

The Glory of Preaching or Why Should I Care About Preaching?
Session 2
Preaching and the Church: Bible Chapel of Delhi Hills

I. Introduction

- A. What does the world think when it thinks about preaching and preachers?
1. Charlatan
 2. Salesperson
 3. Angry (always “against” people/issues/things)
 4. Comedian
 5. Advisor/Coach/Guru
 6. Others?
- B. **John Broadus** (1827-1895) *On the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons* (1870): “The great appointed means of spreading the good tidings of salvation through Christ is preaching—words spoken whether to the individual, or to the assembly. And this, nothing can supersede. Printing has become a mighty agency for good and for evil; and Christians should employ it, with the utmost diligence and in every possible way, for the spread of truth. But printing can never take the place of the living word. When a man who is apt in teaching, whose soul is on fire with the truth which he trusts has saved him and hopes will save others, speaks to his fellow-men, face to face, eye to eye, and electric sympathies flash to and fro between him and his hearers, till they lift each other up, higher and higher, into the [most intense] thought, and the most impassioned emotion—higher and yet higher, till they are borne as on chariots of fire above the world, —there is a power to move men, to influence character, life, destiny, such as no printed page can ever possess. Pastoral work is of immense importance, and all preachers should be diligent in performing it. But it cannot take the place of preaching, nor fully compensate for lack of power in the pulpit” (17-18).
- C. **Martyn Lloyd-Jones** *Preaching and Preachers*: “But, ultimately, my reason for being very ready to give these lectures is that to me the work of preaching is the highest and greatest and the most glorious calling to which anyone can ever be called. If you want something in addition to that I would say without any hesitation that the most urgent need in the Christian Church today is true preaching; and as it is the greatest and most urgent need in the Church, it is obviously the greatest need of the world also” (9).
- D. The Lord Jesus
1. **Mark 1:14-15** Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, *proclaiming* the gospel of God, and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.” (Cf., **Mark 1:35-38** And rising very early in the morning, while it was still dark, he departed and went out to a desolate place, and there he prayed. And Simon and those who were with him searched for him, and they found him and said to him, “Everyone is looking for you.” And he said to them, “Let us go on to the next towns, that I may preach there also, *for that is why I came out.*”)

2. **Luke 4:18-19** “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to *proclaim* good news to the poor. He has sent me to *proclaim* liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to *proclaim* the year of the Lord's favor.” (Cf., v. 21 “Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.”)
- E. The Apostle Paul
1. **Acts 20:24** “But I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to *testify* to the gospel of the grace of God.”
 2. **Col. 1:28** “Him we *proclaim*, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone *mature* in Christ.”
 3. **2 Tim. 4:1-2** “I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: *preach the word*; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching.”
 4. **1 Cor. 9:16** “Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!”
- F. What is so special about preaching? So special that Paul calls down a divine curse on himself if he doesn't do it?

II. Why is preaching glorious?

- A. The glory of what preaching *is*
- B. The glory of what preaching *does*

III. The Glory of What Preaching *Is*

- A. Expository Preaching
 1. The expositor proclaims the Bible because he believes with the Apostle Paul that “All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness” (2 Tim. 3:16).
 - a. Haddon Robinson: “Expository preaching at its core is more a philosophy than a method. Whether we can be called expositors starts with our purpose and with our honest answer to the question: “Do you, as a preacher, endeavor to bend your thought to the Scriptures, or do you use the Scriptures to support your thought?” (*Biblical Preaching*, 5)
 - b. I tell my students that in addition to the doctrine of God, the most important doctrine to the preacher is that of Scripture.
 - c. If you truly believe that the Bible is the Word of God this will govern how you preach. In other words, the Christian preacher will make every effort, in the power of the Holy Spirit, to clearly explain and apply the Bible because of what we believe it to be, namely, the out-breathed breath of God.
 2. John Stott: “[Exposition] refers to the content of the sermon (biblical truth) rather than its style (a running commentary). To expound Scripture is to bring out of the text what is there and expose it to view. The expositor prizes open what appears to be closed, makes plain what is

obscure, unravels what is knotted and unfolds what is tightly packed. The opposite of exposition is 'imposition,' which is to impose on the text what is not there" (*Between Two Worlds*, 125-26).

- B. Words used for preaching (each has to do with the 'proclamation' of the gospel)
1. Euangelizomai
 - a. Occurs 54 times in the NT
 - b. 'bring good news'; 'announce good news'; 'proclaim the gospel'
 - c. Its use in **Isaiah 52:7** and **61:1** (LXX) refers to the activity of the messenger who announces the Lord's universal kingship and restoration of Zion. This is a significant textual and theological foundation for its use within the NT to refer to the proclamation of the good news in Christ.
 - d. **Romans 1:15** "So I am eager to *preach* the gospel to you also who are in Rome."
 - e. **Acts 8:4** "Now those who were scattered went about *preaching* the word."
 2. Katangelo
 - a. Occurs 18 times in NT
 - b. Means 'proclaim' or 'announce'
 - c. **Acts 17:23** "For as I passed along and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription: 'To the unknown god.' What therefore you worship as unknown, this I *proclaim* to you."
 3. Kerysso
 - a. 59 times in the NT
 - b. 'announce'; 'make known' 'proclaim aloud'; 'make proclamation as a herald'
 - c. **Mark 1:14-15** Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, *proclaiming* the gospel of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."
 4. When any of these three verbs is used they typically refer to the act of making a public proclamation, by a recognized authority, the substance of which is some aspect of Christ's person and work.
- C. Preaching as God's monologue
1. **2 Cor. 5:20** Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, *God making his appeal through us*.
 2. Preaching is glorious because it is God appealing to the world: be reconciled, be saved! And he does this through human agents.
 3. As we learn from **Malachi 2:7**, the Christian preacher is nothing less than "the messenger of the Lord of hosts."
- D. Where else would be go?
1. The church should long to be under God's Word. Why?
 2. **John 6:66-69** After this many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with him. [67] So Jesus said to the twelve, "Do you want to go away as well?" [68] Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we

go? You have the words of eternal life, [69] and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God.”

IV. The Glory of What Preaching *Does*

A. Preaching is first and foremost for the display of the glory of God

1. What does it mean to “display the glory of God”?
 - a. To preach as if God is real and his glory and honor the most important reality in the universe.
 - b. After hearing MLJ preach every Sunday evening at Westminster Chapel (London) during the years 1948-1949, J.I. Packer said that MLJ brought him “more of a sense of God than any other man.”
2. This is what Christian preaching does: it displays before the people the glories of God.
 - a. The *creative* power of God from **Genesis 1** (And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light.)
 - b. The *holiness* of God from **Isaiah 6** (“Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory.”)
 - c. The *sovereignty* of God from **Psalms 2** (“He who sits in the heavens laughs; the Lord holds them in derision.”)
 - d. The *faithfulness* of God from **Jeremiah 31** (“Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah . . . I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people.”)
 - e. The *compassion* of God in **Matthew 9** (“When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.”)
 - f. The *mercy* of God in **Ephesians 2** (“But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved”)
 - g. The *power* of God in **1 Cor. 15** (“When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: “Death is swallowed up in victory.”)

B. Preaching is for the *conversions*

1. “Oh my brothers and sisters in Christ, if sinners will be damned, at least let them leap to hell over our bodies and if they will perish, let them perish with our arms about their knees, imploring them to stay, and not madly to destroy themselves. If hell must be filled, at least let it be filled in the teeth of our exertions, and let not one go there unwarned and unprayed for” (Spurgeon, from a sermon on Jeremiah 4:20 preached on December 9, 1860).
2. The preacher will labor for the conversion of sinners knowing that the Word of God is the means God the Holy Spirit uses to save the lost . . .
 - a. **Isaiah 55:10-11** “For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring

forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

b. **Rom. 10:17** "So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ."

C. Preaching is for *sanctification*

1. **2 Cor. 3:18** "And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit."
2. **Col. 1:28-29** "Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me." (Cf., **2 Tim. 3:16-17** "All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.")

V. **Application for the Church**

A. Preaching is glorious because of what it *is* and what it *does*.

1. Preaching is God speaking through a human agent to the world. In this sense, preaching is glorious monologue from God.
2. Preaching displays the glory of God, saves the lost, and sanctifies God's people.
3. Both what preaching is and what it does should humble and thrill us!

B. What are the implications of this for the local church?

1. If our preachers are opening the Word of God every Sunday we should anticipate hearing from God.
2. If our preachers are opening the Word of God every Sunday we should anticipate seeing or beholding the glory of God (i.e., experiencing supernatural authority in our life)
3. If our preachers are opening the Word of God every Sunday we should anticipate people getting saved. (Invite people to church!)
4. If our preachers are opening the Word of God every Sunday we should anticipate being sanctified (i.e., growing more Christ-like).
5. If our preachers are opening the Word of God every Sunday then we should be getting ready for Sunday all week. What does this require?