

Week 1

BIBLICAL PREACHING & TEACHING: THE MESSAGE AND THE MESSENGER

Primary Texts: 2 Timothy 3:14–4:5; 1 Timothy 4:12–16

Assigned Reading: Haddon W. Robinson, Biblical Preaching, 4th ed., chap. 1, "The Case for Expository Preaching."

Lesson Objectives:

- Explain why the nature and authority of Scripture require biblical preaching and teaching.
- Define expository preaching and distinguish it from a message that merely begins with a Bible verse.
- Explain the relationship between preaching and teaching in the New Testament.
- Describe the spiritual responsibilities of the messenger: calling, character, prayer, study, and dependence upon the Holy Spirit.
- Adopt the governing conviction of the course: the text must govern the message and first govern the messenger.

Introduction — A Sacred Stewardship

- **Paul Van Gorder, a former assistant to Richard DeHaan, recalled a memorable phone call his father received when Van Gorder was a teenager.** His father, a local Baptist pastor, received a call at 11:00 p.m. on Saturday, July 3, from a Methodist pastor preparing his July 4 sermon. The pastor was excited about his message but could not remember where his chosen text was found in the Bible. He asked Van Gorder's father if he could identify the reference from the quotation. "What is the text?" Van Gorder asked. The pastor replied, "Give me liberty or give me death!"¹
- The story is humorous, but it illustrates a serious problem: **sometimes a preacher begins with the message he wants to preach and then searches for a biblical text to support it.** Biblical preaching reverses that process. **The message must arise from and be governed by the biblical text.**
- The first question in homiletics, therefore, is not, **"How do I make a sermon interesting?"** It is, **"What has God said, and what responsibility do I have when I communicate His Word?"**
- Biblical preaching begins with _____, not creativity. The preacher or teacher is not the source of the message; he or she is a _____ of a message already given. This is the critical point in which preaching is different from public speaking.
- Donald Hamilton – *"Public speaking relies on human cleverness and, therefore, has very limited authority. Authentic preaching, however, relies on the truth of the Word of God and has an authority inherent in the Word."*²
- **How is this seen in Paul's words to Timothy in 2 Timothy 3:16-4:2?**
 - **2 Timothy 3:16–4:2** — ¹⁶ **All Scripture is given by inspiration of God**, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, ¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. ¹ I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: ² **Preach the word!** Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.

¹ David L. Allen, "Introduction," in *Text-Driven Preaching: God's Word at the Heart of Every Sermon* (Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2010), 2.

² Donald L. Hamilton, *Homiletical Handbook* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1992), 15–16.

- Notice that Paul places preaching right next to the inspired text of Scripture. Because Scripture is inspired, “Preach the Word!” The command to preach is built upon the character and nature of Scripture as the divinely revealed Word of God.

I. The Message – God has _____

A. Why Preaching Must Be Text-Driven

1. Scripture is _____ Word.
 - a. The theological foundation of biblical preaching is simple and decisive: God has spoken. Scripture is not merely a record of human religious reflection; it is God-breathed revelation (2 Tim. 3:16).
 - b. Text-driven preaching grows out of a sound _____. Allen asserts, “Both the inerrancy and the sufficiency of Scripture serve as the theological ground for text-driven preaching.”³
 - c. Key Definitions:
 - i. **Inspiration** describes how Scripture gained its authoritative status. It can be defined as “**that direct influence of God on the writers of the Bible by which, while they did not cease to be themselves, they were so moved, guarded, and guided by the Holy Spirit that their resulting productions constitute the written Word of God.**”⁴ It is this doctrine that grounds the Bible’s trustworthiness in divine authorship rather than human achievement alone.
 - ii. **Inerrancy** – Because God is true (Tit. 1:2), His Word is truthful in all that it affirms. **Feingburg writes, “the Bible in its original autographs and correctly interpreted is entirely true and never false in all that it affirms.”**⁵
 - iii. **Sufficiency** affirms that Scripture contains everything necessary for Christian faith and practice (2 Tim. 3:17; 2 Pet. 1:3).
 - iv. **Authority** – Because Scripture is God’s Word, it carries the authority of the author.
 - a) **The New Testament sometimes speaks of “God” and “Scripture” almost interchangeably.** When Scripture speaks, God is understood to be speaking. In **Matthew 19:4–5**, Jesus attributes the words of Genesis to God even though God is not explicitly identified as the speaker in the Genesis text. Conversely, in **Romans 9:17**, Paul says, “the Scripture says to Pharaoh,” although it is actually God who speaks in Exodus. This demonstrates the biblical writers’ conviction that the words of Scripture are the words of God.⁶
 1. **Matthew 19:4–5:** *Scripture says it, and Jesus says God said it.*
 2. **Romans 9:17:** *God said it, and Paul says Scripture said it.*

³ Allen, *Text-Driven Preaching*, 3.

⁴ H. D. McDonald, “Bible, Inspiration of The,” in *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1988), 308.

⁵ Paul D. Feinberg, “Bible, Inerrancy and Infallibility Of,” in *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, ed. Daniel J. Treier and Walter A. Elwell (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic: A Division of Baker Publishing Group, 2017), 125.

⁶ Allen, *Text-Driven Preaching*, 3.

- b) In the words of J. I. Packer, “Scripture is God preaching.”⁷
 - c) God speaks through Scripture; therefore, the authority of biblical preaching comes from faithfully communicating what God has said.
- d. **Key principle:** Scripture is the Word of God and therefore carries the weight of divine authority upon which the preacher and teacher establishes the message they give to God’s people.
- 2. **The authority is in the text, not the personality**
 - a. Robinson observes that when preachers fail to preach Scripture, they abandon their authority. The authority behind exposition resides in the biblical text, not in charisma, office, education, volume, or rhetorical skill. *“Ultimately, the authority behind expository preaching resides not in the preacher but in the biblical text.”*⁸
 - b. This does not mean the preacher speaks timidly. It means confidence is anchored in “Thus says the Lord,” not “Here is my opinion.” The expositor is a herald: he has authority only insofar as he faithfully announces the King’s message.
- 3. **The Word is living and effective**
 - a. **Isaiah 55:10–11** — ¹⁰ *“For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, And do not return there, But water the earth, And make it bring forth and bud, That it may give seed to the sower And bread to the eater, ¹¹ So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, But it shall accomplish what I please, And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.*
 - b. **Hebrews 4:12** — ¹² *For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*
 - c. **1 Thessalonians 2:13** — ¹³ *For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe.*
 - d. **2 Timothy 2:9** — ⁹ *for which I suffer trouble as an evildoer, even to the point of chains; but the word of God is not chained.*
- 4. Preaching remains necessary because God has chosen verbal revelation as a primary means of making Himself and His will known, and because the Word remains authoritative, living, and attended by the Holy Spirit.

II. The Method – What Is Biblical Expository Preaching

A. Definition:

1. **Exposition:** The word exposition derives from Latin *expositiō*, meaning “a setting forth, narration, citation, _____.”⁹
2. According to Wayne McDill, when applied to Scripture, exposition refers to *“the setting forth or explanation of the message of the biblical text. In expository preaching the*

⁷ J. I. Packer, *God Has Spoken* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979), 97

⁸ Haddon W. Robinson, *Biblical Preaching: The Development and Delivery of Expository Messages*, Fourth Edition (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic: A Division of Baker Publishing Group, 2025), 7.

⁹ Charlton T. Lewis, *An Elementary Latin Dictionary* (Medford, MA: American Book Company, 1890).

sermon is designed to communicate what the text says, including its meaning for the contemporary audience."¹⁰

3. Robinson provides an excellent definition as follows: ***"Expository preaching is the communication of a biblical concept, derived from and transmitted through a historical, grammatical, and literary study of a passage in its context, which the Holy Spirit first applies to the personality and experience of the preacher and then, through the preacher, applies to the hearers."***²

- Notice the movement in Robinson's definition:
 - a. A biblical _____ — the message communicates what the biblical author is saying.
 - b. Derived from the _____ — the sermon is discovered, not invented.
 - c. Studied in _____ — historical, grammatical, and literary context governs interpretation.
 - d. Applied to the _____ — the Word must confront and shape the one who communicates it.
 - e. Applied to the _____ — exposition is not an academic lecture; it calls people to understand, believe, and obey.

B. A Sermon can be based on a text but not actually _____ by the text.

1. A sermon can quote Scripture and still not be _____ by Scripture.
2. Allen distinguishes between using the biblical text as a resource and receiving it as the source of the sermon. In text-driven preaching, the substance, structure, and spirit of the text shape the message.
 - Allen – ***"The biblical text becomes for many not the source of the sermon but merely a resource. Many a preacher uses a text of Scripture, but the sermon that follows is not derived from a text of Scripture."***¹¹
3. Robinson provides a very helpful diagnostic question to gauge if you are actually expositing the text:
 - ***"Do you, as a preacher, endeavor to bend your thoughts to the Scriptures, or do you use the Scriptures to support your own thoughts?"***¹²

C. Marks of authentic exposition

1. Wayne McDill summarizes authentic exposition in his book, *12 Essential Skills for Great Preaching*: the preacher seeks the biblical writer's intended theological meaning, discovers it through careful exegesis and context, lets the text's structure and genre influence the message, communicates persuasively, and aims at faith and obedience.¹³
 - a. **Meaning:** What did the inspired author communicate?
 - b. **Context:** How do grammar, history, literary setting, and the canon clarify that meaning?
 - c. **Structure:** How did the author develop the thought?
 - d. **Communication:** How can that same truth be explained clearly to this audience?

¹⁰ Wayne McDill, *12 Essential Skills for Great Preaching: Second Edition, Revised and Expanded* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2006), 8.

¹¹ Allen, *Text-Driven Preaching*, 6.

¹² Robinson, *Biblical Preaching*, 5.

¹³ McDill, *12 Essential Skills*, 8.

e. **Response:** What should hearers believe and obey because this text is true?

D. What is the relationship between preaching and teaching?

1. The New Testament uses several overlapping terms for communicating God's truth:

- a. kēryssō (proclaim, used around 60 times).
 - i. **Matthew 4:17** — "Jesus began to **preach**..."
 - ii. **Mark 1:38–39** — "that I may **preach** there also..."
 - iii. **2 Timothy 4:2** — "**Preach the word!**"
- b. euangelizō (to declare the good news, used 50 times).
 - i. **Luke 4:18** — "to preach the gospel to the poor"
 - ii. **Acts 8:35** — Philip "preached Jesus to him"
 - iii. **Romans 1:15** — "I am ready to **preach the gospel** to you..."
- c. katangellō (to declare thoroughly, used 17 times).
 - i. **Acts 17:23** — "Him I **proclaim** to you"
 - ii. **1 Corinthians 2:1** — "**declaring** to you the testimony of God"
 - iii. **Colossians 1:28** — "Him we preach..."
- d. didaskō (to teach, used 97 times).
 - i. **Matthew 4:23** — Jesus was "**teaching** in their synagogues"
 - ii. **Matthew 28:20** — "**teaching** them to observe all things..."
 - iii. **Acts 18:11** — Paul was "**teaching** the word of God among them"
- e. parakaleō (exhort/appeal, used 103 times).
 - i. **Romans 12:1** — "I **beseech** you therefore, brethren..."
 - ii. **1 Corinthians 1:10** — "I **plead** with you, brethren..."
 - iii. **1 Timothy 2:1** — "I **exhort** first of all..."

2. The New Testament _____ establish a rigid separation between preaching and teaching.

- a. Hamilton notes that attempts to create an absolute biblical separation between preaching and teaching are difficult because the terms and functions overlap (Matt. 4:23; Mark 1:39; Acts 5:42; 28:31; Col. 1:28).
- b. Jesus both preached and taught.
 - i. **Matthew 4:23** — ²³ *And Jesus went about all Galilee, (didaskō) teaching in their synagogues, (euangelizō) preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people.*
- c. Paul described his ministry in terms of both preaching and teaching.
 - i. **1 Timothy 2:7** — ⁷ *for which I was appointed a preacher and an apostle—I am speaking the truth in Christ and not lying—a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.*
- d. Both preaching and teaching communicate the Word of God and call people to respond to its truth.
 - i. Hamilton — "Both *preaching* and *teaching* rightly characterizes the pulpit. It is preferable to think of both preaching and teaching as the communication of the Word of God—the giving of a message based on the Bible and applied to life today."¹⁴

3. A practical distinction can still be helpful.

¹⁴ Hamilton, *Homiletical Handbook*, 12.

- a. Teaching often emphasizes _____ and explanation and may involve greater interaction, while preaching commonly emphasizes _____ proclamation, exhortation, and persuasion. However, these functions frequently overlap. Good preaching teaches, and good biblical teaching may proclaim, exhort, and persuade.
 - b. The distinction is more one of emphasis and setting than of completely separate biblical activities.
4. For this course, preaching and teaching share the same governing responsibility: **faithfully communicate the meaning of God's Word and apply it to life.** Ministry setting, audience interaction, and delivery may differ; faithfulness to the text does not.
5. Men preparing for preaching ministry and women preparing for teaching ministry **will follow the same text-to-message disciplines of interpretation, central idea, purpose, structure, development, application, and clear communication.**

III. The Messenger – The Word Must Work _____ us before it works _____ us.

A. The Importance of _____

- Howard Hendricks observes, *"The greatest crisis in the world today is a crisis of leadership, and the greatest crisis of leadership is a crisis of character."*¹⁵
 1. What is character?
 - a. Character can be defined as the sum total of a person's distinct qualities, both good and bad, that reflect who he or she is.¹⁶
 - b. Conduct refers to what we do (our outward life), while character is what we are (our internal person) which manifests through visible behavior.
 - c. Character forms the heart's condition, with conduct serving as its external expression; character is the root while conduct is the fruit, a truth Jesus affirmed (Luke 6:43-45).
 2. 1 Timothy 3:1–7 gives the qualifications for a pastor/bishop/elder. Read the passage and identify how many qualifications primarily concern character and how many concern ministry ability.
 - a. **Character:** _____
 - b. **Ability:** _____
 3. This same character-heavy focus is repeated in Titus 1:5–9, with approximately 14 qualifications concerning character and conduct, followed by two abilities (holding to the faithful word; and able to refute error).
 4. **What does this emphasis teach about God's priorities for those who communicate His Word?**
 5. **MacArthur – "Behind the content of his message is the character of the expositor. He must be set apart from mundane matters, lifted above worldly aims and ambitions, and devoted singularly to God's service."**¹⁷

B. The importance of understanding the responsibility

¹⁵ Aubrey Malphurs, *Being Leaders: The Nature of Authentic Christian Leadership* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2003), 18.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ James E. Rosscup, "The Priority of Prayer and Expository Preaching," in *Rediscovering Expository Preaching* (Dallas: Word Publishing, 1992), 85.

1. The weightiness of the preaching ministry is seen by the response of John Knox, the great 15th-century Scottish preacher that God used mightily in Scotland's reformation. He famously prayed to the Lord, "Give me Scotland, or I die," yet when he was later called to preach, he locked himself in his room and wept for several days because of how heavy the call to preaching was.¹⁸
 2. 2 Timothy 4:1–2 places the preacher under the scrutiny of God and Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead.
 3. How does James elevate the responsibility of those who teach God's Word?
 - a. **James 3:1** — ¹ My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a _____ judgment.
 - b. MacArthur — *"No profession has as high a liability potential as that of the preacher of God's Word. God will judge every preacher on the truthfulness and accuracy of his preaching. Any failure as a spokesman for God brings not only shame (2 Tim. 2:15) but judgment. The Holy Spirit has written that all who pastor God's flock must "give an account" (Heb. 13:17). There will be a day of reckoning for the preacher. Only a certain kind of man, then, has the right to be considered a lawyer, a judge, or a physician. The standard is significantly higher for the preacher."*¹⁹
 4. **What is the responsibility of those who preach and teach according to the following?**
 - a. **MacArthur** — *"The preacher needs to realize that God's Word is not the preacher's word. He is to recognize himself as a messenger, not an originator (1 Thess. 2:13). He is a sower, not the source (Matt. 13:3, 19). He is a herald, not the authority (1 Tim. 2:7). He is a steward, not the owner (Col. 1:25). He is the guide, not the author (Acts 8:31). He is the server of spiritual food, not the chef (John 21:15, 17)."*²⁰
 - b. **J.I. Packer** — *"his aim ... will be to stand under Scripture, not over it, and to allow it, so to speak, to talk through him, delivering what is not so much his message as its."*²¹
- C. The messenger cannot be separated from the _____. The audience hears not only words but a person through whom that message comes.
1. Robinson - *"As we study our Bible, the Holy Spirit studies us. As we prepare expository sermons, God prepares us."*⁴
 2. In 1 Timothy 4:12–16, Paul joins life and doctrine (teaching).
 - a. **1 Timothy 4:12–16** — ¹² Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers **in word, in conduct**, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity. ¹³ Till I come, give attention **to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine**. ¹⁴ Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership. ¹⁵ Meditate on these things; **give yourself entirely to them**, that your progress may be evident to all. ¹⁶ **Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them**, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.

D. The messenger must walk with God

¹⁸ William Barclay, *The Letters to Timothy, Titus and Philemon*, rev. ed. (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1975), 49–50.

¹⁹ Ibid., xiii.

²⁰ John MacArthur and Richard Mayhue, eds., *Biblical Doctrine: A Systematic Summary of Bible Truth* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2017), 133.

²¹ James I. Packer, "Preaching as Biblical Interpretation," in *Inerrancy and Common Sense*, ed. Roger R. Nicole and J. Ramsey Michaels (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1980), 203.

1. Doug Webster – “*The best preachers are those who preach first to themselves and then to others.*”²²
2. Those who proclaim God’s Word bear responsibility to embody it themselves (James 1:22).
3. A life of prayer, meditation on Scripture, obedience, holiness, and dependence gives integrity to public proclamation.

E. _____ is not optional

1. Rosscup warns against two opposite errors: those who rely exclusively on prayer while neglecting rigorous study of the text, and those who invest heavily in technical preparation yet abandon dependence on God throughout the process. We study as workmen who must not be ashamed (2 Tim. 2:15), and we pray because apart from Christ we can do nothing (John 15:5).
2. Pray before study, during study, over the sermon or lesson, for the hearers, and before delivery. Prayer does not replace preparation; it saturates preparation.

F. The Holy Spirit empowers biblical communication

1. **1 Thessalonians 1:5** — ⁵ *For our gospel did not come to you **in word only**, but also in **power**, and in the _____ and in much assurance, as you know what kind of men we were among you for your sake.*
2. The Holy Spirit gives boldness (Acts 1:8).
3. The Holy Spirit illuminates (1 Cor. 2:10-14; Ps. 119:18).
4. In 1 Corinthians 2:4-5, Paul deliberately contrasts confidence in human wisdom and rhetorical impressiveness with “demonstration of the Spirit and of power.”

G. Skill must be developed

1. Homiletics is a _____ of learning to handle and communicate the Word more faithfully and effectively.
2. Gift does not eliminate discipline and development.
 - a. Prayer does not eliminate study.
 - b. Orthodoxy does not eliminate clarity.
 - c. Passion does not eliminate accuracy.
 - d. Technique never replaces the Holy Spirit.

H. A Governing conviction for this course: *The text must govern the message, and the Word must first govern the messenger.*

1. Everything in the remaining nine weeks grows out of this conviction. We will learn how to move from text to meaning, from meaning to the Big Idea, from the Big Idea to purpose and structure, and from structure to development, application, language, and delivery. **But technique is always servant, never master.**
2. The goal is not simply to produce better outlines. The goal is to become faithful communicators who can say, with integrity, *This is what God has said; this is what it means; and this is how we must respond.*

Week 1 Summary

- God has spoken in Scripture; therefore, biblical preaching and teaching must be governed by His Word.

²² D. Webster, “Walking with John Chrysostom,” *Journal of Beeson Divinity School* (Spring 2009): 14.

- The authority of biblical preaching and teaching comes from the Word of God, not the personality or ability of the messenger.
- Expository preaching communicates the meaning of the biblical text in its context and applies that truth to contemporary hearers.
- Preaching and teaching differ in emphasis and setting, but both share the responsibility to faithfully communicate and apply God's Word.
- The Word must first govern the messenger—shaping his or her character, spiritual life, and dependence upon God—before being communicated to others.
- Homiletical skill must be developed through disciplined study and practice, but technique must always remain the servant of Scripture and dependence upon the Holy Spirit.

Assignments for Week 2

- **Complete the Week 1 reading acknowledgment and Quiz 1.**
- **Read Robinson, chapter 2, "What's the Big Idea?"** Come prepared with an understanding of Robinson's distinction between a subject and a complement.
- **Choose one of the following texts for your preaching/teaching assignment:**
 - **Genesis 12:1-7; Joshua 1:5-9; Psalms 1:1-6; Psalm 23:1-6; Proverbs 3:5-8; Matthew 5:13-18; Matthew 7:24-27; Luke 10:38-42; John 15:1-8; Ephesians 4:25-32; Philippians 2:1-5; Philippians 4:5-13**

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