

## BACK TO BASICS

### What does back to basics mean?

*“A return to previously held values of decency; most important elements, ideas, or principles, in contrast to more complicated or detailed ones. If you talk about getting back to basics, you are suggesting that people have become too concerned with complicated details or new theories, and that they should concentrate on simple, important ideas or activities; it is a statement of fundamental facts or principles from which other truths can be derived”.*

## PREACHING

There are several Greek words translated ‘preach’ in the New Testament. Two of the most common, following Strong’s transliteration, are *euaggelizō* and *kerussō*. According to Strong, *euaggelizō* is made up of the Greek word *eu*, meaning ‘good’, and *aggelos*, meaning ‘angel’ or ‘messenger’. It is the verb of the Greek word *euaggelion*, which means ‘gospel’ or ‘good news’. For this reason *euaggelizō* is sometimes translated not just as ‘preach’ but as ‘preach the gospel’. *Kerussō* simply means to ‘preach’, ‘proclaim’ or ‘publish’. An example of where the two words occur together is found when the Lord Jesus quoted a prophecy about himself from the words of Isaiah:

*“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He hath anointed me to preach the gospel [euaggelizō] to the poor; He hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach [kerussō] deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach [kerussō] the acceptable year of the Lord” (Lk. 4:18, 19).*

In Timothy 2 Timothy 4:1 - 4 we read

*“I 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: preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate*

*for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths.”*

Paul's encouragement to young pastor Timothy is that he preaches the word of God. It is said that:

*“Preaching is the activity of a redeemed man, standing in Christ's stead, by His (Christ's) authority and in obedience to His command, proclaiming, explaining, illustrating, and strongly urging the word of God, the gospel of Christ, in such a manner as to make it possible for responsible people to understand it and accept it unto life or reject it unto death”.*

Preaching has also been defined as, *“the authoritative proclamation of the word of the living God by living men of God in God's ordained manner of moving people to Christ and salvation and on to eternal life”* The message comes through preaching Christ. Preaching therefore is all about Christ, the message the preacher and the audience (Romans 10:14-17).

The Greek phrase reads: - pronounced *“kerukson ton logon”* its primary meaning is *“to make an official announcement, announce; make known,”* and this is to be done by an *“official herald or one who functions as such”*

Heralds were men who were sent out on official business by a king, a governor, or the emperor himself to herald or proclaim an official message and make the message known to the people. They were not given any power to change, alter or amend the message that they'd been given; to do so would be untrustworthiness. A herald is the one who preached or proclaimed a given official message. Preaching in the Biblical sense is to articulate clearly and particularly exactly what God in his Word orders preachers to declare. Preachers are not expected to change the message by modification, by omission, or by addition. The preacher is not to utter his own persuasive wisdom but is to confine himself to the foolishness and the shamefulness of the gospel.

Preachers are **God's people, who come from God's people**, who stand up in front of God's people and in God's name. What is at stake here is how preachers understand themselves and their roles in relation to their calling.

Preachers come to the pulpit from somewhere, and until we know that, we risk misunderstanding our responsibility and who we are. Preachers come from God's people and not outside them. Preachers should always know that they are not visitors from clergy-land; holy strangers from a special unknown place or ambassadors from seminary-land (University faculty of theology). Preachers are members of God's people, commissioned to preach by the very people to whom we are about to preach. This means that preachers rise from the pew to the pulpit.

*One preacher said; "Preaching is a wild river, wide and deep: congregations want to hear well. Executed preaching; they desperately need to hear thoughtful and faithful preaching of the gospel"*

*Another preacher said: "I confess that sometimes I wish they weren't listening. I can tell you, as a preacher that I bear a terrible burden when people listen, really listen, from the depth of their soul".*

*It is also said: "To be a preacher is to be entrusted with the task of speaking the one word humanity most urgently and desperately needs to hear, the glad tidings of God's redemption through Jesus Christ. To be a preacher is to be a midwife. We do not create the word; we do not establish the time of its arriving; we cannot eliminate the labor pains that surround it; but we serve with gratitude at its coming and exclaim with joy its birth".*

## **THE INGREDIENTS OF PREACHING**

- The preacher
- The sermon; not what the preacher has written down beforehand on paper what the preacher says, an action, a spoken event. It is what the preacher performs in Christ's name.
- The hearers/audience of the preaching
- The presence of Christ he is present in and with the church. All ministries are expressions of the presence of Christ. Preaching does not cause Christ to be present. Preaching is possible only because Christ is already present. Jesus said: *"The one, who hears you, hears me"*. Luke 10:16

What usually remains missing is an understanding of how these ingredients of the total event of preaching work together.

The preacher must be first and foremost having the ability to gather knowledge and seek to possess the transforming power of God – the two are inseparable. You cannot replace knowledge by the Spirit and the Spirit by the knowledge.

The preacher must possess the knowledge of the word of God and be infused by the power of the Holy Spirit. The preacher is not supposed to preach about what he/she thinks about the word of God.

Before preaching there is a need of being filled by the power of the Holy Spirit of God no matter how intelligent and eloquent the preacher can be. The preacher needs to be authorized by the Spirit to preach the word – to be given permission to do it; to be allowed to represent Christ who is the Word of God. Preaching is not all about filling the gap or being given an opportunity to do the work as others are doing it. Preaching is not about honoring the position or status. The preacher is not offered an opportunity to preach because of the position acquired in the Church, community and work situation.

The preacher is not given an opportunity to preach because of educational achievement or qualifications. The preacher is authorized and anointed by God.

The empowerment of the preacher by the Holy Spirit brings about the connectedness between the preacher and the listeners. It starts with the preacher going to “*a thin place*” and communicates with God to be authorized/ empowered with the Spirit.

This is all about the preacher spending time in spiritual solitude- calling for the spirit of God to “fall afresh” on the preacher.

In the thin space the preacher prays for the listeners and the space to be filled by the Spirit of God. Here is where the battle takes place not on the pulpit. Here, in thin space is where the evil powers are disarmed. It is here where the battle is won. The spirit does not come upon the preacher because of the hot song or chorus sung loudly and the instruments set at the highest volume.

The issue of empowerment is about the relationship between the preacher and the Spirit of God. It is about God trusting the preacher to an extent of allowing the preacher to represent him.

A primary concern of every preacher should be the desire to be empowered by the Spirit of God. Preaching is not a matter of covering certain amount of material- but it is being empowered and used by the Holy Spirit of God. It is not merely conveying information but declaring the Will of God.

Empowerment preaching becomes a force that can bring social change and initiate radical transformation in the lives of individuals.

## **TWO TYPES OF PREACHING**

There are many types of preaching but I have chosen to speak about two of them.

### ➤ **The Pastoral Preaching**

The pastoral preaching is when the preacher shepherds and cares for the hurting souls. Pastoral preaching gently brings people into a sense of being comforted and in harmony with God and others.

The pastoral preaching experience the pain of the hurting and the troubled; pastoral preaching comforts the troubled.

### ➤ **Prophetic Preaching**

As prophets, preachers oppose any system that hinders the advancement of the Kingdom of God. In preaching preachers bring the Will of God on earth, "Your Will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

As the pastoral preaching comforts the troubled and hurting, prophetic preaching troubles the comfortable.

The prophetic preaching is delivered with tears because the preacher knows the hurting and the troubles of the people. The prophet weeps with the people because the people's fate is the prophet's fate too. In prophetic preaching, the preacher includes himself/ herself among those who are under God's judgment.

The prophetic preaching is marked with hope promising that with repentance come new possibilities. It clearly provides a new vision of the future – because *“where there is no vision, the people perish.”*

All preaching must be biblical. Biblical preaching does not mean talking about the Bible, using the Bible to support doctrinal arguments, or applying biblical *“principles”* to everyday life. Biblical preaching happens when a preacher prayerfully goes to listen to the Bible on behalf of the people (audience) and speak on Christ’s behalf what he or she hears there. Biblical preaching has almost nothing to do with how many times the Bible is quoted in a sermon and everything to do with how faithfully the Bible is interpreted in relation to contemporary experience. *A sermon that begins in the Bible and ends in the Bible is not necessarily a biblical sermon.*

The aim of a preacher’s reading of a biblical text is to hear in or listen to that text a specific word for him/her, the audience and who *they* happen to be at that particular moment.

*“First, open Scripture and experience God’s words for yourself. If it does not come alive to preachers’ heads and hearts, to their eyes, ears, and senses, it is unlikely to come alive to listeners. There are no quick fixes and no shortcuts...Spiritual authenticity occur when a preacher’s personal walk with God enables public worship to flow from private worship...shallow spirituality leads to shallow preaching...Hearers recognize spiritual authenticity in a preacher.”* Michael Quicke

Preaching aims to establish a transformed society consisting of citizen who are themselves transformed. Preaching aims at spiritual transformation through the power of the Holy Spirit which create people fit to live in God’s Kingdom. There can be no Kingdom of God without Kingdom people need to be filled by the transforming power in order to be a transformed society.

## **THE ATTITUDE OF PREACHING**

It is essential that we deal with the issue of attitude because our attitude toward preaching is extremely important than how we preach. The attitude should cause preachers to take more critically and give better attention to

the way they preach. The preacher ought to believe that in preaching Christ is teaching his people through him, that the Holy Spirit is present and active in the sermon and that God and man come together in sermon delivery. Something wonderful can happen if preaching is God's chosen means of saving souls. Preachers ought to approach the pulpit with the expectation that something is going to happen.

## **GOOD PREACHING**

- Good preaching is not a display of one's knowledge; a show of one's speaking ability, a fashion display, or an effort to build a personal following.
- Good preaching is Bible-centered (2 Tim. 3:16; 4:1-2; 1 Cor. 2:2).
- It harmonizes with truth (Gal. 1:6-7).
- It is simple (Mark 12:37).
- It reveals both the awfulness of sin (Rom. 7:7, 13) and the love of God through Christ (John 3:16; Rom. 5:8).
- Good preaching is well-rounded (Acts 20:20, 26-27, 31-32, 35).
- It accomplishes its intended purposes:
  - ✓ Bringing people to Christ so that they might be saved (John 6:44-45)
  - ✓ Causing Christians to grow spiritually (1 Pet. 2:1,2; Heb. 5:12-14)
  - ✓ Keeping Christians saved (Jas. 1:21; 1 Cor. 15:1,2)

## **KEYS TO GOOD PREACHING**

Good study and preparation. Good study employs observation, interpretation, application, and communication.

- **Observation:** What does the passage say?
- **Interpretation:** What does the passage mean?
- **Application:** How does the passage relate to me?
- **Communication:** How do I relate the meaning of the passage to others?
- **Good presentation:** One must have the right attitude (2 Tim. 2:14-26) and the right motives (1 Tim. 3:5). One must be persistent and patient (2 Tim. 4:1-5), present the Bible as the word of God (2 Pet. 1:16-21), and make his conclusion personal and decisive (Acts 26:29).
- **Good life.**

The messenger of God's word must be living in accordance with God's will. He must take heed to himself and his teaching (1 Tim. 4:16). He should be an example to believers in word, conduct, love, spirit, faith, and purity (1 Tim. 4:12).

➤ **Effectiveness**

For preaching to be effective, there must be sincerity of presentation, clarity of speech, suitability of material, simplicity of lesson, and conciseness of sermon.

**WHAT IS A SERMON?**

“The sermon is a biblical address which has the constituent parts of introduction, proposition, interrogation, transition, organic division and conclusion, the functional elements of scriptural support, explanation, argument, illustration and application and the logical characteristics of unity, order progression and climax.”

**PARTS OF A SERMON**

➤ **THE TITLE**

A title is an expression of the specific feature to be presented in the sermon, stated in a manner which may be suitable for advertising the sermon.

➤ **INTRODUCTION**

Introduction is the process by which the preacher strives to prepare the minds and secure the interest of the audience in the message.

**The purpose of the introduction:**

- ✓ To secure goodwill of the audience
- ✓ To arouse the interest in the theme
- ✓ To challenge the thinking of the audience

➤ **PROPOSITION**

- ✓ The proposition is a simple declaration of the subject which the preacher proposes to discuss, develop, prove and explain in the discourse.

- ✓ The proposition is a statement of timeless truth in the sermon.
- ✓ The proposition is a principle, it is a fundamental truth which abides through all time and has universal application, and e.g. The Lord desires worship that comes from the heart. No one can escape the consequences of his own sin. There is great value in prayer. A praying Christian exerts a mighty influence.

## ➤ **THE DIVISIONS**

They are the main distinct parts with each component contributing to the units of an orderly sermon.

### **The value of divisions:**

- ✓ They promote clarity of thought.
- ✓ They promote unity of thought.
- ✓ They assist in the proper treatment of a sermon.
- ✓ They help in remembering the main points of a sermon.

### **Principles for preparing of main divisions**

- ✓ Divisions should grow out of proposition.
- ✓ Each division should contribute to the development of the proposition.
- ✓ Divisions should be distinct from one another. There should be no overlapping of divisions.
- ✓ Divisions should be arranged in some form of progression.
- ✓ Divisions should be stated clearly. They should relate to proposition and transitions.
- ✓ Divisions should be few.

## ➤ **TRANSITIONS**

It is the sentence that links the last division with the next one.

- ✓ Transition offers the audience a clue that the preacher is ready to move on to the next point of the sermon.
- ✓ It helps to create an interest with the audience in what is to follow in the sermon.

## ➤ **APPLICATION**

Application is the process by which the preacher seeks to persuade the audience to react favourably to the revealed truth.

It is the rhetorical process by which the truth is brought to impact directly and personally upon individuals in order to persuade them to respond properly to it.