

# Why We Teach Expository Preaching?

SEBTS Outlook Magazine (Fall 2005) by Dr. Danny Akin

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## 7 Essential Reasons by Daniel Akin

### Problem

- Biblical exposition is unimportant to those who advocate liberal theologies. Once your theology jettisons biblical inerrancy there naturally follows no commitment to exposition of the Word.
- Evangelicals claim inerrancy and infallibility but how they handle God's word often relays a different message whether intended or not. Types of sermons that do not let the substance of the text direct the structure and flow of the sermon seem to be implying that the Holy Spirit should have packaged the Bible differently.

### Definition of Expository Preaching:

*“Expository preaching is text-driven preaching that honors the truth of the Scripture as it was given by the Holy Spirit. Discovering the God-inspired meaning through historical-grammatical-theological investigation and interpretation, the preacher, by means of engaging and compelling proclamation, explains, illustrates and applies the meaning of the biblical text in submission to, and in the power of, the Holy Spirit, preaching for a verdict of changed lives.”*

### Key Elements of this definition:

1. Text-Driven
2. Honors original intent of the author
3. Sound exegesis- grammatical, historical, theological investigation & interpretation
4. Discipline / planned proclamation- explain, illustrate, apply
5. Holy Spirit-empowered
6. Purpose driven- changed lives / acquiring knowledge is not the end goal
7. Glorifies God by honoring His Word
8. Exalts Christ- Spirit empowered preaching always exalts Christ
9. Trinitarian Focus-Text-driven preaching will reveal God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit.

## **7 Reasons for Teaching Expository Preaching [Memory Acronym--I DO THAT]**

1. **Interpretation**- Interpret the text with sound hermeneutical integrity (historical, grammatical, and theological investigation). Allow your *exegesis to drive your theology*. Let your theology be shaped by Scripture and not the reverse. Two questions to ask of the text in proper order:
  1. What does this text say about God?
  2. What does this text say about fallen humanity?

This approach will keep you focused on the real hero of the bible—Jesus Christ. Exegetical theology fleshed out in expository preaching is a sure cure to spiritual anemia.

2. **Development for Comprehension**- Expository preaching will include effective illustrations, applications, explanations and exhortations.

Illustrations- Windows that help our audience see clearly into the house of the sermon.

Application- Addresses the action that needs to take place. 1. What do I want my people to know? 2. What do I want my people to do?

Exhortation- Addresses the will / call people to action / challenge them.

3. **Original Audience Understanding**- The text can never mean today what it never meant then. A preacher's task is to discover the meaning for the original audience and then cross this meaning (truth) over to the contemporary audience understanding that the meaning is one (but) the applications are many.
4. **Text-Driven Preaching**- Expository preaching allows the Scripture text to determine both the substance and the structure of the message. Pastors should reject methods that superimpose upon the text. For example, Harry Emerson Fosdick- "What Is The Matter With Preaching" (1928) emphasized beginning with the audience's felt needs.
5. **Holy Spirit Empowered**- Desire people at the end of the proclamation to say- "What a great God"! The Holy Spirit is to be called on throughout the preparation and proclamation process. [John 16:14]- "***He will glorify Me.***" "*Call it what you will, preaching that does not exalt, magnify and glorify the Lord Jesus is not Christian preaching.*" We are to be ***Jesus-intoxicated heralds*** by virtue of the indwelling and filling of the Holy Spirit."
6. **Authorial Intent**- A preacher's goal is to honor the Word by honoring the author's intentions, which ultimately are the intentions of God. Haddon Robinson states- "*When a preacher fails to preach the Scriptures, he abandons his authority. He confronts his hearers no longer with a word from God but only another word from men.*"
7. **Transformed Lives**- In addition to glorifying God, this is always an ultimate goal of sound expository preaching. Therefore, it is important to not only explain the truth, but also to apply it. Moreover, it is important to discern how best to preach or communicate the truth in order to capture the minds and hearts of the people. "***What you say is more important than how you say it, but how you say it has never been more important.***" Implement a sound introduction, incorporate Aristotle's 3 Cannon's of rhetoric, and exegete both the text and the audience in helping relate God's truths with relevance.

1. Logos (what) Reason / Word
2. Ethos (who) Integrity / Character
3. Pathos (how) Emotion / Passion

**I**- Interpretation- Hermeneutical integrity

**D**- Development for comprehension

**O**- Original Audience

**T**- Text-Driven Preaching

**H**- Holy Spirit- empowered

**A**- Authorial Intent

**T**- Transformed Lives