

## #96 “A Biblical Grid for Preaching”

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Preaching has come to take on so many various forms that it is confusing to know what makes good preaching anymore. Is it that a person is entertaining, easy to listen to, can quote from various human authors, has great multimedia integration, or what? The only way to know what defines God-honoring preaching is to look at the Scripture. Here are 20 elements from the Scripture as to what defines preaching that we should desire to practice and/or listen to:

1. Biblical preaching encourages the listeners to have open Bibles, to turn to Scripture passages, to make notes in their margins, and to take notes as needed. (2 Timothy 2:15)
2. The preacher takes the Word of God and the call of preaching seriously and with reverence. The tone conveyed needs to be one that is reverent and trembling before a holy God who takes His Word more seriously than we ever could. (Ecclesiastes 5:2, Isaiah 66:2)
3. Preaching is to be passionate, urgent, and confident in tone and delivery. Preaching by definition is not supposed to be boring and dry. There is a sense that what is being said is of the utmost importance so that we don't have to be ashamed at judgment day. (Acts 2:37, Acts 7:54)
4. Biblical preaching trusts in the sufficiency and power of the Word of God. The Biblical preacher is not concerned about keeping the attention of the listeners by entertaining antics and gimmicks. He is mostly concerned that he communicated faithfully the message of the text as the Lord had led Him. The Word is the underpinning of each and every exhortation and rebuke. Stories, experience, scientific studies, and analogies are not what the Biblical preacher makes his case upon. They may be used to support the Scriptures, but the Scriptures are the ultimate authority. (2 Timothy 3:16-17, Romans 1:16, Romans 10:17, John 17:17)
5. Biblical preaching gets no pleasure out of scolding, insulting, or tearing someone down. Some preachers get some kind of adrenaline rush by yelling, sweating, and pounding their fist on the pulpit. They enjoy the power trip and the ability to scare their congregation. The Biblical preacher is not interested in beating people up but in building them up. (Ephesians 4:11-13, Proverbs 25:15)
6. The purpose of Biblical preaching is for the building up of the saints for the work of service and unto maturity in Christ. Thus, messages must be saturated with the Scriptures and theology and doctrine. (Colossians 3:16, Ephesians 4:14-16)
7. Biblical preaching has evidence of thorough study and preparation. It is not "talking from the hip," but it is well-organized and thought through from every angle. (2 Timothy 2:15, Ezra 7:6, 10)

8. Biblical preaching values a literal, historical, and grammatical approach to textual interpretation. Each and every word matters, and the original languages are used to ascertain the exact, intended meaning of a text. (Romans 15:4, Matthew 5:18)
9. Biblical preaching is not merely a man standing up front lecturing from behind a pulpit. Biblical preaching requires that the preacher is filled with the Holy Spirit, having sought the will of God and having no unconfessed sin. (Zechariah 4:6)
10. Biblical preaching is practical in that it connects truth to practice. Applications are obvious and evident because of how the truth is connected to issues of faith and life. (see any of Paul's letters which are very specific in instructions and applications to the churches to whom he writes)
11. Biblical preaching is genuine. The preacher does not try to entertain or perform. Neither is preaching merely a religious exercise. The preacher doesn't change who he is to preach, and he lets the reality of his own walk with Christ flow into his preaching. (1 Corinthians 2:4-5)
12. Biblical preaching is bold and authoritative. The preacher cannot be afraid to take stands on issues. He must call for a conformity to the truth. (2 Timothy 4:1-2)
13. Biblical preaching is humble, not speaking in a manner that is condescending or inferring that the preacher doesn't struggle or has everything figured out. (James 3:2)
14. Biblical preaching is credible based upon the fact that the preacher's life is in line with Scriptural truth. He lives out faithfully what he talks about on Sunday. (1 Corinthians 11:1, Philippians 4:9)
15. Biblical preaching trains the listener in the art of listening, reflecting, and applying. The preacher helps the congregation to know how to listen, take notes, and draw applications. (Nehemiah 8:8)
16. Biblical preaching doesn't draw attention to the preacher. The preacher is merely a messenger. The message is what matters because of Who is behind it. (Hebrews 4:12, 2 Corinthians 12:9-10)
17. Biblical preaching ultimately always exalts God and makes Christ the centerpiece. (Colossians 1:18)
18. Biblical preaching always in some way makes allusion to the gospel in every message. After all, the gospel is central to life in Christ, and we wouldn't want to miss out on sharing it with a visitor, professing Christian, or unbeliever. (Romans 10:14-15)
19. Biblical preaching may be both topical or expositional, as long as texts of Scripture are used as the building blocks of the message rather than the preacher's own ideas.

(Luke 16:31)

20. Biblical preaching may be short or long, but it is not merely a devotional or a sermonette. There must be adequate time to give the context, to read the text, to explain the text, to make exhortations, to draw conclusions, and to cross reference in the process. (see Acts 2:14-41 for an example)