

The Purpose Of Preaching

Introduction

- I. There are many great sermons recorded in the Bible.
 - A. Joshua's farewell address (Joshua 24).
 - B. Sermon on Mount (Matthew 5–7).
 - C. Stephen's history of the Jewish nation (Acts 7)
 - D. Paul's sermon at Mar's Hill (Acts 17).
- II. Peter's sermon on Pentecost was the first sermon under the New Covenant is a model for all time (Acts 2).
 - A. Pentecost was one of the three great feast days in the Jewish economy, the others being Passover and the annual day of atonement.
 1. Passover was always on the first day of the week.
 2. The first day of the week was when our Lord was resurrected.
 - B. It was on this Pentecost that Christ was crowned at His Father's right hand and His Kingdom was established upon this earth—it was also the time when the terms of Divine pardon were first made known unto men.
- III. Peter's audience on Pentecost consisted of "devout men, from every nation under heaven" (Acts 2:5).
 - A. Here is a select crowd of honest, upright men devoted to religious matters, they had gathered from every nation in the Greco-Roman world to attend this feast (Acts 2:6–13).
 - B. Men from up around the Caspian Sea and all the way down to the Persian Gulf; up the rivers of the Tigris and Euphrates.
 1. Passing the Wilderness of Wandering into the continent of Africa, there were representatives from Libya about Cyrene, and as far west as Rome.
 2. There were also strangers and proselytes.
- IV. Using Peter's sermon as a model, let's examine the purpose of preaching.

Discussion

- I. **To Explain The Scriptures (Acts 2:14–16)**
 - A. This sounds so simple, yet it is often overlooked.
 1. 11 out of 25 verses of this sermon were from the Old Testament.
 2. It would have done little good to just read the verses—they already knew what the verses said.
 - B. Every sermon in Acts explained the Scriptures the people already knew.
 1. In Stephen's history of the Jewish nation (Acts 7), 19 out of 52 verses were quoted from the Old Testament.
 2. Consider Philip and the Ethiopian nobleman (Acts 8:34).
 3. Paul's example at Thessalonica (Acts 17:1–3).
 - C. Ezra "helped them to understand the reading" (Neh. 8:5–8).

II. Hold Up The Scriptures As Light

- A. In Peter's sermon no appeal was made to current events or modern theological thought (2 Tim. 3:16—4:2).
 - 1. "And you shall know the truth..." (John 8:32).
 - 2. "...as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue" (2 Peter 1:3).
 - 3. "Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 1:3).
 - 4. "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet..." (Psa. 119:105).
- B. The only way to know the mind of God is to study and understand the Scriptures (1 Cor. 2:6–13).
- C. Paul penned the Scriptures so "when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ" (Eph. 3:4).

III. Disturb People In Error (Acts 2:22–24)

- A. Peter did not soft peddle the truth—his audience on Pentecost was "cut to heart" (Acts 2:37).
 - 1. Cutting a man to the heart is not a task to be relished—we look for the end result of freedom from sin and salvation.
 - 2. Between sin and salvation is a painful period of self examination.
 - 3. Men must come to the shocking realization that they are lost!
 - 4. Some preachers are so diplomatic in their preaching that they could never make a sinner ask what to do!
- B. "And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, 'Be saved from this perverse generation'" (Acts 2:40).
 - 1. Peter told these religious people they were lost!
 - 2. If I am in religious error, please disturb me—I need to be disturbed.
- C. Some people, when cut to the heart, will rebel (Acts 7:54).

IV. Hold Up Christ As The Savior And Only Hope Of The World

- A. "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up..." (John 3:14).
- B. "And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw..." (John 12:32).
- C. In every city Paul visited, the first thing he did was to lift up Christ.
 - 1. Like his trip to Corinth (1 Cor. 2:1–5).
 - 2. Our hope is in heaven—not Washington, D.C. or the United Nations.
 - 3. Men will never be saved by preaching politics or moral platitudes, they need the blood of Christ!
 - 4. Paul gave his audience what was needed, not necessarily what they wanted (1 Cor. 1:18–23).
 - 5. Paul's only glory was in the cross (Gal. 6:14).

V. Tell About The Church

- A. On Pentecost some 3,000 people obeyed the gospel of Christ, and “the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved” (Acts 2:41, 47).
- B. Today men say “Preach the man, not the plan.”
 - 1. Preach the King without His kingdom?
 - 2. The Groom without His Bride?
- C. There is “One Body” (Eph. 4:4); that body is the church (Eph. 1:22–23).
- D. The Lord built one church (Matt. 16:18); He will save only one (Eph. 5:23).
- E. Let us not trust in man made denominations, lodges, etc.

Conclusion

- I. If you had been there in Jerusalem on Pentecost, would you have been one of those who cried out asking what to do?
- II. How would you have responded to Peter’s command (Acts 2:38)?
 - A. Would you have argued with him?
 - B. Would you have been among those who scoffed at the gospel?
 - C. The gospel call is still open for you!