



COVENANT
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

An Article on Exegetical Preaching at CPC
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I realize as a new church with a new pastor that many things are different from previous encounters with churches and preachers. Because of the novelty of our situation, I want to continue to explain the method of my preaching.

I prefer to preach in a manner known as “expository” preaching. Expository means, “To set forth the meaning or the intent of a text.” My intent in delivering the Word of God is to bring to light the meaning of the Bible. No big deal, right?

In theory, many would agree this is the “method” of all Christian preaching. In practice, this is not the case. Much of today’s preaching gives a nod to the Bible or uses the Scripture as a sort of “jumping” off point for the preacher’s best thoughts about life and the world. It is not surprising that many congregations develop into personality cults that hail the preacher but have little sense of the message of the Bible. It is not hard to see why a preacher would entertain such methods: congregations love it, preachers are revered for it, and most especially, we all get to avoid dealing with the more difficult parts of Scripture.

Expository preaching attempts to avoid these mistakes. Here’s how the method works:

Preachers and congregations work through books of the Bible and do not simply “pick and choose” texts. When preaching through a book of the Bible, the preacher is sometimes forced to deal with subjects he or she would prefer not to discuss. This weekend could very much be an example of that. Preaching through continuous texts allows for the sermon to remain subservient to the message of the text and not the preacher. In this way, it keeps me accountable to the Bible.

At the heart of expository preaching is the belief that the Biblical text should dictate the sermon message, not the other way around. Lately, I have had this desire to preach a sermon on how congregations should buy their new, really good-looking pastor a beach condo so that he can relax from all of his hard work (you understand I am kidding...), unfortunately, Genesis 7 does not contain that message. I’m out of luck for this weekend. Maybe another text will come up where I can pound that idea. It is highly unlikely. The crucial commitment is that the Bible dictates the message; the message doesn’t dictate the Bible.

Expository preaching seeks to illumine the Bible, to bring forth its message of the God of grace and hope. Nice thoughts, inspirational messages are fine for playing church and being religious, but that’s not the goal at Covenant Presbyterian. We want to dig deep into God’s Word. We want to know Jesus Christ, to love Him, and to enjoy Him forever. God’s Word is the fuel for that sort of journey.

So here’s the call to you as a congregation: **MAKE ME PREACH YOU THE BIBLE.** Don’t ever let me off the hook. Ignore my dumb stories and bad jokes and gear into the meaning of the text and it’s application in your life. If you will do that, I promise we will wake up in ten years knowing God in ways we previously never have.

With you in Christ,

Alec Flynt