

Preaching

In Homiletics, the aim is to firmly establish the Biblical basis of the preaching ministry as a divinely appointed means of grace in the life of the church. The overall aim is to set forth a preaching ministry with clear Reformed distinctives, placing the sermon itself in the context of a scriptural act of worship.

The programme covers the basic elements of sermon preparation including selecting the text, identifying its themes and applying its truth. Principles of sermon structure and practical matters of sermon delivery are also addressed.

Emphasis will be placed on the necessity and benefit of a preaching ministry that is both doctrinal and experimental, a ministry that seeks to reach both the mind and the heart of the hearer. The course aims to develop ministries that feed the souls of God's people, promote holiness of life, and which include regular preaching that is distinctly evangelistic. Preaching on special occasions such as weddings and funerals are also addressed.

The course takes students into the whole of scripture and therefore includes reference to the narrative, poetic and prophetic books of the Old Testament as well as the books of the New Testament. The Person and work of Christ, inevitably and rightly, feature prominently in all these studies.

Students are shown the necessity of prayer in the preaching ministry. Prayer is essential for themselves both in the preparation and in the delivery of sermons. It is also necessary on behalf of their hearers, that the Spirit of God might own and bless the word that is preached to their souls.

The subjects of evangelism and missions are also covered, including their respective Biblical bases and principles of practice.

Topics taught in the three years

2018

What is Preaching?

Foundations of Evangelism:

The Biblical Mandate for Evangelism

The Goal of Evangelism

The Spirit of the Evangelist

The Place of Prayer in Evangelism

Problems Faced in Evangelism

Biblical Practice of Evangelism:

Methods of Evangelism

The Biblical Practice of Evangelism, Preaching and Church Planting

Theology of Evangelism:

Evangelism: Free Will versus

Sovereign Grace

Persuasive Gospel Preaching – Paul's example

Evangelism in Relation to Revival

Preaching:

The Biblical Warrant for Preaching

Important Principles in Preaching

The Overview of Sermon

Preparation

Preaching Christ

Preaching the Cross

Preaching in the Spirit

Preaching or Lecturing

2019

Romance of Preaching

Calling of a Minister

Character of a Minister

Privilege & Primacy of Preaching

Introduction to Homiletics

Essentials of the Sermon

Text in the Sermon

Preacher and People

Sermon Application

A Balanced Preaching Ministry

A Balanced Sermon

Sermons:

Proposition

Proofs

Introduction and Conclusion

Notes

Biblical Preaching Patterns

Historical Preaching Patterns

Welsh Preaching

2020

Reformed Doctrine, Radical

Change of Life and Reverence in Worship

Sermon Notes and Delivery

Doctrinal Preaching

Controversial Preaching

Experimental Preaching

Expository Preaching

Passage Preaching

Series Preaching

Evangelistic Preaching

Preaching for Sanctification

Evangelistic Preaching from Psalms

Preaching Devotionally

Passionate Preaching

Preaching on special occasions

Preaching from the Types

Preaching from the prophets

Preaching: Practical Sessions

Missions

Content of Some Lectures:

Methods of Evangelism:

Evangelism was defined as the communication of a divinely inspired message from God called the Gospel (1 Corinthians 1 v 17-18 and Romans 1 v 16-18). The person of the Lord Jesus Christ is to be presented to sinful men in order that they come to put their trust in God and serve Him for the rest of their lives.

Since the Gospel has its origin in Christ, His method of Evangelism, drawn from the New Testament, was identified. Christ's method is the perfect example of Evangelism.

He had a MOTIVE – *“He was moved with compassion”* – Matthew 14 v 14.

He had a MESSAGE – Matthew 4 v 17 – *“Repent: for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand.”* He preached HIMSELF because He alone can bring the Kingdom and bring souls into the Kingdom. As we preach the Gospel, we preach CHRIST and not Christianity.

He had a METHOD – He preached. To crowds, to individuals, in the open air, in houses, to Jews and to Gentiles. The Rich young ruler account in Mark 10 was given as a specific example (from many) of Christ's evangelism.

Evangelistic Preaching must be BIBLICAL, COGENT, PERSUASIVE, CONTEMPORARY (ie. in touch with the real world that has real problems), CONVINCED, and the preacher must be CALLED.

Preaching Christ (2 lectures):

'Preaching' – the public proclamation of the Gospel – is the means God uses to save souls and to build His Church. We believe the 'preaching' of God's Word was for the following reasons: 1) preaching is an institution of God (1 Cor. 1:21); 2) during His earthly ministry, Christ Himself preached the 'Good News' (Matt. 4:17,23; Mk. 3:14; cf. Heb. 2:3); 3) in the Great Commission, preaching was appointed for the entire Christian age (Mk. 16:15,20; Lk. 24:47); 4) after ascending, our Lord gave certain gifts to ensure that preaching and teaching would continue to be a blessing to men and women (Eph. 4:11; cf. 1 Cor. 3:21); 5) evidently Christ intercedes for those called to preach and also for their preaching (Jn. 17:8,9,20); 7) the Holy Spirit is pleased to attend the preaching of the Word (Isa. 59:21; Acts 4:31; 1 Cor. 2:4); 8) preaching is directed to the minds of people that they might be made serious and informed of the Truth (Acts 17:2; 26:16,18, 25); 9) since the message is from Heaven, it must be declared rather than be discussed (1 cor. 15:1-3; 2:1); and 10) this use of what appears to be weak and contemptible redounds to God's greater glory (1 Cor. 1:18; 2 Cor. 4:7).

The grand subject of preaching must be the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 5:42; 1 Cor. 2:2; 2 Cor. 4:5) because He is the only Saviour of sinners and sinners can expect nothing but through Him (Dan. 9:17; 1 Tim. 1:1). Christ must be preached as God, the eternal Son (Jn. 17:5; Phil. 2:6), the One who took to Himself our human nature (Jn. 1:14; 1 Tim.3:16), the only appointed Mediator between God and men (1 Tim. 2:5), the great peace-maker (Acts 10:36; Col. 1:19-22), the Sin-bearer who bore our sins to the cross (Isa. 53:4-6; 1 Pet. 2:22-24), the same who was raised again to show that sin's debt has been paid and accepted (Rom. 4:25; cf. 1 Tim. 3:16), this risen Christ is able and willing to save all who apply to Him (Jn. 6:37; Heb. 7:25), and to Him sinners must turn and in Him they must trust for everlasting life (Jn.3:16; Acts 16:31).

Preaching the Cross (2 lectures):

In this first lecture we began with the Apostle Paul's pattern of ministry, asserting that the cross of Christ must be given the pre-eminent place in preaching (1 Cor 1.17, 18). The term 'the cross' stands for the sufferings and death to which Christ gave Himself on behalf of His people in the plan of redemption, whereby He made atonement for sin and secured reconciliation with God.

A preaching ministry must give due place to this grand matter because it (1) is a theme that runs through scripture from beginning to end; (2) is essential in displaying the glory of God; (3) follows the pattern of all the Apostles; (4) is confirmed as central to the life of the church by the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper and by the observance of the Lord's Day; (5) is inextricably linked to virtually all cardinal doctrines; (6) brings light, hope and comfort to all conditions of the soul; (6) pleases God by glorifying Christ; (7) will be a ministry for which prayer can confidently be offered and will surely be answered.

This second lecture covered some of the principles to aim at in preaching the cross, beginning with Paul's words in Gal 3.1 stating that *Jesus Christ hath been evidently* (plainly, clearly) *set forth*, (as a specific aim) *crucified among you*. We then went on to look at a brief overview of the kind of texts and passages from both Testaments which lead us to see Christ crucified, either directly or indirectly. The idea here was to explore the rich range of views of Christ and His cross that scripture gives us so that our preaching is better able to present Christ in the full light of Biblical revelation.

Biblical Preaching Patterns (2 lectures)

The Word pictures the Preaching Ministry. This lecture considered:

1. Various Biblical terms which describe aspects of the character of the preaching ministry.
 - i. A 'burden' - Isaiah 13.1; Zechariah 12.1; Malachi 1.1
 - ii. A work both 'bitter and sweet' - Revelation 10.8, 9
Cp Ezekiel 2.9, 10; 3.1; 3.3
 - iii. Conducted in 'both weakness and fear' - 1 Corinthians 2.3,4
2. Paul's preaching policy.
 - i. Plain speech - 1 Corinthians 2.1
 - ii. Plain truth - 1 Corinthians 1.19, 20
 - iii. Plain meaning – 2 Corinthians 3.12
 - iv. Pleasing to God – 1Thessalonians 2.3-5
3. Paul's preaching style
 - i. Declaring – Acts 17.23; 20.27
 - ii. Reasoning – Acts 17.2
 - iii. Boldness – Acts 19.8
 - iv. Disputing and reasoning – Acts 19.8
 - v. Expounding – Acts 28.23

This lecture considered the approach and construction of examples of Biblical preaching.

In each case the spiritual condition of the gathered congregations was reviewed and then the preaching approach was analysed. Lessons and principles were drawn from these two heads.

1. The preaching of Christ
 - i. In Luke 4.18, 19 cp Isaiah 61.1-3
 - ii. In Matthew 5-7
2. The preaching of Peter
Acts 2.14-36
3. The preaching of Paul
Acts 17.22-31

(Time did not allow for the intended consideration of 1 John 1.1-3. Although this is not preaching per se, it suggests a distinct preaching pattern familiar to John.)

Historical Preaching Patterns (2 lectures)

The *first lecture* considered a very small selection of the huge number of past worthies, noting

- Their times – the spiritual state of their age
- Their personal spiritual experience as revealed in their own writings
- A sample of Preaching content, emphasis and style

In North America:

- Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758)
- Samuel Davies (1723-1761)

In Scotland:

- Thomas Boston (1676 – 1732)
- With reference also to Andrew Gray (1633-1656), Henry Scougal (1650-1678), Ebenezer Erskine (1680-1754) and Ralph Erskine (1685-1752)

In England:

- Charles H. Spurgeon (1834-1892)
Copies of two samples of his written pulpit notes were distributed to the students together with transcripts of the sermon as preached from those notes, (subsequently edited for publication) for comparison purposes.

The *second lecture* considered a selection of ministers ejected from their places in the Great Ejection of 1662. In particular, the lecture gave an overview of the general tone and emphasis of the sermons preached by some of these men on the last Lord's Day (17th August 1662) before being forced out of their ministries. It was a solemn occasion for both preacher and congregation alike and in this context the recorded sermons are very revealing. Clearly in view are truly pastoral hearts, aflame with deep spiritual concern for the souls of the people and the future of the church in England. All this at a time when ejected ministers faced great personal loss and an uncertain future.

The men considered, with their sermons included the following:

Edmund Calamy (1600-1666)	His text: 1 Sam 4.13
Thomas Manton (1620-1677)	His text: Heb 12.1
Thomas Case (1598-1682)	His text: Rev 2.5
Thomas Jacomb (1623-1687)	His text: Jn 8.29

The whole presents a stirring challenge for men in our own day.

Sermon Proofs

Proofs, or how to accomplish our purpose. The content of the sermon depends on how the preacher has grasped the following 3 ideas:

1. It is the proposition is WHAT must be preached.
2. The purpose tells WHY the preacher is preaching it.
3. The structure shows HOW he sets about his task.

This leads to considering the various possibilities in sermon construction, and expedient use of them. There are two basic structural possibilities: the deductive, and the inductive structures.

1. The deductive structure is one in which your introduction leads to a statement of your proposition as a subject that needs to be completed (or proved) by each main point that you make.
2. The inductive structure is one in which the subject part of your homiletical idea is stated in the introduction and the complement is INCREASINGLY REVEALED, with each main point GROWING OUT OF the one that preceded it.

Two common truths about the proofs that must never be forgotten:

1. You will have to explain, and/or prove, and/or apply the proposition in the development of the sermon.
2. Never lose sight of the proper role of the main points/proofs. They are the pillars that support, explain, prove, illustrate, or apply the proposition.

The Essential Characteristics of the Proofs:

1. Textual: they should arise out of the text.
2. Clear: the wording should be plain – aim for precision and simplicity.
3. Full: Set before the people all that must be without being tedious.
4. Structured: There should be a real growth in the message. The hearers must clearly see the direction of the message and its development, or they will be lost. The points must therefore:
 - *Be mutually exclusive*
 - *Follow a natural sequence*
 - *Display unity*
 - *Display proportion*
 - *Be directly connected to the proposition*

An outline with the points is then to be carefully worked out. A discussion of a sermon outline and creation of a sermon is entered into.