

### SOME PERILS IN PRINCIPALIZING

#### I. The Meaning

Extracting a principle from a passage and applying it to the contemporary audience or situation. In practice the reverse often happens. We look for a principle and then try to find a passage to support it. Motivation is we think we know what people need.

#### II. Dangers

1. Makes the facts try to teach something not in text. e.g. Gen 14:22. Since God is the sovereign creator we have a mandate to evangelize the world and tell them that. Evangelism is important and biblical but not from this text. *X. A. J. 570795 God's: 22 goodness, kindness, generosity, uprightness. Him = with a healing touch.*
2. Approaches study and exegesis of text hoping to find analogies between the original audience and contemporary one. "Looking for something that will preach!" e.g. How Much Does God Love the World? Started with Jonah 3-4 but never said this was an exception in OT times. Most came thru proselytism. Then moved to John 3:16. God loves world so much that He (a) sent the Son, (b) sacrificed the Son, (c) separated from the Son. Principles from this were we should be sent and be sacrificial tho we will never be separated from God. Text says what God did. From text our responsibility is to believe.
3. Often spiritualizes the text. Acacia or shittim wood is like brokenness God wants of Xn. It was twisted and fit for burning. God does that to us so we can be broken. Then He will cover us with gold as in tabernacle. Can't find in the dictionary that tree was twisted but did make good charcoal. Thick trunk and a spreading crown 10-18 ft tall. Not all uses of acacia in tabernacle were covered with gold. Ark, staves, table of bread, pillars were, but boards not, and altar covered with bronze. Or another example: Solomon made shields of gold. Shishak took. Rehoboam made shields of bronze, 2 Chron. 12:9-10. Therefore, we should not settle for less than the best. Or Matt. 9:17 new wine in new wineskins validates changing order of service. In truth it distinguishes Judaism and Christianity.
4. Principles can hold out false promises when used without the restraint of the text. Gen. <sup>18:32</sup>~~19~~--if God can find 10 righteous in city or neighborhoods He will spare. No such promise and 100s examples to the contrary. Tornadoes, floods, fires in areas where there were many more than 10 righteous. Or 2 Chron 7:14. Try this on Nepal. China has been spared without meeting conditions. OK to use Prov 14:34 but remember no promise is attached. Save America?
5. Limits HS to using only principles preacher thinks of. Let text speak for self and HS may use in ways you can't think of; e.g. Matt 20, grace to serve. Retort: principalization makes Bible more relevant. But hollow or misleading if not in text. Or e.g. Eph 5 in Philadelphia. HS is smarter and knows audience better than I do.

#### III. Guidelines

1. One popular suggestion today is to follow this procedure. First exegesis, then a timeless theological principle or truth, then the application. But ask: what is the basis of the timeless truth? and how do you know this is the proper timeless truth for this message?
2. Always ask if there is an exegetical basis for principle you are drawing. If not, don't make up one. Physical blindness in Jn 9 not spiritual blindness until come to v 39-41. Then X scolds Pharisees for the sins done in knowledge of spiritual truths. Or, e.g. Good Samaritan, Lk 10. (a) Hurting world, (b) Hesitant church, (c) Healing stranger. Not so. Story answers ques, who is my neighbor?, v.29. Sermon on Ruth, How to deal with in-laws. Gives hearer the idea that these

## EXPOSITORY VS. NOT UNBIBLICAL PREACHING

### I. Definitions

Scriptural meaning and use of διαρμηνεύω. Means (1) translate, Acts 9:36 Tabitha which translated means Dorcas. (2) explain, interpret. Of tongues, 1 Cor 12:30, 14:5, 13, 27. Of OT prophecy, Luke 24:27. Translate is good operative word to keep in forefront. When expounding I translate the meaning of the text into explanatory language that means the same. Other examples not using the word include: (1) Stephen's exposition of OT in Acts 7 around theme in v. 51. Acts 8:35 explains meaning of Isa 53. 2 Tim. 2:15-teach Word correctly, straight. Cut a path in a straight direction so traveler may go directly to his destination. Or mason's cutting stones straight to fit into their proper places. MM expound soundly.

Expository=setting forth of the meaning or purpose of a writing. Expound=to explain by setting forth in careful and often elaborate detail. Expound from Latin meaning to set forth, explain. Some that add too much or extraneous matters. e.g., Bible exposition is communicating the meaning of a text of Scripture in terms of contemporary culture, with the specific goal of helping people to understand and obey the truth of God. (RR 206).

Not unbiblical means that the content of the sermon is not contrary to the teachings of the Bible, but neither does it expose what the text itself says.

### II. Tools for expository preaching

1. Historical setting. Matt 20:2 denarius is one day's wage. Or Matt 17:24-27 temple tax.
2. Context. 1 Cor 2:9-10. Gen. 28:20-22 Can't bargain with God, but Jacob not bargaining--He was affirming the promise back in v. 15.
3. Exegete. Study various options when there are several. Luke 2:14 (a) universal peace, but cf Matt 10:32. (b) men of good will, but = works sal..(c) in whom He is well pleased. Both possibilities in 2 Cor. 5:14. Rom. 1:4. What if don't know original languages? Chafer, HAI did not. Use English dict., concordance for meaning of Grk and Heb, Bible dictionary, if know Greek letters, then use Greek dict. Interlinear and several other translations. Exegetical comm. 3 kinds of comm-- detailed exegetical, expositional survey, devotional (perhaps homiletical). ICC on Romans, Expos's Bible Comm, Newell. Some overlap, of course.
4. Zero in on theme. But there may be more than one in passage. If so, may be able to get overarching theme. Phil 2:17-30. Praise for Phil's sac and service, 17-18; praise for Tim's selflessness and taking second place. Epaphroditus, soldier tho obeys and endures. Or altogether Eulogies for the Living. Word studies like huperekperisseuo, kenos. Doctrine like HSinAsia Minor Eph seal, 1:13; prayer, 2:18; 6:18; indwell, 3:22; power, 3:16, 29; unity, 4:3, 4; fill, 5:18; sword 6:17.

### III. Some examples I have heard.

1. Luke 9:23. No announced theme. 3 points. Deny means wholehearted dedication. Cross means be willing to suffer. Follow means give self to X as leader. Concl. disciple is real bel, consecrated Xn. Then said correctly that cross means to die to self. Another used this as the best example in NT of sal. Never defined disc as leaving work and actually going with teacher, nor did he mention there are real disciples who are not bel.
2. Luke 2:14. Correct to give options to men of good will but then drifted and became fuzzy. Made these people those who do His will (Matt. 3:17) or those born again in order to get to invitation. Result will be peace with self, with others, with God thru confessing and repenting. Not much unbiblical but not in text being expounded.
3. Beginning of the Gospel, Mark 1:1.
  1. Beg in heaven in counsels of God. 2. Beg in prophets on earth. 3. Beg in my heart thru stranger, circumstances, others, church, etc.

*Be careful craftsman to accurately translate word & know it. Bible is most imp't so expression of it is too.*