



# Review: What IS Expository Preaching?

**Dr. Jeffrey Arthurs, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary,  
as taught at Singapore Bible College DMin module, March 2016  
and offered for free download by Dr. Rick Griffith at  
[BibleStudyDownloads.org](http://BibleStudyDownloads.org)**



Expository Preaching is

NOT . . . .

*Holy Bible*

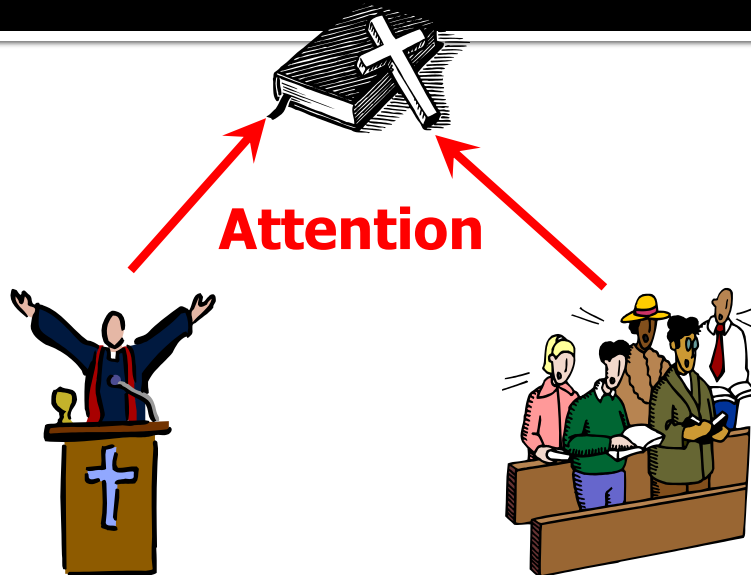
- A lecture.

# ***Not an Expository Sermon:*** **“Where is the Lamb?”** **(Genesis 22:1-19)**

- I. God commanded Abraham (1-2).**
- II. Abraham journeyed (3-5).**
- III. Abraham prepared for sacrifice (6-10).**
- IV. God rescued Abraham (11-14).**
- V. Abraham passed the test (15-19).**

# Two Stances

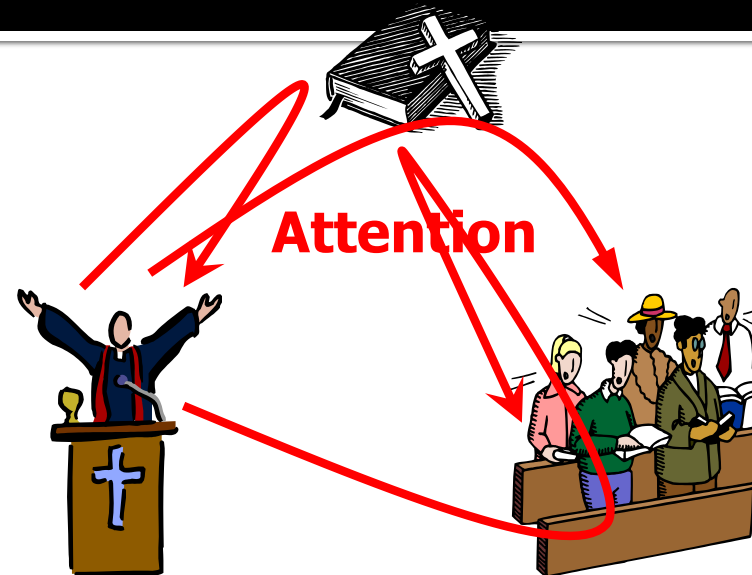
## Lecturing



### The Lecturer Talks...

- in past tense, to inform,
- about the Bible ("God did such and such for the Israelites"),
- in 3<sup>rd</sup> person,
- in an uninvolved, reporting style.

## Preaching



### The Preacher Talks...

- in present tense, to produce change,
- about themselves from the Bible, ("God says to us...")
- in 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> person,
- in an emotionally involved style

# Genesis 22:1-19

## Better:



- I. God's commands sometimes sound preposterous.
  - A. God called Abraham to sacrifice his only son.
  - B. God often calls us to obey beyond our logic and emotions.
- II. Obedience in those circumstances hinges on our faith.
  - A. Abraham's faith was built on a lifetime of covenant relationship with God.
  - B. We too have a covenant relationship with God.
  - C. So we too can obey as Abraham did, knowing and trusting our great God.



# Expository Preaching is NOT . . .

- A lecture.
- A spiritual talk loosely based on the Bible.



**Not an Expository Sermon:  
“What If the Foundations are  
Destroyed?”  
(Psalm 11:3)**

- I. The foundation of morality.**
- II. The foundation of the family.**
- III. The foundation of prayer.**

# Psalm 11

## Better:



- I. The wicked taunt us (vv. 1b-3).
- II. The Lord sees this and will punish them (vv. 4-6)
- III. Therefore, the righteous take refuge in the Lord (vv. 1a, 7).



# Expository Preaching is NOT . . .

- A lecture.
- A spiritual talk loosely based on the Bible.
- A style.

# Expository Preaching: False Stereotypes



*A Delivery Style*

**Dry/uninvolved** ..... **Passionate**

*Length of Passage*

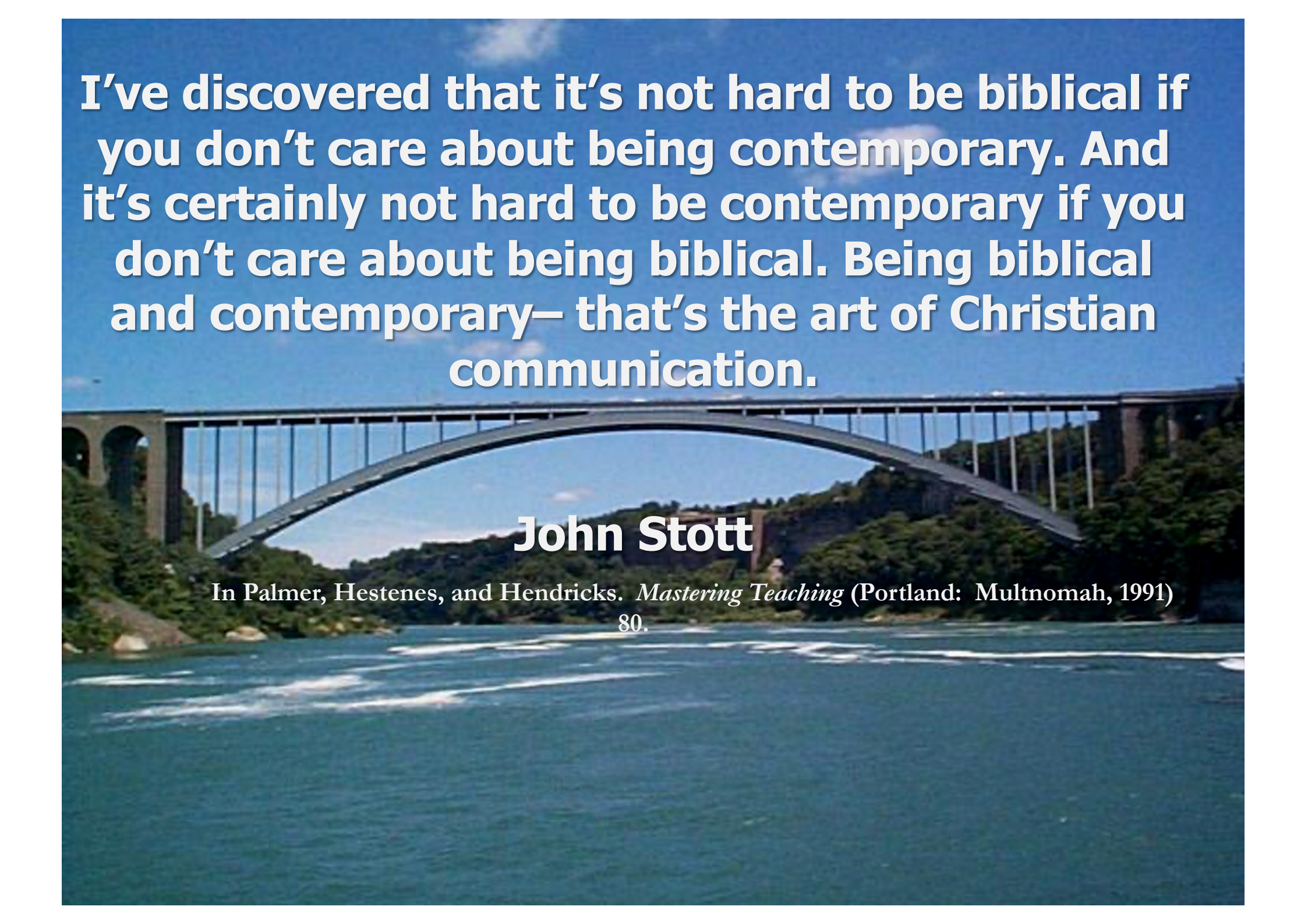
**One long passage** ..... **Short passage(s)**

*A Form*

**Verse-by-verse commentary** ..... **Other**

# EXPOSITORY PREACHING IS BRIDGE BUILDING





**I've discovered that it's not hard to be biblical if you don't care about being contemporary. And it's certainly not hard to be contemporary if you don't care about being biblical. Being biblical and contemporary— that's the art of Christian communication.**

**John Stott**

In Palmer, Hestenes, and Hendricks. *Mastering Teaching* (Portland: Multnomah, 1991)  
80.

# ROBINSON'S DEFINITION OF BIBLICAL PREACHING

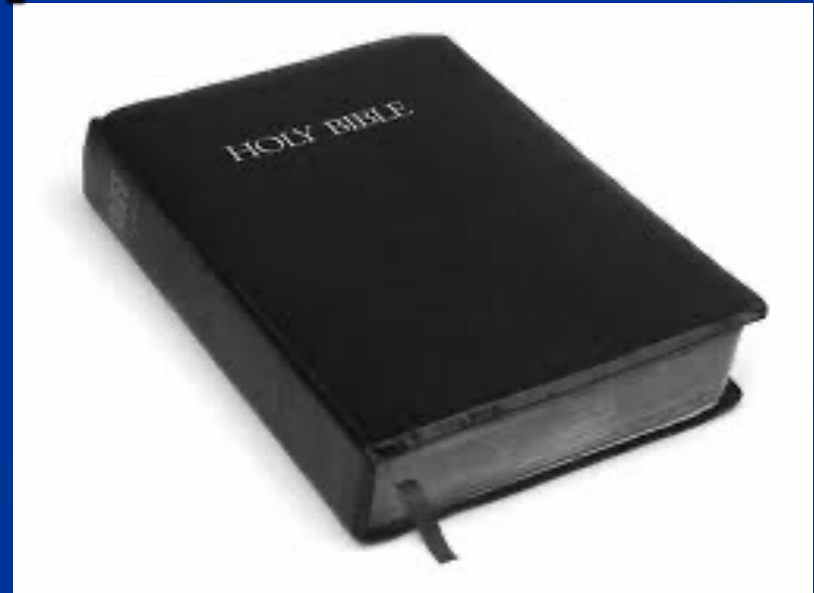
The communication of a biblical concept, derived from . . . historical, grammatical, and literary study of a passage in its context, which the Holy Spirit first applies to the personality and experience of the preacher, then through the preacher applies to the hearers.



**So, being an Expository  
Preacher implies three  
commitments:**

**1. A commitment to the text.**

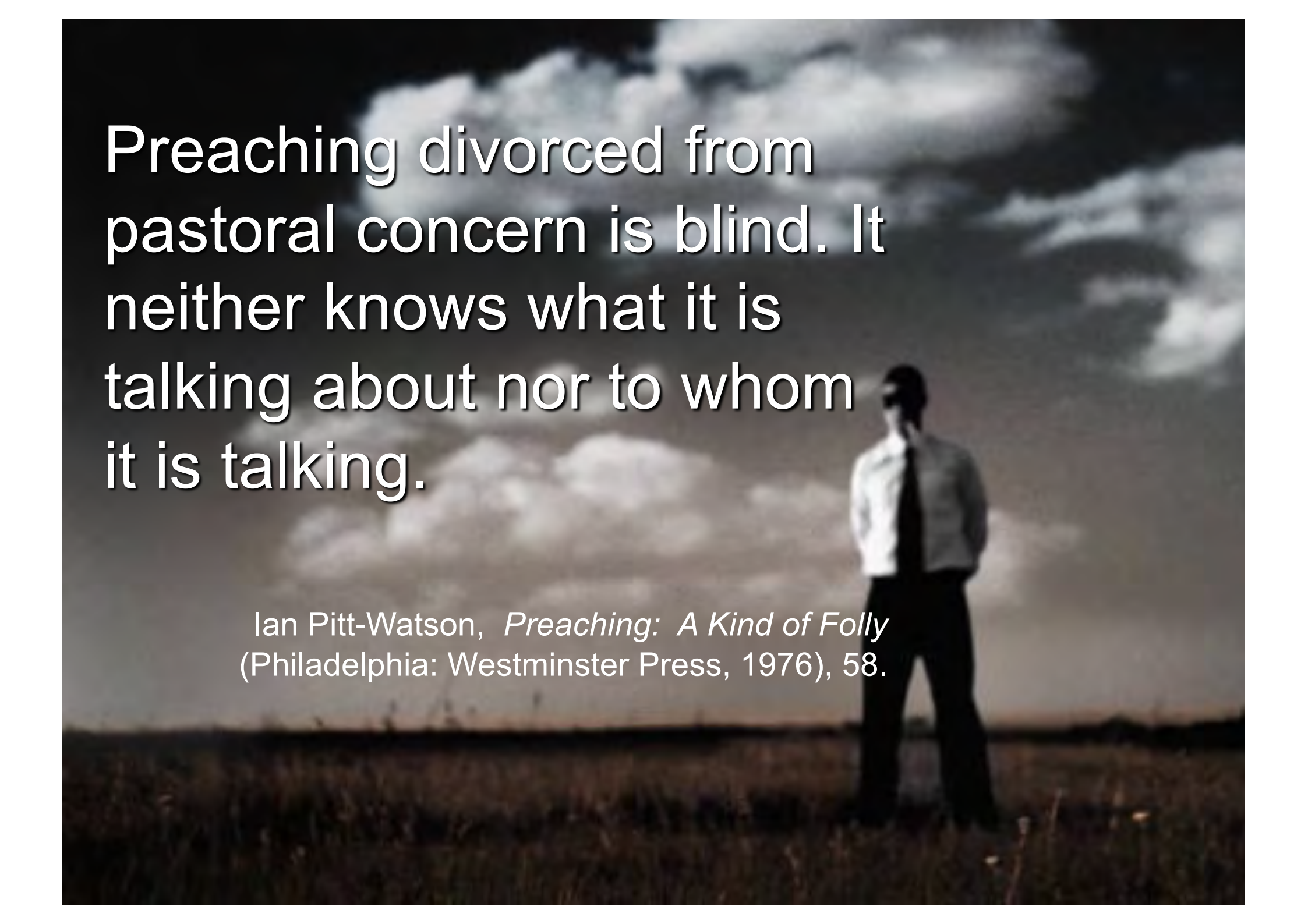
**Expository preaching is more of an *attitude* than a method or style. Do you subject the Scripture to your thoughts or your thoughts to the Scripture?**





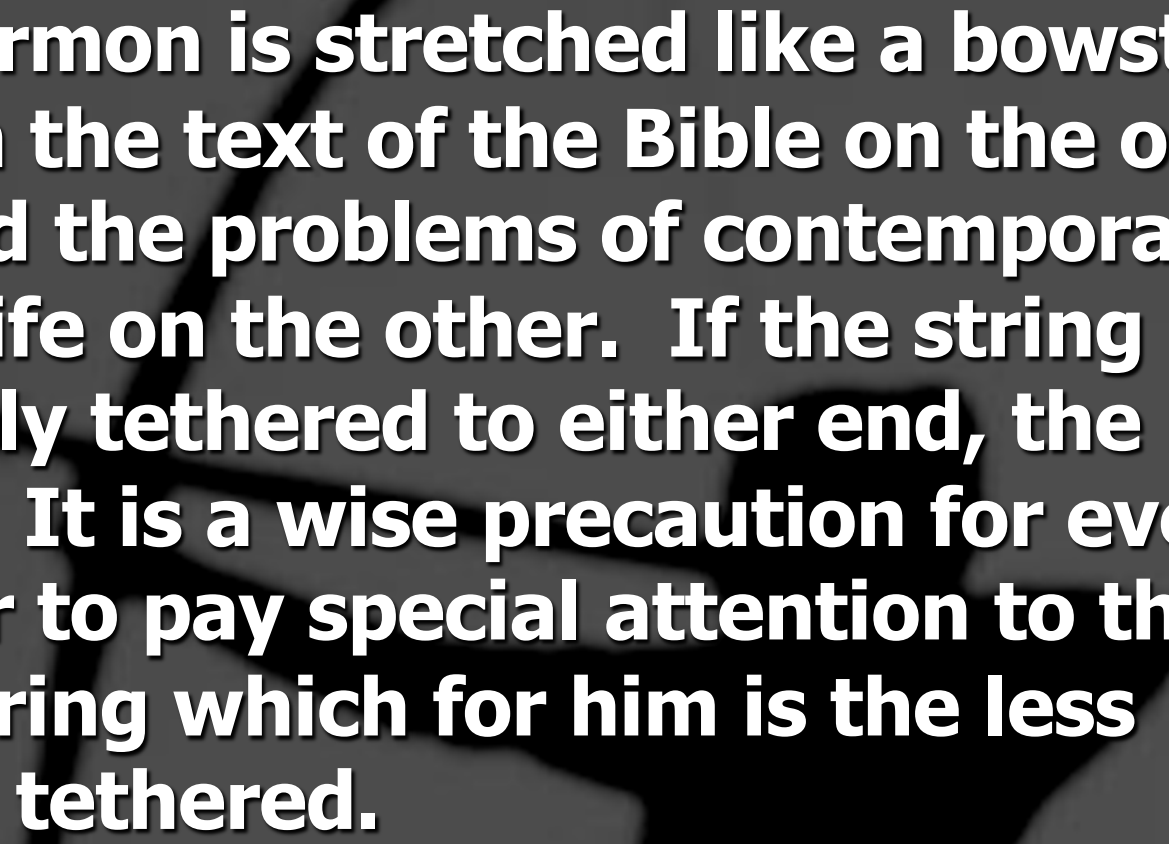
**So, being an Expository  
Preacher implies three  
commitments:**

- 1. A commitment to the text.**
- 2. A commitment to the people.**

A man in a white shirt and dark tie stands in a field, looking towards the horizon under a cloudy sky. The image is in black and white, with the man's figure silhouetted against the lighter sky. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

Preaching divorced from  
pastoral concern is blind. It  
neither knows what it is  
talking about nor to whom  
it is talking.

Ian Pitt-Watson, *Preaching: A Kind of Folly*  
(Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1976), 58.



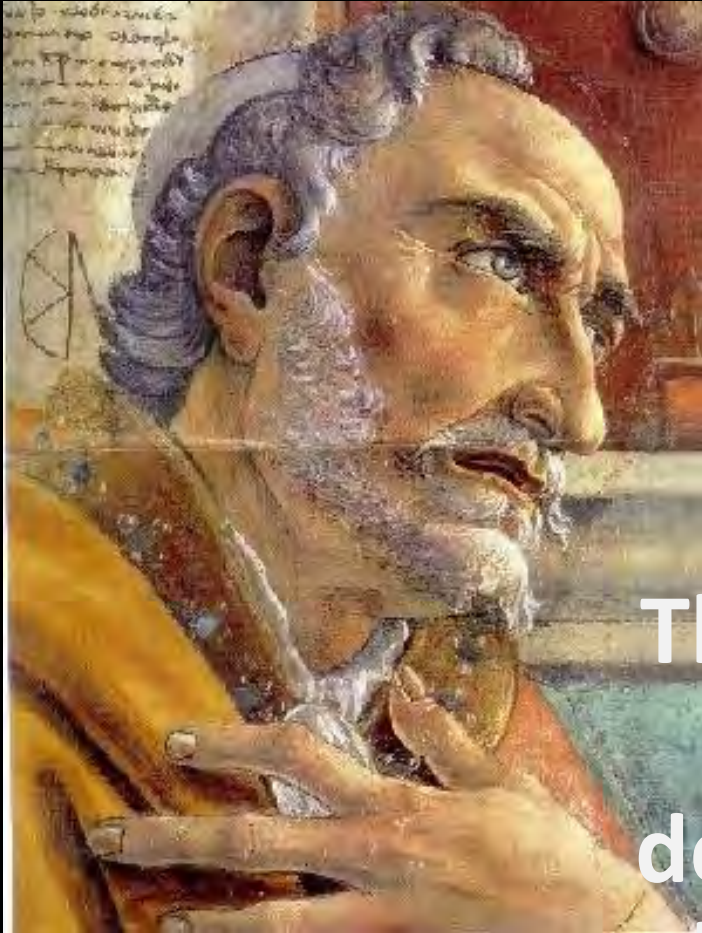
**Every sermon is stretched like a bowstring between the text of the Bible on the one hand and the problems of contemporary human life on the other. If the string is insecurely tethered to either end, the bow is useless. It is a wise precaution for every preacher to pay special attention to the end of the string which for him is the less securely tethered.**

Ian Pitt-Watson, *Preaching: A Kind of Folly* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1976), 57.



**So, being an Expository  
Preacher implies three  
commitments:**

- 1. A commitment to the text.**
- 2. A commitment to the people.**
- 3. A commitment to yourself (to be a conduit).**



**The life of the speaker has  
greater weight in  
determining whether he is  
obediently heard than any  
grandness of eloquence.**

**Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, trans.  
Robertson, 164.**



**Why Expository  
Preaching?**

**Six Reasons  
I want you to be an  
Expository Preacher**

- 1. The power is in the Word.**

# We Believe in the Power of the Word

- Fire (Jer. 23:29)
- Hammer (Jer. 23:9)
- Rain (Isa. 55:10-11)
- Milk (1 Peter 2:2)
- Sword (Heb. 4:12; Eph. 6:17)
  - Mirror (James 1:23-25)
- Lamp (Ps. 119:105; Prov. 6:23;  
2 Peter 1:19)



**“Everywhere we turned the data revealed the same truth: spending time in the Bible is hands down the highest impact personal spiritual practice.” (p. 115)**

**Reflecting on Scripture is the “vanilla factor” for spiritual growth.” (p. 116)**

# St. Paul's Collegiate Church (Storr's CT)

## Participation in the Four Key Individual Spiritual Practices

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE	Exploring Christianity	Growing in Christ	Close to Christ	Christ-Centered	Total
Bible Study <i>(daily)</i>	0% ↓↓	9% ↓	25%	42%	19%
Reflection on Scripture <i>(daily)</i>	0% ↓↓	12% ↑↑	15% ↓	48%	19%
Prayer <i>(daily)</i>	0% ↓↓	24%	40%	45%	30%
Solitude <i>(several times per week)</i>	0% ↓↓	28%	63%	68%	42%
Tithing <i>(10% or more)</i>	0% ↓↓	30%	33% ↓	58%	33% ↓

# **Six Reasons I want you to be an Expository Preacher**

- 1. The power is in the Word.**
- 2. Through preaching, God calls forth and grows the Church.**

# Through Preaching God Saves

- (1 Peter 1:23, 25) You have been born again through the living and abiding Word of God. . . . The word that was preached to us.
- (2 Timothy 3:15) From infancy you have known the holy Scriptures which are able to make you wise for salvation through Jesus Christ.
- Faith comes by hearing the Word of God and that demands that someone preach (Romans 10:14-15).
- (John 15:3) You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you.

## For Example: the Book of Acts

- “Peter stood up with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd,” and about 3,000 were added to infant church in Jerusalem (2:14ff.).
- “Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went,” and the church in Samaria was formed (8:4ff).
- “Those who had been scattered . . . traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch telling the message,” and the church in Syria was formed (11:19ff).
- “Almost the whole city gathered to hear the word of the Lord . . . and all who were appointed for eternal life believed,” and the church in Asia Minor was formed (13:44, 48).

## For Example: the Book of Acts

- “As was his custom, Paul went into the synagogue and reasoned with them from the Scriptures, explaining and proving that Christ had to suffer and rise from the dead,” and the church in Macedonia was formed (17:2ff).
- “Then Paul stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus” to proclaim the unknown God, and the church in Greece was formed (17:22ff).

## Through Preaching God Grows the Church

- (John 17:17) Sanctify them by the truth. Your word is truth.
- (Col. 1:28-29) We proclaim him, admonishing and teaching everyone . . . so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ. To this end I labor, struggling with all his energy.
- (1 Tim. 4:13) [Therefore] devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching.

## For Example: The Early Church

- Justin Martyr: “On the day called Sunday, all who live in cities or in the country gather together to one place, and the memoirs of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read, as long as time permits; then, when the reader has ceased, the president verbally instructs, and exhorts to the imitation of these good things.”
- Tertullian: “We assemble to read our sacred writings . . . . With the sacred words we nourish our faith, we animate our hope, and make our confidence more steadfast . . . and we confirm good habits. In the same place also exhortations are made, rebukes and sacred censures are administered.”

# **Six Reasons I want you to be an Expository Preacher**

- 1. The power is in the Word.**
- 2. Through preaching, God calls forth and grows the Church.**
- 3. We are commissioned as heralds and stewards.**

## **Dr. Timothy Keller on Expository Preaching:**

**A full confidence and rich grasp of the authority and inspiration of the Bible is absolutely crucial for a sustained, life-changing ministry of Bible teaching and preaching. . . . It is not enough for you to just have a general respect for the Bible. . . . Unless your understanding of the Bible—and confidence in its inspiration and authority—are deep and comprehensive, you will not be able to do the hard work to understand and present it convincingly.**

*Preaching, 32-34*

# κήρυξ

- A messenger vested with authority to convey an official message from kings, commanders, or other officials; one who gave a public summons or demand.
- Mounce, *The Essential Nature of NT Preaching*: “The proclamation must be delivered exactly as it was received. As the mouthpiece of his master, he dare not add his own interpretation.”
- (1 Timothy 2:7) I was appointed a preacher and apostle.

# οἰκόνομος

- A “house manager” –a servant entrusted by the owner of the house with the management of his affairs, including feeding the other servants and even the owner’s underage children.
- (1 Cor. 4:1-2) “Men ought to regard us as servants of Christ and as **those entrusted** with the secret things of God. Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful.”

# **Six Reasons I want you to be an Expository Preacher**

- 1. The power is in the Word.**
- 2. Through preaching, God calls forth and grows the Church.**
- 3. We are commissioned.**
- 4. We will be judged.**

## **Because we are heralds and stewards, we will be judged:**

- **(2 Tim 4:1-2) In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge: Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke, and encourage with great patience and careful instruction.**
- **(Heb 13:17) Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account.**

# **Six Reasons I want you to be an Expository Preacher**

- 1. The power is in the Word.**
- 2. Through preaching, God calls forth and grows the Church.**
- 3. We are commissioned.**
- 4. We will be judged.**
- 5. We are models.**

## **Dr. Timothy Keller again:**

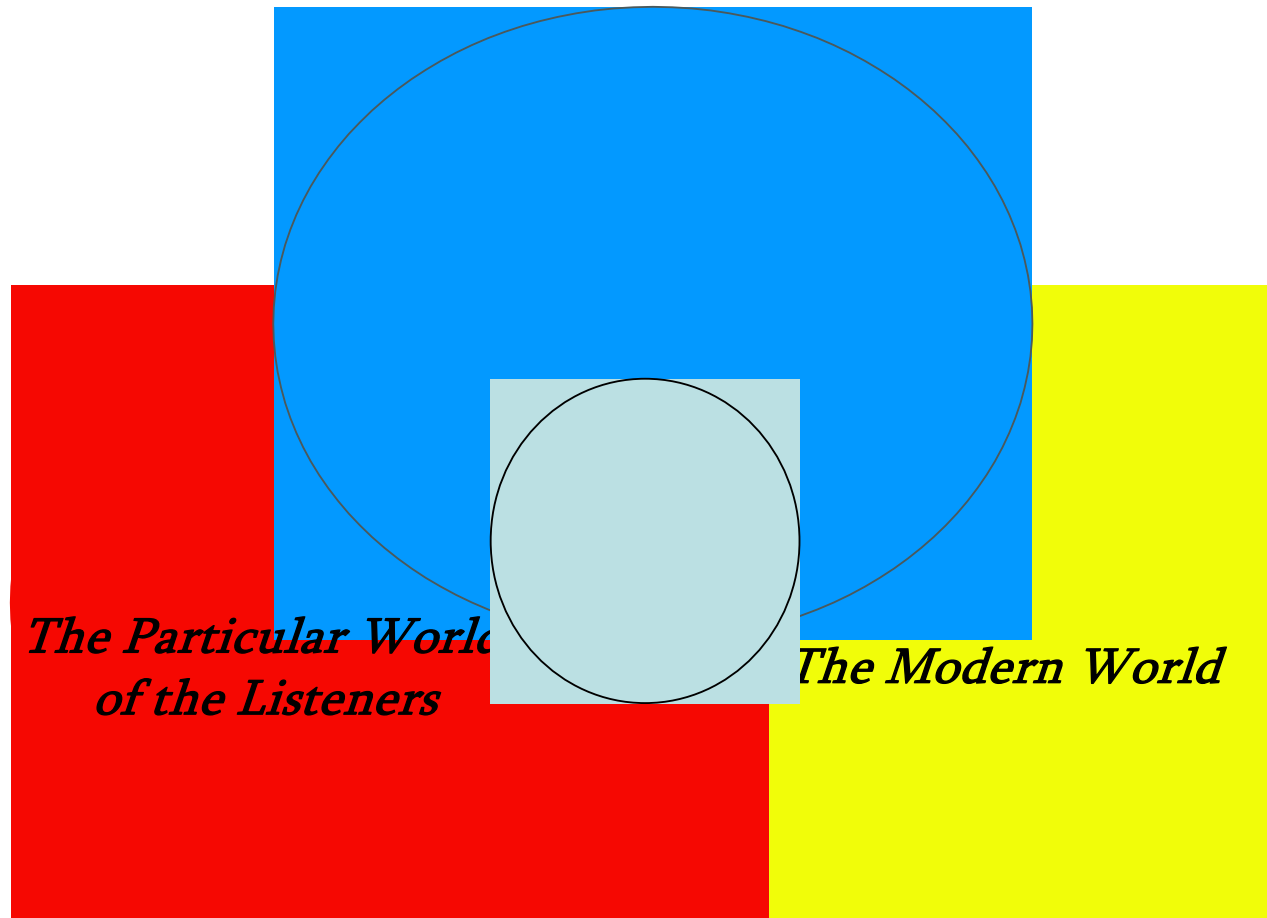
**A steady diet of expository sermons teaches your audience how to read their own Bibles, how to think through a passage and figure it out. Exposition helps them understand why different phrases mean what they do within the story line of the Bible.**

*Preaching, 38.*

# **Six Reasons I want you to be an Expository Preacher**

- 1. The power is in the Word.**
- 2. Through preaching, God calls forth and grows the Church.**
- 3. We are commissioned.**
- 4. We will be judged.**
- 5. We are models.**
- 6. As an expositor, the Bible is what sets the agenda for your organization and yourself.**

# THE WORLDS of THE PREACHER



# Review: Six Reasons

1. The power is in the Word.
2. Through preaching, God calls forth and grows the Church.
3. We are commissioned.
4. We will be judged.
5. We are models.
6. As an expositor, the Bible is what sets the agenda for your organization and yourself.

# Review

Big Idea Preaching

# Robinson's Stages

- I. Choose the passage.
- II. Study the passage. We are trying to discern the author's intended meaning.
- III. State the **exegetical idea**.

# **An Idea is Made up of Two Parts:**

**Subject:**

**Always phrased as a question.**

**Complement:**

**Answers the question . . .**

# **An Idea is Made up of Two Parts:**

**Subject:**

**What does this country need?**

**Complement:**

**Answer the question . . .**

# **An Idea is Made up of Two Parts:**

**Subject:**

**What is the test of a man's  
character?**

**Complement:**

**Answer the question . . .**

# Exegetical Idea

## Subject:

What is the author talking about? (remember, the subject is always phrased as a question)

## Complement:

What is the author saying about what he/she is talking about? (answer the question)

## John Stott:

**In our sermon preparation we must not try to bypass the discipline of waiting patiently for the dominant thought to disclose itself. We have to be ready to pray and think ourselves deep into the text until we give up all pretense of being its master or manipulator and become instead its humble and obedient servant. Then the Word of God will dominate our minds, set fire to our hearts, . . . and later leave a lasting impression on the congregation.**

What idea is the advertiser communicating?

Subject?

Complement?

Why don't you settle back and have a full-flavored smoke?

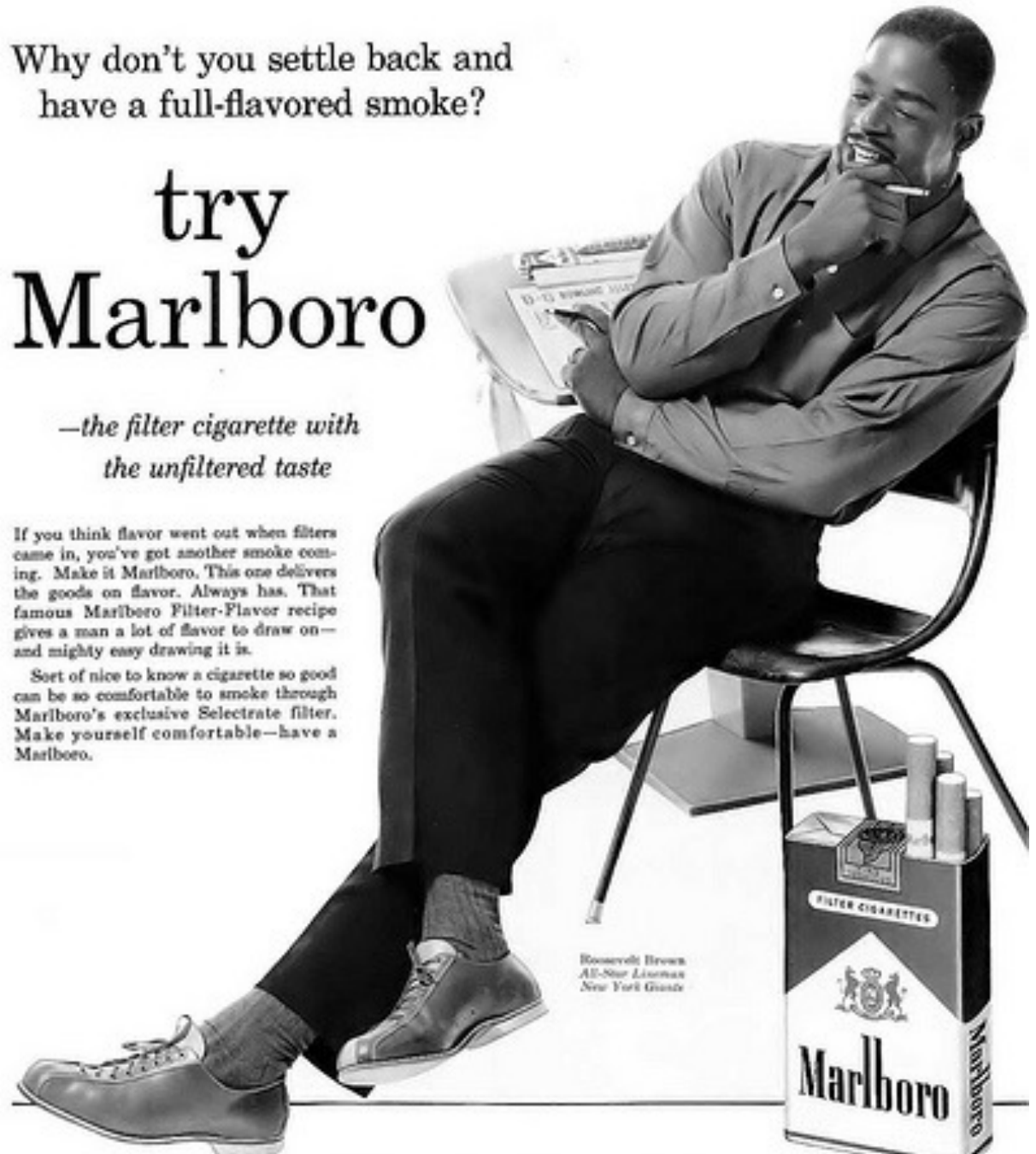
# try Marlboro

*—the filter cigarette with  
the unfiltered taste*

If you think flavor went out when filters came in, you've got another smoke coming. Make it Marlboro. This one delivers the goods on flavor. Always has. That famous Marlboro Filter-Flavor recipe gives a man a lot of flavor to draw on—and mighty easy drawing it is.

Soet of nice to know a cigarette so good can be so comfortable to smoke through Marlboro's exclusive Selectrate filter. Make yourself comfortable—have a Marlboro.

Roosevelt Brown  
All-Star Lineman  
New York Giants

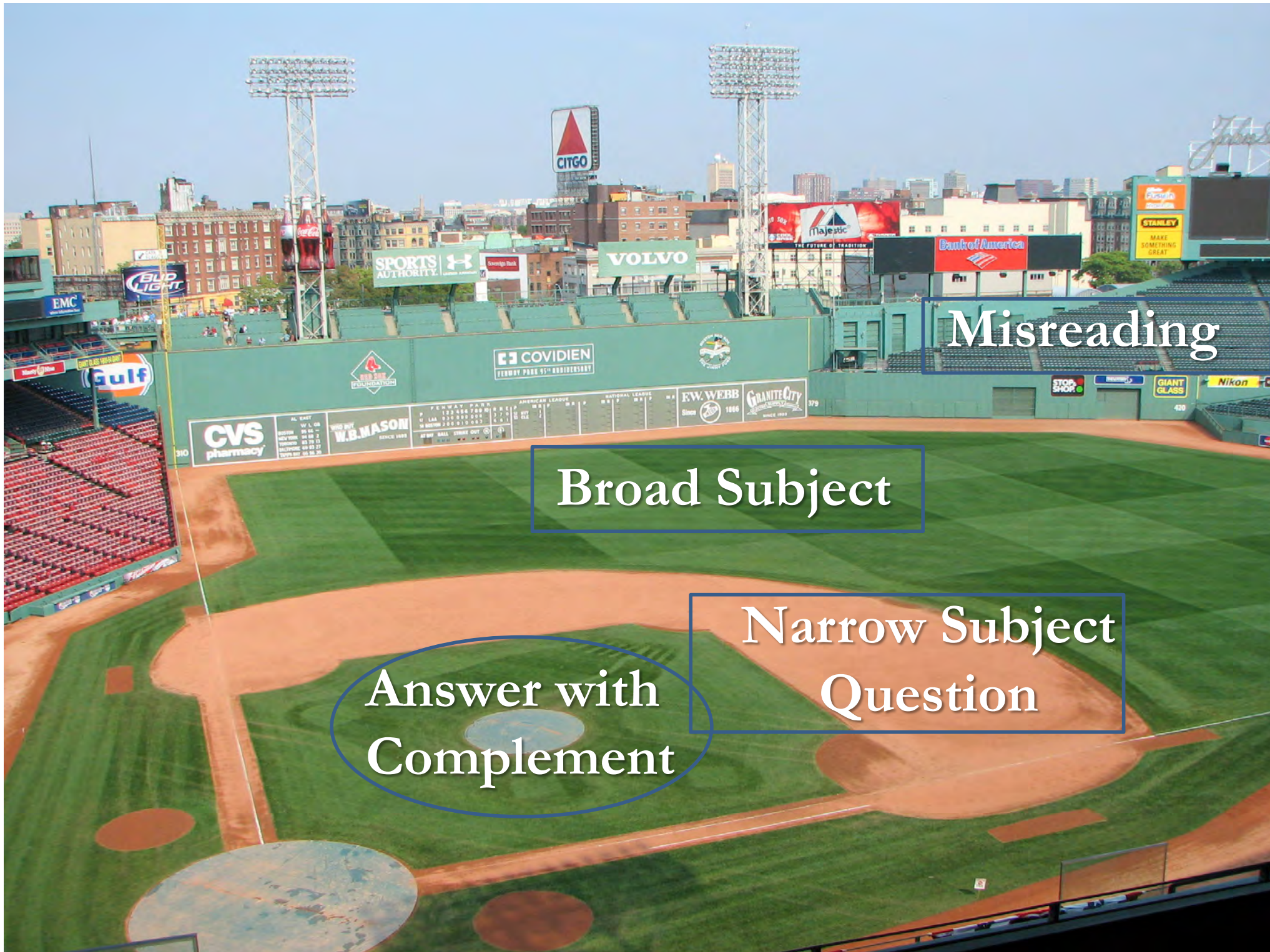


You get a lot to like with a Marlboro

KING-SIZE SOFT PACK  
or Flip-Top Box

# How Determine the Exegetical Idea?

Get in the ballpark!



Misreading

Broad Subject

Narrow Subject  
Question

Answer with  
Complement

# How Determine the Exegetical Idea?

Get in the ballpark!

- State the broad subject.
- Narrow that subject into a precise phrase, worded as a question (who, what, why, when, where, how).
- Answer the question thoroughly with the text's data.

# How Determine the Exegetical Idea?

- **State the broad subject.**

- Faith.
- Standing in God's holy hill.
- Abraham sacrificing Isaac.

- **Narrow that subject into a precise phrase, worded as a question.**

- Where did Paul say saving faith comes from?
- According to the psalmist what qualities enable a person to stand in God's holy hill?
- How did God provide for Abraham when he tested him with the command to sacrifice his son, Isaac?

- **Answer the question thoroughly with the text's data.**

# You try it:

- Groups of 3-4.
- Psalm 117.
- State subject, complement, and idea.
- 5 minutes. Go!

# Exegetical Idea: Psalm 117

- Subject:
- Complement:
- Idea:

# Common Mistakes with the Exegetical Idea:

- Too broad. Results in a thematic sermon rather than rigorously expository.
  - The Ex Idea should be as long as necessary for accuracy and thoroughness.
  - “Field trip” to see some of Arthurs’ Ex Ideas.
- Neglects key elements of the text.
- Moves too quickly to application.

# You try it:

- Groups of 3-4.
- Luke 1:1-4.
- State subject, complement, and idea.
- 5 minutes. Go!

# Exegetical Idea: Luke 1:1-4

- Subject:
- Complement:
- Idea:

# Robinson's Stages

- I. Choose the passage.
- II. Study the passage.
- III. State the Exegetical Idea.
- IV. State a **Homiletical Idea.**

After discovering the Exegetical Idea  
... rephrase it as the sermon's  
Homiletical Idea. This is also called  
the “Big Idea.”

# Compare:

## Exegetical Idea

Purpose: To summarize the passage.

Length: As long as needed for accuracy and thoroughness.

Subjects: Third person.

Tense: Past.

## Homiletical Idea

Purpose: To communicate the message of the passage for your listeners.

Length: 15 words or fewer.

Subjects: First or second person.

Tense: Present or “timeless.”

# The Homiletical Idea should be:

- Clear.
- Concise.
- Compelling.
- Creative.

# Homiletical Idea

**Robinson:** “A statement of a biblical concept in such a way that it accurately reflects the Bible and meaningfully relates to the congregation.”

**Jowett:** This idea should be as “clear as a cloudless moon.”

**Spurgeon:** “Give them a loaf of bread, not a wheat field.”

**Spurgeon:** “One nail driven home is better than twenty tacks loosely fixed to be pulled out in an hour.”

# Big Idea Preaching

“Every time I stand to communicate I want to take one simple truth and lodge it in the heart of the listener.”

Andy Stanley

*The Birth of a One-Point Preacher*

# Big Idea Preaching

“How many things is a sermon about? One!...  
The major idea, or theme, glues the message together and makes its features stick in the listener’s mind. All the features of the entire sermon should support the concept that unifies the whole.”

Bryan Chapell  
*Christ-Centered Preaching*

# Big Idea Preaching

“The central idea of a true expository message reflects the central idea intended by the Bible author himself.”

John MacArthur

*Rediscovering Expository Preaching*

# Big Idea Preaching

“A sermon must be like an arrow, streamlined and clearly driving at a single point, a single message, the theme of the passage.”

Timothy Keller  
*A Model for Preaching*

# Sample Homiletical Ideas

- “Avoid sexual immorality.” (1 Thess. 4:1-8)
- “Give your life to wisdom, and wisdom will give life to you.” (Proverbs 4:20-27)
- “Your neighbor is anyone in need you see, whose need you can meet, whose need you do meet.” (Luke 10:25-37)

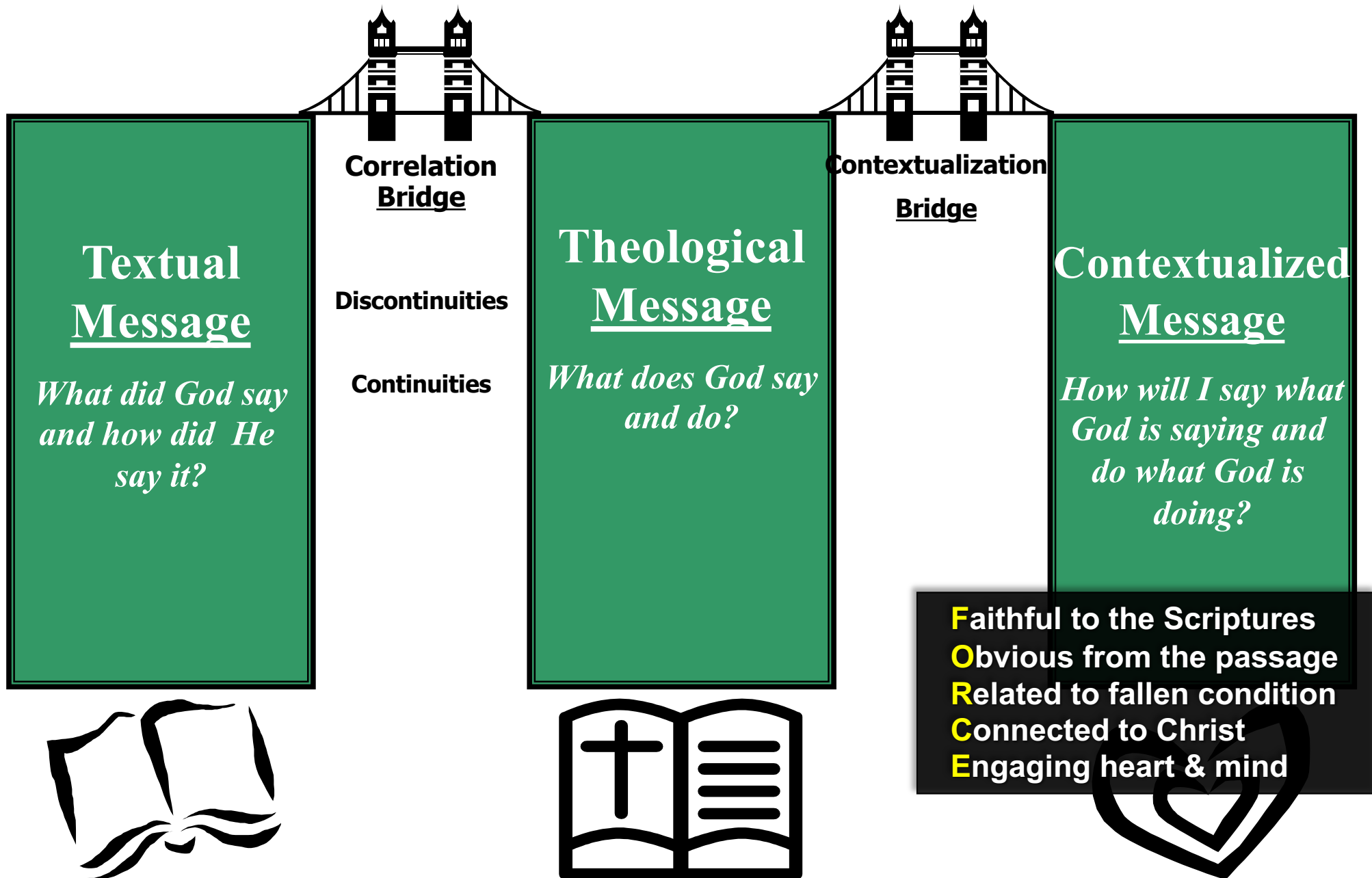
# Communicating the Homiletical Idea

- How many times should you repeat it?
- How can you emphasize it with techniques other than repetition?
  - Restatement.
  - Placement.
  - Image.
  - Multiple channels.
  - Delivery.

# Failure to emphasize the Homiletical Idea will . . .

- Prompt the audience to create their own (usually based on a smaller point that grabbed them).
  - This is not the end of the world.
- Leave the audience in a fog.
  - This *is* the end of the world.

Note: To state the homiletical idea, you often have to travel through theology. Discover the “timeless truths” about God and humanity.


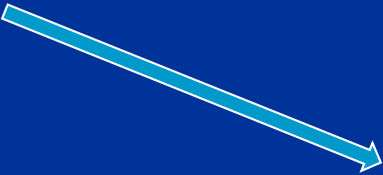


Adapted from Campus Crusade

# Big Idea: Compare

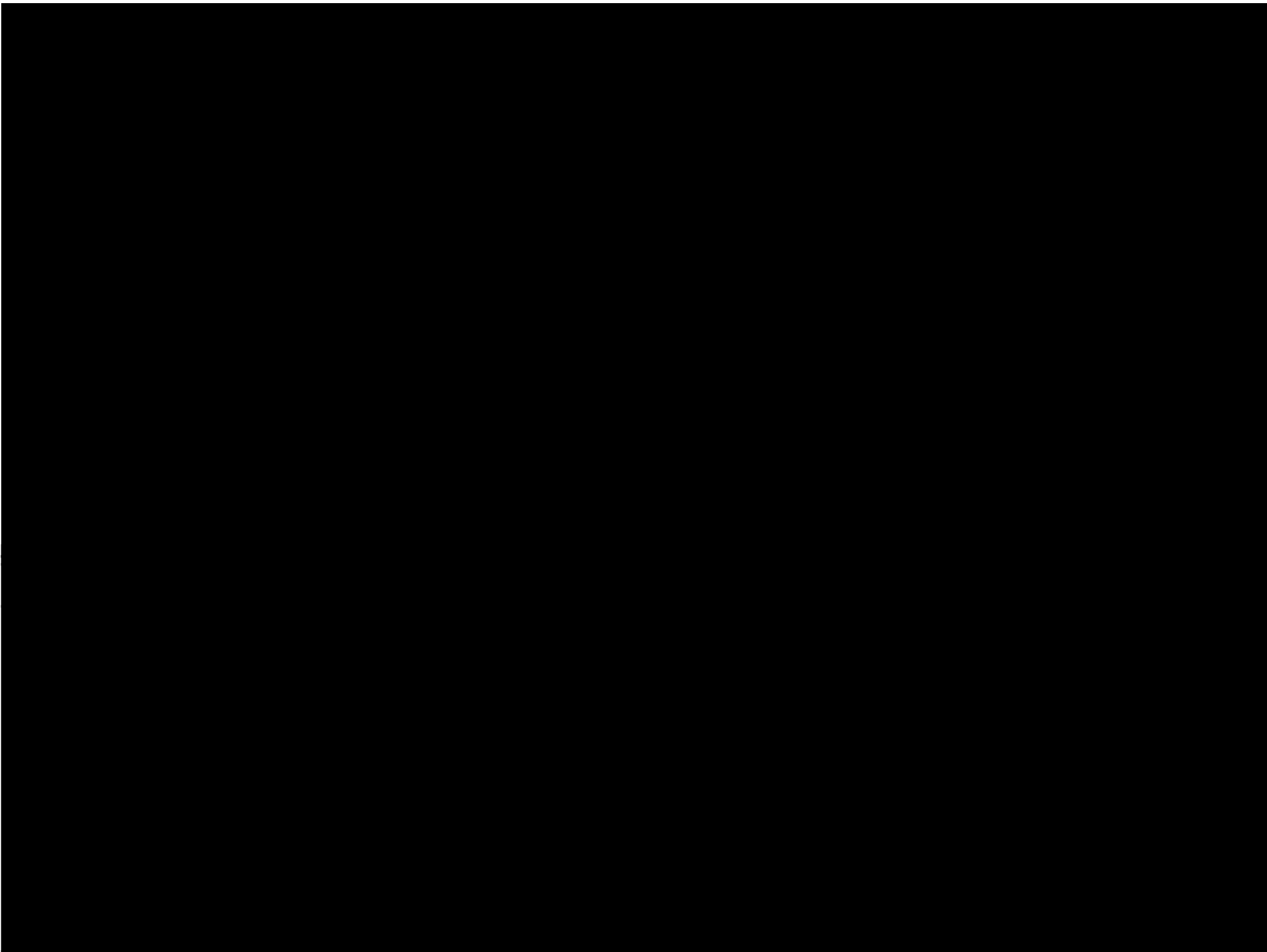
## Robinson (*Biblical Preaching*)

## Pelton (*Preaching with Greater Accuracy*)

- Exegetical Idea  ■ Texbi (textual big idea).
- Conbi (contextual big idea).
- Canbi (canonical big idea).
- Homiletical Idea  ■ Hombi (homiletical big idea).

# **Review: Robinson's Stages**

- I. Choose the passage.**
- II. Study the passage.**
- III. State the Exegetical Idea.**
- IV. State a Homiletical Idea.**



# Get this presentation for free!



BIBLE STUDY  
DOWNLOADS

[Home](#) [Downloads](#) [FAQ](#) [Links](#) [Contribute](#) [Contact](#)

Search...



Bible Study Downloads has thousands of PowerPoint® and Word files in 42 languages for free download [here](#).

**Preaching (Homiletics) link at BibleStudyDownloads.org**