

## U N I T I

### PRINCIPLES OF PREACHING

Unit I provides discussions on some general principles regarding preaching. These matters are of prime importance to the preacher, for he must have an adequate concept of his task in order to be effective in proclaiming the Gospel.

Lesson 1 is a study of the nature, the importance, and the objectives of preaching. The New Testament is the primary guide as to the nature of preaching as indicated by a study of words used by the writers for the proclamation of the Gospel. An analysis of the concept and a study of history also provide additional insights. The importance of preaching is revealed by a study of its place and effectiveness in the ministry of Jesus and of the apostles and in church history. The objectives or purposes of preaching are indicated primarily in the New Testament.

Lesson 2 is a study of the preacher and his calling and the message of preaching. With the New Testament providing the primary source, the discussions provide guidance regarding the nature of the calling to preach and the character of the preacher. The message of the preacher as revealed in the New Testament is analyzed and discussed in order to provide the basis for sermon building.

LESSON 1

THE NATURE, IMPORTANCE, AND OBJECTIVES OF PREACHING

In order for the preacher to be effective in proclaiming the Gospel, he must have an adequate concept of the nature of preaching and its importance and purpose in God's plan for redeeming men. The New Testament is the primary source for the understanding of these matters.

The Nature of Preaching

The Church has been commissioned to proclaim the Word of God throughout the world. God has set aside certain men to lead the Church in this primary mission. This ministry is called preaching.

Though the Bible does not give a definition of preaching, the indications of various Scriptures reveal that preaching is the proclamation of the Word of God by a messenger called by Him for the purpose of persuading men to accept His message and to act upon it. The basic elements are as follows: the act of proclamation, the Word of God, the messenger, and the act of persuasion. Proclamation is the act of delivering God's message by speech or word of mouth. The Word of God is His revealed will to men which now comes primarily through the Bible. The messenger is commonly called a preacher, one whom God has appointed to make known His message. Persuading men to accept the message and to act upon its appeal is the primary purpose of preaching.

A study of history reveals that the art or science of preaching, called homiletics, has several sources. Firstly, the Hebrews provided the concept that God reveals Himself to men through messengers whom He has called for the task. These men were commonly called prophets. They received a message from God through various means and spoke for God appealing to His people to obey His message.

Secondly, the Greeks provided the rules for public speaking called rhetoric. The Greek culture had pervaded the known world since the time of Alexander the Great in the fourth century B.C., and the Greek language had become the universal language of the day. Most educated people understood both their native language and Greek, especially those dealing with the public. The Greek orators, those men concerned with speech and public speaking, developed specific rules for speaking, such as the

[Empty box for student response]

*The primary mission of the Church is \_\_\_\_\_*

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*(to proclaim the Word of God throughout the world.)*

*Preaching is the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Word of God by a \_\_\_\_\_ called by Him for the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ men to accept His message and to act upon it.*

*LIST THE BASIC ELEMENTS OF PREACHING.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*(Compare your answers with text.)*

[Empty box for student response]

arrangement, the style, and the delivery of speeches. Some of the early preachers, such as Paul and Apollos, were educated in Greek schools and utilized the techniques of public speaking in the proclamation of the Word of God.

Thirdly, Jesus Christ Himself provided the unique source of preaching. He is the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies concerning the Messiah. He is the ultimate revelation of God. His death and resurrection are the central truths of the Gospel and provide the very basis of preaching. Christ is the very distinctive of Christian preaching as compared to other forms of public speaking.

A study of the Greek words used for preaching in the New Testament also provides information as to the nature and characteristics of preaching. The expressions used most frequently are "preach" (kerussein) and "preach the gospel" (euangelizesthai). The word used most commonly to describe the act of preaching is translated "to preach", "to proclaim", or "to declare" (kerussein) and appears both in noun and verb forms in the New Testament (Matt. 4:17; Luke 4:18-19; Acts 8:5). The root word literally means to publish or proclaim as a herald. The ancient herald was a man employed by a king or by a state or community to make public announcements. He needed a loud and clear voice in order that people might understand the notices that he called out. He also needed to be reliable in character, for he was expected to declare the message exactly as he received it. The modern equivalent was the town crier in the early history of America who announced public notices and who called local communities into assembly by walking up and down the streets of town declaring the news.

The other word used most frequently is translated "to preach the gospel" (euangelizesthai) which literally means to evangelize or to proclaim the Gospel (Luke 4:18; Acts 16:10). The basic idea comes from the word "gospel", literally good (eu) news or message (angelos). The messenger (also angelos) is the one who announced the good news. The expression, therefore, indicates the following concepts: the messenger, who is the preacher; the message, which is the Gospel; and the act of delivering the message, which is preaching. This expression along with the preceding one as used in the New Testament has the primary meaning of proclaiming the Christian message to unsaved men.

Three other words are used in the New Testament in reference to the act of proclaiming the Word of God. The expression "to prophesy" (propheteuein) is used occasionally in the New Testament (1 Cor. 11:4; 13:9) and is equivalent to the Old Testament concept (Matt. 15:7; 1 Pet. 1:10), which

CONTINUE READING THROUGH THE NEXT PARAGRAPH. THEN YOU WILL HAVE FINISHED READING ABOUT THE SOURCES OF HOMILETICS.

NOW MATCH THE SOURCE WITH THE PERSON OR PEOPLE WHO PROVIDED IT.

- |             |   |
|-------------|---|
| ___ Greeks  | 1. provided the concept that God reveals Himself through called messengers. |
| ___ Hebrews | 2. provided the unique source of preaching.                                 |
| ___ Jesus   | 3. provided the rules for public speaking.                                  |

(3, 1, 2)

Write the words used most frequently in the New Testament which mean:

"preach" \_\_\_\_\_

"preach the gospel" \_\_\_\_\_

(Compare your answers with the text.)

IS THIS STATEMENT TRUE OR FALSE?

Kerussein and euangelizesthai have the primary meaning of proclaiming the Christian message to unsaved men. \_\_\_\_\_

(true)

Another word used in the New Testament which refers to preaching is \_\_\_\_\_ which means \_\_\_\_\_.

(propheteuein, "to prophesy")

means basically declaring the counsels of God. This includes not only foretelling the future but also interpreting the past events and preaching to the present needs of men.

Another word used to refer to preaching is "to exhort" (parakalein) and is also translated "to beseech", "to entreat", and "to comfort" (2 Tim. 4:2; Heb. 13:22; 1 Thess. 4:1). The basic idea is the urging or admonishing others to accept a message or pursue a course of action and may be directed to unbelievers or believers. The expression may also mean to comfort, console, or encourage others in trying circumstances. The meanings of the word relate to the work of the Holy Spirit, who is called the "Comforter" (John 14:26; 16:7-14).

The expression "to teach" (didaskein) is used frequently in the New Testament and is sometimes related to preaching (Matt. 4:23; Acts 28:31; 1 Tim. 6:2-3). The basic meanings include to hold a discourse with others, to instruct, to impart information, or to explain or expound a matter. The purpose in teaching is generally to inform believers of certain truths, but may also mean to enlighten unbelievers to the truths of the Gospel.

Several other words occur in the New Testament in connection with the act of preaching. The expression "to witness" or "to testify" (marturein) is used occasionally to refer to the public proclamation of the Gospel (Acts 4:33; 10:39), though the primary emphasis appears to be on personal testimony. However, the preaching of the Gospel must come from the heart of the preacher as a personal testimony of what he has experienced. The more general expressions "to speak" or "to say" (legein) and "to speak" or "to tell" (lalein) are used occasionally in reference to public speaking (Acts 2:4; 4:20, 29). Actually the emphasis in the New Testament is more on telling of the good news and speaking personally about Christ rather than the formal delivery of sermons in the early ministry of the Church. However, as the Gentiles became more receptive to the Gospel, the proclamation of the Word became more formal (cf. Acts 17:22-31).

Preaching has characteristics that distinguish it from teaching and other types of public speaking. First of all, the message of preaching is centred in the Gospel of Christ, that is, His death for men's sins and His resurrection for their justification. Furthermore, the message is of such importance that its proclamation is marked by a strong sense of urgency in matters of eternal consequence. Finally, though preaching is concerned with informing hearers of certain facts and truths as in teaching, the distinctive factor is in the application of the message. Men are confronted with a choice of accepting

Another word used to refer to preaching is \_\_\_\_\_ which means \_\_\_\_\_.

(*parakalein, to exhort*)

Write another New Testament word which means to teach. \_\_\_\_\_

(*didaskein*)

*Marturein* means \_\_\_\_\_.

*Legein* means \_\_\_\_\_.

*Lalein* means \_\_\_\_\_.

(*to witness or testify, to speak or say, to speak or tell*)

**UNDERLINE THE CORRECT STATEMENT CONCERNING THE EMPHASIS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.**

1. *The New Testament tells of the good news and speaks personally about Christ.*
2. *The New Testament is a formal delivery of sermons in the early ministry of the Church.*

(1)

or rejecting Christ and are persuaded to decide for Him. Thus, the Gospel message, the sense of urgency, and the persuasion for decision are the distinctive characteristics of Christian preaching. The sense of urgency and the force of persuasion may be accompanied by fervency and pathos in the tone of the preacher's voice and in the strength and power of his speech.

The Importance of Preaching

The Church through the centuries has been the strongest spiritually and has accomplished the most for the Kingdom of God when preaching has been central in her ministry. From Pentecost through the rest of the first century the Church spread throughout the known world as she proclaimed the Gospel of Christ through her evangelistic and missionary efforts. The Church declined in her outreach as preaching declined in power during the following centuries, but reached peaks of strength and influence during the fourth, sixteenth, and nineteenth centuries when preaching reached heights of power. During the Dark Ages when the Church reached her lowest ebb, preaching was at its darkest and most corrupt stage.

Evidences today indicate that preaching is depreciated and discredited in many places. Ministers themselves have often set in opposition to preaching other kinds of ministries, such as worship, pastoral work, counseling, and church administration. However, preaching is essential to these ministries, for it has the central place in worship and is basic to pastoral work and counseling since the preacher can multiply his efforts through a spiritual ministry to a group rather than one by one. Many lesser problems can be solved through pastoral preaching.

A survey during the 1950's concerning the roles of ministers revealed that ministers felt that preaching should be given first place and yet gave the least time to preaching and teaching in their work each week. Other types of service had taken priority over preaching.

The Bible itself reveals the importance of preaching. The Lord Jesus as an example of the preacher was anointed by the Spirit of God to preach the Gospel, to preach deliverance to the captives, and to preach the acceptable year of the Lord (Luke 4:18-19). He said that He came forth to preach, and He preached throughout the land during His early ministry (Mark 1:38,39). He appointed select men and sent them forth to preach His Word (Luke 9:1-2; 10:1). He commissioned the disciples to preach the Gospel throughout the world (Mark 16:15). They obeyed His command and began proclaiming the good

*Preaching is distinguished from other forms of public speaking by three characteristics. Can you list them?*

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

*(Compare your answers with the text.)*

*History indicates that the Church has been the strongest spiritually when \_\_\_\_\_ has been \_\_\_\_\_ in her ministry.*

*Powerful preaching brought the Church to peaks of strength and influence during the \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_ centuries.*

*(preaching, central, fourth, sixteenth, nineteenth)*

*NAME SOME MINISTRIES IN WHICH PREACHING IS ESSENTIAL BUT IS OFTEN DISCREDITED.*

\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

*(worship, pastoral work, counseling, church administration)*

*The example for preaching was set by \_\_\_\_\_.*

*IS THIS STATEMENT TRUE OR FALSE?*

*Mark 16:15 says that disciples were commissioned to preach the Gospel in Judaea. \_\_\_\_\_*

*(Jesus, false)*

news on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-40) and continued to preach the Word everywhere they went, even when persecuted (Acts 8:4). At the close of the Book of Acts, the Apostle Paul was still preaching the Kingdom of God and teaching things concerning Christ (Acts 28:31).

Paul wrote to churches and to preachers regarding the importance of preaching. He told Titus that God had chosen to manifest, or make known, His Word through preaching (Titus 1:3). He wrote to the Church at Corinth that "it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe" (1 Cor. 1:21). In these references he meant by preaching both the message of Christ and the Cross and the act of proclaiming the good news to a lost world. In fact, to the Church at Rome Paul wrote that men are saved by calling on the name of the Lord, but they would not call on Him of whom they have not heard and they would not hear without a preacher (Rom. 10:13-15). Someone must be sent to preach the Gospel of peace. He commanded the young preacher Timothy to preach the Word, which was inspired by God, and to reprove, rebuke, and exhort with patience and doctrine, and to do the work of an evangelist, one who preaches the Gospel (2 Tim. 3:15-4:5). He warned that times would come when people would not endure sound doctrine and would turn from the truth to other teachings and fables.

The Objectives of Preaching

The objectives of preaching are the purposes in proclaiming the Word of God or the aims or goals of the preacher in his preparation and delivery of sermons. The overall objective or purpose of preaching is the salvation of men through faith in Christ (1 Cor. 1:21). The term salvation means God's whole redemptive plan for the world. Jesus Christ through the Cross saves men from sin, death, and all that is evil and for righteousness, life, and all that is good (2 Tim. 1:8-11). God has chosen to manifest or make known this message through preaching (Titus 1:3).

Within this comprehensive objective, there are certain major objectives or purposes in preaching. The first and primary objective is evangelism, which is the proclamation of the Gospel of Christ in order that men might be saved by calling on the Lord (1 Cor. 15:1-4; Rom. 10:13-15). The message is directed primarily to unsaved persons with an appeal to them to commit their lives to Christ by faith. The second objective of preaching is instruction in which the unsearchable riches of Christ and the teachings of the Bible are proclaimed (Eph. 3:8-9).

Paul told Titus that God would make known His Word through \_\_\_\_\_.

(preaching)

What is the overall purpose of preaching?

(salvation of men through faith in Christ)

The primary objective of preaching is \_\_\_\_\_.

Another objective of preaching is \_\_\_\_\_.

(evangelism, instruction)

The preacher following the example of the Apostle Paul attempts to declare the whole counsel of God over a period of time for the enlightenment of unbelievers and the edification or the building up of believers. The third objective is Christian living in which the Christian is challenged to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts and to live righteously and godly in this present world (Titus 2:6-15). The emphasis is on the need of the Christian to be an example of the believer and a testimony to God's redeeming grace.

The fourth objective in preaching is encouragement in which the preacher attempts to edify, to encourage, and to comfort in his preaching (1 Cor. 14:1-3). He strives to confirm Christians in the faith, to lead them to full assurance of salvation, to deepen their personal relationship with Christ, and to encourage daily devotions and worship of God (Acts 15:32; Rom. 16:25; John 4:23-24). The fifth objective is exhortation in which the preacher reproves, rebukes, corrects, and exhorts through the use of the Scriptures (2 Tim. 3:16-4:5; Titus 2:15). He also needs at times to defend the faith, called Christian apologetics, and to urge faithfulness to the truths of the Bible in belief and practice (Jude 3-5). The sixth objective is dedication, also called consecration or sanctification. Through preaching, the Christian is urged to dedicate his life wholly unto the Lord (Rom. 12:1) and to grow to spiritual maturity in Christ (Col. 1:28). The Christian who has backslidden or has become indifferent and unconcerned for others is also urged to rededicate his life to Christ.

The seventh objective in preaching is stewardship involving the Christian's responsibilities to God. This includes the proper use of his life, his time, his talents, and his possessions in the work of the Kingdom of God (1 Pet. 4:10; Titus 1:7). The eighth objective is service in which the truths of the Gospel are declared confidently that believers might be careful to maintain good works (Titus 3:8). Christians are urged to action in service for God, helping others to know Christ and to serve Him faithfully.

Often these objectives overlap and involve each other. Instruction is usually included in the evangelistic objective and the stewardship objective. Exhortation may be involved in the objectives of Christian living and service. Moreover, there may be specific objectives for a particular group at a particular time, such as preparation for revival or emphasis on tithing.

List the six objectives of preaching which you have read about on this page.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

DO YOU REMEMBER THE TWO OBJECTIVES WHICH WERE DISCUSSED ON PAGE 8? LIST THEM BELOW.

_____
_____

(Compare your answers with the text.)

Home Study Exercise

Basic activity (Levels 1, 2, and 3):

A. The Study Guide

1. What is the primary commission of the Church? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What is the definition of preaching? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. List the four basic elements of preaching. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Who provided the sources for homiletics, the art of preaching? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. What did each source contribute to preaching? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. Name the two expressions used most frequently in the New Testament to refer to preaching. \_\_\_\_\_
7. Give the other three expressions used in the New Testament that refer to preaching.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. What are three characteristics of preaching that distinguish it from other forms of public speaking? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. When the Church has been the strongest spiritually, what has been central in her ministry? \_\_\_\_\_
10. Name three centuries in which preaching reached peaks of strength. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

11. What other ministries have often been set in opposition to preaching? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
12. Who set the example for preaching? \_\_\_\_\_
13. Who was commissioned to preach the Gospel throughout the world? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
14. What is the overall purpose of preaching? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
15. What is the primary objective of preaching? \_\_\_\_\_
16. List seven other objectives of preaching. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

B. The Bible

The Scripture references cited are those in the King James Version of the Bible.

1. In Titus 1:3 through what way did Paul say that God would manifest or make known His Word? \_\_\_\_\_
2. According to Luke 4:17-19, what did Isaiah prophesy that the Christ would proclaim?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Read 1 Corinthians 1:17-23.  
What did God call the Apostle Paul to do? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
What did Paul say was the power of God? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
How did it please God to save men? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Read Romans 10:13-18.  
What must people do to be saved? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
What two things precede this way to be saved? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Who is sent to make these things known? \_\_\_\_\_

What does He make known? \_\_\_\_\_

How does faith come? by \_\_\_\_\_, the \_\_\_\_\_

5. Read 2 Timothy 4:1-5.

What three things does Paul charge Timothy to do regarding proclamation in verse 2?

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What type of work does he tell the young preacher to do in verse 5? \_\_\_\_\_

6. According to 1 Corinthians 1:21, what is the main objective of preaching? \_\_\_\_\_

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7. In 1 Corinthians 15:1-4, what did Paul preach and the Corinthians receive?

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Supplementary activity (Levels 2 and 3):

Read Chapter I, pages 1-29, of Steps to the Sermon. Answer the following:

1. From your study and understanding, give a full definition of preaching.
2. According to Phillips Brooks, what are the two essentials in preaching?
3. What new dimension did T. Harwood Pattison add to the definition of preaching?
4. What is the current status of preaching?
5. In view of the importance of preaching, what should modern preachers do?
6. According to the textbook, what is the total objective of preaching?
7. List the major objectives of preaching suggested in the textbook. Which objectives do you believe are the most important and why?
8. How would you describe the specific objective of a particular sermon?
9. According to the textbook, what are the origins of Christian preaching?
10. At what period was preaching at its lowest, and at what period was there a revival of preaching?

Advanced activity (Level 3):

1. What do you believe are the essential elements of preaching?
2. Explain preaching as a redemptive deed or divine encounter as discussed in the textbook.
3. Describe the origins of preaching according to the textbook.
4. Describe the high points of preaching in the history of the Church.

5. Describe preaching in the light of the various words used in the New Testament. Consult concordances, Bible dictionaries, and various translations of the Bible.

#### Seminar Discussion

1. Discuss the nature of preaching. Ask an advanced student, especially one who understands Greek, to lead the discussion.
2. What is the status of preaching in your land and in your community? Do you note any renewal of emphasis?
3. What should be your major objectives in preaching in the light of the needs of your people?