

In Defense of Topical Preaching

By Al Distelkamp

In touting the superiority of expository preaching, some have been openly critical of topical preaching. Occasionally an "expositor" will even dare to belittle the topical approach by calling it "proof-text preaching."

There is great value in expository preaching wherein you "expose" the meaning within the immediate context. It appears that Philip used this method when teaching the Ethiopian about Jesus (**Acts 8:35**). However, the use of this approach must not eliminate preaching which

explores a topic within the context of the entire word of God (i.e., gathering all that is revealed about the particular topic).

Both methods of preaching can be used by preachers to promote either truth or error. When preaching topically, care is needed to avoid misusing the text. Similar caution is needed by the expositor to avoid surmising what is meant.

There is danger in the abandonment of topical preaching. For some, the exclusive use of expository preaching has made it convenient to avoid making specific applica-

tions. Some even pride themselves in just preaching the principle and expecting their listeners to make their own applications. Quite frankly, that's not preaching—that's just reading.

Critics of topical preaching need to show us just how to teach against any number of false doctrines and unscriptural practices without use of such preaching. In fact, I have to wonder if this is the very reason some are turned off by topical preaching.

Perhaps what some ignore is that when a book of the Bible is taught in a class setting, there is ample opportunity to employ the expository method of teaching.

Let me be perfectly clear. I am not opposing expository preaching. To borrow a phrase from the Lord, "This you ought to do without leaving the other undone" (**Mt 23:23**). Lest anyone is critical of my use of Jesus' words, keep in mind that even He occasionally resorted to what some call "proof-texting" (**Mt 9:13; Mk 11:17, etc.**).



Classes This Week

Sunday Evening College Devo and Singing at the Roberts with Luke Carter Teaching!	Tuesday 8:00 PM Truth-seekers Campus Study in Room 2225 in Student Center	Thursday 7 PM Ladies Class at the Pender's on "Jesus the King" with Amy Bruns from Atlanta teaching!
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Sick

Brad Marshall (Allie Hosey's Cousin)	Owen Mauldin (Seth and Summer Mauldin's Son)	Frank Hand (Laura Humphrey's dad)	Sandlyn Fultz (Davis Fultz's Sister)
Gloria Detmer and Carol Dickerson (Toni Herd's Sisters)	Don Lanier (Father of Greg Lanier)	David Hartsell (Holly and Brad's Father)	Kate Miller (Daughter of Brandon and Erin Miller)
Betty Mcareavey (Mary Ann Roberts' mom)	Jim Trull (Phillip Box's grandfather)	Mark Dean (Father of Logan Dean)	Jerry Foropoulos (Anna Jean's Uncle)
Tom Davis (Walker Davis' Uncle)	Quinton Addison (April Jerkins Grandfather)	Danny Weldon (Rusty Weldon's brother)	Bob Cannon (Friend of Holly Law)
Gerald White (Christopher, Anna and Wesley's Father)	Amy Baswell Hall	Emily Stallings (Anna's sister)	John Marvin Rhodes (Toni Herd's cousin)
Toni and William Herd	Joe Perkins (Scott Perkins' Dad)	Toni and William Herd	Austin Locke (Jeremiah Johnson's Grandfather)

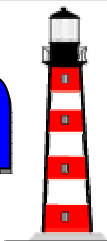
March Birthdays

- 1-Amanda Cagle
- 2-Maddie Norman
- 2-Chase Harrison
- 2-Bryan Golden
- 2-Angela Fowler
- 2-Elizabeth Barham
- 3-Shaun Oliver
- 5-Sophie Borden
- 7-Josh Pender
- 7-Lily Walton
- 8-Carmen Herd
- 10-Pepper Humphrey
- 10-Parker Godwin
- 11-Becky Harris
- 12-Brad Hartsell
- 17-Susan Sullivan
- 18-MaKenzie Anderson
- 18-Victoria Holland
- 18-Alaina Barham
- 20-jimmy Roberts
- 21-Carter Hunt
- 21-Rachel Bobo
- 22-Will Hollis
- 27-Shelby Freeman
- 27-Roxie Rodriguez
- 29-Rachel Simpson
- 29-Makenzie Reynolds
- 30-Amanda Stephens
- 30-York Smith

News and Notes

- ☒ - Lets keep in our prayers our expectant mothers, Laura Humphrey and Jana Hall!
- ☒ - Northwood College Weekend Study, Paul Earnhart teaching on Ecclesiastes, Friday 7-9 p.m., Sat 9:15 a.m.-3:00 p.m.
- ☒ - Time to turn clocks forward on sat night, March 7
- ☒ - Andrew Dunaway has identified with the University church!
- ☒ - Continue to pray for Phillip Box's g'dad, Jim Trull, as he is in hospice care.
- ☒ - This year's VBS will be June 8-11. VBS topic: "Heroes of the NT"
- ☒ - David Ogle continue to recover from hip surgery.
- ☒ - Scott Perkins' dad, Joe, continues to recover from a stroke.
- ☒ - Please pray for Jeremiah Johnson's g'dad, Austin Locke as he goes to rehab to await reevaluation for additional surgery
- ☒ - Wishing all the senior vet students well as they leave soon for their preceptorships: Mason Chandler, Leah Donahue and Justin Padgett.

The Auburn Beacon



Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. (**Matthew 5:16**)

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The Remission of Sins

By James W. Adams



Thoughts to Ponder

"For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. (**Matthew 26:28**)"

The universality of sin is a fact which no man who admits the existence of evil would think of denying. Man's inability to liberate himself from its guilt, love, and dominion is a fact equally as well known and as universally acknowledged. Experience and observation unquestionably confirm the statements of inspiration: "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (**Rom. 3:23**); and "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us" (**1 John 1:8**).

The recognition of evil logically demands a recognition of righteousness. To admit the existence of evil is to give tacit recognition to a standard by which thoughts, words, and deeds are determined to be good or evil. To recognize such a standard is to agree that it is the law of life. If men are to submit to such a law, it must possess authority. To possess authority, it must be infallible. Men are not likely to submit themselves to a law of life that can give no evidence of being infallibly correct. Imperfect beings cannot give to the world a perfect law of life. An infallible law could emanate only from a perfect being. This accounts for the moral decadence and corruption of heathen religions and the devotees of all ideologies that are fundamentally atheistic.

The very existence of evil in the world, therefore, demands the existence of God and a standard of life emanating from Him. Christians worship the one, true, and living God and subscribe to

the Bible as His word or law of life. All evil results from sin -transgressions of God's law of life as revealed in the Bible. Law, however, is impotent unless it provides for the punishment of the transgressor. If law may be violated with impunity, its authority is subverted and its majesty degraded. God's law of life has ever provided for the punishment of the transgressor. The prophet said, "The soul that sinneth it shall die" (**Ezek. 18:20**). Paul said, "The wages of sin is death" (**Rom. 6:23**). Eternal death is the penalty which has ever attached to Heaven's law. Since all have sinned, each responsible being is a condemned transgressor. The facts in the case are clear. The guilt of the transgressor is established. The sinner, therefore, is under condemnation and waits but for the judgment for the inflicting of the penalty.

He is helpless of himself to do ought that would justify his salvation. Only the intervention of Divine power can save him. God cannot disregard transgression and, at the same time, uphold the majesty and power of His law. Yet, infinite love yearned for the salvation of the creature who bore the image of his Creator. From this infinite yearning and heavenly passion, the scheme of human redemption was born. God's law could not permit transgression with impunity, but could and did admit of pardon through a substitute offering for sin.

(Continued on page 2)

Elders

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Larry Rouse
(334) 734-2133



SCHEDULE OF SERVICES Sunday

Bible Class9:30 AM
Worship10:20 AM
Evening Worship 6:00 PM
Wednesday
Bible Classes.....7:00 PM

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Naught could adequately serve in this capacity save that which was absolutely sinless. Only a perfect being, hence only a Divine victim, would suffice. For this cause, Jesus "who knew no sin" came "in the likeness of sinful flesh," as the Word of God "made flesh" and by His sinless life and sacrificial death on the cross "condemned sin in the flesh that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit" (**Rom. 8:1-4**). In this Res the explanation of such passages as these: "Christ died for our sins" (**1 Cor. 15:3**); "This is my blood of the New Testament which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (**Mt. 26:28**); "The love of Christ constraineth us because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead" (**2 Cor. 5:14**); "Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin" (**Rom. 4:6-8**).

Concerning Imputed Righteousness

Denominations, and some of my own brethren, have greatly erred in supposing that "imputed righteousness" is an imputation of the perfect, personal righteousness of Christ to the sinner. The personal righteousness of one person cannot be imputed to another. Paul clearly shows that the righteousness possessed by the sinner (through faith in Christ, jwa) is attained through forgiveness or pardon. He quotes David as saying, "Blessed is the man whose iniquities are forgiven." Christ, the perfect human, the Divine victim, offered Himself as man's substitute on the cross to make possible man's forgiveness without vitiating Divine law. When the sinner accepts the offering of Christ through gospel obedience, he is pardoned, forgiven, hence is then righteous before God. He has sinned (hence stood condemned, jwa), but through forgiveness has become guiltless, therefore possesses "imputed righteousness."

Baptist preachers (and other Calvinists, jwa) suppose David's statement, "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin," to mean that the child of God can do any evil thing under the sun, and God will not regard him as being guilty whether he is ever penitent or not. The passage teaches nothing of the kind. God provides a plan for the forgiveness of His children as well as one for the forgiveness of the alien sinner. In no case does he propose to overlook and forgive unconditionally the sins of men (saints or aliens, jwa).

The Conditions of Remission of Sins

That Christ died for all, Paul says, is just as certain as the fact that all are dead (**2 Cor. 5:14**). The blessings of the sacrificial offering of Christ are made available to all, but they are not bestowed upon them unconditionally. Such would be tantamount to passing by sin without adequate punishment and would be subversive of the majesty, dignity, and power of Divine law, as much so as it would have been without the death of Christ. The sinner must see in Christ crucified the heinous character of sin, the awful penalty of transgression, and the glory and majesty of Divine law. In response to Heaven's overtures of mercy in Christ he must: Believe in Christ as the Son of God and the Savior of the world (the Divine victim) (**1 Cor. 15:1-3**); viewing the awful character of sin and its just penalty, he must be led to a state of deep penitence (**Acts 3:19**); he must make a public acknowledgment of Jesus as Lord (**Rom. 10:9,10**); and he must submit himself to His rulership by being buried with him by baptism into His death unto the remission of his sins (**Rom. 6:4; Acts 2:38**).

Corroborative of these facts are the following incidents from apostolic history. Cornelius the Gentile was told, "To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins" (**Acts 10:43**). You will note, this passage does not teach that the sinner receives remission of sins through faith only, but rather, he receives it through the name of Christ. In **verse 48**, Peter commands them "to be baptized in the name of the Lord." The Jews in Solomon's porch were told, "Repent and be converted that your sins may be blotted out . . ." (**Acts 3:19**). Believers on the day of Pentecost were told, "Repent and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins" (**Acts 2:38**).

No person can consistently (or correctly, jwa) claim to be a child of God and enjoy the righteousness of God who has not complied with the Divine conditions of pardon. The assurance of our pardon (and a right standing with God, jwa) lies in the integrity of Divine promises. Hence, no person can have the assurance (of salvation, jwa) who has not met Divine conditions (upon which it is predicated, jwa). The child of God, having accepted Christ as his offering for sin (in primary gospel obedience, jwa) has Divine assurance of pardon for all sins committed after baptism into Christ (**Gal. 3:27**) upon the conditions of repentance, confession, and prayer (**Acts 8:13-23; 1 John 1:9**).

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What is Wrong With "Exclusive?"

By Aubrey Belue

A sad reality in our current political and religious world is that we are being constantly drawn into a condition of shared mediocrity.

The main pillar of a communist state is the mandated sharing according to ability, and receiving according to need – the ultimate consequence of which is to remove the incentive to work for what you have, both on the part of the worker, and the "receiver". Only the extremely naïve refuse to acknowledge the relationship between the two.

Socially and religiously, this goal is accomplished through the denigrating of "exceptionalism". More and more, we seek to be "like the nations around us," and find a common ground based on meaningless banalities. Individual achievement and excellence are minimized, and it is no longer politically correct to praise victory and face the reality of defeat. (unless it can be done without the winner receiving greater praise than the loser, or the loser feeling the sting of failure).

Borrowing from the political and social "multiculturalism" which promotes the "advantages" of diversity, the religious goal now is "inter-faith interaction", and a passivity toward distinctions in doctrine and practice. In other words, in the name of "unity", anything goes!

BUT:

GOD IS EXCLUSIVE – there is only ONE!—
Eph 4:3-6

And He is not a "generic" god, to be addressed as Allah, Buddha, or some "new age" caricature of Jehovah.

THE BIBLE IS EXCLUSIVE – It is the ONLY source of divine revelation. —**2 Tim 3:16,17**

And it should not be confused with, or relegated to an equal status with other so-called writings. The

ONE God says all He wants to say in it, and condemns these counterfeits.

THE CHURCH IS EXCLUSIVE – There is ONLY ONE body —**Eph 1:22,23**

And it is not intended as an "umbrella" under which many diverse groups serve according to their unique view of truth..It is identified by its relationship to God's truth – and truth is EXCLUSIVE!

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE IS EXCLUSIVE – The ONLY life is one where the gate is "strait", and the way is "narrow" – **Matt 7:13,14**

AND,

HEAVEN IS EXCLUSIVE -- **Rev 21:27** "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."

Me? I don't work at finding "middle ground" with the world, it will not work! (**2 Cor 6:14-18**)

