



LECTURE 6

THE NEW TESTAMENT
PREACHER

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“But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ.” Ephesians 4:15

THE NEW TESTAMENT PREACHER

“And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesus.” Acts 18:24

Our confidence is in the Lord and in His Word, not in what we can do. I have made a deliberate choice to give God authority over my life and to place myself under the authority of His Word.

What we find in Acts chapter eighteen is a glimpse into the life of the New Testament preacher.

It has been my experience through the years of serving the Lord that either you pastor a church or you help someone pastor a church. You are only going to do one of those two things. There is more to pastoring a church than preaching, but the New Testament Church is characterized by preaching. Preachers are not teachers. Every preacher should have teaching in his preaching, but all teaching is not preaching. Preaching is heralding the Word of God.

We must recognize that we are on a pilgrimage here and God uses preaching to accomplish so much in His work.

The Bible says in Acts 18:24-28,

And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesus. This man was instructed in the

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way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John. And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly. And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him: who, when he was come, helped them much which had believed through grace: For he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, showing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ.

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Notice the Bible says of this man, “mighty in the scriptures.”

Consider what the apostle Paul gave as a charge in his closing word in II Timothy 4:1-5,

I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.



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We need a return to Bible preaching. We need a renewed emphasis on the New Testament preacher.

The Bible says, *“For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.”* God not only points us in the direction in which we are to go, He gives us the desire to go there. The miracle of the ministry is not that I am in it; the miracle of the ministry is that I have a desire in my heart to be in it. God has placed me in the ministry. This is what the Lord has given me to do. I have a desire to preach His Word.

The Bible says in I Corinthians 1:18, *“For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.”*

When we are preaching the cross, it is foolishness to the world. When Paul came to Corinth, he did not say, “I’m going to deal with you on some academic basis.” Paul said, *“For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.”*

People are spiritual beings. We need to declare to them spiritual truth and allow the Spirit of God to deal with their hearts. If God has never called you to preach, you should have an appreciation for anyone that is a God-called preacher.

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THE NEW TESTAMENT PREACHER IS PERSUASIVE IN HIS PREACHING

The Bible tells us of the apostle Paul and his preaching in Acts 18:13, *“Saying, This fellow persuadeth men to worship God contrary to the law.”* Paul was a persuader.

Our preaching should be persuasive. I do not believe we should try to castigate people or be harsh with people, but when you hear a God-called man preach, there should be persuasiveness in his preaching. That is a New Testament example.

THE NEW TESTAMENT PREACHER WARNS IN HIS PREACHING

Notice what else the Bible says about Paul preaching. In Acts 20:31 the apostle himself said, *“Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.”* He warned people in his preaching.

Sounding a warning alarms people. A God-called preacher, if he is following the New Testament pattern, will warn people in his preaching. He will speak to people about the terror of the Lord.

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THE NEW TESTAMENT PREACHER REASONS IN HIS PREACHING

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In Acts 24:25 the Bible says of Paul’s preaching, *“And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee.”* Paul reasoned in his preaching.

The New Testament preacher is a man who takes the Word of God and reasons with people. He shows them the Scripture. He deals logically with the truth of God’s Word. He presses the matter. This is New Testament preaching.

The Bible says Paul reasoned with them, *“And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come.”* It was not some little speech Paul got through in a hurry. It was a heartfelt, persuasive warning. Paul reasoned with them.

The Bible says in the closing part of Acts in Acts 28:23 concerning Paul’s preaching,

And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into his lodging; to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening.

Paul was everlastingly at it, expounding the Word of God. There was an intensity.



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THE NEW TESTAMENT PREACHER IS POWERFUL IN HIS PREACHING

Paul put forth the truth of God in logical form. He preached in the power of the Holy Spirit. In I Thessalonians 1:5 Paul tells us, *“For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost.”* He preached in power.

Paul pressed for a verdict. The preacher must be very careful here because he is not the person who gives thumbs up or thumbs down about God and salvation. Unfortunately, when some men stand in the pulpit, think they can decide who is going to be saved and who is not going to be saved. They have to be careful about how they give the invitation so that it is not of men. They must recognize the work of God because salvation is of the Lord. They can freely declare the truth that salvation is offered to all who will come because the Lord has tasted death for every man. Jesus Christ said, *“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”*

The spirit of God must draw a man. The New Testament preacher must recognize that it must be God’s Spirit dealing with a man, convicting that man of his sin as he faces his sin in order that he might repent of his sin and put his faith in Christ for salvation. But he presses for that verdict. He brings people to see the truth and helps them recognize that they must reach that verdict.

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THE NEW TESTAMENT PREACHER IS MIGHTY IN THE SCRIPTURES

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Of course if we were going to take only one model for New Testament preaching, there is no better model than the Lord Jesus Christ. Then there is the model of the apostle Paul, but there is so much in just so few verses concerning the preaching of Apollos. Let us consider the list God gives us concerning this man’s preaching. In Acts 18:24 the Bible says, “*And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man....*”

Alexandria was a place of learning. The world’s most famous library was located there.

Apollos was an eloquent man, called by many who study the Bible the most eloquent of all preachers. But I submit that his power, his usefulness, was not in his eloquence. God tells us about this New Testament preacher. He says of Apollos that he was “*mighty in the scriptures.*”

People who have studied the life of D.L. Moody tell us that Moody was a uneducated man who left home at a young age because he was so poor that his mother could not feed him. He traveled to Boston, then on to Chicago. Moody became a mighty man of God. The thing that characterized the life of Moody was his knowledge of Scripture. He knew the Word of God.



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One can not be a New Testament preacher without striving to be mighty in the Scriptures, to know the Word of God, to preach the Word of God, and to declare the Word of God. It is the Word of God that is *“quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword.”*

Study the Word of God in order to obey God’s Word, not just to know it as some academic achievement. I am convinced that God will teach us His Word, if we intend to obey His Word.

Apollos was a preacher. He was eloquent. He was from Alexandria, a place of learning identified with people who were “in the know.” He came to Ephesus. But he did not just come from Alexandria to Ephesus as an eloquent man; he came preaching *“mighty in the scriptures.”* Every preacher needs to strive to be mighty in the Scriptures.

THE NEW TESTAMENT PREACHER IS INSTRUCTED IN THE WAY OF THE LORD

Then the Bible says, *“This man was instructed in the way of the Lord....”* That means he submitted himself to be instructed.

Instruction has to do with knowing things and being able to get hold of those things with

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the eventual purpose of giving those things to other people, teaching something that is formally unknown. This is what the Proverbs teaches in chapter one. The Bible says, *“The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel; To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding.”*

Apollos was an eloquent man and no doubt an educated man. He placed himself in the position of a student to be instructed in the things of the Lord. Every preacher of the New Testament should be a preacher who is learning, studying, applying what he has learned, and growing in the Lord.

It is unfortunate, but I see so many talented preachers start out young, vigorous, and very able, but they are bigger when they are hatched than they are at any other time in life. They do not grow.

There is no place to stop. Apollos was instructed in the Lord. Continue to allow yourself to be instructed in the way of the Lord.

THE NEW TESTAMENT PREACHER IS FERVENT IN THE SPIRIT

The Bible says, *“...and being fervent in the spirit...”*
The Bible says we should be fervent in prayer.

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There is a great difference between a man preaching with fervency and not preaching with fervency. There is a difference between listening to a man that believes what he is saying and a man who doubts what he is saying. The New Testament preacher who believes what he is saying is fervent in the spirit.

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THE NEW TESTAMENT PREACHER IS DILIGENT

Then the Bible says, *“...he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord...”*

The Bible says Apollos was diligent. He made this his life’s work. He gave himself to it. The man who is a preacher of the gospel should be a man, who is diligent. Apollos *“spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord.”*

THE NEW TESTAMENT PREACHER IS BOLD

The Bible says, *“...knowing only the baptism of John. And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue....”* Apollos hit a little bump in the road. He was teaching and preaching everything he knew. He began to speak boldly.

I love holy boldness. It may come across sometimes as cockiness. I hope it does not because



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our confidence is in the Lord and sometimes people who are not confident in the Lord mistake someone who is for being cocky. But there is such a thing as boldness. That boldness comes from faith and confidence in the Lord.

The apostle Paul had spent about a year and a half with Aquilla and Priscilla, teaching them. When they heard Apollos preaching boldly but only knowing the baptism of John, the Bible says, “...whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.” Is that not a precious statement?

Aquilla and Priscilla did not say, “I’ll tell you one thing. You think you’re somebody, don’t you, with all your eloquence and Alexandrian background. Well, let us tell you a thing or two.” That is not the way they dealt with him. They dealt with him tenderly, lovingly. They joined themselves to him. They had in mind all along that this man was going to be mightily used of God and they were going to serve their role in what God had for them to do to encourage this preacher.

The Bible says,

...they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly. And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive

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him: who, when he was come, helped them much which had believed through grace.

Why do you think Apollos was able to help them? It was because he had spent time with Aquilla and Priscilla.

People say, “If we’d just get the right preacher, we’d have a great church.” Many a right preacher has never had the right people with which to work. It has to be a marriage between pastor and people.

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THE NEW TESTAMENT PREACHER MIGHTILY CONVINCES CONCERNING CHRIST

The Bible says in Acts 18:28, *“For he mightily convinced the Jews...”* Apollos was mighty in the Scriptures, but just going so far as John’s baptism. Now he was going to deal with the Jews about who Jesus is. He was able to do that because Aquilla and Priscilla had taken him aside. He mightily convinced them.

The word *“mightily”* means “well stretched, carefully put together.” As one would string pearls on a string, Apollos took the Scriptures and placed them on a logical string and mightily he convinced the Jews concerning Christ.



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THE NEW TESTAMENT PREACHER DECLARES PUBLICALLY THAT JESUS IS CHRIST.

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The Bible says, “...and that publicly, showing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ.” You cannot have a public ministry if your private life is not what it should be. You can try, but the power of the preacher is not in his public speaking. God does not bless and use a man for what he is in public. You may be enamored by someone’s public ability, but God does not bless and use a man because of what he is in public. God looks in his heart and He sees if things are right. The New Testament preacher is declaring the message of Jesus publically, but he has asked God to help him keep his heart right privately.



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"Observe to do according to all that is written."

Joshua 1:8
