

Pastor's Perspective: On Preaching the Bible

“How Preaching Builds Confidence in the Bible” by Aaron Hoak

Chances are you have a Bible within arm's reach. And if there's not a physical copy in sight, a swipe or a click will bring the Bible to the same screen you're using to read this post. We don't have to think about access to the Scriptures. With ease, and perhaps little appreciation for the privilege, we read the Bible, study it, and preach it.

In theory, we do this because we believe God has spoken to us from heaven through his Son (Hebrews 1:2; 12:25). That truth has been set down in writing, translated, and mass-produced. But does easy access to or familiarity with the Scriptures diminish our amazement or even confidence that we hold in our hands the very Word of God?

Part of the regular work of the pastor should help us at this point: diligent study of God's Word. Since I am privileged to bring a weekly sermon, I must study the Bible. It is my calling to stand and preach a message not of my own whims and opinions but of careful exposition and application of what God has said. Disciplined study teaches pastors to fade to the background and give center stage to God's Word.

Moreover, careful study increases the pastor's appreciation for *and* confidence in the Scriptures. As we dig into the Bible, we see the beauty of God's truth and character. We see sweet harmony in a canon of sixty-six inspired books spanning thousands of years, kingdoms, cultures, and languages. We see the personality of human authors bubbling through while the Divine author is never invisible. We see prophecy fulfilled. We see, from cover to cover, one main story—salvation—and one main character—Jesus, Son of God. And we are drawn to worship this good and gracious God who has spoken through his Son.

Appreciation for and confidence in God's Word increase as we witness the fruits of effective preaching: sinners saved and lives transformed into the likeness of Christ. We see that the Word *is* living and active (Hebrews 4:12) and *does* accomplish God's purpose (Isaiah 55:11). That is a recipe for increased confidence in the Word of God.

Since we're fallen creatures in a fallen world, this isn't a linear process. We won't *always* see the beauty that's there; we won't *always* want to worship; people won't *always* be affected after we've diligently studied and preached. So we must be careful not to rest biblical confidence in feelings or the effects of preaching, but the revelation of God's Son. He is the final Word.

Instead of familiarity breeding contempt as we engage in careful study and preaching of God's truth, it should breed confidence. There is no book like the Bible. There is no revelation like God's Son. Preaching not only reflects this confidence, but also aims to implant it into the congregation, whose members may reap the fruit of greater faith, hope, and love.

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