

The Importance of Expositional Preaching

By Pastor Keith Schmutzler, Oreana

Let me tell you about the week that changed my life and preaching forever. When I was in college we took a trip down to Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary for a preaching conference over Spring Break. It was fantastic. The conference was all about text driven preaching. I will never forget how blown away I was as I considered how much I was making the Bible fit to what I wanted to say as compared to the other way around. From that time on I have been an expositional preacher. Here are a few reasons that I think expositional preaching is so vitally important:

It helps us teach “the full counsel of God” (Acts 20:27). Many times pastors have their favorite “pet topics.” Some like to teach on heaven, others on the second coming, and others yet can spend month after month talking about John 3:16. While none of these things are bad to talk about, we all know that the Bible has 66 books and all of it needs to be preached. As followers of Christ we all need to be equipped with all that God has to say to us through His word. Hard topics like tithing, sex, and the way a church should treat a pastor are much easier to preach when it simply “comes up in the text.” This helps both the pastor and the congregation from feeling like someone is being picked on or singled out.

It is easier for folks to follow. Be honest, how many times have we sat in church one Sunday and heard a passage from the Old Testament preached, and then the next week we hear from an epistle, the following we are in Revelation, then we are back in Genesis again? This is very hard to follow, especially if folks are new to the Christian life. Because churches have given such a mixed bag of “Bible Stories” to our kids, if you are asking for a specific person in the Bible, you will hear names of both Old and New Testament saints that never met each other on this earth. We need to give all people an understanding of what has happened and do it in a cohesive manner. A great way to do that is to preach expositionally through a book of the Bible.

It gives people incentive to come to church. A few years ago when I was doing pulpit supply at Calvary Baptist I did a mini-series on the life of Elijah. As I went through the series I could tell that the people were excited to see what would happen next. I had more than one person tell me that they could tell that people were coming back every week to find out the next chapter in Elijah’s life. You want people to get excited about church? Try preaching through a book of the Bible one verse at time.

It is so much easier for pastors. Think about how much time pastors spend each week researching the context and the background of a book and a passage. If you stick to preaching through a book, there will be less time spent on all the background research, more time praying for the Lord to prepare hearts, and more time spent with family and God’s people. Try expositional preaching, you will be glad that you did!

**FABULOUS
50’S** Sponsored by CBA Senior Adult Team

**Tuesday,
February 16th
10 AM**

Dress 50s

At Emmanuel Baptist Church
1255 Lake Ridge, Decatur

Preacher: Matthew McLeary, Argenta's new pastor
Music: Diane Peterson, Heyworth

Sign up at www.cbaoffice.com/senior_adult by Feb. 10th.

Bring your own photos from the 50s.
Write a short description to go with it.
We'll display them.

Menu: \$ 5 per Person

- Chili
- Hamburgers
- Fries (Potato sticks)
- BLT Side Salad
- Brownies ala mode
- Coke, Coffee or Tea
- Root Beer Floats



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5 Reasons That Lowering Your Expectations for 2021 is a Really Good Idea

We were so anxious to get 2020 over with. It would be amazing if somebody returned everything to some semblance of normalcy right about now, wouldn't it? At the end of a long year, it's tempting to paint 2021 as a relief to all our problems. But that would be a mistake. For some leaders, it would be a fatal one.

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As some say, the secret to happiness is low expectations. One of the reasons you may be frustrated and exhausted is because you expected things to be back to normal by now. Here are 5 ways that lowering your expectations for 2021 is a really good idea:

1. **The Shut Down Happened Overnight. The Reopening will Be Far More Gradual and Intermittent.** It's slowly dawning on most of us that there may not be a reopening "day" or season when everyone floods back in and everything is as it was. While nobody wants it, we'll likely have months ahead of the virus surging and retreating, and with that, regulations that move you in and out of degrees of lockdown. The restrictions themselves will take a while to lift completely. Government regulations are one thing. Human behavior is quite another. It might take a while longer for most people to feel comfortable being in crowded public spaces, and some of the pattern changes people have adopted during COVID will likely be permanent. I think the metaphor of having green light, yellow light and red light people is sound. Green light people are those who will rush back and be perfectly comfortable. Yellow light people will be more cautious for months or maybe longer. And red light people, made so either by disposition or medical condition, might change how they operate in the public sphere for a much longer time. Simply realizing that this will be a longer, gradual process with help you plan for a longer, gradual re-entry and make you more effective as a result.

The longer the current crisis goes on, the longer temporary habits become permanent ones. But it's likely to be a strange and unpredictable mix of familiar and new patterns. So people will return to live events. Schools, gyms, restaurants, and churches will one day be without restrictions. (Yeah!) And to be sure, offices will reopen and traffic jams will happen and people will vacation and airplanes and resorts will operate at capacity again. (Another Yeah!) But don't miss the nuance underneath all this. Will company offices return to exactly where they were pre-pandemic? There is zero indication

that's going to happen. Remote will become much more prevalent than it was pre-COVID. Many companies have already downsized and some may stay that way with more business being handled remotely. It will be interesting to see if people stay with more home delivery or pick up services; if there will be more homeschooling; and if churches will continue with virtual worship services.

3. **The Biggest Certainty is Unpredictability.** Every leader longs for certainty, but what we are used to is predictability, since only death and taxes (and Jesus) are certain. A good way to look at 2020 is that it helped build skills that are essential: agility, adaptability, and resourcefulness. The last 20-40 years has shown us that if you stay stagnant, you start stinking and then who wants that? When the autopsy is done on those organizations, you usually discover they lacked not only the vision to see that change was necessary, but the agility and adaptability needed to change. Keep developing them, and don't let those muscles atrophy.
4. **An Unhealthy Rhythm Now Means You Might Not Make It to Then.** I recently asked over 75,000 leaders what they're struggling with and by far, the #1 challenge is exhaustion: Their exhaustion and the fatigue of their teams. Finding a healthy rhythm during the crisis is essential to being okay after the crisis. Time off won't save you from an unsustainable pace when the problem is how you spend your time. Decide what is the most important parts of your vision and use your efforts towards those parts. Delegate the rest.
5. **The Greatest Leaders Confront the Brutal Facts (But Never Lose Hope)** And sadly for you and me, the crisis and instability will soon drag into their second year. You will prevail in the end, but there's some brutal stuff you need to get through before things get better. Crisis leadership falls apart when leaders embrace the extremes: Pessimists only see the real, and naïve optimists only see the ideal. When you embrace both, you discover true leadership. You'll also emerge out of the crisis stronger and into a much stronger tomorrow.



Welcome Pastor Keith Schmutzler to Oreana Baptist Church

I am Keith Schmutzler and I am very excited to begin my ministry as pastor here at Oreana Baptist Church. I came on board here at OBC March 1st, 2020 as the associate pastor and what a whirlwind

of a ride it has been. I have been a resident of Oreana since I was 3 years old and briefly attended this church for a few months while I was a teenager. Most of my Christian life I have been a faithful member of Emmanuel Baptist Church in Decatur where I first learned to love the Bible, God's people, and hymns and southern gospel music (and a little bit of contemporary stuff, but don't tell anyone. I have an image to keep.)

I graduated from Hannibal-Lagrange University in December of 2017 with a degree in Secondary Education. I now teach Special Education at Argenta-Oreana High School where I am a 2014 alum and I love the crazy, zany world of Special Education.

In the next couple of years at OBC we are hoping to update our children's area so that we can better reach the children of Oreana. We also would like to get more involved in community events. I would also love to see some new Sunday School classes get started, a more robust children's ministry, and many souls saved and equipped for the kingdom of God.

(Keith is a very talented young man who can play the sax, the piano, and the organ. He's a very enthusiastic preacher and has a heart for God and others.-Chris)



Priority is April 23-24 with in-person event attendance at First Baptist Church in O'Fallon. Due to state COVID restrictions, in-person attendance is limited to 400. In-person registration is \$55, including Priority materials and lunch. The cost to attend online is \$30, including Priority materials which will be shipped to participants, or \$15 to attend online without materials.

For more information, visit IBSA.org/women or contact Aubrey Krol at AubreyKrol@IBSA.org or (217) 391-3138. Priority registration opens online Feb. 1.

EDGE-Making Sharper Leaders IBSA online courses

Winter/Spring 2021 COURSES

Leading Through Preaching Starts February 1 *Go to IBSA.org to register*

Leading Change Starts February 15

Leading Self Limited enrollment, Starts February 15 *Heart of Leadership for Women and Heart of Leadership for AWSOM Community Students*

LEADING THROUGH PREACHING

Leading Through Preaching will help pastors become acquainted with the power of the pulpit as it relates to leading God's people and provide training in how to lead through preaching. The course is comprised of weekly reading and videos, short assignments that help you build toward your final project, and a final project (sermon outline demonstrating skills learned in the course). The course will also include bi-weekly opportunities for live video interaction (not required). **[COURSE LENGTH: 6 weeks] [COURSE FEE \$25.00] [additional purchase of book is required]**

LEADING CHANGE

Leading Change will train you how to skillfully guide your church or ministry through changes and to a new future. You will walk through the eight principles of effectively leading organizational change and how they relate to the average IBSA church. Attention will be given to why each of these eight principles is necessary in leading change, as well as how the student can lead the change process in their local church. The course is comprised of weekly reading and learning assignments, interactive online discussions, and a final project demonstrating how you would design and carry out leading the eight change principles in your ministry setting. **[COURSE LENGTH: 8 weeks] [COURSE FEE \$25.00] [additional purchase of book is required]**

LEADING SELF

The first step in leading others is leading yourself well. The Leading Self course is designed to provide strategies and build competencies for leading self toward the ultimate purpose of leading others. This course will draw from leadership concepts that are apply to the church, the workforce, and to personal life. Students will learn to identify their skills, abilities, strengths, weaknesses, goals, communication styles and leadership styles, and how those relate to others. This semester's course is being offered just for IBSA's AWSOM Girls audience and Illinois Baptist Women's audience, with individual courses for each group. **[COURSE LENGTH: 8 weeks] [COURSE FEE \$25.00] [additional purchase of book is required]**

Prayer



When I lay my head to rest
I thank my Lord above,
For helping me throughout the day
with His unending love.

I ask for courage and for strength
to turn away from sin,
To be with me where Satan lurks
and against temptation win.

I pray for friends and family
to keep them safe and sound,
That they may live the kind of life
that show our Christ they've found.

I ask to be a witness
to those lost out in sin,
And tell them about salvation
and a new life begin.

I feel so very saddened
When I think of all the lost,
When all they have to do is ASK,
Christ has already paid the cost.
By Louise Webster (2004)



VBS Train the Trainer Clinic

at Chatham Baptist Church

Saturday, February 27, 2021

Registration begins at 8 am. Clinic starts promptly @ 8:30 am. You will have the option to choose from one of eight different break-out sessions. The clinic will conclude at noon. There is NO cost for this event.

Register at <https://il.sbcworkspace.com/Pub/Event/Register/55233206>

(217) 391-3135

JackLucas@IBSA.org

Churches:

Argenta
Arthur
Atwood
Calvary
Emmanuel
Fellowship
Findlay
Forsyth
Galilee
Hammond
Heyworth
Lincoln
Lovington
Mt. Zion
Oreana
Shiloh
Sullivan
Summit Avenue
Tabernacle
Tri-Valley

Mission Statement

Central Baptist Association exists to foster relationships among churches in order to assist them in fulfilling the Great Commission.

CBA Vision is to see churches collaborating together to build the Kingdom of God.



Coming Events

February

1st-IBSA EDGE Courses begin
16th at 10 AM-Sr. Adult Fabulous 50s Event at Emmanuel
27th at 8 AM-IBSA VBS Training at Chatham

March

7th-14th-Annie Armstrong Offering and Week of Prayer
20th-Missins Leader Boot Camp at IBSA Bldg, Springfield
28th-Palm Sunday

Central Baptist Association

(217) 330-7593

Email: office@cbadecatur.com

650 N. Wyckles Rd.

Decatur, IL 62522

Website: www.cbadecatur.com