

# Preaching - raison d'être

Paul's 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> letters to Timothy provide many references to the process and purpose of preaching.

1 Tim 4:13

*Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching.*

2 Tim 3:15-17

*and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.*

*God-breathed- so that that we may be led to faith in Christ, for faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God.* Cf Rom 10:17<sup>1</sup>

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1 WCF 1.6 The whole counsel of God concerning all things necessary for his own glory, man's salvation, faith and life, is either expressly set down in Scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture: unto which nothing at any time is to be added, whether by new revelations of the Spirit, or traditions of men. Nevertheless, we acknowledge the inward illumination of the Spirit of God to be necessary for the saving understanding of such things as are revealed in the Word: and that there are some circumstances concerning the worship of God, and government of the church, common to human actions and societies, which are to be ordered by the light of nature, and Christian prudence, according to the general rules of the Word, which are always to be observed.

WLC

Q. 2. *How doth it appear that there is a God?*

A. The very light of nature in man, and the works of God, declare plainly that there is a God; **but his word and Spirit only do sufficiently and effectually reveal him unto men for their salvation.**

Q. 3. *What is the Word of God?*

A. The holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are the Word of God, the only rule of faith and obedience.

Q. 155. *How is the word made effectual to salvation?*

A. The Spirit of God maketh the reading, but **especially the preaching of the word**, an effectual means of enlightening, convincing, and humbling sinners; of driving them out of themselves, and drawing them unto Christ; of conforming them to his image, and subduing them to his will; of strengthening them against temptations and corruptions; or building them up in grace, and establishing their hearts in holiness and comfort through faith unto salvation.

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Q. 89. *How is the word made effectual to salvation?*

A. The Spirit of God maketh the reading, but especially the preaching, of the word, an effectual means of convincing and converting sinners, and of building them up in holiness and comfort, through faith, unto salvation.

2 Tim 4:1-5

*In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge: Preach the Word; **be prepared in season and out of season**; correct, rebuke and encourage—with **great patience and careful instruction**. For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths. But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry.<sup>2</sup>*

## Introduction:

**Effective preaching is preaching with a purpose.** Preaching without purpose is relevant only at random and consequential only by chance. Relevant, meaningful preaching **begins not with a plan, but with a purpose.** Preaching does not exist to entertain, to inform, or to instruct, though it may do each of these. The purpose of preaching is not to promulgate personal opinions, social views, or political purposes. Preaching is a **sacred trust, a divine stewardship**, the **purpose of which is to meet human needs with divine power.**

**Paul stated his purpose** in preaching as "determin[ing] not to know anything among you, **save Jesus Christ and him crucified**" (1 Cor. 2:2). Paul's purpose was to communicate Christ, not to demonstrate his ingenuity. His eloquent disclaimer of eloquence was not a rejection of style, but a recognition that the **best style is one that attracts the least attention to itself.** No man can **proclaim Christ as the Great Physician** and himself as the **Great Proclaimer at the same time.**

In the [nineteenth] century the preacher was looked upon as being "the Parson" [Person] in the community. Often the best educated, he possessed both wisdom and integrity and was looked to as the one who could provide help. He was considered the source of

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2 WCF 21.5 The reading of the Scriptures with godly fear, the **sound preaching** and **conscionable hearing** of the Word, in obedience unto God, with understanding, faith, and reverence, singing of psalms with grace in the heart; as also, the due administration and worthy receiving of the sacraments instituted by Christ, are all parts of the ordinary religious worship of God: beside religious oaths, vows, solemn fastings, and thanksgivings upon special occasions, which are, in their several times and seasons, to be used in an holy and religious manner.

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Q. 108. *What are the duties required in the second commandment?*

A. The duties required in the second commandment are, the receiving, observing, and keeping pure and entire, all such religious worship and ordinances as God hath instituted in his word; particularly prayer and thanksgiving in the name of Christ; the reading, preaching, and hearing of the word; the administration and receiving of the sacraments; church government and discipline; the ministry and maintenance thereof; religious fasting; swearing by the name of God, and vowing unto him: as also the disapproving, detesting, opposing, all false worship; and, according to each one's place and calling, removing it, and all monuments of idolatry.

Q. 159. *How is the Word of God to be preached by those that are called thereunto?*

A. They that are called to labor in the ministry of the word, are to **preach sound doctrine, diligently, in season and out of season**; plainly, not in the enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit, and of power; faithfully, making known the whole counsel of God; wisely, applying themselves to the necessities and capacities of the hearers; zealously, with fervent love to God and the souls of his people; sincerely, **aiming at his glory**, and their **conversion, edification, and salvation.**

authority for personal and community decisions in religious and moral questions. How that has changed! Could it be that the preacher's status has changed from "the Parson" to "the Irrelevant" because he has lost his sense of purpose? One who has lost his sense of purpose and direction cannot impart to others that which he is lacking. Is there not a ditch waiting when the blind lead the blind? **The preacher who has ceased speaking God's message has abandoned his purpose for existence.** His hearers, like the prodigal son, feed upon husks.

The preacher who speaks on social issues, psychological disorders, marriage and the home, education, and morality, without bringing God's will to bear upon them, **aims no higher than the spirit of the age.** If he aims to the right, he irritates the left; if he aims to the left, he irritates the right; if he aims to the centre, he irritates everybody. In any event, he prostitutes the purpose of preaching, **which is not to capture the spirit of the age but to change it by the power of God.**

The preacher cannot even challenge the spirit of the age, much less change it, **except from the top of God's mountain.** We live in an age when leadership is lacking; politicians and officeholders abound. The electorate turns government upside down looking for leaders who can take it where it needs to go and ought to be. No sooner has the old regime been voted out than dissatisfaction arises with the new. It is no different with preachers. People long for a preacher who, with purpose, love, and conviction, proclaims the unsearchable riches of Christ, finding in him relevant solutions not only for the ultimate issues of life, but also for the thorny issues of daily living that rip at our robes and to the fiery darts of Satan that knock our would-be halos askew.<sup>3</sup>

When men proclaim the authentic Christ to a community that has lost its sense of direction and purpose, even the stammering lips of the unlearned can proclaim an authentic Word.<sup>4</sup> As it is written:

*How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach, except they be sent? even as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that bring glad tidings of good things!*  
(Rom. 10:14-15).

### *Overall Considerations:*

There should always be a clear message to converted & non-converted, that is one of hope and or encouragement.

People should leave 'uplifted' and equipped for the week to come.

If there are doubts they should result in a continuing search for answers leading to salvation.

There should be evidence of how to seek the resolution of doubts.

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<sup>3</sup> WLC

Q. 158. *By whom is the Word of God to be preached?*

A. The Word of God is to be preached only by such as are sufficiently gifted, and also duly approved and called to that office.

<sup>4</sup> Jess Hall Jr. [www.bible-infonet.org/](http://www.bible-infonet.org/)

## *Provision for non-converted:*

*How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach, except they be sent? even as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that bring glad tidings of good things! (Rom. 10:14-15).*

Even if only by the positive example of the state of 'rebirth' there should be a opportunity for the Spirit to 'draw' these to faith.

There should always be a clear statement of God's grace in providing a way of Salvation; the publishing of the 'Good News'; and the means of obtaining Grace.<sup>5</sup>

God's grace is decreed through the predestined love of God, provided by the sacrifice of Jesus and provided by the drawing of the Spirit. We can do nothing of ourselves which can earn that Grace. But once we accept the saving faith 'born' of the Spirit, we are **bound** and **equipped** to do **Christ's work in the world**.

Works are of no value to obtain Salvation. Salvation is necessary to be willing and able to do Christ's works.

## *Why Preaching?*

Obey Jesus and follow his example

*Sola Scriptura* Preach nothing else but the Word of God. (not secular philosophy, psychology, positive thinking, Freudian ethics, eclectic (from 'all over the place') - no place in the pulpit -

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<sup>5</sup> It would appear to me that most preaching is to the 'converted'. And that is not a criticism. Only those that have had their human natures changed by the holy spirit (that is have been converted), will have the inclination to respond to preaching. Thus preaching (to the converted) is to chasten, instruct and encourage us during our 'preservation' during our progress to glorification, which is completed when we meet Jesus at our death or His second coming. Preaching is not designed to demand that we work for our salvation through our efforts. We are saved freely by God's grace. This is secure! But in response we can only be grateful and by the prompting of the Spirit, wish to do God's will. Little by little we are helped by His Spirit to realise this ambition aided by the preaching of and our waiting on, the Word from God. [ We rely on the Spirit to prepare and present the elect to situations where they (being so prepared) can hear the word and be drawn to respond with saving faith. When this opportunity occurs (unknown to us, generally) in a formal Service of Worship, we must always provide that the preaching of the word is purposed to support God's will and the leading of the Spirit. C H Griffiths 2008]

## What is a Preacher? <sup>6</sup>

### A. Has a duty within the Church.

Eph 4:11-13

*It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.<sup>7</sup>*

[ASIDE FREE WILL , Westminster Confession of Faith, [CHAPTER 9](#)<sup>8</sup>

**(a) The Preacher (together with elders and teachers) is to equip the saints for service.**

(the notion that the ONLY duty is to reach the lost is false)

1 Thes 2:9-10

*Surely you remember, brothers, our toil and hardship; we worked night and day in order not to be a burden to anyone while we preached the gospel of God to you. You are witnesses, and so is God, of how holy, righteous and blameless we were among you who believed.*

Titus 2:1

*You must teach what is in **accord with sound doctrine**. (to members of the Church)*

Titus 3:8

*This is a trustworthy saying. And I want you to stress these things, so that those who have trusted in God may be careful to devote themselves to doing what is good. These things are excellent and profitable for everyone.*

**(b) Reach for those who are lost**

Rm10:14-15

*How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"<sup>8</sup>*

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<sup>6</sup> [www.lavistachurchofchrist.org/LVSermons/PurposeOfPreaching.htm](http://www.lavistachurchofchrist.org/LVSermons/PurposeOfPreaching.htm)

<sup>7</sup> WCF 25.3 Unto this catholic visible church Christ hath given the ministry, oracles, and ordinances of God, for the gathering and perfecting of the saints, in this life, to the end of the world: and doth, by his own presence and Spirit, according to his promise, make them effectual thereunto.

<sup>8</sup> WCF 14.1 The grace of faith, whereby the elect are enabled to believe to the saving of their souls, is the work of the Spirit of Christ in their hearts, and is ordinarily wrought by the ministry of the Word, by which also, and by the administration of the sacraments, and prayer, it is increased and strengthened.

## B. A Teacher - part of the Worship of the Saints

1 Tim 4:6,11,13,16.

*If you point these things out to the brothers, you will be a good minister of Christ Jesus, brought up in the truths of the faith and of the good teaching that you have followed. Command and teach these things. Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching. Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers.*<sup>9</sup>

1 Cor 14:26

*What then shall we say, brothers? When you come together, everyone has a hymn, or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation. All of these must be done for the strengthening of the church.*

### *Purpose of Preaching:*

#### **To explain the scriptures<sup>10</sup>**

Acts 7 (1/3 of Stephen's sermon was from the OT)

Acts 8:34 The eunuch asked Philip, "Tell me, please, who is the prophet talking about, himself or someone else?"

Neh 8:7-8

*The Levites—Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan and Pelaiah—instructed the people in the Law while the people were standing there. They read from the Book of the Law of God, making it clear and giving the meaning so that the people could understand what was being read.*

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<sup>9</sup> Study Bible notes on 1 Tim 4:16:

'**your life and doctrine.** That Paul summarised his instructions to Timothy in this manner is an indication of where the false teachers had gone astray and hence, where Christians in general may go astray. **You will save.** God alone grants salvation (1:1;2:3;4:10), but he is pleased to use his people as instruments in bringing salvation to others. Salvation is not complete when one comes to faith. To be sure, faith brings justification and the assurance of salvation. But **faith also begins the lifelong process of sanctification,** which is not completed until the Christian's earthly life has ended. **Yourself. Sanctification is a work of God** that **demand the cooperative activity of the Christian** (Php 2:12) WCF 159 (again)'

<sup>10</sup> WLC

Q. 155. *How is the word made effectual to salvation?*

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Q. 157. *How is the Word of God to be read?*

A. The holy Scriptures are to be read with an high and reverent esteem of them; with a firm persuasion that they are the very Word of God, and that he only can enable us to understand them; with desire to know, believe, and obey the will of God revealed in them; with diligence, and attention to the matter and scope of them; with meditation, application, self-denial, and prayer.

WSC

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## Hold up the Scriptures as a guiding light<sup>11</sup>

John 8:32

*Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."*<sup>12</sup>

1 Cor 2:6-13

*We do, however, speak a message of wisdom among the mature, but not the wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. No, we speak of God's secret wisdom, a wisdom that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began.*

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11 WCF 1.1 Although the light of nature, and the works of creation and providence do so far manifest the goodness, wisdom, and power of God, as to leave men unexcusable; yet are they not sufficient to give that knowledge of God, and of his will, which is necessary unto salvation. Therefore it pleased the Lord, at sundry times, and in divers manners, to reveal himself, and to declare that his will unto his church; and afterwards, for the better preserving and propagating of the truth, and for the more sure establishment and comfort of the church against the corruption of the flesh, and the malice of Satan and of the world, to commit the same wholly unto writing: which maketh the Holy Scripture to be most necessary; those former ways of God's revealing his will unto his people being now ceased.

1.5 We may be moved and induced by the testimony of the church to an high and reverent esteem of the Holy Scripture. And the heavenliness of the matter, the efficacy of the doctrine, the majesty of the style, the consent of all the parts, the scope of the whole (which is, to give all glory to God), the full discovery it makes of the only way of man's salvation, the many other incomparable excellencies, and the entire perfection thereof, are arguments whereby it doth abundantly evidence itself to be the Word of God: yet notwithstanding, our full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth and divine authority thereof, is from the inward work of the Holy Spirit bearing witness by and with the Word in our hearts.

1.6 (see above)

10.1 All those whom God hath predestinated unto life, and those only, he is pleased, in his appointed and accepted time, effectually to call, by his Word and Spirit, out of that state of sin and death, in which they are by nature, to grace and salvation, by Jesus Christ; enlightening their minds spiritually and savingly to understand the things of God, taking away their heart of stone, and giving unto them a heart of flesh; renewing their wills, and, by his almighty power, determining them to that which is good, and effectually drawing them to Jesus Christ: yet so, as they come most freely, being made willing by his grace.

18.3 This infallible assurance doth not so belong to the essence of faith, but that a true believer may wait long, and conflict with many difficulties before he be partaker of it: yet, being enabled by the Spirit to know the things which are freely given him of God, he may, without extraordinary revelation, in the right use of ordinary means, attain thereunto. And therefore it is the duty of everyone to give all diligence to make his calling and election sure, that thereby his heart may be enlarged in peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, in love and thankfulness to God, and in strength and cheerfulness in the duties of obedience, the proper fruits of this assurance; so far is it from inclining men to looseness.

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Q. 4. *How doth it appear that the Scriptures are the Word of God?*

A. The Scriptures manifest themselves to be the Word of God, by their majesty and purity; by the consent of all the parts, and the scope of the whole, which is to give all glory to God; by their light and power to convince and convert sinners, to comfort and build up believers unto salvation: but the Spirit of God bearing witness by and with the Scriptures in the heart of man, is alone able fully to persuade it that they are the very Word of God.

Q. 67. *What is effectual calling?*

A. Effectual calling is the work of God's almighty power and grace, whereby (out of his free and special love to his elect, and from nothing in them moving him thereunto) he doth, in his accepted time, invite and draw them to Jesus Christ, by his word and Spirit; savingly enlightening their minds, renewing and powerfully determining their wills, so as they (although in themselves dead in sin) are hereby made willing and able freely to answer his call, and to accept and embrace the grace offered and conveyed therein.

Q. 80. *Can true believers be infallibly assured that they are in the estate of grace, and that they shall persevere therein unto salvation?*

A. Such as truly believe in Christ, and endeavour to walk in all good conscience before him, may, without extraordinary revelation, by faith grounded upon the truth of God's promises, and by the Spirit enabling them to discern in themselves those graces to which the promises of life are made, and bearing witness with their spirits that they are the children of God, be infallibly assured that they are in the estate of grace, and shall persevere therein unto salvation.

12 Study Bible notes: **you will know the truth.** Holding to the teaching of Christ, who himself embodies and

*None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. However, as it is written:*

*"No eye has seen,  
no ear has heard,  
no mind has conceived*

*what God has prepared for those who love him"<sup>13</sup> but God has revealed it to us by his Spirit.*

*The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man's spirit within him? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us. This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words.<sup>14</sup>*

Eph 3:4

*In reading this, then, you will be able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ,*

### **Disturb people in error:**

Acts 2:1-37 The Holy Spirit Comes at Pentecost

*When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues<sup>15</sup> as the Spirit enabled them.*

*Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard them speaking in his own language. Utterly amazed, they asked: "Are not all these men who are speaking Galileans? Then how is it that each of us hears them in his own native language? Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome (both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs—we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!" Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, "What does this mean?"*

*Some, however, made fun of them and said, "They have had too much wine."<sup>16</sup>*

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epitomises the truth (14:6), leads one to the truth that liberates the sinner from slavery to sin. Salvation is not obtained by intellectual knowledge, as the Gnostics imagined, but by a personal commitment to Jesus Christ and the truth he came to reveal (18:37). In John's writings this is often the meaning of the verb "to know" (4:10;7:29;8:55;15:21;17:3).

13 1 Corinthians 2:9 Isaiah 64:4

14 1 Corinthians 2:13 Or Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to spiritual men

15 Acts 2:4 Or languages; also in verse 11

16 Acts 2:13 Or sweet wine

### Peter Addresses the Crowd

Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: "Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say. These men are not drunk, as you suppose. It's only nine in the morning! No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

" 'In the last days, God says,  
I will pour out my Spirit on all people.  
Your sons and daughters will prophesy,  
your young men will see visions,  
your old men will dream dreams.  
Even on my servants, both men and women,  
I will pour out my Spirit in those days,  
and they will prophesy.  
I will show wonders in the heaven above  
and signs on the earth below,  
blood and fire and billows of smoke.  
The sun will be turned to darkness  
and the moon to blood  
before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord.  
And everyone who calls  
on the name of the Lord will be saved.'<sup>17</sup>

"Men of Israel, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know. This man was handed over to you by God's set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men,<sup>18</sup> put him to death by nailing him to the cross. But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him. David said about him:

" 'I saw the Lord always before me.  
Because he is at my right hand,  
I will not be shaken.  
Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices;  
my body also will live in hope,  
because you will not abandon me to the grave,  
nor will you let your Holy One see decay.  
You have made known to me the paths of life;  
you will fill me with joy in your presence.'<sup>19</sup>

"Brothers, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried, and his tomb is here to this day. But he was a prophet and knew that God had promised him on oath that he would place one of his descendants on his throne. Seeing what was ahead, he spoke of the resurrection of the Christ,<sup>20</sup> that he was not abandoned to the grave, nor did his body see decay. God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact. Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has

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17 Acts 2:21 Joel 2:28-32

18 Acts 2:23 Or of those not having the law (that is, Gentiles)

19 Acts 2:28 Psalm 16:8-11

20 Acts 2:31 Or Messiah. "The Christ" (Greek) and "the Messiah" (Hebrew) both mean "the Anointed One"; also in verse 36.

*poured out what you now see and hear. For David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said,*

*"The Lord said to my Lord:  
"Sit at my right hand  
until I make your enemies  
a footstool for your feet." <sup>21</sup>*

*"Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ."*

*When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?"*

Titus 2:15

*These, then, are the things you should teach. Encourage and rebuke with all authority. Do not let anyone despise you.<sup>22</sup>*

### **Present Christ as the only hope of the world:**

"Salvation does not come from preaching politics or moral platitudes, our only hope is in heaven"

1 Cor 2:2

*For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.*

Teach about the Church:

(refuting the 'preach the man and not the plan'. ---

- cannot teach about the King without mentioning His Kingdom
- mention the groom without mentioning the bride.

Acts 2:47

*praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.<sup>23</sup>*

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<sup>21</sup> Acts 2:35 Psalm 110:1

<sup>22</sup> WLC

Q. 129. *What is required of superiors towards their inferiors?*

A. It is required of superiors, according to that power they receive from God, and that relation wherein they stand, to love, pray for, and bless their inferiors; to instruct, counsel, and admonish them; countenancing, commending, and rewarding such as do well; and discountenancing, reproving, and chastising such as do ill; protecting, and providing for them all things necessary for soul and body: and by grave, wise, holy, and exemplary carriage, to procure glory to God, honor to themselves, and so to preserve that authority which God hath put upon them.

<sup>23</sup> WCF 25.2 The visible church, which is also catholic or universal under the gospel (not confined to one nation, as before under the law), consists of all those throughout the world that profess the true religion; and of their children: and is the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, the house and family of God, out of which there is no ordinary possibility of salvation.

Matt 16:18

*And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.*<sup>24</sup>

Eph 5:23

*For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Saviour.*<sup>25</sup>

A quote from the end of Spurgeon's Sermon #1834 - To Lovers of Jesus an Example:

“There I leave it. May the Holy Spirit bless the word! As for you that do not love the Lord Jesus, God be merciful to you! I will not pronounce upon you an Anathema Maranatha, but I tremble lest it fall upon you. I am sorely grieved for your sakes. I am, moreover, sorely vexed for Christ's sake that He should be deprived of your love and service. What has He done that you should slight Him? Oh, blind eyes that cannot see His beauties, and deaf ears that cannot hear the charms of His voice! God be merciful to you and help you to trust your Saviour—and then you will love Him for His salvation!

It is no wonder that the saved ones love their Lord—it is a marvel that they do not love Him 10,000 times more!

The Lord be with you for Christ's sake! Amen.”

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24 WCF 25.5 The purest churches under heaven are subject both to mixture and error; and some have so degenerated, as to become no churches of Christ, but synagogues of Satan. Nevertheless, there shall be always a church on earth, to worship God according to his will.

25 WCF 8.1 It pleased God, in his eternal purpose, to choose and ordain the Lord Jesus, his only begotten Son, to be the Mediator between God and man, the Prophet, Priest, and King, the Head and Savior of his church, the Heir of all things, and Judge of the world: unto whom he did from all eternity give a people, to be his seed, and to be by him in time redeemed, called, justified, sanctified, and glorified.

25.1 The catholic or universal church, which is invisible, consists of the whole number of the elect, that have been, are, or shall be gathered into one, under Christ the Head thereof; and is the spouse, the body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all.

WLC

Q. 60. *Can they who have never heard the gospel, and so know not Jesus Christ, nor believe in him, be saved by their living according to the light of nature?*

A. They who, having never heard the gospel, know not Jesus Christ, and believe not in him, cannot be saved, be they never so diligent to frame their lives according to the light of nature, or the laws of that religion which they profess; neither is there salvation in any other, but in Christ alone, who is the Savior only of his body the church.

Q. 66. *What is that union which the elect have with Christ?*

A. The union which the elect have with Christ is the work of God's grace, whereby they are spiritually and mystically, yet really and inseparably, joined to Christ as their head and husband; which is done in their effectual calling.

1. God hath endued the will of man with that natural liberty, that it is neither forced, nor, by any absolute necessity of nature, determined to good, or evil.
2. Man, in his state of innocency, had freedom, and power to will and to do that which was good and well pleasing to God; but yet, mutably, so that he might fall from it.
3. Man, by his fall into a state of sin, hath wholly lost all ability of will to any spiritual good accompanying salvation: so as, a natural man, being altogether averse from that good, and dead in sin, is not able, by his own strength, to convert himself, or to prepare himself thereunto.
4. When God converts a sinner, and translates him into the state of grace, he freeth him from his natural bondage under sin; and, by his grace alone, enables him freely to will and to do that which is spiritually good; yet so, as that by reason of his remaining corruption, he doth not perfectly, nor only, will that which is good, but doth also will that which is evil.
5. The will of man is made perfectly and immutably free to good alone, in the state of glory only.