Why I Am Committed to Expository Preaching, Part 1
Scripture: Selected Scriptures
Code: GTY126

There's no one that I love and appreciate in the ministry or as a fellow Christian and a brother in Christ more than Steve. Thank you. And the Lord in His goodness brought us together a number of years ago and that friendship just continues to develop and he enriches me greatly and I'm so thrilled to be in this church, my second time here. I would come all the time if it were possible, but it's a delight to be here. My favorite people to speak to are preachers cause they're all desperate. They're hanging on every word looking for the next sermon. It's just a privilege to talk about expository preaching and I'm not sure I'm the best person to define what it is, but I know Stephen is. And so, the details that he pours out to you today about how to get at the text and do effective expository preaching is going to be a rich, rich blessing, I know.

I remember years ago, one of our staff was asked by somebody whether or not they could get an appointment with me to find out how I do what I do in preaching. To which this staff member replied, "Well you don't want to do that because he has no idea what he's doing, it just comes out. So I can tell you what he does and so I'll tell you what he would never be able to tell." I don't analyze myself, I guess.

I want to give you a perspective. As we talk about this issue of expository preaching, I want to give you just a general perspective. I've been thinking about this a lot lately and I shared some of these thoughts with the Board when Steve was there who was on the Board of the college and seminary, but it's a paradigm that I think we've lost in the Scripture in which we find the best, most all encompassing definition of our relationship to the Lord. And it's language that has been very judicially avoided in the history of the English-speaking church. And as a result of that, it has been virtually avoided across the world.

What I want you to understand is that you have to view yourself in the big scheme of things as a slave...as a slave. The language of contemporary Christianity is very man-centered. The language of contemporary Christianity is about personal relationship with God. And, of course, the devil has a personal relationship with God and it's not very good. Everybody in the planet has a personal relationship with God. He is the God of everyone for salvation or damnation.

But we talk about this as if somehow God is our God to do for us what it is that we want done. The language of evangelicalism is the language of personal fulfillment, finding your dreams, finding your purpose. God loves you unconditionally and wants you to be all that you can be. Jesus wants you

healthy, and wealthy, etc. You hear that all the time.

The language of the New Testament is very, very different from that. The dominant metaphor in the New Testament for the Christian is he is a slave...he is a slave. The common word is *doulos*. *Doulos* is used 130 times in the New Testament, compound form of it, *sundoulos* is used another 10 times and there is a verb form, *douloo,* that's used a number of times, as well. So approaching about 150 times you have some form of the word *doulos*. Now *doulos* means slave. It doesn't mean anything but slave. It doesn't mean servant and it doesn't mean hyphenated bondservant, it means slave and nothing else. There are over 20 New Testament translations in English, over 20. One of them...one of them, to my knowledge, translates *doulos* every time as slave, the rest do not. That one is E.J. Goodspeed who lived in Chicago and taught at the University of Chicago as a great Greek...pioneer Greek scholar, taught there, I think, from 23 to 37, the last century. E.J. Goodspeed always translates *doulos* slave. I have been told that the new Holman translation, put out by the Southern Baptists Convention, also endeavors to be faithful to the word *doulos.*

I had a conversation two days ago with the man who headed up the ESV who said to me, we had long, long discussions about the word *doulos* because we all knew it meant slave but we opted not to translate it that way because the word bears such stigma. What this has done is it has made obscure this dominant New Testament truth that we are slaves.

There are seven words at least in the New Testament for servant, with all kinds of nuances. There's only one word for slave and all English translations but one, somewhat obscure one by Goodspeed and hopefully this new Holman, I haven't checked this out, avoid this.

I was in Winston-Salem, North Carolina a few months ago and was talking a little bit about this and an African/American pastor stood up after a little bit of discussion and I have them an opportunity to ask some questions, he said, "How am I supposed to tell my people that the Bible defines us as slaves when slavery has such a terrible stigma?" And it was a great question and I proceeded to follow it up by saying, "You're expressing the very reason why translators don't do that, but that is a liberty that translators don't have with the Word of God."

You will find *doulos* translated slave in the New American Standard or in the New King James, or in the NIV, or in the ESV, or any other translation you use, when it refers to an actual slave, or when an actual slave is an illustration and they can't avoid the fact that the two are connected, such as in Ephesians 6, "Slaves, be subject to your masters," and then the next verse he talks about being a slave of Christ. So where it has to be connected, they will translate it slave. Every other time they'll translate it servant, or that hyphenated word bondservant which has no real meaning in the original.

In fact, this is so obviously demeaning that, as I told you, men who directed the ESV, everybody admitted it is the meaning. Here's a quote from Kittel and Kittel is the most voluminous treatment of Greek words, as you well know, this is from Kittel, "All the words...I'm paraphrasing...All the words in the group with *doulos* root describe the status of a slave," here's a quote, "the meaning is unequivocal and self-contained, it is superfluous to give examples or trace the history."

Now if Kittel tells you it is superfluous to give examples and trace the history, that's counter intuitive to everything else they do when they go on page after page after page doing just that. Further in the article it says, it describes...this word describes...a service which is not a matter of choice for the one who renders it, which he has to perform whether he likes it or not. It describes one's subject totally to an alien will, the will of the owner and his utter dependence on his master.

Now you have to understand further that the New Testament uses this word not with slavery as a distant memory, as it is for us, but in the midst of a world where they're between ten and twelve million slaves who were suffering all the possible kinds of experiences that slaves might suffer from noble, loving, loyal, generous masters to the worst abusers. To the Greek, to the free Greek, slavery was the worst possible social status. No freedom, no rights, no ownership of any property, no legal recourse, no access to courts, either on your own behalf or as a witness for anybody else, no citizenship, no possibility to serve in the military, you had no right to do what you wanted, you could not evade any unpleasant task, you were totally dependent on the one who owned you for all protection, all provision and all determination of discipline and reward.

The Greeks had nothing but scorn for slavery. Never in their language will you find that they referred to their relationship to the gods with *doulos.* When they referred to their relationship to their deities, it was *philos*...*philos...philos* meaning love as with a brother. Never did the Greeks consider themselves in relationship to their gods as anything but a friend, not certainly a slave. So the idea of slavery was utterly distasteful.

So here you have the Christian church with a task that looks like this...go out and win people who are spiritually dead and blind, preach the gospel to people who cannot understand, in whom the god of this world has blinded their minds, lest the light of the glorious gospel shine unto them, who are dead in trespasses and sins. And to help you with that impossible task, take a message that is to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks idiocy. Compounding that, the dominate metaphor for what you're asking them to become is a slave. And you have an absolutely impossible task humanly.

And that's exactly what the gospel calls for. We're not asking people to let Jesus in their life so He can make them all they want to be. We're asking them to become slaves. We're speaking to the dead and the blind, of the foolishness of the cross and asking them to become slaves.

What's the difference between a slave and a servant? A servant worked for wages, a slave was owned...huge difference. Servants were hired to work for their wages and when the job was done, they went on their way. Slaves were owned, could not quit. If they tried to quit, they would be arrested, sometimes executed so the other slaves would be afraid or stamped on their forehead, *fugitivus*, so that for the rest of their life it would be identified that they had been a fugitive.

This is a hard sell in the ancient world. It's a really hard sell. But I want you to see how Paul viewed himself. Look at Romans 1:1, and I'm going to have to put the right word in, in no matter what issue of the Bible, or what translation you're using, "Paul, a...what?...slave." That's...that's...that's the first identification. "Then called an Apostle, set apart for the gospel of God." But he starts out, "I'm a slave." This is outrageous. No man who wanted to gain honor or dignity or esteem in the society, would ever begin like that. You'd never do that. You just cancelled out any opportunity to have any influence on the free world. Philippians chapter 1, "Paul and Timothy...what?...slaves of Christ Jesus." Bizarre...Christ Jesus a crucified criminal? As the etching in Rome, has a picture of a crucified body of a man with a head of a jackass and it shows a guy bowing down and it says, *"elixa menos(???)* worships his god." Anybody that would worship a crucified man is worshiping a jackass and you're a slave of a crucified criminal?

Galatians, same thing, Galatians 1:10, "Am I now seeking the favor of men or of God? Am I striving to please men? If I was still trying to please men, I would not be a slave of Christ." It says the same thing in Titus 1. James calls himself a slave in James 1:1. Peter calls himself a slave in 2 Peter 1:1. Jude calls himself a slave in Jude 1:1. And these are the writers of Scripture. These are the highest and the best. John calls himself a slave.

Look at Revelation for a moment. "The revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave him to show to His slaves." All the believers for whom the book of Revelation is written are slaves. "The things which must shortly take place, sent and communicated by His angel to His slave, John." This is just so outrageous for people who affirm that they are the representatives of the true and living God who have the greatest message in the history of the world, who are proclaiming the very Word of God to identify themselves in a way that virtually cancels out any influence. They all see themselves as slaves.

If you look at chapter 7 of Revelation, we have here the section on 144 thousand Jews in the time in the future, the time of the Tribulation, the Lord will seal them and use them for the proclamation of the gospel, but verse 3 says, "Do not harm the earth or sea, or the trees until we have sealed the slaves of our God." Chapter 10 of Revelation, verse 7, "In the days of the voice of the seventh angel when he is about to sound, then the mystery of God is finished as He preached to His slaves, the prophets."

So the prophets are slaves, the Apostles are slaves, the future 144 thousand are slaves, we are slaves and it continues this way. Let's go to chapter 19...chapter 19 verse 2, I'm just kind of flying on

my feet here, I think it's verse 2 where you have this great beginning, hallelujah salvation, glory to our God, verse 2, "Because His judgments are true and righteous, He has judged the great harlot who was corrupting the earth with her immorality and He has avenged the blood of His slaves on her." You can go all the way into the future in the time of the Great Tribulation and the people of God are still going to be slaves. They're always going to be slaves.

Verse 5, "A voice came from the throne saying, 'Give praise to our God, all you His slaves, you who fear Him, the small and the great.'" Everyone who fears God is a slave even in heaven. Revelation 22 verse 3, "And there shall no longer be any curse and the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it and His slaves shall serve Him." Verse 6, "And He said, these words are faithful and true and the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets sent His angels to show to His slaves," and it's a repeat of what was back in 1:1. We're slaves.

You cannot even understand our role if you don't understand that. What does it mean to be a slave? It means you're bought with...what?...a price. Is that a perfect picture of Christianity? Slaves were bought, purchased, not with corruptible things, in our case, but with precious blood of Jesus Christ. You are then exclusively owned, no slave can serve two masters, impossible. You can't be owned by two people who have total control over you. That's the only way you can understand that statement. You could have two bosses, you can't have two totally, unilateral, dominating owners. It means you're bought, you're owned, thirdly, it means that you are subject to complete availability for obedience. Another way to say that is you are subject to an alien will. You're not in control. You do what you're told.

Further, the slave was dependent on his master for protection and provision. And as I mentioned earlier, his master rendered final disposition on him as to discipline and reward. And that is exactly the picture of a Christian...bought, owned by one master, completely available to obey that master, dependent on him for all provision and all protection, and the final discipline and reward is in his hands. The slave then is someone whose life and service belongs totally to another, absolute ownership, absolute control, absolute subjection, absolute obedience, absolute loyalty, absolute dependence.

You have to grasp that idea. You say, "Well it's...it takes us down pretty low, doesn't it?" Let me help you with that a little bit. Turn to Philippians 3...well, Philippians 2, I'm sorry, Philippians 2, verse 5, "Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus." What attitude? "Who although He existed in the *morphe* of God," a form of God, "did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a slave."

A slave...total subjection, total obedience, subject to an alien will, I do only what the Father shows Me, I do only what the Father tells Me, I only...I do only what the Father wills, I do only what pleases the Father, that's slavery...that's slavery. And His slavery took Him down in the likeness of men, down

through obedience to the point of death, even death on a cross. No, it's not beneath your dignity to be a slave, it wasn't beneath His.

One other thing to say about this, He is a slave who became master. I've been asked to write a new edition or an updated edition of *The Gospel According To Jesus*, the book. I'm going to add a chapter on slavery because I think this really answers the question. It's just...it's just...it is the powerful argument for the Lordship of Christ for this reason..there's no such thing as a *doulos* without a *kurios* , and there's no such thing as a *kurios* without a *doulos*. You're not the Lord of nobody. If you're...if you don't have any slaves, you're not the master. And if you have slaves, you are the master. And the master has slaves so He's the master. Who's going to argue the Lordship of Christ over *doulos*? It's absurd.

The Bible does not commend slavery. The Bible does not condemn slavery. The Bible tells people who are in a slave and master relationship to behave in a godly fashion and make it the best that it can be, and for many people it was a great way of life because they had a benevolent master and all their needs were met. And that was especially helpful for people who had a difficult time providing for themselves and protecting themselves. But the Bible doesn't condemn it or condone it, it just finds in it the perfect model for understanding the Christian's relationship to God...slaves.

And so, when you come to the end of it all, you can say when we have done all that we ought to have done, Luke 17, we are nothing but...what?...unworthy slaves. Now, men, if Jesus was a slave and Paul was a slave, we're slaves. But I want to tell you about our Master. He makes His slaves sons and not only does He make them sons, He makes them joint heirs of all that He possesses. Not only does He make them joint heirs, He lets them sit on His throne with Him. Not only that, but when we see Him face-to-face and we sit down at His great banquet, He will gird Himself and serve us.

I could be a slave to that Master. I am a slave to that Master. I just think we need to understand that because as a Christian and as a Christian minister, I have to fulfill the duty of a slave to do only what my master tells me to do, only what my Master wills me to do. And where His will is not specifically stated, I find ways to please Him. Make it my ambition, says Paul, to please Him, to go over the top, to go beyond the minimum, not to live just for the specific things, but even the gray areas. I want to go hard in the direction of what I know would please Him. And with that kind of paradigm in mind, and that was just kind of a little introduction, but with that kind of paradigm in mind, I think we can understand our responsibility now, right?, in ministry.

Now let me say one more thing. I was up at the Desiring God Conference on the weekend, Friday and Saturday up in Minneapolis with John Piper(?) and I was supposed to talk about endurance in ministry and I did, but something struck me in 2 Corinthians 4, Paul says that "Therefore we have this ministry, this New Covenant ministry, the ministry of righteousness, the ministry of life from chapter 3, we have this ministry as we have received mercy." We are unworthy slaves. We are called to be

obedient and the fact that God would call us to this privilege is nothing but a mercy. We are saved, that's a mercy, we don't earn it, we don't deserve it. And you didn't earn your right to this ministry by going to Bible school. It's a mercy which means it assumes you're unworthy, it assumes that I'm unworthy, it assumes that I'm weak and therefore my unworthiness and my weakness can't forfeit it. It's a mercy...it's a mercy. So I never want to presume on it.

It starts out understanding I'm weak. In fact, the weaker I am, the more power I'll have. The less confidence I have in myself, the more I rest on the power of God. So I know it's a mercy, whatever it becomes is a mercy. I deserve nothing. People say, "Well, pastors get burned out, why do pastors get burned out?" They don't get burned out because they work, they get burned out because they establish unrealistic expectations and then they fell badly when they're not treated the way they think they ought to be treated. You don't want to be treated the way you ought to be treated, neither do I. That's why I got saved. (Laughter) This is a mercy. And I'm only asked in this mercy to be faithful as the Son of God was faithful to the will of the Father. And so when I pick up a Bible and I read, "Preach the Word," it doesn't take a high IQ to figure that out. That's what I'm doing because what else am I going to do? I'm a slave.

You say, "Well I'm not having much results." I don't deserve any results. This is a mercy. I can only concentrate on effort, not success. I learned that when I used to play football. You know, I like to win, why else would you play? It's all about winning. But I figured out pretty well that I couldn't...I could not guarantee the outcome because I had eleven people on the other side of the ball trying to stop me and ten other people on my team also trying to stop me, occasionally. You remember that, don't you, Steve? Yeah...so...all I could so...all I could do was deal with effort. I could never deal with outcome. It was all about excellence and not about success. And so, we have received this mercy, Paul says, we are slaves, we obey our Master, all we want to hear is one day, "Well done, good and faithful slave."

I want to give you a list of things that Steve asked me to give you and...I'll give you a few thoughts here.

It was a few years ago that we were having an expository preaching seminar and I just had been thinking about it and I thought to myself, "What are the consequences of not preaching expositionally?" Now I don't want to give you a big definition of exposition, let me just say this, explaining the Bible...that's exposition...explaining the Bible. It doesn't come from the verb expose, it comes from the verb exposit which means to explain. So all I'm talking about is explaining the Bible, explaining the meaning of the Bible...that's all we do. So...there's a lot of ways to do it, but in the end, what you want to do is tell people what the Bible means by what it says and then help them apply it, right? So it seems to me that there's really nothing else to do but that...as a slave, since I've been told to do that.

But I thought... I just began to think, what are the consequences of non-expositional preaching? And I said, I'm going t o come up with ten consequences of non-expositional preaching...I just picked ten out of the air and I sat down and I started writing on these sheets and I came up with 63. Isn't that right? Sixty-three consequences of non-expositional preaching. I was in the flow, I'll tell you. I think I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day...and it was going. And I just...I just kept thinking about these things, it kept flowing, there's a lot of overlap and close connection, but let me give you a few.

Number one, a failure to do expositional preaching usurps the authority of God over the soul...usurps the authority of God over the soul.

Let me put it simple. Who alone has authority over the souls of men and women? You? Are you the one who determines what needs to be said to your congregation? Are you the one that determines what needs to be said to the lost? Are you the one that has sovereignty over the souls of those who come to worship? If you don't open the Word of God and let them hear the message of God, you have usurped His authority. You come up with your little cute clever insightful gimmicky stuff as you hear so often today, you invent a message, you make your theology up as you go, like TV preachers do...except one. Now that I'm on TV. Wrong end of my life to be going on TV, I just say, "Fog the camera up and keep it way back," you know. But you understand, you usurp the authority of God over the soul. God has a right to speak to men and women, has a right to speak to His church and when His church gathers, it is to hear Him speak...not you.

Secondly, it usurps the headship of Christ over His church...it usurps the headship of Christ over His church. Preached a message years ago on the headship of Christ over the church, it's been a great battle, you know, through the history of the church, but Christ is the head of His church.

Look at Ephesians 1, just because it's...it's so powerful...Ephesians 1, verse 20, just a good reminder. "God is the one who raised Christ from the dead, seated Him at His right hand in the heavenlies, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion," you can break all those terms down, "all points of authority, all points of power, He is far above, not just above, far above, *huper*, far above and every name that is named." That's personages. He is far above all *kuriotes*, all lordships, all dominions, all points of power and authority and rule and every personage, not only in this age but in the one to come, both now and in the Kingdom to come. And He put all things in subjection, under His feet, which says it the other way, He's far above all things and all things are far below Him. He is the head. I love this, the end of verse 22, "And gave Him as head over all things to the church." It doesn't say He gave Him as head of the church, it says He gave the one who is head over all things to be the head of the church. What kind of fool is going to usurp that headship?

There is a quote that I found in a wonderful book called *The Preachers of Scotland*, you know that book well, by William Blakie(?) written n 1888. He...he says, "The attempt by the state," this would be

an English throne, “to force a new liturgy on the church the use of which should be binding under the highest penalties, showed a determination to set aside Christ’s authority,” we’re talking about 1600's, “and tyrannize over his heritage even in the most sacred region of worship. By the force of reaction, the church was thrown upon the more full assertion of Christ’s claim as head of the church and the glorious privilege of the church to follow her divine head.”

In other words, in the pressure that came upon the church in the seventeenth century, the Scottish church by England to make the king the head of the church, it forced the church to reassert the headship of Christ over His church. And Blakie says, “It was a moment in history when it went from understanding Christ as the head over every believer to Christ as the head over the church. And that became the defining thing that said to people, “If he’s the head of the church, then he must speak to his church.” Now I’m not going to read the rest of it because I don’t have time. But this has been a historic battleground. Roman Catholicism still says the Pope is the head of the church.

Thirdly, a failure to preach and teach expositionally hinders the work of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit has one tool by which He does His saving and sanctifying work. What is it? The Word of God, we are begotten again by the Word of Truth, right? James 1. And John 17:17, “Sanctify them by Thy truth, Thy Word is truth.”

The Spirit uses the Word as the means of sanctification. So if you fail to proclaim, to teach, to exposit the Word of God, you usurp the authority of God, you usurp the headship of Christ, and hinder the work of the Holy Spirit. This is sort of an all-out assault on the Trinity. I can’t think of anything I’d rather not do. If you think expositional preaching is some preference, you don’t understand. If you think that I’ve just determined that it’s an effective pragmatic way to get people to respond, you don’t get it. If I don’t do this, I have struck a blow against God. I can’t sing, “Holy, Holy, Holy,” and then when I get up give some ideas that I have...some nonsense that I’ve crafted to capture people’s attention.

A failure to do expositional preaching demonstrates then pride and a lack of submission, pride and a lack of submission. Mavericks don’t like to submit to biblical truth because they don’t’ want to submit to God. It’s really frightening.

Number five, this, I think, is so important for me. A failure to do expositional preaching severs the preacher personally from the regular sanctifying grace of Scripture...a failure to do expositional preaching severs the preacher personally from the regular sanctifying grace of Scripture.

Week by week by week by week exposition of Scripture calls for week by week by week intense study of the text...especially, men, if you stay in the same place. Everything you’ve said, they’ve heard. They got it on tape. You’ve got to keep moving, keep moving, keep moving. If I never preached a sermon, I would thank God for my life of study of the Word of God for its own sanctifying grace in my

life. There’s no magic here, guys. There’s no magic here.

People often ask me, “Who holds you accountable?” Look, I could be...I could have all kinds of relationships with people...I do, I’m close to Steve, we’ve traveled the world together, we spend time together. I think there’s a sense of accountability. He can’t read my heart. I can’t read his heart. My wife...my precious wife, she expects me to live all the time everything I preach. It’s ridiculous. (Laughter) I mean, give me some space, huh? No, you guys know, right? You’re not acting like you were preaching last Sunday. And I have two sons and two daughters and fourteen grandchildren who expect me to live consistently with the way I preach. I can’t win that battle on that outside.

I was telling the guys this morning, I’m living in total shock. A pastor I knew for years found him dead, hanged himself, some horrible situation of sexual deviation and perversion. I’m telling you, if you’re not winning the battle on the inside, time and truth go hand in hand and the truth will be known. You’ve got to win the battle on the inside and there’s no magic to that. I study the Bible first for my own soul. I never study the Bible to make a sermon. I study the Bible to know God. I study the Bible to understand the passage, to grasp all that is in that passage that is true about my God, to have it wash my own heart, and then I can usually think of something to say when I get to church. I love what Paul said in 1 Corinthians....2 Corinthians 1, rather. Look at this, this is so good. Second Corinthians 1 verse 12, “Our boasting...” and he hated to do this, but he’s trying to defend his own integrity against the assaults of false teachers who had come to Corinth and just done a massacre job on his reputation, so he says, “Our boasting is this, the testimony of our conscience that in holiness and godly sincerity, not in fleshly wisdom but in the grace of God we have conducted ourselves in the world and especially toward you.”

You know what he’s saying? You can criticize me, you can say whatever you want to say, I will tell you this, “My conscience does not accuse me.” Wow! My conscience, he says, affirms that in holiness and godly sincerity and not in fleshly wisdom, I have conducted my life.

I don’t know how anybody could preach with a guilty conscience. I don’t know how you can craft that kind of hypocrisy, but it’s done all the time. And when you see a man fall into sin, that’s not the beginning of anything, that’s the end of long patterns of losing the battle on the inside. In chapter 4,...Paul, how do you sustain such a long, enduring ministry? Verse 2, chapter 4, 2 Corinthians, “We have renounced the things hidden because of shame.” I don’t have a secret life. I don’t have a secret life. Why? Because the pruning and the washing of the Word. I’m so grateful for that. The Lord must have known that I would have been a disaster had I not been in the ministry for my own sake...because my life is made up every week and has been for nearly 40 years of just letting the Word wash over me. If you’re not in the Word all the time...I worry about that...I worry about that. I wrote a little article about some of this grunge Christianity, maybe you saw it on the Pulpit Magazine website. I fear for these guys who are very...you know, they’re concerned about reaching the culture and identifying with the culture and they know all that’s bad and they’re intimately acquainted with

what’s bad in the culture...that’s toxic. That’s toxic.

Philippians 4:8, right? “Whatever is good and honorable, that’s what you ought to...” I don’t know a whole lot about the culture I just want to know a whole lot about the Bible because God knows a whole lot about the human heart in any culture.

Number six, 44 to go, I’ve reduced it to 50 for today. A failure to do expositional preaching, biblical, doctrinal exposition removes spiritual depth and transcendence from worship. Removes spiritual depth and transcendence from worship.

If you’re superficial and you’re shallow in your preaching, your people think superficially and therefore they worship superficially. What they call worship isn’t worship. It’s music- inducing emotions but it’s not the mind grasping with passion and gratitude the glories of revealed truth.

That’s why people don’t want to sing hymns, because they don’t know enough theology to understand the nuances. It’s got to be 7/11...seven words eleven times, over and over and over and over till one little simple phrase, simple phrase, simple phrase, simple phrase in a tune that makes you feel warm and fuzzy. And if you sing a hymn that has some nuances, some poetic subtleties, they’re lost.

It’s a simple thing. Worship only goes up as biblical understanding goes down. They’re in verse. As they go down into he depth of the Word, they rise to the heights of worship. So if you don’t ever go down where they’re glorying in the greatness of God’s revelation and in the wonder of who He is, then they can’t go up in worship so they all live in the flat land in the middle and you’ve got to entertain them.

I was in England in the spring and I was at The Banner of Truth Conference. That is an interesting experience. Have you ever been to that? Banner of Truth Conference? These guys are Reformed, they’re really Reformed. (Laughter) They’re reformed right down to their socks, I’m telling you, they’re Reformed. They have read every Puritan, analyzed every Puritan. They’re...they’re serious. They are...there are a bunch of them that came from Holland and all the Dutch, the serious Dutch Reformed all wear black suits and black ties...just part of the austerity of being Reformed, they’ve got it all wired. And they were...there was...we were at the University of Lester for the Banner of Truth and we’ve all been blessed by the publications of Banner of Truth, haven’t we? Iain Murray was the host and it was just great to be there. Sinclair Ferguson was there, I was there, it was just a great joy to be there. They’re a little gun shy on Americans and very serious...very serious. And they had a little Q&A, this little anecdote here, and one of the guys said, “I would like to ask the question, can a man who has all unbelieving children be a pastor?”

Well I had come to realize that many of them have unbelieving children, many of them because they may be true evangelicals but they’re in churches there just not, especially if they’re Anglican. So I

tried to give, you know, a biblical answer without, you know, going too far. And one old gentleman stood up who was a patriarch and he said, “Well, here’s the answer (in fuddy-duddy accent) Samuel.” Samuel, what church did he pastor? “Samuel had unbelieving children.” He sat down. And they were all...hum....., you know, that’s what happens to non-dispensationalists, you know? (Laughter) Any way...I mean, it was just that kind of...that’s how serious it was. But I’m telling you this, I’m saying all that to say this, when they sang twelve verses of every great hymn, they understood every single phrase, every nuance. And the worship was transcendent. They were literally...you would call them stodgy, stuffy...you know, they would have apoplexy if they heard a praise band. (Laughter) They would have cardiac arrest. But when they sang those hymns verse after verse after verse after verse, the richness of what they understood just transported those guys and the singing was just heavenly. Not that singing is all there is to worship, but singing is a treasure to us because it allows somebody else to help us say what we couldn’t say that well...but what we want to say. And I grieve when I go places and people can’t worship like that, can’t go up, really up, because they haven’t been down.

So the preacher’s job, take them down so they can go up. Give them the depth so they can go to the heights in worship.

One more point, and I’ll stop. A failure to do expositional preaching prevents the preacher from fully developing the mind of Christ critical to His work. Would you not say this? Christ is the head of the church, right? Christ is the Great Shepherd, Peter says, we are His...what?...under-shepherds. We have delegated authority, is that not true? We are to convey to the church the will and the mind of the head of the church. So, if we should be expert on anything, it should be on the mind of Christ, true? I ought to be able to say when somebody comes up to me, “What...what is the mind of Christ on this issue...that issue...this issue...that issue...this issue?” So being biblically knowledgeable, 1 Corinthians 2:16 says, “You have the mind of Christ.” That’s not some mystical experience, you have the mind of Christ, the whole section is about revelation. You have the mind of Christ. Master it. I can tell you after all these years what Christ thinks. I can tell you what God thinks, as far as God has revealed it. That’s what we do. Physicians of the soul diagnose with a divine diagnosis and cure with a divine cure. If you’re not biblically expert, then you’re not fulfilling your responsibility. It’s a kind of malpractice. You’re a little dangerous.

It’s not about style, and you know that. It’s not about being cute and funny and clever, creative and innovative and attractive and winsome and charismatic, it’s about truth, and it’s about knowing the truth and being consistent and having facility with the truth and speaking the mind of Christ on that. I mean, you’d almost...you’d almost like your congregation not to know your opinion, at least from the pulpit, not to know your opinion on things that aren’t biblical. I don’t ever get in a pulpit and talk about things about which I have an opinion other than Scripture. This is a very sacred place and there’s an expectation that when I stand here, they will hear the mind of Christ, not the mind of John MacArthur on something that’s not a biblical issue.

We have to have as much as is within us possible an understanding of the mind of Christ. And, you know, men, there's really no excuse for not getting after that. The resources are absolutely endless. When I went over to Russia to receive the first copies of the Russian MacArthur Study Bible, 1600 pastors in Moscow from all over the place, leading pastors, regional pastors and all came together to get the first copies and they were so thrilled. In Russia when they're thrilled, the men kiss you on the lips. That's a bad custom. (Laughter) There are no breath mints in Russia, I'll put it that way. (Laughter) But I didn't really know why they were so excited. You know what they told me? This is five years ago, that the notes in the Old Testament were the first commentary on the Old Testament in the Russian language. Now how do you explain the Old Testament if all you have is the Old Testament and no help? There's an excuse if they didn't fully get it right.

We don't have those kinds of excuses. Passionate pursuit to understand the revelation of God to know the mind of Christ, I don't necessarily care about being expert in the culture, I don't care about being expert about what makes people motivated, I just want to be an expert here and trust that God knows the heart as He does.

Okay, I think I'll stop there and cover the other, as many as I can, in the next session.

Lord, thanks for just the delight of this rich fellowship. Thank You for Steve Lawson, for his leadership and his ministry and his friendship to me and to all of us. Thank You for those who work alongside him, for Allen and Jim. Continue to bless this great church and ministry here and continue to use Steve. Thank You for these other men who have come and they've just been such a joy to my own heart. I can see in their faces and feel in their responses that the things that I love are the things that they love and what a joy it is to be together.

Bless them in these days. Enrich them. Lord, keep us faithful. Keep our consciences clear. May we renounce anything that's hidden because of shame, never walking in craftiness or adulterating the Word of God but by manifestation of the truth be faithful slaves. To Your glory we pray in Christ's name. Amen.

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