

# THE ART OF PREACHING.

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To preach is to lift one's voice and cry out with an urgent message. Preaching is not synonymous with teaching although true preaching must always include teaching truth. The act of preaching is when a man is called and commissioned by God to take God's message and lift up the voice, cry out, and urge men and women to hear the meaning of God's message and how it must affect their lives. Christ commissioned men to preach. The art of preaching should always include a number of key characteristics.

## 1. BIBLICAL.

To preach a biblical sermon, a man must have plunged into the Word of God and prayed over it during the week. Preaching must be biblical if it will have any effect whatsoever. To preach without a Bible is to eat without food. To preach a sermon void of biblical truth is to indulge in a meal without substantive food. Cotton candy will not sustain a person for long. He needs solid food, healthy food, good food, and a steady diet of it. The sermon that pleases God is one that points back to the biblical text constantly. As it were, one finger is always pointed down to his text before him and the other finger is pointing at the audience to heed God's message!

## 2. EXEGETICAL.

Preaching must not only be biblical in the act of preaching but it must also be exegetical. To preach exegetically means that the preacher has done the work privately of poring over the Word of God so as to ascertain the meaning of the original author. This includes a careful study of the original languages, the grammatical structure and syntax of words and phrases, and the various background studies that enhance the understanding of the pericope. Not only must the preacher must preach from the Bible but it must be an accurate sermon from it.

## 3. PRACTICAL.

To teach truth without applying it to the lives of the hearers is in fact a lecture. To preach is not to lecture. To preach includes teaching and instructing. But it also conveys the idea of urgency, the tone of immediacy, the art of persuasion, and the goal of change. Heralding God's Word must include the imparting of God's truth accurately revealed from the study of the Word and it must also have the applying of the text to the heart and life of the hearers. Preaching is not only instructing the mind but it is persuading the will and wooing the affections. Every biblical preacher has preached his message to his own heart first and after it has affected and changed him, he longs for it to affect and change all of his hearers also. This must be included in preaching. Preaching changes lives. It tells people how God's truth must change them and how they must now live in light of the doctrines they've heard.

#### **4. CHRIST-CENTERED.**

Every text leads to Christ. Every verse in the Word of God may not directly speak of Christ but every text in every book always points to and leads to God's redemptive plan in Christ. Every sermon must be a Christ-centered sermon. A sermon without Christ is like the sun without heat. A sermon without Christ is like a family without people. To truly preach the Word of God, the man of God must show how every text in every sermon he preaches points to man's need for a Savior and God's provision in Christ and in His substitutionary work at Calvary. Preach with Christ in every sermon. Never apologize for preaching Christ. Men must hear of Christ! Believers must keep hearing of Christ. The lost must be exhorted to trust in Christ! Preach a glorious and irresistible Christ!

#### **5. SPIRIT-EMPOWERED.**

Preaching is not mere speaking. To preach the Word of God, the man of God is filled with the Spirit of God and powerfully heralds divine truth as it thunders forth to the hearers carried on the invisible and irresistible wings of the Spirit's Almighty power. A sermon without unction is a mere pep-talk. A sermon without the Spirit's empowering is like trying to drive a car without the engine. It will go nowhere and accomplishing nothing of any eternal profit without the divine quickening and enabling. To receive the unction of the

Spirit, the man of God must earnestly beg God and regularly beseech the Spirit for help in the preaching act. The people of God must intercede regularly on behalf of their preachers so that God might infuse him with power from on high so that he would speak God's Word with God's power. True preaching always is Spirit-empowered. True preaching rejects entertainment and it refuses manipulative, emotional ploys. Rather, God's men take the Word of God and preach in the thunderous, unstoppable, irresistible, and consuming power of the Spirit. Men, pray for such an anointing of the Spirit to fall upon you!

## **6. URGENT.**

Preach for eternity! Souls live on forever. Nothing is as important in all the planet as a person who finds himself sitting under the proclamation of the Word of God. The preacher knows this and preaches urgently as if the hearers must all make decisions at the immediate moment. No preacher desires his hearers to procrastinate. Rather, he preaches God's truth with heart-fueled urgency because he knows that souls hang in the balances. Eternity is at stake. Heaven and hell are future realities. Men of God take God's message and preach with a sense and tone of urgency so that all men would see the man who has received a message from God and who preaches with fire! Men will come to watch the man burn! Preach for change! Preach as if men would die the very hour they depart from hearing the Word preached. Urge men to be converted!