

PREACHING TO THE HEART

Tim Keller
Ockenga Preaching Series, 2006

Tuesday April 4

Intro to Preaching to the Heart

Personal history-- Expository, revival/renewal, redemptive-historical, culturally engaged/evangelistic.

1. The heart in the Bible.

2. The heart, Jonathan Edwards, and preaching.

3. The purpose of the sermon. The goal of our preaching is not just to make the truth *clear*, but beyond that to also make the truth *real*.

4. Biblical evidence.

5. Preaching and the imagination.

.....Without being legalistic (or relativistic)

1. The gospel vs moral conformity.

2. The gospel vs self-discovery.

3. Emphasizing both holiness and love for a rich concept of grace.

4. The importance of identifying *three* approaches to God, not two.

Religion

"I obey--therefore I'm accepted"

Motivation is based on fear and insecurity.

I obey God in order to get *things* from God.

When circumstances in my life go wrong, I am angry at God or myself, since I believe, like Job's friends, that anyone who is good deserves a comfortable life.

When I am criticized I am furious or devastated because it is critical that I think of myself as a 'good person.' Threats to that self-image must be destroyed at all costs.

My prayer consists largely of petition and it only heats up when I am in a time of need. My main purpose in prayer is control of the environment.

My self-view swings between two poles. If and when I am living up to my standards, I feel confident, but then I am prone to be proud and unsympathetic to failing people. If and when I am not living up to standards, I feel humble but not confident--I feel like a failure.

My identity and self-worth are based mainly on how hard I work, or how moral I am--and so I *must* look down on those I perceive as lazy or immoral. I disdain and feel superior to 'the Other.'

Gospel

"I'm accepted--therefore I obey"

Motivation based on grateful joy.

I obey God to get *God*--to delight and resemble him.

When circumstances in my life go wrong I struggle, but I know all my punishment fell on Jesus and that while he may allow this for my training, he will exercise his Fatherly love within my trial.

When I am criticized I struggle, but it is not critical for me to think of myself as a 'good person.' My identity is not built on my record or my performance but on God's love for me in Christ. I can take criticism. That's how I became a Christian.

My prayer life consists of generous stretches of praise and adoration. My main purpose is fellowship with him.

My self-view is not based on an view of my self as a moral achiever. In Christ I am *simul iustus et peccator*--simultaneously sinful and lost yet accepted in Christ. I am so bad he *had* to die for me and I am so loved he was *glad* to die for me. This leads me to deeper and deeper humility and confidence at the same time. Neither swaggering nor sniveling.

My identity and self-worth is centered on the one who died for his enemies, who was excluded from the city for me. I am saved by sheer grace. So I *can't* look down on those who believe or practice something different from me. Only by grace I am what I am. I've no inner need to win arguments.

Since I look to my own pedigree or performance for my spiritual acceptability, my heart manufactures idols. It may be my talents, my moral record, my personal discipline, my social status, etc. I *have* to have them so they serve as my main hope, meaning, happiness, security, and significance, whatever I say I believe about God.

I have many good things in my life--family, work, spiritual disciplines, etc. But none of these good things are ultimate things to me. None of them are things I absolutely *have* to have them, so there is a limit to how much anxiety, bitterness, and despondency they can inflict on me when they are threatened and lost.