

# BIBLICAL PREACHING

A CORAM DEO CHURCH RESOURCE



# INTRODUCTION: DEVELOPING AS A PREACHER

I'm not a great preacher. But I'm constantly trying to improve. And since Coram Deo is a church-planting church, I'm always trying to help others improve as well. Which means I'm constantly helping young leaders learn the basics of how to outline, craft, and deliver a good sermon.

In the fall of 2015, I asked Trent Senske to condense and compile a few of Coram Deo's standard "go-to" resources. We asked ourselves the question: "If we could have young preachers read a handful of books on preaching, which books would we assign?" Then we set out to distill each book's key contribution to the field in one page or less. The result is this packet. We've summarized seven essential concepts that will help you preach better, more impactful, more gospel-centered sermons.

How should you use this document? Well, that's up to you. But we envision it serving as a sort of combination "research brief/creative template." Review these ideas regularly. Seek to incorporate them into your sermon prep. As you sit down to craft a sermon, work on applying each of these concepts.

It should be noted that these are not necessarily the seven *best* books on preaching. They may not even be the seven most important books on preaching. They are merely the seven that have most shaped the preaching ethos of Coram Deo Church. And we think they'll be particularly helpful to young preachers. A preacher with a decade or two of experience may already do most of these things intuitively, and may need to look to another set of books or resources. But for young, aspiring preachers, these seven concepts are foundational to good preaching.

It should also be noted that this packet represents our summary of each author's major contribution. To fully benefit from each author's thinking, please consult their work directly. A full bibliography can be found on the final page.

I pray that God will strengthen and deepen your preaching of his Word through this resource.

Bob Thune  
Lead Pastor  
Coram Deo Church, Omaha, NE

# 7 KEY CONCEPTS FOR BIBLICAL PREACHING

## #1. IDENTIFY THE BIG IDEA from Haddon Robinson

All sermons must have ONE idea. Preachers may say many things, but the sermon must communicate *one* thing. Every text when studied, therefore, must be reduced to one pregnant statement composed of a *subject* and a *complement*. The **Big Idea** consists of these two components. The subject answers the question: What am I talking about? The complement answers: What am I saying about what I am talking about?

## #2. DISCERN THE FALLEN CONDITION FOCUS from Bryan Chapell

Identifying a **Fallen Condition Focus (FCF)** ensures that sermons are redemptive. The FCF is the mutual human condition that contemporary listeners share with those to whom or about whom the text was written. A clear Fallen Condition Focus provides a sermon with a *distinct claim* about our need for redemption, so that the preacher can organize an entire message to address how Christ has met that need.

## #3. SEEK TO CHANGE PEOPLE ON THE SPOT from Tim Keller

**There is one key to change—preaching Christ.** Keller contends that true preaching is not merely to talk about Christ but to “show” him, to “demonstrate” his greatness, and reveal that Jesus alone is worthy of praise and adoration. Thus, listeners *experience* with awe and wonder the greatness of Christ and are “**changed on the spot.**” Preaching should aim to make an impression on the listener. It must capture the listeners’ interests and imaginations; it must be compelling and penetrate their hearts. Whatever captures the heart’s trust and love also controls a person’s feelings and behavior.

## #4. BUILD BRIDGES from John Stott

The central task of the preacher is **Bridge Building**. A bridge is a means of communication between two places, which would otherwise be cut off from one another. So the preacher must bridge between the biblical world and the postmodern world. Preaching is not exposition only but also communication, not just exegesis of a text only but also conveying a God-given message to living people that need to hear it. There is a gulf between the Bible and our current cultural context, and the preacher must span it.

## #5. REMEMBER BIBLICAL THEOLOGY from Graeme Goldsworthy

Goldsworthy reminds preachers that the Kingdom of God is the unifying theme of Scripture. He describes the Kingdom through the schema of **God-People-Place**: (1) **God** as Lord, (2) his **People** present before him as willing and loving subjects, (3) living in the **Place** he created for them. Gospel preachers, therefore, must always exposit their text in light of the overarching biblical story.

# 7 KEY CONCEPTS FOR BIBLICAL PREACHING

## **#6. PREACH WITH LIGHT AND HEAT** from the Puritans

According to historian Bruce Bickel, the Puritan preacher's main concern was **light and heat**. Light from the pure Word of God to penetrate the darkness of the heart and soul of the hearer, and heat from the pathos and conviction of the heart and soul of the preacher to bring about conviction. John Owen once wrote, "The Word is like the sun...but the preaching of the Word is as the motion and beams of the sun, which actually and effectually communicate that light and heat unto all creatures."

## **#7. PREACH WHAT IS REAL** from Zach Eswine

Good sermons facilitate true contact with **reality**. Zach Eswine insists upon the *human-*ness of the preacher and the ministry. He knows well the temptation of many preachers to disconnect from the real, the tangible, and the mundane aspects of life. But God is not silent on these matters. His truth speaks to the everyday struggles of the people of God. When **truth meets struggle, the result is substantial healing**, and substantial healing is the business of preaching.

## CONTRIBUTION TO THE CONVERSATION

**All sermons must have ONE idea.** Preachers may say many things, but the sermon must communicate *one* thing. Every text, therefore, must be summarized in one pregnant statement composed of a *subject* and a *complement*. Haddon Robinson makes his point this way:

- A sermon should be a bullet, not buckshot. Ideally each sermon is the explanation, interpretation, or application of a single dominant idea.
- “I have a conviction that no sermon is ready for preaching, not ready for writing out, until we can express its theme (idea) in a short pregnant sentence as clear as crystal.” – J.H. Jowett

An idea consists of two essential elements: a **subject** and a **complement**.

- *Subject*: What am I talking about? The subject is always phrased in the form of a question.
- *Complement*: What am I saying about what I am talking about? The complement is always the answer that completes the subject.
- Example: a subject is, “What is the test of a person’s character?” and the complement would be, “The test of a person’s character is what it takes to stop him.”

## KEY INSIGHTS FROM THE BOOK

### Exegetical & Homiletical Ideas

The exegetical idea is the *raw material* from the study of scripture.

The homiletical idea is a *memorable, short, and contextualized* statement.

### Purpose: Why are you preaching that sermon?

The purpose of a sermon is what you expect to happen in the hearer as a result of hearing the sermon. In response what should the hearer think/feel/do? A purpose differs from the big idea in the way that a target differs from the arrow. The idea states truth; the purpose defines what that truth should accomplish.

### The Shapes Sermons Take

#### Deductive

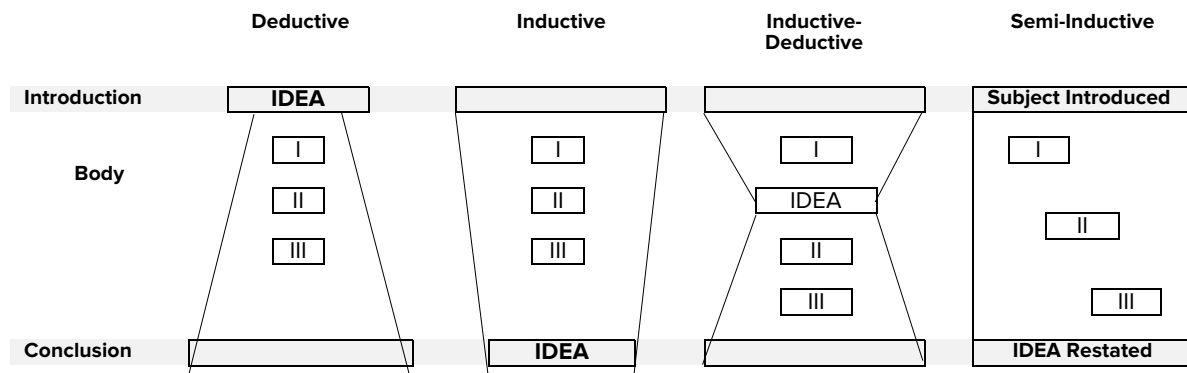
- *Position to be proved*: sometimes your idea needs proving. In this case, the big idea appears as a proposition that you will defend.
- *Principle to be applied*: So what? In this type of sermon you establish a biblical principle in the introduction and explore the implications of this truth in the rest of the sermon

#### Semi-inductive

- *Subject to be completed*: the most common sermon pattern, which can produce tension and climax if used well. The subject is presented in the introduction, often in the form of a question.

#### Inductive

- *Learning truth*: in an inductive sermon the listeners have the experience of learning truth for themselves. It can produce a strong sense of discovery.
- *Completion*: moves toward a complete statement of your idea at the end of the sermon. Therefore, inductive sermons are particularly effective with indifferent or even hostile audiences.



## CONTRIBUTION TO THE CONVERSATION

The **Fallen Condition Focus (FCF)** is the mutual human condition that hearers of the sermon share with those to whom or about whom the text was written that requires the grace of the passage.

God through his Word continually aims to restore our brokenness to spiritual wholeness so that we might reflect his image and rejoice in his glory. Therefore, we must see that every passage was written to bring glory to God by addressing some aspect(s) of our fallen condition. By correction, warning, diagnosis, or healing of this fallenness, *a text unfolds redemption* both in the passage's original context and in our present situation.

textual info → addressing a textually rooted FCF + relevant textual application = sermon

A clear Fallen Condition Focus **provides a sermon with a *distinct claim*** so that a preacher can organize an entire message to address a unified purpose—an area in which people need the grace of the gospel. Through diligently seeking to understand the FCF of the text, the preacher fights not only for unity but also to maintain Christ's redemptive purposes as the focus of a sermon.

## KEY INSIGHTS FROM THE BOOK

### Proposition

A proposition is Chapell's approach to preaching the Big Idea. It is a statement of the sermon's subject that answers the "why" question and the "so what" question. Formal example: Because Jesus commands his followers to proclaim the gospel (the "why"), we must present Christ to others (the "what").

### Preaching for Application

Sermons that merely teach biblical principles often sound biblical but tend to be merely descriptive rather than pastoral. They lack a clear goal or practical application. They teach but neglect to apply, feed, and inspire. Preaching a sermon is an *act of shepherding* that requires a minister to consider every aspect of structure, exegesis, and delivery as a potential tool for spiritual nurture, admonition, and healing.

### Key Questions

When listeners depart, are they focused on themselves or on their Redeemer?  
Do they look to their own works as their source of hope or to God's work on their behalf?

### Context is Part of Text

No text exists in isolation from other texts or from the overarching biblical message. Therefore, we do not need to conjure up Christ in the text in order to preach Christ-centered sermons. A sermon does not become Christ-centered because a preacher finds a slick way of wedging a reference to Jesus' person and work into the message, but rather, the preacher diligently seeks to reveal how the truth and the context of a passage lead to Christ. For example, Rahab does not represent the work of Christ because her cloth is blood red but because God demonstrates through her that he delivers the despicable (her) and the destitute (the Israelites) through means neither naturally possesses or deserves.

Ways of getting to Christ:

- **Text Disclosure.** The text makes a direct reference to Christ or an aspect of his messianic work
- **Type Disclosure.** God's redemptive work in Christ may be disclosed in the form of a type—an echo or prefiguring of the person and work of Christ.
- **Context Disclosure.** In its context, every passage discloses one or more of four redemptive foci. The text may be: *Predictive* of the work of Christ, *Preparatory* for the work of Christ, *Reflective* of the work of Christ, *Resultant* of the work of Christ.
- **Dead Ends and Bridges.** In order to reveal the folly of depending on human authorities for security and peace, God allowed disappointments and failures in particular events and people to demonstrate that human paths to salvation are *dead ends*. On the other hand, some passages also fulfill their redemptive purposes by providing *bridges* to the redemptive work of Christ (e.g. sacrificial system, temple features, prophetic ministries).

## CONTRIBUTION TO THE CONVERSATION

Preachers have two responsibilities: first to the truth, and secondly to a particular group of people. And so, sound preaching arises out of two loves—love of the Word of God and love of people. For both tasks Keller claims **there is one key—preaching Christ**. Preaching is not merely to talk about Christ but to “show” him, to “demonstrate” his greatness, revealing Jesus as worthy of praise and adoration. Thus, listeners *experience* with awe and wonder the greatness of Christ and are **“changed on the spot.”**

Preaching should aim to make an impression on the listener, and that impression is more important than “information takeaways.” Preaching cannot simply be accurate and sound. It must capture the listeners’ interests and imaginations; it must be compelling and penetrate their hearts. Whatever captures the heart’s trust and love also controls the feelings and behavior.

## KEY INSIGHTS FROM THE BOOK

### Preaching to Cultural Narratives

The Christian preacher should compare and contrast the Scripture’s message with the foundational beliefs of the culture. If done rightly it can lead people to say to themselves, *Oh, so that’s why I tend to think and feel that way*. This can be one of the most liberating and catalytic steps in a person’s journey to faith in Christ. Consequently, the preacher *must* study culture. The pattern of preaching should be “Yes, but no, but yes,” when engaging culture in the sermon. “Yes,” to understanding and affirming people’s hopes, fears, and aspirations. “But no,” to where the listener is looking for these things is wrong. “But yes,” Jesus is the one whom you’ve been looking for; all hope is found, fear is stilled, and aspirations are met in Christ. “The story of this one individual (Jesus) never needs to become repetitious—it contains the whole history of the universe and of humankind alike and is the only resolution of the plotlines of every one of our lives.”

### How to Preach Christ Instinctively

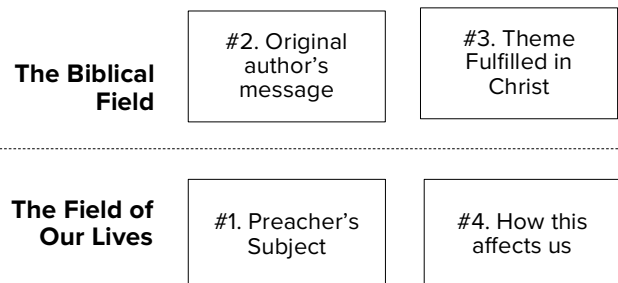
Good preachers develop the capacity to preach Christ from instinct. Knowing the end of a movie sheds unignorable light onto the story the next time you watch. Gospel connections become instinctive over time.

### Unintentional Preaching Models

1. **A sermon about the preacher’s subject:** This model takes one piece of the text to make a point the *preacher* wants to make. This is not faithful exegesis of the text.
2. **A sermon about the original author’s message:** This model teaches the text, even talks about Jesus, but without really preaching the gospel.
3. **A sermon about a theme fulfilled in Christ:** This model preaches “Christ” but without really preaching the text (i.e. jumping to Christ). Because this model doesn’t spend enough time in the text, the way that Jesus is described will sound the same every time.
4. **A sermon about us:** This model preaches to the cultural heart or lives of the listeners, emphasizing application and how the truth is to affect us.

In addition to these four models, there are combinations of the four:

- From #1 →2: Sunday School Lesson
- From #1 →3: Allegorical or Inspirational
- From #1 →4: Exhortation
- From #1 →2→4: The Puritan Approach
- From #1 →2→3: Redemptive-Historical
- From #1 →2→3→4: Redemptive-Historical with application
- From #1 →2→4→3: This is the model that Keller is arguing for; preaching to the heart in a way that changes people on the spot



## CONTRIBUTION TO THE CONVERSATION

John Stott contends that the central task of the preacher is **bridge-building**. A bridge is a means of communication between two places, which would otherwise be cut off from one another. The preacher must bridge between the biblical world and the postmodern world. Preaching is not exposition only but also communication, not just exegesis of a text only but also conveying a God-given message to living people that need to hear it. There is a gulf between the Bible and our current cultural context, and it must be spanned.

All preachers tend toward one of two mistakes. Those more **conservative** in theology live on the Bible side of the gulf, struggling to bridge to the culture. They believe the Bible, love the Bible, study the Bible, and expound the Bible. But they are not at home in the culture. It bewilders and threatens them. Those more **liberal** in theology find it congenial to live on the contemporary side of the great divide. They are sensitive to the current mood and their preaching reflects it, but the original meaning of the text is often lost.

The task of the preacher is **to understand both the biblical world and the modern one**, so as to communicate the truth of Jesus to those who need to hear it. Someone once asked Karl Barth, "What do you do to prepare your Sunday sermon?" Barth answered, "I take the Bible in one hand and the daily newspaper in the other." Fifty years prior the prince of preachers, Charles Spurgeon, taught the same method.

## KEY INSIGHTS FROM THE BOOK

### The "Quadruple-Think"

The task of the preacher is to "quadruple-think." Here's how it works: (1) think out what I have to say, (2) think out how the other man will understand what I say, (3) re-think what I have to say, so that, when I say it, he will (4) think what I am thinking. Quadruple-thinking involves mental pain and great spiritual sensitivity but is far worth the cost.

### Six New Testament Pictures of the Preacher

- The preacher as a **herald or town crier** (*keryx*). He has been given a message of good news and told to proclaim it. So in the market square, he lifts up his voice and makes it known.
- The preacher is a **sower** (*speiron*) who goes out into the world, as a farmer into his fields. There he broadcasts the seed of the gospel, knowing that some will fall into ready soil and bear good fruit.
- The preacher is an **ambassador** (*presbus*) commissioned to serve as an envoy to a foreign land. He has the responsibility of representing his king, whose cause he is proud to plead.
- The preacher is a **steward or housekeeper** (*oikonomos*) in charge of God's household and entrusted with the provisions they need. He is must be faithful in dispensing them to God's family.
- The preacher is a **pastor or shepherd** (*poimen*). The Chief Shepherd delegates the care of his flock to under-shepherds, who protect from wolves (false teachers) and lead to pasture (sound doctrine).
- The preacher is an **approved workman** (*ergates*), skillful in his treatment of God's Word. He "cuts straight" the Scriptures, as a road-maker paves the way directly to the destination.

### Christ is Ever-Contemporary

In every generation and every culture men and women have wrestled and debated the deep questions of existence. The great novelists and dramatists have treated such questions in every age. As preachers, we must be convinced that Jesus Christ has answers to these questions or at least throws more light on them than can be gathered from any other source. How often does your preaching deal with these topics?

- What is the purpose of our existence? Where did I come from, and where am I going to?
- What does it mean to be a human being, and how do humans differ from animals?
- Where does my thirst for transcendence and meaning come from?
- What is freedom, and how can I experience personal liberation?
- Why the painful tension between what I am and what I long to be?
- Is there a way to get rid of guilt and of a guilty conscience?
- What about hunger for love, sexual fulfillment, marriage, family and community?
- How can we find courage to face life, then death, and what may lie beyond death?
- Is there any light on the dark mysteries of evil and suffering?



## CONTRIBUTION TO THE CONVERSATION

Goldsworthy reminds preachers that the Kingdom of God is the unifying theme of Scripture. He describes the Kingdom through the schema of **God-People-Place**: (1) **God** as Lord, (2) his **People** present before him as willing and loving subjects, (3) living in the **Place** he created for them. Gospel preachers, therefore, must always exposit their text in light of the overarching biblical story.

- **In the Garden of Eden:** God's people. In God's place. In perfect relationship as intended by God.
- **Outside the Garden of Eden:** God's people and his creation are dislocated, confused, and disordered by sin. The destruction is pervasive but not complete.
- **In redemptive history:** God calls *one* family of people (Abraham) and their successors to be the context within which he reveals his plan for redemption of people from *every* tribe, tongue, and nation. The relationships of the kingdom of God are reestablished but never fully realized.
- **In prophetic eschatology:** The prophets herald the pattern and promise of redemption, but because of Israel's sin and idolatry the Kingdom of God fails to land within history. By the word of the Lord, the prophets proclaim a future, glorious salvation and kingdom.
- **In Jesus Christ:** Where Adam failed and where Israel failed, Jesus is victorious. He comes as the last Adam and the true Israel to carry out God's purposes perfectly. Believers from all periods of history are credited with his perfection and righteousness as a gift. Christ preaches that the Kingdom of God is already at hand but not yet established in full.
- **In the Consummation:** The perfection that is in Jesus, and that believers possess by faith will be fully formed in believers and the world when Christ returns in glory.

Or this Kingdom schema can be explained another way:

1. The pattern of the kingdom is established in the garden.
2. This pattern is broken when sin enters in.
3. The pattern is reestablished in salvation history in Israel but never fully realized.
4. The same pattern shapes the prophetic view of the future kingdom.
5. The pattern of the kingdom is perfectly established in Jesus in a representative way.
6. The pattern of the kingdom is consummated at Christ's return.

## KEY INSIGHTS FROM THE BOOK

### Biblical Theology

While there is much in the Bible that is strictly speaking not the gospel, there is nothing in the Bible that can be truly understood apart from Jesus. Preachers must always ask: How does this passage of Scripture, and consequently my sermon, testify to Christ?

### What is your operative gospel?

Preachers have a *theoretical* gospel and an *operative* gospel. We may agree *theoretically* with the gospel of Jesus, but in pastoral practice we operate on something else (e.g. pragmatism). Our *operative* gospel will be the thing that preoccupies us as the focus of our preaching. Therefore, in order to preach the gospel of Jesus to the hearts of people we need to uncover what is their *operative* gospel and replace it with the good news of Jesus Christ.

### What is the gospel?

1. **The gospel as the work of Christ FOR us.** The gospel is the past historic event in which Jesus did for us what we could not do for ourselves. All the expectations of the Old Testament have been fulfilled *in Him*. And this has happened *for us*.
2. **The fruit of the gospel as the work of Christ IN us.** The Holy Spirit applies the message of Christ to the elect so they embrace the gospel by faith. In other words, the embrace of faith involves us in union with Christ so that the believer belongs to Christ and Christ to the believer. By virtue of union with Christ, his righteousness is imputed to us and becomes ours.
3. **The consummation of the gospel as the work of Christ WITH us.** In Christ, the end of the old age has come. Yet we live in the overlap of the ages. There is ongoing tension between what we have now in Christ, and what will be the reality at his return. It is important that the preacher has a clear understanding of the "already not yet" dynamic of the gospel.

## CONTRIBUTION TO THE CONVERSATION

The Puritan preacher's main concern was **light and heat**. Light from the Word of God to penetrate the darkness of the heart and soul of the hearer, and heat from the pathos and conviction of the preacher to bring about conviction. John Owen once wrote, "The Word is like the sun in the firmament...It hath virtually in it all spiritual light and heat. But the preaching of the Word is as the motion and beams of the sun, which actually and effectually communicate that light and heat unto all creatures."

Thomas Cartwright captures the Puritan reverence for the pulpit: "As fire stirred giveth more heat, so the Word, as it were, blown by preaching, flameth more in the hearers, than when it is read." Whereas the Anglican view of the pulpit produced excellent *orators*, the Puritan view produced impassioned *preachers*. The contrast was between formality and urgency. In the words of Richard Baxter, a preacher should preach as "a dying man to dying men."

## KEY INSIGHTS FROM THE BOOK

**Good preaching results in good Christian practice.** Sermons should not be merely passionate but also practical. To the Puritan minister the aim of preaching was "the glory of God and the persuasion of each man to live a life submitted absolutely to the will of God. To this end their sermons were directed with unrestrained passion."

### Light First, Then Heat

Richard Baxter explains, "The preachers' aim should be first to convince the understanding and then to engage the heart. Light first, then heat. Begin with a careful opening of the text, then proceed to the clearance of possible difficulties or objections; next to a statement of uses, and lastly to a fervent appeal for acceptance by conscience and heart." Thus, Puritan sermons had a predictable shape:

1. **Doctrine** (or declaration) →
2. **Reason** (or explanation) →
3. **Use** (or application)

### Personal Piety

Personal apprehension of salvation and fervent pursuit of holiness is fundamental to preaching. Richard Baxter admonished preachers, "Take heed to yourselves, lest you should be void of that saving grace of God, which you offer to others, and be stranger to the effectual workings of the gospel which you preach."

### Watchmen Over Souls

The Puritans considered themselves watchmen over the flock. "He that is more frequent in his pulpit to his people than he is in his closet for his people is but a sorry watchman," charged John Owen. The care of souls and the preaching of the Word were fundamentally connected for the Puritans:

- John Flavel: "A prudent minister will study the souls of his people, more than the best human book in his library; and not choose what is easiest for him, but what is most necessary for them."
- Peter Lewis: "The Puritans were physicians of the soul, skilled enough to avoid that vagueness and subjectiveness which leaves the anguished mind clutching at uncertain straws with uncertain hope. They believed the Word of God to be comprehensive enough to cover every basic human situation and need, and knew their Scriptures well enough to apply, with responsible authority, the available salve to the exposed sore."

## CONTRIBUTION TO THE CONVERSATION

Good sermons facilitate true contact with **reality**. Zach Eswine insists upon the *human-ness* of the preacher and the ministry. He knows well the temptation of many preachers to disconnect from the real, the tangible, and the mundane aspects of life. But God is not silent on these matters. And his truth speaks to the everyday struggles of the people of God. When **truth meets struggle, the result is substantial healing**, and substantial healing is the business of preaching.

Therefore, a preacher is meant to learn the terrain of reality as it relates to God, people, places, and personal conscience. The Bible is the map that one needs to make true contact. With that map, **the preacher introduces reality to people** by identifying the *under-the-sun seasons* and *under-the-sun-situations* shared by the biblical text and the lives of God's people. Things like—birth and death, planting and harvesting, killing and healing, breaking down and building up, weeping and laughing, silencing and speaking, warring and making peace (Ecclesiastes 3:1-8).

**Preaching is mentoring.** When we preach we publically model for a community how a human being is meant by God to relate to reality. By watching the preacher, people learn how to think, act, and speak toward God, our neighbors, and the issues of our times. Therefore, to facilitate contact with reality, preachers must remember (a) who they were apart from Christ and (b) who they are as breathing, sleeping, working, sweating, loving *humans* living by faith in a fallen world.

## KEY INSIGHTS FROM THE BOOK

### Preaching the *near* and *far* application of the text.

The *near* application is nearer to the biblical text but farther from our lives. For example, when preaching the life of Joseph: “Does physical betrayal, separation from family, and wrongful enslavement happen to God's people?” The *far* application is closer to our lives but further from the biblical text. For example, when preaching the life of Joseph, “What are the ‘pits’ in your life?” Preachers are wise to do both; but when moving to far application, be careful to stay tethered to the biblical text to avoid facile and cliché applications.

**Show God's Provision, Give God's Command.** There must be grace if we are to train for godliness. Without grace, there is no chance to fail and get up again. Newton was right—it is grace that teaches our hearts to fear. Eswine urges preachers to follow this pattern: show God's provision, give God's command.

### Expanding Bryan Chapel's Fallen Condition Focus (FCF):

- **Fallen Condition:** One's inner tendency toward temptation and evil often shown in spiritual hardness, warring desires, and the fruit of the flesh.
- **Finite Condition:** Not every expression of man's broken condition is moral evil. We need God's provision because we live with the limits of knowledge, understanding, emotional capacity, or physical ability. One's finite condition often evidences itself in spiritual blindness.
- **Fragile Condition:** Sometimes people need God's provision because they have been sinned against or have felt the effects of sin in general by living in a fallen world.
- **Faltering Condition:** A person falters between what he or she professes is true and what actual living requires of truth. Where we like the first disciples of Jesus falter is the place of inconsistency between creed and practice.

### Face the Problem of Simplism

Preachers are like forest rangers in that they cannot afford to be simplistic or naïve in the way they describe the landscape. Life and death is at stake. The simpleton is the one who “lacks sense” regarding the landscape of life (Prov. 7:7, 8:5, 9:4). The simplistic preacher uses right theology wrongly. In contrast to the gospel, simplism and moralism conspire to reduce dependence upon God. Simplism fosters self-dependence by reducing complexity.

- Moralism says, “Follow these simple steps and God will love you...”
- Simplism says, “Follow these simple steps and things will go well for you in life.”

# CONTRIBUTORS & RESOURCES

## CONTRIBUTORS

Research By: Trent Senske

Summaries By: Trent Senske and Bob Thune

Design Inspired By: Mike Kresnik

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# NOTES & APPLICATION

 *coram deo*