

# Lesson 1: What Makes a Sermon “Good”?

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## INTRODUCTION:

### WHAT MAKES A SERMON “GOOD”?

- There are many opinions about what makes a sermon a “good” sermon. What might be some of those opinions?
- Why is it important to know what makes a sermon “good”?
  - Helps increase your appreciation for preaching.
  - Helps enhance your listening skills.
  - Helps increase your discernment when listening to preachers online.

### A DEFINITION OF EXPOSITORY PREACHING:

1. Simple Definition: “Expository preaching is preaching in which the main point of the biblical text being considered becomes the main point of the sermon being preached.” (Mark Dever & Greg Gilbert).
2. My Definition:
  - a. Expository Preaching: Expository preaching is the process in which the preacher discerns the original God-intended meaning of a text of Scripture, then expounds the meaning and significance of the text to contemporary listeners.
  - b. An Expository Sermon: A sermon in which the text of Scripture determines the substance and structure of the sermon.

## THE NEED FOR EXPOSITORY PREACHING

### 1. It's Biblical

#### a. Survey of OT (Deut 6:1-5)

- "The word of the Lord came to..." = 101 times in the OT
- "Thus says the Lord..." = 415 times in the OT.
- "Hear the word of the Lord..." = 34 times in the OT
- Neh 8:1-12: Ezra and the Scribes allow the divinely inspired text to serve as the substance of their preaching, and they explain the text so that the listeners understand the text.

#### b. Survey of the NT

- Luke 4:16-21: Jesus read and explained the Scriptures as a visiting rabbi in Synagogues.
- Luke 24:27: Jesus unfolded the meaning of the Old Testament to the disciples on the Emmaus road.
- Acts 17:23: Paul reasoned from the Scriptures.
- The entire book of Hebrews is an expositional sermon in which the author explains and applies significant sections of the Old Testament.

### 2. It's Theological

- a. Special biblical revelation
- b. The authority of Scripture
- c. The sufficiency of Scripture
- d. The inerrancy of Scripture

### 3. It's Practical

#### a. Practical for the Preacher

- Provides a wealth of preaching material
- Protects the preacher from preaching personal opinions
- Guards against misinterpretation
- Saves research time

- b. Practical for the Listener
  - Increases your biblical literacy
  - Increases your spiritual maturity

## MARKS OF A GOOD EXPOSITIONAL SERMON

1. Biblical Explanation
  - a. Explaining the original meaning
  - b. Explaining the meaning of words
  - c. Explaining the literary genre
  - d. Explaining the culture
  - e. Explaining the historical background
2. Biblical Application
  - a. Something to believe
  - b. Something to think
  - c. Something to do
3. Biblical Unity
4. Centered on Christ
  - a. “The centerpiece of the message preached by the church should be Jesus Christ and His Cross. That’s not to say that all sermons should only be about Jesus and/or His crucifixion. But it does mean that the life and work of Christ is the *main* message the church should preach. Further, since Jesus Christ...is the main message of the Bible, all messages preached from God’s Word should relate either directly or indirectly to Him.”  
(Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines Within the Church*, 65).

## CONCLUSION

A “good” sermon is a sermon in which the preacher explains the biblical text faithfully and clearly, applies the text directly to people’s lives, emphasizes one core biblical truth from the text, and proclaims the person and work of Christ.