.

- Have love for the souls of man in doing our Father’s business (John 15:9-14). He wants us to keep His commandments and realize He loves us as His Father loves Him. This love is to extend from us to our fellow man (v.12). We need to love the souls of man and use that love to teach them, even if it costs us our life (v. 13). To love Him is to be willing to do all we can in teaching His gospel in the toughest of circumstances (John 13:34-35).

- Show obedience in doing our Father’s business (Heb. 5:5-9; Mark 16:15-16). Jesus set the example obedience and we must follow it. He was obedient in carrying out the Father’s will and so must we be.

Jesus came to earth to be about the Father’s business (Heb. 10:7). His dedication to that will is ultimately seen in His willingness to die on the cross for the sins of mankind. As His people, we ought to dedicate ourselves to following in His obedient footsteps. We ought to make the Father’s business our priority and lovingly obey Him in all things.

CW

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

“Show me the way.” They walked for hours through dense brush hacking their way through unmarked jungle. The missionary began to worry and said, “Are you quite sure this is the way? Where is the path?” The native said. “In this place there is no path. I am the path.” Preachers are the path to lead others to salvation (Brett Blair, eSermons.com).

**It is a privilege to preach because it puts one in great company.** The word preach (in various forms) is found 159 times in the Bible.

- John the Baptist came preaching (Matt. 3:1).
- God sent Jesus to preach (Luke 4:43).
- Jesus preached in synagogues, and from city to city (Matt. 4:17, 23; 9:35). Jesus’ first sermon in His “home church” was on the subject of preaching (Luke 4:17-19).
- Jesus’ last words on earth were: “And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature” (Mark 16:15).
- The apostles obeyed this command, for the historian records: “And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ” (Acts 5:42).
- The church began with dynamic preaching on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2).
- The early disciples who were scattered abroad went preaching (Acts 8:4).
- When the Samaritans believed Philip preaching, they were baptized, both men and women (Acts 8:12).

- Paul stood ready to preach: “So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also” (Rom. 1:15). He considered it a privilege to preach: “Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ” (Eph. 3:8).

**It is a privilege to preach because it strengthens Christians and churches (Acts 20:28-32).** There is an on-going need for teaching. Hearing the truth is not like a one-time vaccination—it’s more like a prescription that needs to be dispensed over a long period of time! On the back of one preacher’s door is this quote by Frederick Danker: “The Gospel is a fuel required constantly to produce and promote the life of the Spirit within the Christian. The fruits of the Spirit grow only where the Gospel is sown tirelessly and unremittingly.”

Active churches have many ongoing activities, but they could omit any of them better than they could the preaching. In the midst of busy, helpful activities, the time-conscious apostles decided, “We will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word” (Acts 6:4). Preaching and salvation go together as cause and effect. If the preacher fails, the church will fail. When the pulpit ceases to give living water, drought spreads in the pews. But when fountains flow from the pulpit, then the desert becomes a garden.

Most historic social movements (cf. Nazism, Communism, the Civil Rights Movement, political campaigns), have been led by “preachers,” men who used the art of public speaking to inspire others. Abraham Lincoln said, “He who molds opinion is greater than he who enacts laws” (100777.com/quotes/). Farmers and doctors keep people living, but preachers make life worth living.

Preachers have been a fixture in Christianity for over 2,000 years. God managed for 1,700 years without a Sunday school, as important as that is. He managed 1,850 years without a single Boy Scout. But He has never managed without a preacher. Many things have come and gone—preachers have stayed. Consider the importance of what a local preacher does. If we do not preach to our congregation, nobody else will.

CW





[www.swsbs.edu](http://www.swsbs.edu)

## FACULTY

Steven Lloyd Director  
Clay Bond Associate Director  
Matt Gibson  
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Ronnie Scherffius  
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## From the Director's desk



**Steven Lloyd**  
Director SWSBS

**I**t is hard to believe that another Class is ready to graduate. Though we started with more students in 2019, three students will have completed their course of studies: Aaron Anderson, Jesse Moser and Justin Parks.

Aaron Anderson will be working with David Westbrook at the Home of Restoration and Recovery in Winnsboro, Texas.

Jesse Moser is in conversation with a few congregations who are looking for a preacher. Jesse is married to the former Alex Scherffius who graduated last year (2020). Alex recently gave birth to a baby girl they named, Joy.

Justin Parks has been invited to join the staff at World Video Bible School as their IT manager upon graduation. He is well suited for the work with a BA in Industrial Technology and a minor in Computer Science. More alumni have worked or are working with WVBS than any other place I know. Justin is married to Jamie and they have a little girl named Olivia.

Ten students will advance to the 2nd year: Greg Campbell, Patrick and Josha Gooch, Tara Griffith, Adan and Ana (Karen) Hernandez, Caleb Nash, Anthony and Hailey Scherffius, and Hannah Surles.

Twelve potential students plan to join us as first-year students in August. Two on the list may waiting until 2022. They are: Ryan Brewer, Grace Marie Cox, Raoul Ferris, Raymond Freiley, Declan McCann, Ty McClellan, Shelby Polk, Curtis Scherffius, Taylor Stein, Jesse Stuart and Billy York.

We already have a growing list of students who plan to attend in 2022.

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