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**INTERNATIONAL TRAINING AND EQUIPPING MINISTRIES**  
**ITEM Conference on Ministry and Preaching**  
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**PROVING THE PRIORITY OF EXPOSITORY PREACHING**

Preaching Lecture #10

**Introduction:** We all look with possible anger towards a lawyer or a judge who distorts the truth for personal gain and wealth. We also respond with possible anger at an untrained doctor who risks the health of a patient because he does not know what he is doing. So how should we think about a “spiritual physician” (a pastor) who is responsible for the souls of men and women who does not know what to do or is not doing what he is called to do. Preachers are held to a higher standard and will receive stronger judgment if they are not faithful in what they do (James 3:1).

The pastor is the one who is supposed to discover the errors of his church members and free them of the strongholds of ignorance in their lives. The pastor has only one weapon and it is the Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God (Eph 6:17).

The preacher must become like Ezra who “set his heart to study the Law of God, and to practice it, and to teach His statutes and ordinances” (Ezra 7:10) or be like Apollos who was “mighty in the Scriptures” (Acts 18:24).

**I. THE REASON FOR EXPOSITORY PREACHING**

- A. It follows our strong belief that the entire Bible is inspired and without any errors (2 Tim 3:16-17).
- B. Paul told Timothy to “Preach the Word” (2 Tim 4:1-2).
- Preaching appears in the Bible as repeating what God has said about Himself, His actions, and about His relationships with men. It is also a declaration of His commands, promises, and warnings and the expectation is that the hearers will respond positively.
- C. If all Scripture is inspired then we should preach it in such a way that the meaning of the Bible passage is presented entirely and accurately as it was intended by God.
- D. Expository preaching is the only preaching that preserves the purity of Scripture.

## II. A THEOLOGY OF EXPOSITORY PREACHING

- A. Why do we preach? Because God commanded it (2 Tim 4:2) and the apostles responded to His command (Acts 6:4).
- B. What do we preach? The Word of God only (1 Tim 4:13; 2 Tim 4:2).
- C. Who preaches? Holy men of God (Luke 1:70; Acts 3:21; Eph 3:5; 2 Pet 1:21; Isa 6:6-13).
- D. What is the preacher's responsibility?
  - 1. He is to realize these six things.
    - a. He is a messenger only, not the originator of the message.
    - b. He is the sower, not the source of the message (Matt 13:3, 19).
    - c. He is a proclaimer, not the authority.
    - d. He is a steward, not the owner (Col 1:25).
    - e. He is the guide, not the author (Acts 8:31).
    - f. He is the server of the "spiritual food," not the cook (John 21:15, 17).
  - 2. He needs to be convinced and committed to the fact that the Scripture is GOD'S Word not the word of man (1 Thes 2:13).
    - a. Then he will stand under Scripture's authority not over it.
    - b. Then he will let Scripture speak through him, not deliver his own message.
- Scripture must do the talking. The preacher is only the one that Scripture speaks through.
- E. How did the preacher's message begin?
  - 1. It began as a true word from God.
  - 2. Holy men received it and recorded it (2 Pet 1:20-21).
- F. How is God's message to continue in its original true condition? Only a verse by verse, chapter by chapter method will protect God's original truth and preserve the completeness and the accuracy of the message.
- G. What is the final step that connects inerrancy to preaching?
  - 1. The true text from the Scripture must be used. (Use the best translation possible.)
  - 2. Interpret the text accurately. This requires hard work (1 Tim 5:17; 2 Tim 2:15).

3. The preacher must try to use good judgment when interpreting the text.
    - a. He must consider whether it is a story, poetry, a letter, history, or prophecy. (All are understood correctly when there is proper understanding of what kind of writing it is.)
    - b. He must look closely at the context. That includes the verses before and after the text he is preaching from and even the chapters before to truly understand the truth of the text he is preaching from.
  4. After beginning with the true Scripture message, then interpreting it properly the preacher is ready to preach an expository sermon.
- NOTE: An expository sermon can be long or short. It can include a series of many verses or only a few. The sermon is an expository sermon if the preacher clearly explains the meaning of the verses and applies what they say to the present-day needs of the hearers.
  - NOTE: Exposition begins with a strong belief the all Scripture is inspired and infallible. Then the preacher commits himself to studying it, then to simply explaining to the hearers what it says and what it means and how to apply it.

### **III. THE RELEVANC OF EXPOSITORY PREACHING**

- A. Many reject expository preaching. They say it is not exciting. They are the ones who only want their ears tickled (2 Tim 4:3).
- B. The preacher needs to remember that what many want is not what they need (1 Pet 2:2).

### **IV. THE DEFINITION OF EXPOSITORY PREACHING**

- A. There are generally three types of sermons.
  1. Topical sermons usually combine several Bible verses that loosely connect with some theme or topic.
  2. Textual sermons use a short passage from the Bible that generally provide a pathway into whatever subject the preacher chooses to talk about.
  3. Expository sermons focus mainly on the chosen passage and their context.
- B. An expository sermon “exposes” the meaning of the text even when it is hard to understand. Exposition is simply “explaining the meaning and giving the application of the verses.”
- C. The preacher (the expositor) “lays the Scripture open” for the hearer to be able to understand the meaning and then make the appropriate application.

D. A summary of expository preaching

1. The sermon's only source is Scripture.
  2. The sermon is taken directly out of Scripture through careful study.
  3. The preacher prepares his sermons by carefully interpreting the verses in context using the normal literal meaning of the words.
  4. The sermon clearly explains the God-intended meaning of Scripture. This meaning is discovered through careful study.
  5. The sermon applies the message from the Scripture to life today.
- NOTE: An example from the ministry of Jesus in Luke 4:16-22. Another is from the ministry of Philip (Acts 8:27-35).

**V. UNDERSTANDING THE EXPOSITORY PROCESS**

A. The preparation of the expositor (preacher)

1. The preacher must be a true follower of Christ, a true Christian.
  2. The preacher must be appointed and gifted by God to the preaching and teaching ministry (Eph 4:11-16 and 1 Tim 3:1-2).
  3. The preacher must be willing to be a student of the Word of God. If he is not then he cannot carry out the command to "rightly divide" or "cut straight" God's truth (2 Tim 2:15).
  4. The preacher must be a mature believer who demonstrates a consistent godly life and character (1 Tim 3:2-3).
  5. The preacher must be dependent upon the Holy Spirit for insight and understanding of God's Word (1 Cor 2:14-15).
  6. The preacher must be in prayerful communion with God to be able to receive the full force of the Word (Psalm 119:18).
  7. The preacher must first let the message he is building enter his own thinking and life before he can preach it. Ezra is the example. He studied it and applied it before he taught it (Ezra 7:10).
- B. Look for basic, general principles from the text that can be applied to anyone, anytime, and in any place.

- C. Use introductions, conclusions, stories, and illustrations to help
  - 1. All of these are useful when explaining the meaning of the text to those who are listening.
  - 2. The preacher must relate all of them to the specific audience who is listening.
- D. When the preacher preaches what he has learned from the careful study of the Bible text he must be clear.
  - 1. The purpose of preaching is not to motivate people emotionally while not challenging their thinking.
  - 2. When people are motivated to act they must be given biblical teaching that tells them why they are to act. This appeal is to the mind.

**Conclusion:** Through our preaching the Lord wants to change people's lives. He does that as we become God's messenger who tells people what God has said in His Word.