

Grace to You :: esp Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time

Preaching the Book God Wrote, Part 2

Scripture: Isaiah 6:6–13; Matthew 13:3; Matthew 13:19; Luke 1:70; John 21:15–17; Acts 3:21; Acts 6:4; Acts 8:31; Ephesians 3:5; Colossians 1:25; 1 Timothy 4:13; 2 Timothy 4:2; 2 Peter 1:21;

Revelation 18:20; Revelation 22:6

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INERRANCY, EXEGESIS AND EXPOSITION

Postulates and Propositions

Let me propose five logically sequential postulates that introduce and undergird my main propositions. These five ideas also establish the true biblical basis for the doctrine of inerrancy:

1. God is (Genesis 1:1; Psalms 14, 53; Hebrews 11:6).
2. God is true (Exodus 34:6; Numbers 23:19; Deuteronomy 32:4; Psalms 25:10, 31:6; Isaiah 65:16; Jeremiah 10:8, 10:11; John 14:6, 17:3; Titus 1:2; Hebrews 6:18; 1 John 5:20, 21).
3. God speaks in harmony with His nature (Numbers 23:19; 1 Samuel 15:29; Romans 3:4; 2 Timothy 2:13; Titus 1:2; Hebrews 6:18).
4. God speaks only truth (Psalms 31:5, 119:43, 142, 151, 160; Proverbs 30:5; Isaiah 65:16; John 17:17; James 1:18).
5. God spoke His true Word as consistent with His true Nature to be communicated to people (a self-evident truth which is illustrated at 2 Timothy 3:16-77; Hebrews 1:1).

Therefore, we must consider the following propositions.

1. God gave His true Word to be communicated entirely as He gave it, that is, the whole counsel of God is to be preached (Matthew 28:20; Acts 5:20, 20:27). Correspondingly, every portion of the Word of God needs to be considered in the light of its whole.
2. God gave His true Word to be communicated exactly as He gave it. It is to be dispensed precisely as it was delivered without the message being altered.
3. Only the exegetical process which yields expository proclamation will accomplish propositions 1 and 2.

Inerrancy's Link to Expository Preaching

Now, let me substantiate these propositions with answers to a series of questions. They will channel our thinking from the headwaters of God's revelation to its intended destination.

1. *Why preach?* Very simply, God so commanded (2 Timothy 4:2), and the Apostles so responded (Acts 6:4).
2. *What should we preach?* The Word of God—*sola Scriptura* and *tota Scriptura* (1 Timothy 4:13; 2 Timothy 4:2).
3. *Who preaches?* Holy men of God (Luke 1:70; Acts 3:21; Ephesians 3:5; 2 Peter 1:21; Revelation 18:20, 22:6). Only after God had purified Isaiah's lips was he ordained to preach (Isaiah 6:6-13).
4. *What is the preacher's responsibility?* First, the preacher needs to realize that God's Word is not the preacher's word. But rather:

- o He is a messenger, not an originator (*euaggelizo*).
- o He is a sower, not the source (Matthew 13:3, 19).
- o He is a herald, not the authority (*kerusso*).
- o He is a steward, not the owner (Colossians 1:25).
- o He is the guide, not the author (Acts 8:31).
- o He is the server of spiritual food, not the chef (John 21:15, 17).

Second, the preacher needs to reckon that Scripture is *ho logos tou theou* (the Word of God). When he is committed to this awesome truth and responsibility,

His aim, rather, 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. In our preaching, that is what should always be happening. In his obituary of the great German conductor, Otto Klemperer, Neville Cardus spoke of the way in which Klemperer "set the music in motion," maintaining throughout a deliberately anonymous, self-effacing style in order that the musical notes might articulate themselves in their own integrity through him. So it must be in preaching; Scripture itself must do all the talking, and the preacher's task is simply to "set the Bible in motion." (Packer, *Inerrancy and Common Sense*, p. 203)

The expression "the Word of God" (*logos theou* in the Greek texts) is used 47 times in the New Testament. It is what Jesus preached (Luke 5:1). It was the message the Apostles taught (Acts 4:31, 6:2). It was the word the Samaritans received (Acts 8:14) as given by the Apostles (Acts 8:25). It was the message the Gentiles received as preached by Peter (Acts 1:1). It was the word Paul preached on his first missionary journey (Acts 13:5, 7, 44, 48, 49, 15:35-36). It was the message preached on Paul's second missionary journey (Acts 16:32, 17:13, 18:11). It was the message Paul preached on his third missionary journey (Acts 19:10). It was the focus of Luke in the Book of Acts in that it grew (Acts 6:7, 12:24, 19:20). Paul was careful to tell the Corinthians that he spoke the Word as it was given from God, that it had not been adulterated and that it was a manifestation of truth (2 Corinthians 2:17, 4:2). Paul acknowledged that it was the source of his preaching (Colossians 1:25; 1 Thessalonians 2:13).

As it was with Christ and the apostles, so Scripture is also to be delivered by preachers today in such a way that they can say, "Thus saith the Lord." Their responsibility is to deliver it as it was originally given and intended.

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