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Manuscripts: Though most articles and book reviews are assigned, submissions are welcome. They must by typed and double-spaced. All articles will be juried to determine suitability for publication. Please send articles to the General Editor, Scott M. Gibson, at scott_gibson@baylor.edu. Letters to the editor are also welcome. Those who have material of whatever kind accepted for publication must recognize it is always the editor's prerogative to edit and shorten said material, if necessary.

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Please note: Although the articles in *The Journal of the Evangelical Homiletics Society* reflect the general concerns of the Evangelical Homiletics Society, some details in the articles may not reflect the position of the Editorial Board.

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The Journal of the Evangelical Homiletics Society is the publication of the Evangelical Homiletics Society. Organized in 1997, the Evangelical Homiletics Society is an academic society established for the exchange of ideas related to the instruction of biblical preaching. The purpose of the Society is to advance the cause of biblical preaching through the promotion of a biblical-theological approach to preaching; to increase competence for teachers of preaching; to integrate the fields of communication, biblical studies, and theology; to make scholarly contributions to the field of homiletics.

Statement of Faith: The Evangelical Homiletics Society affirms the Statement of Faith affirmed by the National Association of Evangelicals. It reads as follows:

1. We believe the Bible to be the inspired, the only infallible, authoritative Word of God.

2. We believe that there is one God, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

3. We believe in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, in His virgin birth, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood, in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and in His personal return in power and glory.

4. We believe that for the salvation of lost and sinful people, regeneration by the Holy Spirit is absolutely essential.

5. We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit by whose indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a godly life.

6. We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost; they that are saved unto the resurrection of life and they that are lost unto the resurrection of damnation.

7. We believe in the spiritual unity of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ.

CONTRIBUTING TO SCHOLARSHIP

SCOTT M. GIBSON
General Editor

There is a rich and informative production of scholarship that continues to be produced by members of the Evangelical Homiletics Society. One demonstration of this prodigious work is the journal. We are in our nineteenth year of publishing the *Journal of the Evangelical Homiletics Society* and have almost two decades of quality research that has been placed in print.

In addition to the journal are the papers presented at the conferences over the years. Hundreds of scholars have written papers and then led discussions on their work in sessions at the conferences.

Many of our members have produced books and chapters in books, as well as presented papers at other conferences, all the while advancing the field of homiletics. We are rich, indeed.

This edition of the journal continues to push our shared field of homiletics further with the articles included for our readers' pleasure and stimulation.

The first article is one that I composed following the 2018 textbook survey that the society conducted among its membership. The paper explores the background of the history of textbook surveys and concludes with how the 2018 Evangelical Homiletics Society Legacy Textbook Survey fits into the development of such surveys. The conclusions provide insight on the place of textbooks in the teaching of preaching in the past—today—and in the future.

A similar study conducted by Chris Rappazini on textbooks accompanies the first article as it provides a more textured historical background for providing perspective on the

function and place of textbook surveys. Rappazini examines the quantitative studies that have been conducted on homiletics textbooks. Taken side-by-side, both articles will provide the reader with a greater appreciation for homiletics textbook use over the years.

The third article is written by Stuart Blythe. In this article, Blythe explores Luke 4:16-30 and its implications for preaching. Too often, notes Blythe, in the study of Luke 4:16-30 focuses either on mission or preaching, and that mission and preaching "are not always considered in relation to one another." Blythe engages the reader in demonstrating that Spirit-empowered preaching is integral to mission.

Eric Price explores in the fourth article the historical distance between the original readers of Scripture and Christians today. Emphasizing the overarching theological continuity between God and his people throughout redemptive history, Price proposes "a more integrated approach to application." Readers can appreciate the task to which Price calls them as preachers and teachers of preaching.

Book reviews follow the final article. There is a treasure-trove of information and analysis present in these reviews. Readers will appreciate the breadth and variety of the books provided in this section, reviews often written by our own members. A word of thanks to Abe Kuruvilla, Book Editor, for providing a rich array of books to read about and potentially purchase for our own library or the library of the institution in which we teach.

Finally, a sermon is provided for our mutual edification. The sermon is by Jonathan Moreno, at the time of submission a student at Detroit Baptist Theological Seminary, and first-place award winner of the 2018 Evangelical Homiletics Society's Haddon W. Robinson Preaching Award. He graduated in 2018. The sermon is based on Psalm 73.

Enjoy reading this edition of the journal. As you do, you will be able to appreciate the contribution to homiletics scholarship that this edition provides.

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EVANGELICAL HOMILETICS SOCIETY LEGACY PREACHING TEXTBOOK SURVEY

SCOTT M. GIBSON
George W. Truett Theological Seminary
Baylor University

ABSTRACT

This article explores the development of textbook surveys beginning with Lloyd M. Perry's doctor of philosophy dissertation in 1961 and culminating in the results of the "Legacy Preaching Textbook Survey" conducted by the Evangelical Homiletics Society in 2018.

INTRODUCTION

Surveys of the use of preaching textbooks in Bible Colleges, divinity schools and seminaries have been conducted over several decades with a measure of regularity. Some of the studies which will be explored below focused on a particular constituency while others took a broad survey of the landscape. This paper will explore the development of textbook surveys leading to the results of the 2018 Evangelical Homiletics Legacy Textbook Survey.

LLOYD M. PERRY TEXTBOOK STUDY

One of the most comprehensive studies to date of homiletical textbooks is Lloyd M. Perry's 1961 doctor of philosophy thesis.[1] The dissertation title notes a focus on trade and textbooks

between the years of 1834 to 1954, Perry's study engages a total of sixty-eight textbooks that reach back to the early nineteenth century.[2] The focus of the dissertation is an analysis of the subjects and themes addressed in the books, noting similarities and differences. Perry notes, "The task to which the author of this thesis set himself was to discover trends and emphases in the philosophy, materials, and methodology in this field, and to report and describe these, interpreting his findings only to the extent of noting tendencies and trends."[3]

Perry does not provide a ranking of the most frequently used books. Instead, he engages the homiletical emphases of the books as they relate to the teaching of preaching.

LITFIN'S SURVEY

A brief study on preaching textbooks was conducted by A. Duane Litfin in 1973, published in *Christianity Today*.[4] He surveyed 177 North American seminaries of the American Association of Theological Schools, asking "which available texts in homiletics they would currently recommend and which they were actually using in their courses."[5] With a sixty-three percent response rate, five textbooks rose to the top of the list. The textbooks are as follows:

1. H. Grady Davis, *Design for Preaching* (Fortress 1958)
2. John A. Broadus and Jesse B. Witherspoon, *On the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons* (Harper & Row, 1944)
3. Ilion T. Jones, *Principles and Practice of Preaching* (Abingdon, 1956)
4. Reuel Howe, *Partners in Preaching* (Seabury, 1967)
5. Herbert H. Farmer, *The Servant of the Word* (Scribner, 1943)

Litfin cited Davis' *Design for Preaching* as "the most significant work in homiletics today," and credited Davis for his emphasis on "the sermon as an embodiment of an idea…."[6]

As for Broadus and Witherspoon and Jones, Litfin notes "both espouse a more traditional approach than Davis."[7] Regarding Howe, Litfin reflects, "While Howe may leave evangelicals with a few unanswered questions, this book is nevertheless an important one."[8] Litfin assesses that the final book, Farmer's *The Servant of the Word*, "has become something of a classic."[9]

Following Litfin's survey are those conducted by Donald F. Chatfield, to which we will turn next. Chatfield's 1973 survey results, contemporaneous with Litfin's are not extant. Yet, Litfin's survey reflects variations in textbook adoption which existed in the field at that time.

CHATFIELD'S TWO SURVEYS

Early surveys were conducted by Donald F. Chatfield of the Academy of Homiletics.[10] Chatfield conducted two surveys, ten years apart from each other, approximately 1973 and 1983. However, the results of only the second survey were published in spring of 1984 in *Homiletic*, the journal of the Academy of Homiletics. In this article on the second survey, Chatfield briefly mentions that there had been a first survey conducted "ten years ago."[11] The data details of the first survey were not known to have been published previously, nor are they revealed in Chatfield's article, but he suggests that the majority of respondents in the first survey cited H. Grady Davis' *Design for Preaching* as "their textbook of choice."[12]

In 1983, Chatfield sent a second survey among the Academy of Homiletics members, numbering 131. Of the 46 respondents, 115 books comprised the list. Chatfield notes, "The highest number of mentions for any one book was only 7."[13] The top vote-getters were:

1. Clayde E. Fant, *Preaching for Today* (New York: Harper & Row, 1977).
2. Haddon W. Robinson, *Biblical Preaching* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1980).

3. John R. W. Stott, *Between Two Worlds: The Art of Preaching in the Twentieth Century* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982).
4. George E. Sweazey, *Preaching the Good News* (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1976).[14]

Chatfield notes, "No book or books emerge as clear favorites among us,"[15] with each book receiving 17.5% of the votes.[16] Chatfield makes two observations. First, he states, "On the face of it, it looks as if the reason is that there is no one book that a lot of us can agree really does what needs to be done for students in our classes."[17] Second, and perhaps most insightfully, he reflects, "Of course, part of the lack of unanimity on textbooks also stems from the differences among us. The most important differences are of two kinds: theological/denominational differences and differences in the way we understand and practice the teaching of preaching."[18]

A few observations might be helpful at this point concerning Chatfield's discussion of the second survey. First, as Chatfield intimates, at the time of both surveys the Academy of Homiletics was comprised of professors of preaching from both Evangelical and Mainline seminaries. Since the founding of the Evangelical Homiletics Society in 1997, the Evangelical presence in the Academy of Homiletics is less than what it was in 1983. From the results of this survey, it may be fair to say that the Evangelical presence is felt strongly in the selection of preaching textbooks. Second, all of the books that received the highest number of mentions, tend toward exegetical, biblical preaching, a feature of the Evangelical sector of the membership of the Academy of Homiletics: Fant, Robinson, Stott and even Sweazy. Chatfield confirms, "Robinson, Stott, and Sweazy especially seem to be fitting the bill for the preaching departments in some conservative seminaries."[19] Third, although Chatfield notes, "No book or books emerge as clear favorites among us,"[20] and, "A third reason that a consensus on textbooks is so low may be that there is as yet no book extant (or at least well known) which fills the pedagogical needs we *can* agree on."[21] One wonders if indeed

this was the case for the Academy in general, or, if Chatfield is referring specifically to the Mainline section of its membership. Chatfield reflects, "I suggest that teachers of preaching at more 'conservative' seminaries are closer to a consensus on homiletical textbooks than the teachers at other seminaries."[22] He notes, "Teachers of preaching at seminaries of other persuasions are still searching."[23]

HUGHES' STUDY OF TEXTBOOKS

R. Kent Hughes' 1983 doctor of ministry thesis project is another contribution to the field of homiletics, building on the work of Lloyd M. Perry.[24] Hughes conducted a survey of the 137 members of the American Association of Theological Schools, resulting in a total of thirty-five textbooks. The results of the survey are similar to that of Litfin's and Chatfield's: *Design for Preaching* (Davis) far out-numbered the top fifteen (76 votes), while *A Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons* (Broadus) numbered in second place (38 votes). The top ten listing is as follows:

Rank	Book/Author	Total Votes
1.	H. Grady Davis, *Design for Preaching* (Fortress 1958)	76
2.	John A. Broadus, *A Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons* (Armstrong 1898, Harper/Collins 1979)	38
3.	Andrew W. Blackwood, *The Preparation of Sermons* (Abingdon 1948)	37
4.	Ilion T. Jones, *Principles and Practice of Preaching* (Abingdon, 1956)	35
5.	Donald G. Miller, *The Way to Biblical Preaching* (Abingdon 1957)	31
6.	Merrill R. Abbey, *Preaching to the Contemporary Mind* (Abingdon 1963)	30
7.	Haddon W. Robinson, *Biblical Preaching* (Baker 1980)	27
8.	William E. Sangster, *The Approach to Preaching* (Westminster 1952)	26

9. John R. W. Stott, *Between Two Worlds: The Art of Preaching in the Twentieth Century* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982) 25
10. Daniel J. Baumann, *An Introduction to Contemporary Preaching* (Baker 1972) 21

Hughes provides helpful analysis and critique of the responses provided by the professors surveyed. Some of the weaknesses in textbooks cited by professors include "instruction in relating exegesis to sermon preparation"[25] to "instruction in creating an introduction and conclusion," a total of twenty-one suggested weaknesses.[26] Additionally, Hughes gives attention to engaging the twenty-one weaknesses, providing helpful observations of the listing, including analysis of the overall list of textbooks.[27]

The conclusions Hughes reaches provides suggestions for authors of future homiletics textbooks. Hughes writes, "if one is contemplating writing a standard homiletical textbook, careful consideration should be given to its comprehensiveness and balance."[28]

MCKENZIE'S RETROSPECT

Similarly, Alyce M. McKenzie's 2001 article, "Homiletical Grammars: Retrospect and Prospects," surveys the leading preaching textbooks of the 1980s and 1990s.[29] It is important to note that McKenzie ignores the contribution of evangelical homileticians.[30] Haddon Robinson, John R.W. Stott, Bryan Chapell, among others are not mentioned in her assessment. Instead, the focus is on mainline contributions to the field. Her treatment of the textbooks is uneven, lightly criticizing Fred B. Craddock's *Preaching* for his treatment of the hermeneutical process of preaching, but hailing David Buttrick's *Moves and Structures* as "weighty."[31] No critical assessment is given about the theological assumptions of either Craddock or Buttrick—in fact, theological assessment is not given for any of the volumes discussed.

However, McKenzie raises an interesting question concerning the "pitfalls" of introductory homiletics textbooks. Her assessment is worth considering. McKenzie's observations are as follows:

1. Inadequate theological context for recommendations about the craft of preaching.
2. Inadequate theological attention to the person of the preacher.
3. Inadequate attention to the preparation of sermons as the spiritual discipline of the pastor.
4. Sweeping modernist assumptions about universal human listening patterns or needs.
5. Failure to take multicultural contexts into account.
6. Exclusively hierarchical understanding of authority.
7. Reduction of metaphor and poetic language to the level of illustrative material.
8. Nonexistent ecclesiology.
9. Unwieldy presentation of steps in biblical exegesis process.
10. Reduction of worship to one of several contexts of preaching.
11. Equation of one's own form of choice, however choice it may be, with the whole field.[32]

McKenzie's list of pitfalls raises important questions for evangelical teachers of preaching as these pitfalls touch on issues with which all professors of preaching want to wrestle as courses are shaped and textbooks are evaluated.

"A new survey is needed among members of the Academy of Homiletics to determine what textbooks are being used most frequently," notes McKenzie in 2001.[33] In the intervening years since McKenzie's article, a survey among mainline professors of preaching has not yet been forthcoming.

PREACHING MAGAZINE'S 2010 SURVEY

Since its founding in 1985, *Preaching Magazine* has yearly surveyed the best books for preachers, featuring "The 10 Books Every Preacher Should Read this Year," written by R. Albert Mohler, which includes the "*Preaching* Book of the Year" and the annual survey of the best preaching books. In addition, each edition of the magazine includes the "Bookshelf" column written by editor, Michael Duduit.[34]

The survey results are as follows:

1. *Biblical Preaching* by Haddon Robinson (Baker Books)
2. *Homiletics: Moves and Structures* by David Buttrick (Fortress Press)
3. *Between Two Worlds* by John R.W. Stott (Eerdmans)
4. *Preaching* by Fred Craddock (Abingdon)
5. *The Modern Preacher and the Ancient Text* by Sidney Greidanus (Eerdmans)
6. *Christ-Centered Preaching* by Bryan Chapell (Baker)
7. *The Homiletical Plot: The Sermon As Narrative Art Form* by Eugene L. Lowrey (Westminster John Knox)
8. *The Supremacy of God in Preaching* by John Piper (Baker)
9. *The Witness of Preaching* by Thomas G. Long (Westminster John Knox)
10. *Rediscovering Expository Preaching* by John MacArthur & Masters Seminary Faculty (Word)
11. *Handbook of Contemporary Preaching*, edited by Michael Duduit (Broadman)
12. *Preaching & Preachers* by D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones (Zondervan)
13. *Communicating for a Change* by Andy Stanley (Multnomah)
14. *The Preaching Life* by Barbara Brown Taylor (Cowley Publications)
15. *Preaching the Whole Bible as Christian Scripture* by Graeme Goldsworthy (Eerdmans)

16. *The Burdensome Joy of Preaching* by James Earl Massey (Abingdon)
17. *The Company of Preachers* by David L. Larsen (Kregel)
18. *360-Degree Preaching* by Michael Quicke (Baker)
19. *Preaching and Teaching with Imagination* by Warren W. Wiersbe (Victor)
20. *Scripture Sculpture* by Ramesh Richard (Baker Academic)
21. *The Art & Craft of Biblical Preaching*, edited by Haddon Robinson and Craig Brian Larsen [sic.] (Zondervan)
22. *Preaching: The Art of Narrative Exposition* by Calvin Miller (Baker)
23. *The Art of Preaching Old Testament Narrative* by Steven Matthewson (Baker Academic)
24. *Doctrine that Dances* by Robert Smith (B&H)
25. *Concise Encyclopedia of Preaching*, edited by William H. Willimon and Richard Lischer (Westminster John Knox)

The listing above reflects both mainline and evangelical homiletics books. Since *Preaching Magazine* has both mainline and evangelical readers, the books that comprise the list vary widely in their theological presuppositions, which is not surprising. However, one wonders, as per readership, what comprises the percentage of subscribers for mainline or evangelical readers. One would suspect that the readership tilts toward an evangelical constituency.

Of the top twenty-five books listed, Haddon Robinson's *Biblical Preaching* ranks number one. Duduit notes, "More than any other book of the past quarter century, *Biblical Preaching* has profoundly influenced a generation of evangelical preachers."[35] Curiously, David Buttrick's *Homiletics: Moves and Structures*, takes second place in this listing of twenty-five.[36] Duduit recognizes the irony, writing, "The second Book of the Year recognized by *Preaching* also was one of the minority of such titles not written by an evangelical author." He continues, "Nevertheless, Buttrick's book, published in 1986, has influenced the thinking of mainline and evangelical preachers and teachers with its insights about the sermon as a series of 'moves' rather

than simply propositional points."[37] The other books by mainline authors recognized on the list are Fred Craddock's *Preaching*, Eugene L. Lowrey's *The Homiletical Plot: The Sermon As Narrative Art Form*, Thomas G. Long's *The Witness of Preaching*, Barbara Brown Taylor's *The Preaching Life*, and William H. Willimon and Richard Lischer's edited volume, *Concise Encyclopedia of Preaching*. Out of the twenty-five titles, six are from mainline authors.

BORST'S HOMILETICAL TEXTBOOK STUDY

In 2015 Troy Borst chose nine traditions/denominations to sample across Protestant, Catholic and Orthodox seminaries to determine textbook choice through informal conversations and surveys.[38] Twenty-seven seminaries or higher education institutions made up the base for inquiry. The survey revealed that ninety-six textbooks were used by the various institutions surveyed.[39]

The top twenty books to frequent the survey, in alphabetical order per Borst's listing are:

1. Jeffrey D. Arthurs, *Preaching with Variety* (Kregel)
2. John Behr, *On the Apostolic Preaching* (St. Vladimir's Seminary Press)
3. Frederick Buechner, *Telling the Truth: The Gospel as Tragedy, Comedy, and Fairy Tale* (Harper & Row)
4. Bryan Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching* (Baker)
5. Fred B. Craddock, *As One Without Authority* (Abingdon)
6. Fred B. Craddock, *Preaching* (Abingdon)
7. Sebastian Dabovich, *Preaching in the Orthodox Church: Lectures and Sermons by a Priest of the Holy Orthodox Church* (Orthodox Research Institute)
8. Anna Florence Carter, *Preaching as Testimony* (Westminster John Knox)
9. Sidney Greidanus, *The Modern Preacher and the Ancient Text* (Eerdmans)

10. Thomas G. Long, *The Witness of Preaching* (Westminster John Knox)
11. Thomas G. Long, *Preaching and the Literary Forms of the Bible* (Fortress)
12. Thomas G. Long and Cornelius Plantinga, *A Chorus of Witnesses: Model Sermons for Today's Preacher* (Eerdmans)
13. Eugene L. Lowry, *The Homiletical Plot* (Westminster John Knox)
14. John Piper, *The Supremacy of God in Preaching* (Baker)
15. Haddon W. Robinson, *Biblical Preaching* (Baker)
16. Haddon W. Robinson and Craig Brian Larson, *The Art and Craft of Biblical Preaching* (Zondervan)
17. John R. W. Stott, *Between Two Worlds: The Art of Preaching in the Twentieth Century* (Eerdmans)
18. Barbara Brown Taylor, *The Preaching Life* (Cowley)
19. Jerry Vines and Jim Shaddix, *Power in the Pulpit: How to Prepare and Deliver Expository Sermons* (Moody)
20. Paul Scott Wilson, *The Four Pages of the Sermon: A Guide to Biblical Preaching* (Abingdon)[40]

The list provides a variety of textbooks from a variety of theological traditions. Unlike other surveys, Borst includes Catholic and Orthodox responses. The listing of books does not provide a ranking in terms of receiving the most votes. Instead, Borst's criteria included "books had to have been used in more than two seminaries…."[41]

While the survey is helpful, analysis of the results and of the books appears to be lacking. A critical assessment rather than a descriptive listing would have been more helpful in interpreting the data.

KATO'S "THE BOOKS WE CHOOSE"

Alex Kato's 2017 study, "The Theology Behind the Books We Choose," is an exploration of textbook use in both mainline and evangelical schools, with the intent to demonstrate textbook use in evangelical contexts. Drawing upon his study of homiletics

courses in 123 Association of Theological Schools (ATS), Kato set the goal of identifying the "key books in evangelical preaching courses, then examine their theological themes."[42]

Although Thomas Long's, *The Witness of Preaching*, makes the top of the list for the ATS schools (30 schools, 6245 FTE), Kato notes "because of the average size of evangelical schools, Robinson's *Biblical Preaching* is assigned to almost the same number of students"[43] (18 schools, 6169 FTE). To put this observation into perspective, Kato states, "The most assigned book, Long's *Witness of Preaching*, is still only assigned at 30 out of 123 schools (24%), and the 123 schools assign 318 different books."[44]

Long's book is assigned in but a few evangelical schools (9 seminaries), but as discussed above and confirmed by Kato, "professors at mainline schools rarely assign the distinctively evangelical books…."[45]

Kato indicates that the two most popular mainline textbooks assigned in preaching courses in evangelical seminaries are Thomas Long's *The Witness of Preaching* and Barbara Brown Taylor's *The Preaching Life*.[46] Kato raises the question, do mainline texts belong in evangelical curricula?[47] "Perhaps some evangelicals assign these texts because they are the most popular preaching books, so that students can learn from or become aware of other perspectives," says Kato, noting that "In the syllabi I found, no schools represented at EHS assign either of these books."[48] Yet, as one will note in the following Evangelical Homiletics Society survey of EHS members' responses, Long's *The Witness of Preaching* takes fourteenth place.[49] There is an unexplained disparity between Kato's results and that of the Evangelical Homiletics Society survey.

Kato's research provides a helpful background to the on-going study of preaching textbooks in both mainline and evangelical seminary contexts.

RAPPAZINI'S "WHAT HAS BEEN WRITTEN" STUDY

Chris Rappazini's study provides a helpful historical overview of textbook use and adoption in American homiletics.[50] His doctor of philosophy dissertation touches on the other surveys mentioned in this article: Chatfield's two surveys, Hughes, Borst, and Kato. He applies helpful critique on Borst's study noting unanswered questions. "For instance, what was the process used for choosing the schools at random, and from what pool were the schools drawn?" asks Rappazini.[51] Borst's study seems to have other inaccuracies associated with it.[52] An even fuller critique of all sources would make Rappazini's study more robust.

THE EVANGELICAL HOMILETICS SOCIETY 2018 SURVEY

A survey to determine the top twenty-five "legacy"—all time—preaching textbooks was conducted by the editor of *The Journal of the Evangelical Homiletics Society* in 2018. The survey was sent to the 350 members of the Evangelical Homiletics Society. A total of 227 titles of homiletics textbooks found their way onto the list. The top twenty-five book titles that received the most votes made the list, which is discussed below.

However, some observations concerning the results of the survey need to be mentioned. First, the determination of "twenty-five" is an arbitrary number. Such decisions may reflect more of a desire for a neatly-packaged reference, for the difference between textbook twenty-five and twenty-six is minimal.

Second, since the difference between textbook twenty-five and twenty-six is a matter of one number, a careful assessment of the wider list results is necessary.

The top twenty-five legacy books of all time for members of the Evangelical Homiletics Society (2018) are as follows, beginning with the book that received the most votes, followed in descending order by the remaining books:

1. *Biblical Preaching* by Haddon Robinson (Baker)

2. *Between Two Worlds* by John R.W. Stott (Eerdmans)
3. *Christ-Centered Preaching* by Bryan Chapell (Baker)
4. *On the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons* by John A. Broadus (HarperOne)
5. *Preaching and Preachers* by D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones (Zondervan)
6. *As One Without Authority* by Fred B. Craddock (Chalice)
7. *The Modern Preacher and the Ancient Text* by Sidney Greidanus (Eerdmans)
8. *Homiletics: Moves and Structures* by David Buttrick (Fortress Press)
9. *Design for Preaching* by H. Grady Davis (Fortress)
10. *The Homiletical Plot: The Sermon As Narrative Art Form* by Eugene L. Lowry (Westminster John Knox)
11. *The Supremacy of God in Preaching* by John Piper (Baker)
12. *Lectures to My Students* by Charles Haddon Spurgeon (Hendrickson)
13. *On Christian Doctrine* by Augustine (Pearson)
14. *The Witness of Preaching* by Thomas Long
15. *Power in the Pulpit* by Jerry Vines and Jim Shaddix (Moody)
16. *The Art & Craft of Biblical Preaching*, edited by Haddon Robinson and Craig Brian Larson (Zondervan)
17. *Preaching* by Fred Craddock (Abingdon)
18. *Preaching* by Tim Keller (Penguin)
19. *Lectures on Preaching* by Philips Brooks (SPCK)
20. *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament* by Sidney Greidanus (Eerdmans)
21. *Toward an Exegetical Theology* by Walter C. Kaiser (Baker Academic)
22. *The Art of Prophesying* by William Perkins (Banner of Truth)
23. *Heralds of God* by James Stewart (Hodder & Stoughton)
24. *Invitation to Biblical Preaching* by Donald Sunukjian (Kregel)
25. *Preaching the Whole Bible as Christian Scripture* by Graeme Goldsworthy (Eerdmans)

Of the 227 books nominated for the legacy list, Haddon Robinson's *Biblical Preaching* ranks first with fifty votes, followed by John R.W. Stott's *Between Two Worlds* with forty-two. However, only one vote separates Stott from Bryan Chapell's *Christ-Centered Preaching* (forty-one) most likely demonstrating a growing appreciation for Chapell's contribution to the field. Broadus' classic, *On the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons* yielded a total of 39 votes cast. Rounding out the top five, Lloyd-Jones' *Preachers and Preaching* garnered 29 votes. The votes cast for each of the top twenty-five is as follows:

Rank	Book/Author	Total Votes
1.	*Biblical Preaching* by Haddon Robinson (Baker)	50
2.	*Between Two Worlds* by John R.W. Stott (Eerdmans)	42
3.	*Christ-Centered Preaching* by Bryan Chapell (Baker)	41
4.	*On the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons* by John A. Broadus (HarperOne)	39
5.	*Preaching and Preachers* by D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones (Zondervan)	29
6.	*As One Without Authority* by Fred B. Craddock (Chalice)	17
7.	*The Modern Preacher and the Ancient Text* by Sidney Greidanus (Eerdmans)	17
8.	*Homiletics: Moves and Structures* by David Buttrick (Fortress Press)	15
9.	*Design for Preaching* by H. Grady Davis (Fortress)	15
10.	*The Homiletical Plot: The Sermon As Narrative Art Form* by Eugene L. Lowry (Westminster John Knox)	15
11.	*The Supremacy of God in Preaching* by John Piper (Baker)	15
12.	*Lectures to My Students* by Charles Haddon Spurgeon (Hendrickson)	15
13.	*On Christian Doctrine* by Augustine (Pearson)	14
14.	*The Witness of Preaching* by Thomas Long	13

15. *Power in the Pulpit* by Jerry Vines and Jim Shaddix (Moody) 13
16. *The Art & Craft of Biblical Preaching*, edited by Haddon Robinson and Craig Brian Larson (Zondervan) 12
17. *Preaching* by Fred Craddock (Abingdon) 11
18. *Preaching* by Tim Keller (Penguin) 9
19. *Lectures on Preaching* by Philips Brooks (SPCK) 8
20. *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament* by Sidney Greidanus (Eerdmans) 8
21. *Toward an Exegetical Theology* by Walter C. Kaiser (Baker Academic) 8
22. *The Art of Prophesying* by William Perkins (Banner of Truth) 8
23. *Heralds of God* by James Stewart (Hodder & Stoughton) 8
24. *Invitation to Biblical Preaching* by Donald Sunukjian (Kregel) 8
25. *Preaching the Whole Bible as Christian Scripture* by Graeme Goldsworthy (Eerdmans) 7

Since the survey requested readers to provide nominations for "legacy" books, the list demonstrates an array of historical eras and theology. From the ancient world of preaching is Augustine's *On Christian Doctrine*. William Perkins' *The Art of Prophesying* represents the Puritan period. Charles Haddon Spurgeon's *Lectures to My Students* and *Lectures on Preaching* by Philips Brooks are both nineteenth-century classics. The remaining twenty-one titles are from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, which comprises most of the list.

Absent from the top twenty-five are timeless publications on preaching like A. Vinet's *Homiletics: The Theory of Preaching*, P.T. Forsyth's, *Positive Preaching and the Modern Mind* or Aristotles's *Rhetoric*, Andrew Blackwood's *Expository Preaching for Today* or Karl Barth's *Homiletics*, some of these titles did not appear in the 227 books listed.

The legacy survey was taken among members of the Evangelical Homiletics Society and therefore understandably

reflects in its finding books by evangelical authors, with the exception of those by Craddock, Buttrick, Davis and Long. Yet, if the list is to reflect the legacy books of the entire field of homiletics, there appear to be noticeable absences in the survey.

Another consideration of this legacy list is its Euro-centric/North American-centric leanings. Not one of the books recorded is written by an ethnic minority, with the exception perhaps of Augustine. The lacunae underscore the work those in the field of homiletics have before them to read widely and recruit determinedly those who are not white, European, or North American. Women preachers can also be included in this omission.

The 2018 Legacy Preaching Textbook Survey of the Evangelical Homiletics Society is a window into the thinking and teaching life of those who teach preaching in the society at this present time. There are strengths and weaknesses in the survey results, which can be considered as directives for the future of the field and the society.

CONCLUSION

The in-depth research of Lloyd M. Perry set the bar for rigorous homiletics textbook study. The brief, but informative survey by A. Duane Litfin provides an interesting 1970s exploration of textbook use. In addition, the variety of responses that Donald Chatfield garnered, and the different answers gathered by Kent Hughes, the *Preaching Magazine* survey and Alex Kato, and of course the varied responses to the 2018 Legacy Preaching Textbook Survey of the Evangelical Homiletics Society demonstrates the different reactions by assorted constituencies on leading preaching books at various times. Yet, a consistent response from evangelicals over the years has been the prime place that Haddon Robinson's *Biblical Preaching* has retained. This book deserves to be considered a legacy volume. Like its publication predecessor of the nineteenth century, *On the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons* by John A. Broadus, Robinson's textbook remains dominant and will continue to do

so until it is replaced by another publication that speaks to evangelicals in the future.

Mainline professor of preaching Alyce McKenzie's observation may at first appear to be correct, "The days of the lone star textbook, standing above the others, used by one and all are past."[53] However, as Thomas G. Long wrote in 1985, "Textbooks, it can be argued, are the products of periods of relative consensus. If they are to be useful and successful, they must represent broad scholarly agreement about what is true and good regarding preaching theory, method, and practice." He continues, "A fine textbook may be the work of one hand, but it should be the expression of many minds. It should gather together bursts of creativity and instances of intellectual advancement which have occurred in isolated areas of the discipline, place them into a unifying framework for understanding, and thus help to make sense of the whole."[54]

For now, evangelicals have a fine, dominant textbook, a legacy textbook that rises to the top, that leads the other publications that are employed to teach men and women how to preach.

NOTES

1. Lloyd M. Perry, "Trends and Emphases in the Philosophy, Materials and Methodology of American Protestant Homiletical Education as Established by a Study of Selected Trade and Textbooks Published between 1834 and 1954" Ph.D. dissertation, Northwestern University, 1961.
2. Perry, 528-532.
3. Perry, 494.
4. A. Duane Litfin, "The Five Most-Used Homiletics Texts," Christianity Today (10 August 1973): 14.
5. Litfin, 14.
6. Litfin, 14.
7. Litfin, 14.
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9. Litfin, 14.
10. Donald Chatfield, "Textbooks Used by Teachers of Preaching," *Homiletic* 9:12 (1984): 1-5.
11. Chatfield, 2.
12. Chatfield, 2.
13. Chatfield, 1.
14. Chatfield, 1.
15. Chatfield, 2.
16. Chatfield, 2.
17. Chatfield, 2.
18. Chatfield, 3.
19. Chatfield, 3.
20. Chatfield, 2.
21. Chatfield 4.
22. Chatfield, 3.
23. Chatfield 3.
24. R. Kent Hughes, "A Quantitative Analysis of Selected General Homiletical Trade and Textbooks," D.Min. thesis project, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, 1983.
25. Hughes, 69-70.
26. Hughes, 83.
27. Hughes, 83-93.
28. Hughes, 102.
29. Alyce M. McKenzie, "Homiletical Grammars: Retrospect and Prospects," *Homiletic* (Winter 2001): 1-10.
30. Not including evangelical homileticians in their research is a glaring omission among mainline homileticians' work. Either the contributions of evangelical homileticians are not read, dismissed, or considered not credible or theologically weak, or ignored altogether, suggests the possibility that evangelical homileticians appear—at least for mainline homileticians—not to provide a worthy contribution to the field. Yet, evangelical homileticians have read their work—sometimes to the harm of the church. In so doing some evangelical homileticians have embraced uncritically these mainline writers' points of view. A scholar is one engages in thorough research recognizing all

voices in the homiletical conversation. If not, one may wonder about the veracity and validity of the scholarship produced.
31. McKenzie, 4-6.
32. McKenzie, 9.
33. McKenzie, 7.
34. Michael Duduit, "The 25 Most Influential Preaching Books of the Past 25 Years," *Preaching*, 2010, https://www.preaching.com/articles/the-25-most-influential-preaching-books-of-the-past-25-years/
35. Duduit.
36. On a personal note, I taught preaching with Haddon Robinson for twenty-one years at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, South Hamilton, MA. On one occasion in the early 1990s following the publication of Buttrick's book, Robinson and I were in his office. He had read *Homiletic*. He held up the book and said to me, "This is a dangerous book," due to what Robinson considered its theological heterodoxy. He said he would never assign it as a textbook for beginning homiletics students.
37. Duduit.
38. Troy M. Borst, "Homiletical Textbook Study: What are Seminaries Across Traditions using to Teach the Next Generation of Preachers?" *The Journal of the Evangelical Homiletics Society* (September 2015): 38.
39. Borst, 40.
40. Borst, 42-46.
41. Borst, 41.
42. Alex Kato, "The Theology Behind the Books We Choose," Evangelical Homiletics Society Papers for the 2017 Annual Conference, 77.
43. Kato, 79.
44. Kato, 80.
45. Kato, 82.
46. Kato, 88.
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48. Kato, 88.

49. See following section, "The Evangelical Homiletics Society 2018 Survey."
50. Chris Rappazini, "What Has Been Written: Quantitative Studies on Homiletical Textbooks Used in Seminary Classrooms," Papers of the Evangelical Homiletics Society Annual Meeting, 2018, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. See also, Christopher Rappazini, "The Influence of Dr. Haddon W. Robinson on the Teaching of Homiletics in North American Evangelical Seminaries" Ph.D. dissertation, Gonzaga University, 2019, 77-114.
51. Rappazini, "The Influence of Dr. Haddon W. Robinson," 111.
52. Rappazini, "The Influence of Dr. Haddon W. Robinson," 111.
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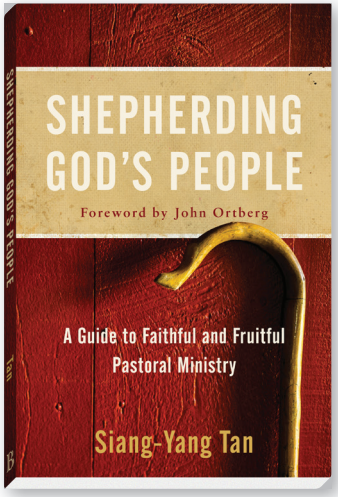

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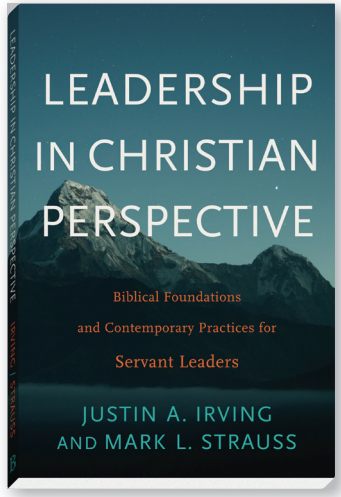

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WHAT HAS BEEN WRITTEN: QUANTITATIVE STUDIES ON HOMILETICAL TEXTBOOKS USED IN SEMINARY CLASSROOMS

CHRIS RAPPAZINI
Moody Bible Institute
Moody Theological Seminary

ABSTRACT

In this paper, the author identifies some of the most historically significant homiletical books used in English speaking seminaries, in particular Broadus's *On the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons* and Davis's *Design for Preaching*. He then gathers and summarizes the six quantitative studies conducted over the past 50 years that survey which preaching books have been influential to the teaching of preaching. Collecting and summarizing the survey's data will enable researchers and future homileticians easy access to identify trends and homiletical movements that may impact the future of the teaching of preaching.

INTRODUCTION

Accessible publication and a growing number of seminaries triggered many people in the field of homiletics to begin publishing works specifically on preaching. Books on preaching assisted seminary professors in their teaching of preaching and helped active pastors hone their skills in the pulpit. Therefore, it is significant to identify some of the most influential and widely used preaching books, which may help to pinpoint homiletical

trends throughout recent history, as well as guide future publications on preaching for the twenty-first century.

SIGNIFICANT TEXTBOOKS USED IN SEMINARY CLASSROOMS

According to Levy,[1] a couple of the earliest English authored preaching texts to receive popular acceptance in both England and the colonies were Perkins' *The Art of Prophecy*[2] and Bernard's *The Faithful Shepherd*.[3] Perkins' book focused on the calling of the minister and consideration of the congregation in the preparation of the sermon, while Bernard's book gives special attention to sermon construction. One of the early American textbooks for ministerial education was Mather's *Dr. Cotton Mather's Student and Preacher*.[4] Another early colonial textbook was Willard's *Brief Directions to a Young Scholar Designing the Ministry for the Study of Divinity*.[5] After Willard's book, very few homiletical textbooks were widely produced or shared for nearly 100 years. Sermon manuscripts and other theological works circulated from place to place, but the formation of the United States of America, war, shift from Puritan living, and other national and global events overshadowed the publication of preaching books.

In the 1800s, a growing number of professors of homiletics began publishing their lectures and notes on preaching. Some of the more popular homiletical textbooks published were Ware Jr.'s *Hints on Extemporaneous Preaching*,[6] Porter's *Lectures on Homiletics and Preaching*,[7] Ripley and Ware's *Sacred Rhetoric*,[8] Kidder's *Treatise on Homiletics*,[9] Alexander's *Thoughts on Preaching*,[10] and Shedd's *Homiletics and Practical Theology*.[11] However, despite the growing number of preaching books produced, it is challenging to determine which ones were the most widely used in seminaries prior to 1869.[12]

According to homiletical historian, R. L. Kelly some of the earliest, widespread preaching textbooks that were used in seminaries after 1869 were:[13] Broadus' *Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*,[14] Brooks' *Lectures on Preaching*,[15] Phelps' *The Theory of Preaching*,[16] Greer's *Present-Day Preaching*,[17] Kennard's *Psychic*

Power of Preaching,[18] Pattison's *The Making of a Sermon*,[19] and Slattery's *The Preacher and His Place*.[20] Hundreds of preaching books were written throughout the nineteenth, twentieth, and twenty-first centuries demonstrating the growth, importance, and legitimacy of the field of homiletics.

Even though hundreds of homiletical books were published from 1869 to the early 1970s, there appears to be two texts that dominated the landscape of homiletics in seminary classrooms during this time: John A. Broadus' *On the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*[21] and H. Grady Davis' *Design for Preaching*.[22] Rose summarizes twentieth century homiletical theory by stating, "The story of homiletics claims that for roughly three quarters of the twentieth century there was general agreement about correct homiletical theory. Broadus represents the earlier state of the art and Davis the later."[23] Both of these books were widely used by preachers and teachers of preaching and served key roles in the advancement of homiletics.

John A. Broadus: On the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons

The American Baptist preacher, professor, and former President of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, John A. Broadus, has been termed "The Prince of Expositors."[24] Rose studied the major homiletic theorists of the past 150 years and states that Broadus' textbook, *On the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*, has stood the test of time and, "defined preaching for the first half of the twentieth century."[25]Its fourth edition is still used in seminary classrooms today. Even with differing opinions on the veracity of the editions, *On the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons* has been a dominant homiletical textbook in American Bible colleges and seminaries since its inception largely in part to its combination of scholarship and common sense.[26]

H. Grady Davis: Design for Preaching

H. Grady Davis was the Professor of Functional Theology at the Chicago Lutheran Theological Seminary and worked in Lutheran

ministries from 1913-1927. *Design for Preaching* quickly became widely used by many who taught preaching. Rose asserts, "Between 1958 and 1974 the earlier consensus that had looked to Broadus to define the task of preaching had dissolved and a new consensus had formed around Davis."[27] Davis' new ideas helped revolutionize sermon preparation.

Throughout his book, Davis uses the running theme of a sermon being like a tree with a goal to represent how a sermon is to be rooted in its foundation, the Bible. He asserts that a tree can only produce that which comes from its roots and a sermon ought to have parts that only come from its foundation.[28] Davis contends that the sermon, like a tree, must be a living organism that grows naturally as opposed to planned or organized. He advocates for the sermon to grow out of the Scriptures as opposed to using a sermonic mold for the construction of the sermon.

This novel way of preparing a sermon gave evangelical and mainline denominational homileticians an alternative to Broadus and the traditional approach to preaching. It appears Davis paved a way for the beginning of new homiletical paradigms.[29] Lake claims, "Davis anticipated and charted the course for many contemporary discussions on issues related to preaching, such as narrative, poetic language, creative form, movement of thought, and particularly inductive preaching."[30] Long notes that *Design for Preaching*, "was a bridge spanning the gap between the traditional approach to form and those developments yet to come."[31]

However, beginning in the late 1970s and early 1980s, more homiletics books were published and it seems homiletics professors began to differ on which preaching book to use in their classrooms. Rose writes, "The 1980s became an era in which homiletical scholarship tried at times to reclaim an earlier consensus and at other times to articulate a new position around which to rally a new consensus."[32] The data from quantitative studies confirms Rose's assertion, but it also demonstrates that some books remained consistently in use by homiletics professors.

QUANTITATIVE STUDIES ON PREACHING BOOKS

Quantitative surveys can be helpful in accurately determining which textbooks homiletics professors favor. This article relies on six surveys conducted between 1974 and 2019 to decipher which homiletical textbooks seminary professors have most often used over the last 45 years.

Chatfield's 1974 Survey

In 1974, Donald Chatfield, Professor of Preaching and Worship at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary in Evanston, Illinois, conducted a research study to discover which homiletical textbooks teachers of preaching who were associated with the Academy of Homiletics used in their classrooms. The results of Chatfield's survey were never publically published, but in a later publication, Chatfield eludes to his early survey and cites that in 1974, "over half of the respondents named H. Grady Davis's *Design for Preaching* as their textbook of choice."[33]

Hughes' 1983 Survey[34]

In his 1983 doctoral dissertation, Kent Hughes surveyed 137 members of the American Association of Theological Seminaries seeking to find the most-used homiletical texts. The following (*Table 1*) is a list of the author, title, and number of responses from those who completed the survey giving us one of the earliest comprehensive quantitative studies ever publically published.

Author, Title	Mentions
Davis, H. G. (1958) ***Design for Preaching***	76
Broadus, J. (1979) ***A Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*** **(4th ed.)**	38
Blackwood, A. (1948) ***The Preparation of Sermons***	37
Jones, I. (1956) ***Principles and Practices of Preaching***	35
Miller, D. (1957) ***The Way to Biblical Preaching***	31

Abbey, M. (1963) ***Preaching to the Contemporary Mind***	30
Robinson, H. (1980) ***Biblical Preaching***	27
Sangster, W. (1952) ***The Approach to Preaching***	26
Stott, J. (1982) ***Between Two Worlds***	25
Baumann, J. D. (1972) ***An Introduction to Contemporary Preaching***	21
Killinger, J. (1969) ***The Centrality of Preaching in the Total Task of the Ministry***	19
Haselden, K. (1963) ***The Urgency of Preaching***	18
Bartlett, G. (1962) ***The Audacity of Preaching***	15
Koller, C. (1962) ***Expository Preaching Without Notes***	15
Lenski, R. C. H. (1968) ***The Sermon, Its Homiletical Construction***	15

Table 1. Quantitative study of preaching textbooks according to Kent Hughes.

Hughes' survey confirms Chatfield's 1974 findings and helps to affirm that Davis' *Design for Preaching* and Broadus' *A Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons* were two of the most widely used textbooks in seminary classrooms. However, the consensus around homiletical textbooks would soon dissipate, as Chatfield's second survey in 1984 would discover.

Chatfield's 1984 Survey

In 1984, Chatfield mailed a similar questionnaire as the one from 1974 to the 131 names on the Academy of Homiletics' mailing list, which consisted of various Protestant denominations (mainline and "conservative") as well as a Roman Catholic school. The two questions asked were, "What basic textbooks do you use, if any (rank in order of usage)?" and "What kind of book[s]—basic or advanced—would you most like to see published now?"[35] The results yielded that 46/61 respondents (67%) answered the first question (15 listed 4 books, 10 listed 3 books, 13 listed 2 books, and 8 listed 1 book) resulting in a final count of 115 different

books.[36] The following (*Table 2*) is a chart of all the authors and books mentioned more than twice, from most to the least amount of mentions:

Author, Book	Mentions
Fant, C. (1977) ***Preaching for Today***	7
Robinson, H. (1980) ***Biblical Preaching***	7
Stott, J. (1982) ***Between Two Worlds***	7
Sweazey, G. (1976) ***Preaching the Good News***	7
Buechner, F. (1977) ***Telling the Truth***	6
Wardlaw, D. ed. (1983) ***Preaching Biblically***	6
Lowry, E. (1980) ***The Homiletical Plot***	6
Davis, H. G. (1958) ***Design for Preaching***	5
Craddock, F. (1979) ***As One Without Authority***	5
Crum, M. (1977) ***Manual on Preaching***	4
Keck, L. (1978) ***The Bible in the Pulpit***	4
Steimle, E., Morris J. Niedenthal, and Charles L. Rice (1980) ***Preaching the Story***	4
Lischer, R. (1981) ***A Theology of Preaching***	3
Cox, J. W. (1983) ***Biblical Preaching: An Expositor's Treasury***	3

Table 2. Quantitative study of preaching textbooks according to Donald Chatfield.

Admittedly, Chatfield was surprised to find that no one book received more than seven mentions and, while Sweazey's book received six first mentions and one second mention, no book emerged as an overwhelming favorite. It appears the homiletical field desired alternative voices other than those of Broadus and Davis and wanted different books to fulfill their educational and practical needs.

Chatfield attested this dramatic shift to three significant reasons based on further information he gathered from the respondents. First, Chatfield attributed this change to a difference in theological stances among educational institutions. Chatfield admitted that seminaries that are more conservative

are closer to a consensus by using books by Robinson, Stott, and Sweazy but teachers of preaching from other persuasions were still searching for a core book. Second, he recognized various teaching styles, methods, and approaches to teaching among homiletics professors. Finally, Chatfield suggested the lack of consensus may be because there was no book that existed which fulfilled the agreed-upon pedagogical needs. He reached this conclusion based on the response to the second question, which inquired what type of book teachers of preaching would like. A variety of responses were given, but the two most frequent answers revolved around the need for a basic textbook for students in beginning courses and a book on biblical preaching. Chatfield mentioned that Robinson's book, *Biblical Preaching*, as well as similar books, "do not strike the right note" for some in the Academy.[37] Chatfield does not clarify what he means by "right note" but perhaps he is speaking to the view one holds on the interpretation and authority of the Bible and how the Scriptures are to be viewed and handled when preaching?

Preaching Magazine's 2010 Survey [38]

Over the next 26 years, writers published a variety of homiletical texts. Unfortunately, I have been unable to locate any survey occurring during this span which surveys homiletical textbooks used in classrooms. However, in 2010, during their 25th year of publishing, *Preaching* magazine announced the 25 most influential preaching books since the magazine's inception. In their quest to find books that, "have shaped the thinking and teaching about preaching," the compilers of the magazine surveyed readers, preaching professors and influencers.[39] This ranking helps to identify some of the more recent and major texts in preaching, however, it does not survey books used specifically in classrooms by seminary professors. Here are the top ten results in order:

Author, Book
1. **Robinson, H. (1980) *Biblical Preaching***

2.	**Buttick D. (1986)** ***Homiletic***
3.	**Stott, J. (1982)** ***Between Two Worlds***
4.	**Craddock, F. (1985)** ***Preaching***
5.	**Greidanus, S. (1988)** ***The Modern Preacher and the Ancient Text***
6.	**Chapell, B. (1994)** ***Christ-Centered Preaching***
7.	**Lowry, E. (2001)** ***The Homiletical Plot***
8.	**Piper, J. (1990)** ***The Supremacy of God in Preaching***
9.	**Thomas Long (1989)** ***The Witness of Preaching***
10.	**MacArthur J. & Masters Seminary Faculty (1992)** ***Rediscovering Expository Preaching***

Table 3. Quantitative study of preaching textbooks according to *Preaching* magazine.

There are several questions that remain unanswered regarding how the survey was conducted. For instance, the magazine does not explain the number of compilers of the survey, how they were chosen, whom they represent, or votes cast for each book. Nonetheless, the significance of this survey is that even though it comes 26 years after Chatfield's survey, it demonstrates that Stott's *Between Two* Worlds and Robinson's *Biblical* Preaching were a couple of the top preaching books that were also influential in Chatfield's 1984 survey. The results also confirms the reduced use of books by Broadus and Davis. Editor of *Preaching* magazine, Michael Duduit (2010), writes:

> [Robinson's *Biblical Preaching*] stands apart from all the others in terms of recognition by those who study preaching—by far it received the most nominations from pastors and professors. The book was originally published in 1980, 30 years ago, but has dominated the classrooms of evangelical colleges and seminaries in the past 25 years…Robinson's emphasis on "Big Idea" preaching has shaped the thinking of thousands of expository preachers and been the major influence on many of those who teach preaching in today's classrooms. More than any other book of the past quarter century, *Biblical Preaching* has

profoundly influenced a generation of evangelical preachers.[40]

Borst's 2015 Survey [41]

As a doctoral student, Troy Borst sought to study the preparation process of clergy across denominations and Christian traditions. He randomly selected 32 seminaries and higher educational institutions across three major Christian traditions as well as schools from 12 different American Christian denominations. He received 27 responses using phone interviews, emails, online information, and reviewing syllabi and found 96 different texts were used to educate students in the area of preaching. To narrow his list down to 20 books, Borst decided a book had to cover two criteria. First, multiple theological institutions must use the book. Second, multiple denominations must use the book; however, exceptions were made for two books in the Orthodox Church because of their high frequency within that tradition.

Borst listed the top 20 books in alphabetical order, briefly describing each one, and gave random notes on where and how often each book was used. To rank them for this article, I listed the texts by frequency of responses and included some of Borst's brief notes (*Table 4*):

Author, Book	#	Notes from Borst
Long, T. (1989) *The Witness of Preaching*	8	Used across denominations as well as in the Orthodox Church
Chapell, B. (1994) *Christ-Centered Preaching*	7	
Lowry, E. (2001) *The Homiletical Plot*	6	
Taylor, B. B. (1993) *The Preaching Life*	5	Used across denominations as well as in the Roman Catholic School

Arthurs, J. (2007) ***Preaching with Variety***	4	Four institutions in four denominations
Behr, J. (1997) ***On the Apostolic Preaching***	3	Only used in Orthodox Church institutions
Buechner, F. (1977) ***Telling the Truth***	3	Three institutions in three denominations
Craddock, F. (1979) ***As One Without Authority***	3	
Craddock, F. (1985) ***Preaching***	3	Used across denominations as well as in the Roman Catholic School
Dabovich, S. (2008) ***Preaching in the Orthodox Church***	3	Only used in Orthodox Church institutions
Robinson, H. (1980) ***Biblical Preaching***	3	Used at Liberty, Dallas Theological Seminary, and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary
Stott, J. (1982) ***Between Two Worlds***	3	
Florence, A. C. (2007) ***Preaching as Testimony***	2-3	Only book from a feminist point of view
Greidanus, S. (1988) ***The Modern Preacher and the Ancient Text***	2-3	
Long, T. (1989) ***Preaching and the Literary Forms of the Bible***	2-3	
Long, T. and C. Plantinga. ed. (1994) ***A Chorus of Witnesses***	2-3	
Piper, J. (1990) ***The Supremacy of God in Preaching***	2-3	
Robinson, H. and C. B. Larson. ed. (2005) ***The Art and Craft of Biblical Preaching***	2-3	
Vines, J. and J. Shaddix. (1999) ***Power in the Pulpit***	2-3	

Wilson, P. S. (1999) ***The Four Pages of the Sermon***	2-3	

Table 4. Quantitative study of preaching textbooks according to Troy Borst.

Borst concluded that schools use one to three basic types of textbooks when teaching students about preaching: practical, theoretical, and anthological.[42] He suggested that preaching professors ought to cover all three types when educating their students and concludes that preaching is a practice in Christendom, which can be a point of unity amongst clergy.

However, it should be noted there appears to be flaws or unclear practices in Borst's study. For instance, what was the process used for choosing the schools at random, and from what pool were the schools drawn? Borst also does not specify which courses used the books and whether or not those courses were required for all students. There may have also been more than one preaching class at an institution, which may have swayed the data. One other major flaw is Borst records that Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary was not one of the seminaries that used Robinson's *Biblical Preaching*. However, the preaching faculty at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary has confirmed with me that the book was required for their introductory preaching class at the time.

Kato's 2107 Survey [43]

One of the most comprehensive and thorough quantitative studies conducted regarding homiletical textbooks used in seminaries was presented at the 2017 annual conference of the Evangelical Homiletics Society. Alex Kato sought to identify which preaching books professors at theological institutions within the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) assigned in their introductory preaching classes. Kato collected preaching course syllabi in two stages. First, he searched school websites and located freely available and current preaching syllabi from 83 theological institutions. Second, he contacted the preaching

faculty at the remaining schools, requesting a copy of their preaching course syllabus and received an additional 40 more. From these 123 schools (of 278 total ATS institutions), he analyzed the syllabi for both (a) the required preaching course to earn a Masters of Divinity and (b) the introductory preaching course at institutions that do not require students to take preaching courses. Here is a summary of his findings regarding the top ten books generated by his data collection:

Author, Book	Schools	FTE	Primary Tradition
Long, T. (1989) ***The Witness of Preaching***	30	6245	Mainline
Robinson, H. (1980) ***Biblical Preaching***	18	6169	Evangelical
Taylor, B. B. (1992) ***The Preaching Life***	15	3846	Mainline
Chapell, B. (1994) ***Christ-Centered Preaching***	10	2564	Evangelical
Brown, T. F. (2008) ***Delivering the Sermon***	10	1556	Mainline
Lowry, E. (2001) ***The Homiletical Plot***	8	3760	Evangelical
Allen, O. W. (2009) ***Determining the Form***	8	1678	Mainline
Allen, R. (1998) ***Patterns of Preaching***	8	1201	Mainline
Thomas, F. (1997) ***They Like to Never Quit Praisin' God***	7	1183	Mainline
Stanley, A and Jones, L. (2008) ***Communicating for a Change***	7	1064	Evangelical

Table 5. Quantitative study of preaching textbooks according to Alex Kato.

The data revealed that roughly 25% of the ATS schools surveyed use Long's *The Witness of Preaching*[44] and 15% are using Robinson's *Biblical Preaching*.[45] However, Kato also calculated the

Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) enrollment of students at each school and determined that some books, like Long's *Witness of Preaching* and Taylor's *The Preaching Life*,[46] happened to be assigned at several schools, but were not assigned to as many students as those in evangelical schools. Kato concluded that Robinson's *Biblical Preaching* is assigned to almost the same number of students as Long's *The Witness of Preaching* because of the larger average size of the evangelical schools. Kato's survey is significant because it was the first to consider the scope of the school and FTE enrollment of students in his findings.

OBSERVATIONS

These six surveys permit a few general observations:

1. There seemed to be a consensus amongst homiletic professors around using H. Grady Davis' *Design for Preaching* to teach preaching during the 1970s and early 1980s.

2. There does not appear to be the same unanimity amongst various Christian traditions and denominations regarding the use of another homiletical textbook since that time, although several books frequently appeared on the surveys conducted. For instance, books written by evangelical authors that appear regularly and on almost every survey since their own respective publication are: Robinson's *Biblical Preaching*, Stott's *Between Two Worlds*, and Chapell's *Christ-Centered Preaching*. Top books by mainline authors that occur regularly on the surveys are: Long's *The Witness of Preaching* and Lowry's *The Homiletical Plot*.

3. Robinson's, *Biblical Preaching*, appears on every survey and seems to be one of the most used books on preaching spanning nearly four decades. Since its inception, *Biblical Preaching* has sold "well over 300,000 copies" and, according to the Vice President of Baker Academic, "shows no signs of letting up."[47] From its outset, reviews applauded Robinson's

Biblical Preaching.[48] Further study reveals that his book was successful due to the plain manner in which it was written and the timing of its publication came when professors were looking for an andragogical textbook to be used in a classroom. In addition, more evangelical professors desired a book that affirmed their view on Biblical inerrancy. *Biblical Preaching* was also marketed well because of Robinson's reputation and ability to preach.[49]

4. Quantitative data and analysis has not been used often in the homiletical field. This method may be helpful for future preaching professors to understand the needs and trends occurring within homiletical education. However, if this aspect of the field is to be studied, it is necessary for those conducting the research to have a firm grasp on how to conduct exemplary research. Researchers must be sure that studies are accomplished by using objective measurements and careful analysis of the statistical, mathematical, or numerical data.

5. Few minority and female authors appear on the quantitative surveys. These results raise several questions: Have there been few minority and female authors writing books on preaching? Have minority and female voices been quieted due to an overwhelmingly white-male field? Do most of the individuals being surveyed come from the majority culture and therefore, perhaps unknowingly, choose books from authors who they more closely identify with? What are the bias of those conducting the surveys, do they come from the majority culture, and how does this affect their research? How would surveys be piloted and what would the results be if done in another country? As churches and seminary's students become more diverse, will books that speak to multicultural environments be on the rise?

CONCLUSION

Quantitative data research and analysis can be a useful guide for homileticians to improve their preaching, writing, and teaching abilities. The need for more surveys, like the ones mentioned in this article, are important for advancing homiletical literature. Additional surveys will help to identify other trends and possible needs within the field of homiletics. As churches, culture, literacy rates, and educational practices evolve and change so will the use of homiletical textbooks. It is important for those who influence the field of homiletics to be aware of these changes and adapt accordingly. Using analyzed data from quantitate research is one way to sharpen the field and enhance people's ability to become better preachers in the twenty-first century.

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THE PLACE OF PREACHING IN THE CHURCH'S MISSION LUKE 4:16-30

STUART BLYTHE
Acadia Divinity College
Acadia University

ABSTRACT

Both literature on mission and literature on preaching discuss the significance of Luke 4:16-30. In these discussions, however, mission and preaching are not always considered in relation to one another. Luke 4:16-30, emphasizes the holistic mission program of Jesus Christ as he participates in God's salvific purposes for the world. The same Scripture text, however, also demonstrates that Spirit-empowered preaching is integral to this mission and to achieve its goals. This indicates that Spirit-empowered, embodied, and varied preaching, which focusses on prophetically interpreting the Scriptural text in context, has an essential place in the Church's ongoing participation in God's mission in and to the world.

INTRODUCTION

This article discusses the place of preaching in the Church's mission. It does this with reference to Luke 4:16-30. It is widely recognized that these verses, which record a sermon by Jesus at Nazareth, contain a programmatic statement of the mission of Jesus in the Gospel of Luke. The suggestive interplay of preaching and mission in this programmatic sermon is the subject of this paper. For, despite this interplay, the literature

which discusses these verses often fails to hold preaching and mission together in a mutually interpretative way. This article, therefore, highlights this disconnect between preaching and mission in some literature, discusses the nature of mission presented in Luke 4:16-30, emphasizes the integral place of preaching in this mission manifesto, and draws out some of the implications of this for our understanding of the place of preaching in the Church's mission as participation in God's ongoing mission in and to the world.[1]

THE DISCONNECT: LUKE 4:16-30

There is an apparent disconnect between mission and preaching in some of the literature which discusses Luke 4:16-30. This disconnect is the case in some significant literature concerned with the ongoing mission of the Church and some important preaching literature.

There is a body of literature that discusses the Church's mission at home as much as abroad, local as well as global, in that mission is seen to be part of the very nature of the Church. Accordingly, it is stated that "a church that is not 'the church in mission' is no church at all,"[2] that "Christianity is missionary by its very nature, or it denies its very *raison d 'être*,"[3] and that since mission is the defining essence of the Church and not merely something which it does, "if it ceases to be missionary, it has not just failed in one of its tasks, it has ceased being the Church."[4] Frequently in such literature, the writers seek to apply the significance of biblical material to the ongoing understanding and practice of the Church's mission. Bosch, in his still hugely significant book *Transforming Missio*n, draws attention to the centrality of mission in the Gospel of Luke and the importance of this Gospel in establishing a biblical foundation for the mission of the Church.[5] He emphasizes that the Nazareth episode in Luke 4:16-30 has a "programmatic" relationship to the whole.[6] As a consequence, he draws upon Luke 4:16-30 in establishing his understanding of the Lucan paradigm of mission.[7] At no time, however, either concerning Luke 4:16-30 or concerning Luke-

Acts in general, does Bosch discuss the place and of preaching in such mission.[8] That is, while Bosch stresses the missionary significance of Luke 4:16-30, he does not emphasize the fact that this manifesto is articulated in a sermon that contains references to preaching as a means of expressing and extending the mission of Jesus Christ. Bosch is not alone in this sort of omission. Senior and Stuhlmueller, in their study of *The Biblical Foundations for Mission*, have a concern for the ongoing universal mission of the Church. They mention the Lukan passage but do not highlight the significance given to preaching in these verses.[9] In turn, Peskett and Ramamachandra highlight Luke 4:16-30 as an important passage in their discussion of *The Message of Mission*.[10] However, even when talking about "proclaiming Jesus and bringing release" they do not develop the place of preaching in this task with reference to these verses.[11] Other significant writing on the mission of the Church, including that by Wright, does not focus on Luke 4:16-30 or indeed major on the nature and place of preaching in such mission.[12]

Just as it is possible to emphasize the missionary emphasis of Luke 4:16-30 while downplaying the significance of preaching, it is also possible to highlight the significance of preaching in this text while downplaying the missionary context. This downplaying is evident in several histories of preaching, which consider the biblical material in general and Luke 4:16-30 in particular.[13] Brilioth, in his older book, *A Brief History of Preaching*, begins his study with reference to Jesus' Nazareth sermon.[14] He does so because he claims that this sermon is "the most important link which unites the Jewish proclamation and the Christian sermon."[15] Brilioth focusses on "how" Jesus preached with reference to the "liturgical," "exegetical," and "prophetic" elements of the synagogue sermon.[16] He then uses these elements as a framework for evaluating the development of Christian preaching throughout the centuries.[17] While Brilioth's insights have value, he concentrates only on verses 16-21 and pays little attention to the content or the mission emphasis of the passage and its significance for the nature of preaching. Old, in *The Reading and Preaching of the Scriptures*, maintains, "Again and

again the Church has returned to the preaching ministry of Jesus for its example."[18] Regarding the sermon at Nazareth, he says that it "adds substantially to our knowledge of the way Jesus exercised the ministry of the Word."[19] He observes that Jesus interpreted Scripture, that the sermon continues beyond verse 20 to include the dialogue that stretches to verse 27 and argues that this account may represent the preaching of Jesus rather than merely being a Lukan construct.[20] This said, his discussion is relatively limited in depth and scope concerning the content, and he fails to discuss the missionary context of the sermon and the significance of this for the example that Jesus provides for preaching. Larsen, in his work, *The Company of Preachers*, locates the "Glorious Birth of Christian Preaching" with "The Powerful Preaching of Jesus Christ the Savior."[21] Larsen's approach is more thematic, gathering the varied Gospel material under several headings. He does, however, refer to Luke 4:16-30 and makes some valuable observations. These observations include that Jesus announces the Year of Jubilee, the sermon was not necessarily concluded in verse 21, and "the pattern seems to be that Jesus the preacher takes a text of Scripture, reads it, explains it, and applies it."[22] Again, however, in part because of his survey approach, there is no specific emphasis on the missionary nature of this particular passage and the significance of this for the preaching discussed.[23]

As demonstrated above, therefore, missiologists, while discussing Luke 4:16-30 as a basis for ongoing Christian mission, omit any noteworthy reference to the place of preaching in the mission announced in these verses. On the other hand, writers in homiletics, while highlighting the importance of these verses for the Christian practice of preaching, do not develop the significance of the missionary context of the preaching therein described. Both approaches create a disconnect between the ongoing mission of the Church and the role of preaching in that mission. This disconnect is certainly something with which missiologists should contend. On the other hand, it is also a matter for those concerned with the practice of preaching. Luke 4:16-30 provides an example for Christian preaching based upon

the words and actions of Jesus Christ. This example, however, is of preaching within the context of his missionary task. It should, therefore, be understood and applied in this context. Following on from this, as homileticians like to stress, Jesus came preaching.[24] Preaching was a central activity in his life and ministry. Thus, those concerned with the importance of preaching should be prepared to enter the significant discussions concerning the ongoing ministry and mission of the Church from this perspective. Furthermore, in so far as mission is indeed part of the very nature of the Church, preachers should be concerned to understand what this means for their regular practice.

This article, therefore, seeks to address the disconnect between mission and preaching in relation to Luke 4:16-30. It builds on the above approaches to these verses but in contrast to them, will explore the practice of preaching within the paradigmatic missionary emphasis of Luke 4:16-30.

MISSION IN LUKE 4:16-30

Mission plays a central role in Luke-Acts.[25] In Luke 4:16-30, "the evangelist gives a programmatic statement of Jesus' ministry—and by extension, the ministry of the church."[26] Comparisons with a similar but much briefer incident recorded in Mark 6:1-6 generally understood to have been a source for Luke, and the internal features of the narrative event itself which indicate awareness of an earlier Galilean ministry (4:23), strongly suggest that Luke deliberately placed this incident at the beginning of the Galilean ministry (4:14-9:50) as a manifesto.[27] Edwards writes,

> The bold repositioning of Jesus' sermon in Nazareth, and its dramatic expansion in comparison with its parallels in Mark 6:1-6 and Matt 13:54-58, distinguishes it as the programmatic cornerstone of Jesus' ministry. The literary artistry of the sermon is as evident as is its placement.[28]

In this way, Luke creates the expectation or "critical narrative need for Jesus to perform in ways that grow out of and reflect this missionary program."[29] The larger Luke-Acts narrative demonstrates that the ministry of Jesus reflects this program, and later, narrative summaries refer back to this event (7:21-22; Acts 10:38).[30] Luke 4:16-30, therefore, explicates a programmatic mission manifesto. I will now highlight a number of its features.

First, mission in the light of Luke 4:16-30 is participation in God's salvific purposes. Jesus appeals to the authority of Old Testament Scripture (4:21) and incidents from such (4:25-27). Thus, he emphasizes that the mission in which he is engaged is nothing other than "God's eschatological purpose."[31] The theme of prophecy-fulfillment, a central feature in Luke-Acts,[32] also demonstrates the continuity between the experience of Israel and Jesus. This is emphasized not least through his identification with the Spirit-anointed Servant of Isaiah (4:18). This reference and that by the narrator (4:14) can be understood as interpretative "throwbacks" to Jesus' baptism (3:21-22) and the testing in the wilderness (4:1).[33] These Spirit references at the beginning of Jesus' ministry seek to establish him as one empowered by God in his acts and actions. The narrative summary of Acts 10:38 supports this reading.[34]

Second, the nature of this mission centers on the person of Jesus Christ. Jesus presents himself as the one who fulfills God's saving purposes, as revealed in Scripture. It is when "The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him" (4:20) that Jesus affirms himself as the fulfillment of such Scripture. (4:21). In this way, he self-presents as the Spirit-anointed prophet of Isa. 61.[35] His use of the phrase "I tell you the truth" (4:24),[36] his identification with Elijah and Elisha (4:25-27), and the theme of "rejection" stated (4:24), and experienced (4:29) [37] all heighten this self-identification of Jesus as a prophet. However, the identity of Jesus, as presented in Luke 4:16-30, is not confined to that of a prophet. It also has "messianic" significance.[38] Marshall says that in these verses, "we have a description of the work of the Messiah in terms of the activity of the eschatological prophet like unto Moses and of the Servant of Yahweh."[39] Likewise, Bock argues

that Jesus identifies himself as the Spirit-anointed one who not only proclaims the "the arrival of the new era" but who also brings it into being and in this combination reveals both his prophetic and Messianic functions.[40] For the readers of Luke 4:16-30 though not the original congregation, there is also an implicit reference to Jesus as the "Son of God." This reference is found in the "situational irony" of the narrative as the congregation respond positively and ask, "Isn't this Joseph's son?" (4:22).[41] For unlike the congregation, readers know from the preceding chapters that this Jesus can fulfill this prophecy and pursue the mission of God precisely because he is not the son of Joseph but the Son of God.[42]

Third, the mission which Jesus announces is one of holistic and transformative salvation. Luke 4:18-19 communicates "that the content of Jesus's commission consists in nothing else than in carrying out the eschatic transformation of unsalvation into salvation, which God has promised to his people."[43] This salvation is announced in language that is both "literal and symbolic."[44] One key term is "the poor."[45] The various other categories, "the prisoners," "the blind," and the "oppressed" are various expressions of this primary term.[46] This primary term of poor, if allowed both a "literal and larger meaning"[47] resists reduction to either merely a personal spiritual or a social-economic interpretation. Instead, as Green argues, the term "poor" can be understood in its "holistic sense of those who are for any of a number of socio-religious reasons relegated to positions outside the boundaries of God's people."[48] To such people, variously described, Jesus promises "freedom" (NIV), perhaps better translated as "release."[49] This term "release" has an emphatic position in the complex composite text cited by Jesus drawn from Isaiah 61:1-2 and Isaiah 58:6.[50] In Isaiah 61:1, "release" belongs to a series of rich eschatological metaphors of hope proclaimed for a post-exilic people.[51] In Isaiah 58:6, "release" involves a distinctly "social profile" highlighting economic injustice as an affront to true religion.[52] Both passages have allusions to the "release" of OT Jubilee legislation (Leviticus 25) that involved the release of slaves, the cancellation of debts, and

the return of land and is suggested by the phrase "the year of the Lord's favour" (4:19).[53] In the Lukan narrative co-text, the term "release" is used in two main ways. One is to refer to release from conditions related to diabolic activity (e.g., Luke 13:10-17; Acts 10:38).[54] The other is to refer to "forgiveness" from sins (e.g., Luke 5:20-21; 12:10).[55] This "spiritual" concern should not be too quickly set over and against the "social" implications of release. For in the Lucan context, "forgiveness of sin" had social ramifications concerning the status of a person in the community.[56] Neither, however, should we downplay the spiritual importance of the necessity of such forgiveness or its prominent place in this manifesto. The salvific mission of God, therefore, expressed and embodied by Jesus, is one of holistic transformation. Bosch writes about the Lukan perspective, "Whatever salvation is, then, in every specific context, it includes the total transformation of human life, forgiveness of sin, healing from infirmities, and release from any kind of bondage."[57]

Fourth, the mission announced by Jesus in Luke 4:16-30 has a centrifugal orientation of grace. To borrow from Talbert, if Jesus offered salvation for "The Whole Person" it was also "In the Whole World."[58] In the complex conflated text that Jesus cites, it is noticeable that he excludes the statement from Isaiah 61:1-2 "and the day of vengeance from our God." Within context, such a statement would have been understood as announcing God's judgment on the foreign nations that had oppressed Israel.[59] The implication of this omission appears to have been initially missed by the congregation as they welcomed the gracious message that Jesus announced.[60] The significant references by Jesus to Elijah and Elisha (4:24-27) and to the "widow in Zarephath" and "Naaman the Syrian," however, clearly indicated that Jesus envisioned a mission which extended beyond the people of Israel to include "the poor, the blind, the Samaritan, the Gentile, the tax collector, the sinner, and the outcast."[61] As a consequence, "The acceptance of the crowd quickly gave way to their rejection because the message of inclusion challenged their predetermined assumptions of God's work and way."[62] In terms of the narrative, this section, which starts with Jesus going to Nazareth, ends with

him going on his way into the narrative of Luke-Acts, which takes us to Jerusalem and ultimately Rome.[63]

Luke 4:16-30 is a programmatic statement of the mission of Jesus. Such mission involves participation in the Spirit-empowered centrifugal grace of God, which seeks relentlessly in concrete manifestations to transform people's lives. This being the case, the next step is to discuss the place of preaching in this mission.

PREACHING IN THE MISSION OF LUKE 4:16-30

Luke 4:16-30 offers a programmatic statement of the mission of Jesus. In that program, preaching has a prominent place of significance. This prominence of preaching is evident in a variety of ways.

Jesus' announced his programmatic Nazareth manifesto in a sermon. Jesus declares this mission program as he functions as a synagogue preacher.[64] The phrase "and he began by saying," indicates this is only a summary of what Jesus said (4:21).[65] Indeed, the sermon itself should be seen as continuing to verse 27 as the narrative setting sustains a continuity between 4:20 and 4:29. In 4:20, "he sat down," the position of the one teaching the Scriptures,[66] a position maintained until 4:29 when "they got up." This claim is not negated by the argumentative and debating style of verses 23-27, which may have represented the "normal" practice in synagogue sermons.[67] So it is the drama of Luke 4:16-30 takes place around what Jesus said. It was what he said that resulted in the congregations' positive (4:22) and negative (4:28) reactions. The sermon inaugurated the very mission which Jesus proclaimed as the congregation rejected him like a prophet (4:28-29), as he said they would (4:24), and so went on his way to fulfill the claims made (4:30). At the very least, the nature of this event as a sermon points to the vital place of preaching in the mission Jesus announced.

Although the sermon in Luke 4:16-30 is programmatic for mission, Luke also unmistakably depicts it as a specific example of the regular mission practice of Jesus. This regularity is

emphasized in the narrative summaries 4:14-15 and 31-32, which frame Luke 4:16-30 and underscore the regularity of his synagogue preaching practice. Green writing about 4:14-15 states, "Luke draws special attention to Jesus as teacher…It is precisely in this role that Jesus often appears – cf. 4:31; 5:3, 17; 6:6 et al."[68] The narrator, almost unnecessarily because of these framing summaries, also stresses "as was his custom" (4:16) when he recounts Jesus going to the synagogue in Nazareth. This stress is a reflection back to 4:15 and describes not only Jesus' attendance at synagogues but highlights the regularity of preaching as an expression of his mission.[69] This regularity of practice is confirmed in verses 31-32 which are significant in that they are not merely another summary statement of regular practice, but an example of the developing mission announced in Luke 4:16-30 in which preaching had a critical role. The fact the Nazareth manifesto was announced in a sermon is not, therefore, incidental but integral to the programmatic and revelatory narrative of salvation, which is unfolding in the Gospel focussed on the person of Jesus from Nazareth.

Critically the sermon at Nazareth also explicitly indicates the vital significance of preaching in the Sprit-anointed mission Jesus inaugurated. Green writes that the structural nature of Luke 4:18-19 "underscores in the clearest possible way the inexorable relation of the Spirit's anointing and the statement of primary mission, 'to proclaim good news to the poor.'"[70] This does not mean as some argue that the Spirit anointing was exclusively for the purposes of preaching.[71] To be sure, in his sermon, Jesus refused to perform any miracle in Nazareth. He did, however, identify himself with Elijah and Elisha, who did perform miracles (4:25-27). The narrative co-text also clearly indicates that miracle-working, and preaching, were both parts of Jesus' Spirit-anointed ministry as announced in Nazareth (4:31-44, 7:21-22). Be this as it may, it is clear that preaching as proclaiming good news to the poor (4:18) and proclaiming "freedom" (4:18) and "the year of the Lord's favour" (4:10), were essential to the fulfillment of the Spirit-anointed mission Jesus announced. Marshall writes that the "infinitival phrases brings

out more fully through various metaphors the significance of the preaching."[72] Indeed, the Spirit-anointed peaching announced in this text is not so much a "talking about" but a "bringing about" the transformation to which they refer. Preaching is, therefore, fundamental to the Spirit-empowered mission announced in Luke 4:16-30.

In the paragraphs above, I have been arguing that preaching is essentially integral to the form and content of the programmatic Nazareth mission manifesto. There is, however, a critical issue of definition. For in these verses, several words are used to describe preaching. In the central verses of 18-19 two verbs are used to describe preaching: *(euangélion)* "to preach the good news" (4:18), and *(kērýssō)* "to proclaim" (4:18-19).[73] Furthermore, when we include the significant narrative summaries of 14-15 and 31-32, we also have the verb (didáskō) "to teach."[74] Each of these terms is used somewhat interchangeably in Luke (compare 4:31-32 and 4:43-44). Nevertheless, each carries some nuance in meaning.[75] The preaching discussed in Luke 4:16-30 in keeping with the unfolding practice in Luke-Acts is therefore somewhat dynamic and varied as to its particular expression in the mission announced.

In Luke 4:16-30, Jesus issues a programmatic statement of his prophetic and Messianic Spirit-empowered mission. He makes this statement in a sermon, the content of which indicates that the varied practice of preaching is integral to the nature and fulfillment of this mission. Luke 4:16-30, therefore, is not merely a text about mission nor about preaching but about the missionary intent of Jesus with preaching at its core.

PREACHING IN THE CHURCH'S MISSION

Following on from the above, I will now discuss the value of Luke 4:16-30 for informing the place and practice of preaching in the mission of the Church. In this respect we can note that Bosch suggests that in some sections of the Church, "Luke 4:16-21 has, for all practical purposes, replaced Matthew's 'Great

Commission' as the key text not only for understanding Christ's own mission but also that of the church."[76] Whether or not this is or should be the case, Luke 4:16-30 should be of substantial interest to those concerned for a biblical understanding of the nature of the ongoing mission of the Church. This is because of the programmatic missionary nature of these verses in Luke-Acts. In turn, the significance of these verses is heightened in that Luke-Acts "may be the clearest presentation of the church's universal mission in all of the New Testament" and consists of two volumes in which Luke "indicates that one of his major purposes was to show the relationship between the mission of Jesus and the mission of the church."[77] Concerning the programmatic Luke 4:16-30, therefore, the following words from Newbigin seems particularly apposite:

> In every age, we have to go back to God's revelation of Himself to learn afresh by the guiding of the Spirit, what is our duty for to-day…The Church's mission is none other than the carrying on of the mission of Christ Himself.[78]

As argued above, in the revelation of Luke 4:16-30, the practice of preaching is central to the mission of Christ, which has to be carried on by the Church. It is, therefore, because Luke 4:16-30 is a key programmatic missionary biblical text with the preaching of Jesus as its core that these verses can claim to have an instructive function for the place of preaching in the Church's ongoing mission. As a consequence, in the remainder of this article, I will discuss the place of preaching in the Church's ongoing mission in the light of Luke 4:16-30.

First, preaching, in the trajectory of Luke 4:16-30, is a regular Spirit-anointed practice of God's ongoing salvific work in the world. Preaching is not, therefore, merely a traditional practice to be evaluated as to its perceived practical value as a form of communication. Instead, it is a practice whose significance in the Church is established through its habitual association with the mission of Jesus and the work of the Holy

Spirit. I am not here establishing some sort of theological no-go area concerning the quality and nature of preaching. For to claim that preaching is particularly Spirit-empowered for mission necessarily raises vital questions concerning what such Spirit "anointed," "illuminated," and "empowered" preaching looks like.[79] I am also not denying the necessity and significance of other Spirit-empowered acts and actions. The importance of such is evident in the content and outworking of the mission announced in Luke 4:16-30. Preaching should regularly accompany and be accompanied by such. I am, however, defending the important and particular place of preaching as a regular and Spirit-empowered practice as part of the Church's mission because in Luke 4:16-30, preaching is integral to Spirit-anointed mission announced.

Second, the preaching integral to the mission announced in Luke 4:16-30 has the Scriptures centered on Jesus Christ as its primary content. As the narrative unfolds (4:16-18), Jesus takes the Scripture, reads Scripture, claims its fulfillment in him, and expands upon the meaning for the congregation.[80] Certainly, Jesus establishes a continuity with the faith and practice of Israel by accepting the role of the synagogue preacher and interpreting the Scriptural text. Simultaneously, however, he is also the model for the future, with Luke 4 marking "the origin of Christian preaching."[81] This is the case both hermeneutically and homiletically. On the one hand, Jesus establishes himself as the hermeneutical prism by which we are to make sense of Scripture.[82] On the other hand, he offers the interpreted and applied elucidation of Scripture as the necessary content for preaching in the mission announced in the manifesto. Preaching in this mission paradigm, therefore, approaches Scripture as an authoritative source. It calls on listeners to change their lives in accordance with the preached message. This call may be in evangelistic preaching. It might also be preaching that reminds a believing congregation of who they are and their role in God's mission. For as Brueggemann argues, there is a massive "amnesia" among the people of God that "causes the church to lack any serious missional energy."[83] One way or another,

Scripture is the authoritative source for preaching, which seeks to participate in the mission of God as outlined in the Nazareth manifesto.

Third, preaching in the mission paradigm of Luke 4:16-30 is an embodied act. The above paragraphs suggest something of the divine nature of preaching. Preaching, however, is also a human act of communication related to context and culture. Jesus comes preaching, resisting the tempted route of the dramatic supernatural spectacle (4:1-13). Luke 4:16-30 is about a speaker and hearers sharing space and time. It is the humanity of preacher, congregation, and context which make the revelation of Luke 4:16-30 possible and directly relevant. To the home congregation, Jesus was indeed "Joseph's son." The human potential and the vulnerability of such Spirit-empowered yet human speech is demonstrated in the reactions it created, including the unsuccessful attempt to kill Jesus. In this model of preaching exemplified by Jesus, physical presence is critical. Here is the Word enfleshed in incarnational embodiment. As a consequence, I would argue that preaching, which serves the mission of the Christian Church in the model of Luke 4:16-30 is primarily a live event when and where a preacher shares space and time with the congregation. Embodied presence in the context of people's lives is critical. Other forms of mediated preaching may be valuable but are derivative and should be regarded as such both academically and practically in the life of the Church.

Fourth, preaching in the mission of the Church in the model of Luke 4:16-30 should have a prophetic element. This prophetic emphasis has several dimensions. It should envision God's alternative reality. In quoting Isaiah (Luke 4:18-19), Jesus commandeers the language of the prophet. This prophetic language is the language of the poetic. Such language speaks to the imagination without denying the reality of the freedom to which it points.[84] It should proclaim an understanding of the world as though God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit "were a real character and an effective agent in the world."[85] While these prior emphases of prophetic preaching need not address specific

issues, I would argue that prophetic preaching should also deal with a wide range of issues in seeking the holistic transformation envisioned in Luke 4:16-30. This approach may require thematic or topical preaching. More regularly, however, it would involve engaging with subjects of social concern while preaching through the Scriptures and relating them to life in the light of the Gospel. This will require preachers "to ground their entire preaching ministries in the kind of deep and passionate social analysis that will change the shape and nature of all their sermons."[86] Such preaching should be prepared for contested responses. Prophetic preaching may not simply involve "a quarrel with the world"[87] but as in Luke 4:16-30, it may involve a quarrel with the congregation. This quarrel should not be the goal. Forming a missionary people through evangelism, teaching, and proclamation should be the goal of congregational preaching. Opposition by itself is not the measure of faithfulness. Be this as it may, prophetic preaching requires the courage to be contrary for the sake of discovering truth and reality.

Finally, preaching in the paradigm of Luke 4:16-30 is a varied practice. This variety is not only a matter of content but of style, purpose, listeners, and location. Luke 4:16-30 supports Spirit-empowered Scriptural preaching, but no one particular style, purpose, listeners, or location for preaching. Jesus, on this occasion, sits to preach and engages in a somewhat confrontational and dialogical style, which he actively instigates (4:23). As already noted, a variety of terms are used to distinguish the more general practice of preaching. These terms are indicative of different styles related to different purposes as directed towards different listeners: teach, evangelize, proclaim. While Griffiths does not elaborate on "teaching" his word study summary of the use of "evangelize" and "proclaim" in Luke-Acts and beyond demonstrates something of the varied contexts and contents of such preaching in the New Testament.[88] Preaching in the mission paradigm of Luke 4:16-30 will be attentive to this variety for the sake of achieving the mission.

In addition to the above, one critical point on variety requires to be made: locations for preaching can vary. The

Nazareth sermon took place in a synagogue. On this basis, Brilioth sees the "*liturgical*" as a "basic" element of Christian preaching.[89] This emphasis rightly associates Christian preaching as a practice that takes place among people gathered in worshipful assembly often in a building expressly set apart for such a gathering, whether permanently or temporarily. This is undoubtedly the regular location for preaching, which takes place in the Global North. Jesus, however, through the content of his sermon, subverted this context as the only proper place for preaching to take place. In this trajectory, we can observe that there is a long and varied tradition of preaching, which has taken place out-with gathered worship and out-with buildings set apart for that purpose.[90] The driving force for such preaching has often been a commitment to the centrifugal grace of God demonstrated in the person of Jesus Christ. Preaching, which follows the mission paradigm of Luke 4:16-30, will not confine itself to the liturgical assembly. It will creatively seek other locations and contexts when and where its claims may be heard, and its power demonstrated.

CONCLUSION

Luke 4:16-30 is a key Scriptural text in delineating the mission program of Jesus and subsequently that of the Christian Church. Mission matters to the Church. Luke 4:16-30 presents this mission as the centrifugal grace of God, pushing out in Jesus Christ for the holistic salvation of various people groups. Preaching is not incidental but essentially integral to the elucidation and enactment of this mission. Preaching matters, therefore, in the mission of the Church as a particular Spirit-empowered practice. This calls for heightened attention to the possibilities of Scripturally based preaching in terms of content, purposes, peoples, and locations. In Luke 4:16-30, a program for mission, and the practice of preaching belong together.

NOTES

1. This article is based upon a revision and updating of material which I first studied for my MTh Dissertation, "The Place and Function of Preaching in the Church's Mission: A theological interpretation with reference to Luke 4:16-30," (unpublished master's dissertation: Spurgeon's College London/University of Wales, 2002). It is also significantly different from an article that was published based upon one section of that dissertation, "Preaching and the Missionary Intention of the Church," *College of Preachers Journal*, 116 (January 2004): 37-48.
2. Lesslie Newbigin, *The Open Secret*: *An Introduction to the Theology of Mission*, Rev. ed. (London: SPCK, 1995), 2.
3. David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission*: *Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* (New York: Orbis Books, 1991), 9.
4. J. Andrew Kirk, *What is Mission? Theological Explorations* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1999), 30.
5. Bosch, *Transforming*, 84.
6. Ibid., 89, 100.
7. Ibid., 100-104.
8. When Bosch discusses Luke 24:46-49, he ignores the fact that these verses speak of repentance and the forgiveness of sins being "preached," Ibid., 91. Although his section on "The Lucan Missionary Paradigm" contains a heading, "Preaching the good news of the peace of Christ" his focus is on "peace-making" not preaching, Ibid., 118-119.
9. Donald Senior and Carroll Stuhlmueller, *The Biblical Foundations for Mission* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1983), 260-261, 268-269.
10. Howard Peskett and Vinoth Ramachandra, *The Message of Mission* (Leicester: IVP, 2003), 157-171.
11. Ibid., 165-167.
12. Wright refers to Luke 4:16-30, but it is not a major focus. In turn, while he mentions evangelism, the Gospel, and proclaiming, he does not develop the place of preaching in mission, Christopher J. H. Wright, *The Mission of God: Unlocking*

the Bible's Grand Narrative (Downers Grove: IVP, 2006), *The Mission of God's People: A Biblical Theology of the Church's Mission* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010). To be sure, Andreas J. Köstenberger and Peter T. O'Brien do discuss Luke 4:16-30 and stress the importance of proclamation in their work, *Salvation to the Ends of the Earth: A Biblical Theology of Mission* (Downers Grove: Apollos, 2001), 115-118. Their concern, however, unlike the other literature I reviewed, offers an exploration of mission as found in the Scriptures rather than seeking to address contemporary missiological challenges in the light of that biblical material.

13. Not all histories include the biblical material, O. C. Edwards, *A History of Christian Preaching* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2004).

14. Yngve Brilioth, *A Brief History of Preaching* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1965), 1.

15. Ibid., 8.

16. Ibid., 8-10.

17. Ibid., 11.

18. Hughes Oliphant Old, *The Reading and Preaching of the Scriptures in the Worship of the Christian Church*: *Volume 1 The Biblical Period* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 111.

19. Ibid., 130.

20. Ibid., 130-133.

21. David L. Larsen, *The Company of the Preachers: A History of Biblical Preaching From The Old Testament To The Modern Era* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1998), 37-62, 40.

22. Larsen, *Company*, 41-42.

23. Quicke drawing on Brilioth also gives significance to this Scriptural passage but does not discuss the missionary nature of the content, e.g., Michael J. Quicke, *360 Degree Preaching: Hearing, Speaking, and Living the Word* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 19-32, 37.

24. Ibid., 19-20.

25. Köstenberger and O'Brien, *Salvation,* 111.

26. Charles H. Talbert, *Reading Luke: A Literary and Theological Commentary*. Rev. ed. (Macon: Smyth & Helwys Publishing, 2002), 60, *EBSCOhost*.
27. I. Howard Marshall, *Commentary on Luke*: *New International Greek Testament Commentary* (Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1978), 177-178.
28. James R. Edwards, *The Gospel According to Luke* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015), 133, ProQuest Ebook Central.
29. Joel B. Green, *The Gospel of Luke* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 207.
30. Ibid., 207.
31. Ibid., 204.
32. Michael Prior, *Jesus the Liberator: Nazareth Liberation Theology Luke 4:16-30* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), 123, 128-141.
33. Green, *Gospel*, 203.
34. Joel B. Green, *The Theology of the Gospel of Luke* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 44-45.
35. Marshall, *Commentary*, 183.
36. E. Earle Ellis, *The Gospel of Luke*: *The New Century Bible Commentary* (London: Marshall, Morgan and Scott, 1974), 98.
37. Green, *Gospel*, 216-218
38. Prior, *Jesus*, 137.
39. I. Howard Marshall, *Luke: Historian and Theologian* (Devon: Paternoster, 1970), 128.
40. Darrell L. Bock, *Luke: The New Application Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 137.
41. Green, *Gospel*, 215. I agree with Green and others that, at this point, the relationship between Jesus and the synagogue congregation is positive, and the question of 22b asked in admiration.
42. Ibid., 215.
43. Michael Wolter, *The Gospel According to Luke*: *Vol. 1*, trans. Wayne Coppins and Christopher Heilig (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2016), 201.
44. Green, *Gospel*, 211.
45. Green, *Theology*, 79-84.

46. Wolter, *Gospel*, 201.
47. Green, *Theology*, 79.
48. Green, *Gospe*l, 211.
49. Ibid., 210-211.
50. Green, *Theology*, 77.
51. Prior, *Jesus*, 134.
52. Ibid., 135.
53. Many writers make a connection to the Jubilee legislation.
54. Green, *Theology*, 78-79.
55. Ibid., 78.
56. Green, *Gospel*, 211-212.
57. Bosch, *Transforming*, 107.
58. Talbert, *Luke,* 57-60
59. Prior, *Jesus*, 135-137.
60. It is possible to understand "the gracious words" (v22) to refer not merely to "how" Jesus spoke, but to the "content" which he announced, Richard Bolling Vinson, *Luke* (Macon: Smyth & Helwys, 2008), 122, *EBSCOhost*.
61. Prior, *Jesus*, 142-148, 148.
62. W. Mark Tew, *Luke: Gospel to the Nameless and Faceless* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2012), 33, *EBSCOhost.*
63. Talbert, *Luke*, 59.
64. Many writers discuss current knowledge about synagogue worship at the time of Jesus. They generally recognize that the reading, interpretation, and discussion of Scripture were regular features of synagogue gatherings.
65. John Nolland, *Luke 1-9:20*: *Word Biblical Commentary*, Vol. 35a (Dallas: Word Books, 1989), 198
66. Marshall, *Commentary*, 184.
67. Prior, *Jesus*, 112-113;
68. Green, *Gospel*, 205.
69. Nolland, *Luke 1-9:20*, 195.
70. Green, *Gospel*, 210.
71. So, Robert P. Menzies, *Empowered for Witness*: *The Spirit in Luke-Act*s (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994).
72. Marshall, *Commentary*, 183.

73. In verse 19, the verb kērýssō replaces the Septuagint "to call" (καλέσαι) with "the familiar Christian technical term," Marshall, *Commentary*, 183.
74. This is without mentioning the other verbs which are used to describe Jesus speaking in the ongoing sermonic discourse, 4: 21, 23, 24. In verse 21, the verb used to describe his fulfillment announcement is "to say" (λέγω).
75. Joseph A. Fitzmeyer in *The Gospel According to Luke I-IX* (New York: Doubleday & Company, 1981), discusses the various terms Luke used to describe preaching, 147-148.
76. Bosch, *Transforming*, 84.
77. Senior and Stulmueller, *Biblical*, 255.
78. Lesslie Newbigin, *One Body One Gospel One World*: *The Christian Mission Today* (London: Wm. Carling & Co. Ltd., 1958), 17.
79. There is much to be gained from recent Pentecostal writing on preaching about the role of the Holy Spirit, Lee Roy Martin, ed., *Toward a Pentecostal Theology of Preaching* (Cleveland: CPT Press, 2015).
80. Whether Jesus chose or was given the text, a subject off scholarly debate, does not affect this interpretation.
81. Quicke, *360 Degree*, 37.
82. Prior, *Jesus*, 129.
83. Walter Brueggemann, *Biblical Perspectives on Evangelism*: *Living in A Three Storied Universe* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1993), 90.
84. Walter Brueggemann, *Finally Comes the Poet: Daring Speech for Proclamation* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989), 104-105, discusses the Isaiah text and Jesus' appropriation of it.
85. Walter Brueggemann, *The Practice of the Prophetic Imagination: Preaching an Emancipating Word* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2012), loc. 180, Kindle.
86. Christine M. Smith, *Preaching as Weeping, Confession and Resistance*: *Radical Responses to Radical Evil* (Louisville: WJKP, 1992), 163.
87. William J. Barber II in Frank A. Thomas, *How to Preach a Dangerous Sermon* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2018), xii.

88. Jonathan I. Griffiths, *Preaching in the New Testament: An Exegetical and Biblical-Theological Study* (Downers Grove: Apollos, 2017), 17-40.
89. Brilioth, *Brief*, 8-10, italics original.
90. Stuart Blythe, "Open-Air Preaching: A Long and Diverse Tradition," *Perichoresis,* 16:1 (2018): 61–80.

UNTIL THE TWO WORLDS MERGE INTO ONE: A REDEMPTIVE-HISTORICAL CONCEPTUALIZATION OF SERMON APPLICATION

ERIC PRICE
Teaching Assistant
Trinity Evangelical Divinity School[1]

ABSTRACT

Sermon application is often conceptualized as a process of traversing historical distance between the original readers of Scripture and contemporary Christians. This essay seeks to qualify such accounts of application by setting historical distance within the context of the overarching theological continuity between God's people throughout redemptive history. While there is an element of historical distance between the biblical text and the listener, this need not be the exclusive or even primary category by which homileticians understand and teach sermon application. The essay suggests that the primacy of historical distance in the theology of sermon application arises from conceptual disjunctions central to biblical studies as an academic discipline. It then proposes a more integrated approach to application which foregrounds theological continuity. Finally, it concludes with suggestions for how teachers of preaching might integrate this theology of application into their homiletical pedagogy.

INTRODUCTION

Sermon application is central to the task of preaching. The process of application is often conceived of as something needed

to traverse distance between "the ancient text" and "the modern listener."[2] John Stott famously described preaching as "bridging two worlds" –that of the text and that of the listener.[3] The primacy of historical distance in conceptualizing the relationship between the biblical text and contemporary Christians is often assumed in evangelical homiletics. Yet in this article, I want to suggest that, while there is an element of historical distance between the text and the listener, this should not be the exclusive or even primary category by which we think about and teach sermon application. In this article, I explain that this distinction draws unnecessarily from biblical studies as an academic discipline; I then propose an alternative model and provide some brief pedagogical suggestions.

BIBLICAL STUDIES AND ITS DISJUNCTIONS

Here I suggest that the goal of biblical studies, by virtue of its focus on historical backgrounds and ancient contexts, differs from that of homiletics. As such, there are three conceptual disjunctions often assumed in biblical studies that are unhelpful for homiletics if they become absolutized in the way we describe sermon application. The three disjunctions, explained below, show how the goals and concerns of biblical studies are largely historical in nature.

Original Meaning Versus Contemporary Application

The first disjunction—the overarching one that creates the other two—is between what a biblical text "meant" in its original context and what it "means" for contemporary readers.[4] For example, J. P. Gabler, a key figure in the development of biblical studies, held that interpreters must "do the biblical theological work of separating the central core [of the biblical message] from the details of historical ideas."[5] This central core "is what is left when the theology of the New Testament in its own time. . . . [is] shorn of its time-conditioned inessentials."[6] Functionally, this

means historical details of the biblical text are an encumbrance to contemporary usage.

This approach privileges the historical details behind the text by holding that they are essential for understanding the text itself. A survey of technical commentaries will show this—their focus is on ancient Near Eastern or Greco-Roman backgrounds, linguistic analysis, textual criticism, and (depending on the commentary) discussion of redaction and editing behind the final form of the text. Except for explicitly theological or homiletical commentaries, it is rare for such commentaries to discuss how the text relates to systematic theology or the Christian life.

Douglas Sweeney, in a study of biblical interpretation, says: "In more recent modern history, learned preachers have been taught to think primarily as historians, explaining sermon texts by reference to their ancient, social contexts."[7] The truth of Sweeney's observation is evident when one surveys how introductory homiletics texts speak of the applicational process. Haddon Robinson's widely used text provides a representative example:

> We cannot decide what a passage means to us unless first we have determined what the passage meant when the Bible was written… Only after we comprehend what he [the biblical author] meant in his own terms and to his own times can we clarify what difference that should make in life today.[8]

Historicizing the text distances modern readers from it. The need to "bridge worlds" or traverse historical distance then arises, and the process of bridging this distance is often conceived of as principlizing. This is a process whereby the preacher identifies a spiritual truth contained within a biblical passage and then extracts that truth from the biblical passage in order to state it in a timeless way for present listeners.[9] When meaning is identified with events behind the text, rather than the text itself, this atomistic conception of sermon application becomes necessary.

Biblical Studies Versus Theology

The second divide, between biblical studies and theology, also results from prioritizing historical circumstances behind the text, as described above. A key issue in navigating the relationship between biblical studies and theology is the relationship of exegesis to the essential components of doctrinal orthodoxy, often called the rule of faith.[10] There is a mutually informative relationship between the rule of faith and biblical exegesis, with the former delimiting and guiding the latter, and the latter nuancing and refining (but not, I would argue, overturning) the former.[11]

As biblical studies emerged as an academic discipline divorced from an ecclesial context, it developed a methodology that required an *a priori* bracketing of theological tradition from the interpretive task. The tools of academic biblical studies are not incompatible with a confessional approach to Scripture, but the danger nonetheless for evangelical theology is that the rule of faith becomes merely a guardrail against heresy rather than a handmaiden of interpretation.[12] A classic example of this issue is whether the plural "us" in Gen 1:26 ought to be taken as a Trinitarian reference (as in a confessional approach) or a utilization of the ancient Near Eastern concept of a "heavenly court" (as in biblical studies).[13]

Academic Versus Applicational Study

The third disjunction homiletics has inherited from academic biblical studies is between academic study and applicational study. In considering the history of writing commentaries, biblical scholars Mark Gignilliat and Jonathan Pennington say "it is only from a modern viewpoint that distinctions between 'scholarly' and 'devotional' arise; modernity will come to define 'scholarly' and 'academic' commentary as somehow objective and nonpersonal, nonsapiential, and nonexhortational."[14] The frequently utilized threefold method of inductive Bible study—

observation, interpretation, application—reflects the division between studying the text and applying the text.[15] This implies that interpretation can take place in a cognitive manner detached from affectional concerns.

TOWARD A MORE INTEGRATIVE APPROACH

We are indebted to biblical scholars who have provided us with increasingly precise tools to interpret Scripture. I highlight these three disjunctions, not to dismiss the value of academic biblical studies, but to show that the goals of biblical studies are not identical to those of homiletics. The disjunctions described above may facilitate goals prized by biblical scholars, but they can become problematic when applied uncritically to homiletics. Thus, I propose a model of interpretation and application that provides an alternative to the disjunctions described above.[16]

A Pauline Case for Theological Continuity between the Text and the Readers

The three disjunctions described above create distance between the biblical text and the reader. I propose that the way the Apostle Paul views the New Covenant believer's relationship to OT stories in 1 Corinthians 10:1-22 provides us with an alternative homiletical model. My focus here is the theological lens through which Paul views OT characters and events; this lens substantiates his use of the OT for the church by showing a continuity between contemporary readers of Scripture and the believing community whose life is recorded in Scripture.

In 1 Corinthians 10, Paul appeals to Exodus 32 and Numbers 25 to warn the Corinthian congregation about the danger of idolatry; his repeated use of the comparative adverb καθώς (1 Cor 10:6, 7, 8, 9, 33) indicates that commonality between the church and Israel is central to his argument. He refers to OT believers as the church's fathers, or ancestors (πατέρες, 10:1). In what sense, though, is there a paternity between OT believers and NT believers? Here I will sketch

briefly a three-fold continuity that substantiates the correspondence he draws between the OT and the church for the purposes of instruction and exhortation.

First, there is continuity of divine identity. In 1 Cor 10:4, Paul in some measure identifies the rock which followed Israel in the wilderness with Christ.[17] This enigmatic statement is often attributed to Jewish interpretive strategies such as midrash.[18] While Paul may indeed draw upon such interpretive traditions, it is also likely that his identification of the rock as Christ is an intentional application of an OT designation for Yahweh to the Messiah Jesus. Yahweh is identified as a rock in the OT (cf. Deut 32, Ps 18:2). Further, his provision of water from a rock later functions as a reminder of his presence (Ps 78:15, 78:20, 105:41, 114:8), and also as a foreshadowing for his provision of a Messiah (cf. Isa. 48:20-49:7). Thus by identifying Jesus as the rock in the wilderness, Paul (1) expands the identity of Yahweh to include Jesus within it, as he has already done in 1 Cor 8:6, and (2) identifies Jesus as the ultimate instantiation of Yahweh's provision for his people. The same God who gave provision to Israel in the wilderness has now given redemptive provision to his people anew in Christ.

Second, there is a redemptive-historical continuity. Paul's statement that Christians are those on whom "the culmination of the ages" (τὰ τέλη τῶν αἰώνων) has come (1 Cor 10:11) indicates redemptive-historical intensification of God's activity in the world—intensification that, through the Messiah, "constitutes the fulfillment of God's promises of Israel's restoration and humanity's salvation."[19] This fulfillment presupposes the unity of God's work through Israel and through the church. Though Israel appeared in a scene less proximate to the Scriptural plot's climactic resolution, she and the church are both actors in the same play, on the same stage, guided by the same divine Director.[20] Commenting on 1 Cor 10:1-22, Richard Hays says that "the point of Paul's metaphor depends on seeing Israel and church as pilgrim people who stand in different times, different chapters of the same story, *but in identical relation* to the same gracious and righteous God."[21] The description of the Israelites

being baptized into Moses parallels the New Covenant concept of baptism into Christ.[22] Moses prefigured faintly what Christ provides in full.

Third, there is an ethical continuity. Paul warns the church not to test Christ, as the Israelites did. This parenesis is grounded in the broader continuity of divine presence—both OT and NT believers are to abstain from idolatry and worship the one true God. The connection between redemptive-historical progression and ethical exhortation is indicated when Paul identifies the events that happened to OT believers as τύποι for the church (1 Cor 10:6). Modern translations render this "examples," although τύπος is usually translated "type." The differences in translation point to an underlying interpretive question: Are these OT incidents simply examples employed retroactively by Paul, or could they properly be considered types in the sense that they are intended by God to foreshadow Christ and the church?

Much could be said about this question, but here I note that the two defining features of typology – historical correspondence and escalation – are both present in this text.[23] As Eric Watkins explains, the experiences of OT Israelites parallel those of NT believers because both live in the interim period between the initiation and consummation of redemption: "The Israelites were already brought out of Egypt in the Exodus but were not yet in the land of promise."[24] This interim status is, for the church, even more eschatologically significant due to the onset of the end times (described above) and her anticipation of redemption's eschatological completion. Thus, Jim Hamilton's comment applies well Paul's use of OT events in this text: "the events of Israel's history function like schematics or templates, and they are used to communicate the meaning of who Jesus was and what he accomplished."[25] In light of 1 Cor 10:6, I suggest that those who experienced God's presence in the OT function, by extension, as schematics for New Covenant believers who are likewise God's people through the Spirit. The events that happened to OT Israel are types insofar as Israel herself anticipates the Messiah. Christ, as the fulfillment of Israel, is "the one…in whom God's people are summed up."[26] Since Christ

sums up Israel in himself, those joined to him stand in antitypical relationship to OT believers.[27]

This continuity enables Paul to draw moral exhortation from OT events, but the redemptive-historical logic by which he does so places the Corinthian believers in close proximity to OT Israel.[28] The proximity is not spatial or temporal, but rather theological and familial. Notably, though Israel is typical of Christ and the church, the nation's typical status does not preclude Israelites from serving as ethical models of Christian living. In this way, a canonical interpretation of Scripture is inseparable from the hortatory element of Scripture, and typology is undergirded by a redemptive-historical framework that allows it to be both predictive of the Christ event and exhortational in its instruction for the Christian life.[29]

How Redemptive-Historical Continuity Collapses Dichotomies

I suggest the canonical continuity within which Paul relates OT Scripture to NT believers collapses the three dichotomies I outlined above that are frequently found in evangelical homiletics. First, the Israel-church proximity collapses the distance between original and contemporary meaning by placing the saints of old within the same redemptive-historical context. The writers and characters of Scripture may indeed occupy different historical, social, and circumstantial contexts than contemporary readers, but the common context of redemptive history places situational discontinuities within the larger context of an overarching theological continuity. This is not meant to deny that legitimate situational discontinuities do exist and may require understanding of historical background – Paul's comments on head coverings in 1 Cor 11:2-16 come to mind here. However, it does keep us from absolutizing discontinuity in a way that might implicitly inhibit readers without training in historical backgrounds from studying the Scriptures and finding instruction for discipleship.

Second, this redemptive-historical continuity collapses the distance between interpretation and application by orienting

Scripture toward a divine *telos*—worshipful obedience—which indicates that one cannot know a biblical text apart from obedient response. Dean Flemming rightly says that "in Paul's contextualizing hermeneutic, the relationship between understanding and application becomes almost seamless."[30] I suggest that this seamlessness actually reflects the redemptive-historical continuity between Israel and the church, which means that both entities have a divine mandate to avoid idolatry. Israel's corporate identity as a people was rooted in her reception of God's redemptive initiative, and this identity had ethical entailments. Upon redeeming Israel from Egypt, Yahweh said: "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. You shall have no other gods before me" (Ex. 20:2-3). Likewise, the God who redeemed Israel has now redeemed the church in Christ, and this continuity of redemption means that the church's mandate to avoid idolatry is even more significant. Thus, Paul identifies the events of Scripture as types because we have inherited Israel's ethical mandate: "Do not be idolaters, as some of them were" (1 Cor 10:7a). This imbues Scripture with a teleology that means right worship is an essential, not incidental, component of Scripture's function in the Christian life.

Finally, this Pauline continuity collapses the divide between biblical studies and theology by locating individual texts within the context of the Christian canon. The identity of God and his revelation in the Christ event provide the theological fabric for relating biblical texts to contemporary believers. This theological fabric means that a methodological bracketing of Christian theology from the exegetical process risks separating what God has joined together.[31]

Implications for Homiletical Pedagogy

I propose that this continuity has implications for the language and concepts by which we teach the homiletical process. Here I will offer four suggestions.

First, I offer the following analogy that may to help explain how Paul conceptualizes Scriptural application. Imagine that a gentleman named Fred operates a family business founded by a great-grandfather whom he had never met. One day, Fred uncovers the diary of his great-grandfather, and there he reads about this distant relative's founding vision for how the business could provide quality customer care. Though the world of business has changed since the since his great-grandfather's lifetime, Fred nonetheless finds the continuity of vision and purpose between these two worlds to be a valuable guide for how to navigate contemporary business challenges. He shares and is inspired by his great-grandfather's vision for the business.

Though an imperfect analogy, I offer it to highlight this point: When Fred reads his great-great-grandfather's vision for the business, he likely would not think primarily in terms of "my ancestor's world" and "my contemporary world." He likely would not suspend personal involvement until he had investigated the historical circumstances surrounding the diary entries. The experience of reading it would be one of familial involvement and personal investment. Of course, there would be historical and circumstantial bridges to cross in order to learn from the previously undiscovered diary entries and apply their lessons to the contemporary state of the business. Yet the size of these gaps between Fred and his ancestor would also be relativized, I suggest, by the context of common familial identity and commonality of purpose in running the business.

Similarly, we share with saints throughout Scripture a common family and God-given purpose—to worship and make known the one true God. Their struggles are our struggles, their God our God, and their purpose our purpose. The shared familial identity and common purpose precludes major chasms between academic and devotional study and between "then" and "now." Redemptive-history is a familial bond that unites these polarities by joining believers across time into a common family with a common Parent.

Second, I propose that we explain the homiletical process in terms that are explicitly theological. The inspired apostles

provide controlling conceptual categories by which we understand what takes place in preaching. Because of this, it is incumbent upon us to conceptualize the homiletical process in ways that draw upon Scripture's own self-understanding. Systematic theologian John Webster has called for us to do "theological theology," a recognition of the fact that even theology can be done in non-theological ways. Similarly, I suggest we should strive for a "theological homiletic," one that derives its conceptual categories for explaining the homiletical transaction from the NT's own use of Scripture.[32]

Third, I suggest that we nuance the way that we describe the process of application when teaching homiletics courses. It is important emphasize the need for application, as students in theological schools must be trained to think of preaching as more than the regurgitation of exegetical tidbits about a biblical text. Yet while it is pedagogically sensible to an extent that we emphasize application as distinct from explanation to a certain extent, I would suggest we be careful not to overstate the distinction. Perhaps we might speak of explanation as a twofold process of addressing the world of the text and also the world in front of the text, with explanation being complete when the two worlds have been fused so that contemporary believers may respond with worship. This conceptualization of the application process seems to accord better with Paul's theological method in 1 Cor 10 than does a rigid distinction between interpretation and application. Timothy Gabrielson's comments state the matter well: "innerbiblical exegesis has a 'contemporizing' bent; that is, it emphasizes the immediacy of God's word to later generations rather than moving between 'exegesis' and 'application' as a two-stage process or back-and-forth method."[33] If this is so, then a theological homiletic ought to likewise emphasize application as an essential facet of explanation rather than a totally distinct component of the sermon.

Fourth, I suggest we develop sermon delivery strategies that implicitly capture the familial continuity of contemporary listeners with saints of ages past. Here I suggest the African-American preaching tradition offers guidance, as it understands

intuitively this theological continuity better than Anglo preaching traditions. Homiletician Cleophus LaRue says:

> So often in black preaching there will be little distance between the preacher and the events of the text. It's not uncommon to hear the preacher proclaim, 'I heard Paul say the other day…' as if the preacher and Paul had recently been in conversation, for the preacher believes that God is speaking in the hear *[sic]* and now directly through the text.[34]

Similar strategies, such as anachronism, in explaining biblical texts allow preachers to collapse the distance between the biblical world and contemporary world in order to show that cultural and temporal separation between God's people is secondary to their shared identity and mission as members of God's redeemed family.[35] Such delivery strategies help re-create the communal and 'contemporizing' (to use Gabrielson's term) nature of Scriptural application.

CONCLUSION

This article has suggested that the primary conceptual categories often utilized to speak of sermon application are somewhat in tension with the way the NT itself conceptualizes the application of Scripture to new situations and to Christians living subsequent to the inscripturation of God's revelation. Here I offered 1 Cor 10 as a case study of a Scriptural theology of application. This text demonstrates how the NT's application of prior Scripture merges two worlds into one rather than traversing them as if they were two historically, culturally, and temporally distinct entities. In light of this, I suggested some pedagogical strategies for teaching and communicating these theological truths. A homiletic that is truly evangelical ought to draw from Scripture its understanding of what preaching is and of what this communicative process consists. This will put us on the path toward a theological

homiletic that teaches us to merge two worlds into one rather than merely build a bridge between them.

NOTES

1. The author would like to thank Kevin Vanhoozer and Timothy Gabrielson for providing feedback on a draft of this article. Any shortcomings remain the author's own. This article draws, in language and thought, from the author's ThM thesis written at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School.

2. Here I draw these terms from the title of Sidney Greidanus' book *The Modern Preacher and the Ancient Text: Interpreting and Preaching Biblical Literature* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988).

3. John R. W. Stott, *Between Two Worlds: The Challenge of Preaching Today* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1982).

4. My understanding of the hermeneutical and theological issues involved in this is indebted to Rhyne R. Putman, *In Defense of Doctrine: Evangelicalism, Theology, and Scripture* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2015).

5. M. Elliott, "Gabler, Johann Philipp (1753-1826)," in *Dictionary of Major Biblical Interpreters*, ed. Donald K. McKim (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2007), 454.

6. Ibid, 453.

7. Douglas Sweeney, *Edwards the Exegete: Biblical Interpretation and Anglo-Protestant Culture on the Edge of the Enlightenment* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 42.

8 Haddon Robinson, *Biblical Preaching: The Development and Delivery of Expository Messages*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2014), 58. For a more technical explanation of a hermeneutical approach that produces this kind of view, see Robert H. Stein, "The Benefits of an Author-Oriented Approach to Hermeneutics," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 44:3 (September 2001): 451–466.

9. My definition draws from Ramesh Richard, who critiques this approach: "Principlization is the theory of preaching that takes a passage, extracts a universal principle, and applies it to the contemporary context" (*Preparing Expository Sermons: A Seven-Step Method for Biblical Preaching* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001), 160). For a defense of principlizing, see Walter C. Kaiser Jr., "A Principlizing Model," in *Four Views on Moving Beyond the Bible to Theology*, ed. Gary T. Meadors, Zondervan Counterpoints Series (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009), 19–50.

10. See Adriani Milli Rodrigues, "The Rule of Faith and Biblical Interpretation in Evangelical Theological Interpretation of Scripture," *Themelios* 43:2 (2018): 257–70.

11. Daniel J. Treier, *Introducing Theological Interpretation of Scripture: Recovering a Christian Practice* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 59.

12. For an account of the transition of biblical studies from an ecclesial discipline into an academic one, see Michael C. Legaspi, *The Death of Scripture and the Rise of Biblical Studies* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010). For an appreciative review by a biblical scholar who nonetheless differs with Legaspi's assessment that the tools of biblical studies should not be appropriated by confessional scholars, see Mark S. Gignilliat, "Review of 'The Death of Scripture and the Rise of Biblical Studies' by Michael C. Legaspi," *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 15:1 (January 2013): 107–110.
13. On the interpretation of Gen 1:26 as an example of tension between historical and theological readings of Scripture, see Treier, *Introducing Theological Interpretation*, 70–77.
14. Mark Gignilliat and Jonathan T. Pennington, "Theological Commentary," in *A Manifesto for Theological Interpretation*, ed. Craig G. Bartholomew and Heath A. Thomas (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2016), 239–240.
15 This three-fold division of the study process is utilized, for example, in Howard G. Hendricks and William G. Hendricks, *Living By the Book: The Art and Science of Reading the Bible*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: Moody, 2007).
16. As I was developing this model for myself based on a study of 1 Corinthians, I read the following article which addressed the same issue and offered a proposal with similarities to my own: Timothy A. Gabrielson, "Along the Grain of Salvation History: A Suggestion for Evangelical Hermeneutics," *Trinity Journal* 36NS (2015): 71–90. I am indebted to Gabrielson for helping me better understand, solidify, and articulate my views. This article is more focused on homiletics, whereas Gabrielson is more focused on various models of evangelical hermeneutics; yet the model I suggest 1 Cor 10 offers us for thinking about application is similar to what Gabrielson finds in other passages of Scripture. The reader is encouraged to consult his article for elaboration on what I have presented here.
17. On the meaning of Paul's statement that "the rock was Christ," see the discussion by Roy E. Ciampa and Brian S. Rosner, *The First Letter to the Corinthians*, Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 450–451; Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, Revised Edition, New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014), 494–496.
18. See, for example, Wayne A. Meeks, "'And Rose Up to Play': Midrash and Paraenesis in 1 Corinthians 10:1-22," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 16 (October 1982): 64–78.
19. Eckhard Schnabel, *40 Questions About the End Times* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2011), 19.
20. Here I employ the metaphor developed by Kevin Vanhoozer of Scripture as a divine drama. See Kevin J. Vanhoozer, "A Drama-of-Redemption Model," in *Four Views on Moving Beyond the Bible to Theology*, ed. Gary T. Meadors, Zondervan Counterpoints Series (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009), 151–199. For examples of how this metaphor applies to homiletics, see Ahmi Lee, *Preaching God's Grand Drama: A Biblical-Theological Approach* (Grand Rapids:

Baker, 2019) and Eric Brian Watkins, *The Drama of Preaching: Participating with God in the History of Redemption* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 2017).
21. Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 99. Italics are added for emphasis.
22. So Ciampa and Rosner, *First Letter to the Corinthians*, 447–448.
23. James Hamilton Jr. says: "Typological interpretation attends to historical correspondence and escalation. Real events that took place in history are seen to match in sequence and import, and as we progress from a type to fulfillment, we find an increase in significance" (*God's Glory in Salvation Through Judgment* [Wheaton: Crossway, 2013], 365).
24. Watkins, *Drama of Preaching*, 124.
25. James Hamilton Jr., *What Is Biblical Theology? A Guide to the Bible's Story, Symbolism, and Patterns* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2014), 39. Hamilton did not make this statement specifically about the passage under our consideration; but it is a broad truth of biblical theology that applies to and informs my reading of 1 Cor 10:6.
26. N. T. Wright, *Justification: God's Plan & Paul's Vision* (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2016), 125. Italics removed from the original text.
27. This antitypical relationship between Israel and Christ is one that may be affirmed by both dispensational and non-dispensational biblical theologians. For a summary of the issue and, in this writer's judgment, a helpful mediating position, see Brent E. Parker, "The Israel-Christ-Church Relationship," in *Progressive Covenantalism: Charting a Course Between Dispensational and Covenant Theologies*, ed. Stephen J. Wellum and Brent E. Parker (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2016), 39–68.
28. Eric Watkins, whose work has been of great assistance to me, says this about the church-Israel continuity in 1 Cor 10: "The comparisons between Israel and the church are clear, demonstrable, and are anchored in the over-arching DR [drama of redemption] theme of God's redemptive metanarrative as that which binds not only Scripture together, but also binds the faith experiences of God's people *back then* with God's people *now*" (*Drama of Preaching*, 125).
29. Again, Eric Watkins's comment is helpful, as he is the only scholar I am aware of whose homiletic accounts for this dual function of typology: "It is customary to think of typology foremost as a category of Christocentric revelation…While it is appropriate to think of typology in this way, the New Testament also employs the language of typology as a pastoral means of illustrating ethical norms" (Ibid., 124).
30. Dean Flemming, *Contextualization in the New Testament: Patterns for Theology and Mission* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2005), 169.
31. For a helpful example of how biblical and systematic theology facilitate theological interpretation of history, see Grant Macaskill, "History, Providence and the Apocalyptic Paul," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 70:4 (2017): 409–426.

32. The phrase "theological homiletic" and its connection to John Weber was suggested to me by Kevin Vanhoozer. For a summary and overview of Webster's theological method, see Michael Allen, "Toward Theological Theology: Tracing the Methodological Principles of John Webster," *Themelios* 41.2 (2016): 217–37.
33. Gabrielson, "Along the Grain of Salvation History," 74. Similarly, Daniel Doriani says that "it is ill advised to draw a sharp line between exegesis and relevance, for the boundary between them is fuzzy and permeable" (*Putting the Truth to Work: The Theory and Practice of Biblical Application* [Phillipsburg: P&R Publishing, 2001], 23). See also Gregory W. Lee, *Today When You Hear His Voice: Scripture, the Covenants, and the People of God* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016).
34. Cleophus J. LaRue, *I Believe I'll Testify: The Art of African American Preaching* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2011), 62.
35. For more suggestions on how to implement such strategies in ways that draw from African-American preaching, see Jared E. Alcántara, *Crossover Preaching: Intercultural-Improvisational Homiletics in Conversation with Gardner C. Taylor* (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2015), 243–245.

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GOD IS GOOD TO HIS PEOPLE

JONATHAN MORENO

Psalm 73

[1]Surely God is good to Israel,
To those who are pure in heart.

INTRODUCTION

God is Good to his people. It's a truth that we read, affirm, and sing. But I think if we're honest with ourselves…there are seasons in our lives that we find this to be a truth very difficult to believe; especially in a world where his people suffer, and his enemies thrive.

Last September, Hugh Hefner, the founder of *Playboy* died in his multi-million-dollar mansion at the age of 91. He lived the self-absorbed life of a hedonist… constant parties, and countless women. He liked to refer to himself as "the boy who dreamed a dream." In addition to his brazen hedonism, he experienced stunning success, making millions off of the lust of men and the objectification of women. Not only that, he used his influence to propel the sexual revolution forward along with abortion rights, and drug use… Truly a godless man, living a healthy, wealthy life, free from care, filled with pleasure, then dying peacefully in his mansion, surrounded by loved ones, at the ripe old age of 91. He had lived the dream.

Roughly a month after Hefner's death, another person died, and her name was Annabelle. But she was not 91, she was only 14. Her life was snuffed out by an armed gunman while she was worshiping God on Sunday morning in a small church in TX. The innocent victim of pure evil, she, along with 25 others,

many of them children, had her life cut short just for being in church.

Day after day, we see the sorrow of God's people, and the prosperity of his enemies; and it causes us to wonder: *"Is God really good to his people?"*

But you know, it's not just what we read in the headlines, it's also what we experience in our own lives. Perhaps you're suffering from abuse, loneliness, illness, poverty, neglect, disease, or depression. And in the midst of your pain, you're doubting God's goodness to you. You're not perfect, but you love God, and you've trusted him as a child trusts a father. But it seems as though he responds with one pain after the next. And in light of that, this truth that we so often affirm; that "God is good", feels terribly hallow. We might not say it, but we feel the hurt, and the bitterness. And although we may try to hide it, these doubts are tearing us apart on the inside.

If that's you, can I encourage you with this truth: You are not alone. In fact, you stand in the company of many of God's children, including our Psalmist. Let's pick up where we left off. Immediately after declaring God's goodness, the Psalmist writes in verses two and three:

[2]But as for me, my feet almost slipped;
I had nearly lost my foothold.

[3]For I envied the arrogant
When I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

Here in Psalm 73, we witness a man in crisis. A man who, in the face of what he sees and what he feels, is questioning what he believes.

I'd like to invite you to listen to his personal testimony, to feel his frustration, envy, and doubt; then watch in wonder as God takes this man from the depths of doubt to the heights of hope. And if he did it for him, he can do it for you. So let's begin with his spiritual crisis. What is it that's causing him to question

the goodness of God: The prosperity of the wicked and the suffering of God's people.

THE PROSPERITY OF THE WICKED CAUSED HIM TO QUESTION GOD'S GOODNESS.

Notice the extent of their wickedness.

They're Violent:

[6b]they clothe themselves with violence.

[7]From their callous hearts comes iniquity;
their evil imaginations have no limits

[8]They scoff, and speak with malice;
with arrogance they threaten oppression.

They're Proud:

[6a]pride is their necklace

[9]Their mouths lay claim to heaven,
And their tongues take possession of the earth.

[11]They say, "How would God know?
Does the Most High know anything?"

And yet in spite of all their wickedness, see how they prosper.

They're Healthy:

[4]They have no struggles;
Their bodies are healthy and strong.

[5]They are free from common human burdens;
They are not plagued by human ills.

They're Influential:

[10]Their people turn to them
And drink up waters in abundance.

They're Wealthy and Carefree:

[12]This is what the wicked are like--
Always free of care, they go on amassing wealth.

He looked around and he saw the wicked were living the dream and in his heart, he was not only troubled, he was *jealous*. He wanted what the wicked had. But his inner turmoil wasn't merely due to the wicked's prosperity, it was also due to his own suffering as one of God's people.

THE SUFFERING OF GOD'S PEOPLE CAUSED HIM TO QUESTION GOD'S GOODNESS.

[13]Surely in vain I have kept my heart pure
and have washed my hands in innocence.

[14]All day long I have been afflicted,
and every morning brings new punishments.

[15]If I had spoken out like that,
I would have betrayed your children.

[16]When I tried to understand all this,
It troubled me deeply.

He'd trusted God, followed him, served and obeyed him, and for what? For affliction after affliction. Notice the relentlessness of his suffering; *all day long* I have been afflicted; *every morning* brings new punishments. Like the relentless waves against the cliffs, he's hit with sorrow upon sorrow. So much so,

that he throws his hand up and cries, "surely in vain have I kept my heart pure." And compounding the burden of his plight is the psalmist's ever-present awareness of the scandal of his jealousy and doubts, ever mindful of the devastating effect it could have on God's children. It's be nothing short of betrayal.

15 If I had spoken out like that,
I would have betrayed your children.

Can you relate to this man's pain?

Ever since you were in high school, you've been praying for your future spouse. You've been dreaming about your wedding. You've been looking forward to having a family. Trusting God as you patiently awaited his perfect timing. But as the years go by, you watch as friend after friend finds her prince, gets married, and starts a family; and you're still waiting. You've been faithful. You've been pure. And you're still single. And what makes it even harder, is you see classmates who care nothing for God, who'd lived all their younger years in rebellion against God now appear to flourish with the devoted man of their dreams at their side. And in your heart you envy them. *How is God good to his people?*

You and your spouse have tried for years to have a child. You've spent hours in prayer for God to give you a baby that you would love, provide for, and bring up in the Lord but after years of infertility, and three heart-breaking miscarriages, God continues to say no and it doesn't make sense! You look around and you see thousands of people in this world with pregnancies they don't even want, but you do, but God says no. *How is God good to his people?*

You're fired by your boss due to the jealous slander of a coworker. You're forgotten by your children who've grown up, moved out, and moved on. You're diagnosed with cancer. You're abused by your caretaker. You're served the divorce papers. You're handed the eviction notice. And in your heart, you wonder, *how is God good to his people?*

Have you been there before? Are you there now? Are you, like the Psalmist feeling your feet begin to slip? Here we've come to the lowest point of the Psalm. Here we find this man in a very dark place but thankfully, God in his mercy would not leave him there. Thankfully, this is not the end of his journey. Here in verse 17, we see a clear pivot in this man's downward trajectory from doubt towards faith. and what is that crucial turning point?

HE ENTERS THE SANCTUARY OF GOD

16 When I tried to understand all this,
It troubled me deeply

17a Till I entered the sanctuary of God;

Here in the midst of jealousy and doubt he shows up at church! What about you? When faced with jealousy and doubt where do you run? Here we see our Psalmist run to God. And I think it's important to recognize that he didn't feel like he had to "clean himself up" or "get his act together" before coming to God's house. He entered doubts, bitterness, jealousy and all. And it is there in His Sanctuary, that his faith is graciously renewed.

Let's consider the results of the Psalmist's visit to God's house**.** I see three:

IN GOD'S HOUSE HE GAINS A NEW PERSPECTIVE

16 When I tried to understand all this,
It troubled me deeply

17 Till I entered the sanctuary of God;
Then I understood their final destiny.

As he stood there in the sanctuary of God, something drastically changed but it wasn't his circumstances, it was his perspective. His jealousy melted away as he was reminded of the inevitable destiny of the wicked.

18 Surely you place them on slippery ground;
You cast them down to ruin.

19 How suddenly are they destroyed,
Completely swept away by terrors!

20 They are like a dream when one awakes;
When you arise, Lord,
You will despise them as fantasies…

27 Those who are far from you will perish;
You destroy all who are unfaithful to you.

The wicked may prosper now, but their prosperity will end in destruction. And God's people may suffer now but their suffering will end in glory. The lives of Hugh Heffner and dear Annabelle raise serious doubts about God's goodness and justice, until we consider their ends. Heffner's prosperity ended in destruction.

27 Those who are far from you will perish;
You destroy all who are unfaithful to you.

But Annabelle's suffering ended in glory.

24 You guide me with your counsel,
And afterward you will take me to glory.

In God's house he gains a new perspective, and second:

IN GOD'S HOUSE HE REALIZES HIS IGNORANCE

21 When my heart was grieved
And my spirit embittered,

22 I was senseless and ignorant;

I was a brute beast before you.

Here, with a fresh perspective, he recognizes that his jealous thoughts and doubts are borne out of an ignorance to the truth! How many of you remember the famous Gatorade Commercial "Be like Mike"? Well I, along with millions of other American kids growing up in the 90's desperately wanted to be like Michael Jordan. I had his jerseys, posters, shoes, cards, and basketballs. I even had my own bottle of official Michael Jordan Cologne! I wanted to be like Mike. Unfortunately, as genetics would have it, *bald* is the only possible way that I am like Mike.

A couple summers ago, around the time Michael Jordan turned 50, I read a big fat biography on Mike, and here's my greatest takeaway from those 700 pages: I *do not* want to be like Mike. He's Bitter, Frustrated, Selfish, Cruel, Fearful, and Terribly Lonely. My envy and jealousy of Michael Jordan was merely senseless ignorance.

Do you know what this psalmist has realized? It doesn't matter how wealthy, healthy, popular or powerful they are; being jealous of the wicked is senseless ignorance. Why? Because their end is always death. I'm reminded of a proverb in the 24th chapter:

19 Do not fret because of evildoers
or be envious of the wicked,
20 for the evildoer has no future hope,
and the lamp of the wicked will be snuffed out.

Don't envy them, pity them, and pray for them.

In God's house, He gains a new perspective. In God's house, he realizes his ignorance, and finally:

IN GOD'S HOUSE HE AFFIRMS GOD'S GOODNESS

21 When my heart was grieved
And my spirit embittered,

22 I was senseless and ignorant;
I was a brute beast before you.

23 But I am always with you;
You hold me by my right hand.

I am *always* with you. In light of where this guy had been, this is an astonishing truth! *He was a brute beast.* And yet, God did not abandon him. He didn't walk away. God was there holding him, guiding him, *always* with him. The Psalmist almost slipped. He nearly lost his foothold but he didn't! Why? *Because God was with him, holding him by the hand, refusing to let him go.*

Aren't you grateful for a God who's with us not only through the victories, but also through the failures? Aren't you thankful for a God who's holding his people even through the doubts? *especially* through the doubts.

24 You guide me with your counsel,
And afterward you will take me into glory.

25 Whom have I in heaven but you?
And earth has nothing I desire besides you.

26 My flesh and my heart may fail,
But God is the strength of my heart
And my portion forever.

27 Those who are far from you will perish;
You destroy all who are unfaithful to you.

28 But as for me, it is good to be near God.
I have made the Sovereign LORD my refuge;

I will tell of all your deeds.

Here at the close of this psalmist's testimony, we see him resolutely affirm the unshakable goodness of God towards his people. Through this dark and difficult journey of sorrow, envy and doubt, here's what the poet realizes: *God is good, not because He gives us health or wealth, but because He gives us Himself.* And that is infinitely more valuable than anything this world could ever offer…

25 Whom have I in heaven but you?
And earth has nothing I desire besides you.

26 My flesh and my heart may fail,
But God is the strength of my heart
And my portion forever.

God may not give us a spouse or a promotion or a child or a cure, but God is still good because he gives us something far greater: He gives us Himself.

And this side of the cross, this reality rings with even greater resonance doesn't it? For we have been given God-in-flesh—Jesus Christ—who is always with us, for us, and in us.

Why do the righteous suffer? If we're honest, there is really only one who's righteous. His name is Jesus. And why did he suffer? He suffered for our sins—*the righteous for the unrighteous*—and he did it to bring us to God. Jesus was forsaken by God so that we would never be.

Surely God is good to his people.

BOOK REVIEWS

Preaching With Empathy: Crafting Sermons in a Callous Age. By Lenny Luchetti. Nashville: Abingdon, 2018. 978-1501841729, 98 pp., $19.99.

Reviewer: *Jeffrey Arthurs, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, South Hamilton, Massachusetts.*

Writing for "seasoned preachers who want a shot in the arm to heighten their passion for the God they proclaim and the people to whom they make God known" (xiv), Lenny Luchetti, professor of proclamation and ministry at Wesley Seminary in Indiana, has produced a tidy volume on a fresh subject. Surely the preacher's empathy is one of the elements most appreciated by parishioners, yet it is quite difficult to spot. We intuit the speaker's sincerity, identification, and affection, but empathy makes or breaks a sermon. As the author states, "Empathy can make mediocre preaching better, and good preaching great" (xiii).

Luchetti cites four definitions of the elusive term from scholars and then offers his own description: "the skill and . . . grace that bridges the gap of distance between my reality and another's" (11). This skill/grace is needed in an insensitive culture and is possible because of the *imago Dei* (chapter 2), Trinitarian perichoresis, and the incarnation of the Son of God (chapter 3). Grounding his case in neuroscience as well as theology, Luchetti contends that we are naturally more empathetic than apathetic. Nonetheless, we live in "a callous age" and this opens the door for empathetic preachers like John Wesley and Martin Luther King, Jr. (chapter 4). The final chapters are practical and applied. Chapter 5 offers fifteen practices—spiritual disciplines—to increase empathy. Some of these are "incarnational immersion" (taking opportunities to live another person's experience), "booking" (reading the experiences of

people unlike ourselves), "viewing" (similar to booking, but watching films), "ethnographic interviews," "the Walmart walk" (taking a thirty-minute, weekly walk in the giant retailer simply to observe and pray for people), and "leeching" (latching onto empathetic people to learn from them). Chapter 6 offers a similar potpourri of practices for infusing empathy in preaching. Some of these are: using a pre-sermon support team, preaching in teams, and giving heed to delivery since empathy is conveyed nonverbally as much as verbally.

As stated above, this is a fresh and necessary topic. I'm glad that Luchetti added to our collective homiletical wisdom by tackling it. The length of the book does not permit a detailed or profound exploration of the topic, but the less-than-hundred pages are nicely grounded in theology, neuroscience, history, and communication theory. I see this book as breaking the ground for other studies that will likely build on it.

From the Study to the Pulpit: An 8-Step Method for Preaching and Teaching the Old Testament. By Allan Moseley. Bellingham, WA: Lexham, 2017. 978-1683592143, 259 pp., $21.99.

Reviewer: *Pete Charpentier, Grand Canyon Theological Seminary, Phoenix, Arizona*.

Allan Moseley writes *From the Study to the Pulpit* from both academic and practical perspectives. His experiences as a professor and pastor infuse this book with informative and insightful points. His goal is "to offer an 8-step [exegetical] method that [is] understandable and workable" (11). Moseley's intended audience is twofold: he writes for "pastors in their weekly preparation of sermons" (13), as well as "teachers who may teach the Old Testament in a small group Bible study, a mission setting, a children's Sunday school class, or in some other context" (13–14).

Moseley accomplishes his goal for his readers in this work that has a brief introduction and eight chapters. Among other topics in the introduction, the author outlines two of his foundational presuppositions, the divine inspiration of Scripture per the Chicago Statement of Biblical Inerrancy, and the abiding importance of preaching and teaching the Old Testament. The eight following chapters of *From the Study to the Pulpit* systematically guide readers through the mechanics of Moseley's proposed exegetical method. He summarizes the eight steps of his process as: translation, textual criticism, genre interpretation, exploring the context, defining important words, identifying the big idea, making connections to Jesus, and applying the message (13).

Even a cursory glance at these steps signals that Moseley's work focuses more on the hermeneutical (steps 1–5) than the homiletical and rhetorical aspects of his method (steps 6–8). Thus, readers should be aware that although the book's title mentions the words "preaching and teaching," its contents help more with the analysis of the biblical text in the preparation of expository sermons/lessons and less with the organization and delivery of sermons/lessons.

Yet, both seasoned academicians and local church practitioners committed to handling rightly God's word will find Moseley's book useful. First, he challenges readers to study the biblical languages. For those who have no formal training in this field, the author references and recommends key resources for assistance. Second, each chapter includes an inspirational exhortation to prayer in connection with its main topic(s). These short sections of the book are refreshing reminders for readers to keep both their heads and hearts engaged in their study of the biblical text. Third, Moseley draws repeatedly from his pastoral experience in the book, providing many illustrations from his own preaching to help his audience see how his steps can take shape in actual sermons.

Although *From the Study to the Pulpit* is introductory in nature, Moseley's succinct discussions of each step in his proposed exegetical method are beneficial. Those formally

trained in biblical exegesis will find helpful reminders in its pages, and lay teachers in the local church will be introduced to the essential components of a sound methodology for preparing to preach/teach the Old Testament along with resources for further study. In short, Moseley has made a useful contribution to the study of God's word.

Impact Preaching: A Case for the One-Point Expository Sermon. By Jim L. Wilson, R. Gregg Watson, Michael Kuykendall, and David Johnson. Bellingham, WA: Lexham, 2018. 978-1683592105, 290 pp., $19.99.

Reviewer: *Abraham Kuruvilla, Dallas Theological Seminary, Dallas, Texas.*

The authors of this work teach at Gateway Seminary (formerly Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary). Wilson is involved in all its chapters; in some, he is aided by one of the others. For a collaborative work, it reads quite smoothly.

The subtitle indicates that these writers recommend a "one-point" sermon; they also assert that "the biblical author … makes a single point" (29). It is only in chapter 2 that we find that "the point(s) is (are) the theological truth preachers want the listeners to understand and put into practice" (34). Later, they define preaching as "teaching people the Bible so they can encounter God and live transformed lives. … This requires preachers to identify the transformative truth in the text and develop a transformative point based upon that truth" (52, 56; italics removed). All this leads me to conclude that our authors' "point" is nothing but the propositional Big Idea: their "transformative truth" is the exegetical Big Idea, and their "transformative point" is the homiletical Big Idea (aka application). Wilson *et al.* want that "transformative point" to be the sole driving force of the sermon, without it being divided into subsidiary (traditional) "points" that make up individual moves

of a multipoint sermon. After scratching my head quite a bit (I might need a dermatologist!), I assume that what these writers are calling for is a sermon that subserves a single "point" (Big Idea), whether exegetical or homiletical. I'm not certain this is anything novel.

Signs of Big Idea thinking abound in *Impact Preaching*. Take, for instance, an example sermon on Jonah (45–48). Of the total 125 lines this sermon takes in the book, 102 lines simply retell the story. I didn't quite see the sermon's "point," but the subsequent commentary on the sermon helpfully informs us that "we learn that God's grace flows in the direction of his choosing. … We must be open to be conduits of grace to those who speak different languages, live in different cultures, and are of different generation. We must not run from God's redemptive purposes; we must cooperate with him even if it means sacrificing our preferences" (49). That's quite a wordy single "point," if that is what it is. And all the retelling merely regurgitates authorial saying, paying no attention to authorial *doing*, without which the thrust of the text, the pericopal theology, can never be grasped, and valid application never be derived. Many of the intricacies of the text—how the author is writing the text, i.e., the textual clues to what the author is *doing* with what he is saying—are not addressed. For instance, the commission of Jonah ("arise," "go," and "cry," in 1:2 and 3:2) is distorted in the prophet's execution of that commission: he only "arises," and "goes" (3:3), as he delivers a five-word (in Hebrew) oracle that, quite unusually for such declamations, has no reason given, no repentance recommended, no hope offered, and no remnant promised. In fact, God's subsequent grace is labeled by the prophet as "evil, great evil" (4:1). Moreover, Jonah's prayer in the fish reveals his hypocrisy: the prophet ends his "psalm" claiming a superior ground, promising to sacrifice to God and fulfil his vows (2:9). Remarkably, those sailors who, earlier, had to throw the prophet overboard at his request, the very sailors whom Jonah had seemingly disparaged in his prayer as "those who regard vain idols forsake their faithfulness" (2:8), had already done both—sacrificing and fulfilling vows (1:16). Jonah, for his part, would

do neither in this book. And on and on. My point is that unless such close attention is paid to the passage and *how* it is written (a "thick" reading, a privileging of the text), the interpreter will not be able to figure out what the author is *doing* in and with the text; as a result, valid application will be stymied. (This despite a subtitle in one of their chapters: "What does it [the text] say and *how does it say it*?" [67, italics mine].)

The creative retelling of textual stories in sermons is a widely prevalent sermonic oddity, endorsed (and engaged in) by our authors, as well. Retelling assumes that the actual text of Scripture and how it is written is secondary. If a creative retelling (or enactment or even a comic-book style pictorial narration) is sufficient for listeners to catch the point/Big Idea, this gives lie to plenary, verbal inspiration. Though Big Idea devotees would never say that, it is a natural conclusion from what they do.

The rest of the book goes through, in similar fashion, different genres of Scripture, not yielding anything particularly new for readers of this *Journal.* And, in my opinion, their succumbing to Big Idea-ism only leaves them, their sermon, and their listeners untouched by the power of the *doings* of Scripture and the *doings* of its A/author.

Rehearsing Scripture. By Anna C. Florence. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2018. 978-0802874122, 215 pp., $12.37.

Reviewer: *Calvin Choi, Watertown Evangelical Church, Watertown, Massachusetts.*

We often gloss over a passage of Scripture because we think we are familiar enough with it. "Not so fast," says Anna Florence. In an age where biblical illiteracy is increasing, our author invites readers to engage with the Bible in a creative and compelling way. She achieves this on at least four levels: Scripture rehearsing must be done communally, creatively, compellingly, and carefully.

Church is communal by nature. Yet, many Christians today are becoming more individualistic, and less community-oriented. Coupled with this rise of individualism is a decrease in biblical literacy. If people are not well equipped to read and understand the Bible on their own, they are less inclined to read the Bible and quickly lose interest; so the vicious cycle of biblical illiteracy continues. Against this current of individualism and biblical illiteracy, what Florence offers can be helpful on two fronts: to promote community-oriented mindset, and to enhance biblical literacy. While she recognizes the challenge of gathering what she calls "the repertory" group to rehearse Scripture, she demonstrates how essential it is for the preacher to be ready, willing, and open to carve out time for reflection on the word and digging into what God is saying.

One of the benefits of rehearsing Scripture together is being able to observe the creative ways the word can touch group members and be applied among them. Drawing from her former study of theater, Florence employs theatrical language to explain how we can read and rehearse the biblical passage together such as "staying in the scene" and "blocking the action." For instance, she suggests highlighting the verbs before the nouns and raising questions centered on those verbs. It seems like an elementary exercise, but Florence shows that much can be learned from such a hermeneutical exercise. For one, it allows us to see others' insights and understanding of the text. The author goes further by stretching our imaginations to "act" out the verbs in the passage "to let our bodies do the teaching" (55), so that we can appreciate the passage fully and notice things that we may have missed before. These creative measures help us appreciate the text in a profound way.

Reflecting, raising questions and rehearsing a text as a group evoke imaginations in a compelling and animated way, minimizing broad generalizations about it. Such exercises allow the group not only to reinvigorate the whole experience of reading and understanding the Bible but also stimulates individuals to listen carefully to each other.

Overall, this book offers helpful and creative ways for ministers, small group leaders, and laity to experience the text in a group, in an imaginative, dramatic, and non-linear way. It challenges readers to move out of their comfort zone and try something new and different to deepen their love for God's word. In an age of increasing biblical illiteracy, Florence's suggestion is timely in that it may reinvigorate the importance of communal Bible reading in the church.

Spirit-Led Preaching: The Holy Spirit's Role in Sermon Preparation and Delivery. By Greg Heisler. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2016. Revised Edition. 978-1433643361, 190 pp., $ 19.99.

Reviewer: *Daniel D. Green, Moody Theological Seminary, Chicago, Illinois.*

Greg Heisler is senior pastor at Madison Avenue Baptist Church in Maryville, Tennessee. He was formerly the Johnny Hunt Chair of Expository Preaching at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, North Carolina. Each chapter in this revised edition of his work has been reworked and includes illustrations from Heisler's preaching ministry. In addition, a new chapter on the congregation's role in listening to a sermon has been added. Chapters one through five lay a theological foundation for preaching; chapters six through ten outline practical applications for its execution. The work is not academic, and there are no unique hermeneutical or methodological insights in it. Rather, it is a mixture of theory, praxis, and probing questions. Its goal is not so much to set forth hypotheses or prove points as to get readers to practice more dependency on the Third Person of the Trinity as they preach.

The premise of the book is clearly stated: "If Spirit-empowered sermons are going to be preached in the pulpit, then the preachers who preach these sermons must become Spirit led and Spirit dependent in their preaching" (3). In fact, "if the Spirit

of God is left out of preaching, preaching doesn't really happen" (16). The word and the Spirit must function together (70) even as do dynamics and mechanics.

Chapter 8, "The Spirit and the Sermon's Presentation," elaborates on such issues as openness to the Spirit's intervention while preaching, passion, and connecting with the hearts of hearers. It also emphasizes the need for the preacher to trust the Holy Spirit to convict the hearer rather than taking such burden upon himself.

Some readers will question aspects of Heisler's theology and hermeneutics. While he is clear that all believers are anointed by the Spirit (161), he seems to equate the anointing with the filling (165). It is also important to Heisler that the anointing be a continuous ministry of the Spirit, a point that is not well-argued. But his suggestion that "we move away from using the word *anointing* to describe the Spirit's work in preaching and instead speak of the Spirits empowerment" (161, italics original) is well put. He also assumes that a proper theological relationship between the word and the Spirit demands Christ-centered preaching (37), a much-contested point among evangelicals.

Overall, the emphasis of the book is one that is needed. The Holy Spirit's help should be enlisted from the time the text is first opened until the delivery of the message is completed. Methods, although necessary, do not suffice. Natural talent and charisma alone will not do. Only a heart-felt and deeply engrained sense of dependence on the Spirit will lead to preaching that pleases God. That will be the difference between preaching that merely informs and preaching that transforms. Perhaps the greatest compliment that can be given to this work is that its readers will rely more on the Spirit when they preach.

Preaching for The Rest of Us: Essentials for Text-Driven Preaching. By Robby Gallaty and Steven Smith. Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 2018. 978-1462761623, xviii+190 pp., $19.99.

Reviewer: *D. Bruce Seymour, Talbot School of Theology, La Mirada, California.*

This book is a joint effort by experienced preachers who have academic expertise in homiletics. Both Gallaty and Smith pastor local churches with weekly preaching responsibilities, and Smith has also served as a homiletics professor at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. The combined experience of the authors made the book practical in some sections and technical in others. Both seem to love God's word genuinely and they sincerely want their work to help preachers: "This is written for those who have not preached, for those who have no formal education, and for those who, like us, knew how to preach and later realized that it is more daunting than we originally imagined. If you got it all the first time in seminary, you may not need this book. This is preaching for the rest of us" (xv). Yet, the target audience for this book was unclear.

It also seems to me that the authors attempt too much; the discussion of different genres is too technical for someone with no formal education, Generic advice like "God always communicates. We often miscommunicate" (62), seems simplistic.

The book was a challenge to this reviewer in three other ways. First was the authors' habit of presenting the negative before the positive. For example, in their discussion of text-driven preaching they take five paragraphs (over three pages) to tell us what text-driven preaching is not, before they finally offer a definition of what it is (23). Then, before they unpack the definition itself, there are two more items presented that the definition did not include. For the sake of clarity, I would have preferred a straightforward affirmation and then a brief list of objections, as needed.

Second, the tone was irregular. Sometimes it was semi-formal, like that of a professor; at other times it was very casual, like that of an elderly uncle pontificating on the porch. This may have been a result of dual authorship, so it might have helped to

know which of the two authors was offering a particular piece of advice.

Third, I had reservations about some of their methodology. For example, on identifying the structure of a passage, their recommendation was simply to read it over and over (anywhere between 20 and 50 times) (40). Then, "After multiple careful readings, this structure should become buoyant. What may have seemed inaccessible will rise to the surface" (45). I would cautiously agree that reading the text repeatedly is helpful, but if that is all the preacher does, important insights may be missed. Repeated reading needs to be balanced with seeking the insight of experts usually found in commentaries. Gallaty and Smith offer an example of their method with Psalm 119:33–36 (76). Now Psalm 119 has an acrostic structure and verses 33–36 are only one-half of the strophe which runs from verses 33–40. Perhaps the overall structure of the poem is not relevant, and it may be legitimate to preach only half of a strophe, but I do not think those sorts of questions would surface with repetitive reading alone.

Haddon Robinson used to say, "A mist in the pulpit is a fog in the pew." I think that may apply to books as well. From my perspective there was a lot of authorial mist regarding their target audience which made the book foggy to me and less helpful than it was meant to be. However, the authors' love of the biblical text and their desire to aid preachers cannot be denied.

A Guide to Christian Spiritual Formation: How Scripture, Spirit, Community, and Mission Shape Our Souls. By Evan B. Howard. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2018. 978-0801097805, 278 pp., $25.00.

Reviewer: *Gregory K. Hollifield, Lancaster Bible College at Memphis Center for Urban Theological Studies, Memphis, Tennessee.*

We sang about "it" in children's church, in a chorus that promised if you "read your Bible (and) pray every day, you'll grow, grow, grow!" We've heard "it" alluded to in pulpit slogans, like "God is more interested in your holiness than your happiness." We preachers urge consistent church attendance in the belief that worshipping in community with our fellow saints is essential for "it." The *it* in each of these scenarios is Christian spiritual formation—a topic which has been garnering renewed interest and igniting a contemporary movement now forty years in the making.

Howard, in his *Guide*, defines Christian spiritual formation as "a Spirit- and human-led process by which individuals and communities mature in relationship with the Christian God … and are changed into ever-greater likeness to the life and gospel of this God" (18). After unpacking his definition, the author concludes Part One of his book on the basics of formation by setting forth transformation as the center of God's "all things new" story. In Part Two he introduces the primary elements of formation: aims, contexts, agents, transformation, task, means, and charism. Part Three delves more deeply into how formation is practiced in and through prayer (in relationship with God), community (in relationship with others), intellectual and moral development (in relation to ourselves), and mission (in relationship with the world). Part Four looks briefly at spiritual formation as a ministry.

Endorsers from within the field of Christian spiritual formation describe Howard's *Guide* as "comprehensive, inviting, and practical," "readable and helpful." They praise its "conciseness, practicality, and theological integrity." One recommends it as "an important introductory resource… for persons who are new to the field." It's from the latter perspective that I review this work. Perhaps like many members of our guild and readers of this *Journal*, I've read plenty across the years for my own formation but can recall coming across very little on formation as a subject unto itself.

I must admit that I found Howard's book difficult to read—difficult both for its density (with the author having

packed into 250 pages a lifetime of reading, meditating, and experimenting with a variety of spiritual disciplines) and for its luminosity (exposing more of me to myself than I'd wished to see). I suppose all Christians, preachers and homileticians included, can grow so accustomed to their personal spiritual practices that they, over time, grow spiritually soft. When that happens, we must either take deliberate steps to reinvigorate our practices or wait on the Lord to force circumstances into our lives that will whip us back into shape. Readers will find Howard's work instructive for the former, and one can only hope that it will prove as helpful in sparing us from more of the latter.

The book's vision of transformation—individuals and communities formed increasingly in the likeness of the life and gospel of God—will remind readers of what Abraham Kuruvilla has termed preaching's "christiconic" purpose. In this way, the aim of preachers and directors of transformation would appear to be one and the same. Consequently, preachers who read Howard's *Guide* will be better equipped to think through how they might assist their hearers' spiritual growth while rightly dividing God's word. The author's ideas won't necessarily change the types of exhortations preachers give their congregations ("Read your Bible. Pray. Attend church. Be a light to the world.") but will provide them with deeper insights into why those prompts are necessary and how heeding them facilitates transformation.

Apart from offering us guidance for our own formation and to assist us as preachers, what does Howard have to offer us as teachers of preaching? In reflecting on his changed role as a professor from that of "sage on the stage" to "guide on the side" (242), and likening it to the role of a director of spiritual formation, he provides us with a glimpse of how we might equip our student-preachers to facilitate the transformation of their future hearers. It isn't by providing them with "another menu of practices," based on our scholarly research and expert opinion, but by modeling an "authentic spiritual life" for them and challenging them, as Paul did Timothy, to "follow me as I follow Christ" (1 Cor 11:1).

Preaching Jesus Christ Today: Six Questions for Moving from Scripture to Sermon. By Annette Brownlee. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2018. 978-0801098826, 210 pp., $18.41.

Reviewer: *Timothy S. Warren, Dallas Theological Seminary, Dallas, Texas.*

Brownlee serves as chaplain, professor of pastoral theology, and director of field education at Wycliffe College, University of Toronto, after having been an Episcopal priest in multiple parishes in North America. She offers six questions to assist preachers with the theological and spiritual practice of proclaiming Jesus Christ. Without much ado, the author reveals her agenda: We should preach to span racial, political, social, economic, gender, and sexual gaps today. This point of departure shapes the author's understanding of the biblical texts she employs to illustrate her approach to preaching Jesus Christ.

The first question, "What Do I See?" rightly encourages preachers to attend to their preaching texts as witnesses. However, by claiming that "all the Scripture points to Jesus Christ" (25), Brownlee seems compelled to find him in ways that do not reflect the thrust of many texts. The tools she proposes for "seeing" are twofold: biblical theology and typology: one should read around one's text and across the Testaments, "always looking for how a text refers to other 'texts'" (29), seeking some connection with Christ. But these strategies often lead the preacher to ignore the thrust of a particular text.

The second question, "Whom Do I See?" encourages preachers to describe how Christ is revealed in the text since Jesus should be in "most" sermons (43). But one does not thereby have warrant to vacate the meaning of a particular text, just to get to a Jesus-related application. Brownlee suggests that Paul's call to discipline oneself spiritually in order to win a heavenly reward might be "interpreted through the story of Jesus healing the leper, [preparing] us not to win races but to come alongside

our neighbors and walk with them" (51). However, in so doing, Paul's message is abandoned and Mark's story hijacked.

The third question, "What Is Christ's Word to Me?" encourages the preacher to hear God's message of judgment and mercy personally as one who confesses one's need of ongoing spiritual forming. This rings true, but the author's example of how to preach the command of Ephesians 5, that wives submit to their husbands as the church submits to Christ, violates her prior claim that preachers not turn away from difficult texts (25). Brownlee suggests glossing over the direct command in favor of preaching the "call to both husbands and wives to practice mutual submission" (63–64).

The fourth question, "What Is Christ's Word to Us?" encourages the preacher, acting as theologian, to hear God's message as it will be spoken into the context of the preacher's own congregation. Having warned that "how we receive God's word to and about us … will vary despite our shared context of belief" (77), Brownlee asserts that "the textually fixed discourse of Scripture is the single address of the Spirit to the church across time and contexts" (80), apparently affirming a transhistorical theological intention that is relevant in all places across time.

The fifth question, "What Is Christ's Word about Us?" encourages preachers to speak into a community in need of judgment, repentance, and amendment of life. Though Brownlee's confession that "I locate the inspired character of Scripture in the Spirit's use of it, not in its writing per se or in matters of form" (91) will give readers of this *Journal* pause, her emphasis on the transforming work of the Spirit through preaching, liturgy, baptism, giving, and other forms in worship reminds preachers how the Spirit calls the body to turn from its "failures, divisions, corruption, and violence" (102).

The sixth question, "What Does It Look Like?" encourages the preacher to "facilitate recognition of how the identity of Christ is inhabited in a broken and disobedient world" (109). Rejecting Stott's bridge metaphor, Brownlee promotes "the continuum of the church" (112) with no gap between text and listener, the sermon telling "the story of a continuous

community," instead (115). Rather than extracting something from a text, the preacher situates the listeners in the ongoing story of the text.

Brownlee invites the reader to love God's word and his people. She sees no hope for this broken world except Jesus Christ. She views preaching as a theological task. She calls on preachers, first of all, to listen to the biblical text. All commendable, indeed.

But readers will want to weigh the author's emphasis on resolving social, racial, sexual, and other divisions and inequalities that humans experience, while she scarcely mentions the means of spanning the distance between fallen humans and a holy God. In addition, Brownlee's rejection of "theological truisms, abstract or universalized terms, abstract truths or universal experiences, and abstract principles" is often contradicted by her own statements, the authors she quotes, and the theological propositions expressed in the three example sermons provided.

Christ-Centered Preaching: Redeeming the Expository Sermon. By Bryan Chapell. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2018. Third Edition. 978-0801099748, 448 pp., $32.99 hardcover.

Reviewer: *S. Jonathan Murphy, Dallas Theological Seminary, Dallas, Texas.*

Bryan Chapell, senior pastor of Grace Presbyterian Church in Peoria, Illinois, and president emeritus of Covenant Theological Seminary, has made significant contributions to preaching, both as practitioner from pulpit and as scholar with pen. What Chapell writes is always worth reading.

This book, *Christ-Centered Preaching*, is the third edition of Chapell's well-known work. However, little is added that is new as it relates to hermeneutics and homiletics. The author himself admits this third edition just gives "opportunity to freshen

citations, clarify fuzzy thinking, correct errors, and word concepts better," and interacts "with those who have provided new perspectives" (xv).

The book is organized in three major sections. In Part 1: Principles for Expository Preaching, foundational and practical matters are presented, such as the power and authority of the word of God, the nobility of preaching, the obligations of a sermon (e.g., unity, the "fallen condition focus," application), and the components of expository preaching. Part 2: Preparation of Expository Sermons deals with practical topics such as the process of explanation, outlining and structures, illustrating, applying, and introductions, conclusions, and transitions. Lastly, Part 3: A Theology of Christ-Centered Messages presents Chapell's redemptive hermeneutic and includes guidance on how one might develop such sermons. An extensive set of appendices provides an array of practical help for would-be preachers, ranging from discussion of philosophy of preaching style to samples of funeral and wedding messages, and even of sermon evaluations.

In the area of homiletics, mostly elaborated in Part 2, Chapell walks the reader down well-trodden paths, yet this reviewer enjoyed and benefited from the refresher. The author's points are clear and valid, and they are supported with multiple examples and with helpful illustrations, diagrams, and tables. Each chapter is reader-friendly with a preview/outline of what is presented as well as a statement of the goal of the chapter. Chapters close with *Questions for Review and Discussion* and *Exercises*.

Chapell is an engaging writer. Besides the thorough discussion of his main topics, there are also what, at times, read like incidental comments—wisdom from the experience of a seasoned preaching-pastor. Here are a few favorites: "In the pulpit, we are expositors, not authors" (41); planning ahead "keeps sermon preparation from degenerating into a Friday-afternoon flurry or a Saturday-night fever whose results distress preacher and congregation alike" (46); and "a minister's

imagination is not the place to discern what a biblical passage means" (267).

With regard to his redemptive-historical hermeneutic (mainly Part 3), this reviewer is not convinced Chapell does enough to alleviate the struggles of many preachers with such a theological lens. The allegorical shoehorning of Jesus into every passage of Scripture pays only lip-service to authorial intent. Moreover, if this latest edition was an opportunity to interact "with those who have provided new perspectives" (xv) then the absence of engagement with the christiconic approach is baffling.

Overall, this is a commendable work which, no doubt, is why *Christ-Centered Preaching* has run into a third edition. Those starting out in homiletics will definitely benefit from its reading. But so will seasoned preachers: *Christ-Centered Preaching* serves as an accessible preaching refresher for those overdue a tune-up. Your congregation will be grateful!

Homiletics and Hermeneutics: Four Views on Preaching Today. Edited by Scott M. Gibson and Matthew D. Kim. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2018. 978-0801098697, 192 pp., $21.99.

Reviewer: *Gregory K. Hollifield, Lancaster Bible College at Memphis Center for Urban Theological Studies, Memphis, Tennessee.*

The ancient Greeks demonstrated great wit and wisdom when they identified Hermes, the winged herald of the Olympian gods, as the creator of speech, inventor of oratory, *and* a divine trickster. Speech, the Greeks realized, is a tricky thing. Messages must be thoughtfully parsed to get at their truth and intent. Rules must be established to direct this exercise. Thus, the science of *herm*eneutics was born.

In *Homiletics and Hermeneutics* Scott Gibson and Matthew Kim engage four respected homileticians in a conversation on the tricky subject of the hermeneutics behind their theologies of preaching. In another volume of what has come to be known

popularly as a "# views" format (here # = 4), Bryan Chapell, Abraham Kuruvilla, Kenneth Langley, and Paul Scott Wilson set forth their redemptive-historic, christiconic, theocentric, and law-gospel views, respectively, and then critique one another's positions. Each contributor gives a biblical, theological, homiletical, and applicational rationale for his position. Following these presentations and critiques, Gibson and Kim assess and engage with their collaborators' views.

Simply stated, the question under consideration in this thought-provoking book is: "What is the Bible all about?" What is its ultimate context and primary intent, and how should all that shape preaching? Is it man's fall and Christ's redemption, intended to spur love for God, neighbor, and self (Chapell)? Is it an ideal world in front of the biblical text into which the obedient believer is ushered pericope-by-pericope while being gradually transformed into Christ's likeness (Kuruvilla)? Is Scripture all about God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—and the hearer's response to God amidst the vagaries of life to which the Bible speaks (Langley)? Or, is it all about trouble on the vertical and horizontal axes of life, and the grace that is available—ultimately through Christ—to address these troubles (Wilson)? Chapell and Wilson largely agree on a christocentric hermeneutic, Kuruvilla and Langley on a hermeneutic that privileges the text and points to Christ (Kuruvilla) or God (Langley).

If one reads each contributor's view in isolation from the rest, the reader may find only a little to disagree with and a great deal to affirm. But it is those "little" points of disagreement that the other contributors seize upon as being of great importance. Alas, that's the way it is with all these "# views" books. They leave the reader appreciating how complex their subject matter is and uncertain as to whether any one viewpoint is "right" or if all the viewpoints are right but only to greater or lesser degrees.

Surely, something inside every Christian agrees with Chapell's claim that preaching should be about Jesus. But what does a Christological view of the Bible and preaching demand? Kuruvilla's answer, that every pericope should be scrutinized in its own right for the purpose of transforming the hearer into

Christ's likeness, sounds reasonable. Then again, Langley's call to refocus preaching on the Trinitarian God within a context in which his salvation is celebrated seems commonsensical. If, however, one considers preaching from the vantage point of the pew, Wilson's talk of trouble and grace feels true to life as hearers experience it. Indeed, there is much to be said in favor of each of these views.

What receives too little consistent attention throughout the book is the extent to which the context in which preaching is heard might influence a given sermon's hermeneutic or a theology of preaching. There's no arguing that preaching is contextually dependent. Not only should the context of the sermon's text play a decisive role in preaching so, too, should the context in which the sermon is heard. Depending on that context, any one of the four views propounded in Gibson and Kim's book might be "right."

One wonders, what if each of the writers had contributed a sample sermon on the same text? Isaiah 53, perhaps. Would the gist of their sermons have been all that different?

Homiletics and Hermeneutics neatly summarizes what three of its contributors, excluding Langley, have developed in one or more monographs of their own. Readers unfamiliar with those earlier works will appreciate this particular book as an introduction to the rest. Members of the *EHS,* already conversant with each contributor's views, will appreciate most the writers' critiques of each other and the editors' assessment. This conversation between the book's contributors is both interesting and needed. Let it continue!

Paul's Community Formation Preaching in 1 Thessalonians: An Alternative to the New Homiletic. By Kwang-hyun Cho. Bern: Peter Lang, 2017. 978-303433089, 191 pp., $57.95 hardcover.

Reviewer: *Matthew D. Kim, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, South Hamilton, Massachusetts.*

This, Kwang-hyun Cho's doctoral thesis-turned-book, based on his research at the University of Pretoria, is a welcome addition to the growing body of literature evaluating the New Homiletic. This book calls into question the movement's ability to foster Christian community through proclamation. Cho queries whether true and lasting community formation has happened among advocates within New Homiletic circles. One of the reasons that the author cites for this scarcity of community formation is the new homileticians' focus on individual listeners and their frequent neglect of preaching from Paul's more communally-focused Epistles. Therefore, appropriating the concept of symbolic boundaries from sociology, Cho contends that Paul's letters, in particular 1 Thessalonians, serves as a salient template for homiletics that will shape and form disciples in cultivating Christian community.

The opening chapter introduces the scope of the book. The author helpfully charts out for the reader the trajectory of his argument. He also attempts to articulate and substantiate his foundational premise that there is "continuity between Paul's letters and his preaching [which] provide a strong echo of his actual preaching ministry" (25).

In chapter 2, the author pivots toward a useful critique of the New Homiletic and New Hermeneutic movements. He seeks to debunk the two modi operandi of new homileticians with regard to the primacy of the listeners' experience in preaching and the focus on individual listeners rather than on a collective body of listeners in a congregation.

The third chapter explains the nature of 1 Thessalonians as Paul's pastoral plea for Christian solidarity and community preservation amid external pressures from pagan influences.

Chapter 4 presents an original contribution to homiletics employing Lamont and Molnár's sociological theory of "symbolic boundaries" as a useful paradigm for community formation—"conceptual distinctions made by social actors to categorize objects, people, practices, and even time and space" (101). In other words, it is a concept that helps to distinguish

insiders from outsiders. As Cho argues, "Paul's drawing of symbolic boundaries created a strong sense of in-group similarity and out-group contrast, constructing communal identity of the Thessalonian community" (107). Three primary metrics of symbolic boundaries, according to Cho, are depicted by kerygmatic narrative, local narratives in first century Thessalonica, and ethical norms.

Lastly, in chapter 5, the author concludes that there are clear implications for preaching when connecting Paul's pre-Christian culture to our modern post-Christian culture by way of articulating shared narratives and ethics.

Paul's Community Formation Preaching in 1 Thessalonians is a thoughtful work that, on the whole, enriches the homiletical conversation concerning the role that community formation plays in Christian preaching. At times, I found Cho's use of biblical arguments inconclusive—particularly in the introduction—regarding how definitively Paul's homiletic can be duly discerned from his epistles. Another shortcoming of the book is mentioned by the writer himself: this book is fundamentally theoretical and lacks practical application in the context of the local church. I wish the author had field-tested his hypothesis in select congregations to ascertain if and how symbolic boundaries, kerygmatic narrative, local narratives, and ethical norms, shape community formation.

Yet, readers of this *Journal* will applaud Cho for admirably critiquing the strengths and pitfalls of the New Homiletic and New Hermeneutic. In addition, there are some nuggets of original thinking here that are worthy of evangelical homileticians' consideration and engagement.

Narrative Art and Women in the Gospels and Acts. By David E. Malick. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2017. 978-1532645099, 151 pp., $18.00.

Reviewer: *S. Jonathan Murphy, Dallas Theological Seminary, Dallas, Texas.*

David E. Malick is a seminary trained independent researcher, Bible teacher, and practicing lawyer. His *Narrative Art and Women in the Gospels and Acts* falls predominantly within the field of narrative-critical studies. The author applies select narrative-critical devices to specific passages in the Gospels and Acts that involve women.

The work is presented as six chapters. Each chapter—with the exception of chapter IV—uses literary devices intrinsic to how narrative communicates, so as to expose what a biblical author is *doing* with what is written in order to project the theological agenda unto a would-be reader. While several narrative-critical techniques are employed within each chapter, the focus in each is primarily on one major narrative tool. Here are the chapter titles with each major literary technique employed therein italicized:

I. The Significance of Three *Narrative Parallels* of Men and Women in the Gospel of Luke, John, and the Book of Acts
II. Simon's Mother-in-Law as a *Minor Character* in the Gospel of Mark: A Narrative Analysis
III. An Examination of Jesus' View of Women through Three *Intercalations* in the Gospel of Mark
IV. The Contribution of Codex Bezae Cantabrigiensis to and Understanding of Women in the Book of Acts
V. *Narrative Logic* and the *"Sign-Sermon"* Pattern in Acts
VI. The *Cyclical Story* as a Unifying, Literary Device in Acts

The book would benefit greatly from introductory and concluding chapters framing the overall purpose of the work and providing a clear, unifying thread. Four of the six chapters, for example, were articles published elsewhere and so the work reads more like an anthology of the author's narrative critical

studies. Particularly problematic for this reviewer was chapter IV. This chapter suspends the narrative-critical lens used hitherto (and returned to in chapter VI) for a hybrid form of textual and redaction criticism; it reads like an intentional move to expose a scribal and patriarchal theological bias. This chapter seems unnecessary, a foreign imposition on what is, otherwise, a narrative-critical analysis of texts.

The overall value of the work is two-fold. First, there are numerous textual details exposed from these specific Scriptural passages through narrative tools designed to catch the *doings* of the biblical author. These insights will aid the exposition of those passages by anchoring and building the sermon on the intended call of these texts. Second—and this is where this work is most valuable to a preacher—Malick models a way of reading narrative texts well; he shows how a hermeneutic sensitive to the mechanics of a genre, and applied in the study of that genre, can aid a preacher in understanding (catching the authorial *doing* in a passage) before preparing to preach it. Reading well is an essential initial step in the expositional process. Those desiring to sharpen their hermeneutical skills in narrative will benefit from this work.

The Last Blues Preacher: Reverend Clay Evans, Black Lives, and the Faith that Woke the Nation. By Zach Mills. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2018. 978-1506428178, 305 pp., $26.99.

Reviewer: *Jesse L. Nelson, Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church, Panama City, Florida.*

In *The Last Blues Preacher,* Zach Mills narrates the life and ministry of Reverend Clay Evans, a remarkable leader, community and civil rights activist, gospel music legend, and African American preacher. Zach Mills is a communications scholar, ordained minister, and founder of a consulting firm that helps clients become effective communicators.

Mills hopes this biography will impart four important lessons from the life and ministry of Evans: (1) inspire people to be the best version of themselves; (2) challenge people to extend greater measures of openness, generosity, and mercy to the people they meet; (3) show greater humility; and (4) reconcile with others and themselves. The author conveys Evans' story in four parts: Beginnings, Launching the Ship, On Open Seas, and Docking the Ship.

In Part One, Zach Mills details the beginning of Evans' life from childhood to his mid-twenties. Clay Evans was born into a sharecropper family in Brownsville, Tennessee. He worked in the fields with his family till he began high school. After high school, Evans moved to Chicago in pursuit of his God-inspired dreams. Evans' musical and preaching ministry began at Tabernacle Missionary Baptist Church. By age twenty-five, Evans was married and had organized a new church in Chicago.

In Part Two, Mills focuses on Evans' life and ministry during the early 1950s. Mills explains the development and growth of Fellowship Missionary Baptist Church founded by Reverend Evans. Apparently, its music attracted the crowds; yet Evans states that biblical preaching and teaching were the keys to building a strong church. Evans' success did not omit him from scrutiny: many local pastors and National Baptist leaders ostracized Evans for licensing and hiring a female minister as an assistant pastor.

In Part Three, the author covers a span of more than forty years, from the mid-1950s to the 1990s. During this period, Fellowship grew from 300 members to more than 2000 members. Mills also reveals Evans' initial engagement and continued activism for civil rights, as he served as the chairperson of Operation Push, Jesse Jackson's civil rights organization.

In Part Four, Mills depicts the preacher's last years of pastoral ministry and the identification of a successor. Within months of retirement, Evans was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer, but he survived and currently maintains a rigorous preaching schedule.

Mills' research is robust. He includes numerous primary and secondary sources, incorporating interviews from community activists, politicians, college professors, pastors, and national leaders, such as Louis Farrakhan and Jesse Jackson. The dates referenced at the beginning of each chapter provide a timeline of Evans's life and ministry and the context for the chapter in relation to American history.

Though Mills defines blues preaching and describes blues preachers, he does not include illustrations of such preaching to demonstrate its uniqueness as a preaching style or form. Including a sermon from Reverend Evans would have exposed the reader to the substance and nuances of blues preaching and conveyed the relevance of this homiletic for a twenty-first century pulpit. The author asserts the effectiveness his protagonist's preaching, but does not offer substantial insight into the development or delivery of Evans's sermons.

Yet the lessons offered from the life and ministry of Reverend Evans are helpful: (1) know and understand your call to ministry; (2) be faithful to what God has called you to do instead of focusing on others; (3) do not compromise your values and beliefs for popularity or acceptance; and (4) develop a succession strategy to establish a lasting legacy.

The Last Blues Preacher is a quality work on the life and ministry of Reverend Clay Evans. Though the book's contribution to homiletics is limited, it is a noteworthy resource for studying African American history and religion.

The Journal of the Evangelical Homiletics Society

History:

The Evangelical Homiletics Society (EHS) convened its inaugural meeting in October of 1997, at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, South Hamilton, MA, at the initiative of Drs. Scott M. Gibson of Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary and Keith Willhite of Dallas Theological Seminary. Professors Gibson and Willhite desired an academic society for the exchange of ideas related to instruction of biblical preaching.

Specifically, the EHS was formed to advance the cause of Biblical Preaching through:

> promotion of a biblical-theological approach to preaching increased competence for teachers of preaching integration of the fields of communication, biblical studies, and theology scholarly contributions to the field of homiletics

The EHS membership consists primarily of homiletics professors from North American seminaries and Bible Colleges who hold to evangelical theology, and thus treat preaching as the preaching of God's inspired Word. The EHS doctrinal statement is that of the National Association of Evangelicals.

Purpose:

The Journal of the Evangelical Homiletics Society is designed to engage readers with articles dealing with the best research and expertise in preaching. Readers will be introduced to literature in the field of homiletics or related fields with book reviews. Since the target audience of the journal is scholars/practitioners, a sermon will appear in each edition which underscores the commitment of the journal to the practice of preaching.

Vision:

The vision of the Journal of the Evangelical Homiletics Society is to provide academics and practitioners with a journal that informs and equips readers to become competent teachers of preaching and excellent preachers.

General Editor:

The General Editor has oversight of the journal. The General Editor selects suitable articles for publication and may solicit article suggestions from the Editorial Board for consideration for publication. The General Editor works cooperatively with the Book Review Editor and the Managing Editor to ensure the timely publication of the journal.

Book Review Editor:

The Book Review Editor is responsible for the Book Review section of the journal. The Book Review Editor contacts publishers for books to review and receives the books from publishers. The Book Review Editor sends books to members of the Society who serve as book reviewers. The reviewers then forward their written reviews to the Book Review Editor in a timely manner. The Book Review Editor works in coordination with the General Editor for the prompt publication of the journal.

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The Managing Editor has oversight of the business matters of the journal. The Managing Editor solicits advertising, coordinates the subscription list and mailing of the journal, and works with the General Editor and Book Review Editor to ensure a timely publication of the journal.

Editorial Board:

The Editorial Board serves in advising the General Editor in the publication of articles for the journal. The Editorial Board serves as a jury for articles considered for publication. The Editorial Board consists of no more than five members. Board members are approved at the annual meeting of the Evangelical Homiletics Society and hold a two-year appointment.

Frequency of Publication:

The Journal of the Evangelical Homiletics Society is published twice a year: March and September.

Jury Policy:

Articles submitted to the Journal of the Evangelical Homiletics Society are blind juried by members of the Editorial Board. In addition, the General Editor may ask a scholar who is a specialist to jury particular articles.

The General Editor may seek articles for publication from qualified scholars. The General Editor makes the final publication decisions. It is always the General Editor's prerogative to edit and shorten said material, if necessary.

Submission Guidelines

1. Manuscripts should be submitted in electronic form. All four margins should be at least one inch, and each should be consistent throughout. Please indicate the program in which the article is formatted, preferably, Microsoft Word (IBM or MAC).

2. Manuscripts should be double-spaced. This includes the text, indented (block) quotations, notes, and bibliography. This form makes for easier editing.

3. Neither the text, nor selected sentences, nor subheads should be typed all-caps.

4. Notes should be placed at the end of the manuscript, not at the foot of the page. Notes should be reasonably close to the style advocated in the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* 3rd edition (New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 1988) by Joseph Gibaldi and Walter S. Achtert. That style is basically as follows for research papers:

   a. From a book:

   note: 23. John Dewey, *The Study of Ethics: A Syllabus* (Ann Arbor, 1894), 104.

   b. From a periodical:

   note: 5. Frederick Barthelme, "Architecture," *Kansas Quarterly* 13:3 (September 1981): 77-78.

   c. Avoid the use of op. cit.
   Dewey 111.

5. Those who have material of whatever kind accepted for publication must recognize it is always the editor's prerogative to edit and shorten said material, if necessary.

6. Manuscripts will be between 1,500 and 3,000 words, unless otherwise determined by the editor.

Abbreviations

Please do not use abbreviations in the text. Only use them for parenthetical references. This includes the names of books of the Bible and common abbreviations such as "e.g." (the full reference, "for example" is preferred in the text). Citations of books, articles, websites are expected. Please do not use "p./pp." for "page(s)," or "f./ff." for "following." Precise page numbers or verse numbers are expected, not "f./ff."

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Capitalize personal, possessive, objective, and reflexive pronouns (but not relative pronouns) when referring to God: "My, Me, Mine, You, He, His, Him, Himself," but "who, whose, whom."

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Manuscripts should be sent to the attention of the General Editor. Send as an email attachment to the General. Send to: sgibson@gcts.edu

Address correspondence to Scott M. Gibson, General Editor, Journal of the Evangelical Homiletics Society, Baylor University's Truett Seminary, One Bear Place #97126, Waco, TX 76798-7126

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