

**The Power of Expository Preaching**  
**HV Leadership Summit**

*May 4, 2025*

**1. Pastors/Teachers?**

2. Studying for ministry?

**3. Wandered here by accident?**

- a. Bio – 15 years pastoring TNCC, by all means a student of word and preaching like you...
- b. Hopefully you learn something today...

***Nehemiah 8:1-11 (some parts removed)***

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*<sup>1</sup> all the people assembled with a unified purpose at the square just inside the Water Gate. They asked Ezra the scribe to bring out the Book of the Law of Moses, which the LORD had given for Israel to obey.*

*<sup>2</sup> So...Ezra the priest brought the Book of the Law before the assembly, which included the men and women and all the children old enough to understand. <sup>3</sup> He faced the square just inside the Water Gate from early morning until noon and read aloud to everyone who could understand. All the people listened closely to the Book of the Law.*

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*<sup>5</sup> Ezra stood on the platform in full view of all the people. When they saw him open the book, they all rose to their feet.*

*<sup>6</sup> Then Ezra praised the LORD, the great God, and all the people chanted, "Amen! Amen!" as they lifted their hands. Then they bowed down and worshiped the LORD with their faces to the ground.*

<sup>7</sup> The Levites...<sup>8</sup> They read from the Book of the Law of God and **clearly explained the meaning** of what was being read, **helping the people understand** each passage.

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<sup>9</sup> Then Nehemiah the governor, Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites **who were interpreting for the people** said to them, “Don’t mourn or weep on such a day as this! For today is a sacred day before the LORD your God.” For the people had all been weeping as they listened to the words of the Law.

<sup>10</sup> And Nehemiah<sup>[b]</sup> continued, “Go and celebrate with a feast of rich foods and sweet drinks, and share gifts of food with people who have nothing prepared. This is a sacred day before our Lord. Don’t be dejected and sad, for the joy of the LORD is your strength!”

<sup>11</sup> And the Levites, too, quieted the people, telling them, “Hush! Don’t weep! For this is a sacred day.” <sup>12</sup> So the people went away to eat and drink at a festive meal, to share gifts of food, and to celebrate with great joy because **they had heard God’s words and understood them.**  
**Nehemiah 8:1-11**

There may not be a better example of what powerful, well done, expository preaching and expository teaching looks like, than this passage from **Nehemiah 8...Locus Classicus (best example)**

We’ll come back to the text in a moment...

However, **jumping off from the text**...I want to share the **key idea** for today’s time on the **Power of Expository Preaching**...

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**Workshop Idea**...Expository Preaching is powerful because it's derives **meaning** directly from the **power** found in **God's Word**, inspired by **God's Spirit** which gives life to **God's people**.

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### **By Definition**

- Expository preaching is **grounded in the Bible** and occurs when the Scriptural text's meaning (plain meaning of text) is **presented, explained, illustrated and applied** – so that **Jesus** is glorified and people edified!
  - To say it another way...
    - Expository preaching is preaching the Word in a way that is **true to the text**, magnifies Jesus, and helps people **follow** the God who SPEAKS.
  - *To say it another way...*
    - **Boogie Down Bronx terms** – *EP is making it plain so that we know what God is sayin'.*
    - **Therefore, expository preaching** does not reveal **our ideas** about the text...
    - Rather as John Piper says - simply **explains what is already in the text** – and hopefully , presents the meaning of the text, in a way that is life giving – so that people are without excuse.

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### **Expository Versus Topical Preaching**

- Expository preaching differs from **topical preaching** in that, topical preaching utilizes the Scripture to develop, illustrate and apply the **TOPIC**.
  - **For example** – If the topic is Biblical Finance or The Inspiration of Scripture, Deity of Christ, Baptism In The Holy Spirit...important topics that should be preached –
    - ***The Scriptures must be gathered from the full council of God's Word to support the TOPIC....***
    - **Piper** - However, even in **topical preaching**...we must ***never depart*** from the true meaning of the text...***HS and author*** intended to say something to us in their words, and it is our job to decipher that meaning...God's meaning...and communicate that to people, so Jesus is exulted!
    - **Dr. Bill Dogterom** – All topical preaching is expository, and all expository preaching topical, i.e. we can never go beyond what is written and its true meaning...

YBH...Eugene Peterson would say...

### **Yes But How**

How to...Preach Expository Messages...

- ***Justification***...just as if I never sinned
- ***Atonement***...at one-ment

***Let's form an idea out of the word Expository...***

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- Pictionary...sound like...Expository sounds like...**EXPOSE IT TO OUR WHY**

## **EXPOSE IT**

Expose (= exegete) **it** (the text)

- The 'it' we are exposing or exegeting, is the TEXT...
- So what exactly are we exposing in the text?

***This is not glorious work***...this is likened to digging in the dirt, and seeing what's **beautifully hidden** beneath the surface...

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- Expose its **main idea and outline**
  - **What's the main idea of text we just read from Neh.8?**
  - **To find this**, go back and look at what the text is saying, what **is repeated**, what is central, primary, what stands out– what is the main meaning of this text ...
  - **Main idea of this text is found (rephrased) in last sentence...**
    - ***<sup>12</sup> So the people went away to eat and drink at a festive meal, to share gifts of food, and to celebrate with great joy because they had heard God's words and understood them.***
      - **Central idea...God's word heard, understood (explained) and applied, changes lives.**
  - **Why find the main idea?**

- Going sound like a broken record
- Central idea reveals the main meaning of the text, which is the whole point of expository preaching...
  - Hard work...crucial work...but....
- **Once you have the main idea**, every part of sermon is now built upon that central idea...
- **Conversely**, if central idea is not clear, people will be uninspired, unclear, unchanged and at worse case, ***misled regarding application of God's word!***
  - *Mist in the pulpit is a fog in pews... - Tony Evans*
- Now...Once you have main idea...
  - **Develop outline** (skeleton) which are the supporting points to fully develop the idea...(will provide resources to help with this)

### Expose it...

What's the it...Text...

What are we exposing? Main idea and body...

### Second...

- **Expose its GENRE.**
  - Genre has to do with what type of passage we're looking at...
  - For example...some passages
    - Narrative
    - Poetry
    - Apocalyptic
    - Wisdom

- Prophecy
- Interpreting text within its ***proper genre*** is important so we can understand proper meaning.
  - ***E.g.*** John talks about Jesus writing letters to the Angels of 7 Churches...
    - Angel is a symbol for pastors, messenger or angelic messenger...and symbols are prevalent in apocalyptic literature

- **Expose its SYNTAX.**

- Syntax has to do with word order, phrasing or sentence structure...
  - Important because the placement of words within sentences matter...
  - **Example...**
    - **At the Leadership Summit lunch**, Chick Fil-A was eaten by everyone.

***But if I change the word order...syntax...meaning changes...***

- **Everyone was eaten by Chick Fil-A**, at the Leadership Summit lunch.

- **Example of Syntax...**

- *All Scripture is God breathed and useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training. 2 Tim. 3:16-17*
  - **Teaching** – doctrine
  - **Rebuking** – what we need to stop doing
  - **Correcting** – what we need to start doing

- *Training* – how we need to keep doing

**Reiterate...**

**Expose it...the 'it' is text**

- Expose its **main idea/body**
- Expose its **genre and syntax...**

- **Expose its GRAMMAR.**

- Grammar has do with punctuation, sentence structure and tenses of actual words...
  - **E.g. Rev. 3 – Jesus says to Laodicean church...*those whom I love I rebuke*** (love is Greek word **Phileo** – *brotherly affection*...important as they needed to be reminded of their eternal sonship after their pow-pow for being lukewarm)
  - In exposing **grammar, ask...**
    - What words (verbs) seem to pop and which part of speech are they?
      - Strong's concordance is helpful
      - Don't have pronounce **Geek words**, I mean Greek words...nobody but us cares...

- **Expose its HISTORICAL/CULTURAL context**

- **Historical context answers the question....*When was the text written?***
  - **After** Nehemiah's physical walls were rebuilt...
  - So what? *Now time to focus on spiritual foundations*



- **Historical context answers the question...By whom was text written?**
  - *Ezra, Nehemiah...chronicler...NOT PAUL, JAMES OR JOHN*
- **Historical context answers the question...*To whom was text written?***
  - **Specifically to the Jews returning after Babylonian exile.**
  - **Also took place at the Water gate – that matters because water gate *place of washing and cleaning...and we are washed and renewed with the Word when we hear, understand and apply it!***
- **Historical context answers the question...*What is the larger context?***
  - In contextual terms, Ezra/Nehemiah one book, and are newest Book in Jewish Cannon, are post exilic and prepare the way for Jewish Messiah as they are two of the last Books (chronologically in Hebrew Bible).

### **Tools to expose 'it' (the text)...**

- **Commentary – Logos Bible Software**
- **Lexicon (Hebrew/Greek dictionary)/Concordance**
- **AI – helpful with outlines and doing research**
- **Proven expositors**– listen after you prep outline stage. When you Steal but give credit.
- **Cohorts – Follow Me**

**That's EXPOSE IT...Text's main idea/outline, grammar, syntax, historical/cultural context**

Now...

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### TO OUR WHY

Sinek...Know your why?

(Why do we preach expository messages?)

### Your first why in preaching is **JESUS...**

- Preaching is not performance **it's worship unto Jesus**
  - *Every message is a Sunday School until you get to Jesus - Keller*
- Therefore, **seeing Jesus in the text** and **preaching the gospel** (Jesus died in my place), is central
  - **Where do we see Jesus in this text?**
    - Just as Ezra the priest, and Nehemiah the prophet, faithfully shepherded, preached and explained God's Word, **Jesus is the Word of God**, the **fulfilment of prophecy** and the **Good Shepherd** who oversees our souls
    - **Secondly**, Just as leaders called the people to gather in community to hear and understand God's Word, Jesus has laid down His life for the Church, **to wash her in the word** and to make her holy...
    - **Third**, just as the people were called to embrace God's joy, which is our strength, **for the joy set before Jesus**, he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sent His Spirit, the Spirit of joy, to live in us eternally....

Know you're why...Your first why is Jesus...

### Your second why is **YOU**

- What does God need to ***reveal to your heart through this text?***
  - The text is FIRST, for YOU!
- ***Robinson...As preacher studies passage, HS studies the preacher...***
- **Preaching is you...**Dr. George Wood
  - God's called you....and you are God's man or woman on His assignment!
  - Plus - your people are showing up to hear YOU as you partner with God, to deliver God's Word– ***so be yourself***

### Your third why is the **COMMUNITY**

Every 'church' community has 3 groups

- **Crowd**
  - Unbelievers that need to receive and believe the Gospel unto salvation
- **Committed**
  - Believers that need to Repent and believe the Gospel unto sanctification
- **Core**
  - Believers that need to Repent, believe and share the Gospel unto disciple making
- What is the ***application*** of the text you've chosen for each group?
- **Slide**

### **Cautions in Expository Preaching**

#### **Caution 1 - Expository extinction.**

- a. ***Unless you're Dr. Martyn L Jones*** - I don't recommend 150 straight Sunday mornings on Psalms!

- i. **You may love it...**Congregation may go from 150 to 1...
- b. **Tips....**After 10-12 weeks you may need to switch it up...***especially for Sundays***...which is main street...
  - i. Psalms of David
  - ii. Imprecatory Psalms
  - iii. Pilgrim Psalms
  - iv. Psalms as prayers – Eugene P...
- c. **Tips...**Develop a calendar...that has at least one OT, one NT and topical expository messages

### **Caution 2 - Expository rigidity.**

- d. **Rigidity happens** when you have no room for spontaneity
- e. **Example....**I Preached a great Palm Sunday message on Laodicea...
  - i. Susan...Why don't you ever preach on Palm Sunday on Palm Sunday?
  - ii. My calendar, dear...

### **Caution 3 - Eisegesis over Exposition.**

- f. Eisegesis happens when you write yourself or people into every text make it all about you or people instead of God...every illustration...
  - i. **David and Goliath**
    - 1. **Eisegesis - You are David...**meant to overcome the giants...**perhaps...**
    - 2. **True meaning...**
      - a. Jesus is the fulfilment of the Davidic line...the One who has perfectly overcome the enemy on our behalf stripped him of all

of his power - so that God's army, the church prevails!

**Caution 4 - Expository Suppository.**

- g. When you read **David's Words in Psalm 23, 51, 103, Peter's words at Pentecost, Paul's words at Athens**, or Jesus' Words on the Mount...you realize...***We all stink***, compared the HS...
  - i. We're frail, weak, not as good as we think we are...don't believe the reel numbers!
  - ii. If don't believe me...go back and listen to one of your sermons from 5 years ago...
- h. **Good news**...God still chooses you...He has made you a non-stinky warrior!
  - i. **Tip**...Keep tweaking...widdle it down...get feedback...

Summary...Expository Preaching is powerful because it draws its power from the meaning of God's powerful Word...

**Expository preaching** occurs as we **EXPOSE-IT-TO-OUR-WHY**

**Resource List**

**JP Pokluda Sample Sermon Outline**

Pokluda, a national leading pastor in Texas uses this basic structure to coach his preaching team. I have found it to be super helpful.

**Here are the components:**

1. **Image** - a picture or story that introduces your message. Try to think about something that can easily capture the hearts of varied audience from teens to older adults.
2. **Subject** - Today, I want to talk to you from the subject/topic...

3. **Need** - Why should people pay attention? Why does what you're going to say even matter?
4. **Preview** - Here's where we're going. This is where you share your big idea and provide a map of where message is going.
  1. E.g. My big idea is that God can raise up willing preachers right from within NYMN. I am going to share with you 3 reasons why I think “home-grown” preachers are necessary for the health of the Body of Christ. After that, I share 2 key ways we can apply these truths to our personal lives.
5. **Text** - Read the text. If it's more than 12 verses, I encourage you to break into parts/units of thought.
  1. **When considering text ask:** To whom was it originally written and why? What is the context? Why was it included? What is confusing/terms needing definition? What does it mean? How can we apply this today?

***If you're covering an entire chapter,*** summarize the narrative parts that are important but read the portions that are essential.

1. **Summary** - Here's what we talked about, and what we said about the topic (e.g. to summarize)
2. **Conclusion** - Application. Call to action. What should I do now that I've heard these truths? *Where do we see Jesus/Gospel message?* Try thinking about this in terms of a) people far from God (non-believers) as well as believers (committed, core).

### **Recommended Book List**

1. **Andy Stanley** – *Communicating For A Change*
2. **Eugene Peterson** – *Working The Angles*
3. **Haddon Robinson** – *Biblical Preaching*
4. **Bryan Chapell** - *Christ Centered Preaching*
5. **James Bradford** – *Preaching - Maybe It Is Rocket Science*

## 6. Timothy Keller - *Preaching*