

## Articles and Sermons :: The Supremacy of Preaching Christ Himself by Bryan Purtle

**The Supremacy of Preaching Christ Himself by Bryan Purtle - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2012/7/14 11:26**

“For while I was with you I resolved to know nothing except Jesus the Messiah, and Him crucified.” -1 Cor. 2.2

“Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them.” -Acts 8.5

Every true preaching will lead its hearers to a higher vision of Jesus Christ and the centrality and supremacy of His cross. When we set up camp around superfluities or even biblical doctrines, however crucial they may be, yet fail to proclaim them in a manner that points the hearer Christ-ward, we fail in the high calling of true proclamation.

Nearly every religion on earth has some measure of light and truth; a paradigm or mode of thought that could be beneficial for living, but every one falls short of the glory of God. Religious systems do not impart life, and not one of them can deliver men in the salvific sense. Only the proclamation of “Christ, and Him crucified” brings to bear the truth of God, for “there is no other name given under heaven by which men can be saved.”

No other supposed faith can hold a candle to the glory of the Man Christ Jesus, and none can answer the ancient problem of mankind; namely, the universal dilemma of depravity and sin. To preach Jesus in the apostolic sense is not merely to give a “Roman’s Road to Salvation” presentation. It is to declare things which “angels long to look into”- the mystery of God as the merciful Judge, and the remarkable desire of Jesus Christ to restore sinners to Himself. Only the Gospel reveals the eternal God as He is, and only the Gospel deals with the issue of sin.

The missionary message is the limitless significance of Jesus Christ as the propitiation for our sins, and a missionary is one who is soaked in that revelation.

The key to the missionary message is the remissionary aspect of Christ’s life, not His kindness and His goodness, and His revealing of the Fatherhood of God; the great limitless significance is that He is the propitiation for our sins.

A missionary is one who is wedded to the charter of His Lord and Master, he has not to proclaim his own point of view, but to proclaim the Lamb of God.

(Oswald Chambers, My Utmost for His Highest, October 15th selection)

Missionary work, ministries, movements, or “revivals” that stray from the proclamation of “Christ, and Him crucified” will ultimately fade into nullity. Even if they flourish numerically in this age, they will be as nothing in the age to come. “That which is born of flesh is flesh,” and only the foundation of Jesus Himself will endure to the glory of God. He must be the center, the nexus, and the capstone of our proclamation and vision. Even other necessary biblical views will end in nothingness unless they are postured in such a way as to lead us to “Christ, and Him crucified.” We need not to set forth our “own view, but to proclaim the Lamb of God.”

We are struggling back to God, and that is the peculiar thing that characterizes our own ministry. Instead of being occupied with the formalisms and superfluities, our endeavor is to come back under the light of the Spirit of God to the real truths of God; to have them settled down in our hearts, branded upon our souls, and stamped upon our conscience, that we may walk in truth and power and strength as servants of God.

-John G. Lake

A man may preach about eschatology, the issue of Israel, divine healing, or even the cross itself without preaching Jesus Christ. If the message delivered is only categorical and canned, one may even expound on 1 Corinthians 2.2 without actually preaching “Christ, and Him crucified.” There is preaching and there is preaching. Have we come to know the difference between the two?

In contrast to mere human proclamation a man sent by the Lord will expound the same subject matter in such a way that it reveals the centrality and glorification of Jesus Christ to the heart of the hearer. Everything depends on whether or not

the proclaimer is ascribing the glory to God in his own soul. If we are puffed up about knowledge, wanting to be clever, hoping to receive a certain calculated response from our listeners, we are disqualified from preaching Jesus Christ. Our own souls must be ever and always ascribing glory to the Lamb of God, or all our speech becomes suspect and dubious.

Thus, a radical and total jealousy for Christ Himself to be glorified is at the heart of true proclamation. Philip preached Jesus. He not only spoke about Christ, but his proclamation was an actual conveyance of the Person Himself. Something of the substance of the Lord was transmitted to the hearers and salvation ensued immediately. For Paul it was the same reality. Even the prophets of old preached Christ in this manner, though they prophesied "in part."

We need to see to the restoration of preaching Christ Himself, and not merely speaking of Him in a superficial or skin-deep manner. Down to the "marrow" of the soul we must be suffused with an active jealousy for the glory of Jesus Christ. Preaching and living from that place is preaching Christ indeed.

Have I "resolved to know nothing except Jesus the Messiah, and Him crucified," or am I frolicking on the periphery of Christian theology and thought? He must be the center, dear saints. The world shall be in want of a true proclamation of the Gospel unless we give Him the pre-eminent place.

The more the Church holds to its central message- Jesus Christ Himself- the more effective it is.

-Dietrich Bonhoeffer

from: <http://thoughtsuponrising.com/2010/06/28/the-supremacy-of-preaching-christ-himself/>