

“PREACH THE WORD.”¹

The preacher is anointed by God to preach His word. He must be bracingly sure of God's call upon his life for His labor is demanding. He is ever refining his study of God's Bible, and becomes increasingly aware of his place in God's redemptive history. His life is marked by a holy urgency for he has “set his heart to study the law of the Lord, and to practice it, and to teach His statutes and ordinances in Israel.”²

God's preacher is suspicious of his own godliness and yet remains confident of Christ's work in and through him. He vomits at the thought of being a men-pleaser and is tireless in identifying the spiritual strangulation taking place in his society.³ He prays without ceasing for the mind of Christ and applies himself to the task of increasing in wisdom.

The man God commissions to preach His word preaches with God-glorifying prophetic authority. He is passionate for the souls of the blind and is ready to intelligently, yet with much decorum, contradict the contemporary philosophies and accepted societal ways. He is betrothed to Christ and accepts responsibility for the tutelage of Christ's bride.

The message God's preacher brings is directly from God's holy word. He holds forth with unswerving seraphic joy the teaching of the Holy One of Israel. As God's trumpet he is humbly *vox Dei*, the voice of God.

The man under the unction of the Holy Spirit takes the whole counsel of God to the people. He preaches the cross of Christ, the depravity of man and man's need for the Savior. He preaches for decision by disturbing fallen biases and lifestyles. He challenges all within the sound of his voice to consecrated unconditional commitment, complete surrender and total obedience.

God's mission for His anointed is the transformation of both the blind and those who see (See Appendix A).⁴ The preacher's heart is for Christians to become conquerors, not casualties. The God-anointed preacher fills his messages with personal application thereby enabling saints to capture the present relevancy of the ancient ways so that they might interpret the condition of their world, their nation, their corporate church body and their own souls.

The encumbrances to effective preaching are many. Insufficient prayer and preparation, the demands of congregants, busyness and imitating the methods of shallow evangelicalism serve as hindrances (See Appendix B). Nonetheless, he must refuse a casual approach to preaching in order to confront and comfort as the Holy Spirit directs (See Appendix C). God's preacher understands that he stands between man and eternity – the seriousness of the moment is ever in his mind. He prays for unconverted preachers and attends to the flocks of the unconverted preachers, as the Lord allows (See Appendix D).

The strongest enabler of preachers of righteousness is the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of Jesus endues His preachers with sacred energy, holy enthusiasm and tireless joy. God's Spirit

provisions the preachers of Christ with vision, courage, wisdom, patience, compassion and passion. The proclaimers of Christ bring a message that leaps across the millennia.

God's preachers and God's congregations should be preparing themselves to take God's word to the people by taking God's word into their hearts (See Appendix E). As God's word sifts into your heart you will become a proclaimer within the sphere God has graced to you.⁵

“And I searched for a man among them who should build up the wall and stand in the gap before Me for the land....”⁶

Appendix A: The Mission, Vision and Responsibility.

*“All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.
Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations,
baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,
teaching them to observe all that I commanded you;
and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”⁷*

Christians in all places at all times are commissioned by the Lord Jesus Christ to go and make disciples of all the nations. Going and making disciples is not optional for any Christian. God commands all Christians to be engaged in holy warfare. His Spirit furnishes you with divinely powerful weapons for the destruction of everything opposed to the knowledge of God.⁸ The preacher is purposed to enhance the appetite for and adequacy of Jesus' brothers and sisters in fulfilling their commission.

The Vision

*“I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God,
to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God,
which is your spiritual service of worship.
And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind,
that you may prove what the will of God is,
that which is good and acceptable and perfect.”⁹*

Every man, woman and child approaching the preacher's doors enter with one of two spiritual needs: to be transformed out of darkness into light or to be transformed from their present light into more excellent light. The preacher anointed by the Holy Spirit is committed to being deployed by the Holy Spirit as His agent of transformation for all whom He escorts into his commonwealth.

The vision God's Spirit has placed upon the hearts of anointed preachers is to communicate His gospel by way of all God-honoring verbal, visual, relational, lifestyle, print and electronic approaches known to man. He refuses to be limited by man's vision, always praying to capture the mind and resources of Christ.

God's vision for His anointed is for him to be the equipper of Christ's bride throughout the world. God has gifted His spokesmen with a burden to assist all God's people in the

proclamation of the excellencies of Him who has called His sons and daughters out of darkness into His marvelous light.¹⁰

The Responsibility

Jesus said, “I will build My church; and the gates of Hades shall not overpower it” (Mt. 16:18). At the church’s inception, Jesus alerts all to His church being the focal point for conflict.

John Calvin’s Genevans were fractious, John Knox’s zealous congregation in Edinburgh turned Laodicean, John Owen’s Londoners became sluggish and Jonathan Edwards’ Northamptoners fired him! The Corinthians accused Paul of being “unimpressive, and his speech contemptible.”¹¹

Nevertheless, where on earth do you discover the most splendid display of God’s glory? The church is the Scripturally anointed earthly ambassador for evangelism and edification.¹² The preacher of the church is charged with the teaching of orthodoxy and the practice of righteous living. This must be accomplished because Jesus gave Himself up for the church.¹³

In the Confession of Augsburg (1530), Martin Luther defined the church as “the congregation of the saints, in which the gospel is rightly taught and the sacraments rightly administered.” Your church must welcome unbelievers while guarding against their becoming members until they evidence being regenerated by the Holy Spirit.

The worship service must be a worship of God, not man. Therefore, the order of worship will purpose to bring glory to God, not man. The saints’ participation in the worship service shall be structured so that **all** praise goes to God, not to preachers, musicians, artists, missionaries, church leaders, children, etc. Decorum concerning dress, instrumentation and presentations will assist in disallowing performances and enhance your awareness of Paul’s admonition: “Let all things be done properly and in an orderly manner.”¹⁴ God’s leaders intend to establish an environment that encourages and advances the saints’ entry into the transforming presence of the living God.

Appendix B: The Message.

The popular method of evangelism has taken on many of its society’s ways. Christian evangelists are attempting to persuade men to believe in Jesus on the basis of His merciful love and generous rewards. Though rarely stated expressly, a young evangelist is cautioned against mentioning sin and hell. He is to address God’s beauty, not the sinner’s ugliness; Jesus’ love, not Jesus’ wrath; the Holy Spirit’s power, not His rebuke. Surface Christianity promises so much and requires so little, therefore many claiming to be Christians are Christians only on the surface for they have never come under conviction for their sin.

Perhaps you are being called to protect God’s gospel from current evangelicalism. Too many modern evangelists depend upon their presentation rather than the Holy Spirit. Marketing and compromise shall not compensate for what Paul calls “a different

gospel.”¹⁵ Effective gospelizers are unashamed of declaring the scandal, shame and bloodiness of Jesus’ cross.

At this moment you may be protesting what you just read. Think for a moment. When did your preacher most recently state from the pulpit on Sunday morning the verity of hell’s flames? When did your preacher at your evangelical church proclaim directly to the congregation under his care that those without Christ shall suffer eternally in the anguish of God’s wrath?

Scores of well-intentioned Christians believe that if they just present the gospel in the right way, conversions will occur. They might be correct if the one to whom they are presenting the gospel had the ability to make the final call, but he does not. You are charged with the responsibility of presenting God’s gospel God’s way for it is God’s salvation and God’s heaven.

Pelagius and Joseph Arminius were of the opinion that every man had the natural ability to make a reasoned choice concerning his final destiny. Augustine and John Calvin disagreed. Man’s will is not freed from his natural death until he has been graced with eternal life.

Contrast man’s warped approach with the Holy Spirit’s blameless approach. He labors in the hearts of unbelievers to discomfort them in their sin. He wants them to be distressed for their sinfulness and recognize the suffering accompanying sin. He does not only want them to remember their sin, He wants them to repent for their sin. Until the soul “be wounded for sin, it will never be converted from sin, and brought effectually to Jesus Christ.”¹⁶

What gospel did Jonah preach leading to the conversion of 120,000 Ninevehites? Jonah walked through a city and amongst a people he hated, crying out, “Yet forty days and Nineveh will be overthrown.”¹⁷ What gospel did John the Baptist come out of the wilderness of Judea preaching to the Jews? “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”¹⁸ What gospel did Jesus preach as He came into Galilee? “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.”¹⁹

Never believe *you yourself* have been saved if *you* have not come under the conviction that *you* are a sinner. Unbelievers view their unbelief as intelligent cultured sophistication – unbelief is death! You must not only perceive yourself a sinner in thought, word and deed, in your commissions and omissions, you also must believe that you have not placed your trust in the righteous Jesus.

Several of your elder brothers offer vital insight into the deception and misery of sin:

- ❖ “Sin is the dare of God’s justice, the rape of His mercy, the jeer of His patience, the slight of His power, and the contempt of His love.” John Bunyan
- ❖ “The only dreadful thing is sin.” Elisha Coles
- ❖ “Sin is the strength of death and the death of strength.” Thomas Adams
- ❖ “Put sin into its best dress, it is but gilded damnation.” William Jenkyn

❖ “To see sin as sin is hell.” Thomas Goodwin²⁰

The Holy Spirit cannot accomplish His mission unless He makes personal sin visible to the sinner. God’s Spirit so offends the unbeliever’s soul that the sinner begins to understand he cannot save himself. He initiates the search for the salve of the Savior because he has come to value his inability to escape God’s eternal hell if he continues to “neglect so great a salvation.”²¹

An unbeliever shall never know the quickening grace of the holy God unless he first comes to face his own unholiness. He is not interested in the throne of grace until Jesus’ prosecutor reveals the chambers of sin he has secreted from himself. Unbelievers have no lasting interest in God’s eternal pardon without first comprehending their sentence of everlasting death.

Unbelief is man’s primary and most damning sin. Scores of those in leadership positions in Christian churches would say that not trusting in Jesus alone for salvation is not necessary as there are many different opinions on this matter. Their problem is that only God’s opinion matters and God’s opinion has been clearly set forth in His Scriptures. Trusting yourself rather than Jesus is the root of all sin. The non-truster rejects the gospel promises and the gospel remedy.

Appendix C: The Address.

A preacher was recently asked why he utilizes the pronoun “you” rather than “we” when he preaches. His response is that he desires to direct your attention to yourself rather than making use of a less defining word (“we”) thereby allowing God’s children to escape more easily the personal application of the passage.

When you go to church, does your preacher preach from the Bible? Does he translate God’s word in such a way to grant you insight into how you should be living your life? Has your preacher’s grasp and treatment of Scripture excited you to become more familiar with your Bible?

Your Bible is Jesus’ letter to His bride. Your preacher should be interpreting the heart that the Groom has for His bride. How well do you understand your Betrothed’s heart? Will the wind of the Holy Spirit and the power of God’s anointing be manifested in the words that you hear from God’s pulpit next Sunday?

Many men are anointed by God to be pastors; far fewer are anointed by God to be preachers. Too many men anointed to be pastors find themselves in pulpits that they are not anointed to fill.

God’s only begotten Son was a preacher. He preached well. Though during His earthly ministry there were not many who came to believe in Him as God’s Son, He opened hearts and minds to comprehend the Old Testament.

Search the Scriptures and make a note of how many times Jesus preached “we” and how many times He preached “you.” No one hears words that are addressed to everyone. The preacher is to stand in the council of the holy God as he prepares God’s message. In that holy council the preacher confesses his sins, admits his unworthiness to bring God’s word to His people and petitions God for the sermon to be preached **to** his own heart before He brings it **from** his heart.

Scripture is confrontational. It brings sinful man face to face with himself as he really is. What happens when you water down God’s eternal truth for your hearers with “weisms”?

Even in this writing God challenges you to address these issues:

- ❖ Have you placed yourself at the feet of a God-anointed preacher who preaches in the Holy Spirit’s power with the Son’s passion?
- ❖ When he reads from the Bible and plows through the Scriptures, does the word of the living God come to dwell richly in your soul?
- ❖ If you cannot immediately and enthusiastically affirm the matters surrounding these interrogatories, vote with your feet and leave that man’s preaching.

Jonathan Edwards said, “I had rather be fully understood by ten than admired by ten thousand.” Make certain your heart is in concert with Mr. Edwards and the Apostle Paul who declared:

*“When I came to you, brethren, I did not come with superiority of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of God.
For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.
And I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling.
And my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power,
That your faith should not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God.”*²²

The balm of Gilead must be taught authoritatively or it loses its influence. Every man, lady, boy and girl you meet today is being taught statutes and ordinances by a lost and dying world. They are drowning in the besetting gospel of a corrupt and perverted generation. God says that His saints are Christ’s ambassadors with the eternal mission of entreating the world on Christ’s behalf to be made right with God.²³

Richard Baxter (1615-1691) was expelled from the Church of England and imprisoned for years for the crime of “sedition.” This preacher of God said, “I preach as a dying man to dying men.” Your desire is that God will make your preachers resemble Mr. Baxter and Thomas Watson, Thomas Vincent, Jeremiah Burroughs, William Greenhill, Obadiah Sedgwick, Jonathan Edwards, Thomas Boston, John Owen, C. H. Spurgeon and Matthew Mead. These men preached for verdicts. They were not interested in hung juries and mixed decisions. Their desire was to see the transforming Rose of Sharon in their people’s lives so that many would become God’s transformer.

When anointed preachers stand behind God's sacred desk on His holy Sabbaths, they want to see men walk out of that Sanctuary as conquerors, not casualties. They know that Shiloh is coming again. They convert no one and have no discernable motive other than in being faithful to the letter and tenor of God's holy word.

Vance Havner said, "It is not the business of the preacher to fill the house; it is his business to fill the pulpit." To fill the pulpit, the preacher must be cognizant of the reality that though there may be a congregation of thousands gathered to hear him, he has but One whose approval and commendation he seeks. He must be bold in the cause of Christ.

It is reported that James VI of Scotland was disruptive and disrespectful when he attended worship services. Robert Bruce was preaching one morning when Scotland's king attended the service. James VI began talking to those around him during Rev. Bruce's message. The preacher became silent, and when the king was made aware of his own lack of courage, he became silent.

When God's preacher resumed preaching, the king resumed his conversation. Bruce was quiet again, and so was the king. On the third occasion of the king's disrespect for your Lord Jesus, God's human trumpet turned and looking directly into the face of the earthly king declared, "When the lion roars, all the beasts of the field are quiet. The Lion of the Tribe of Judah is now roaring in the voice of His Gospel, and it becomes all the petty kings of the earth to be silent."²⁴

The God-sent preacher is not a salesman. A large percentage of churchgoers who attend regularly are dead in their trespasses and sins. If the preacher takes the edge off of God's word, whom am I seeking to please?

God has called His preachers to speak to man for Him, and to petition Him for man

God calls preachers to preach prophetically in the manner of Ezekiel to whom He said, "Now as for you, son of man, I have appointed you a watchman for the house of Israel; so you will hear a message from My mouth, and give them warning from Me. When I say to the wicked, 'O wicked man, you shall surely die,' and you do not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood I will require from your hand."²⁵

George Whitefield was not shy about declaring, "I have come here to speak to you about your soul." Just as your oncologist does not say "we" when "you" have cancer, neither should your preacher couch the condition of your soul in tones that belie the death of death.

Jeremiah was shackled in prison because he preached "you" to Israel. Paul was brought to Rome in chains because he preached "you" to the Jews. Jesus was nailed to a tree because He preached "you" to the world.

Your preacher should have an acute awareness of the urgency of this place, this time and His message. Preaching that costs little will accomplish little. Like David, your preacher must not offer that to God which costs him nothing. Preaching “you” is expensive. But then, not preaching “you” is even more expensive.

“If I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for I am under compulsion; for woe is me if I do not preach the gospel.”²⁶

Appendix D: The Unregenerate Preachers.

John Chrysostom said, “If a man should speak fire, blood, and smoke; if flames could come out of his mouth instead of words; if he had a voice like thunder and an eye like lightning, he could not sufficiently represent the dreadful account that an unfaithful pastor shall make. What horror and confusion shall it cast them into at the last day to hear the blood of the Son of God plead against them, to hear our great Master say, ‘It was the purchase of My blood which ye did neglect! God died for these souls, of whom ye took so little pains!’ Think not, therefore, to be saved by that blood which ye have despised, or to escape the torments whereunto many others are plunged through your faults!”²⁷ In another place Mr. Chrysostom said, “For my part, I do not think many of the ministers of the church are saved.”

Appendix E: The Labor of the Hearers.

“Come not to hear with a careless heart, as if you were to hear a matter that little concerned you, but come with a sense of the unspeakable weight, necessity, and consequence of the holy work which you are to hear; and when you understand how much you are concerned in it, it will greatly help your understanding of every particular truth....

“Make it your work with diligence to apply the word as you are hearing it.... Cast not all upon the minister, as those that will go no further than they are carried as by force.... You have work to do as well as the preacher, and should all the time be as busy as he... you must open your mouths, and digest it, for another cannot digest it for you... therefore be all the while at work, and abhor an idle heart in hearing, as well as an idle minister.

“Chew the cud, and call up all when you come home in secret, and by meditation preach it over to yourselves. If it were coldly delivered by the preacher, do you...preach it more earnestly over to your own hearts....”
Richard Baxter, *Practical Works of Richard Baxter* (George Virtue: London, 1838) I:473,475.

“Many come to these holy places, and are so transported with a desire of hearing, that they forget the fervency of praying and praising God...all our preaching is but to beget your praying; to instruct you to praise and worship God...I complain not that our churches are auditories, but that they are oratories; not that you come to sermons (for God’s sake, come

faster), but that you neglect public prayer: as if it were only God's part to bless you, not yours to bless God...

Beloved, mistake not. It is not the only exercise of a Christian to hear a sermon; nor is that Sabbath well spent that despatcheth no other business for heaven... God's service is not to be narrowed up in hearing, it hath greater latitude; there must be prayer, praise, adoration..." Thomas Adams, *Works* (James Nichol: Edinburgh, 1861-62) I:103.

"Prepare to meet thy God, O Christian! Betake thyself to the chamber on the Saturday night, confess and bewail thine unfaithfulness under the ordinances of God; shame and condemn thyself for thy sins, entreat God to prepare thy heart for, and assist it in, thy religious performances; spend some time in consideration of the infinite majesty, holiness, jealousy, and goodness, of that God, with whom thou are to have to do in sacred duties; ponder the weight and importance of His holy ordinances...; meditate on the shortness of the time thou hast to enjoy Sabbaths in; and continue musing...till the fire burneth; thou canst not think the good thou mayest gain by such forethoughts, how pleasant and profitable a Lord's Day would be to thee after such a preparation. The oven of thine heart thus baked in, as it were, overnight, would be easily heated the next morning; the fire so well raked up when thou wentest to bed, would be the sooner kindled when thou shouldst rise. If thou wouldst thus leave thy heart with God on the Saturday night, thou shouldst find it with Him in the Lord's Day morning." George Swinnock, *Works* (James Nichol: Edinburgh, 1868) I:234.²⁸

Suggested Reading:

- John Baillie, *A Diary of Private Prayer* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996).
Richard Baxter, *A Christian Directory* (Morgan, Pa.: Soli Deo Gloria Publications, 1996).
Joel R. Beeke, *Puritan Evangelism, A Biblical Approach* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 1999).
Loraine Boettner, *Immortality* (Philadelphia: P & R Publishing Company, 1971).
Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship* (New York: MacMillan Publishing Company, 1963).
Jerry Bridges, *The Practice of Godliness* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1983).
John Bunyan, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, with notes by Warren Wiersbe, (Grand Rapids: Discovery House, 1989).
William Gurnall, *The Christian In Complete Armour* (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1995).
Abraham Kuyper, *Abraham Kuyper, A Centennial Reader*, ed. James D. Bratt (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998).
Brother Lawrence, *The Practice of the Presence of God* (Springdale, Pa.: Whitaker House, 1982).
Richard F. Lovelace, *Dynamics of Spiritual Life* (Downers Grove, Ill.: Inter-Varsity Press, 1979).

Stephen F. Olford, *Not I But Christ* (Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, 1995).
 John Owen, *Sin and Temptation*, ed. James M. Houston (Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1996).
 J. I. Packer, *A Quest For Godliness* (Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, 1990).
 J. I. Packer, *Knowing God* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1973).
 Arthur W. Pink, *The Sovereignty Of God* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1987).
 Francis A. Schaeffer, *How Should We Then Live?* (Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, 1983).
 Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield, *The Inspiration And Authority Of The Bible* (Phillipsburg, N. J.: P & R Publishing Company, 1948).
 G. I. Williamson, *The Westminster Confession Of Faith* (Philadelphia: P & R Publishing Company, 1964).

* The writings of the following authors will serve to enrich any Christian's soul:
 Anthony Burgess, Jeremiah Burroughs, Stephen Charnock, Jonathan Edwards, William Greenhill, D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, Matthew Mead, Richard Sibbes, Charles Haddon Spurgeon, Thomas Vincent, Thomas Watson, George Whitefield, The Church Fathers and The Reformers.

Caution:

You cannot be about your Master's business unless you purpose to know the business of your Master. Read the writings of authors that regard Scripture as the only rule of faith and practice. Your favorite books should be those wherein God is exalted, the Lord Jesus Christ is honored and the Holy Spirit is accessed.

Make sure that the author draws the distinction between salvation and sanctification, grace and faith, regeneration and justification. When you settle for writings that are shallow, vague, misty and designed for increased sales rather than richer souls, you have chosen for your mind and heart to forfeit the length, breadth, width and depth of the true God of Scripture.

PREACHING

The Man

“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth” (II Ti. 2:15).

Anointed by the Holy Spirit to pastor by preaching.

Possesses a sense of _____, _____ and _____.

Prays:

_____ yet confident in Christ.

No men-pleasing: *Gal. 1:10; II Ti. 4:3*

Wise: _____, _____, _____.

The Message

It is written – The mouth of the Lord has spoken it – The grass withers, the flower fades...

Speaks with apostolic _____.

He is God's _____, speaking **vox Dei**.

Thunders to sleeping souls; not debating, but declaring, “Thus sayeth the Lord.”

He preaches the whole counsel of God, both the Old Testament and the _____.
Preaches *I Cor. 2:1-5*
Preaches for decision by disturbing _____ and _____.
“Woe to those who are at ease in Zion...” (Am. 6:1)

The Mission

II Cor. 3:18 – Transformation (see Appendix A)
Application: Christians rarely volunteer to personally apply even the basic truths.
C.H. Spurgeon: “Preach not only so that the people can understand, but so that they cannot misunderstand if they wish.”
George Swinnock: “There is no such cruelty to men’s souls, as clemency to their sins.”
Make ancient ways relevant thereby enabling hearers to interpret their condition:
_____, corporately, _____ and globally (*I Chron. 12:32*).

The Encumbrances

Sloth
Demands of congregants
Shallow evangelicalism’s entertainment & non-offensive mode (see Appendix B).
Protecting congregants from _____.
Lack of confidence in Christ: _____ hears words addressed to everyone (see Appendix C).
Unwillingness to be a _____ for Christ.
Unconverted Preachers (see Appendix D).

The Enablers

Holy Spirit
Living with Intentionality → Avoiding _____.
Swaths of time invested on the mountain of God.
Unafraid of the world thereby willing to take the 1st bullet from men and devils.
Prays for God’s vision for his life and those God has called him to shepherd.
Passionate about the Biblical God.
When the congregation he shepherds prepares itself to hear God’s Word (see Appendix E).

Closing:

Alexis de Toqueville:
And I searched for a man among them.... (Eze. 22:30).

PREACHING

The Man

Ez. 7:10 – II Ti. 2:15 – Amos 7:14ff. – Sense of place/history/urgency/bracingly sure
HS anointed to pastor by preaching–Prays to see/hear more of God than man– Adorer/praiser of +
Student of Scripture – Self-suspicious yet confident in + - No men-pleasing: *Gal. 1:10; II Ti. 4:3*
Wise: Appraising/interpreting/penetrating –Identifies spiritual strangulation–Expects opposition
An affect pervaded w/ God-glorifying prophetic authority and compassion for men’s souls
Intelligently contradicts contemporary philosophy/traditions/accepted societal & church practices

The Message

It is written – The mouth of the Lord has spoken it – The grass withers, the flower fades...
He holds forth/takes the word w/ apostolic authority/seraphic joy – God’s trumpet/**vox Dei**
Preaches what cannot be contained on paper: Majesty/lightning/thunder/hell/rainbows
Plain/clear/thunder to sleeping souls ~ Debate, declares: *Thus sayeth*–Depth: Message judges you
Whole Counsel = hallowed dynamite = OT & NT – Bread/stone: Starved bec. they stayed

Preaches *I Cor. 2:1-5*: Depravity of man - Disenculturation from American Babylon
Enculturation to American Canaan – Gospel ~ enable you to live w/ you, but to live w/ God
Preaches for decision: Disturbs biases/lifestyles – Challenge them to radical commit./sacrifices
Woe to those who are at ease in Zion... (Am. 6:1)

The Mission

II Cor. 3:18 – Transformation (see Appendix A) – Fortify the battler: > Conquerors ~ casualties
Application flowing from exegesis: Christians rarely volunteer to personally apply even basics
C.H. Spurgeon: “Preach not only so that the people can understand, but so that they cannot misunderstand if they wish.”

George Swinnock: “There is no such cruelty to men’s souls, as clemency to their sins.”²⁹

Make ancient ways relevant thereby enabling hearers to interpret their condition
personally/corporately/nationally/globally (*I Chron. 12:32*)

The Encumbrances

Sloth: Prayer/study precede the sacred desk – Demands of congregants: Complacent lifestyles
Shallow evangelicalism’s entertainment & non-offensive mode (see Appendix B)– Trespass souls
Protecting congregants from truth/God’s holiness – Casual –v- Confrontational Addresses
Lack of confidence in Christ: No one hears words addressed to everyone (see Appendix C)
Bishop Ryle says of Geo. Whitefield: “He never used that indefinite expression ‘we,’ which seems so peculiar to English pulpit oratory, and which only leaves a hearer’s mind in a state of misty confusion.” – You stand between man and eternity → Gravitas/Seriousness
Unwillingness to be a fool for Christ – Unconverted Preachers (see Appendix D)

The Enablers

HS – Sacred Energy/excitement/enthusiasm – Live w/ intentionality/Avoid busyness – Margins
Swaths of time invested on the mtn. of God – Eyes of assassin: Envision dry bones & HS breath
Earnestness/Volcanic – Read widely – Discipline/balance – Unafraid/Takes 1st bullet
Dies for holiness: preaches as a dying man to dying men – Vision/Leadership/Alone/Arrows back
Passion for/about the Biblical God enables preaching to leap across the millennia
Preparing yourself to hear God’s Word (see Appendix E)

Closing:

Alexis de Toqueville: “I sought...commodious/ample/fertile/boundless...rich mines/vast world
commerce/public school sys./instit. of higher learning...democratic Congress/matchless constit...
And I searched for a man among them.... (Eze. 22:30).

_____, *The Puritan Remembrancer* ed. by H. J. Horn (London: Stanley Martin & Co., Ltd., 1928), p.

I have not used quotation marks as they are all quoted unless otherwise noted.

It is weakness to be hot in a cold matter, but worse to be cold in a hot matter. John Trapp. P. 224.

There is no such cruelty to men’s souls, as clemency to their sins. George Swinnock. P. 258.

It is a holy impudence to be impudent in calling upon people to regard their souls. It is a sinful modesty to prefer courtesy herein before Christianity. William Jenkyn. P. 258.

Many will walk with religion when she wears her silver slippers. John Bunyan. P. 333.

A pluralist in religion is indeed a neutralist. Thomas Adams. P. 333.

C.H.Spurgeon:

“Preach not only so that the people can understand, but so that they cannot misunderstand if they wish.” S. M. Houghton, *Sketches From Church History* (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2001), p. 240.

¹ II Ti. 4:2

² Ezra 7:10

³ Gal. 1:10; II Ti. 4:3

⁴ II Cor. 3:18

⁵ Acts 17:26

⁶ Eze. 22:30

⁷ Mt. 28:18-20

⁸ II Cor. 10:4f.

⁹ Ro. 12:1f.

¹⁰ I Pe. 2:9

¹¹ II Cor. 10:10

¹² Eph. 3:10

¹³ Eph. 5:25

¹⁴ I Cor. 14:40

¹⁵ Gal. 1:6

¹⁶ Ernest F. Kevan, *The Grace of Law* (Morgan, Pa.: Soli Deo Gloria Publications, 1999), p. 86.

¹⁷ Jon. 3:4

¹⁸ Mt. 3:2

¹⁹ Mk. 1:15

²⁰ *The Puritan Remembrancer*, *Ibid.*, p. 142.

²¹ Heb. 2:3

²² I Cor. 2:1-5

²³ II Cor. 5:20

²⁴ D. C. MacNicol, *Robert Bruce: Minister in the Kirk of Edinburgh* (1907; reprint ed., n.p.: Banner of Truth, 1961), p. 38.

²⁵ Eze. 33:7f.

²⁶ I Cor. 9:16

²⁷ Henry Scougal, *The Works of Henry Scougal* (Morgan, Pa.: Soli Deo Gloria Publications, 2002), p. 235.

²⁸ J. I. Packer, *A Quest for Godliness* (Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, 1990), pp. 254-257.

²⁹ George Swinnock, *The Puritan Remembrancer* ed. by H. J. Horn (London: Stanley Martin & Co., Ltd., 1928), p. 258.