

“TAKE HEED HOW YOU HEAR”: HOW TO HEAR A SERMON (pt. 1)

INTRODUCTION:

- A. General: Emphasis on “Back to Basics” in Church Life, esp. because of diverse backgrounds.
- B. This Brief Series: “How to Hear a Sermon”, cf. *Lk. 8:18 (Context, *vs. 1, vss. 4b-18, 19-21)
NOTE: Necessity of “hearing” in other contexts, cf. Matt. 18:15ff. Here: “Preaching”.
- C. Note on Format: cf. MLJ’s PREACHING & PREACHERS. Less technical. More “functional” & practical. *This is usually the way we think and work!
- D. Outline:
 - 1. What is “Preaching?”
 - 2. What Goes Into a “Sermon”?
 - 3. How to Profit from Preaching.

I. WHAT IS “PREACHING”? c. 130 X in NT e.g. John . Jesus. Apostles. II Tim. 4:2

- A. The Difference Between Teaching & Preaching.
i.e. All true preaching contains teaching. Not all teaching is preaching...
 - 1. *Teaching*: Communicating truth for instruction. i.e. to clarify, correct, develop ideas, etc.
 - 2. *Preaching*: Communicating truth for transformation. i.e. regeneration & sanctification.
- B. A Functional Definition of Preaching:
 - 1. Phillips Brooks: “*Truth communicated through personality.*”
 - 2. Kloosterman: “*The official, covenantal administration of the living Word of God revealed in Scripture in the context of public worship whose goal is edifying believers and discipling the nations.*”
 - 3. Packer: “*The event of God himself bringing to an audience a Bible-based, Christ-related, life-impacting message of instruction and direction through the words of a spokesperson.*”
 - 4. Shishko: “*The official proclamation of the Word of God as it focuses on Christ in His person, offices, and work, with the goal of forming disciples of Christ the King by regeneration and sanctification.*”
- C. Breaking This Down:
 - 1. *Official*: “kerusso”, “kerux” Herald: a. One who officially represented a King. An official spokesman. b. One who lived with a King.
 - 2. *Proclamation*: Not “sharing”, “dialogue”, or debate. The declaration of a King/Kingdom.
NOTE: Also: Not pictures, drama, dance, mime: Words! “Faith comes by *hearing*...”
 - 3. *The Word of God as it focuses on Christ...* cf. “Apostles’ doctrine”. “preach Gospel”
II Cor. 4:5, “For we do not preach ourselves...” Eph. 3:8. Col. 1:28, “Him we preach...”
NOTE: Teaching the Word of God is not necessarily Christian teaching or preaching!
 - 4. *In His person, offices, and work.* Not every reference to Christ is the Christ of Scripture.
 - 5. *With the goal of forming disciples...* *Matthew 28:18ff.
- D. Some Basic Texts...
***Romans 10:8-17**. *Critical importance of preaching and evangelism.
cf. Rom. 10:15. *Sending done by Church. Reason for “Presbyterian way of doing things...!”
NOTE: “Preaching” always done by official spokesman. Otherwise: “Witness”, “Evangelizing.”, “Giving every person a reason for the hope that lies w.in you.” etc.
***I Peter 1:22 – 2:3**. cf. Canons of Dort, III/IV, 17
NOTE: Worship is the Holy Spirit’s workshop....
- E. The Unique Character of Preaching: *Rom. 10:14. *Eph. 2:17. *II Cor. 5:20, “we”, cf. vs. 12.
NOTE: This is why all true preaching is *eternally* important, cf. Attendance on worship.

IV. SOME CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES TO PREACHING:

- A. Low views of public address, e.g. Manipulation, distrust, emotionalism. cf. Television culture.
- B. Low views of the Church, cf. Ps. 84:2, *I Cor. 14:24f.
- C. Low views of the Ministry, e.g. Scandals, Anti-authority mentality, secularism, caricatures.
- D. Ministerial low views of preaching., e.g. “*If there’s a fire in the pulpit there will be warmth....*”

