

Expository Preaching

Grace Bible Church
Coeur d'Alene, Idaho

Grace Bible Church believes that spiritual worship and life change come through the Word of God. The church has a long history of carefully explaining Bible texts in its classes and worship services and expects its pastors and teachers to be careful expositors of the Word of God.

What do we mean by “expository preaching”?

By that term, we mean two things:

- 1) How a teacher understands and interprets a particular passage of Scripture
- 2) How a teacher develops a message for presentation to the congregation

A key verse for understanding expository preaching comes from Israelite history under the leadership of Nehemiah and Ezra. Nehemiah 8:8 says, “*So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading.*” In that event, Ezra read the Scriptures and a team of men circulated through the audience, explaining the text. Notice from that verse that the *source* of their message was the Bible text itself and they were concerned that the congregation *understood* the text.

Based on that, our congregation expects its teachers to develop sermons from the Bible text itself. They must be committed to clearly and accurately teaching what God has said in His Word. Should a teacher offer his personal opinion, it is to be identified as such and he should remind his listeners that they have the option to embrace or ignore his personal opinions.

When teaching the Scriptures, the teacher should be concerned with five things: 1) the specific wording of the text being taught, 2) the greater context in which the text resides, 3) the grammatical rules by which the text was originally written in the original languages and translated into the English language, 4) the historical setting for the text in Bible history, and 5) the application of the text into the modern context in which his listeners live.

Expository preaching does not limit a teacher to verse-by-verse, through-the-book teaching of the Bible, although that is the historical tradition at Grace Bible Church. The teacher can also focus on a topic or develop a theme. However, whether the preaching covers a book study (like Philippians), a topical study (like marriage), or a theme (like prayer), the teacher is careful to develop his comments from the Scriptures and to interpret the Scriptures according to their literal, historical, and grammatical context. Expository preaching is effective when it answers three questions: “What?”, “So What?”, and “Now What?”

Biblical exposition is a means to an end. The end is transformed lives. The speaker cannot *make* the text relevant – it is *already* relevant. Grace Bible Church believes that accurate biblical interpretation through expository preaching leads to personal transformation.