

*the essence of*  
**BIBLICAL**   
**PREACHING**

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THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

# SESSION 3

## TEXT-DRIVEN, DOXOLOGICAL PREACHING A SUGGESTION

Perhaps, a somewhat different approach is called for. In our final moments together, I suggest that text-driven, doxological preaching is the best approach.

### 1. Preaching that is Text-Driven

#### A. Proponents

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#### B. Definition

***Text-driven preaching is preaching that follows and emphasizes the contours of the Biblical passage.***

#### C. Description

- *First, the outlines of text-driven sermons follow the contours of the Biblical passage.* R. Scott Pace writes, “The form of the passage should serve as the blueprint for our sermon construction. In other words, the structure of the sermon should mirror the literary structure of the passage.”<sup>10</sup> Gallaty and Smith agree, “Ideally, a text-driven sermon’s shape is based on the substance, structure, and spirit of the text.”<sup>11</sup> Later, they write, “For the rest of [our lives], how to structure a sermon will always be a secondary question. The primary question is always, how is the text structured?”<sup>12</sup>
- *Second, the aim of text-driven sermons coheres to the author’s original aim.*
- *Third, the presentation of text-driven sermons is sensitive to the genre and tone of the text being preached.*

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<sup>10</sup> R. Scott Pace, *Preaching by the Book*, 11, 56.

<sup>11</sup> Robby Gallaty and Steven W. Smith, *Preaching for the Rest of Us: Essentials for Text-Driven Preaching*, 28.

<sup>12</sup> Gallaty and Smith, *Preaching for the Rest of Us*, 30.

- *Fourth, text-driven sermons require the preacher's fundamental commitment to a text-driven life and ministry. In other words, text-driven sermons aren't produced by accident. Gallaty and Smith write, "The preacher commits to stay in the chair until the Word is clear, and as a result, the Word changes him.... At that point the pastor is leading the church from the study, from his willingness to stay in the seat until he knows what the text means."<sup>13</sup>*

#### **D. Strengths**

- *First, text-driven sermons fill the preacher with both seriousness and confidence.*
- *Second, text-driven preaching demonstrates the preacher's belief in the ability of God's unfailing Word.*
- *Third, text-driven preaching frees preachers from the pressure to manufacture sermons built on personal charisma or slick presentations.*

#### **E. Weaknesses/Dangers**

Preachers who poorly preach text-driven sermons might demonstrate the following issues:

- *First, proponents of text-driven preaching occasionally produce sermons that are more like running commentaries on verses of scripture than sermons intended to build the church.*
- *Second, proponents of text-driven preaching may put undue emphasis on subsidiary points made by the biblical author.*
- *Third, proponents of text-driven preaching sometimes moralize Old Testament texts by making direct application to new covenant believers without mentioning the gospel or the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit.*

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<sup>13</sup> Gallaty and Smith, *Preaching for the Rest of Us*, xiv.

## 2. Preaching that is Trinitarian & Doxological

### Regarding the goal and object of our preaching-

- Preaching is \_\_\_\_\_ God and \_\_\_\_\_ God.
- Emphasizing only a Christological, or a Theological, or a Pneumatological view is too narrow.
- My trinitarian suggestion is \_\_\_\_\_ than Christological, Theological, or Pneumatological views by themselves.

*Preaching is for God and about God!*