
INTERNATIONAL TRAINING AND EQUIPPING MINISTRIES
ITEM Conference on Ministry and Preaching
Dr. Steve Van Horn

THE PATTERN OF BIBLICAL PREACHING (Ezra 7:10)

Preaching Lecture #5

Introduction: A Bible scholar once said that when a man preaches, he should never remove his finger from the Scriptures. What he was trying to say is that the preacher's complete focus should be on exactly what the Bible says. The preacher should always be pointing at the Scriptures. In too many sermons the Bible is mentioned at the beginning of the sermon but then the Bible is closed and never mentioned again.

How can pastors expect people to be saved and believers to become spiritually healthy if they not are preaching and teaching the Bible just as it was written, verse by verse (1 Pet 1:23-25; John 17:17)?

I. AN EXAMPLE FOR ALL PREACHING (EZRA)

- A. God used Ezra to start a great spiritual revival when he returned to Jerusalem from the Babylonian captivity (Ezra chapters 7-10).
- B. Ezra 7:10 characterized Ezra's life. He *studied, practiced, and taught* the Law of God.
 - 1. Before he ever taught the Law to Israel he first studied it and practiced what it said.
 - 2. All biblical preachers and teachers should follow this example: study to Bible so you can get to know it, practice what it says, then and only then teach it to others asking them to obey.

II. THE PREACHER'S PREPARATION IN THE WORD (EZRA STUDIED THE LAW)

- A. Ezra 7:10 says he "set his heart to study God's Law." That means he was totally committed to study God's Word.
- B. Ezra concentrated his whole life on the study of the law.
- C. The word "study" means to look at something carefully.

- D. Ezra studied the Word of God carefully and investigated what it was saying.
- E. Ezra wanted to know what it said about everything.
- F. For a preacher today to be truly powerful in the pulpit he must first “set his heart” to study the Word of God carefully just as Ezra did.
- G. All serious preachers who want to please God with their preaching must be serious students of the Bible and be willing to devote themselves to learning what it says on every page

III. THE PREACHER MUST PRACTICE THE WORD (EZRA OBEYED THE LAW)

- A. His study of the Word of God led to Ezra living a holy life.
- B. What he learned he lived.
- C. After he studied the Word of God and before he preached the Word of God he lived out the Word of God. Obedience comes before preaching.
- D. Ezra obeyed God completely.
- E. Those who preach and teach are held to a higher standard of obedience (James 3:1).
- F. Preachers and Bible teachers today should follow Ezra’s example.

IV. THE PREACHER’S PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD (NEHEMIAH 8:1-8)

- Biblical preaching and teaching seeks to lead people to obey the Word of God by declaring exactly what God has said (word by word) in his Word.
- A. When Ezra took the book of the Law to read it the people stood up out of respect and reverence for God’s Word (v. 2-6).
 - 1. They knew they were about to hear God speak directly through His Word.
 - 2. When Ezra prayed they bowed with their faces to the ground and worshipped.
- B. Ezra read from the book of the Law with emotion and meaning and passion (v. 8).
 - 1. Jesus began His ministry by reading Isaiah 61:1-2
 - 2. Paul instructed Timothy to read the Word (1 Tim 4:13).
 - 3. By reading the Bible to the church the preacher is proclaiming the Word of God directly to the church.

- C. Ezra explained the words so the people understood (v. 8)
 - 1. The people understood the Word (v. 2-3, 7-8, 12-13).
 - 2. Biblical preaching should result in:
 - a. Proper understanding of the meaning of the verses that the sermon is coming from.
 - b. A way to personally apply what has been preached.
 - c. A call to choose to live according to the verses that were preached from.

Conclusion: Biblical preaching is NOT preaching about the Bible, it is preaching the Bible.

Biblical preaching begins in the Bible, it ends in the Bible, and everything in the middle comes out of the Bible.