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TEACHING THE CONGREGATION AT GRACE FELLOWSHIP
BAPTIST CHURCH, ROBERTSDALE, ALABAMA,
TO DO BIBLICAL EXPOSITION

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APPROVAL SHEET

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To Steph,
my love and partner in ministry
and to
Grace Fellowship Baptist Church,
my faithful brothers and sisters

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PREFACE

I am grateful for the opportunity to continue studying God's word and for the faithful men at Southern Seminary who have encouraged and inspired me in this endeavor. Professors and administrators have led me through this long process with grace and kindness. I am especially thankful for the steady and patient guidance Jeff Walters exhibited as he walked with me through this project after a two-year hiatus. He made what seemed overwhelming doable.

My brothers and sisters at Grace Fellowship Baptist Church who have financially and prayerfully invested in this work, who love the Lord and His word, and always demand clear and consistent biblical exposition from the pulpit, remain my joy in the work of ministry. Because God's word is their meat, I must strive to shepherd them and faithfully "contend for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints."

Our sweet daughters, Abigail, Rachel, and Rebecca, are the most precious flock a shepherd could ever have the joy of leading. Their faith and discipline in Christ and their love for me is humbling. I could not count the number of prayers they offered up for their father as he struggled and procrastinated to finish this project.

There are no adequate words to express my love and gratitude to my wife, Stephanie, who is my dearest friend, unyielding supporter, partner in ministry, and deepest love on the earth. She has read these pages with diligence and honesty, edited my grammar, and added smiley faces to encourage my heart. Her love for me is surpassed only in her love for Christ.

Finally, it is the steadfast love of God and His promise to complete the good work He has begun in me that gives me the greatest joy and compels me to continue in the work of shepherding the flock among me. Soli Deo Gloria.

Jeffrey W. Hunter

Silverhill, Alabama

May 2012

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this project was to teach and encourage the congregation at Grace Fellowship Baptist Church in Robertsedale, Alabama to do biblical exposition.

Goals of the Project

There were five goals to be accomplished in this project. The primary goal was to improve my own preaching preparation and delivery. I believe good pedagogy is cyclical; if we teach others well, the process will bring a beneficial personal return. Therefore, the fundamental instrument for training others to become good expositors was to model and analyze expository preaching in my own methods of preparation and delivery.

The second goal was to create a desire in the congregation to understand Scripture's meaning and demonstrate a willingness to communicate that meaning effectively to others. Grace Fellowship Baptist had few members who were adequately trained to teach expositionally, while there were many desiring to learn how to properly exegete and communicate the meanings of passages from the Bible. I invited current teachers and those who had shown interest in becoming biblical expositors to participate in an introductory seminar designed to create greater desire and willingness to understand the meaning of Scripture with a resultant desire of being trained further to effectively

communicate it to others. Success of this goal was having people leaving the preliminary seminar excited about Scripture and willing to commit to a four-week class to encourage and develop expositional thinking when approaching the Bible.

The third goal was to increase the knowledge and skill level of teachers, preachers, and potential teachers and preachers to communicate Scripture expositionally. Our congregation and many class members were aware (mostly through preaching models) of what expositional teaching and preaching looked like as a final product, but they were untrained in the skills of preparing to teach or preach expositionally. I continued the seminar by teaching an additional four-week class on how to expositionally approach, accurately exegete, and effectively communicate the meaning of the Bible. It was my desire that those who completed the class would be able to take a passage of Scripture, effectively communicate the meaning of the text, and give proper application to their class, friends, or congregation.

The fourth goal of the project was for a select group of elders and deacons from the first part of the project to model, assist, and eventually teach others to think and teach expositionally within the church. There was no one in the church apart from the pastor who was able to train and model proper exposition of the Bible. This goal was accomplished through an additional two week class.

The fifth goal of this project was the broadest, yet I believe potentially most beneficial, for the future of our church. While specifically training some members to become skilled expository teachers and preachers, as my fifth goal, I sought to instill in all participants the knowledge and awareness of the necessity for all believers to think and interact expositionally as a mindset. Therefore, it was within this fifth goal that the appeal for expositional training bloomed and penetrated beyond the few who were indeed teachers and preachers of God's Word.

Context of the Project

Grace Fellowship Baptist Church, a newly constituted congregation, is located on the Gulf Coast of Alabama in Central Baldwin County, twenty-five miles from Mobile, thirty miles from Pensacola, Florida, and twenty miles from the Gulf Shores public beaches. Although best known to those in the Southeastern part of the United States as part of the “Redneck Riviera” for its beachfront condominiums and miles of waterways, Baldwin county, is mostly farmland. That is, it *was* mostly agricultural until 1979 when the aftermath of Hurricane Frederick introduced what was previously undiscovered real estate to the eastern U.S. as an untapped investment opportunity. During the last decade, the county has been the recipient of a new wave of immigration and economic prosperity, forever changing the historic enclave of provincial townships into sprawling suburbs and tourist destinations. Robertsdale, like each of the other small cities along the main north/south artery of the county, is experiencing all that comes with unprecedented visibility and infrastructural demands.

Robertsdale has a total population of 4,228, consisting of families earning on average \$50,000 annually. There is also a steady growth of Hispanic immigrants who were once classified as agricultural migrant workers who are now integrating permanently into the community.¹ The five-mile radial demographics show a population of 15,247 of still overwhelmingly white middle-middle class families born and raised in Baldwin County.² However, the extension of the radius to twenty miles (from which our church draws attenders and members) finds a more varied population of over 120,000 with trends toward upper-middle class educated transplants from other regions. This data

¹Baldwin County, Alabama Demographics [on-line]; accessed 20 February 2008; available from http://www.baldwineda.com/Demographics/city_of_robertsdale.html; Internet.

²MCDC Demographic Profile 3, 2000 Census, 5-Mile Radius [on-line]; accessed 2 July, 2008; available from http://mcdc2.missouri.edu/cgi-bin/broker?_PROGRAM=websas.caps.sas&_SERVICE=appdev&latitude=36567&longitude=&sitename=&radii=3+5+20&state=01&units=+&tablelist=1&printdetail=on&_debug=; Internet.

does not include Mobile due to the geographic and traditional segregating barrier of Mobile Bay.³

Grace Fellowship Baptist Church first assembled in November, 2006, when five families gathered in a home following a theological split among the members of the century old First Baptist Church in Silverhill (adjacent to Robertsedale). This split was the result, in part, of concerns and the subsequent publication and dissemination of materials from some influential and well-meaning Southern Baptist men questioning the validity of Calvinist theology and pastors like me who are Calvinists. These actions ultimately brought about my resignation. It was my private intention to leave even before there were public signs of dissension, and I wanted no part of remaining in Baldwin County to pastor a congregation of misplaced “radicals,” even if I were, in part, responsible for what had come to pass.

During the weeks that followed, a few families, including my own (30-35 individuals), commuted across Mobile Bay to Christ Fellowship Baptist Church, where Steven Lawson is the pastor. He had experienced the same circumstances himself nearly three years prior at Dauphin Way Baptist Church. Lawson, along with other elders and staff, encouraged and met with those who were now attending Christ Fellowship as a result of the split. These meetings were intended to help guide the new fellowship, including their search for a pastor. At this time, these families were meeting in a warehouse on Sunday and Wednesday evenings for prayer and Bible study. In mid-December, three former deacons from First Baptist Silverhill who were meeting with the group were appointed to formally ask me to be their pastor; I declined. Lawson, aware of my intention to leave, told me he had done the same thing following his departure from Dauphin Way, wanting to get as far away from the situation as he could. He admitted that he was wrong trying to leave and expressed that I was also wrong for the same reasons.

³Ibid.

In January 2007, following much prayer and consideration, I joyfully became the pastor of Grace Fellowship Baptist Church. The church was formally incorporated and constituted in February 2007, along with affirmation and initial instruction from our doctrinal statement and church covenant.

Currently, Grace Fellowship has 62 members, between 37 and 40 active families, 65-70 active adults, and 30-35 active children, making a total active congregation participating in worship services of between 95 and 100. God has graciously supplied space needs although we are near capacity in our sanctuary and nursery/preschool facilities. In December 2007, we purchased more than thirteen acres in a transitional location of Robertsdale where land is no longer farmed but is being sold for residential and commercial developments. In September 2009 we moved from the small office complex and began meeting in what was formerly a Presbyterian school in Robertsdale. Our plan is to relocate on our property within the next three years.

The importance of accurately describing a church using terminology that has historical precedence and contemporary relevance cannot be overstated. Recognizing that our doctrinal statement along with our constitution and by-laws are lengthy documents demanding time and reflection, we have assembled what many in our culture are diligently avoiding: labels. These historic and contemporary labels serve as summary for our membership and to our community to aid in the explanation of who Grace Fellowship Baptist Church is and is not. First, the Bible is our authority: we are a biblical congregation. Therefore, we derive our identity, actions, and attitudes about God and humanity along with the authority for them from Scripture. Second, the gospel is our message: we are an Evangelical congregation. Therefore, our gathering and purpose is predicated upon the truth and implications of the gospel as presented through God's sovereign work of redemption revealed in Scripture and demonstrated through the universal church. Third, the historical beliefs and practices of Baptists, specifically

Southern Baptists, are our identity. We are a Baptist congregation and adhere to the primary historical theology and practice of Baptist congregations and the observances of the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper.

Fourth, the Protestant Reformation is the genesis of our affirmations and denials. We are a Protestant congregation and recognize the historic schism formally pronounced by the officials and adherents of the Roman Catholic church, and we affirm the five formal pillars of the reformation: Scripture alone, Christ alone, grace alone, faith alone, and all to the glory of God. Fifth, the doctrines of Grace, or Reformed theology, are the guiding tenants of our systematic and biblical theology: we are a Calvinistic congregation. Therefore, we begin all formal and informal considerations of God with the acknowledgement that God alone is sovereign in character and in all His activities.

Currently, we are a white, middle-class congregation where more than 30 percent of our adults hold college degrees and would be described by most surveys as politically conservative and civic-minded. We are a “culturally-middle” congregation⁴ in a culturally-right context.⁵ This homogeneous classification is not by design but default. Our desire is to diligently maintain and emphasize our biblical, Evangelical, Protestant, Baptist, Reformed distinctions while working to unfetter ourselves from our socioeconomic, political, demographic identity. Both have historically been difficult.

The one symbol defining Grace Fellowship Baptist Church that we have purposed to ingrain within every aspect of our gatherings is the public reading of Scripture. Albert Mohler has noted that every church must be able to pass the “catacomb” test where every word taught and preached is weighed in the context of what a simple

⁴Tex Sample, *U.S. Lifestyles and Mainline Churches* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1990), 101.

⁵Ibid., 63.

underground church would demand.⁶ To pass this test, a church must never incorporate activities or programs as centerpieces of its ministry that may not be successfully carried out in hidden exile. If we must be defined by a symbol representing our purpose and ministry that could never undermine our intentions, it must be the Bible.

Rationale for the Project

It has been observed that within many Evangelical churches of recent decades, the Bible is often treated as a storehouse of obscurity filled with “did you know?” facts used by teachers and preachers as a convenient and settled starting or ending point to their lessons and sermons. There are two primary reasons for this erroneous thinking. First, although most Evangelical preachers and congregations have a relatively orthodox answer to the question of whether or not the Bible is the authoritative Word of God, some, in practice seem to deny this orthodoxy. Second, by listening to the sermons and reading the literature of many modern Evangelicals, it may be concluded that they do not know how to extract meaning and relevance from the Scripture; which leads to fragmented, incorrect and trivial information being the foundational yet thin strata of those churches.⁷ It is neither my primary intention nor ability to correct the first and most important issue of unbelief in the sufficiency and supremacy of Scripture for life, godliness and worship (2 Pet 1:3). That dilemma is an issue of faith and must be accomplished by God Himself. However, it is the responsibility of the preacher and elders of the church (formally and informally – 2 Tim 3:14-4:4; 1 Tim 3:2; and 1 Pet 5:1-5), themselves, to “accurately handle the Word of truth” in the presence of all with the purpose of presenting a high view of both God and His Word along with training the

⁶Albert Mohler, *Feed My Sheep: A Passionate Plea for Preaching* (Orlando: Reformation Trust Publishing, 2008), 6.

⁷J. I. Packer, *Knowing God* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 1993), 24-32.

congregation to do likewise. When good exegesis and exposition is consistently accomplished, it enables the reversal of the first fallacy regarding faith in the Scriptures.

It was my strong desire and the intention of this project to encourage, inspire, and instruct the congregation of Grace Fellowship Baptist Church to think expositionally and do biblical exposition as they teach, preach, counsel and converse among members and attendees of all ages. The project was needed to create and perpetuate biblical attitudes and actions within and without the church. It was needed because we are still in the formative stages of our development. Our documents and distinctives strongly reflect the philosophical mindset and structure of a church holding to the tenants of expositional preaching and teaching to prevent subsequent generations from abandoning the centrality of God's Word within our church. The implementation of this project will help guard Grace Fellowship Baptist Church from the temptation of neglecting or abandoning a high view of Scripture.

The desire and willingness of leaders and teachers of Grace Fellowship Baptist to grow in their ability to "accurately handle the word of truth" (2 Tim 2:15) and the hunger of the congregation to, themselves, "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Pet 3:18) enabled me to execute my project "with joy and not with groaning" (Heb 13:17).

Definitions and Limitations

For the purpose of this project it was important to have a clear definition of expository preaching. I followed Albert Mohler's approach to expository preaching as set forth in his definition:

Expository preaching is that mode of Christian preaching that takes as its central purpose the presentation and application of the text of the Bible. All other issues and concerns are subordinated to the central task of presenting the biblical text. As the Word of God, the text of Scripture has the right to establish both the substance and the structure of the sermon. Genuine exposition takes place when the

preacher sets forth the meaning and message of the biblical text and makes clear how the Word of God establishes the identity and worldview of the church as the people of God.⁸

He continues his explanation of expository preaching by giving three distinctive characteristics: “(1) Authority – because it stands upon the very authority of the Bible; (2) Reverence – this type of preaching requires and reinforces a sense of reverence on the part of God’s people; and (3) Centrality – because it demands the central place in Christian worship and is respected as the event through which the living God speaks to His people.”⁹

The goals of this project were in keeping with a definition of expository preaching set forth and applied in three additional areas of consideration: (1) expository teaching; (2) expository counseling; and (3) expository conversation. Expository teaching is the clear explanation of Scripture with a changed mind as its intended goal. Expository counseling is personal explication of God’s Word with another, sometimes directed topically or by life situation, with changed behavior or lifestyle as its intended goal. Expository conversation is the salting of informal exchange by using the explication of God’s Word with God exalting relationships as its intended goal.

The project was limited to fifteen weeks. This period included all four phases and the administration and analysis of all instruments. The ultimate goal of this project was to perpetuate a biblical expository mindset and skill level through leadership modeling (consistent execution for teaching and preaching, and the training of future biblical expositors) and a deepening expansion of a biblical worldview through informal counsel and conversation. Therefore, the limitations of time and research methodology did not fully determine the success or failure of the project. However, it was the intention

⁸Albert Mohler, “Expository Preaching and the Recovery of Christian Worship,” Commentary by R. Albert Mohler Jr. (August 2005), parts 1 & 3 [on-line]; accessed 26 September 2005; available from http://albertmohler.comcommentary_print.php?cdate=2005-08-11; Internet.

⁹Ibid.

of the project to create a model of (instruments and seminar) and models for (trained and executing biblical expositors) the perpetuation of these goals.

The implementation of this project included four groups. The first group consisted of the adults of Grace Fellowship Baptist Church invited to attend a ninety minute session explaining the project and inviting them to participate. The second group consisted of those adults from among the first group who desired to learn more about becoming a biblical expositor as it related to their general life as a believer. That group attended an additional four-week seminar. The third group consisted of those individuals who, following completion of the first four-week seminar, believed they were gifted and called to pursue further instruction about biblical exposition as it related to teaching and preaching. The fourth group was made up of those who finished the first eight weeks of instruction (originally intended for elders and deacons) who would continue as model expositors in the future (perpetuating biblical exposition) attending the third seminar (two weeks) where they prepared to lead the congregation in a ninety minute session about the value, necessity, and joy of biblical exposition in their everyday life. Although, according to Scripture, women are not permitted to preach or serve as elders, they are instructed and gifted to teach, counsel, and converse with a biblical mindset and use adequate skills in biblical explication. Therefore, women were encouraged to participate in the project.

Research Methodology

Four phases of the project served to define the levels of knowledge, ability, and desire of the congregation of Grace Fellowship Baptist Church to be biblical expositors. Each phase was intended to increase the knowledge of and skill level for the participants in biblical exposition while intensifying their desire to learn and do more Bible exposition.

Six instruments were essential to the project. Of the six instruments, four were intended to measure attitudes and desire as they related to biblical exposition for recruitment into the various phases of the project. One, the “Congregational Survey Regarding Expository Preaching,” was intended to compare the baseline knowledge and understanding of expository preaching with the gained knowledge and understanding of expository preaching from the project (with the concluding seminar consisting of those who desired to become model expositors). Although the goals of the project extended beyond knowledge of and skills for expository preaching, it was a more familiar concept (one of the church’s distinctives) for the congregation of Grace Fellowship Baptist Church. Therefore, I introduced a broader understanding and usage of biblical exposition through the familiar terminologies of expository preaching. A helpful instrument for the advancement of my own preaching came through personal feedback, questions and discussion topics drawn from my personal methodology for the preparation and delivery of expository sermons. Questions and discussions from the methodology were related to sermons preached.

Video recording was originally only to be used with the elders and some deacons of the church, who, through their gifting and commitment to serve as ministers of the Word, had made previous commitments to the church when affirmed by the congregation to perform their ministry. These elders and deacons were to make up the focus group interviewed at the beginning and conclusion of the project, however, this aspect of the project was extended beyond elders and deacons to include all willing participants.

Summary of Chapters

Chapter 1 introduces Grace Fellowship Baptist Church along with Robertsdale, Alabama, and its geographic and demographic context. The typology, symbols, and

rituals of the new church were expressed with emphasis on five specific labels adopted by the church; and the goals of the project were explained. The purpose of the chapter was to provide the context of the church and the rationale and need for this particular project.

Chapter 2 gives the biblical and theological justifications for doing biblical exposition. I introduced the chapter with Hebrews 1:1-3 because it tells of a God who has spoken in the past; He is a God who speaks. I expanded the passage to include the full Epistle of Hebrews which tells how God definitively spoke through His Son (Heb 1:2-12:27) and continues His speaking through His church (Heb 12:28-13:25). I explained how God is an expositing God (revealing) and still exposit Himself through His creation, His people (Israel and the church), His prophets, His law, and His promises by way of His Word. I used various passages to demonstrate this activity. The remainder of the chapter emphasized and explained the biblical mandate believers have to, themselves, be expositors of God's Word. John Calvin's interpretations about the biblical offices spoken of 1 Corinthians 12:28 and Ephesians 4:1-16 inform the theological justification for the specific ministry of the Word in the church taught in the project.

Chapter 3 sets forth the philosophical and practical mindset for becoming a biblical expositor. Francis Schaefer's *He Is There and He Is not Silent* guided the philosophical justification for the need for biblical expositors by considering language itself and communication as one of the most compelling expositing aspects of God and His creation.¹⁰ God, as a speaking God, speaks through His Word to and through His people as theocentric agents of exposition. That relationship necessitates men and women to become competent expositors themselves so they may obediently tell others what God has revealed. I gave a brief defense of biblical exposition as the primary means of teaching, preaching, counseling, and conversing God's Word. The last half of the chapter

¹⁰Francis A. Schaeffer, *The Three Essential Books in One Volume Trilogy* (Wheaton: Crossway Books, 1990), 275- 350.

was dedicated to establishing expositional presuppositions and useful methods of interpreting Scripture (using Sidney Greidanus' ten components of John Calvin's hermeneutical method)¹¹ and explained my own method for doing biblical exposition.

Chapter 4 explains the process and research methodology used in implementing the project. There was a detailed explanation for each questionnaire and survey used. Also, the chapter demonstrated the progressive nature of the project in conjunction with the goals initially stated. The three main phases of the project were explained. There was an introductory session to inform and recruit for the first part of the seminar consisting of four sessions explaining the basic elements and need for all believers becoming competent biblical expositors. Part 2 consisted of four sessions with the purpose of instructing and encouraging participants who desire to become expository teachers and preachers with the instructor serving as a model expositor. The final part consisted of two sessions preparing expository teachers and preachers to become models of biblical exposition and concluded with the participants leading the congregation in a ninety minute session on the value, necessity, and joy of biblical exposition in the home and local church.

Chapter 5 focuses on analysis and evaluation of and reflection on the project. This final chapter evaluated the project's purpose, goals and process. I also noted the strengths and weaknesses discovered and draw final conclusions.

Research Instruments

The research instruments are included in Appendices 1-7.

¹¹Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 127-37.

CHAPTER 2

A BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL JUSTIFICATION FOR BIBLICAL EXPOSITION

A preface for the Bible may be summarized in two propositions: “God created” and “God said.” Of those two statements, “God said,” is perhaps the most profound and exceptional statement known to man, for if God had not spoken, then man would not know that it was God who made all things and God who sovereignly rules all He has made. That exceptional statement, however, begs two new questions: “If God has spoken, what did He say?” and “because He does not dwell among us in visible presence,”¹ “Who will speak for God?” This chapter serves as the biblical and theological answer to those questions.

“God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways” (Heb 1:1). Arthur Pink, in his commentary on Hebrews, asserted what he saw as the clarifying distinction between the one true and living God and all other gods created in the imaginations of fallen humanity. He explained that “God spoke. True Deity is not speechless. The true and living God, unlike the idols of the heathen, is no dumb being. The God of Scripture, unlike that absolute and impersonal ‘first cause’ of philosophers and evolutionists, is not silent.”²

History (relating to prophecy and God’s people) and Scripture (as the written Word of God) reveal that God not only speaks but also that He is significantly defined by His speech. *That* God spoke in the beginning is in itself profound and relevant to time,

¹John Calvin, *The Institutes of Christian Religion*, vol. 2 of the Library of Christian Classics, ed. John T. McNeill trans. Ford Lewis Battles (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006), 1053.

²Arthur Pink, *An Exposition of Hebrews* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 2004), 22.

space, and matter, but the existence of a beginning only as a result of His speaking makes God's words inextricably linked with the subsistence of all that is. Therefore, as human history began because of God speaking, it continues by His Word (Col 1:17). What makes the linkage between God speaking and human existence more significant than the linkage with the rest of creation is the fact and record of God speaking to humanity. Although the purpose of this verbal relationship between God and humanity does not fully answer our questions, it does move us in the right direction. Using the letter to the Hebrews as a guide, let us gain a broad view of how God has spoken and what He has said: (1) Hebrews 1:1 – God spoke to and through human vessels known as prophets; (2) Hebrews 1:2-12:27 – God has spoken ultimately and completely through His Son the Lord Jesus; and (3) Hebrews 12:28-13:25 – God still speaks through His people the church.

God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power (Heb 1:1-3).³

This passage reminds the New Testament reader that God did indeed speak and that in times past He spoke through human vessels known as prophets. R. T. France says, “One of the chief glories of the Old Testament religion was its prophetic tradition. Israel lived not by human insight but by divine revelation as God spoke through the prophets.”⁴ Whereas “many portions” means differing amounts of revelatory information, which is understood to be incomplete and fragmented, what is meant by “in many ways” or how He first delivered His messages is of some debate and speculation. Quibbling over visions, dreams, and actual verbal encounters has often caused unnecessary divisions.

³Unless otherwise noted all Scripture references are taken from the New American Standard Bible, 1977.

⁴R. T. France, *Hebrews – Revelation*, in vol. 13 of *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, ed. Tremper Longman III and David E. Garland (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006), 37.

The primary focus of the text and this project, however, demands attention to the controlling proposition; God spoke first through prophets and ultimately and completely through His Son.

Genesis 1:1 says that God created the universe. Genesis 1:2 says that the initial state of the material universe was chaos. The remaining verses in the chapter reveal that after God spoke the material universe into existence (Gen 1:3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24, 26, 28, and 29), He spoke it into order. According to Kenneth Mathews, in the biblical account of creation “God is depicted as autonomous master who has by His uncontested Word commanded all things into existence and ordered their design and purpose.”⁵ In the most general yet universally equitable way, God speaks in and through His creation. Psalm 19 says, “The heavens are telling of the glory of God, and their expanse is declaring the works of His hands.” Reymond asks, “What was it God revealed? He revealed both His existence and something of His nature, as well as moral precepts, through man’s nature as *imago dei*, and His glory, in creation and nature, in a nonpropositional manner.”⁶

Thielicke compared this process of organizing formlessness and chaos into order and glory as a sermon. We may often encounter those who scoff at the idea of this universe coming into being in only six days. In fact, if one so bold to believe God could make all that is in less than one week, could they not also believe He could create everything in a moment without measure? Thielicke delighted in God’s “sovereign freedom (in creation) that suffers no other influence or limitation.”⁷ As an expositor of Himself, God was more interested in us learning through the witness of the Word about who He is than any scientific components which may give satisfaction to our intellect but not explain His

⁵Kenneth A. Mathews, *Genesis 1-11:26*, The New American Commentary, vol. 1A (Nashville: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 1996), 117.

⁶Robert L. Reymond, *A New Systematic Theology of the Christian Faith*, 2nd ed. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1998), 5.

⁷Helmut Thielicke, *How the World Began: Man in the First Chapters of the Bible*, trans. and ed. John W. Doberstein (Philadelphia: Muhlenburg Press, 1961), 20.

glory. “A sermon is not an academic lecture,”⁸ it is indeed a means of expressing the glory of God.

All of the creation activity by God and the creation testimony of God’s glory occurred and was evident prior to the entrance of sin and rebellion on the earth through man’s disobedience. Sin may be defined as any thought, behavior or attitude of man in rebellion against what God has spoken; this would include any product of His word in creation. Erickson says that to categorize this rebellion is to recognize that sin is “failure to love, worship, and obey God.”⁹ He continues this summary by saying, “Anyone who truly believes God to be what He says He is will accord to Him His rightful status. Failure to do so is sin. Setting one’s own ideas above God’s revealed Word entails refusal to believe it to be true.”¹⁰ Therefore, one may conclude that all sin is unbelief.

Romans 1:20 explains, “For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they [humanity] are without excuse.” Although it cannot be said that the formlessness or disorder of the original matter was a result of sin, one can deduce from Genesis 3 (the fall of humanity) through the remainder of Scripture (revealing and describing redemption) that sin has brought a certain kind of chaos to what God had previously called good. Ross explains, “God, the sovereign Creator, is in fact the Redeemer and Lawgiver and He accomplishes His work through His powerful Word.”¹¹ God’s Word brings both order and reorder (redemption) to chaos.

God speaks through creation and God has spoken through the prophets but these means and the messages through these means, although marvelous, are insufficient

⁸Ibid.

⁹Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1985), 580.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Allen P. Ross, *Creation and Blessing: A Guide to the Study and Exposition to the Book of Genesis*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1988), 103.

to restore the broken relationship between man and God. The most impactful point of Hebrews 1:1-3 answers the questions “Who will speak for God?” and “What will God say?” Jesus, the Word of God made flesh (John 1:1-3 and 14), is the final and all-sufficient Word of God who was sent into the world to speak and live the full revelation of the Father to those who were in sinful rebellion against God and His Word. Hebrews 1:2-12:27 fully explains this with a combination of passages telling how Jesus fulfilled the requirements and testimonies of the law, given through the prophet Moses, and how Jesus is the mediator of a new and eternal covenant spoken of and alluded to by all the previous and the subsequent faith-filled men and women and prophets. God has spoken through His Son, the Lord Jesus.

But perhaps the most pressing and contemporarily relevant question asked is, “Is God still speaking?” Jesus answered that question in His High Priestly prayer in John 17:13-21 saying,

But now I come to Thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy made full in themselves. I have given them Thy word; and the world has hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I do not ask Thee to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in the truth; Thy word is truth. As Thou didst send Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth. I do not ask in behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; that they may all be one; even as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be in Us; that the world may believe that Thou didst send Me.

The dilemma of this present age and all ages for Christians is if they belong to Christ then why do they remain here in this sinful world? God sent Jesus into the world to give to His Apostles the Father’s Word. That Word has the power to sanctify or separate His people from the world unto the Father. As the Father sent Jesus into the world to reveal His Word to the Apostles, He also sent the Apostles into the world to reveal His Word to the church. That sanctifying Word is now entrusted to the church that they may

declare the truth in all the world. The question, “Is God still speaking?” and the dilemma of why Christians remain here in this sinful world are satisfied when they believe and act on their belief that God has left His children in this dark world to speak for God. Mohler pinpoints a crucial problem within the contemporary church when he lists the “loss of confidence in the power of the Word”¹² as a part of his explanation for weak preaching. This loss of confidence is eradicated when Christians believe that we remain in order to speak.

As the reader comes to the conclusion of Hebrews (12:28-13:25), along with the applicational passages of the other Epistles of the New Testament, he finds the same message: God is still speaking. God speaks presently in every age through the testimony and application of God’s truth in, to, and through the church.

God is not silent. God, who made all things, spoke to and through the prophets, revealing that He is the God of creation. Bonhoeffer, in *Creation and Fall*, explains how the God of creation is significantly distinct from all other gods proposed or created by men. He is “totally God, wholly Creator, completely the Lord, and His creature remains totally the submissive, obedient creature, praising and worshiping Him as Lord. He is never the creation. . . . There is no continuum that binds or unites Him with His work. There is only His Word. ‘God said. . . .’ The only continuity between God and His work is His Word.”¹³ But in the case of creation that was not the final and complete revelation of God. At the appointed time, God sent His Son, the Word made flesh, into the world to live and speak the full revelation of God. That message is for all men to hear, but it is the church, by the power of God’s Spirit, who will believe the Word of God declared in creation, spoken by the prophets and fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Bonhoeffer’s idea of the

¹²R. Albert Mohler Jr., *He Is Not Silent: Preaching in a Postmodern World* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2008), 16-17.

¹³Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Creation and Fall: A Theological Interpretation of Genesis 1-3*, trans. John C. Fletcher (New York: Collier Books Macmillan Publishing Company, 1959), 22.

continuum binding and uniting God with His creation finds biblical continuity from creation though redemption. To parallel Genesis 1, “God said,” with Romans 10:17, “So faith comes from hearing and hearing by the Word of Christ,” is to acknowledge the imperative of this continuum. Bonhoeffer continues, “The Word calls being out of non-being, so that it may be. . . . It is simply impossible to grasp that first, wordless act of creation, because the Creator is One, and we, as His creatures are created by His Word. These two moments in God are one act; we cannot express this differently.”¹⁴ Certainly this parallel gives insight to Paul’s teaching in 1 Corinthians 1 and 2 that the Word apart from God’s Spirit is indiscernible, foolish, and offensive. The activity and participation of the Trinity observed in creation is equally paramount in redemption. The instrument of order is, in both cases, the Word of God.

That God has spoken is a historically unifying principle within Christendom. Jesuit Hugo Rahner, in *A Theology of Proclamation*, asks, “What do you seek from the church? Faith. And what does faith offer you? Eternal life.”¹⁵ In what he refers to as revelation as the root of kerygma, he states, “Belief in the fact of revelation itself, being filled with awe and true fear over this incredible fact, that God has spoken to me, there lies the starting point and the all-penetrating form of our kerygmatic theology.”¹⁶ Rahner’s kerygmatic theology, which may be compared to a Protestant’s idea of a theology of preaching, is based upon a clear understanding of the message of salvation and the idea that, “Kerygma is the good news as it came forth from God’s mouth. . . . From the historical point of view, then, kerygma considered in its content must preach

¹⁴Ibid., 24.

¹⁵Hugo Rahner, S. J., *A Theology of Proclamation*, trans. Richard Dimmler et al. (New York: Herder and Herder, 1968), 17.

¹⁶Ibid.

urgently those truths which God placed in the foreground in the historical economy of His salvation.”¹⁷

John Stott, representing the Protestant Evangelical position, has endeavored to relink Evangelicals and Catholics with this principle. During the *Dialogue on Mission 1977-1984*, Stott pointed out that “Roman Catholics and Evangelicals are entirely agreed on the necessity of revelation, if human beings are ever to know God. . . . We all recognize that in the Scriptures God has used human words as the vehicle of His communication.”¹⁸ He also recognizes that “Roman Catholics and Evangelicals differ slightly in their understandings of the Scriptures, and even more on what the proper process of interpreting this Word should be.”¹⁹ But it may be concluded that both Evangelicals and Catholics “affirm [that] the written Word of God is the work of both God and human beings.”²⁰ Therefore, it is established from historical orthodox Christianity that God has indeed spoken.

The purpose of this project is to teach the congregation at Grace Fellowship Baptist Church (GFBC) to do biblical exposition. This purpose does not originate with this writer or with any man. God Himself is an expositor. He is an expositor of Himself. It is because God has explicated or revealed Himself in His Word that we are called to be expositors of God as He has revealed Himself. Scripture indicates five ways God explicates Himself: (1) God explicates Himself through His creation; (2) God explicates Himself through His people; (3) God explicates Himself through His prophets; (4) God explicates Himself through His law; and (5) God explicates Himself through His promises.

¹⁷Ibid., 13.

¹⁸Basil Meeking and John Stott, eds., *The Evangelical-Roman Catholic Dialogue on Mission 1977-1984: A Report* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1986), 16.

¹⁹Ibid., 17.

²⁰Ibid., 17-18.

Everything that exists, has ever existed, or will ever exist is revealing or explaining something about God. *The Belgic Confession*, Article I, commenting on Romans 1:20, speaks about “the creation, preservation, and government of the universe; which is before our eyes as a most elegant book, wherein all creatures, great and small, are as so many characters leading us to see clearly the invisible things of God, even His everlasting power and divinity, as the apostle says, ‘all these things are sufficient to convince men and leave them without excuse.’”²¹ How gracious God is to exposit Himself at least in part to man who is rebellious and darkened by sin in his ability to even see God. God would have been justified if revelation and explanation of Himself would have ended with His eviction of Adam and Eve from Eden. But the first way God explains Himself is by context. The context of man is God’s creation (Gen 1 and 2). Man is a creature whose existence is confined to the narrow tunnel of time and space. Man, along with all creation, cannot know or be known apart from creation. Yet, Christians in particular must establish in their thinking that they have indeed come from the rest of creation and not *ex nihilo*. However, in attempts to distance themselves from Darwinism or evolutionary thinking of any kind Christians often disrupt the linkage of man with the animal world (and the rest of creation). In overplaying the hatred of such doctrine Christians lose the peculiarity of their beginnings. Man was not made from nothingness but rather as the image of God within the context of God’s creation.²² Sproul clarifies some misunderstanding regarding man’s fallen state and his ability and inability to understand what God is revealing in His creation. Because God has spoken through His creation so clearly “man has no basis for apologia to God’s indictment.”²³ Sproul even

²¹William Hendriksen, *Romans*, New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1981), 70.

²²Bonhoeffer, *Creation and Fall*, 36-37.

²³R. C. Sproul, *Romans*, St. Andrews Expository Commentary (Wheaton: Crossway, 2009), 42.

wonders if John Calvin was inconsistent when he said, “nature was the glorious theater man cannot see because of his fallen condition.”²⁴ However, this condemnation is not unjust because God is a poor expositor of who He is. This condemnation is just because God has so marvelously revealed Himself through creation. The Apostle Paul in Romans 1:18-20 said that this universally revealed knowledge condemns not because God has not adequately spoken but because man suppresses what God has spoken. Paul states,

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.

It is not merely that sin has made mankind blind, but rather it is fallen humanity’s love of sin that blinds them. Mounce says that “truth cannot be changed, but it can be held down or stifled. . . . The blindness that follows is self-imposed.”²⁵

The first recorded word spoken by God, “Let there be light” (Gen 1:3), was the first recorded word spoken by God to bring order from chaos. As previously stated, this particular chaos was not a result of sin; however, man learns from this activity of God that both creation and redemptive recreation are accomplished by God’s Word. More will be said about this as I consider the ministry of evangelistically expositing God’s saving grace in the gospel.

There is a certain irony in considering creation as an exposition of God. Whereas God’s creation is so overwhelmingly vast and complex and its wonders could never be exhausted by man, the main thing it accomplishes is condemnation. Remember Bonhoeffer’s insistence that man must meditate on and grasp the continuum between God’s Word and creation not merely as cause and effect but freedom in the Word. Just as

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵Robert Mounce, *Romans*, The New American Commentary, vol. 27 (Nashville: Broadman Holman Publishers, 1995), 77.

God was not bound by the initial cause of creation to then make man (and man in His image), He was likewise not bound to make a covenant of redemption by any previous causes. Also, there is a parallel between God making man from the already existent “stuff” made from nothing and God making a covenant with a man and people who already existed in order to create something gloriously new and in His image.²⁶

The second way God expositis Himself is through His people. Genesis 3-11 is a catalogue of narratives filled with sinful humanity’s rejection of God and disobedience to His Word. If God would have been justified to cease revealing Himself to man following his banishment from paradise, how much more would He be warranted to close the book on His personal exposition following mankind’s murder, idolatry, and immorality? However, rather than chastening humanity, He made a covenant with Himself on their behalf. God chose to love the idolatrous Abram and his barren wife Sarai. He spoke a new promise to bless all men in generations to come through the people He would make His own and use them as the divine revelation of His will and glory. Why did God wait? Were there not other people or another individual He could have chosen sooner? Pink answers that question with a clear view of God’s purpose of displaying God’s grace saying,

The Lord determined to have a people of His own by the calling of grace, but it was not until all the claims of the natural man had been repudiated by his own wickedness that divine clemency was free to flow forth. In other words, it was not until the utter depravity of man had been demonstrated by the antediluvians, and again at Babel, that God dealt with Abram in sovereign grace.²⁷

Greidanus summarizes the call of Abram and the making of His people with an eschatological outlook: “The Lord gives His people the earth in order to reclaim it for the

²⁶Bonhoeffer, *Creation and Fall*, 23-24.

²⁷Arthur W. Pink, *Gleanings in Genesis* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1922), 139-40.

Kingdom of God.”²⁸ This new nation was created as a means of redemption for all nations. Greidanus concludes his exposition with the parallel between the call and commissioning of Abram and our own. Christians, likewise, are “called to reclaim the world for God’s Kingdom. Jesus’ command (to go into all the world and make disciples) still holds.”²⁹ God was creating a new holy people from among the people who rejected Him. It was through the process of making this new people and the people themselves that God was revealing Himself. In Isaiah 43:1 and 21 we read that this people were a people God created for Himself to “declare His praise.”

This covenant was not the end of God’s gracious exposition of Himself through a people. First Peter 2:9-10, in fulfillment of Psalm 102:18, identifies the church as the fulfillment of God’s promise to make a people from many nations to become His people. Why would God make a people for Himself? The eschatological answer is for His own glory, but there is a lot of “space” between Genesis 12 and Revelation 22. This holy, chosen, and peculiar people who have been left in this sinful wasteland are strangers and aliens who, through their holiness, are to reveal God to the observing world. There are temporal yet relevant answers in the next three ways God exposit Hisself.

In the same way God spoke order from the chaos in creation, this passage reveals order coming into the vanity of man’s sinful existence. Mankind loves sin; it is our nature. But the root of sin is rejection of God’s sovereignty. Boice explains, “When we peer below the surface we discover that we are all in rebellion against God because of our desire for autonomy. . . . We hate sovereignty because we want to be sovereign

²⁸Sidney Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from Genesis: Foundations for Expository Sermons* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2007), 149-50.

²⁹*Ibid.*, 156-57.

ourselves. We want to run our own lives.”³⁰ Whereas creation generally exposit God to humanity, sinful man’s love of darkness elicits his natural inclinations to “suppress the truth in unrighteousness” (Rom 1:18) and become even darker and chaotic. Mankind, of themselves, will never seek God, never understand His truth, and never love His character. Therefore, a third way God exposit Himself is through His prophets. A prophet is anyone who is sent from God to speak forth God’s Word. The chief job of the prophet is to declare “thus saith the Lord.” But such a bland understanding of the person, role, and aim of the prophet allows exposition to be understood and received as equally insipid. Rabbi Abraham Heschel colorfully describes the prophet in the context of normal humanity, saying,

To a person endowed with prophetic sight, everyone else appears blind; to a person whose ear perceives God’s voice, everyone else appears deaf. No one is just; no one is strong enough, no trust complete enough. The prophet hates the approximate, he shuns the middle of the road. Man must live on the summit to avoid the abyss. There is nothing to hold to except God. Carried away by the challenge, the demand to straighten out man’s ways, the prophet is strange, one-sided, an unbearable extremist. . . . The prophet’s word is a scream in the night. While the world is at ease and asleep, the prophet feels the blast from heaven.³¹

From where do these prophets come? They are, with few exceptions, from among the chosen people of God and are primarily to declare the person, character, commandments, will, and judgments of God.

The majority of the Old Testament (with the antecedent found in Exodus 3, 4:10-11 and 4:14-16 – Moses) expresses the relationship between the prophet of God and God Himself and the work of the prophet. For example, “Therefore, come now and I will send you to Pharaoh,” where God called Moses, gave him mission and message, supernaturally endowed him with power, and sent him to speak on His behalf. Even as

³⁰James Montgomery Boice, *Romans 1-4: Justification by Faith* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1991), 1: 147-48.

³¹Abraham J. Heschel, *The Prophets* (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1962), 16.

Moses doubted and argued with God about the task, God informed Moses that He made Moses. The expositor, whether prophet or preacher, must know that it is always the God who made all things who sends and empowers. As with all “theological” questions and debates, the revealed answer will rest upon the foundation of God’s first exposition of Himself, creation. The God who creates is the God who speaks. God continued to rebuke Moses’ argument, “Now then go, and I, even I, will be with your mouth (the one I made) and teach you what you are to say.” Moses, seemingly unfazed by God’s rebuke, continued his argument, but God was undeterred by Moses’ unbelief (Exod 4:14-16):

Then the anger of the Lord burned against Moses, and He said, Is there not your brother Aaron the Levite? I know that he speaks fluently. And moreover, behold, he is coming out to meet you; when he sees you, he will be glad in his heart. And you are to speak to him and put the words in his mouth; and I, even I, will be with your mouth and his mouth, and I will teach you what you are to do. Moreover, he shall speak for you to the people; and it shall come about that he shall be as a mouth for you, and you shall be as God to him.

Moses’ contention was a classic retort heard from many human spokespersons: “I can’t, I won’t, choose someone else.” But God’s Word stands along with His purpose and will. Even though Moses was unbelieving and obstinate, God essentially answered, “I can and I will.” The call and commissioning of the prophet had both the element of mystery and humanity rolled up in the event. Childs, reflecting upon the call of Moses, points out the irony of the divine-human interaction that remains relevant for everyone wrestling with the message of God in the context of a world that would rather not engage. He says,

There remains a human initiative and will which, far from being crushed, remains a constitutive element of the one who is being sent. The astonishing elements of awe-inspiring theophany before which Moses cowered, suddenly recede into the background of the chapter and God addresses Moses as His chosen agent. . . . The divine will seek to transform the human, but the messenger continues to resist even after he has been given the office. The prophet of God is not just a vehicle of communication in the Old Testament. Exodus 3 offers a classic description of the

office as one which, even though initiated fully by God, incorporates a genuine human personality.³²

Hebrews 1:1-2 prefaces God's new work of exposition in His Son by recalling God's foundational revelation through His prophets. "God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son." There are three offices of the Lord Jesus in Scripture: prophet, priest, and king. Of those three it is His work as prophet that is most recognizable. This recognition is evidenced by many of the world's main religions and philosophical schools acknowledging Jesus as a "great teacher" or prophet. Hans Kung, for example, seeking a kind of peaceable conciliation between Islam and Christianity, offers such a grace when he emphatically states, the "Qur'an leaves no doubt about the fact that Jesus preached the truth," although he also points out that Jesus Himself "insisted that He was only a human being."³³ However, in spite of these systems' conciliatory and shallow theological genuflect, that credit is mostly polite or merely intellectual. It is when one, following Jesus' own example, pushes the prophetic and conclusive point that, yes, Jesus was indeed a prophet, but He was also prophetically confirmed the Son of God, that such interreligious civility turns contentious.³⁴

Mary, Jesus' mother, in her Magnificat, praised God for remembering His promise to send Messiah to His people and bless all nations, keeping His covenant of salvation saying, "He has given help to Israel His servant, in remembrance of His mercy, as He spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and his offspring forever" (Luke 1:54-55). This prophetic continuity is likewise affirmed in the early church's epistles. For example, the

³²Brevard S. Childs, *The Book of Exodus: A Critical, Theological Commentary* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1974), 73.

³³Hans Kung, *Christianity and World Religions: Paths to Dialogue with Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism*, trans. Peter Heinegg (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1986), 98.

³⁴Paul Tillich, *Christianity and the Encounter of the World Religions*, Bampton Lectures in America Delivered at Columbia University, 1961 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1963), 27-51.

Apostle Paul declared, “Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, ‘And to seeds,’ as referring to many, but rather to one, ‘And to your seed,” that is, Christ” (Gal 3:16). The Apostles, through their prophetic ministry, reminded Israel of the revelation of God in His Son and reminds us that this fulfillment was a promise given and declared first through Abraham and the Patriarchs. No true prophet (in our case biblical expositor) sent from God will change, diminish or add to what has previously been established in creation, in the establishment of a chosen people, or in the continuity of the prophetic utterances of the Patriarchs, prophets, and Apostles. As George states, “That is why Paul could stress with such passion the continuity and irrevocability of God’s covenant with Abraham: ‘If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.’”³⁵ Second Peter 1:16-21 gives us the distinction between men’s words and God’s Word as first given through the prophets. Peter explained,

For we did not follow cleverly devised tales when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty. For when He received honor and glory from God the Father, such an utterance as this was made to Him by the Majestic Glory, "This is My beloved Son with whom I am well-pleased"— and we ourselves heard this utterance made from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain. And so we have the prophetic word made more sure, to which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts. But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.

God exposit His Himself through His law. The law was given to reveal the character of God and the sin of man. Certainly the Reformers, as the Scriptures were revived in private and public discourse, explored the Christian application of the law of

³⁵Timothy George, *Galatians*, The New American Commentary, vol. 30 (Nashville: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 1994), 246.

God. Calvin, for example, extolled the virtues of teaching and preaching the law in his expansive commentary in the *Institutes*.³⁶

Perhaps the Puritans are our best resource in exploring this concept. The Puritans, through their extensive writing on the law, created a sophisticated and nuanced understanding of God's law revealed in scripture, but they did not reserve their meditations on the law for private consumption. It was their intention for right application ultimately as the law relates to the gospel. Nehemiah Coxe, on this subject said, "The mystery of the gospel cannot be thoroughly apprehended by us, without some good understanding of the economy of the law, yea, and also of the state of things before the law."³⁷ Some of the best examples of accurate understanding and use of the law of God by the Reformers and Puritans may be found in many confessions and accompanying catechisms composed during those eras such as the *Heidelberg Catechism* (1563) and the *Westminster Confession* (1647). Kevin DeYoung, in *The Good News We Almost Forgot* explains to the contemporary Evangelical, using the *Heidelberg Catechism*, the necessity of the law within a biblical presentation of the gospel.³⁸

Many Christians are comfortable allowing the Old Testament prophets to "set up" or validate the New Testament's claims about Jesus and His fulfillment of God's redemptive plan. However, in rightful celebration of God's grace and exuberant declaration "He is risen indeed!" Christians may be prone to skip the law by flippantly saying, "All was accomplished by Christ at Calvary." This joyous proposition is true; however, the cross of Calvary and our Lord's atoning sacrifice was not accomplished

³⁶John Calvin, *The Institutes of Christian Religion*, ed. John T. McNeil, trans. Ford Lewis Battles, Library of Christian Classics, vol. 1 (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006), 348-428.

³⁷Nehemiah Coxe, *A Discourse of the Covenants that God made with Man before the Law* (London: J. D., 1681), 3, quoted in Earnest F. Kevan, *The Grace of Law: A Study in Puritan Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1965), 109.

³⁸Kevin DeYoung, *The Good News We Almost Forgot: Rediscovering the Gospel in a 16th Century Catechism* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2010).

within an ambiguous vacuum such as “Jesus died for our sins because He loves us.” What exactly does that statement mean? Of course, it could be a theological short-cut or Evangelical jargon summarizing a volume’s worth of orthodox theology. But the present state of American Evangelicalism may at times be represented in cryptic, biblically empty, and esoteric presentations of the gospel like Saddleback Church’s pastor Rick Warren’s answer to political commentator Sean Hannity’s question, “How does a person get to heaven?”: “What it means to be a follower of Jesus Christ is to say, ‘I give as much of myself as I understand to as much of Jesus Christ as I understand’ at that moment.”³⁹ Whereas, I do believe Pastor Warren has a clearer understanding of the biblical gospel than that answer demonstrated and time would permit, the present climate of biblical ignorance and neglect in our culture almost demands a more careful explanation that includes what the Scriptures say about God’s righteousness and man’s inability to fulfill that righteousness. It was not the brevity of Warren’s statement to the very straight-forward question, “How does a person get to heaven?” but the lack of a biblical compartment for the hearer so they may be unable to biblically respond with biblical actions. Even in Acts 16:31 where Paul answered the jailer’s question, “What must I do to be saved?” with the brief “Believe in the Lord Jesus and you shall be saved,” verse 32 explains how Paul continued to “speak the word of the Lord to him.” This further explanation by the Apostle Paul is consistent with Peter’s earlier response in Acts 2:37-40 where he followed up his “repent and be baptized” answer to the crowd’s plea, “What shall we do?” with “many other words” of explanation about the gospel and the “promises” of God. Therefore, for the sake of this point, I believe it is the absence of the law of God at least in some measure, from Pastor Warren’s reply that may disable a person who truly believes Warren’s answer from biblically following Christ.

³⁹Rick Warren, interview by Sean Hannity, on *The Sean Hannity Show* (New York: Fox News Channel, 10 February 2008) [on-line]; accessed 8 March 2011; available from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w6F4HZ1Nry8>; Internet.

Undoubtedly, the law has been abused by preachers and leaders within the church in every generation. Paul warned Timothy of such abuse, “We know that the law is good if one uses it lawfully” (1 Tim 1:8). This affirmation was preceded by warnings and examples of misuse of the Scriptures in Ephesus. It appears that extremes are always present. It is not unusual to encounter strict legalism accompanied by the eventual pharisaical traditions of men leading to prideful success or broken spirited failure in contemporary churches. Likewise, rampant antinomianism infests the culture neglectful and ignorant of God’s law. Ernest Reisinger has observed and is

convinced that the present widespread contempt for civil law is the inevitable outgrowth of disregard and disrespect for divine laws. Adding to this the appalling ignorance in the church on this subject – the fruit of silence in the pulpit, or worse yet, false teaching.⁴⁰

Such perversion or neglect will inevitably pervert the gospel. The end purpose of the law is Christ. Without proper explanation of the law men are left with a wrong view of Christ.

First, it must be established in biblical evangelism that God first gave His law and the accompanying rituals and ceremonies to exposit Himself to His chosen people Israel. Exodus 19:3-Leviticus is the written record of God’s exposition of His character and His command to Moses to “say to all the house of Jacob and tell all the sons of Israel” (all that follows through Leviticus is the giving of the law and the proper rituals and ceremonies for worshiping God). If God had not explicated His righteous character through the giving of the law, mankind would be left to establish a “righteousness of our own” thus leaving them in sin, falling short of the glory of God.

Romans 2-5 and Galatians 3:15-19 explain that the law of God was given to not only exposit His holiness but also to expose humanity’s sin and unrighteousness. There is a peculiar and tense confluence Paul expresses in these passages where he refers to the

⁴⁰Ernest C. Reisinger, *The Law and the Gospel* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P and R Publishing, 1997), 157-58

giving of the law to Israel. They were already a holy people by promise, covenant, and preparation prior to the actual giving of the law, yet they were still unholy. Luther said,

When it [the law] was first given and first heard of them that were washed, righteous, purified, and chaste (having followed God's commands for preparation): and yet notwithstanding it brought that holy people into such a knowledge of their own misery, that they were thrown down even to death and desperation.⁴¹

When God's holiness impacts sinful man's holiness they are undone. However, in the Romans 10 passage we find the holy people of God unfazed by God's holiness because they have ceased teaching the law of God and replaced it with ignorant zeal. In Romans 10:1-4 the Apostle Paul who, himself prior to his conversion, trusted in his own righteousness, said, regarding his people, the Jews:

Brethren, my heart's desire and my prayer to God for them is for their salvation. For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not in accordance with knowledge. For not knowing about God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

The righteous life lived or the perfect fulfillment of the law by the Lord Jesus was the prophetically established requirement for His sacrificial death on the cross. "Do not think that I came to abolish the law or the prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill" (Matt 5:17). Blomberg explains how the "Fulfillment of the law . . . refers to the bringing to fruition of its complete meaning . . . none of it can rightly be interpreted until one understands how it has been fulfilled in Christ."⁴² Not only does the absence of the law in evangelism neglect the biblical nexus between divine demand and acceptance, it also perverts a right understanding of every New Testament applicational passage calling for righteous living from all who believe and follow Christ. J. I. Packer, in his lecture

⁴¹Martin Luther, *A Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians: Based on Lectures delivered at the University of Wittenburg* (1531; London: James Clarke and Company, 1953), 300.

⁴²Craig L. Blomberg, *Matthew*, The New American Commentary, vol. 22 (Nashville: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 1992), 103-04.

“Our Lord’s Understanding of the Law of God” at Westminster Chapel said, regarding Evangelicals and their neglect of the law of God:

It is often said that standards of conduct and integrity among evangelical Christians today are not as high as they were in days gone by. Few, I think, would feel able to dispute the justice of this accusation. But why should it be so? Some might point to the way in which standards of honesty, purity, and general decency have fallen in society around us, and find in this the cause of our own moral decline. And there would no doubt be an element of truth in such a diagnosis: certainly, when the ideals and values of our callous and immodest culture are constantly being shouted at us by newspapers, novels, radio, television, and public advertisements, it is impossible for us to avoid feeling their impact, however much we might wish to. Yet the root of our trouble must surely lie deeper than this. After all, what the Bible calls 'the world' and 'the spirit of the world' is not essentially different today from what it always has been. And it is just a fact of history that in the days when Puritan laymen and the early Evangelicals became a byword, as they did, for sheer goodness and integrity, the general standards of public morality were no higher than they are now, and in some cases even lower. What was it, then, we ask, that made the difference between their lives and ours? Why were they so outstanding for righteousness while we are so feeble at this point? Even a cursory study of their life and thought will show us that what made the difference was this: not that the pull of the world on them was any less strong or insidious than it is on us, but rather that their minds and hearts were more deeply exercised in the law of God than ours are.

The root of our trouble, putting it quite plainly, seems to be that we neither know nor care much about the law of our God. On the one hand, we do not give ourselves to studying and applying the law in the way that our evangelical forefathers did. Our neglect of the Old Testament, in particular, bears witness to this. On the other hand, our thinking, unlike theirs, has a lawless tinge. There is an antinomian streak running through it. We act as if our freedom from the law has made it a matter of comparative unimportance whether we keep the law in daily life or not. We appear to care more for right faith than we do for right living. We show a greater concern to be orthodox than to be upright. We seem to be more anxious to know the truth than we are to adorn it by our behaviour; we are, it appears, more interested in feeding our own souls than in doing good to our neighbours. We lap up the doctrinal chapters of the Epistles, but we skate over the ethical ones. Our Lord accused the Pharisees of antinomianism, telling them that they had 'overlooked the weightier demands of the Law, justice, mercy, and good faith' (Mt. 23: 23, N.E.B.); would he not have reason to bring a similar accusation against us? Here, then, is the root cause of our present moral flabbiness: we have neglected God's law.⁴³

⁴³J. I. Packer, “Our Lord’s Understanding of the Law of God,” The Campbell Morgan Memorial Bible Lectureship, no. 14 (lecture presented at Westminster Chapel, 10 June 1953, Buckingham Gate, London) [on-line]; accessed 15 July 2010; available from http://www.biblicalstudies.org.uk/article_law_packer.html; Internet.

The fifth way God exposit His promises is through His promises. There have been many helpful templates or hermeneutics laid over Scripture to aid the reader in digesting the immensity of God's message. Perhaps none have been more helpful or encouraging than the hermeneutic of God's promises. To read the Bible using this template is to always be asking, "Lord, what is your promise here?" or "Lord, how are you keeping your promise here?" Many Christians even carry little booklets containing "All the Promises of the Bible."⁴⁴ A skillful expositor of God's Word learns to categorize and prioritize God's revelation not according to his personal preference or need but according to the entirety of God's revelation. For now the concern is not so much properly cataloguing all the many promises of God but, as those who desire to be good expositors of Scripture, gaining a clear picture of what God is revealing of Himself in and through His promises.

The clearest outline of Scripture is creation, fall, redemption, and consummation. Greg Gilbert, in *What Is the Gospel?* Points out that, "It is a good framework for a faithful presentation of the biblical gospel"⁴⁵ but alone does not adequately focus on the cross and the atoning work of Christ.⁴⁶ By looking at the Bible with these four headings, it is easy to see the bulk of material asymmetrically falling under redemption: (1) Creation (Gen 1-2); (2) Fall (Gen 3); Redemption (Gen 4-Rev 18); and Consummation (Rev 19-22). The vast volume of material under redemption tells the reader that the promises relating to man's rescue from sin, God's judgment, death and hell is where God has revealed Himself most and where there would be the most promises. As one looks at the many promises of God relating to salvation they find that

⁴⁴Herbert Lockyer, *All the Promises of the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1962).

⁴⁵Greg Gilbert, *What Is the Gospel?* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2010), 105.

⁴⁶*Ibid.*, 105-07.

all could be poured into the promise of justification or God's act of enabling sinful man to stand in the judgment.

The Epistle of Romans (specifically 1:1-3a and 9:4-5) tells how the promises of God exposit the mystery and purpose of God in those He justifies. "Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus, called as an apostle, set apart for *the gospel of God, which He promised* beforehand through His prophets in the holy Scriptures, concerning His Son" (1:1-3a). Paul says it another way in 2 Corinthians 1:20, "For as many as may be the promises of God, in Him they are yes; wherefore also by Him is our Amen to the glory of God through us." The promise of God that swallows all promises is the Lord Jesus Himself.⁴⁷ For these reasons Christians of all ages, along with Paul say, "We preach Christ crucified" (1 Cor 1:23). The mystery or hidden promise of God is found in every Old Testament prophecy, covenant, and promise made by God. The summary of the glorious exposition of God through His promises was declared by Paul to the Colossians who needed encouragement in the midst of the philosophies and confusion created by strange teachings of their day. "The mystery which has been hidden from the past ages and generations has now been manifested to His saints, to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col 1:26-27). All the people of God are called and equipped to exposit this great promise through the preaching, teaching, counseling, and conversing of Christ to all the world.

We come now to the apex of the chapter and of our lives as expositors of God's Word. All believers must know, be encouraged to, be reminded of, be chastened when forgotten, and always be revealing Jesus Christ, who is the full exposition of the Father. Jesus told His disciples, "Whoever has seen Me has seen the Father" (John 14:8). He is our message. Regardless of where one begins in Scripture, no matter what context

⁴⁷Leander E. Keck, *Romans*, Abingdon New Testament Commentaries (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2005), 228-29.

of life, without concern of abruptness in conversation, one must as quickly as possible get to Jesus Christ.⁴⁸ Without Jesus at the heart of our preaching we are heralds of trivia, without Jesus as the subject of our teaching we are instructors of vanity, without Jesus as the wisdom of our counsel we make fools more foolish, and without Jesus as the rudder of our conversation we are reduced to babblers. Using the Gospel of John as an example, one can see from Scripture how Jesus exposit the Father and how all Christians likewise can be biblical expositors whose subject is tethered to Jesus the Word of God. Space will not allow the expansive exposition needed for each revelation listed. The intention of this section is not only to see how Jesus is the full exposition of the Father but also to be illustrative of how to outline a portion of Scripture in order to begin the process of uncovering and expanding on biblical truth in preaching, teaching, counseling, and conversing God's Word.

First, Jesus, the Word of God, exposit the light and life of the Father through His condescension and His birth (John 1:1-14). Second, Jesus, the Word of God, exposit the glory and truth of the Father in His obedient and righteous fulfilling of life (John 1:14). Third, Jesus, the Word of God, exposit the promise of the Father through His works and miracles (John 5:36-47, 14:10-12). Fourth, Jesus, the Word of God, exposit the love and grace and the justice and wrath of the Father through His death (John 3:16-21, 34-36). Fifth, Jesus, the Word of God, exposit the power of the Father over sin, death, and hell through His resurrection (John 11:25-26 and John 20-21). Sixth, Jesus, the Word of God, exposit the hope of the Father in His promises (John 14:1-3).

Learning to clearly outline Scripture is no mere pedagogical or homiletical exercise only for teachers and preachers. For all who are in Christ are expositors of His Word. Just by taking the previous work of outlining the Gospel of John with the view to

⁴⁸Charles Spurgeon, "Christ Precious to Believers," quoted in Sidney Greidanus, *Preaching Christ in the Old Testament: A Contemporary Hermeneutical Method* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Company, 1999), 153-54.

explaining Jesus as the full revelation and explanation of God, the student gains a rich “package” of biblical information (needed to “combine spiritual thoughts with spiritual words” – 1 Cor 2:13) to study, meditate upon, and implement in the Christian’s daily walk. Is it possible that Christians have become so compartmentalized in their personal lives and thinking and professionalized in their church ministries, where only “trained experts” are to handle the Bible, that they no longer prepare themselves to be expositors of the Scripture? Therefore, let us consider four ways believers, like Jesus, are to exposit the Father.

First, the life of a Christian is to expose the righteousness of the Father through obedience to His Word. The Epistle of James is often referred to as a practical book filled with applicational direction for Christians. It is a wonderful place to start with new believers for them to quickly learn what a true follower of Christ will look like as he does what the Scripture says. It is also important, as established in the section dealing with the law’s work in evangelism, to make clear the distinction between the justification by faith that will result in good works and the often erroneously taught idea that one can be justified by good works.

The idea of exposing God’s righteousness through good works is what Jesus taught in His Sermon on the Mount where He told His disciples to “Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may (not only) see your good works (but most importantly) and glorify your Father who is in heaven” (Matt 5:16). The first thing believers are to expose through their obedience is the righteousness of God. However, the second thing a believer’s life should expose is the glory of the Father. James was simply reinforcing Jesus’ teaching when he said, “Prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves” (Jas 1:22). This instruction does not replace content. One must first hear or read the truth of God’s Word before they are able to do it rightly. It is true that Christians may learn to “do” good things by watching others and

mimicking their good deeds, but that is a dangerous approach for two reasons. The first danger to doing a good thing without hearing or reading God's Word is shifting the authority of the deed from God to a person or a system of religious piety. Although that shift may be a subtle misappropriation, and Christians are all prone to follow ready-made systems, it not only puts the believer in danger, but also all who join the system thinking they will be justified in their doing of good deeds. Parents are to teach their children this principle early. As they teach them to obey they must make it clear to them that in so doing they are obeying the commandment of God and thus pleasing Him above all. Parents must never allow their children or anyone to believe that by doing good deeds they will be justified before God. For that reason Christians teach the law first and properly. The law is God's character and all men are sinful breakers of that law.

However, just as God spoke order into the chaotic universe, He likewise is remaking His adopted children into the image of His Son by His sanctifying truth. Christians are to expose God's character by doing that which is good. This public exposition of God's Word is for all who believe and not only the preacher of expository sermons. Second, by not making God and His Word the source of obedience Christians put themselves in a vulnerable position where they obey or seek to please others with their good works and not making it their goal to glorify their Father in heaven. The greatest danger here is stealing God's glory, and God has made it clear in Isaiah 42:8 and 48:11 that He will not share His glory with another.

The third way believers, like Jesus, are to exposit the Father is by exposing the grace of the Father through a living biblical theology. Howard Hendricks says in *Living by the Book*, "Biblical truth is the wardrobe of the soul."⁴⁹ Hendricks is agreeing with the Apostle Paul when he said, "Urge bondslaves to be subject to their own masters in everything, to be well-pleasing, not argumentative, not pilfering, but showing all good

⁴⁹Howard Hendricks and William D. Hendricks, *Living by the Book* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1991), 284.

faith that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in every respect” (Titus 2:9-10). The implications toward, for example, expository preaching and teaching, are that those who truly believe the Bible will accept preaching and teaching as the outward manifestation of that belief. Those who adorn the doctrine of God are living expositors of God’s Word.

The fourth way Christians, like Jesus, are to exposit the Father with their lives is by exposing the gospel through telling the lost world of God’s saving grace and His eternal plan of redemption through Jesus Christ. Is it enough for Christians to believe that God does the saving? Can Christians say, with biblical integrity, that “Whoever will call upon the name of the Lord will be saved,” and simply trust that God is able to save whomever He will? Paul addressed that very question in Romans 10:13-17 saying,

How then shall they call upon 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 unless they are sent? Just as it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring glad tidings of good things!" However, they did not all heed the glad tidings; for Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed our report?" So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.

It is at this next point that many Christians feel overwhelmed and under qualified. And it is important to understand in the next text that Paul was specifically addressing Timothy, an elder, one who was specifically set aside to teach and preach the Scriptures. However, with that context established, there is also a clear sense that Paul is not excluding all believers from the general calling of being expositors of the written Word of God. There is a biblical mandate and general calling for all who are in Christ to be expositors of God’s Word. Second Timothy 3:10-4:2 is specifically aimed at Timothy the elder. What precedes that passage is Paul’s instruction to Timothy to,

remind them of *these things* (the responsibility to teach and pass along the truth), and solemnly charge *them* in the presence of God not to wrangle about words which is useless, and leads to the ruin of the hearers. Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth.

John MacArthur, commenting on this passage says,

Paul's purpose was to motivate and encourage Timothy to keep a firm grasp on the truth himself and to pass it on to others who would do likewise (2:2). It is only with a thorough knowledge of God's truth that falsehood and deceit can be recognized, resisted, and opposed. . . . *Them* refers to the whole congregation in Ephesus as well as to the 'faithful men' mentioned in 2:2.⁵⁰

The context for being a biblical expositor is found in 3:10-13 where Paul commends Timothy for following his teaching (doctrine) and example (convictions and lifestyle) while enduring great hardships and persecutions. As the Lord Jesus instructed His followers that they would be persecuted and hated on account of Him, Paul likewise warned Timothy that teaching truth and living righteously in the name of Christ would bring persecution. The "righteous living by faith" (Rom 1:17/Hab 2:1) is a continuous pattern for biblical exposition.

The content for those who are biblical expositors is 2 Timothy 3:14-15. Timothy was not charged to be clever or to creatively integrate cutting-edge technology and trendiness in his teaching.⁵¹ The content of a biblical expositor is not original but ancient, even eternal. Timothy was instructed and present day Christians are instructed to "continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of." The authority of this teaching is established first in the lives of our teachers by way of wisdom leading to "salvation through faith in Christ Jesus." In Romans 1:16-17, Paul spoke of the gospel of salvation being "revealed from faith to faith," or from one established believer in God's Word to make another believer. Therefore, there is a clear content of truth born out of a context of faith.

The practical work for those who are biblical expositors is 2 Tim 3:15c-17 and 4:2. Often this passage is preached and taught defending and encouraging the mandate to

⁵⁰ John MacArthur, *2 Timothy*, in *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary* (Chicago: The Moody Bible Bible Institute, 1995), 70.

⁵¹ John MacArthur, *The Jesus You Can't Ignore: What You Must Learn from the Bold Confrontations of Christ* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2008), 160-61.

preach the Word of God, and that is a good application of the meaning. However, with this emphasis, the general application for all believers may become muted. Beginning with 3:16 and continuing to 4:2 Paul explains,

All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work. I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction.

Certainly Timothy, as an elder, was to perform this duty as a preacher/teacher, as 4:2 clearly states. The question I will address more thoroughly in the following chapters is should all believers be involved with the ministry of the Word by teaching, reproving, correcting, and training in righteousness? If so, then how? It is important to sufficiently honor the biblical role of preacher/teacher while decompartmentalizing one's thinking that *only* preachers and teachers have the biblical mandate to be biblical expositors.

Just as there is a biblical mandate and general calling for all who are in Christ to be expositors of God's Word, some, who are in Christ, are specifically called to be expositors of His word through the ministry of preaching and teaching. John Calvin is particularly helpful on this point by answering the question earlier posed, "Who will speak for God?" That question presupposed that God would need someone to speak for Him. A better way to consider this question is why does God need man's service? Calvin states,

Now we must speak of the order by which the Lord willed His church to be governed. He alone should rule and reign in the church as well as have authority or pre-eminence in it, and this authority should be exercised and administered by His Word alone. Nevertheless, because He does not dwell among us in visible presence, we have said that He uses the ministry of men to declare openly His will to us by mouth, as a sort of delegated work, not by transferring to them His right and honor,

but only that through their mouths He may do His own work – just as a workman uses a tool to do his work.⁵²

That God uses man to do His work is a question answered by pointing to the church. Likewise, the question, “What does man who is in God’s service look like?” may also be illustrated by looking at both the historical and the contemporary church. Yet Christians are not to be a people who use illustration as their authority; it is the continuity of such illustration born from Scripture that gives the clear answer. Paul’s first and second letters to the church at Corinth serve well for this question because Paul was dealing with an unhealthy and fragmented body. His instructions, warnings, and rebukes to the Corinthian church help believers to more clearly understand how the Body and those who make up that Body are to look. Calvin lists four biblical examples of how a man in God’s service looks.⁵³

First, God has made the reconciled elect to be His “ambassadors” in the world, reconciling the world to God.⁵⁴ Paul says, “Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were entreating through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God” (2 Cor 5:20). Those who are in God’s service are left in the world in a mission of diplomacy to bring and make peace among those who are presently hostile against God and one another.

Second, He has made His children to be “Temples of God”⁵⁵ (1 Cor 6:19). First Corinthians 3:16 and 2 Corinthians 6:14-18 explain the necessity and reality of the sanctified life of followers of Christ. From the onset of these examples, however, one will find a tension. As ambassadors, followers of the Lord Jesus are thrust into the world and as temples we are separated from the world. This apparent strain is explained in

⁵²Calvin, *Institutes*, 2:1053.

⁵³*Ibid.*, 1053-55.

⁵⁴*Ibid.*, 1053.

⁵⁵*Ibid.*, 1053-54.

Philippians 2:15, where believers are instructed to “prove ourselves blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach *in the midst* of a crooked and perverse generation.” Also, Paul made it clear to the Corinthian church in his first letter (5:9-13) that they were not to associate or tolerate ungodliness within the church. Rather, they were not to completely withdraw themselves from sinful men outside the church because they would therefore have no relationship at all with the world, therefore nullifying their role as ambassadors.

Third, God has left His sanctified ones as mere “earthen vessels”⁵⁶ (2 Cor 4:5-7) to humbly proclaim and reflect the glory of the gospel. Once again one finds a certain irony in this example with the others. Man’s problem is pride, and to elevate prideful creatures with such a glorious task is sure to ruin both his testimony and his effectiveness. Therefore, the Father has wisely and graciously left man as a mere “privy pot” filled with the honey of His Word rather than refuse.

Fourth, He has made the many into “one body” (unity)⁵⁷ (1 Cor 12:4-31) that they may work together through a “variety of ministries.” Calvin comments on this point, “The Lord has therefore bound His church together with a knot that He foresaw would be the strongest means of keeping unity, while He entrusted to men the teaching of salvation and everlasting life in order that through their hands it might be communicated to the rest.”⁵⁸

It is at the fourth example that the general calling to all believers to be expositors of God and His Word becomes more specifically defined as a special calling to some in specific roles as preachers and teachers within the Body. As Paul concluded 1 Corinthians 12 he explained, “And God has appointed in the church, first apostles, second

⁵⁶Ibid., 1054.

⁵⁷Ibid.

⁵⁸Ibid.

prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, various kinds of tongues.” That passage, given to bring clarity and unity to a divided church, has often been used to divide and do the very thing Paul was setting straight.

Ephesians 4:1-16 is a companion passage for considering the special calling of some within the church to be preachers and teachers of the Word. The means of producing growth, maturity, edification, conviction, clarity, exhortation, consolation, revelation, knowledge, prophecy, teaching, clear meaning, instruction of the mind, order, and common good within the church is through the gifting by God and obedience of gifted men to perform the ministry of the Word.

I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, entreat you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing forbearance to one another in love, being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all. But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore it says, "When He ascended on high, He led captive a host of captives, and He gave gifts to men." (Now this expression, "He ascended," what does it mean except that He also had descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is Himself also He who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.) And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ. As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him, who is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by that which every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.

Calvin's "semi-cessationist" interpretation and teaching regarding the various offices (where he divides the offices into five some scholars such as Bruce combine the

last office into one, preacher/teacher)⁵⁹ is one for academic discussion. Few continue to teach that the various offices are as vibrantly ordained and effectively recognized as they were when Paul wrote this letter. Most (in various degrees) are cessational explanations of how the original offices are no longer distinctly needed and they therefore coalesce into either two (preachers and teachers) or three (preachers, teachers, and evangelists) distinct offices. The point of this section is not to argue or defend a particular view or interpretation of the offices listed in Ephesians four, but rather to acknowledge the orthodox consensus from Scripture that these offices were given by God and equipped by His Spirit for the express purpose of “equipping the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ” (Eph 4:12). Biblically and historically Christians understand the primary instrument of these offices to be Scripture.

In Calvin’s explanation of these offices, he teaches that they are specific callings with varying degrees of frequency and necessity within the church. He also teaches that God will, as in the case of the Protestant Reformation, revitalize the specific offices to include apostles (such as Martin Luther), prophets, and evangelists as unique offices. Even with dramatic reinstitution of certain distinct offices, as in his own day, Calvin made the point that whereas apostles, prophets, and evangelists are to be seen as rare, the offices of preacher and teacher are ongoing and necessary to the church in every age.⁶⁰

As I conclude this chapter I want to draw together the main thrusts considered. First, God, as creator, is a speaking God, revealing Himself through that which He created with His Word. Although God continues to speak a general revelation of Himself through this marvelous creation, He chose to specify His message through human vessels

⁵⁹F. F. Bruce, *The Epistles to the Colossians to Philemon and to the Ephesians*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1984), 348.

⁶⁰Calvin, *Institutes*, 1056-58.

called prophets sent to speak forth God's Word. But it was not until God chose a people to reveal Himself to the world that the message began to become specific and personal. Second, God revealed His personal character through the giving of the law and the ceremonies of worship through which it was reestablished through His people Israel, that God is holy. God's message and hope of redemption began to be spoken among and from His people. Whereas God is holy, man is sinful and in need of reconciliation; this was the driving core of God's Word through Israel. Third, God finally and ultimately spoke through His Son, the Lord Jesus the Word of God. That very Word became flesh in order to reveal the Father fully. Fourth, those who hear the Word speak in their hearts through the ministry of the Scripture and the work of God's Spirit are themselves called to follow Christ and become expositors of God and His Word.

CHAPTER 3

A PHILOSOPHICAL AND PRACTICAL MINDSET FOR BECOMING A BIBLICAL EXPOSITOR

There are two basic points of genesis when establishing a worldview or mindset: either one starts with God or oneself. In essence the consideration of existence and meaning arises from what may be labeled theological or anthropological fulcrums upon which all movement and cessation occurs and is measured. Francis Schaeffer, in *He Is There and He Is Not Silent*, addressed the human (personal) dilemma of trying to understand and explain existence and meaning by referencing Jean-Paul Sartre's conclusion that finite beings (we are here) cannot establish meaning apart from an infinite reference point. Schaeffer says, "Man is finite; so he is not a sufficient integration point for himself."¹ Man is not satisfied to rest in chaos where his existence is unable to have meaning. He is therefore determined to establish, discover, or have revealed that infinite point of reference so he may find meaning to his existence. Scripture reveals that God is that infinite point whereby meaning is understood. Therefore, man's natural quest for meaning to existence is most satisfied when God is revealed, when God is heard. Because God speaks there is meaning.

There is a relationship revealed in Scripture between the presence of language and the absence of chaos. "Now the whole earth used the same language and the same words" (Gen 11:1). Man in his fallen state disobeyed God's command to spread out on

¹Francis A. Schaeffer, *Trilogy: The Three Essential Books in One Volume* (Wheaton: Crossway Books, 1990), 277-78.

the earth and be fruitful and multiply. Rather, man chose to establish meaning apart from God (anthropological fulcrum) by congregating in the land of Shinar to “build for themselves (ourselves) a city and tower whose top would (will) reach into heaven” (Gen 11:4). But the Lord, recognizing the ability of man to establish meaning apart from Him because “they all had (have) the same language” (Gen 11:6), was displeased by their rebellion and “confuse(d) their language” (Gen 11:7) so they were unable to finish building the city.

Language was given by God to bring order and meaning to existence. When language is used to worship God, to organize obedience to God, or to explain God, it establishes a theological fulcrum upon which meaning is derived from God. When language is used to deny or curse God, to organize disobedience to God, or to explain man (and creation) apart from God, it establishes an anthropological fulcrum upon which meaning is sought but never able to rest, for man is not an infinite point of reference. Whereas the results of a biblical worldview create meaning, a man-centered worldview creates chaos. When Christian men and women exposit God’s Word they are working to bring order or re-order to existence. Mohler includes in his definition of expository preaching that “Genuine exposition takes place when the preacher (expositor) sets forth the meaning and message of the biblical text and makes clear how the Word of God establishes the identity and worldview of the church as the people of God.”²

The purpose of this chapter is to create a philosophy and method for becoming a biblical expositor. A crucial component of this project is to establish within Grace Fellowship Baptist Church meaning derived from Scripture and the means of explaining and perpetuating that meaning in and through its members. God, as the infinite point of

²Albert Mohler, “Expository Preaching and the Recovery of Christian Worship,” Commentary by R. Albert Mohler Jr., (August 2005), parts 1 and 3 [on-line]; accessed 26 September 2005; available from http://albertmohler.commentary_print.php?cdate=2005-08-11; Internet.

reference in the universe, speaks through His Word to and through men and women as theocentric (as opposed to anthropocentric) agents of exposition.

Each corresponding ministry of the Word necessitates benefactor/beneficiary relationships. Although, as presented in the previous chapter, God does uniquely gift and specifically call some men to devote their time and energies to the work of being biblical expositors, it is also important to recognize and facilitate the general call of all believers to be biblical expositors.

There is a biblical and necessary ministry of exposition for all believing men in the church although many men are uncomfortable with such ministry. A man may involve himself in the ministry of exposition within the church in four ways including: (1) teaching; (2) preaching; (3) counseling; and (4) conversing the Word of God. Because of the discomfort many men have with personally participating in the ministry of the word it is a helpful responsibility for teachers and preachers to equip and encourage their brothers to become biblical expositors on a level where they may be comfortable and effective. Because biblical exposition is more closely linked with preaching than the other three, my entire project is informed by Mohler's definition of expository preaching.

The four ways listed are in a descending order of difficulty which requires some explanation. At first consideration, one may think the opposite is true regarding difficulty. In other words, merely conversing or talking about the Bible must certainly require less training and preparation than the demands of teaching and preaching. The goal of teaching is to inform, to successfully transfer information from source or resource to student. Whereas it may be helpful as a teacher to have good pedagogical skills, the actual work of transferring information does not require a human instructor at all. It only demands a student willing and able to acquire the desired information. Preaching contains an element of teaching or transference of information, but has as its ultimate goal the heralding or proclamation of truth to move the hearer to believe and apply the truth and

meaning of the text. Sproul, in making the distinction between teaching and preaching says that in preaching, “There is a sense in which we are addressing people’s wills and are calling them to change.”³ What makes teaching and preaching less demanding than counseling and conversing is the relational context. Because the basic goal of teaching and preaching is to get information from a source to the audience, it only demands the teacher and preacher to be well-prepared to disseminate information and, in the case of preaching, compel their listener. Teachers and preachers talk while their audiences listen.

Counseling and to a greater extent conversing the Word of God requires the expositor to interact with another person. This relational context introduces countless variables. Although the biblical counselor has the benefit of establishing parameters such as time of encounter, depth of investigation, pace, and flow of dialogue, the relationship moves from only being driven by one person to the introduction of a participating party. Expository conversation, however, is the “wild West” relationship of the ministry of exposition where both or all parties may participate equally. These relationships are more demanding not only due to the involvement of other participants and their variable contributions, but also because there are fewer controls on the encounter.

To create a dynamic and maturing biblical mindset within a church, all four aspects of biblical expository ministry must be present. It is also important to distinguish the hierarchy of difficulty continuum previously explained from the hierarchy of need and importance. It may be said that scales and compositional theory in music are what teaching and preaching are to the Body of Christ, in the same way creativity and improvisation are to music what biblical counseling and conversation are to the Body of Christ. Vibrant “improvisation” in conversation about the Scriptures, for example, must be tethered to the mooring of being the beneficiary of solid expository teaching and preaching. What may be observed as being a healthy, lively congregation doing the work

³R. C. Sproul, *Feed My Sheep: A Passionate Plea for Preaching* (Orlando: Reformation Trust, 2008), 87.

of ministry may also be presumed to be a body of “equipped(ing) saints for the work of service” as a result of diligent preachers and teachers equipping them for that work (Eph 4:11-12). John MacArthur rightly observes that “God uses the teaching of gifted men to bring the church to maturity. The Holy Spirit uses leaders to assist the church in understanding the riches of Scripture.”⁴ In other words, one cannot have accurate and helpful biblical counsel or conversation apart from the consistent, accurate ministries of expository teaching and preaching.

All believing women in the church can also find some form of expository ministry in which they may biblically participate. The role of women in church leadership and ministry is a much debated issue in culture and in the local church. It is the position of this author, in agreement with the conclusions of the Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood (CBMW), that “only men should be pastors and elders. That is, men should bear primary responsibility for Christlike leadership and teaching in the church. So it is unbiblical, we believe, and therefore detrimental, for women to assume this role.”⁵ This conclusion, however, does not exclude or discourage believing women from participating in expository ministries within the local church. The same four ways a man may involve himself in the ministry of exposition within the church (teaching, preaching, counseling, and conversing) are open to women without ignoring or undermining the biblical teaching regarding their roles.

As stated previously, each corresponding ministry of the Word necessitates benefactor/beneficiary relationships. Understanding our roles or contexts within these ministries is an important part of Christian maturity and participation. It is the responsibility of shepherds in the home and church to explain and model this aspect of church life. Continuing in the C. B. M. W. statement, “There are levels and kinds of

⁴John MacArthur, *Rediscovering Expository Preaching* (Dallas: Word Publishing, 1992), 107.

⁵John Piper and Wayne Grudem, *Fifty Crucial Questions: An Overview of Central Concerns about Manhood and Womanhood* (Wheaton: Crossway Books, 1992), 15.

leadership for which women may and often should take responsibility. There are kinds of teaching, administration, organization, ministry, influence, and initiative that wives should undertake at home and women should undertake at church.”⁶

For women, there is a ministry of expository preaching where they may actively participate as the beneficiary of the word and encourager of others using the Scriptures that can be cultivated within the church. Likewise, the expository ministry of teaching other women and children in home and church are vital extensions of expository preaching. Because expository preaching is heralding or declaring the truth of God with the intention of faithful obedience and application, the informal function of expository preaching may at times be permissible and even encouraged in the relational contexts with other women and children in a home or gathering outside the local church. Humility and wisdom must guide our hearts at this point with careful attention paid to the role prescribed and described in Scripture.

A ministry of expository counseling where women “admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, and help the weak” (1 Thess 5:14) women and children in their home and church reinforces expository preaching and establishes women’s ministries grounded in the word of God. And finally, the dynamic expository ministry of biblical conversation is one of the greatest opportunities for mature godly women to invest themselves in the lives of other women and children. To speak of “mere” conversation as an important ministry for women in our egalitarian culture may seem condescending when in fact it may prove to be the most precious and beneficial work and indicator of spiritual health within the local church.

The Bible, as the authoritative and infallible Word of God has always been under attack – nothing new. Undermining the Word of God is the enemy’s chief means of “stealing, killing and destroying” (John 10:10) the helpless yet rebellious waifs

⁶Ibid., 22.

wandering through this dark world. Anything he can do to “blind the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ who is the image of God” (2 Cor 4:4), he will do. One might expect the enemy to work through the most vociferous and articulate of the unbelieving masses, but that is too obvious and therefore of little effect. Little doubt exists regarding the harm and persecution evil men have brought upon the church, but it takes little discernment to grasp the hatred and dismissal of God by men like Darwin, Nietzsche, or Hitchens. The real damage and confusion to souls has always come from pulpits, lecterns, and publishing houses dedicated to religion and the explanation of “spiritual” things. For example, in these so-called Postmodern days, Kevin DeYoung says one is likely to hear preachers and authors speak glowingly about the Bible on the one hand, while “reject[ing] the Bible as the foundation of Christian theology and reflection (on the other).” However, these same men are also “skeptical of our ability to understand the original intent of the biblical authors.”⁷ The consensus, which even casual observers may come to, is that mainline Christianity in America seems to no longer be established upon firm propositional truths, but has become the funhouse mirror of our “world of perpetual squishitude.”⁸

Perhaps Evangelical Christianity in America is redefining what it means to be Christian. Historically, and as demonstrated in the writings of the early church and our Protestant forefathers, the gospel is paramount to all worship and ministry. Graeme Goldsworthy, recognizing the danger of using or allowing the gospel idea to merely inform our worship and ministry says, “It cannot be stressed too much that to confuse the gospel with certain important things that go hand in hand with it is to invite theological,

⁷Kevin DeYoung and Ted Kluck, *Why We’re Not Emergent: By Two Guys Who Should Be* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2008), 82.

⁸Ibid., 85.

hermeneutical, and spiritual confusion.”⁹ The very word used to identify gospel believing people is, after all, Evangelical. But as D. A. Carson points out, “The question most likely to light a fuse is. . . ‘What is the gospel?’ One might usefully add that question’s first cousin, ‘What is evangelicalism.’”¹⁰

Although church web sites, local church literature, and published statements of faith or philosophies of ministries may be slow to incorporate the new language reflecting current mindsets (formal statements traditionally lag behind contemporary praxis and will appear more historically orthodox yet invalid by observance), the consumption of the external literature (web sites, curricula, multimedia, books, journals etc.) is the real indicator of the beliefs and practice of the local church. I appreciate the complexities and perhaps foolhardiness of making a brief statement to describe what is now a thoroughly eclectic movement. However, my intention is not to create an overly simplified impression of the mainline Protestant Evangelical church, but to relate my observations of the converging concepts from contemporary Evangelicalism and its more contemplative less traditional twin the Emergent church. I observe four undulating ideas having a significant effect upon the church in America.

First, the new ethos of many churches has become cool humility: “I couldn’t possibly understand, nor do I think anyone is able to grasp the depth of God. I don’t know it all, I do the best I can.” Rob Bell says it this way: “Just because I’m a Christian and I’m trying to articulate a Christian worldview doesn’t mean I’ve got it nailed. I’m contributing to the discussion. God has spoken, and the rest is commentary, right?”¹¹

⁹Graeme Goldsworthy, *Gospel-Centered Hermeneutics: Foundations and Principles of Evangelical Biblical Interpretation* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 58-59.

¹⁰D. A. Carson, foreword to *What Is the Gospel?*, by Greg Gilbert (Wheaton: Crossway, 2010), 13.

¹¹Rob Bell, *Velvet Elvis: Repainting the Christian Faith* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), back cover of the book.

Second, the central controlling idea of historical biblical Christianity has been moved from Scripture and propositional truth to exemplification or as is popularly referred to, “The way of Jesus.” This idea is not new. This debate was being conducted among immature Christians and non-believers in the church at Corinth when conflicting parties sought to gain the higher spiritual ground from those with whom they disagreed: “I am of Paul, I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ” (1 Cor 1:11-12). Whoever said, “I am of Christ” always won because who could argue against the one working to be like the Son of God? The Evangelical equivalent is the once ubiquitous WWJD bracelet and bumper sticker. As with all fads, the shelf-life is short and the trinkets of that one time phenomenon are sitting in warehouses or discount Christian bookstores all across America. The more serious-minded Emergent church community has their own version that has replaced the WWJD platitude with a more philosophical idea: “The way of Jesus.”¹² With very few exceptions, the now mainstream Emergent church author will go a long way to defend their love for the Bible but eventually will give way to what amounts to a categorical about-face. “The Bible and doctrine are very important, but the way of Jesus is, after all, our goal isn’t it?” How does one critically respond to such a false dichotomy?

The third way Evangelical Christianity is being redefined is through the nearly obsessive preoccupation with appeal, meeting every felt need, and relevance. Bill Hornsby, in his book *The Attractional Church* says, “The attractive church offers a large variety of services to the community. Eventually, with growth, its financial and human

¹²With the growing influence of Emergent church authors who are typically more philosophical and seem to be more serious about what they write and do than their Evangelical counterparts, the Evangelical community is now adopting less trivial yet similar ideas like “The way of Jesus” to describe their goals for their people in contrast with those who insist that Scripture is the biblical means of sanctification (John 17:17). Examples of such authors include Rob Bell, *Velvet Elvis: Repainting the Christian Faith* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), 20-21, and Brian McLaren, *A New Kind of Christianity: Ten Questions That Are Transforming the Faith* (New York: Harper One, 2010), 204.

resources can be a one-stop shop for nearly every need that a member has.”¹³ Not only is this philosophy shaping the way church and ministry is conducted, it actually adversely affects the gospel. The shift from Christ the eschatological redeemer of sinners to Jesus the helper or savior from trouble in this life completely changes the gospel message.

The fourth torrent of philosophical adjustment within the Evangelical church in America is the move to universal acceptance of all people and tolerance of all religions. One should be careful when addressing this shift. This idea is linked with the “way of Jesus” philosophy in this way: Jesus, especially as portrayed within Evangelicalism, is seen as completely tolerant and willing to intimately encounter the dregs and outcast from culture. He makes no demands for them to change and is even, by contrast, quite harsh with the religious officials of His day who had no love for the established pariahs in the world. There is an eventual theological exponent of this philosophy which ironically is being displayed through the most recent writing of Rob Bell¹⁴ (author of *Velvet Jesus*) where unhindered demand for tolerance and universal acceptance on earth among men inevitably requires such universal tolerance from God Himself.

Where does such a condition leave godly men and women who believe and love the Scriptures? What is a church to do in this culture where tolerance has become the prevailing doctrine and church growth and unity have become the goals signifying success? Jonathan Leeman, identifying the crucial corrective as a strong biblical doctrine of the church and church membership says, “What we need, I believe, is a truly systematic theology of church membership and discipline. We need to consider how the practices of local church membership and discipline fit into the larger matters of God’s

¹³Bill Hornsby, *The Attractional Church: Growth through a Refreshing, Relational, and Relevant Church Experience* (New York: Faith Words, 2011), 4.

¹⁴Rob Bell, *Love Wins: A Book About Heaven, Hell, and the Fate of Every Person Who Ever Lived* (New York: Harper One, 2011).

love, God's judgment, God's authority, and the gospel."¹⁵ DeYoung answers these questions with two provocative questions of his own.

Why offer people more of what they already have – vague spirituality, uncertainty, and borderline interpretive relativism? Why not offer them something hard and old like the law in which we delight (Psalm 1:2), and dare to say and believe “Thus saith the Lord”?¹⁶

Is it foolish and nostalgic to believe that clear and accurate handling of the Word of God is able to penetrate our culture of skepticism and unbelief? Can a church dedicated to biblical exposition from the pulpit, within classrooms, in the parking lot, and across a table at the local coffee shop change minds, hearts, and lives without clever marketing, state of the art technology, cutting edge music, and a cool staff? To answer these questions with a resounding “yes” requires from the shepherds and members of that church two commitments.

First, that church must have a high view of Scripture. Often, the idea of highly esteeming the Bible is born out of tradition or historical denominational distinction from other groups. It may become an inherited part of one's faith without personal conviction. This kind of cultural or denominational esteem for Scripture is weak. It has allowed churches and denominations to publically or institutionally affirm their love for the Bible while at the same time creating and practicing a Christianity where methodology and philosophy of ministry are the real indicators that in fact they hold a very low view of Scripture. John Stott has little patience with such churches and pastors and says of those who lightly esteem the Bible in practice, “If we are not sure of this (that God has spoken), it would be better to keep our mouths shut.”¹⁷ Stott continues his conviction on this

¹⁵Jonathan Leeman, *The Church and the Surprising Offense of God's Love: Reintroducing the Doctrines of Church Membership and Discipline* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2010), 17.

¹⁶DeYoung and Kluck, *Why We're Not Emergent*, 85.

¹⁷John R. W. Stott, *Between Two Worlds: The Art of Preaching in the Twentieth Century* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1982), 96.

matter with an encouragement to the church committed to the Scriptures as their means and method of doing ministry. “Once we are persuaded that God has spoken, however, then we too must speak. A compulsion rests upon us. Nothing and nobody will be able to silence us.”¹⁸

Second, the church with a high view of Scripture must equip their members to be expositors of God’s Word in every imaginable facet of ministry. Such a commitment to expository teaching, preaching, counseling, and conversing, makes most marketing strategies and church growth methodologies superfluous and even contemptible. Using Mohler’s definition for expository preaching as a guide, a church with strong biblical convictions may shape their worldview, Christian mindset, and methodological mold through which every encounter (in and out of the church) may be poured.

Expository preaching is that mode of Christian preaching that takes as its central purpose the presentation and application of the text of the Bible. All other issues and concerns are subordinated to the central task of presenting the biblical text. As the Word of God, the text of Scripture has a right to establish both the substance and the structure of the sermon. Genuine exposition takes place when the preacher sets forth the meaning and message of the biblical text and makes clear how the Word of God establishes the identity and worldview of the church as the people of God.¹⁹

Beginning with the last statement of the definition, the church committed to biblical ministry must have their identity and worldview firmly shaped by the Word of God. Does the Bible address the question of worldview? Not if the only place you look is the concordance, and that is part of the problem. The Bible does not address worldview as a niche or topic. The Bible is a worldview containing many topics, and there is a wide chasm between approaching the Bible as an answer book for life and approaching the Bible as the very word of life. The differences may be summed up in two opposing words: eisegesis and exegesis.

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Mohler, “Expository Preaching and the Recovery of Christian Worship.”

Eisegesis, according to Walter Kaiser, is the method of “reading into a text what the reader wants it to say.”²⁰ It is studying life, then bringing to the Bible your worldly or personal considerations and presuppositions and trying to coordinate the multiplicity of ideas and concepts into the Scripture; trying to make sense of the Bible through the lens of the world. Many pastors and their churches along with corresponding programs and curricula are built upon eisegesis; observing, contemplating, and engaging life and this world then going to the Bible to make sense of it. The eyes of eisegesis are focused outward at the world.

Exegesis, in contrast with eisegesis, is explained by Kaiser as having its roots firmly planted in the Bible itself. Its various Greek derivatives are used in the New Testament translated to mean “explain,” “lead out,” “expound,” and even “translate.”²¹ To exegete is the method of drawing out of the Scripture its information and meaning then going into the world to apply the truth of Scripture; making sense and giving meaning through the lens of truth. The simple difference is that eisegesis starts with the world and exegesis starts with Scripture. The difference is one worldview created to accommodate Scripture (eisegesis) and another worldview shaped by Scripture (exegesis). To teach our people to be expositors of God’s Word begins with teaching them to think exegetically.

Moving back to the first statement of Mohler’s definition, “that mode of Christian preaching that takes as its central purpose the presentation and application of the text of the Bible”²² we find that when applying this principle in teaching, counseling, and conversing God’s Word, two important activities are set in motion. First, there is the application (discipleship) of what is being practiced while in the process of creating a

²⁰Walter C. Kaiser Jr., *Toward an Exegetical Theology: Biblical Exegesis for Preaching and Teaching* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1981), 45.

²¹*Ibid.*, 43-45.

²²Mohler, “Expository Preaching and the Recovery of Christian Worship.”

biblical worldview. In other words, not teaching or modeling before the congregation how to “use” the Bible as a tool that is used to interact with others. Rather, the stress is on “usefulness” within the body and the world. In 2 Timothy 2:14-15, Paul told Timothy to,

remind them of these things, and solemnly charge them in the presence of God not to wrangle about words, which is useless, and leads to the ruin of the hearers. But be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth.

He continued to instruct young Timothy to avoid foolish and trivial disputes and help others to mature in the truth in order to keep themselves from the wickedness of the world so that in the end they will be “sanctified and useful to the master and prepared for every good work” (2 Tim 2:21). If the goal is to have sanctified members able to minister in any capacity, the means to that goal is to accurately handle the Word and teach them to do the same. As Christians become “sanctified in truth” (John 17:17), they are becoming useful to aid in the sanctification of their brothers (2 Tim 3:17). The result of sanctification is not only a clearly biblical worldview but also usefulness which qualifies and enables us to do within our church what Paul instructed Timothy to do where he ministered.

Second, and this is an important goal of my project, the presentation and application of the Bible creates a means of perpetuating this expository mindset. There is an aspect of the eisegetical approach to Scripture which has a human parallel. The church where the Bible is modeled as an answer book will inevitably create a shallow congregation always running to the “answer guy” whether it is the pastor, a counselor or the latest self-help author. What is perpetuated from the eisegetical or topical pulpit proves to be a shallow and often biblically incoherent congregation. Where the Scripture is modeled as the place from which one comes (exegetical) as opposed to the place to which one goes (eisegetical), there also is found its human parallel; men and women who are able to teach, preach, counsel, and converse the Word of God.

Whereas the biblical and theological justifications for exposition of Scripture have been examined, a consideration of the practical justification for biblical exposition must also be addressed. It is true that pragmatism in ministry can become a recipe for eventual compromise in areas that should never be compromised. For this reason the biblical and theological justifications were examined first. However, if application is never made or the practical is never evaluated, all the biblical and theological study and wrangling is worthless. Practical justification is measurable within the church but wisdom demands caution and patience in order to guard from either pride or discouragement. As expository preaching is growing in popularity, more of the literature is incorporating practical examples of the positive results of the ministry as well as negative examples of neglecting expository preaching. I will include three examples I am currently observing. The execution and analysis of my project will demonstrate more.

At the heart of every expository ministry is fidelity to the Lord's command to make disciples (Matt 28:18-20). The first practical justification for creating an expository mindset and developing biblical expositors at Grace Fellowship Baptist Church is that it is faithful obedience to the call of Christ which calls for faithful obedience to that same call to others. Jesus told a crowd that was following Him, "If you abide in My word, then you are truly disciples of mine" (John 8:31). To abide is to dwell or live. Expository ministries actively declare the truth so those who hear may receive, believe, and live in that truth thus proving to be true followers of Christ.

The second practical justification for developing biblical expositors is the creation of a plurality of ministers. The Body of Christ demands that every member function as ministers and not neglect the gifts and callings of the Holy Spirit graciously given to glorify God and edify one another.

The third practical justification for growing a vibrant biblical church filled with expositors is not only healthy ministries but acceptable worship. There are countless

examples from Scripture where ignorance of God's Word turned into unacceptable worship. The most glaring examples of this kind of unbiblical worship may be seen on "Christian television" every day. This unbiblical trend in worship is no less apparent in contemporary churches today. The practical remedy for unbiblical worship is replacing the ignorant zeal for God with the true knowledge of God (Rom 10:2 and 12:1-2).

For a church to commit and follow through on the commitment to becoming biblical expositors, it is important to have core beliefs established. In chapter two, the general calling of all believers to be biblical expositors, was established by examining the full context of 2 Timothy. In this chapter, however, while considering that the goal of "accurately handling the word of truth" (2 Tim 2:15) is the "usefulness" of Christians who are shaped by God's Word, the emphasis again rests upon the general calling of all Christians to be expositors of Scripture. From this mandate and these core beliefs about Scripture, arise five presuppositions expositors of God's Word bring to their "useful" life and ministry.

First, God calls all believers to involve themselves on some level and degree of competency in the ministries of teaching, preaching, counseling, and conversing His Word. For more than a century the Protestant clergy has become more professionalized. The more professionalized it has become, the less serious the laity have become in gospel work and service leaving an ever-widening gap between the two. One result is a clergy that is viewed as the "hired help" and the laity as the patrons of that work. Another unbiblical consequence of this paradigm, according to John Piper is that "we as pastors are being killed by the professionalizing of the pastoral ministry [and] the more professional we long to be, the more spiritual death we leave in our wake."²³ He continues by explaining what it truly means to be a childlike, tenderhearted, desperate slave of Christ as well as a servant to all men. Piper says, "The world sets the agenda for

²³John Piper, *Brothers, We Are Not Professionals: A Plea to Pastors for Radical Ministry* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 2002), 1.

the professional man; God sets the agenda of the spiritual man.”²⁴ There is much discussion among pastors about how overworked and overwhelmed they are in their work with little care given to the biblical remedy which is recognizing the general call to all believers to be involved with the ministry of the Word. Closing the gap between clergy and laity begins with the recognition that the Bible prescribes a philosophy of a co-working plurality of ministry partners working together. Colin Marshall and Tony Payne point out that “up to 100 names are associated with Paul in the New Testament, of which around 36 could be considered close partners and fellow laborers. Paul uses two names for them: fellow workers (*sunergoi*) and ministers (*diakonoi*).”²⁵

Second, Christians are completely dependent upon the Holy Spirit in teaching, preaching, counseling, and conversing God’s Word. The ministry of the Word is a supernatural endeavor given to frail humanity to carry out. Apart from the Holy Spirit, who was sent by the Father and the Son to dwell in the hearts of Christians so they may do the work of ministry as Paul instructs as he concludes his letter to the Romans (15:13-16), it will be a fruitless and frustrating endeavor:

Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you will abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. And concerning you, my brethren, I myself also am convinced that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge and able also to admonish one another. But I have written very boldly to you on some points so as to remind you again, because of the grace that was given me from God, to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles, ministering as a priest the gospel of God, so that my offering of the Gentiles may become acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

First, being filled with all joy and peace in believing in order to abound in hope can only come in the power of the Holy Spirit. Second, the content of the work (the knowledge of God) comes from the Spirit illuminating and giving discernment in the Word itself.

²⁴Ibid., 3.

²⁵Colin Marshall and Tony Payne, *The Trellis and the Vine: The Ministry Mind-Shift That Changes Everything* (Kingsford, Australia: Matthias Media, 2009), 112.

Third, the goal of this work, which is personal and corporate sanctification, is that which the Spirit of God accomplishes in and through those doing the ministry of biblical exposition.

The third presupposition biblical expositors must bring to their life and ministry is that they must expect and prepare for one of two ultimate results as they teach, preach, counsel, and converse God's Word: humble reception and belief of the truth revealed or rejection and hardening the heart to the truth revealed. There is a biblical reality that the Word of God will always accomplish what God wills (Is 55:11) therefore, success for the biblical expositor is guaranteed. However, success must be measured in humility and mystery knowing that "the hidden things [ultimately] belong to God" (Deut 29:29).

There is a fourth presupposition that requires the biblical expositor to have clarity about what faith looks like in the heart and life of the one hearing the Word of God. Whether the expositor is teaching, preaching, counseling or casually conversing the Word of God, he must care about and look for obedience or disobedience from the hearers. To some degree, there should be a tension of expectation because God has spoken. The eroding results of ambiguity or carelessness on the part of the expositor are many. The two most damaging results are the disassociation of God's revealed will (as spoken by the expositor) from obedience to His commands and the eventual diminishing of the hearer's view of God and His Word.

Finally, the expositor must engage others with God's Word with the primary intent of glorifying God. In other words, every time God's Word is spoken there should be the expectation of worship. This presupposition is sweetest and most gracious because the expectation does not depend upon the intellect, emotion, ability, or any other supposed hurdle before the speaker or the hearer. One may have this confidence, that God is always glorified in the faithful proclamation of His Word.

To accomplish all that has been presented thus far requires a system or method by which competent biblical expositors are made. The establishment of a basic hermeneutic or system of interpreting Scripture is necessary. Sidney Greidanus presents a thorough yet doable hermeneutical method using components from John Calvin's Theocentric approach to biblical interpretation.²⁶ The two best-known reformers, Martin Luther and John Calvin agreed on most fundamental theological issues. However, one distinction between Luther and Calvin regarded a basic understanding about how to interpret Scripture. Whereas Luther was insistent and diligent to find Christ and salvation in every passage of both the Old and New Testaments, Calvin, as Greidanus, citing Leroy Nixon explains, "affirmed justification by faith in Christ, [yet] had a broader viewpoint, namely, the sovereignty and glory of God."²⁷ Greidanus continues, "This broader perspective enabled Calvin to be satisfied with biblical messages about God, God's redemptive history, and God's covenant without necessarily focusing these messages on Jesus Christ."²⁸ Calvin's approach, philosophically and practically, will create and equip deeper, more theologically sound, and more effective biblical expositors than Luther's.

Greidanus, using the "eight exegetical principles gleaned from Hans Kraus"²⁹ lists nine components which this author also includes in the development of my method of expositing God's Word. The nine components are as follows: (1) clarity and brevity; (2) the intention of the author; (3) the historical context; (4) the original, grammatical meaning; (5) literary context; (6) meaning beyond the literal biblical wording; (7) figures

²⁶Sidney Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1999), 127-37.

²⁷*Ibid.*, 127.

²⁸*Ibid.*

²⁹Greidanus using research from Hans-Joachim Kraus, "Calvin's Exegetical Principles," 31(1977), 8-18.

of speech; (8) the scope of Christ; and (9) the relation between the Old and New Testaments.³⁰

Now that a basic hermeneutic is established for interpreting Scripture it must correlate into a useful and transferable method for teachers, counselors, and conversers as well as preachers. Because a broad expository ministry within the local church must originate and first be established from the pastor's own life, study and pulpit, this method was developed for an expository preaching ministry. Therefore, all references will be made within that relationship. Following the presentation of the model for expository preaching will be a conclusion drawing the correlation and transference of the model into the ministries of expository teaching, counseling, and conversation.

There are seven aspects to the method to be considered while preparing the sermon, with an eighth serving as an intermediary activity to bridge the gap between the study and the pulpit. First, the preacher must determine a preaching text. Typically, I preach through books or major sections within books therefore alleviating a great deal of weekly anxiety on this primary step. It is best to have a yearly plan with built-in flexibility for interruptions or time for "a further look" at a particular passage. In the initial stage of planning it is not always apparent how much explanation or delight in explanation a particular text may awaken during the preparation or weeks of exposition leading up to a grand passage (that becomes even grander in the buildup). For example, through the course of a few years while preaching through Romans, I knew chapter eight began a wonderful section filled with some of the most wonderful and "mind-blowing" doctrines found anywhere in Scripture all jammed together and concluding the larger section of chapters one through eleven. While preparing to enter this new section (with a great deal of fear and joy mingled together) I came across what I thought was great advice; go to the glorious benediction of Romans 11:33-36 and preach it first as an

³⁰Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 127-32.

introduction. Then when one concludes the section, preach it again. Planning ahead allowed for and even determined a preaching event I would have missed otherwise. In this particular instance the planning coincided with the new information and advice. It changed the whole feel of chapters 8 through 11.

Second, the preacher must establish the fullest context for the passage. In *The Modern Preacher and the Ancient Text*, where Greidanus explains the grand theocentric purpose of Scripture, he encourages, “One of the most important questions we can ask in interpreting a passage is, ‘What does this passage tell us about God and His coming Kingdom?’”³¹ The fullest context must stretch itself into eternity as far as God has revealed, before settling down to time/space history and culture. This practice will safeguard against anthropocentric contextualizing that always falls short of the goal of exalting God up to the heavens. Such context must never divorce itself from the provincial, historical or cultural, but it will contextualize it properly. For example, whereas the hot springs of Hierapolis and the cold springs of Colossae are helpful explanations for the lukewarm designation with which Jesus branded the Laodicean church of Revelation, it does not get to the heart of the Laodicean problem, which may also be our own. The preacher must take his people to the holy throne room of Heaven where God and His righteousness radiate to grasp how sickening our religious self-righteous offerings are to Him. The fullest context of God and His Kingdom will allow for localized context yet never be governed by it.

Third, the preacher must do syntactical exegesis and establish an outline of the text. I may deviate from some others on this point as I allow that outline to go another step in developing the sermon. The outline is not the sermon but a means to a sermon. It is important to properly identify the main idea and its supporting clauses and phrases through some sort of diagramming or textual grid work. In Paul’s epistles, for example, it

³¹Sidney Greidanus, *The Modern Preacher and the Ancient Text* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1988), 114.

often makes most sense to preach the textual outline established. But nothing will wreck a poem like three artificial points and another poem. The point in all of this is to get to the heart of the text's meaning not to slice and dice a clever outline out of the passage with consideration of neither genre nor literary context. Certainly there are some good sermons from Esther settling on verses like "Thus it shall be done to the man the king desires to honor," but it takes work to make it drive the point of the entire book. It is on this aspect of sermon preparation that many preachers have been misled or improperly taught and exposed to the process. This reality will become more apparent as one pours over collections of sermon outlines devoid of commentary or process. One may think of a good outline, "Okay, that will preach, but where did that come from?" It is during the process of syntactical exegesis that crucial decisions are made, but not by the preacher, by the text. Thus far in the method there are very few decisions to be made other than whether or not to submit to the text and its meaning or impose our own.

Fourth, the preacher must establish a theological classification for the text. In the planning of my preaching I force myself to properly classify the "big idea"³² in a theologically familiar category. Sometimes exegetical work forces a theological reclassification. I allow for this preliminary error because I want to be able to have some sort of survey of the breadth of doctrinal material I am covering over a given time. With the help of systematic theologies and commentaries I usually get it right in the planning, but precision during the planning phase is only nominally important. However, to cause congregations to think theocentrically, preachers must preach with the "big person" of the "big idea" always being God Himself. When asking, "What does this passage say about God and His coming Kingdom?" there is a seeking for a theological answer even as it relates to man and creation. Walter Kaiser, quoting George M. Landes says,

³²Haddon W. Robinson, *Biblical Preaching: The Development and delivery of Expository Messages*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001), 33-46.

The seminary Bible teacher does a gross injustice to the biblical documents if he interprets them only in their historical setting. Though that is indeed where he must begin, if he does not go on to articulate their theology and the way they continue to address him theologically in the present, he ignores not only an important part of their intentionality for being preserved but also their role and function.³³

Fifth, the preacher must establish an anthropological classification for the text. Simply, this step is where the preacher asks the question, “What is this passage saying about and to humans?” It is at this point where a title or at least preliminary title may emerge. Once the “God idea” (theological classification) is known and the “man idea” (anthropological classification) is understood, the preacher can rightly establish the main thrust of the text; God’s message to mankind. It is also at this point that implications begin to explode out of the text. Implications are the main source for application; “If this [implication], then that [application].”

Sixth, the preacher is now able to create a homiletical sketch driven by the theological and anthropological big ideas. It is during this phase that the preacher can take the textual outline and refine it into a proper guide for preaching. For some texts this may look like a classic outline (I.-A.-1.), and for others it may look more like a flow chart of “if this-then that” bubbles and shapes. I, personally, am more comfortable taking the homiletical sketch into the pulpit than a full manuscript. That preference does not eliminate the need for manuscripting as a part of the process, and some preachers are more at home with a manuscript in the pulpit. But I need to see the big picture all at once while I both preach and write. This preference is why I place this step here.

Seventh, the preacher should do a measure of manuscripting whether it includes a beginning-to-end expansion of every aspect of the sermon or what may be referred to as partial manuscripting that only includes introductions, conclusions, and transitions. There are two prominent advantages to manuscripting: (1) forced clarity through articulate writing; and (2) discipline in the study which follows into the pulpit. A

³³George M. Landes, *Biblical Exegesis in Crisis: Biblical Exegesis for Preaching and Teaching* by Walter Kaiser, *Toward an Exegetical Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1981), 21.

third practical benefit is simply having complete, coherent sermons on file rather than outlines and scraps which will mean virtually nothing over time.

The eighth step in my method of preaching, which is an indispensable bridge from the study to the pulpit, is called “preaching-through.” Preaching-through is not the same as standing in the pulpit to practice the sermon and its delivery, although many preachers would never stand before their congregation without first doing so. Preaching-through is talking out loud through various parts of the sermon such as the introduction, conclusion, transitions, main point introductions, or narrative portions. I think of this as a verbal / manuscripting process. There is something clarifying about hearing what I will eventually commit to paper and then declare before the congregation. It is like the young man who practices his proposal over and over in his mind before actually kneeling before his future fiancé. Some things might pass the manuscripting phase that simply do not sound or feel right.

Ultimately, what preachers do is verbal. Therefore, to model what exposition sounds like is most beneficial for the congregation desiring to be expositors themselves. Expository preachers should never divorce the end result from the process. Therefore, an important aspect of getting to the verbal end should certainly include a verbalizing means at some points along the way. As the included dimensions of counseling and conversation are added to the collective goals of establishing an expository mindset within the local church, the idea of verbalizing becomes even more important. For example, exhortation is a fundamental component of preaching, but it is also at the heart of biblical counsel and everyday conversation among believers. Exhortation includes encouragement and comfort as well as rebuke to wayward Christians. Robert L. Thomas brings to light how exhortation “covers the broad spectrum of advice on how to live the Christian life. Unfortunately, much of what passes itself off as Christian counseling is more secular than

it is biblical. This is because it is not on a solid exegetical footing.”³⁴ Thomas continues and explains the necessary partnership between expository preaching and biblical counseling. “Expository preaching does well to include the right kinds of application to the assembled group, just as it should be done on an individual or small-group basis, i.e., a counseling situation.”³⁵ During the process of preaching- through the sermon, more care should be given to verbalizing thoughts when moving to points of exhortation or application in order to hear, to listen, to wrestle with the “spiritual thoughts and spiritual words” (1 Cor 2:13). It becomes a conversation within the biblical content that linear manuscripting often misses. In contrast, however, with the growing practice of replacing the sermon with a dialogue or conversation, preaching-through material in the process of preparation to deliver a sermon is not full of public variables or congregational improvisation with theological ideas or biblical texts. It is first being saturated with the truth and content exegeted from the text then pushing away from the desk to deal with the “therefores” and the “now whats?” that are often not considered by the man racing to shape his sermon for delivery.

Preaching-through happens throughout the entire process of sermon building and is not relegated to the end. These elements of the sermon that are first spoken aloud are the verbal scraps that send me running for paper or computer where they may be resculpted and refined before being spoken again. Preaching- through might begin with a question while reading the text for the first time: “God, what could you possibly be implying here when You say. . . ?” Preachers tend, as “highly trained exegetes,” to forget (or sanitize) their first verbalized responses in their studies while reading or in the church parking lot while conversing about God. Those “verbal scraps” may actually get to the heart of the text and issue better than the overly-worked written manuscript. Preaching-

³⁴Robert L. Thomas, *Rediscovering Expository Preaching*, ed. John MacArthur (Dallas: Word Publishing, 1992), 144-45.

³⁵*Ibid.*, 145.

through does not stand in opposition to writing down, it merely serves as a means of finding clarity before entering the pulpit. Sometimes the most beneficial preparation a preacher can make for the pulpit is to get up from his desk, take a walk or drive, and listen aloud to himself work through the text, implications from the text, applications to the pew, and struggles of his heart. This aspect of my method is the bridge that takes my preparation from an informational and impersonal lecture to a passionate sermon where the congregation experiences the process I “preached-through” the previous week. Philosophically, one might align this process with proponents of the inductive method of preaching and teaching. However, it has little to do with whether or not induction or deduction is more appropriate from the pulpit and more to do with incorporating the clarifying process of verbalizing the Scripture, the meaning, interpretation and application, into the development stage.

The process of correlating this model into a useful and transferable method for teachers, counselors, and conversers of God’s Word may be accomplished on two levels (casual and formal) and through two mediums (interaction and instruction). First, the most effective and penetrating method of transferring a modeled philosophy and behavior is through consistent and personal interaction. This transference occurs through the regular relational interface established by and within the relationship. In the case of a pastor and his congregation, scheduled events such as worship services, fellowships, visitation, Sunday School, and other “church” activities give opportunity for casual interaction whereby the expositional mindset is experienced. All that is needed for this transference to effectively take place is daily diligent, consistent, biblical interaction on the part of the pastor married to his commitment to bring the biblical mindset out from behind the pulpit into every facet of his life. Second, the consistent display of biblical exposition inevitably nurtures a desire in those with whom the pastor interacts to be formally instructed about how they might be better biblical expositors. Formal instruction

is most beneficial when it originates from delight and demand. Those who delight in the “law of God” (Ps 1:2) will eventually demand to be satiated with it. Those who are full of God’s Word overflow with it as teachers, preachers, counselors, and conversers.

The goal of this project is to move the congregation of Grace Fellowship Baptist Church from being beneficiaries of expositional ministries to becoming benefactors of God’s Word, where they are not only comfortable with but looking for opportunities to “combine spiritual thoughts with spiritual words” (1 Cor 2:13).

CHAPTER 4

ELEMENTS OF THE MINISTRY RESEARCH PROJECT

The ministry research project, “Teaching the Congregation at Grace Fellowship Baptist Church, Robertsedale, Alabama,” to Do Biblical Exposition, consisted of ten classes broken into three phases of instruction. Part 1 included members and active congregants participating in four weeks of instruction (sixty minute sessions) with the primary goal of increasing general knowledge about biblical exposition and increasing desire to do biblical exposition as teachers, preachers, counselors, and conversers of God’s word. Included in part 1 was three sermon evaluations. Part 2 included members and attenders who had participated in part 1 who then attended four additional weeks of instruction (sixty minute sessions) with the primary goal of developing biblical expositors who have a simple and reproducible method of exegesis and model of biblical exposition. Part 3 included elders and deacons along with participants from parts 1 and 2 who were willing to participate in two final weeks of instruction (session 1: ninety minutes of discussion and instruction followed by session 2: ninety minutes followed by a ninety minute panel discussion) with the primary goal of presenting to the congregation at Grace Fellowship Baptist Church a ninety minute panel discussion encouraging, inspiring, and instructing the congregation on the value, necessity, and joy of biblical exposition.

Scheduling of Elements

The project began in May and continued through September allowing for breaks or extensions due to holidays and vacation.

Project Adjustments

There were a few adjustments in the administration of the project beyond the calendar adjustments. First, there were changes made in conducting the sessions themselves. Originally, the project called for ninety minute sessions in parts 1 and 2. However, upon further consideration of scheduling and interest from the congregation, it was determined that one hour sessions would encourage more participation. Therefore, parts 1 and 2 included a total of eight one-hour sessions. Modification in time was carried over into part 3 where the two sessions were ninety minutes each followed by a forty-five minute evaluation immediately after the panel discussion.

In the outline of the project I determined that only the first meeting with the elders and deacons along with the final evaluation of the project would be videoed. After the first session, prior to the beginning of part 1, I decided to video all sessions, as this proved helpful to my personal evaluation of each session and also will be helpful in any future implementation.

Next, there were adjustments made due to the number of participants, variance in demographics, and their willingness to participate in all three parts of the project. I determined that there would be a drop-off in participants between parts 1 and 2 due to an increasingly technical emphasis on exegesis and biblical exposition, followed by only a few elders and deacons remaining through part 3. The preliminary session was attended by twenty persons showing interest in becoming biblical expositors on varying levels (most remained through part 2). Part 3, including the final session and discussion panel included eleven persons who had participated in all three parts.

The final change made in the project's implementation was the venue through which the participants in part 3 would address the congregation. Originally I planned for a few elders and deacons to lead a ninety minute session before the congregation comprised of what they had learned from the classes and the book on the value, necessity, and joy of biblical exposition. However, to my delight, those who had persisted in the

sessions were becoming increasingly engaged and interactive in the material with one another. During session 1 of part 3, it was suggested and agreed upon by the class that rather than presenting a lecture style seminar to the congregation by just a few representatives of the class, that the eleven participants, moderated by me, would conduct a panel discussion including previously determined questions and goals also allowing for congregational questions and answers. The guiding questions and outline of the panel were given to each of the eleven panel participants the week prior to the panel.

Project Participants

The criteria I used for participants joining the project was their desire and their four-week commitment to part 1, four-week commitment to part 2, and a final commitment to two additional weeks of instruction, reading the book *Feed My Sheep: A Passionate Plea for Preaching*, and participation in a public presentation before the congregation. I broke the project into these three parts of increasing commitment with the intention of allowing the casual or less committed participants to be encouraged and challenged, yet not disheartened or overwhelmed by the prospect of increasing information and involvement beyond their present level of interest or ability. Such a division gave an “out” to those who were unwilling or unable to commit to a lengthy and involved project. Therefore, part 1 was intended to address and increase a general knowledge of biblical exposition while introducing the idea of having a biblical or expository mindset in all relational interactions, including casual counseling and conversation. The purpose of part 2 was to bring along those participants who, after gaining more knowledge and becoming more challenged to be biblical expositors, were willing to commit to an additional four weeks where the information learned would become more technical, moving beyond an expository mindset to actually being more skilled at interpreting and interacting with others in the Scripture. One aspect of success from the first part was the willingness of some who, originally were unsure about

continuing, accepted the challenge to proceed into the second part. Most of the twelve who dropped out in the course of the first two parts discontinued their participation because they did not want to commit to reading the book or to be involved with a public presentation. One participant (female, 51 and older) dropped out after two sessions of part 1 due to her belief that she would neither be teaching nor preaching, and the classes would not be beneficial to her. I explained that the goal of the project was not geared toward teachers and preachers necessarily, but for all believers to be encouraged through the ministry of the word and learn to relationally interact with others, accurately handling the Scriptures. Although she withdrew from the class, she appreciated the explanation and encouraged me in my project.

The general demographics of those who attended the preliminary class were as follows: (1) 16 males and 8 females; and (2) 2 16-18 year olds, no 19-35 year olds, 11 36-50 year olds, and 11 51 and older adults. The obvious notch in age group 19-35 year olds may be explained by not having provided child care. This oversight in planning excluded a valuable group of participants. The number of participants attending according to project parts are as follows: (preliminary session) 16 males and 8 females; (part 1) 16 males and 7 females; (part 2) 16 males and 6 females; and (part 3) 7 males and 4 females.

Project Texts

Two texts, in addition to the Bible, were used in the project. The primary text for parts 1 and 2 of the project was a reformatted and bound copy of chapters two and three of this project: (chap. 2) “A Biblical and Theological Justification for Biblical Exposition;” and (chap. 3) “A Philosophical and Practical Mindset for Becoming a Biblical Expositor.” The secondary text used for part 3 was *Feed My Sheep: A Passionate Plea for Preaching*, a compilation of contributing preachers and educators by Reformation Trust with the intent of encouraging preachers as well as those who sit in the pew to hold fast to biblical exposition.

Synopsis of the Project According to Weeks

Week 1

There were two main goals to be accomplished in week 1: first, to inform the leadership (elders and deacons) of Grace Fellowship Baptist Church about the project; and second, to secure and recruit men in leadership to participate and exemplify biblical exposition. I explained the context of the project in relation to the doctoral program, my ministry, and Grace Fellowship Baptist Church. Three elders and 7 deacons were in attendance. One deacon, a truck driver, was unable to commit to the project due to his travels. Three elders and 6 deacons were active participants in parts 1 and 2. Two elders and 3 deacons contributed greatly in part 3, including the panel. One elder was out of town with his job and unable to be involved with part 3.

Week 2

The goal of week 2 was to contact all adult members and regular attenders of Grace Fellowship Baptist Church, to invite them to attend a preliminary meeting where they would hear a forty-five minute presentation on *Becoming a Biblical Expositor*. I sent a letter, advertised in the bulletin, and explained from the pulpit the purpose of the preliminary session. It should be noted that promotion extended beyond the week.

Week 3

The goals of week 3 included (1) preliminary meeting for explanation and recruitment; (2) administration of two questionnaires; and (3) follow-up during the week to encourage participation in the project. The preliminary meeting was demanding because of the amount of material that needed to be covered in fifty-five minutes. A one hour session would not have been sufficient if I had not done a lot of preliminary work before the meeting began (leadership meeting, letter with explanation, personal conversations, and previously established like-mindedness on the topic with most

attenders). I administered Questionnaire One at the beginning of the session to collect general demographic information and ask a few questions establishing the prospective participant's attitude toward Scripture and personal Bible study and application. I spent most of the body of the session explaining the project, specifically the five goals of the project. I concluded the session with the administration of Questionnaire Two which invited the class to express some level of commitment to the project. I noted the change of time for each class (from ninety to sixty minutes) before the administration of the Questionnaire. Finally, I concluded with an explanation of the scheduling for the project from that point forward.

Week 4

I began week 4 by handing out the class manual (chapters two and three) and explained how we would be using it in parts one and two (not page by page or even covering every aspect of the material). I allotted twenty minutes to administer the *Congregational Survey Regarding Expository Preaching*. There were 2 goals in the administration of the survey: (1) to establish a baseline of knowledge about expository preaching in the participants; and (2) to explain, through the administration of the survey, that the foundations and definitions used in the project would originate from preaching terminologies but would eventually become more task specific (teaching, preaching, counseling, conversing). Following the survey I taught (1) the definition of expository preaching from Dr. Albert Mohler; (2) the distinctions between expository teaching, preaching, counseling, and conversing, and the difference between the hierarchy of difficulty (as listed) and the foundational necessity for expository preaching and teaching in the local church; and (3) the primary goals of biblical exposition as it relates to teaching, preaching, counseling, and conversing. I concluded the class by handing out and explaining the sermon evaluation form and the procedure for the class in evaluating my preaching for the next three weeks.

Week 5

Week 5 began, in keeping with the first goal of the project, with the first sermon evaluation on Mark 2:23-36, “The Confrontational Clarity of the Gospel: The Law.” The evaluations are divided into two parts: (1) The Preacher and His Delivery; and (2) The Message and Its Content. Some of those participating have formally evaluated my preaching as many as twenty times and have been under my preaching ministry anywhere from ten to more than twelve years. Two of the evaluators have been at GFBC for less than a year, three have listened to me preach for a little more than two years, four have heard me preach almost five years, and my wife and daughter, my most faithful critics, rarely get a break from my preaching. It was interesting to watch those who have only known me as their preacher for a relatively short amount of time listen to those who know me very well in and out of the pulpit and are brutally honest yet gracious. I serve a congregation who loves God deeply, has a very high view of Scripture, and loves me overwhelmingly. These are the best evaluators a preacher could ever have. Whether or not they are given a formal evaluative instrument, they never hesitate to encourage, challenge, and even mock me when ridicule is well deserved. After a few minutes of hearing the evaluations of those who know me best, everyone felt relaxed and ready to engage. We spent more time on this first evaluation because we talked through each component including posture, appearance, mannerisms, etc. Many of the comments on the sermon itself revolved around the text itself. Two things were addressed critically (also in other evaluations): (1) good exposition of the text yet overwhelming amount of material; and (2) I “diseled” (stop, start, stop, start, etc.) my conclusion by not being clear as I wrapped up the sermon.

During the teaching portion of the session I answered the question, from the class manual, “What does the Bible say about God’s word and man’s relationship to it?” I gave a brief overview of the biblical and theological justification for biblical exposition using Hebrews 1:1-3 as the premise. The conclusion of the class also served as transition

to the heart of the project, because God Himself is an expositor, revealing Himself through His word, we who are His people are to be expositors of His word.

Week 6

Week 6 began with discussion and evaluation of the sermon I preached that morning from Mark 3:7-9, “The Confrontational Call of the Gospel: Sovereign Election.” We spent little time on the preacher and his delivery and moved quickly to the evaluation of the sermon itself. The comments were generally encouraging in the area where I am weakest, my conclusions. I was more direct and focused. The greatest goal of the sermon was achieved, God was exalted, and the people worshiped as they considered His sovereign grace in salvation.

I continued where we left off the previous week on how God has explicated Himself through His creation, His people, His prophets, His law, His promises, and ultimately and most gloriously through His Son. We then considered how God calls, equips, and sends His people to exposit Him in the world. I concluded this section by explaining how God’s people need to think in theocentric classifications as they read and study Scripture in order to translate such thinking into their interpersonal relationships. I began to move the teaching toward the fifth goal of the project which is to instill in all participants the knowledge and awareness of the necessity for all believers to think and interact expositively as a mindset (worldview).

Week 7

Week 7 began with discussion and evaluation of the sermon I preached that morning from Mark 3:20-35, “The Confrontational Confusion of the Gospel: Relationships.” We started with a lively discussion about the content of the sermon. It was noted that the amount of material was overwhelming and that although a challenging and encouraging sermon, too long and too much. The dilemma was noted about whether

or not to divide such a sermon in order to preserve attention at the expense of harming the continuity. I was particularly pleased with the evaluator's growing ability to determine theological and anthropological distinctions within the sermon.

I concluded the teaching material of part one explaining the necessity of establishing a biblical worldview by first establishing an expository mindset and applying what we had learned in the first three sessions from part 1. I continued to press the concept of the four venues or categories of moving biblical exposition into relationships that are both formal (teaching and preaching) and informal (counseling and conversing).

I administered Questionnaire 3 with two goals: (1) to enroll the participants in part 2; and (2) to gain clarity about their willingness to learn more and press deeper in the work of becoming biblical expositors.

Part 1 concluded with the participants taking *Congregational Survey Two Regarding Expository Preaching*. The goal of retaking the survey was to determine the mastery of material and to determine if any shift in mindset had occurred in part 1.

Week 8

I contacted participants from part 1 who related interest in participating in part 2 using various mediums: (1) bulletin announcements; (2) email; and (3) personal conversations of encouragement and explanation about part 2.

Week 9

I explained the purpose of part 2 in distinction from part 1. Whereas part 1 emphasized general information along with biblical and theological instruction about biblical exposition, the purpose of part 2 is learning to do biblical exegesis and exposition. I gave a session overview as well as the goals of part 2. Without the administration of surveys, questionnaires, and sermon evaluations, part 2 was primarily instructional.

I began by defining and explaining the purpose and linkage between exegesis and hermeneutics and then proceeded to present the Calvin/Kraus hermeneutical method presented by Sidney Greidanus in *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*.¹

Week 10

I concluded the instruction from the previous week on establishing a hermeneutical method and transitioned into teaching about the two levels and mediums of biblical exposition. I then explained that the ultimate goal of a church established upon biblical exposition is for the members to delight in and demand more truth to the extent that it overflows into every area of their existence (formal and casual). Once I established a basic hermeneutic for interpreting Scripture, I determined to help the class correlate it into a useful and transferable method for teachers, preachers, counselors, and conversers of God's word. I taught the first four aspects of my method of preparing for and doing biblical exposition while constantly referring to applicational transference to the four venues of expository interaction. I concluded the class with an assignment: put 1 Corinthians 14:34 in historical context and create a good syntactical understanding of the verse. Also explain what the verse tells us about God and man.

Week 11

I began the class by extending the previous week's assignment. This assignment would be extended to include other aspects of the expositional method being taught for the final class. We continued to unfold the method of exposition to include the final four aspects of the method. I concluded the class by explaining what we would do in the following week's class: using the assigned text we would consider some pedagogical aids and concepts in bringing private exposition to public interaction.

¹Sidney Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1999), 127-37.

Week 12

The entire class of the final session of part 2 was devoted to the exegetical and hermeneutical considerations of 1 Corinthians 14:34. There were two goals for session 4: (1) to give a thorough explanation of the passage; and (2) to demonstrate how to relationally interact as expository teachers, preachers, counselors, and conversers in light of our Bible study. Although I originally scheduled to administer Questionnaire 4 to determine the interest and willingness of the class to continue in the project for the final two weeks, I determined it unnecessary in light of the previous two questionnaires and their findings.

Week 13

I used week 13 to contact, promote, and answer questions about the final part of *Becoming a Biblical Expositor: Being a Model of Exposition*. I also used this time for the participants to read or finish reading *Feed My Sheep: A Passionate Plea for Preaching*.

Week 14

Week 14 was the first of two ninety minute sessions dedicated to discussion about the book *Feed My Sheep* and preparation to give a ninety minute presentation before the congregation of Grace Fellowship Baptist Church. I began part 3, session 1 by reminding the class of the primary goals of each part of the project: (part 1) to encourage and inspire an expository mindset; (part 2) to teach a model of exposition and encourage implementation into personal Bible study and relational interaction with others; and (part 3) to encourage one another in the ministry of the word (through what we have learned including the book *Feed My Sheep*), prepare to instruct, encourage, and inspire the congregation at GFBC to become biblical expositors, and lead an evening service where we will instruct, encourage, and inspire the congregation to become biblical expositors.

The rest of the session consisted of general dialogue about what we had learned and how we were beginning to apply what we had learned in the first two parts of the project and the book *Feed My Sheep*. It was determined as we began to consider the presentation that a panel discussion would be the most effective means of instruction and inspiration.

During the week I compiled the notes from session 1 and created an outline along with guiding questions for the ninety minute panel discussion and emailed it to each of the participants. I had several phone conversations, email interactions, and face-to-face conversations with the members of the group in preparation for the final session and panel the following week. Promotion for the panel discussion had been ongoing through the bulletin and pulpit announcements.

Week 15

We concluded part 3 with a vigorous discussion (somewhat of a mock panel) through the guiding questions and panel outline. The group had prepared well and was nervous and excited about this type of forum.

The panel discussion was well attended and the participation and interaction among the group along with the congregation accomplished the goal to be instructive, encouraging, and inspirational to one another and the congregation of GFBC.

Directly following the panel, the group adjourned to the classroom where we held a forty-five minute debriefing and evaluation of both the panel discussion and the fifteen week project. The eleven participants were encouraged and determined to consider how to duplicate and continue the most helpful elements of the project in GFBC.

CHAPTER 5

EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT

Grace Fellowship Baptist Church was founded upon a strong statement of faith with the understanding that in the future there would be doctrinal, cultural, and ecclesiastical demands for distinctive statements of emphasis and clarity from the leadership. Within the first year two distinctives were added: (1) a more expansive statement on the gospel; and (2) a statement on expository preaching. I begin with this clarification as context because it is an important element for analyzing this project. At the time of this analysis GFBC is nearly five years old and still has the same two distinctives with the aforementioned labels (from chapter 1). From the beginning the leadership and members of GFBC recognized the significance and necessity for clear biblical exposition from the pulpit. My project was not intended to persuade the participants of the importance of biblical exposition as much as to expand their participation in the ministry of the word, beyond the pulpit. The overarching premise of developing a church of multi-faceted expositors able to model and perpetuate biblical exposition serves as the context of my analysis.

Analysis of the Data

There were four different types of instruments administered in the project that I will consider for analysis along with the reasons for the perseverance of some of the participants to remain throughout the three parts and panel discussion.

Congregational Survey Regarding Expository Preaching

The purpose of the *Congregational Survey Regarding Expository Preaching* was to create a baseline of knowledge about expository preaching among those initial participants in the project. Although the materials created for the project's curriculum were not constructed around the survey, nor were the classes intended to answer all the questions or deal with every issue of the survey, a second taking of the survey at the conclusion of part 1 helped measure the knowledge the participants gained within the first part and introduced the concept of relational engagement as a biblical expositor in the final section.

The first survey showed a good, basic understanding of expository preaching on the part of those (19) participating in the survey. As stated previously, this project did not involve participants unfamiliar with biblical exposition as it is a distinctive of GFBC. The comparison between the first (19) and second (17) surveys show no dramatic shifts in trends of beliefs or opinions about expository preaching. However, attitudes and beliefs became more hardened toward the extremes on the Likert scale questions. The first three questions only had three options (disagree, no opinion, and agree) and there was statistically no variation between survey 1 and 2. Likert scale questions 8-16 is where the hardening was shown, but with little shift. If a variation occurred it was only by one number up or down in the direction of the trend (9's became 10's and 3's became 2's).

Prior to the first survey, I took my own survey and created a baseline opinion. There was little distinction between my survey and the final survey given with few exceptions. The most difficult question to analyze was question 7: "The questions I want to be able to answer following a sermon are" (Instructions: "According to your opinion, list each phrase [by letter] in the order of importance"). The options to be ordered were as follows: (a) What does the text mean? (b) Do I know more now than I did before the

sermon? (c) What should I do with what I heard? and (d) Have I worshiped God as a result of the sermon I have heard? The contrast between the very objective question, “What does the text mean?” and the subjective, yet very important, “Have I worshiped God as a result of the sermon I have heard?” broke any consistency within each survey and from the first to second survey. I, therefore, view question 7 as more provocative and certainly leading to good discussion, but in the end unable to be definitively ranked.

The final section of the survey addressing expositional teaching, counseling, and conversation showed a better understanding of the concepts from the participants from survey 1 to survey 2. However, it was not until part 2 of the project that we dealt at length with the concept of moving biblical exposition beyond the pulpit to relationships.

Questionnaire 1: Demographics and Preliminary Survey

The Participants took the first questionnaire in the preliminary interest meeting where the project was introduced to those who were considering participation. Not all eventual participants were in attendance. I met with and had phone conversations with some who were unable to attend this first meeting. Twenty individuals (7 females and 13 males) answered Questionnaire 1. The purpose of Questionnaire 1 was to assess general attitudes about and habits involving Scripture. Overall, the questions revealed a respectful to high view of Scripture and corresponding consistency in habit of personal Bible reading and study. The true or false questions, 5 through 8, assessed their willingness to “do better” and be more consistent in personal Bible study/reading and application. Overwhelmingly, the participants expressed a desire to improve in these areas. Question 9, the most specialized of the questions; “I would like to learn how to preach,” revealed 8 out of 20 participants wanting training and encouragement in this particular expository ministry. The final two questions showed that nearly every contributor at least occasionally looks for or creates opportunities to speak with others about the Bible or

spiritual matters. It also showed that they try to apply or relate to others the things they are learning in Scripture. After reviewing the results from Questionnaire 1, I was confident that there would be good participation in my project beyond the elders and deacons.

Questionnaires 2 and 3: Preparation for Parts 1 and 2

The purpose for these questionnaires was to assess the desire and willingness of the participants to continue in the progression of the project along with their personal goals for the project. Each questionnaire consisted of three questions. The first two questions were identical on both with the third question intended to assess the participant's willingness to move into the next part of the project.

The responses to question 1 relating to the participant's desire to learn various facets of expository ministries remained consistent between the two questionnaires. However, question 2, "I am willing to: (1) teach others the Bible; (2) preach in front of others; (3) counsel using the Bible; and (4) engage in biblical conversations, showed variations in some of the contributor's answers from the first questionnaire to the second. Interestingly, some added facets while others removed facets in which they were willing to engage following the conclusion of part 1. My interpretation, based on conversations and relationships with the participants, led me to believe that better understanding of the facets and their various demands either increased or diminished their willingness.

Evaluation of the Project's Purpose

The primary input for evaluating the various aspects of my project is the Post-Panel Evaluation given to those who participated in the three parts of my project including the panel discussion on the final evening of the project. Following the ninety minute panel discussion, the 11 participants met for a forty-five minute evaluation

consisting of a written and oral debriefing about the panel and the entirety of the project. I videoed and reviewed this evaluation. The secondary input for evaluating the various aspects of my project is my own reflections and considerations.

The basic purpose of my project was to teach the congregation at GFBC to do biblical exposition. However, that purpose was not designed with only potential preachers and teachers in mind. My original mindset was that the project's participants would primarily be current and potential preachers and teachers. The purpose was to establish a means of creating and perpetuating an expository mindset in GFBC beyond the present members, leaders, and attenders. Teaching and encouraging biblical exposition so that it will be the guiding philosophy of our church in formal engagement (preaching, teaching, and counseling) as well as informal engagement (counseling and conversation) was at the heart of my project.

Evaluation of the Project's Goals

There were five goals established for my project. The first goal was to improve my own preaching preparation and delivery. This goal, although stated to be primary, was simply an acknowledgement that any project carried out by me with the purpose of helping others become biblical expositors must have the improvement of my own knowledge and skills as a biblical expositor as a central guiding principle. Two activities served to improve my own biblical exposition: (1) particular attention to my own preaching through evaluations and (2) the process of establishing and teaching a method of doing biblical exposition. Of the two, it was the teaching of the method that was most helpful (several of the project participants have evaluated me many times). Teaching and discussing the process of doing biblical exposition forced me to be specific and refine some areas of my method that I do inconsistently or poorly. For example, through teaching others about creating various types of sketches (pedagogical, homiletical,

psychological, relational) of the text driven by the theological and anthropological thrusts in order to make accurate applications, I saw that I was more often than not sloppy in creating applications for my sermons.

The second goal was to encourage the desire in the congregation to understand Scripture's meaning and demonstrate a willingness to communicate that meaning effectively to others. I believe this goal was successfully accomplished as demonstrated by a strong initial response to the project accompanied by willing participation including and beyond the leadership through all three parts of the project.

The third goal was to increase the knowledge and skill level of teachers, preachers, and potential teachers and preachers to communicate Scripture expositionally. The intention of this goal was to help others learn the components of biblical exposition and actually begin to do biblical exposition themselves. The success of this goal was in the transference of good information along with good interaction in the class. The best evaluative instrument for this goal was accomplished through the discussion panel on the final evening of the project. However, I fell short on this goal by not offering more opportunities to practice what we were learning and therefore incrementally measure the participant's mastery of the information. Overall, the lack of "doing" and evaluating as we learned the method of hermeneutics and biblical exposition in part 2 has proven why I am unable to accurately measure success or failure of the project on this point.

The fourth goal was for a select group of elders and deacons from the first part of the project to model, assist, and eventually teach others to think and teach expositionally within the church. Due to the enthusiasm and participation of those who are not elders and deacons, the fourth goal began what became a series of modifications. I viewed these modifications to the project as positive. Therefore, my initial assumption and plan to complete the project (part 3) using only elders and deacons to become the future teachers and models for biblical exposition within our church proved to be short-

sighted. Also, this broadening of participation changed the feel of the classes and their goals as I discovered the desire from those who are not in leadership to continue in the process and to learn more about doing biblical exposition. For example, the continuation of those not in leadership roles (women and youth) in the project heavily influenced the recommendation and willingness of the participants to all take part in a panel discussion as opposed to a lecture style presentation. The best part about this, from my perspective, was how this participation moved the project more in the direction I discovered I was most interested in: doing biblical exposition informally through the means of counsel and conversation. These modifications actually reinforced the fifth and broadest goal of the project.

The fifth goal was to seek to instill in all the participants the knowledge and awareness of the necessity for all believers to think and interact expositively as a mindset. I was hoping that the current leadership, as a result of my project, would have a means and be able to model and inspire biblical exposition in our church in the final presentation. What happened instead was that a diverse group beyond the elders and deacons, discussed, encouraged, and inspired the congregation in a more effective setting (panel discussion) to become biblical expositors themselves. In other words, that expositional mindset was not merely talked about but was actually demonstrated.

Strengths of the Project

There were six strong components to the project, including (1) broad and consistent participation through the three parts of the project; (2) a sense of cumulative progression throughout the project; (3) vibrant participation during class and the panel discussion; (4) the panel discussion as a means of instructing, encouraging, and inspiring the congregation; (5) the establishment and instruction of a method for doing biblical exposition; and (6) the inclusion of less formal means for doing biblical exposition.

I was hopeful that there would be broad participation in my project, yet I planned to finish my project with elders and deacons as the participants. The construction of the project's execution (three parts) allowed and even planned on a certain amount of attrition before getting to the final two weeks. In light of the final participation in the project, my first meeting with the elders and deacons which introduced my project and sought their commitment to remain through its conclusion, although helpful, may have been unnecessary. In the end, three elders (not including me), three deacons, two youth, and three women made up the final part of the project.

As with any prolonged class or seminar, there is always the concern that the material may fragment or become disjointed especially when the class is not mandatory and participants are inconsistent in attendance. I commend the participants of my project for persevering through the summer months and, at times, tedious material. In spite of the potential of not being able to move forward with a large amount of material at a pace needed to accomplish the demand of the project, the members worked hard to attend and retain. Therefore, the cumulative progression of the subject was able to be accomplished.

Certainly the success or failure of a class is ultimately determined by whether or not the participants learn and apply what was taught, but there is also something to be said about the classroom experience. Good students will inevitably make the teacher a better teacher. One of the most important components of the success of this project was the vibrant participation of the students in the classroom as well as those final eleven who led the panel discussion. However, this lively involvement also made it a challenge at times to cover all the material (which at times was pushed forward to the next week).

I wish I could take the credit and say I had the foresight to conclude my project with a panel discussion, but the idea originated within the first meeting of part 3 as we began to talk about what we would present to the congregation and how we would present it. Everyone was willing but no one was excited about "giving a report" about

how to be biblical expositors. The panel discussion concept was floated out in the midst of a lot of considerations. Finally, one of the deacons spoke up and said, “You know, the smart thing to do would be for us to sit in front of the congregation and just talk about what we have learned and believe about the necessity of being biblical expositors.” It was settled.

One of the most beneficial and, I believe most successful, parts of the project was the establishment and instruction of a method for doing biblical exposition. However, the strength of this component may only be realized over time as it is worked and reworked into a tight and doable method able to be perpetuated easily and modeled frequently. I believe, due to the expansion of the project to include those who are not specifically or biblically qualified to be preachers and teachers, I was not successful in helping the participants apply the method in counseling and conversing God’s word. The method makes good and easy sense if you’re a teacher or preacher. The challenge of the project was and will continue to be, how do we implement such a method into a regular means of studying Scripture and then translate the results into godly counsel and conversation?

Finally, the strength of the project that is closest to my heart and ultimately will become the applicational component of our expository ministry at GFBC is doing accurate and clear biblical exposition through the casual or informal venues of counsel and conversation. Just about everyone who values the ministry of biblical exposition in the local church has some sort of idea about how to preach and teach expositionally. Very few who are likeminded on this topic have much to say about how to intentionally take biblical exposition beyond the pulpit and lectern. The thrust of my project has been to firmly instill and greatly improve the ministry of the word at GFBC, and that begins with accurate biblical exposition and clear application from the preacher and elders entrusted with this good work. However, if that is where the ministry of the word ends, we have

failed in feeding, loving, and protecting the flock God has entrusted to us. One of the grave mistakes preachers (me included) make is in believing their pronounced application from the meaning of the text is the sufficient end to their work. Application is not merely saying what we must do or think in light of the passage. Application is explaining the “therefores” in or derived from the text so that the hearers may then do and think biblically. I believe the true test of whether or not a church is succeeding in the ministry of biblical exposition is how the members of that church “therefore” informally engage with others in light of the Scripture. I would have done well to apply this reality to my own project.

Weaknesses of the Project

There were four weaknesses in my project: (1) there was a lack of practical and measurable activity in the class; (2) class time needed to be longer; (3) I did not provide childcare for young families; and (4) there needed to be more opportunities for discussion about the material including *Feed My Sheep*.

I believe the greatest weakness of the project was in my failure to create and do more practical exercises as a class. Three explanations for this shortcoming include: (1) lack of planning or intentionality on my part; (2) the large amount of material to be covered was prohibitive to a lot of classwork; and (3) the brevity of the classes (60 minutes). The broad participation encouraged me in the most passionate aspect of my project which, ironically, resulted in me not doing a good job moving beyond the academic to the practical because of the amount of material. I, along with the participants, would have benefitted from an adjustment to the material to include exercises in the areas of counseling and conversation. When I rework this material to be taught again I will truncate the material further with the purpose of inserting practical exercises in these areas. Perhaps a better curriculum might lengthen the class time a bit

(to 75 minutes) and structure the classes so that there is always specific time for both the academic and practical. My original plan called for longer class time knowing there was a lot of material to be covered. I determined, and this may explain how my project actually broadened in appeal, that I would have more participation if I only met for 60 minutes instead of 90. This compromise caused me to push and abbreviate during the classes.

Every pastor knows that if you want younger adults to participate in an activity you had better provide child care. Embarrassingly, child care never entered my mind until after looking at the demographics and I realized there were no participants between the ages of 19-35. Because of my lack of foresight and preparation on this fundamental provision I missed having an important demographic represented in my project.

Finally, and this may seem contradictory to what I pointed out as a strength of my project, it was recommended that there should have been more discussion. This recommendation may be explained by three considerations. First, this was, as I stated prior, a lively group full of opinions and ideas about biblical exposition and the ministry of the word. They would have talked as long as I would have permitted. Second, the criticism from those who desired more practical activities in the class room, I believe, explains better this weakness. Certainly they enjoy inputting their thoughts and considerations on this topic, but some of their desire to have more discussion in the class room was as much a desire to interact with the material presented as their desire to present their own ideas. Third, some of this desire for more discussion was related specifically to the final part of the project and the book *Feed My Sheep*. Most (although not all) of the participants read most or the entire book, enjoyed and were challenged by it. Therefore, some of the final eleven wanted to interact more with one another about what they had read.

A fifth weakness of my project was related to the fluidity of the focus corresponding to the change in my status as pastor from First Baptist Church, Silverhill to

becoming the pastor of Grace Fellowship Baptist Church. I did not adjust the intent of the project enough to reflect my new focus in establishing the new work and philosophy of ministry. Upon further reflection I find some weaknesses especially in the areas of what became my passion and focus, moving beyond the pulpit to the pew. This discrepancy is most clearly seen between the preliminary session with the elders and deacons compared with the final session and panel discussion. My original mindset guiding the project was more about developing the existing and potential leaders already serving in some capacity of elder or deacon ministry. Within the first two or three weeks, to my delight, the participation and interest from women, youth, and men who were not elders or deacons shifted the dynamic of the classes significantly. Although I did adjust in some areas such as the length of class, pace and amount of material to be covered, I did not make the crucial adjustment of focus from expository teaching and preaching to counseling and conversation.

In summary and through hindsight, a complete reconstruction of the material toward biblical counsel and conversation where expository preaching and teaching served as the impetus from which those activities derive would have been more beneficial. However, it was in the process of doing my project that the participants gained a better understanding of the linkage between these four aspects of the ministry of the word. Therefore, what may now appear to be the greatest weakness of the project may, in time, become the greatest asset for my ministry and the ministry of the word at Grace Fellowship Baptist Church.

What I Learned through the Project

This project was as much (and perhaps more) a chronicle of my ministry over the past five years as it was an academic and practical exercise and application of what I learned in the doctoral ministry program in expository preaching. I greatly appreciate the

grace extended to me by those who have guided me through this project. The context of this project was inextricably theologically, philosophically, and practically linked with life and ministry events as I was dismissed from a church I loved and had served for over seven years in large part due to my convictions about biblical exposition. I resigned my church in November of 2006, attended the writing seminar for this project in January of 2007 where I was to propose a project for and within a church in which I was no longer serving with the possibility of moving to an entirely new field of service, and began my ministry with Grace Fellowship Baptist Church in February of that same year. The next two years were primarily focused on establishing this new congregation. What I learned in those first two years about God and His church in concert with what I was discovering about me and my ministry was invaluable. What began as an academic endeavor a few years prior as I entered the doctor of ministry program, became the most real and convictional part of my new work at GFBC along with the core beliefs of that new congregation. What I have learned about God, His church, and His word in the process of doing this protracted project in parallel with planting, establishing, and shepherding this new church has been rich and ministry altering. In a far less dramatic context than Job's, "I know that God can do all things, and that no purpose of His can be thwarted." Upon reflection I realize that "I have [often] declared what I did not understand, things too wonderful for me, which I did not know" (Job 42:2-3).

God has spoken and He compels His people by faith to speak for Him, not our own words but His. God has reaffirmed and steeled within me that indeed, "All Scripture is inspired by Him [God] and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work" (2 Tim 3:16-17). Even though man, in our sin and pride have sought to undermine God's glory through His church, the Lord Jesus will build His church, ". . . and the gates of hell will not overpower it" (Matt 16:18). Also, I have learned and been humbled by

faithful men who have endured alienation, persecution, and death for the sake of God's word, and I, as a very small and weak vessel, am a part of that long and enduring line of men who have been charged to be faithful to God's word.

APPENDIX 1

LETTER OF APPEAL TO GFBC CONGREGATION



Wednesday, May 25, 2011

Dear Church Family,

Since the fall of 2005 I have been working on my doctoral degree from The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, KY. The first two years consisted of research in my area of study (expository preaching) with corresponding seminars. The third/fourth year(s) of the program are dedicated to specific research and writing on a topic within my field of study as it relates to my particular ministry. In the winter of 2007 I began my ministry at Grace Fellowship Baptist Church (GFBC). Because of my change in ministry and need to focus on establishing the new work, my doctoral advisors approved a two year hiatus starting in 2008. In 2010 I restarted my work and have recently been approved to move from the research and writing phase into the project phase of my study. That is the reason for this letter.

As a part of my study I have developed a philosophy and practical means of encouraging and teaching biblical exposition within the local church. GFBC is itself established upon many of these concepts and you, as a congregant, are very aware of the model of exposition I teach and practice. However, GFBC has few members who are adequately trained to do biblical exposition. This is your invitation to participate in my project. ***Sunday evening, June 12th, 5:00 in the Creamer/Gruenloh classroom*** I will present a preliminary session explaining my project. There will be a brief presentation about becoming a biblical expositor and two questionnaires given.

There are three phases in which you may participate. If, following the introductory session on the 12th, you are interested in pursuing further instruction in biblical exposition, you will be given the opportunity to continue in phase one of the project; a four-part seminar that meets four weeks on Sunday evenings at 4:30. Phase two consists of an additional four weeks of more in-depth training. The final phase is reserved for those who not only have completed the first two phases but have also committed to two final weeks of preparation in expository training.

One of the most important goals of the project is to create a desire in our congregation to understand Scripture's meaning and demonstrate a willingness to communicate that meaning effectively to others through biblical teaching, preaching, counseling, and conversing. I hope you will join me in this endeavor.

In Christ,

Brother Jeff

jhunter@gracefellowshipbaptist.org
www.gracefellowshipbaptist.org

APPENDIX 2

EXPLANATION AND RECRUITMENT IN PRELIMINARY MEETING

1. **Welcome and prayer**
2. **Appreciation for willingness to consider involvement in my doctoral project**
3. **Administer Questionnaire One**
4. **Explain the doctoral degree along with history of my involvement**
 - a. As early as the mid-nineties I began to consider doing doctoral work (Beeson Divinity, Covenant Theological, and Southern). Began to inquire and research the schools (and some others).
 - b. Moved to Silverhill in June, 1999. All efforts and energies were there.
 - c. In 2005 I began to reconsider beginning work on a doctorate. By this time there was no doubt where I wanted to study. I mentioned it to a few men at FBC and they were very encouraging. Not only did FBC encourage my studies but said they would financially support my work.
 - d. I began the application process in the summer of 2005, was accepted into the program and began my studies in October, 2005.
 - e. The Doctorate of Ministry program is structured in two basic phases:
 - f. Literary research and interaction with professors and cohort (6-7 men) – This is a two year phase in which we read around forty books within the discipline, develop a philosophy of preaching, create models and methods of developing sermons, interact within congregation through sermon evaluations and seminars, interact with professors and cohort in Louisville, evaluate ministry and preaching etc.
 - g. Research and writing of project – This is a one to two year phase where I began to condense and specify research into a workable thesis and project. The writing phase consists of five chapters:
 - i. **Chapter 1** – Prospectus where the research and project are assembled and contextualized including all instruments, bibliography, demographics, context, goals, limitations/delimitations, controlling definitions and concepts, etc.
 - ii. **Chapter 2** – *The Theological and Biblical Justification for Biblical Exposition*
 - iii. **Chapter 3** – *A Philosophical and Practical Mindset for Becoming a Biblical Expositor*

- i. **Chapter 4** – Do the project – *Teaching the Congregation at Grace Fellowship Baptist Church, Robertsedale, Alabama, to Do Biblical Exposition*
 - ii. Chapter 5 – Analysis of the project
- b. In November, 2006 I resigned FBC. I was to begin the writing phase in spring, 2007. During a two week seminar in Louisville in January of 2007 I determined to terminate the candidate process with a church in California and accept GFBC's offer to become their pastor. Although I did some research and writing, my efforts and focus at starting the church limited my ability to move toward the project. The seminary gave me a two year hiatus.
- c. And so here we are...

2. Explain the meeting

- a. To introduce the project (which I will do next)
- b. To recruit participants (which I am doing now)

3. Explain the Project

- a. *Teaching the Congregation at Grace Fellowship Baptist Church, Robertsedale, Alabama, to Do Biblical Exposition*
- b. **Five Goals of the Project**
 - i. *The primary goal is to improve my own preaching preparation and delivery.* I believe good pedagogy is cyclical; if we teach others well, the process will bring a beneficial personal return. Therefore, the fundamental instrument for training others to become good expositors will be to model and analyze expository preaching in my own methods of preparation and delivery.
 - ii. *The second goal is to create a desire in the congregation to understand Scripture's meaning and demonstrate a willingness to communicate that meaning effectively to others.* Grace Fellowship Baptist Church currently has few members who are adequately trained to teach expositionally, while there are many desiring to learn how to properly exegete and communicate the meanings of passages from the Bible. I will invite current teachers and those who have shown interest in becoming biblical expositors to participate in an introductory seminar designed to create greater desire and willingness to understand the meaning of Scripture with a resultant desire of being trained further to effectively communicate it to others. Success of this goal will have people leaving the preliminary seminar excited about Scripture and willing to commit to a four week class to encourage and develop expositional thinking when approaching the Bible.
 - iii. *The third goal is to increase the knowledge and skill level of teachers, preachers, and potential teachers and preachers to communicate Scripture expositionally.* Currently, our congregation and many class members are aware (mostly through

preaching models) of what expositional teaching and preaching looks like as a final product, but they are untrained in the skills of preparing to teach or preach expositionally. I will continue the seminar by teaching an additional four-week class on how to expositionally approach, accurately exegete, and effectively communicate the meaning of the Bible. It is my desire that those who complete the class be able to take a passage of Scripture, effectively communicate the meaning of the text, and give proper application to their class, friends, or congregation.

- iv. ***The fourth goal of the project will be for a select group of elders and deacons from the first part of the project to model, assist, and eventually teach others to think and teach expositionally within the church.*** At the present time, there is no one in the church apart from the pastor who is able to train and model proper exposition of the Bible. This goal will be accomplished in an additional two week class.
- v. ***The fifth goal*** of this project is the broadest, yet I believe potentially most beneficial, for the future of our church. While specifically training some members to become skilled expository teachers and preachers, I will, as my fifth goal, ***seek to instill in all participants the knowledge and awareness of the necessity for all believers to think and interact expositionally as a mindset.*** Therefore, it is within this fifth goal that the appeal for expositional training blooms inclusively and penetrates beyond the few who are indeed teachers and preachers of God's Word.

4. Invite those attending to join Part 1 and administer Questionnaire 2

Calendar

- **Part 1:** June 26, July 3, July 10, and July 17
- **Part 2:** July 31, August 7, August 14, August 21
- **Part 3:** September 11 and September 18

5. Administer Questionnaire 2

6. Dismiss with prayer

APPENDIX 3

DEMOGRAPHICS AND PRELIMINARY SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE 1

The following three questions are for demographic information only.

1. I am () male () female
2. My age group is () 16-18 () adult age 19-35 () adult age 36-50 () adult age 51 and older
3. I am a () member () regular attendee, but not a member of Grace Fellowship Baptist

Circle the letter of the statement best agreeing with your answer

1. Which best describes your current habit of casually reading the Bible?
 - a. I never read the Bible
 - b. I only read the Bible at church
 - c. I read a few verses or passages a week
 - d. I read a daily devotion which contains some portion of Scripture
 - e. I read a few verses or passages each day
 - f. I read a chapter of Scripture each day
 - g. I read more than a chapter of Scripture each day
2. Which best describes your current habit of intently studying the Bible?
 - a. I never study the Bible
 - b. I only study the Bible at church
 - c. I study the Bible when I prepare for Sunday School or weekly Bible study
 - d. I follow a regular system of Bible study
 - e. Other
3. Which best describes your attitude about the Bible?
 - a. I am not very interested in reading or studying the Bible
 - b. I am only interested in studying certain topics from the Bible
 - c. I am “hot and cold” in my desire to read or study the Bible
 - d. I am passionate about reading and studying the Bible

Answer True or False

1. _____ I am intimidated by the Bible.
2. _____ I would like to be more consistent in reading and studying the Bible.
3. _____ I would like to become more confident in my knowledge of the Bible.
4. _____ I would like to be able to confidently discuss the Bible with others.
5. _____ I would like to learn how to teach the Bible to others.
6. _____ I would like to learn how to preach.

Circle the word that best completes the statement for you.

7. I *never rarely occasionally frequently always* **look for or create opportunities to speak with others about the Bible or spiritual matters.**
8. I *never rarely occasionally frequently always* **find myself applying or relating to others the things I am learning from the Bible.**

APPENDIX 4

PERSONAL INFORMATION AND PREPARATION FOR PART 1 QUESTIONNAIRE 2

Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email: _____

Circle the letters of all the statements that apply.

1. I would like to learn to:

- a. Study the Bible better than I do now
- b. Accurately teach the bible to others (adults and/or children)
- c. Accurately preach the Bible to others
- d. Accurately and biblically counsel and disciple others
- e. Accurately discuss the Bible with others
- f. Accurately apply the Bible personally and for others

2. I am willing to:

- a. Teach others the Bible
- b. Preach in front of others
- c. Counsel using the Bible
- d. Engage in biblical conversations

3. I am willing to:

- a. Attend a four week seminar (60 minutes each week) on how to better learn and explain the Bible
- b. Attend an eight week seminar (60 minutes each week) on how to learn, explain, and teach others the Bible
- c. Attend a ten week seminar (60 minutes a week for eight weeks and 2 hours a week for two weeks) on how to learn, explain, and teach the Bible and become a model for others to learn
- d. Read 1 book (150 pages) over the next three months

APPENDIX 5

PART 1 – SESSION 1

- 1. Welcome and prayer**
- 2. Hand out Class Manual "Chapters 2 and 3"**
- 3. Explain and administer Congregational Survey Regarding Expository Preaching** (Explain that the foundations and definitions used will originate from preaching terminologies but will eventually become more task specific - teaching, preaching, counseling, conversing).
- 4. The definition of expository preaching**
Albert Mohler - **Page 46** in class manual
- 5. The distinctions between expository teaching, preaching, counseling, and conversing**
- 6. The primary goals of biblical exposition as it relates to** (in descending order of complexity):
 - a. Teaching (**37**)
 - b. Preaching (**37**) and the bottom of **38** through the top of **39** (expository preaching is the stack pole around which all expositional ministries originate and are encouraged and fed)
 - c. Counseling (**38**) - I Thessalonians 5:14
 - d. Conversation (**38**) (**23** - Spurgeon quote) - Colossians 4:6/I Peter 3:15/I Peter 4:11
- 7. Explain and give out Preaching Evaluation forms**
- 8. Dismiss with prayer**

APPENDIX 6

CONGREGATIONAL SURVEY REGARDING EXPOSITORY PREACHING

The following three questions are for demographic information only.

1. I am () male () female
2. My age group is () 16-18 () adult age 19-35 () adult age 36-50 () adult age 51 and older
3. I am a () member () regular attendee, but not a member of Grace Fellowship Baptist

Dear Friend,

On the next three pages you will find a survey intended to determine general knowledge of and experience with biblical exposition (especially expository preaching). I realize that some of these questions may be difficult to answer if you are unfamiliar with the concepts and terminologies of expository preaching. That is perfectly fine and your participation will be greatly appreciated and beneficial regardless of your previous knowledge of and experience with expository preaching. Thank you for your willingness and valuable time.

Jeff Hunter

Please fill in the blank with the number which best represents your view of the given statement.

1-Disagree

2-No Opinion

3-Agree

1. _____ Expository preaching demands that the preacher begin with the text of Scripture when developing the content and structure of his message.
2. _____ In order for preaching to be considered expository, the preacher must preach through an entire book.
3. _____ Because expository preaching is text driven and not felt-need driven (expressed needs of the congregation/culture), it is more difficult to apply to everyday life.

Multiple choice and priority lists

Please follow the directions for each section.

In your opinion, select the letter of the definition which best defines *expository preaching*.

4. _____
- a. Preaching a series through a particular book in the Bible.
 - b. Preaching verse by verse through a book in the Bible.
 - c. Preaching which draws its content and structure from the text(s) of the Bible.
 - d. Preaching which accurately supports the topic or theme with text(s) from the Bible.

According to your opinion, list each phrase (by letter) in the order of importance (e.g. *a, b, c, d*).

5. _____ The most relevant sermons are delivered when the preacher

- a. Observes and is sensitive to the current culture
- b. Studies the text of Scripture
- c. Listens to his congregation
- d. Allows God's Spirit to lead him

6. _____ The most important element in preaching is

- a. Proper application of the text
- b. Good exposition of the text
- c. Authoritative delivery of the sermon
- d. Relevant illustrations within the sermon

7. _____ The questions I want to be able to answer following a sermon are

- a. What does the text mean?
- b. Do I know more now than I did before I heard the sermon?
- c. What should I do with what I have heard?
- d. Have I worshiped God as a result of the sermon I have heard?

Circle the number which most closely represents your opinion about the statement.

8. Expository preaching is essential for the spiritual growth of the church.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Strongly		Disagree		Uncertain		Agree		Strongly	
Disagree								Agree	

9. Expository preaching is applicable to today's needs.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Strongly		Disagree		Uncertain		Agree		Strongly	
Disagree								Agree	

10. Expository preaching is the type of preaching I usually hear.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Uncertain		Agree		Strongly Agree	

11. Expository preaching is the kind of preaching I heard as a child/youth.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Uncertain		Agree		Strongly Agree	

12. Expository preaching does not relate to teenagers and college students as well as topical preaching.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Uncertain		Agree		Strongly Agree	

13. Expository preaching is difficult for new believers to follow and understand.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Uncertain		Agree		Strongly Agree	

14. Expository preaching appeals to the head (intellect) more than the heart (emotion).

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Uncertain		Agree		Strongly Agree	

15. Expository Preaching is the best preaching to increase attendance in worship.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Uncertain		Agree		Strongly Agree	

16. Expository preaching is the type of preaching I like best.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Strongly		Disagree		Uncertain		Agree		Strongly	
Disagree								Agree	

In your own words explain how biblical exposition may influence and be used in the following areas:

Bible Teaching:

Informal Counseling:

Informal Conversation:

APPENDIX 7

PREACHING EVALUATION

Text _____

Sermon Title _____

The Preacher and His Delivery

1. Posture

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Poor			Average			Good			Outstanding

2. Clothing and Appearance

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Poor			Average			Good			Outstanding

3. Eye contact and facial expressions

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Poor			Average			Good			Outstanding

4. Mannerisms

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Poor			Average			Good			Outstanding

5. Gestures

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Poor			Average			Good			Outstanding

6. Voice and delivery

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Poor			Average			Good			Outstanding

The Message and its Content

1. Introduction

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Poor			Average			Good			Outstanding

2. Exposition

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Poor			Average			Good			Outstanding

3. Illustrations and Analogies

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Poor			Average			Good			Outstanding

4. Application

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Poor			Average			Good			Outstanding

5. Exhortation

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Poor			Average			Good			Outstanding

6. Conclusion

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Poor			Average			Good			Outstanding

Comments

APPENDIX 8

PART 1 – SESSION 2

1. Welcome and prayer
2. Make sure everyone has Class Manual "Chapters 2 and 3"
3. Re-explain and discuss Congregational Survey Regarding Expository Preaching
 - a. Explain that the foundations and definitions used will originate from preaching terminologies but will eventually become more task specific - teaching, preaching, counseling, conversing.
 - b. Discuss Sermon Evaluation One
 - i. **Title:** The Confrontational Clarity of the Gospel: The Law (part 4)
 - ii. **Text:** Mark 2:23-3:6
4. What does the Bible say about God's word and man's relationship to it?
 - a. Part 1 from Chapter 2 – *A Biblical and Theological Justification for Biblical Exposition*
 - b. Premise for Chapter 2 – *God's people must become expositors of God's word because everything created by Him and given for Him is an exposition of Him.*
5. Give out Preaching Evaluation forms for Sermon Evaluation 2
6. Dismiss with prayer

APPENDIX 9

PART 1 – SESSION 3

1. **Welcome and prayer**
2. **Make sure everyone has Class Manual "Chapters 2 and 3"**
3. **Re-explain and discuss Congregational Survey Regarding Expository Preaching**
 - a. Explain that the foundations and definitions used will originate from preaching terminologies but will eventually become more task specific - teaching, preaching, counseling, conversing.
 - b. Discuss Sermon Evaluation Two
 - i. **Title:** The Confrontational Call of the Gospel: Sovereign Grace
 - ii. **Text:** Mark 3:7-19
4. **What does the Bible say about God's word and man's relationship to it?**
 - a. Part 1 from Chapter 2 – *A Biblical and Theological Justification for Biblical Exposition*
 - b. Premise for Chapter 2 – *God's people must become expositors of God's word because everything created by Him and given for Him is an exposition of Him.*
 - c. Review Ia-c – finish c. Jesus Christ is the full exposition of the Father
 - d. Teach Id-f.
 - e. Developing biblical and systematic theologies (statements of faith) in order to properly identify theocentric classifications of passages and sections of Scripture (what are referred to as "pegs" upon which we may understand and theologically contextualize Scripture).
5. **Give out Preaching Evaluation forms for Sermon Evaluation 3**
6. **Dismiss with prayer**

APPENDIX 10

PART 1 – SESSION 4

- 1. Welcome and prayer**
- 2. Re-explain and discuss Congregational Survey Regarding Expository Preaching**
 - a. Explain that the foundations and definitions used will originate from preaching terminologies but will eventually become more task specific - teaching, preaching, counseling, and conversing.
 - b. Discuss Sermon Evaluation Two
 - i. **Title:** The Confrontational Confusion of the Gospel: Relationships
 - ii. **Text:** Mark 3:20-35
- 3. What does the Bible say about God's word and man's relationship to it?**
 - a. Developing biblical and systematic theologies (statements of faith) in order to properly identify theocentric classifications of passages and sections of Scripture (what are referred to as "pegs" upon which we may understand and theologically contextualize Scripture).
 - b. Explain the necessity of the creation of a biblical worldview (46) by establishing an expository mindset and the application of what we have previously learned (weeks 1-3).
 - c. Establish the four categories of biblical exposition
 - i. Expository teaching
 - ii. Expository preaching
 - iii. Expository counseling
 - iv. Expository conversation
- 4. Administer Questionnaire 3 and invite participants to continue in Part 2 starting Sunday, July 31st at 5:00.**
- 5. Administer Expository Preaching Survey to measure gain of information and changes of attitude regarding expository preaching.**
- 6. Dismiss with prayer**

APPENDIX 11

PART 2 – SESSION 1

1. **Welcome and prayer**
2. **Explain the purpose of Part 2 – *Doing Biblical Exposition***
 - a. Explain and outline Part 2
 - i. Session 1 – How to Do Biblical Exegesis
 - ii. Session 2 – Establishing a Model for Biblical Exposition (Part 1)
 - iii. Session 3 – Establishing a Model for Biblical Exposition (Part 2)
 - iv. Session 4 – Various Pedagogical and Applicational Considerations for Doing Biblical Exposition
 - b. Express goals for part 2
 - i. **Goal 1:** *Better understanding about how to read and study the Scriptures with an end toward a ministry of exposition*
 - ii. **Goal 2:** *Direction in your study and meditation upon Scripture where theological/biblical “pegs” are being established*
 - iii. **Goal 2:** *More desire to interact with others using Scripture and more confidence in your ability/skills to develop into an accurate handler of God’s word*
3. **(Page 52) The establishment of a basic hermeneutic or system of interpreting Scripture – How to Do Biblical Exegesis**
 - a. **Hermeneutics** – (Hermes – messenger of the gods) The science or method of studying and interpreting Scripture.
 - b. **Exegesis** – The method or process of drawing out of the text its meaning
 - c. Often exegesis and hermeneutics are used interchangeably. There is a distinction however: exegesis is a more precise or specific discipline and hermeneutics is a broader work which includes exegesis. Hermeneutics is interested in the wider interpretive process.
 - i. **(Page 53)** Present Calvin/Kraus method presented by Sidney Greidanus (*Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 127-37).
 1. **Clarity and Brevity** – Clear and concise understanding translates into clear and concise explanation. Being able to explain a text or idea from the text in a simple sentence or paragraph must be accomplished before interacting with others.

2. **The Intention of the Author** – Calvin – “Since it is only the interpreter’s only task to unfold the mind of the writer (human and divine) whom he has undertaken to expound, he misses his mark, or at least strays outside his limits, by the extent to which he leads his readers away from the meaning of his author.”
3. **The Historical Context** – I have often heard the phrase “A text without a context is a pretext.” By this it is meant that without proper understanding of the historical (including cultural, attitudinal, and referential) background of a text, writer and audience, it is nearly impossible to gain a clear and proper meaning or intent.
4. **The Original Grammatical Meaning** – Simply asking, “What do these words mean?” Proper grammatical understanding of how words, phrases, sentences, paragraphs, sections, and entire works are both interrelated and externally related (how other works and authors use words and construct meaningful texts). This emphasis stands against allegorical or spiritualizing meaning or subjectivism.
5. **Literary Context** – Literary context involves identification and understanding of genre distinctions (narrative, epistle, poetry, apocalyptic etc.).
6. **Meaning Beyond the Literal Biblical Wording** – Calvin explained this as, “looking beyond the literal meaning of a passage to the author’s (human and divine) goal.” He also offered warning against undisciplined or unprincipled straying. He used the law and commandments of God as illustration. For example, the fifth commandment (Honor your father and your mother): “The purpose of the fifth commandment is that honor ought to be paid to those to whom God has assigned it. This, then is the substance of the commandment: that it is right and pleasing to God for us to honor those on whom He has bestowed some excellence; and that He abhors contempt and stubbornness against them.”
7. **Figures of Speech** – Calvin, although a stickler for exegetical and hermeneutical precision, never intended merely wooded literalism. Specifically, to ignore clear figures of speech in Scripture which are often anthropomorphisms (giving God human qualities or physical attributes) “leads to a boundless barbarism.” Examples: “The Lord is a warrior” (Ex 15:3), “God’s eyes see”, “It came to God’s ears”, “His hand extended”. Or in the Gospels where Jesus used hyperbole – “Pluck out eyes”, “Mustard seed as the smallest seed” etc.

8. **The Scope of Christ** – Calvin writes, “We ought to read the Scriptures with the express design of finding Christ in them. Whoever shall turn aside from this object, though he may weary himself throughout his whole life of learning, will never attain the knowledge of the truth; for what wisdom can we have without the wisdom of God?”
9. **The Relation Between the Old and New Testaments** – As Greidanus explains on this matter, there is a clear distinction between Calvin and Luther at this juncture as well as many scholars. I will only note a few necessary considerations for our study as a beginning.
 - a. Although there are clear distinctions between the old and New Testaments, it is crucial to recognize there is but one covenant underlying the Testaments.
 - b. The only difference between the Old and New Testaments is in the form of the administrations of the covenant. The substance is one and the same.
 - c. The Old was established upon the free mercy of God and was confirmed in the New by Christ’s intercession
 - d. Calvin said, “Christ the Lord promises to His followers today no other Kingdom of Heaven than that which they may sit at the table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Matt 8:11).

2. Dismiss with prayer

APPENDIX 12

PART 2 – SESSIONS 2 AND 3

1. Welcome and prayer

2. Establishing a Model for Biblical Exposition (Part 1)

a. Turn to page 60 (halfway down)

- i. Creating two levels whereby biblical exposition becomes the foundational mindset of the local church
 1. **Formal** – The formal level of exposition occurs by creating and establishing programs and curriculums to introduce (plant) and nurture (water) the seed planted – Preaching, teaching, counseling.
 2. **Casual** – The casual level of exposition occurs by fostering and encouraging biblical and theocentric interaction among those who are being formally instructed with one another and among those not being formally instructed (unchurched or nominally churched – in name only). Casual biblical ministries are only evident among strong formal biblical ministries. In other words, whatever a church is formally emphasizing or investing in is what will be casually yielded.
- ii. Creating two mediums or venues whereby biblical exposition becomes the foundational ministries of the local church
 1. **Instruction** (corresponding with the formal or intentional) – When time and money are spent more on ministries of formal instruction (getting truth into people) you will have a biblically literate people (but not necessarily a biblical people).
 2. **Interaction** (corresponding with casual) – Without intentional ministries whereby biblical knowledge may be applied and lived, instruction is useless (just like a sermon with no application is not complete).
- iii. The ultimate goal of a church established upon biblical exposition is for the members to delight in and demand more truth to the extent that it overflows into every area of their existence (whether formal or casual).

- b. **Turn back to page 54 (at the top)**
- i. Now that a basic hermeneutic is established (last week – page 53) for interpreting Scripture, it must correlate into a useful and transferable method for teachers, preachers, counselors and conversers of God’s word.
 - ii. **There are seven aspects of the method to be considered while studying, preparing to teach or meditating on God’s word with an eighth serving as the bridge to interaction.**
 1. ***Establish a text*** – Remember, as a preacher or teacher you are in complete control of the interaction (hierarchy of difficulty), but as a counselor and converser you are typically not able to establish a text for the interaction. This establishing must take place through consistent instruction and meditation on the word of God.
 - a. Create or adopt a good systematic theology whereby theocentric “peg” are established from Scripture.
 - b. Take good notes with a view to application
 - c. Immediately interact within the text (self, authors, friends)
 2. ***Establish the fullest context for the passage*** – This context only *begins* with good study and instruction in order to learn historical, grammatical, and literary contexts. But that context is only enough to understand what you are studying.
 - a. At some point contextualizing the passage must move to a localized context (application or how this text fits today’s culture and situations – never start here in your study, but know that you are not done contextualizing until you get here).
 - b. Ironically, however, it is at the point of localization that you will actually begin to interact with others.
 - c. Let me put this in the context of preaching. I should never start *building* my sermon on localized context and application, yet it is perfectly acceptable and often very effective to begin delivering my sermon at the point of application or localized context.
 3. ***Do an adequate measure of syntactical exegesis and establish an outline of the text*** – Syntactical exegesis is the work of understanding the structure and construction of the text (knowing primary statements from secondary clauses, divisions of paragraphs, etc.) Syntax is about understanding the words, grammar, and literary construction.
 - a. Get good books/commentaries
 - b. Deal with and ask to deal with this part of the study in your classes (formal/instructional)

4. ***Establish theological classifications for texts*** – This work happens after contexts are established. The theological context is what the passage is telling us about God. In light of this statement or information, I understand “this” about God.
 - a. This work (which takes protracted and consistent Bible study with this as a goal) will give you greater competence and confidence in the interaction of God’s word with others.
 - b. Like with localized contextualizing or applicational conclusions, you should not start here because it will foster eisegesis rather than exegesis. However, after a period of time where you have begun to establish a “portfolio” of theological classifications, you will begin to automatically “click-into” these classifications as you interact with others. Next week we will begin with the counterpart to this part of the method, anthropological classification which is what the Scripture tells us about man.
5. ***Establish an anthropological classification for texts*** – This work happens when the question is asked, “What is this passage saying about and to humans?” It is at this point where applicational implications explode from the text. The gospel itself is predicated upon the anthropological classification of the depravity of man. “Because man is sinful...therefore...”
 - a. What does this passage tell us about man?
 - b. How should man respond in light of this information?
 - c. What are the implications of this truth beyond the personal regarding “mankind”?
6. ***Create a kind of homiletical sketch driven by the theological and anthropological classifications*** – For preachers this is where the work of building the sermon begins (outlines and flowcharts). But how does this relate to less formal expository ministries?
 - a. Outlining is a skill which forces us to establish the main point and points of the texts.
 - b. Outlining forces us to condense and restate the ideas of the text with coherence and main focus being supported within the text (points)
 - c. Outlining is a practice that forces us to see and understand the text in a way that translates into clear and concise communication.
 - d. Flowcharting (not everyone) lays out passages in logical and progressive categories and conclusions

while allowing implicative direction to “flow” out from the chart.

7. ***Manuscript your outlines and flowcharts*** – The practice of manuscripting is time consuming but necessary in order to be precise and coherent in thoughts.
 - a. Whereas a preacher manuscripts in order to guide them in the pulpit, it is actually the process of manuscripting that is most beneficial.
 - b. Manuscripting may be accomplished in journaling.
 - c. Manuscripting preserves the precision whereas outlines only preserve vagaries.
 8. ***Preaching through*** – Preaching through is more than merely practicing the sermon out loud. In fact that is not at all what preaching through accomplishes. (See page 58 – halfway down).
 - a. Verbal articulation should never be “practiced” on your audience or interaction of consequence.
 - i. Listen to yourself articulate your thoughts, prayers and wrestling with texts.
 - ii. Spousal interaction with the text increases both sharpness of mind and spiritual intimacy.
 - iii. Family interaction with the text is a part of Christian parenting and shepherding. Although this is interaction with consequence, the dynamic of love and trust allows for this practice. In other words, it’s okay for your family/children to witness your personal growth, transitions, wrestling, and changes regarding texts.
 - iv. Friendships are some of the best venues of “preaching through” if they are established on trust and honesty. This is where “iron sharpening iron” really takes place.
 - b. Teaching, preaching, counseling, and conversing are each verbal interactions. Make verbalization part of your process.
2. Next week we will close by considering some pedagogical aids and concepts in bringing private exposition to public interaction.
 3. **Assignment: I Corinthians 14:34** – Put into historical context and create a good syntactical understanding of the verse. Also explain what this verse tells us about God and man.
 4. **Dismiss with prayer**

APPENDIX 13

PART 2 – SESSION 4 - EXEGETICAL AND HERMENEUTICAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR 1 CORINTHIANS 14:34

Purpose of First Corinthian Letter

1. 1:10, 3:3, and 11:18 – Explicitly speaks of divisions within the church
2. 1:10 – *I exhort you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all agree, and there be no divisions among you, but you be made complete in the same mind and in the same judgment.*
3. 14:40 - *...let all things be done properly and in an orderly manner.*

Conflicts and disorder arising from these issues (Outline):

1. (1:11-17) Leadership
2. (1:18-2:16) The Gospel and the wisdom of God (awareness that lost people reject the wisdom of God)
3. (3:1-7) Lifestyle and relationships
4. (5) Discipline
5. (8-9) Christian liberty
6. (10) Warning
7. (11-14) Christian and Ecclesiastical order
8. (15) Resurrection
9. (16) Final instructions

Syntactical/Grammatical considerations

Recognize the wrong division of verses

33^b should be with 34^a (as in the ESV)

Other uses of the phrase “as in all the churches”

- 4:17
- 7:17 *Encouraging harmony and unity in the churches*
- 11:16

Textual Issues

“Be subject/Subject themselves”

Huppotasso means to be put under, to obey, or willingly submit

“The law”

The appeal to the law here is a general reminder of the order of worship found within the structure of Levitical parameters. In that structure women had no official place of leadership or verbal participation. But this appeal goes beyond that well-established idea to a new appeal which Paul essentially states as a commandment (14:37): *“If anyone thinks he is a prophet or spiritual, let him recognize that the things which I write to you are the Lord’s commandment. But if anyone does not recognize this, he is not recognized.”* In other words, this was not optional.

Historical/Cultural Context

1. Greek influence where women were more vocal and participatory (not so much in politics or governmental affairs, but in religious matters)
2. 1000 priestesses at the temple of Aphrodite on Acrocorinth. These were not merely religious women but temple prostitutes who uncovered their short-haired heads and were brazenly vocal. Paul addressed that issue in I Corinthians 11:3 and 6, 15-16.
3. However, I Corinthians 14:34 is not only informed by the Acrocorinthian priestess issue, but more specifically the women who participated in the Oracles of Delphi. At Delphi the women were not permitted to go into the inner holy place but at a prominent location would prophesy (often drunk and perhaps possessed) incoherently.
4. **Warning:** Do not over contextualize. Although the temple prostitutes and Delphi prophetesses were examples they were not the foundation for Paul’s teaching.
5. Paul’s authority in this teaching was the law, his own Holy Spirit inspired instruction, and creation established principle (I Corinthians 11:7-12)
6. Context of principles: Men are to teach and lead within the church. There should never be dissension especially from among the wives of those men nor any other women. Even though the exhortation in Ephesians (5:22) calls women to “submit to their own husbands”, this is not license for women to undermine the authority of another woman’s husband.

General considerations

1. I Corinthians is primarily a corrective letter
2. It was written to a church in disorder and confusion
3. It does not serve as a “first-line” theological treatise but is solidly established upon “first-line” theological truths.
4. It is filled with and moves us toward theological and practical implications. It is a consequential letter. Another way of saying that is, “Because of these truths there are a multitude of theological and practical consequences.”
5. In order to understand First Corinthians well, one must do a lot of Bible study in other areas.

Theological Classifications

- Divine headship/sovereign lordship
- Trinity
- Revelation

- Ecclesiology
- Sin/depravity of man
- Creation

Anthropological Classifications

- Marriage and male/female relationships
 - Women's roles in society and church
 - Men's roles in society and church
 - Leadership
 - Followship
-

Teachers

Explain the verse in light of this information (make sure the main issue guides the lecture)

Preachers (Example of a homiletical sketch where the theological classification of Ecclesiology guides the sermon construction)

- I. God created the church for His own pleasure and glory
- II. God is neither pleased nor glorified when there is disorder and disunity within the church
- III. The foundation of society is marriage (Genesis/creation) and family, therefore, marriage and family are the foundation of church relationships and interaction
- IV. Husbands and wives must please and glorify God through their attitudes and actions within the church

Counselors

1. Marriage and family issues – Can wives be the spiritual leader when the husband is not
2. Church staff and lay relationships and service
3. Societal implications (Example: relationships with bosses and employees)

Conversers

1. Michele Bachman at the GOP debate in Iowa – “When you are president of the United States will you submit to your husband?”
2. Sarah Palin – Are you helping or hurting the cause of women's rights in America?
3. Can women pray out loud at Wednesday evening prayer meeting?
4. Can a woman teach men at work?

APPENDIX 14

PART 3 – SESSION 1

1. Welcome and prayer
2. Explanation of part III along with goals
 - a. **Part I** – To encourage and inspire an expository mindset
 - b. **Part II** – To teach a model of exposition and encourage implementation into personal Bible study and relational interaction with others
 - c. **Part III** – To encourage one another in the ministry of the word (through what we have learned including the book *Feed My Sheep*), prepare to instruct, encourage, and inspire the congregation at GFBC to become biblical expositors, and lead an evening service where some of those who attended the 3-part seminar on Becoming a Biblical Expositor will instruct, encourage and inspire others to become biblical expositors
3. General discussion about what we have learned and how we are beginning to apply what we have learned in the first two parts of the seminar
4. Discuss the book, *Feed My Sheep*
5. How do we, who have learned these things, explain, encourage and inspire others to become biblical expositors?
6. Make assignments based upon what we have discussed concerning the seminar and the book
7. **Announcement:** Our final session is next week (September 18th) at 4:30. During that session we will organize and prepare to lead the congregation in the evening service to become biblical expositors through instruction, encouragement, and inspiration. We will lead the service. Following the service this class will meet for a 45 minute debriefing and evaluation of the 3-part seminar and service just taught.
8. Prayer and dismissal

APPENDIX 15

PANEL DISCUSSION OUTLINE AND GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. ***Let's start with a good definition of expository preaching.***
2. Martin Luther said that the preaching of the word is the first essential mark of the church. He stated, "Now, wherever you hear or see this word preached, believed, professed, and lived, do not doubt that the true *ecclesia sancta catholica* (Christian Church, holy people) must be there... and even if there were no other sign than this alone, it would still suffice to prove that a Christian, holy people must exist there, for God's word cannot be without God's people and, conversely, God's people cannot be without God's word."

Dr. Albert Mohler, president of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, rightly points out, "A preacher is called to be a servant of the word."

- a. ***Are you, as a layperson, any less called to be a servant of God's word?***
 - b. ***Explain.***
3. Now, most of us here are neither inclined nor interested in becoming preachers. ***So, how is expository preaching relevant to most Christians?***
4. We have spent a good deal of time (since June) talking about four venues of relational interaction as associated with biblical exposition:
 - a. Teaching expositionally
 - b. Preaching expositionally
 - c. Counseling expositionally
 - d. Conversing expositionallyLet's talk some more about these four venues of interaction.
 - i. ***Define and explain each of them***
 - ii. ***Explain the order in which I have listed them*** (hierarchy of difficulty) ***and why it's important to understand this hierarchy of difficulty.***
 - iii. ***Which one is most crucial in the local church*** (preaching)? ***Why?***
5. ***What do we mean when we talk about a biblical or expositional mindset?***
6. ***How do we go about becoming good biblical expositors?*** (personal testimony of how this is happening in your own life as well as explanation of the method of biblical exposition I explained in class)

7. Okay, we've talked about bringing biblical exposition out from behind the pulpit into personal interaction.
 - a. *So...how do we make that transition... how do we “naturally” move good Bible study* (exegesis, context setting, theological clarity, grammatical examination etc. – somebody explain biblical exegesis along with the difference between exegesis and eisegesis) *into our daily walk or conversation?*
 - b. *What does that look like?*
8. *How do we become more confident in our expositional interaction whether it is formal* (preaching/teaching) *or informal* (counseling/conversation)?
9. Okay, I need to ask this to see if we are all going the same direction: *is expository preaching applicable to today's needs?*
10. Let's continue talking about expository preaching specifically. *If expository preaching demands that the preacher begins with a text or a passage of Scripture* (exegesis versus eisegesis) *when developing the content and structure of his sermon, how can we* (laypersons not preaching yet desiring to be biblical and expository in our interactions with others) *be true to Scripture's meaning and intent by relating back to Scripture* (eisegetical) *in our conversations and impromptu counseling encounters?*
11. *What scares you more, preaching/teaching or counseling with someone? Why?*
12. We have discussed a good bit about what I refer to as “theological pegs”. *First of all, what is meant by a theological peg* (remember how we talked about categorizing/systematizing passages and sections of Scripture into theological pegs)? *How does establishing these pegs help in informal counseling and conversation?*

Following the wonderfully biblical and insightful answers from the panel on these questions (I am that confident in you) I will ask if the congregation has any questions. Do not worry...time may not allow many, and I will help field any questions you may not feel confident answering.

13. _____ read **I Corinthians 1:18 and 2:1-5**. Now _____, you read **2:6-16**.
 - a. I want us to close this evening by talking a little bit about this passage (please read and do some study in preparation – also reread chapter 1 in Feed My Sheep by Al Mohler).
 - b. *If indeed the cross* (the gospel) *and every spiritual thought, word, and concept can only be accepted and understood by those who are truly in Christ, why do we* (knowing this before every conversation and counseling situation) *still speak the word of God as the basis of our conversation and counsel?*

- c. *Are there or could there be other methods or approaches in our personal interactions whereby those with whom we are speaking will respond favorably* (sort of a trick question)?
14. Let's finish by circling back to the primacy of preaching (to equip the saints – Ephesians 4:12). The late James Montgomery Boice (pastor of Tenth Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia 1968-2000), in his essay *The Foolishness of Preaching* (chapter 2 – *Feed My Sheep*) asks three, I think in light of today's approach to church, provocative questions:
- a. *Is biblical preaching really foolish?*
 - b. *Why is biblical preaching so important?*
 - c. *What kind of preachers do we need?*

APPENDIX 16

POST PANEL EVALUATION

Let's talk a little about this evening's panel discussion.

1. Did you enjoy the forum or venue of the panel discussion?
2. How is the panel discussion venue more or less helpful than lecture or straight teaching?
3. Do you think we clearly explained or instructed the congregation in helpful areas in becoming biblical expositors?
4. Was the evening encouraging and inspirational to you?
5. Do you believe we were encouraging and inspirational to the congregation (motivating them to adopt an expository mindset)?
6. What did we not talk about that you think would have been helpful for those listening?

What has been or have been the most impactful thing(s) you have learned as a result of your reading (my project chapters 2 and 3 and Feed My Sheep) and sessions?

What, as a result of what you have learned, have you applied to your personal Bible study, personal interactions or formal ministry of the word (teaching/preaching)?

Let's talk a little bit about strengths and weaknesses of the project.

Weaknesses – *What would you like to have done differently or what would you like to have done or learned that we did not do or cover in the material?*

Strengths – *What about this project would you like to see repeated, incorporated into our general approach to instruction, or formalized for GFBC in the future?*

General Comments

APPENDIX 17

SERMON 1 – MARK 2:23-3:6

This sermon is a synopsis of the sermon preached for evaluation

Mark 2:23-3:6

Summary Truths Learned in Mark 2:23-3:6

1. Beware of misunderstanding and misapplying the law (using it unlawfully) and beware of those who would try to inflict upon the church such abuse
2. The Sabbath is a gracious gift from God on three levels:
 - a. God revealed Himself (character and purposes) in and through the law.
 - b. Specifically, the Sabbath reveals to us God's grace and truth (creation) along with futility of sin and trying to overcome sin in the flesh – *John 1:17*
 - c. The Sabbath reveals Jesus Christ as our only hope for rest
3. The Sabbath is neither to be neglected (*antinomianism*) nor is it to be an excuse for neglect (*legalism*).

Review – What have we learned?

1. What we have been learning over the last few weeks as we have examined this passage is the undeniable significance of the law of God, including the Fourth Commandment – “Remember the Sabbath and keep it holy”
2. We have also learned that all of God's laws, which are the revelation of God's character, will, and purpose, will never be kept or mastered by sinful men, and that only the Lord Jesus, who was born of a woman and every bit as much a man as any of us yet without sin, was able to fully keep and fulfill every demand of the law of God.
3. We have learned that this is a fundamental part of the gospel and neglecting to explain the law of God and His holy demands on all men to keep that law, the willing grace of Christ's atoning and sacrificial death on the cross and triumphant resurrection from the dead, are incomplete, strangely arbitrary, and ultimately meaningless to those who hear.

4. The religious official with whom Jesus had conflict misunderstood the law, added their own traditions and prohibitions to the law, and inevitably made the law unrecognizable, useless, and ultimately harmful to themselves and those they taught.

Matthew 5:17-20

So, we find here this principle: Because Jesus is the fulfillment of the law, in every respect, we must avoid, at all points, trying to understand and interpret the law of God apart from Jesus.

Two things must be done to rightly understand the law:

1. Never diminish or ignore the law, for it is the very character, will and purpose of God, and God Himself never changes.
2. Understand both the continuity and discontinuity between the Old and New Covenants. This is the one I want us to think about more closely this morning.

When we speak of the continuity between the Old and New Covenants we are looking at the things which are eternal or transcend time. Here are some examples of continuity and discontinuity:

1. **Marriage** is as sacred now as it ever was (continuity), but all the special laws regulating its duties, and the penalty for its violation, are abolished (discontinuity).
2. **Homicide**, or murder is still a horrific crime and never permitted among men even as it was originally prohibited under the Covenant of the Mosaic law (continuity), but the old laws about the avenger of blood and cities of refuge are no longer in force (discontinuity).
3. **The rights of property** and the unacceptability of stealing or vandalism are in place even after the coming of Christ (continuity). But the Jewish laws regarding its protection or penalties are no longer binding (discontinuity).

...This is continuity and discontinuity within the law of God. The same is true regarding the Sabbath.

We are as much bound to keep one day in seven holy unto the Lord as were the people within the Old Mosaic Covenant. This law is binding within the Old Covenant as it is contained within the Ten Commandments.

However, the discontinuity is the discontinuation of the enforcement and ceremonial observance as they are related to the Old Covenant. The continuity is also beyond the Jewish Mosaic Covenant because it is an ordinance based upon creation (as noted in our earlier list of the seven elements of design and purpose for the fourth commandment).

The continuity or essential two elements of the Fourth Command are:

1. The Sabbath should be a day of rest – a cessation from worldly pursuits or amusements
2. The Sabbath should be devoted to the worship of God and devotion to some reflection upon the person, attributes, character, purpose, and will of God.
3. No longer is the context of the Sabbath (as was in the Old Covenant) to be the deliverance of the Jews from captivity in Egypt (which was itself a discontinuity from the Sabbath of creation) or are any of the ceremonial aspects of the covenant which explained that deliverance required. Therefore, the change, by the Apostles and early church from observance on the seventh day to the first was to express, rejoice in, and explain the Lord Jesus as our Sabbath.

APPENDIX 18

SERMON 2 – MARK 3:7-19

This sermon was a continuation of a series within the Gospel of Mark

Mark 3:7-19

This next section may be broken into two parts, but I have chosen to put them together.

1. 3:7-12 – Although there are some things of note within this part, it serves as somewhat of a summary of what we have already learned previously:
 - a. Jesus’ teaching and healing ministries are gaining popularity among the people so that the crowds are increasingly dense and demanding
 - b. Demons are aware and alarmed by the presence of the Lord Jesus and continue to declare Him (as we considered prior: **(1)** because they knew who He was; **(2)** to create confusion; and **(3)** to give a false impression of association)
 - c. Jesus continues to muffle the demonic declaration
2. 3:13-19 – This section contains some important truths which inform our understanding of the gospel and the Lord Jesus Himself. Before we begin to look at these truths I want to say a word about what we will *not* be doing in this section.
 - a. It is in this passage that we learn the names of those Jesus called to Himself as apostles (also listed in Matthew 10:1-5 and Luke 6:12-19). I do not want to ignore the fact that Jesus called these particular men to Himself; in fact I want us to consider what this calling *means* and *what it tells us about God* (as opposed to what it tells us about these men).
 - b. However, I do not believe it is necessarily helpful to spend a lengthy period of time doing a biographical sketch of each apostle. As we encounter them along the way it will be sufficient to note particulars about them and their responses and activities as they relate to the Lord Jesus. To spend an inordinate amount of time delving into the character and personalities of these men is to create an incorrect perspective about the persons God uses. I compare this to “*Spiritual Gift Inventories*” where too much emphasis may be placed on the activities and personalities of the gifts and persons themselves when ***the real emphasis from Scripture is never on the person receiving the gift but upon the Person who gives the gift (the Holy Spirit).***

- c. **My point is this:** We are not to approach Scripture *anthropocentrically* (where the emphasis and concern is man), but rather we must always take up the Word of God as the revelation of God Himself, which is to be *Theocentric* (where the emphasis and concern is God). Therefore, it is not particularly important to know that Peter was impulsive and often fickle, whereas John was steady and loyal.
- d. Not to belabor my point, but such musings is akin to asking what type of dirt God picked up to make Adam. Was it sandy? Was there a lot of clay? Was it rich in minerals, or was it rocky? ***The miracle and joy of God's sovereign creation of man is not found in the elements of the dirt, but in the work itself and revelation of God in that work.***
- ★ e. Mark 3:12-19 is no more about the men God called to be His apostles any more than Genesis 2:7 is about the dust God used to make Adam.

According to our text this morning, Jesus called these men for three purposes:

(1) To be with Him; **(2)** To send them out; and **(3)** To cast out demons...with a fourth coming from Matthew 10:8 **(4)** To restore life by healing and raising the dead

But the most important aspect of this passage is explained to the apostles themselves as they were actually living the life of an apostle. In Luke 10:17-24 Jesus acknowledged to His disciples that yes, indeed it is amazing to have been given authority and power over demons and sickness, but that such power and authority could never compare to the real miracle and the real joy.

So, although much may be said about these twelve, it is beside the ultimate point of the passage which is found in verse 13:

It was a specific call
 “And He went up to the mountain and summoned those who He Himself wanted, and they came to Him.”
It was an effectual call *It was an official and authoritative call*

So far this morning we have looked to the Synoptic Gospels regarding these Apostles and The Lord's calling of them. I want us to hear from the Gospel of John and a different perspective about these men and God's sovereign calling of them to Himself.

- John 13:1 – He loved them to the end
- John 13:18 – I know the ones I have chosen
- John 15:16/19 – You did not choose Me but I chose you...out of the world John 17:6-20 – He chose them that they might be with Him and with the Father in Heaven for eternity

Why did Jesus call poor uneducated fishermen, a terrorist, a tax collector, men of little esteem to Himself? Why these men and not others? It was and is always that He will be glorified in His sovereign grace. If we emphasize the dirt we will end up worshiping dirt, therefore, let us train our eyes upward and worship God for His sovereign grace in calling us (dirt) and promising us glory with Him.

APPENDIX 19

SERMON 3 – MARK 3:20-35

This sermon is a synopsis of the sermon preached for evaluation

There have been a lot of words associated with the gospel throughout history, some negative, yet most positive:

- **Glorious** – It's glorious because it exalts the fullness of God, His character and purposes
- **Humbling** – The gospel is humbling because it begins and ends with the grace and will of God to call to Himself those He has chosen to be with Him
- **Confrontational** – Certainly all truth has elements of tension and potential confrontation because any persons or ideas contrary to that truth are marked clearly by their objection to the truth. Therefore, the gospel is confrontational in the exclusivity of its means of determining and bringing eternal life to those who believe it and leaves those who reject it in their condemnation.

But here's a word you may not have ever associated with the gospel, confusion.

Generally, we associate confusion with the enemies of the gospel and the devil himself, who is the author of deceit and confusion.

1. We think of the "double-minded man" who is, according to James 1:8, "unstable in all his ways."
2. Or maybe we think of the church in Corinth who insisted on defining their idea of Christianity by measuring individual spirituality with a prideful standard created by themselves (spiritual gifts and leader association) and not the gospel of grace alone.
3. Or maybe, *you* have watched as divergent and traditional concepts of what it means to be a church or a good Christian have created confusion.

But the true gospel? Can the gospel that Jesus is the Son of God who came to earth and lived a perfect life, died a willing wrath satisfying death on the cross, was raised from the dead after three days defeating sin, death, and hell, and ascended to heaven where He ever lives to make intercession on behalf of His own, create confusion? In a word, "Yes." But how? How does the gospel create confusion, and even more specifically, in what areas will we see confusion caused by the gospel?

Our text this morning in Mark's Gospel reveals the confusion of the gospel clearly being manifested in relationships. Now, before we read our passage let me identify a way of thinking that will help us not only this morning, but anytime you read, study, or contemplate Scripture. ***God Himself, in the fullest and deepest sense, is the gospel.*** Wherever we encounter His character, His will and purpose, or anything identifiably Him, there we also find at least an aspect of the gospel.

So, with that in mind, let us take up the Gospel of Mark and see how the gospel, even God Himself, does create confusion in and among relationships.

Mark 3:20-35

What I want us to see in our text are the points of confrontation or conflict:

1. 3:20-21 – The very sanity of the Lord Jesus was questioned
2. 3:22 – Here we have the first confrontational confusion of relationship (which, as we have seen in each of the previous demonic encounters demonstrated) with the Lord Jesus and Satan and the demons.
3. 3:23-30 – This next section of conflict is actually Jesus' counter or explanation regarding the demonic tactic of association and the Pharisee's belief in or at least obliging of that tactic
4. 3:31-35 – This final confrontational confusion is very personal, and I believe the most relevant and pressing kind of confusion: ***How the gospel effects close human relationships.*** And really, this is the one we will spend most of our time on this morning. So it's not that these other points of relational confusion are not important, but more that these other relationships (with truth and other people) ultimately are realized in our closest human relationships.

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ABSTRACT

TEACHING THE CONGREGATION AT GRACE FELLOWSHIP BAPTIST CHURCH, ROBERTSDALE, ALABAMA TO DO BIBLICAL EXPOSITION

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The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2011
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The project develops, encourages and inspires believers to be biblical expositors. It explains and models a method for doing biblical exposition in formal and informal settings. Chapter 1 presents the purpose, goals, context, rationale, definitions, limitations, and research methodology of the project and a detailed outline.

Chapter 2 gives the biblical/theological justifications for doing biblical exposition. Specifically, how God is a speaking God who speaks through His people.

Chapter 3 sets forth the philosophical/practical mindset for becoming a biblical expositor. It expands the theological idea of God expositing Himself to His people necessitating men and women to become competent expositors themselves.

Chapter 4 explains the process and research methodology used to implement the project. The intent is to explain the process of doing the three progressive parts of the project.

Chapter 5 provides an evaluation of the project goals, along with suggested modifications to strengthen the project for future use.

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