

A Pastor's Convictions About the Bible and Preaching: Developing Foundational Bible Convictions

The Bible is God's instrument of change, transformation, and above all, grace. We should expect that whenever the Bible is opened and faithfully taught, lives will be changed and transformed. This session will consider the role that Bible teaching has in the life of the disciple and the church. With an emphasis on TRANSFORMATIONAL Bible teaching, this session will cover precisely HOW a Bible teacher can teach and exposit the Scriptures in such a way that true life change occurs in the lives of those who hear and respond.

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Introduction:

The great Protestant Reformation responded to a very complex and multifaceted breakdown within the universal Christian Church by righting a number of wrongs. Theologically and pastorally, one could easily argue that the Reformation once again *simplified* for the Church what the heart of the Gospel message is, as well as its pastoral applications. Nowhere is this more true than with the Reformer's repeated challenge to preach "the whole counsel of God" as contained in God's Word, the Bible. The Reformers were convinced that when rightly and boldly preached, God's truth has the power to literally change the composition of a human heart and thus the trajectory of a human life. This is core to the pastor's role – to preach. The pastor is a preacher and must learn to combine his/her pastoral heart with the clear and bold proclamation of God's truth.

I. THE POWER OF GOD'S WORD (THE BIBLE)

A) All on its own: *Hebrews 4:12*

^{ESV} **Hebrews 4:12** For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

B) When rightly preached and taught: *Isaiah 55:10-11*

^{ESV} **Isaiah 55:10-11** “For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, 11 so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.”

C) The POWERFUL POTENTIALITY: *Romans 12:1-2*

^{ESV} **Romans 12:1-2** I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. 2 Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

II. Implications/Imperatives for the pastor’s preaching and teaching:

A) The Goal

The goal of pastoral preaching is *KNOWLEDGE that TRANSFORMS!*

Truth without transformation is dead orthodoxy (which will eventually and tragically lead to legalism); while attempted transformation without truth is an engagement in flesh-based sin management.

What are some things that hinder this goal of transformational knowledge? What are some things that foster it?

B) **The Process**

The process of pastoral preaching: *exegesis* ⇒ *illustration* ⇒ *application*

Exegesis ensures the right and accurate communication of God's truth; illustration ensures the bridging of two to three thousand year old truths to today's world; and application ensures that we all know what to DO with the truth we now have learned.

What happens when one or more of the above three aspects is lost in any given sermon? What happens when all three are present?

C) **The Pathway**

The only effective pathway to truth that transforms is ***Spirit-enabled and Spirit-guided PRAYER!***

Why do you think the average pastor today has such a poor prayer life? What are some of the effects on preaching that stems from a deficit of prayer?

III. **Key distinctives to preaching as a pastor:**

A) A pastor's heart (1 Peter 5:2)

B) Human experience (Hebrews 5:8)

C) Spirit-empowered (Revelation 1:10)

D) GRACE!