

## Word and Spirit

Goal for this lesson: To consider approaches to preparing messages that keep preachers true to the priorities of the Word and Spirit.

### I. How to Demonstrate Priorities of the Word in the Pulpit:

A. Preach from an Open Bible

B. Refer to the Text Often in the Sermon

1. Cite the portion of the text from which your point (or subpoint) is taken
2. Take persons to “helpful” parallel passages (pre-mark them in your Bible)
3. Give people time to find the passage before you read from it (occasionally encourage them repeat it with you)

C. Read the Word meaningfully

1. How?

- a. Not sentimentally nor theatrically nor with "stained glass/preacher tones"
- b. Read at a conversational pace
- c. Let voice and intonation reflect content and meaning
- d. Emphasize verbs and modifier
- e. Practice out loud for sentence breaks, punctuation surprises, pronunciation problems

2. Hints

- a. Use the Scripture Introduction to prepare listeners for surprises and difficulties
  - Hard terms/names, new ideas, story background, context, or twists
  - Skipped verses (curiosity makes listeners read what you skip)
  - Combined passages
- b. Read "indelicate" matters (see Broadus p. 360) in more appropriate translation or with "unconcerned" matter-of-factness.
- c. Practice; read meaningfully to children.
- d. Give respect before/after you read the Word (“This is the Word of the Lord...;” “Thus far God’s Word...”; “Let’s read together, God’s holy and inerrant Word ...”)
- e. Pray before/after you read the Word

3. Why?

- a. Reading is itself a type of exposition and interpretation (even for yourself)
- b. More and more people are dependent on the public reading (as in the early church, so occasionally look up as you read)
- c. Reflects your own theology of the Word; you believe the Word is able to change people eternally and is the source of authoritative truth

Rev. 1:3 "Blessed is he that reads, and they that hear, the words of this (book)"  
Heb. 4:12 "The Word of God is quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit ... and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

## II. Why to Engage the Priorities of the Spirit in the Pulpit:

### A. Preaching is a Redemptive Event (John 17:17)

17 Sanctify {Greek hagiazo (set apart for sacred use or make holy) them by the truth; your word is truth.... (see also vs. 190

19 For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified.

(Not simply thoughts for mind or memory, but words of life by the Word of Life)

And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the word of God, *which is at work in you who believe.* (I Thess. 2:13)

#### 1. Christ as Speaker, God as Audience (II Pet. 1:21; John 16:13-14; II Tim. 4:1-2)

For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit (II Pet. 1:21)

But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. 14 He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you.(John 16:13-14)

In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge: 2 Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage--with great patience and careful instruction. (II Tim. 4:1-2)

#### 2. The Word Made Flesh (I Cor. 1: 17-18, 21; Titus 1:3)

17 For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel--not with words of human wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power. 18 For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.... 21 For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe (I Cor. 1:17-18, 21)

[A]t his appointed season he brought his word to light through the preaching entrusted to me by the command of God our Savior (Titus 1:3)

#### 3. Co-creators of a New Creation (John 1:1-3; 17:18, 21-23; I Pet. 1:23-25)

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was with God in the beginning. 3 Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. (John 1:1-3)

18 As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world.... 21 that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. 22 I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: 23 I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. (John 17:18, 23-23)

23 For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God. 24 For, "All men are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field; the grass withers and the flowers fall, 25 but the word of the Lord stands forever." And this is the word that was preached to you. (I Pet. 1:23-25)

#### B. Preaching is Supernatural Event (Fire and Wax = Speaker and Listener)

We tend to be more concerned to perform our part creditably than we are about God's mighty involvement in our efforts. We tend to be more hungry for success than we are for God's empowering" (Duewel, 81). God made it clear to Zerubbabel that the task of rebuilding the temple would be accomplished "not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit" (Zech. 4:6). As Phillips Brooks said, "Never allow yourself to feel equal to your work. If you ever find that spirit growing on you, be afraid" (Piper, 38).

#### 1. The Need of Unction (Luke 4:18-19; I John 2:20, *KJV*)

(1 Thess. 1:5) Our gospel came to you not simply with words, but also with power; with the Holy Spirit and with deep conviction."

(Luke 4:18-19) "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, 19 to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

(I John 2:20, *KJV*) But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things.

Unction means the anointing of the Holy Spirit upon a sermon so that something holy and powerful is added to the message that no preacher can naturally generate, no matter how great his skills.

## 2. The Requirements of Unction (Illumination, Conviction, Assimilation)

### a. Illumination

- John 14:26

But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will *teach* you all things and will *remind* you of everything I have said to you.

Teach = understanding (give insight into what the Scriptures mean in themselves and for our circumstances)

Remind= bring teaching to mind (we remember what we would not without the intervention of the Spirit; my thoughts are ordered and stimulated by the Spirit so that I remember – have appear in my thoughts – things I would not consider without him. I put my circumstances and my people's in appropriate juxtaposition with appropriate scriptural truth by the working of the Spirit)

- I Corinthians 2:14

The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.

Does the Bible support an emphasis on the Spirit's power in our preaching? I believe it does. In 1 Corinthians two, Paul states: " My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, so that your faith might not rest on men's wisdom, but on God's power" (vss. 4-5). and then he says that " God has revealed [the riches of God's wisdom] to us by his Spirit," for " the Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God" (vss. 10-11). " We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us. This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words" (vss. 12, 13). God's truth is " spiritually discerned" (v. 14), and because " we have the mind of Christ" (v. 16) we may proclaim these truths with spiritual insight and power. In 1 Thessalonians 1:5 Paul writes that " our gospel came to you not simply with words, but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and with deep conviction." There are many other scriptures that support - either directly or indirectly - this foundational truth ( Acts 1: 8; 4:29-31; 1 Cor. 15: 10-11; 2 Cor. 3:3-6; 12:9; Col. 1:28-29; Mt. 28:18-20).

### b. Conviction (John 16:8)

7 But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.

8 When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment:

Sin=what is wrong

Righteousness=what is right

Judgment=what is ahead (Christ's victory and Satan's demise)

c. Assimilation (John 3:3, 11-13; II Timothy 2:15)

(John 3:3, 11-13) In reply Jesus declared, "I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again.".... 11 I tell you the truth, we speak of what we know, and we testify to what we have seen, but still you people do not accept our testimony. 12 I have spoken to you of earthly things and you do not believe; how then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things? 13 No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven--the Son of Man.

i. Study (II Tim. 2:15,16; 3:14-17)

(II Tim. 2:15,16) Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth. 16 Avoid godless chatter, because those who indulge in it will become more and more ungodly.

(II Tim. 3:14-17) But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, 15 and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. 16 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, 17 so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

"All Scripture is God-breathed...Preach the Word!" The unction is already upon the Scriptures. The Bible is already drenched in sacred oil. When I preach, I love those inexplicable moments when I find myself soaring, when the Word is like honey to me, and fire. But what I have learned from Paul's last admonitions to Timothy (i.e., be prepared in season and out) is to trust the unction that is always upon Scripture even when my words seem clumsy or common.

Sometimes unction is simply received by faith, without feeling the wind or the heat. We go home to our Sunday afternoon nap deflated and disappointed that nothing seemed to happen. But when with a pure heart, a Christian preacher declares the Scriptures, or proclaims Christ, or calls for repentance and holiness, his words are surely anointed.

Martin Lloyd-Jones: *The right way to look upon the unction of the Spirit is to think of it as that which comes upon the preparation.*

The preparation that ML-J has in mind includes "all I have been saying." This involves the preparation of the message (including exegesis, exposition, homiletics, etc.) and the preparation of the preacher (through prayer, personal holiness, devotional exercise, study, general reading, etc.). To my mind, this is the sanest and most holistic treatment of the way to true spiritual unction to be found in any 20th-century treatment of this subject.

ii. Piety (Psm. 66:18; John 8:31-2; I Thess. 2:3-12; Philemon 1:6)

(Psm. 66:18) If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened;

(John 8:31-2) To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. 32 Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

(I Thess. 2:8-9) We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well, because you had become so dear to us. 9 Surely you remember, brothers, our toil and hardship; we worked night and day in order not to be a burden to anyone while we preached the gospel of God to you.

(Philemon 1:6) I pray that you may be active in sharing your faith, so that you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ.

Must know light to see light-- Hodge

Alexander Maclaren said, " Power for service is second. Power for holiness and character is first. . . . The first, second, and third requisite for our work is personal godliness." J. D. Jones said, " The one indispensable condition of our usefulness and success in the work of the ministry is that we should be good men - men of pure and holy life - men of God. . . . The effect of our words on the Sabbath will really depend on our lives during the week, for it is always the man behind the speech which wields the power" (Wiersbe, p. 144).

Another hindrance is our desiring the power out of wrong motives. James writes: " When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives" (4:3). Unbelief is another major reason for the lack of power in our preaching, and in our lives. Many preachers - perhaps the majority who are not preaching in the power of the Spirit of God - don't really believe it's possible. They say, " Well, I'm this kind of person, you know. I have this kind of temperament or personality."

iii. Prayer (Acts 6:4)

(Acts 6:3-4) Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word."

### III. An Approach to Spiritually and Homiletically Sound Expository Messages:

(P)                                      RAMBOPP                                      (P)

#### Read the passage

- |             |              |   |              |
|-------------|--------------|---|--------------|
| ·Search for | Main idea    | } |              |
|             |              | } | The Big Idea |
|             | Thought flow | } |              |

- Create *Cursory* Exegetical Outline

#### Apply

- Identify a FCF (Fallen Condition Focus)
- Personalize the FCF for your People

#### More Research

- Consider Historical Background
- Consider Logical and Literary Context
- Conduct Pinpoint Exegesis
- Develop *Exhaustive* Exegetical Outline

#### Brainstorm

- Consider Homiletical Outline Options
- Specify Applications
- Collect Illustrations

#### Outline

- Determine Proposition, Main Points and Subpoints
- Determine Conclusion and Introduction

#### Plug-In

- Plug-in Main Point and Subpoint Explanations
- Plug-in Illustrations and Applications

#### Practice

#### Pray

- Prior to Preparation
- Prior to Presentation



#### **IV. An Alternative Approach to Sound Expository Messages:**

1. Read
2. Research
3. Focus on a Single Idea
4. Bathe all in Prayer

#### **Conclusion:**

Question 72: What is justifying faith?

Answer: Justifying faith is a saving grace, wrought in the heart of a sinner by the Spirit and Word of God, whereby he, being convinced of his sin and misery, and of the disability in himself and all other creatures to recover him out of his lost condition, not only assents to the truth of the promise of the gospel, but receives and rests upon Christ and his righteousness, therein held forth, for pardon of sin, and for the accepting and accounting of his person righteous in the sight of God for salvation.