

Public Scripture Reading

I. Priority

- A. Good Scripture reading habits are foundational to good preaching—if you can't read then you can't preach, especially without notes!
- B. Public Scripture reading is the most important part of the worship service but the part that seems to get the least amount of preparation. The choir practices, the preacher rehearses his sermon, the ushers plan out which aisles they'll serve, etc., but the readers "wing it."

II. Problems & Solutions (reading of Luke 5:17-26 or Luke 19:28-44)

- A. Too often the Scripture reading has nothing to do with the message of the morning—so make sure they relate!
- B. We introduce the reference poorly so people have to ask one another where we are—so in the introduction always announce your text three times for those who did not catch it initially.
- C. We begin reading before people have a chance to find the passage—so wait until you hear the pages stop turning before reading the text.
- D. We don't give the necessary background to understand the text (e.g., no context for beginning reading at Acts 14:21)—so provide the needed context even before announcing your text.
- E. Difficult words are sometimes mispronounced due to lack of preparation—so practice with the guide in the back of the notes to pronounce names correctly (pp. 226-244).
- F. We emphasize the wrong words (e.g. accent "gave" not "for" in Gal. 2:20; accent "me" not "before" in Exod. 20:3)—so read with correct emphases and read the passage aloud so many times that you almost have it memorized.
- G. The passage is often read with a flat tone of voice—so use variety. Vary your speed of speaking and volume. Read to children—they're merciless!
- H. It's hard to teach people to read well who have a "I already know how to read" attitude—so select 5 people at church who are good readers and train them in this mini-seminar.
- I. We feel we always have to end every reading with the trite cliché, "May God add His blessing to the reading of His Word"—if we read the Bible well maybe it will already be a blessing without us having to bless it.

III. Scripture Readings

- A. Narrative: Triumphal Entry (Mark 11:1-11)
- B. Prophecy: Heaven's Throne (Revelation 4:1-11)
- C. Lament: Petitioning Help (Psalm 70)