

A Theology of Preaching

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When preparing to preach or teach you should have an approach in mind as to the message you want to communicate. In the following, I will address my theology for preaching by discussing the need for a Spirit driven preaching style, a desire to engage the church, and a recognition that the upside-down kingdom of God has arrived!

Brown and Powery, writing in *Ways of the Word* outline a pneumatological homiletic¹ which recognizes and depends on the active presence of the Holy Spirit in the preaching of the Word, an experience of Christ's living presence, given to the church, and empowering the church's engagement with the world. The Word of God is alive (Heb 4:12, ESV) and it is through the power of the Holy Spirit that people will come to know Christ (1 Cor 12:3, Rom 8:9-11). Jesus started his ministry proclaiming his teaching was empowered by the Holy Spirit (Lk 4:18) and Paul emphasizes his preaching relies on the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 2:4-5). A reliance on the Holy Spirit is needed as an active part of a Christian's preaching to communicate to the church.

A preacher should be aware of the cultural, background, and issues impacting their family of God, the church. This understanding can be used to shape a message to address the needs of the church while maintaining the Biblical integrity of the Scripture. The goal of

¹ Sally A. Brown and Luke A. Powery, Luke A. (2016). *Ways of the Word: Learning to preach for your time and place* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2016), 28.

preaching isn't to simply inform but to transform to action, those who are listening. Action that changes a person's life and in turn, motivates them to perform positive change in the life of the community around them. This is the mission of the church, to proclaim the gospel, make disciples, and to transform the world.²

The Apostle John wrote, "we love because He first loved us" (1 Jn 4:19). Jesus came to earth as the Word in flesh (Jn 1:14), preaching "the kingdom of God is at hand" (Mk 1:15), and teaching us to pray, "Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven" (Mt 6:10). Jesus came as a servant, teaching the need to value all people, love our enemies, and acting in unexpected ways that has been described as the upside-down kingdom. Our preaching should be animated in a style that demonstrates and encourages the church to live as ambassadors of the kingdom. Ambassadors acting here and now – not waiting for a time when we go to heaven but recognizing we, in some mysterious way, are living in heaven now as we wait for the fulfillment of the eschaton and resurrection, in the future.

Preaching that is focused on the needs of church; that is exciting, Spirit-driven, and can motivate people to upside-down transformation is on track to drive change and action in the members of our congregation. The focus of preaching is to allow the Holy Spirit to influence and minister through Scripture which is the divine Word of God. As we preach to the church, the church becomes the hands and feet of God to take the Gospel message of Jesus to our communities resulting in growth in the family of God. Jesus said, "love one another just as I have loved you" (Jn 13:34). My preaching theology has a recognition that the Bible is God's story of love and redemption, with Christ as the center. This view helps shape messages to

²Brown and Powery, *Ways of the Word*, 142.

inspire congregants to transformation, and to demonstrate the love of Jesus through their actions in their communities and to the world.

Bibliography

Brown, Sally A., and Powery, Luke A. (2016). *Ways of the Word: Learning to preach for your time and place*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2016.