

# Expositional Preaching

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## Isn't there only one kind of expositional sermon?

### Ditch the disposable; Invest in Telephoto

#### Telephoto Preaching

- Our preaching often becomes like taking pictures with a disposable camera - no zooming, no panning, focus isn't guaranteed, and panoramics are unlikely.
- Expositional preaching is like graduating to a telephoto lens - it gives you the ability to take a wider diversity of Scriptural snapshots from new angles and more perspectives with higher resolution, richer texture, and variable scope.
- Since an expositional sermon is one in which the point of the passage is taken as the point of the sermon, we are just as free to ask "what is the point of Romans?" in one expositional sermon as we are to ask "what is the point of **Romans 8:1a**?" in another.
- Proceeding from panoramic to microscopic, then, we may legitimately preach a single expositional sermon on the whole Bible, a whole testament, a whole book, a whole narrative or parable, one paragraph, one phrase, or a single word - as long as we are preaching the intended point of the selected meaning unit.

### Ditch the disposable; Invest in Telephoto

#### Cost/Benefit

- Telephoto lenses are a lot more expensive than disposable cameras. It's the same with expositional preaching - it takes a bigger investment of muscle and minutes than the other kinds.
- But the pictures are absolutely *incredible*, because they give people a multi-layered vision of the Biblical landscape from a greater variety of vantage points.
- *Study to show yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the Word of truth (2 Tim 2:15).*

### Meaning Metrics

#### Should I preach on different lengths of text?

- Preaching through the Bible is like taking pictures of the Grand Canyon. You can take a mule all the way down to the bottom, take a bus up around the rim, or stop

anywhere in between. Each picture will reveal something different yet true about the Canyon. You just have to find level ground on which to stand.

- In the Bible, that level ground is any literary *meaning unit* - a portion of text intended by the author to convey significance according to the rules of the particular kind of literature being written. A meaning unit can be a single word, one phrase, or a paragraph in any kind of literature. It can be one story in narrative literature, or one parable or string of related parables in the gospels. It can be a section of related laws in legal texts, a whole prophetic utterance in a prophetic book, or it could simply be any whole book. It could even be a whole Testament or the whole Bible!
- The closer you are to the normal meaning unit for a type of biblical literature (usually the length of a paragraph or chapter), the easier it will be to write your sermon. The further you are from the normal meaning unit, whether your focus is narrower or broader, the more difficult the preparation will be.
- Taking longer and shorter texts based on the literature type you are approaching will provide a congregation with a more balanced diet of the Word, and will eventually sharpen and broaden your skill in preaching.

### **Should I preach the meaning units of a text in any certain order?**

- There is certainly no hard and fast rule. But overview sermons (sermons on the whole Bible, a whole testament, or a whole book) are most helpfully preached *before* preaching sermons at the more minute level of the same book or testament.
- This way, both preacher and congregation have an overall contextual framework into which they can place more detailed expositions.
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### **Expositional Gallery**

- Overview sermons
  - Whole Bible
  - Whole testament
  - Whole book
- One chapter per week through a whole book
- One paragraph or narrative at a time
- One phrase or verse at a time