

Reference: VARIOUS

Church: GRACE

Date: 1/9/00

Public Worship - Preaching

Purpose: To define preaching and show its place in public worship

1. Introduction

Continuing series on worship

What have we seen so far?

What is worship?

What place do the 10 commandments have?

What important principle did we see last time?

Now moving on to specifics of public worship

Have seen in series in the church how Word-centered she is

Saw last week we are to worship in Truth

Therefore start with preaching

2. What is preaching?

2.1. *The Act*

Greek word:

- 1) to be a herald, to officiate as a herald
 - 1a) to proclaim after the manner of a herald
 - 1b) always with the suggestion of formality, gravity and an authority which must be listened to and obeyed
- 2) to publish, proclaim openly: something which has been done
- 3) used of the public proclamation of the gospel and matters pertaining to it, made by John the Baptist, by Jesus, by the apostles and other Christian teachers

Ordered by God

Acts 10:39-43 We are witnesses of all the things He did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They also put Him to death by hanging Him on a cross. 40 God raised Him up on the third day and granted that He become visible, 41 not to all the people, but to witnesses who were

chosen beforehand by God, that is, to us who ate and drank with Him after He arose from the dead. 42 And He ordered us to **preach to the people**, and solemnly to testify that this is the One who has been appointed by God as Judge of the living and the dead. 43 Of Him all the prophets bear witness that through His name everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins."

Phillips Brooks defined preaching as "the bringing of truth through personality". The preacher is not only a herald, but also a witness.

Acts 1:8 but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and **you shall be My witnesses** both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."

Acts 2:32 This Jesus God raised up again, **to which we are all witnesses**.

2.2. *The Originator*

Who is it that the people hear in preaching?

Ephesians 4:20-21 But you did not learn Christ in this way, **21 if indeed you have heard Him** and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus,

It is the Lord's word and it is He who speaks in true preaching

2 ways someone can speak

Directly or through a herald

Consistent with the role of a herald as ambassador

This means there is a prophetic element in true preaching

Not in terms of new revelation

But of authoritative declaration from God to the people

As the spirit gives the message for the church

The preacher delivers in the power of the Spirit

The Spirit applies the word to the heart

2.3. *The Content*

2 types of preaching

To proclaim the Gospel – preaching/teaching

To edify the church – teaching/preaching

There is a sort of teaching that is by proclamation

2.4. *The purpose*

To proclaim the Word of the Lord

To witness to the message of the Gospel

To engender faith in the hearers – primary means of salvation

Romans 10:12-15 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call on Him;

13 for "Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved." **14 How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher?** 15 How will they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news of good things!"

1 Corinthians 1:21 For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not come to know God, God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.

To build up the church – knowledge and holiness
 "Sanctify them through the Truth – Your word is truth"
 To add to condemnation of those who are lost
 Side issues – what of drama, music in evangelism?
 Can they ever truly be preaching?

2.5. *The priority*

Acts 6:2 So the twelve summoned the congregation of the disciples and said, "It is not desirable for us to neglect the word of God in order to serve tables.

Given a place of great importance in the church

3. What is it not?

It is not lecturing – all the difference in the world
 Why is this?
 It is not simply recounting historical facts
 Why not? – No imperative – no heralding
 It is not simply explaining what scripture means
 Why not? – no application
 Not simply teaching – although this is involved in preaching
 How do we know this? – all elders must be apt to teach but some are gifted to preach
 It is not a TV program or a movie
 Yet often we treat it as though it were

4. How do we recognize true preaching?

Sadly, live in days when true preaching is seldom recognized
 People think anyone who can stand up and talk is a preacher!
 But true preaching can be recognized –
 What are its marks?
 Power – not personality but spiritual power,
 Authority – never apologetic,

freedom,
 exchange with congregation,
 Preacher's involvement with message, - it has touched him first
 warmth,
 urgency – the time is short
 application – some say this should not be the case
 Just expound and leave others to apply
 Was this the method of Bible preachers?

Acts 3:14-19 But you disowned the Holy and Righteous One and asked for a murderer to be granted to you, 15 but put to death the Prince of life, the one whom God raised from the dead, a fact to which we are witnesses. 16 And on the basis of faith in His name, it is the name of Jesus which has strengthened this man whom you see and know; and the faith which comes through Him has given him this perfect health in the presence of you all. 17 And now, brethren, I know that you acted in ignorance, just as your rulers did also. 18 But the things which God announced beforehand by the mouth of all the prophets, that His Christ would suffer, He has thus fulfilled. 19 **Therefore repent and return**, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord;

5. How is preaching worship?

Based on what we have seen so far, how is preaching worship?
 Some talk about having more participation
 Do not regard the sermon as something requiring involvement!
 Why is this wrong?
 The Lord speaks through His word
 How will His people listen? Involved or not?

6. What is Biblical evidence for its place in public worship?

Can't we argue from sheer logic?
 Why might we expect preaching to be an essential element of our worship?
 ?? The Scriptures are His Word
 ?? He speaks through preachers
 ?? We are to worship in truth

But there are Scriptures too:

It was clearly ancient practice among the Jews

Acts 15:21 For Moses from ancient generations has in every city those who preach him, since he is read in the synagogues every Sabbath."

It was an important part of the life of the early church

Acts 2:42-46 And they continued stedfastly in the **apostles' doctrine** and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. 43 And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. 44 And all that believed were together, and had all things common; 45 And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. 46 **And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple**, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,

It was part of the Sunday worship too

Acts 20:7 On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul began talking to them, intending to leave the next day, and he prolonged his message until midnight.

Timothy was a pastor – look at Paul's charge to him:

2 Timothy 4:1-2 I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: 2 preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction.

7. What kind of preaching conforms to the principles already developed?

Adhering to the Truth

Focused on the One True God

Done in a way that is in keeping with God's character

Listeners as well as the preacher!

Attentive, reverent, not bored, distracted

What does this suggest?

8. Conclusions

Have seen much about preaching

What it is and how it should be done

We need to take these things to heart especially today

Do not lose sight of them

Maintain the primacy of preaching

This has always been the means of God to the saving of His people

His means to the edifying of the church

The means He honors