

## **Expository Preaching: The Need of the Hour**

### **By: Scott Brown**

The doctrine of the sufficiency of Scripture is the hallmark doctrine of the National Center for Family Integrated Churches. It is the pivotal principle around which all matters of faith and practice must revolve. Given this fact, our great desire at the NCFIC is that the people of God would be satisfied with Scripture alone and that we would foster a love for God's Word by giving it the prominent place in our homes and in the meeting of the church through expository preaching. To help encourage this, the NCFIC is pleased to present a Workshop on Expository Preaching to be held April 27-28, 2007 in Wake Forest, North Carolina.

Why an expository preaching conference? Simply put, our heart's desire is to raise up a new generation of expository preachers and expository fathers. Both are desperately needed today, and both have their particular requirements and responsibilities — and their roles require some of the same skills in biblical exposition.

One thing is certain: the quality of the teaching of both pastors and fathers will have a profound reciprocal effect. If fathers are faithful expositors, the church will benefit, for the family is the nursery of the church; and if the pastors are faithful expositors, the family will benefit, for the church is the family of God and the pillar and support of the truth. In this way, both church and home are transformed by holy Scripture as it is loved and communicated by both church shepherds and family shepherds. This is how fathers teaching in their homes and pastors teaching in the churches are interdependent.

**In order for there to be lasting reformation of the church, three things must happen as we make this a priority:**

First, Scripture must take center stage in church life, and church leaders must become fiercely thorough in expositing God's Word in their teaching.

Second, fathers must become Bible expositors, taking on the mantle of prophet, priest, and king as they deliver the whole counsel of God to their families as heads of their households.

Third, churches need to be planted that restore Bible's rich doctrines restore to centerstage and set aside the modern secular encumbrances that are plaguing the church today due to ignorance of God's Word.

### **Expository Preaching: The Need of the Hour**

Expository preaching has been central to great moves of God throughout the centuries and is as critical to us today as ever. Steve Lawson explains the need this way:

The greatest seasons of church history — those eras of widespread reformation and great awakening — have been those epochs in which God-fearing men took the inspired Word and unashamedly preached it in the power of the Holy Spirit. As the pulpit goes, so goes the church. Thus, only a reformed pulpit will ultimately lead to a reformed church. In this hour, pastors must see their pulpits again marked by sequential exposition, doctrinal clarity, and a sense of gravity regarding eternal matters. This in my estimation is the need of the hour.[1]

### **The Divine Genius of John Calvin's Geneva**

The church in Geneva during the sixteenth century offers us one of the most striking examples of the impact of expository preaching on a culture and civilization. Four powerful things happened in Geneva during this eventful time that shook the world and beautified the church. First, fifteen families with an unusual passion for

the recovery of the Word of Christ moved to Geneva, Switzerland and started a little congregation. These church planters included the families of John Foxe (author of Foxes Book of Martyrs), Samuel Rutherford, (author of Lex Rex), John Knox, John Calvin and several other devoted Bible scholars. Second, these families held fiercely to the practice of expository preaching as John Calvin faithfully handled all of Scripture. Third, during a two year super-abounding labor of love, these men translated the entire Bible into English (The Geneva Bible) and put hundreds of thousands of copies of this faithful translation into the hands of the common man. Fourth, these men used the patterns and commands of Scripture to reform every area of life. As a result, people moved to Geneva in droves to be a part of this mighty work of God.

In the midst of this move of reformation, the reformers in Geneva resurrected the biblical doctrine of the family. They particularly focused on reforming fatherhood, charging fathers to take their role as household leader seriously — to become heralds of the whole counsel of God in their homes in the way that Deuteronomy 6 explains.

### **Generational Reformation: Expository Fathers Must Do Their Part**

We need a biblical reformation like the one that took place in Geneva in the sixteenth century. We need men — particularly fathers — to faithfully exposit the Word of God to their family and church congregations as Deuteronomy 6:6-7 prescribes: when they sit in their house, when they walk by the way; when they lie down and when they rise up.

In order for biblical reformation to be sustained for generations, expository fathers must take the lead in discipling their families. Richard Baxter explained how that family reformation serves as the foundation for lasting general reformation with these words:

You are not likely to see any general reformation, till you procure a family reformation. Some little religion there may be, here and there; but while it is confined to single persons, and is not promoted in families, it will not prosper, nor promise much future increase.

“And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures...” (2 Timothy 3:15). Paul wrote this of Timothy who had been faithfully taught God’s Word by his mother and grandmother. Theirs was a generational legacy of biblically-based discipleship.

Wives and mothers play a key role in family discipleship, but it is fathers who are held responsible and must take the lead. As men, may what Paul wrote of Timothy be true in our family flocks even as we heed this charge: “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” (II Timothy 2:15).

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1. Steven J Lawson, *The Expository Genius of John Calvin* (Reformation Trust, a division of Ligonier Ministries, 2007), p. 4.