**Advantages, Goals & Difficulties of Exposition**

**III. What are the *Advantages* of Expository Preaching?** (adapted from Liefeld, 10-13)

A. *We can be more confident of preaching God’s will when we preach His Word.*

B. *Subjectivism is minimized because we confine ourselves to biblical truth.*

C. *It* *protects the preacher from imbalance in his preaching, enabling him to speak on the whole counsel of God.* All speakers have weaknesses which topical messages generally hide since, given the choice, most of us speak on areas of strength.

D. *The context of a passage usually includes its own application.*

E. *Scripture often provides a literary structure that can form the basis for a sermon outline.*

F. *We can include touchy subjects in the course of sequential exposition without being accused of directing our message towards certain individuals.*

G. *It provides the preacher a fine opportunity to model Bible study.*

H. *It saves time by not having to provide background material to each sermon passage since it would have been covered in previous recent messages.*

I. *It develops the character of the preacher by exposing his weaknesses.* Expository preaching keeps the speaker alert to areas of personal growth needed.

J. *It helps prepare the congregation for next week’s sequential message.*

K. *It is easier for new Christians to grasp.*

**IV. What are the *Goals* of Expository Preaching?** (adapted from Liefeld, 14-16)

A. Evangelism: To preach the gospel in the context of exposition is to preach it more fully.

B. Meeting Human Needs: Contrary to what some think, expository sermons are more relational than non-expository ones.

C. Declare the Will of God for the Church: Our greatest need is to thoroughly know the ways of God (Eph. 5:10).

D. Motivate us in Faith, Obedience, and Spiritual Growth: It is possible to present a passage in an orderly accurate way, arousing great interest on the part of a congregation, but in a totally aimless way (this is *exposition* but not expository *preaching*).

E. Teaching Doctrine or Theology: This employs a version of the case study method. It is better to start with a foundation in Scripture and then apply it to the lives of people than to start with human need and go to the Bible for a proof text.

F. Worship of God and Exaltation of His Name: Directing people to the Word which speaks of God is directing them to God Himself.

G. Convict of Sin and Rebuild on Grace: God’s word will not return to Him void (Isa. 55:10-11).

**V. What *Difficulties* Accompany Expository Preaching?** (adapted from Liefeld, 16-19)

A. It requires a *thorough study* of the passage. Such study must emphasize literary structure and flow of thought over parsing, diagramming, and word studies.

B. It requires observation of sound principles of *hermeneutics.*

C. It requires constant *attention to the larger context* of the book and even the corpus (e.g., the Pauline writings).

D. It requires *faithfulness to the literary form* (narrative, parable, poetry, etc.) of the passage and its context.

E. It requires skill in *matching the passage to needs* of the congregation. The topical preacher has to constantly ask himself what his people need in order for him to organize his content, but the expositor has the same need as well except he has less work selecting the verses!

F. It requires skill and experience to *determine the single, main idea* taught in a passage.

**VI. How can Expository Preaching be Contemporary?** (adapted from Liefeld, 22-24)

 (How can the gap between the ancient and modern worlds be bridged to be relevant?)

A. *Know both cultures well:*

1. Ancient: Do your homework to know the background and conceptual framework of the passage. Here’s when a good knowledge of OT and NT backgrounds is indispensable!

2. Modern: Take into account the listeners’ level of biblical knowledge, experience with Christianity and the evangelical subculture, education level, and socio-cultural environment. Get to know your people and their needs! Ideas?

B. *Preach the life situation of the passage before abstracting principles.*

C. *Get a feel for the setting of the passage (events, words, teachings, etc.) and determine what things in modern culture most closely approximate that setting.*

**Three Major Components of Expository Messages**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Components** | **Concerns** | **Needs** | **Role** | **Steps** |
| Conveys faithfully the basic *message* of the passage | Hermeneutics | Biblical | Teaching | Facts |
| Congregational *needs* met through a Spirit-directed preacher | Human Need | Personal | Pastoring | Function |
| Communicates well in *structure* to accomplish the sermon’s goal | Homiletics | Practical | Preaching | Form |

*Adapted into chart form from Liefeld, 24-25*