

Preaching Christ in a Post-Modern World

Notes on Lecture 13 Adoring Christ: Getting Inside Their World Part Two

By Tim Keller

How do you argue for the authority of the Bible?

Traditional way: Look at fulfilled prophecy of the OT.

Better contemporary way:

- 1) Do you want a personal relationship with God?
- 2) You can't have a personal with God unless you accept the authority of the Bible
- 3) Why? Because having a personal relationship means being outraged sometimes. You must expect the Bible to offend. Unless you accept the complete authority of the Bible God can't contradict you or differ with you.

The strategy used is presupposition apologetics. Affirm what they affirm, and then show them that their view is incomplete without biblical truth.

How do you argue for the reality Hell?

Post-modernist: I don't believe God would send anyone to Hell.

Christian: What did it cost your God to love us and embrace us? It cost my God pain, agony and torment to bring me near to Him. In your effort to make God more loving you've made God less loving by removing Hell from your worldview. If punishment doesn't exist because of God's justice, then when Christ died on the cross it wasn't really that bad and therefore Christ isn't really that loving. If you want a God who is willing to suffer and die for you, you must have a God of justice and Hell.

We need to know the people well enough to know what the people's commitments are. We need to understand their perspective.

How do you argue for the uniqueness of Christ?

Post-modernist: How can you say Jesus is the only way? I believe that we need to treat religions as roads to the top of the same hill.

Christian: If that's true you're claiming to be at the top of the hill seeing the whole truth. Your position assumes greater spiritual knowledge than all the religions of the world including Christianity. You're saying, "my spiritual understanding of all religions is right and enables me to evaluate the validity of all religions." You're actually as exclusive as me.

Preaching Matthew 26:61 - "This fellow said, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God and to build it in three days.'"

The main charge against Christ is found in Matt 26:21. Christ is being crucified for his claim over the temple.

- 1) What is a temple?
- 2) What did Jesus mean when He said He was a temple?
- 3) What does that mean for us today?

1) What is a temple?

A temple was a crossroad between heaven and earth. It was a place where you could bridge the gap between yourself and God.

Why is it that modern society doesn't know this concept? The enlightenment.

The enlightenment said everything has a natural cause. We can see through everything; we can solve all our problems. If this is true, then we don't need God. As science progresses and is applied problems will disappear.

But today lots of new religions are attracting attention. Why is this? Because people are realising that there is something behind the visible because science is not solving our problems.

The pragmatic problem: if everything is a problem of natural causes then every problem should be solved by scientific endeavour. But it's not. Everything is getting better except our problems, which are getting worse.

"All truth claims are really just really power grabs." Nietzsche

"All views of God are psychological projections to deal with your guilt and insecurity." Freud

If the two statements above are true we needn't pay attention to them because all our explanations can be explained away. To see through everything is not to see. People are starting to see that we need mediation.

Now we can see why Christ got killed for what He said.

2) What did Jesus mean when he said he was a temple?

By saying he was the temple Christ is claiming to be the God on the other side of the gap.

2 Chronicles 7:1-5- The Jews understood that the raw power of God is held in the temple.

The temple is where you meet with the divine and where the divine is mediated to you. We don't just need God we need a temple. We can't approach this holy God without a mediator. Christ is claiming to be the temple to end all temples.

3) What does that mean for us today?

If you're a searcher for God, you must build a relationship with him on grace. You can't be a good person to know God. If you do that you are turning the house of God into a market place to buy your way into God.

If you're a Christian, you need to know that the temple is a person not a place. And when you're united to this person you are united to his people. His people are his dwelling place.

Preaching Genesis 29:15-35

Traditional cultures suggest that family is what life is about.

A) Background of the story

1) Jacob came from a family chosen by grace

At every generation of Jacob's family one person will bear the messianic seed.

2) Jacob came from a family marked by brokenness

Isaac wife's Rebekah when having twins was told that the older shall serve the younger. In other words, the messianic seed would not come through the older child. The younger one would be in the line of the seed. Isaac ignored this and favoured Esau. Jacob became a manipulator.

B) The substance of the story

1) Laben's plot

Laben realises that he will become wealthy if Jacob works for him for a low price.

Laben realises that Jacob will do anything to get Rachel. Rachel's sister Leah had ugly eyes while Rachel was beautiful. Jacob thinks he makes a deal with Laben. Laben doesn't agree with Jacob's agreement. Jacob marries Leah and then gets him to work another seven years for Rachel.

2) Leah's Lot

Leah is married to someone who is madly in love with her sister.

Leah fights for the love of Jacob by having kids with him. She realises that she can praise YHWH- have the love of YHWH without fighting for it.

C) The meaning of the story

1) Do not make family your ultimate hope

Making family equal to happiness destroys family. Christianity is the first religion to say that being single is a valid way to live. Singleness can be a happy lifestyle.

2) Don't make anything on earth your ultimate hope

If you make anything your ultimate hope other than God, you go to bed thinking you have Rachel but then wake up and find it's Leah!

3) Make the ultimate family and the ultimate bridegroom your ultimate hope.

When God saw that Leah was not loved He opened Her womb. God chooses the weak things of the world to shame the wise. God is attracted to unattractive beautiful. Leah becomes the mother of our Lord. She bears Judah.

God is gracious to the broken.