

PREACHING IN THE 21ST CENTURY

MIN502 – Sunset Graduate School
Short-Course Intensive



ABOUT SUNSET GRADUATE SCHOOL:

- Graduate School History
- Present Leadership
- Academic Offerings
- The Future of Sunset Graduate School

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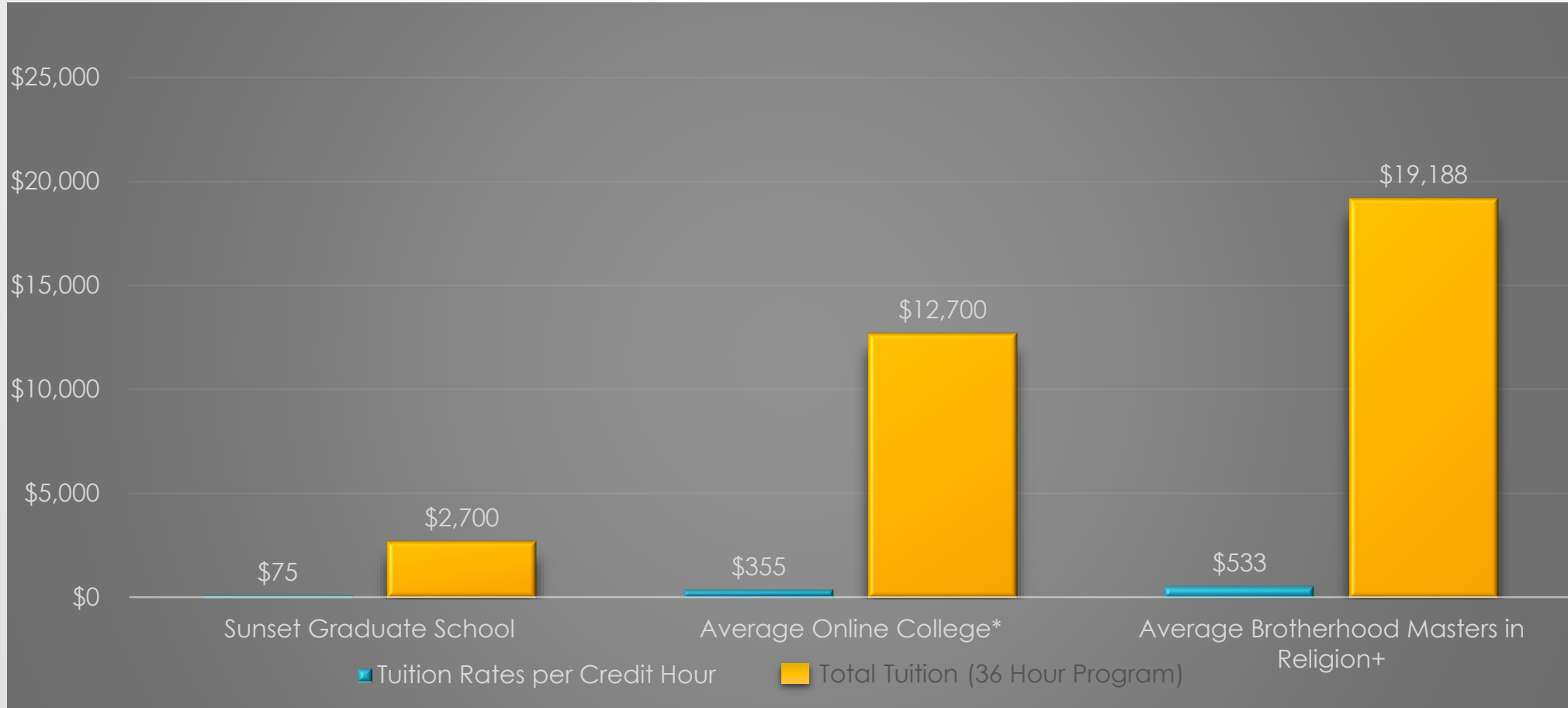
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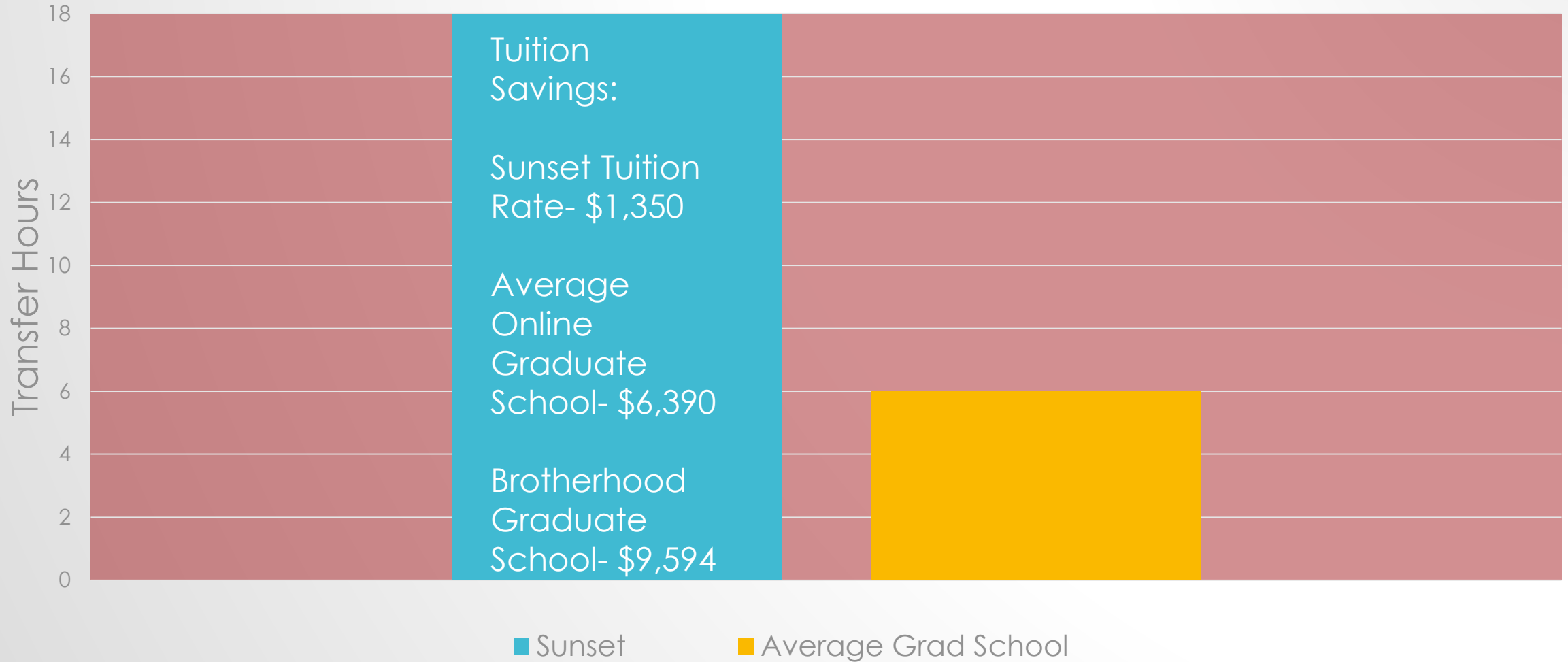
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ADVANTAGES OF SUNSET GRADUATE SCHOOL: TUITION



- http://learn.org/articles/What_is_the_Average_Cost_of_Tuition_Per_Credit_Hour_for_an_Online_University.html
- + Average determined based upon the tuition rates of five prominent schools among Churches of Christ (ACU, OCU, Harding, Lipscomb, and Faulkner)

Advantages of Sunset Graduate School: TRANSFERS



THE NEED FOR PRACTICAL TRAINING

- The Church in the U.S. is in desperate need of preachers
- Fewer men desire the ministry (especially pulpit ministry)
- There is a negative stigma concerning preaching among many members of the church
- Strong members dissuade their sons from ministry
- 50% of preachers leave the ministry within 5 years
- Churches are filled with former preachers

THE THEOLOGY OF PREACHING

THEOLOGY OF PREACHING: A NOBLE CALLING

- Of all vocations, there is no calling as noble as that of a preacher:

Romans 10:14-15

ROMANS 10:14-15

¹⁴ How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? ¹⁵ And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written:

“How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace,
Who bring glad tidings of good things!”

THEOLOGY OF PREACHING: A NOBLE CALLING

- Of all vocations, there is no calling as noble as that of a preacher:

Romans 10:14-15

- The responsibility and honor of being the “spokesman of God” is profound:

1 Thessalonians 2:10-13

1 THESSALONIANS 2:10-13

¹⁰ You *are* witnesses, and God *also*, how devoutly and justly and blamelessly we behaved ourselves among you who believe; ¹¹ as you know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father *does* his own children, ¹² that you would walk worthy of God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.

¹³ For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed *it* not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe.

THEOLOGY OF PREACHING: A NOBLE CALLING

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1 Thessalonians 2:10-13

- The work of ministry yields eternal results like no other vocation and therefore requires great care and devotion:

James 3:1-2

JAMES 3:1-2

My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment. ² For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he *is* a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body.

“TIP OF THE SPEAR” 27:30-43:05



THEOLOGY OF PREACHING: A CRUCIAL CALLING

- Preaching is God's intended vehicle through which truth is transmitted to this world. No ecclesial philosophy which de-emphasizes preaching can be consistent with God's plan, regardless of culture!
- The duties of the evangelist are therefore a great responsibility. We guard the truth, exalt His will, and express God's love to mankind.

2 Timothy 4:1-5

2 TIMOTHY 4:1-5

I charge *you* therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: ² Preach the word! Be ready in season *and* out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. ³ For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, *because* they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; ⁴ and they will turn *their* ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables. ⁵ But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

THEOLOGY OF PREACHING: A CRUCIAL CALLING

- Our challenge as preachers is therefore sobering and thrilling: to be God's spokesman – communicating His will in order to bring mankind closer to God.

- This responsibly was aptly expressed by Karl Barth:

“What are you doing, you man, with the word of God on your lips? Upon what grounds do you assume the role of mediator between heaven and earth? ...Who dares, who can, preach, knowing what preaching is?” (The Word of God and the Word of Man, p. 125, from B. Stephens).

THE MAN BEHIND THE PULPIT

MAN BEHIND THE PULPIT: A NOBLE CALLING

2 Corinthians 5:16-21

2 CORINTHIANS 5:16-21

- Therefore, from now on, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know *Him thus* no longer. ¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone *is* in Christ, *he is* a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. ¹⁸ Now all things *are* of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, ¹⁹ that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.
- ²⁰ Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore *you* on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God. ²¹ For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

MAN BEHIND THE PULPIT: A NOBLE CALLING

2 Corinthians 5:16-21

Ambassadors must speak as they have been directed as they are conscious that they REPRESENT the one who sent them.

Phillips Brooks said at the Yale lectures of 1877, “Preaching is the communication of truth through personality” (Stephens). This could be called “incarnational preaching,” in which the incarnation of Christ is reflected through us.

What an incredible responsibility! We are ambassadors of Christ. As we speak His words, our lives must reflect the words we speak!

MAN BEHIND THE PULPIT: HERALDS AND HEROES

As a herald of God's message, the preacher also has the responsibility to become a HERO for others to imitate.

People – especially young people – need positive role models. They need men who they can listen to AND imitate.

1 Thessalonians 1:5-8

1 THESSALONIANS 1:5-8

For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance, as you know what kind of men we were among you for your sake.

⁶ And you became followers of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit, ⁷ so that you became examples to all in Macedonia and Achaia who believe. ⁸ For from you the word of the Lord has sounded forth, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place. Your faith toward God has gone out, so that we do not need to say anything.

MAN BEHIND THE PULPIT: HERALDS AND HEROES

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The Thessalonians saw an example in the apostles and modeled that example.

Through his attitude and his walk, a preacher can be a powerful motivator for good. Adversely, he can also turn people away from his message through arrogance or hypocrisy.

MAN BEHIND THE PULPIT: REFLECTIONS OF CHRIST

1 Thessalonians 4:1-7

1 THESSALONIANS 4:1-7

Finally then, brethren, we urge and exhort in the Lord Jesus that you should abound more and more, just as you received from us how you ought to walk and to please God; ² for you know what commandments we gave you through the Lord Jesus.

For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality; ⁴ that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, ⁵ not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles who do not know God; ⁶ that no one should take advantage of and defraud his brother in this matter, because the Lord *is* the avenger of all such, as we also forewarned you and testified. ⁷ For God did not call us to uncleanness, but in holiness. ⁸ Therefore he who rejects *this* does not reject man, but God, who has also given us His Holy Spirit.

MAN BEHIND THE PULPIT: REFLECTIONS OF CHRIST

1 Thessalonians 4:1-7

The man of God must WALK (live) a holy path.

He must strive to rid himself of immorality, to sanctify himself, and live a life of HONOR.

He must aspire to be an example of EXCELLENCE in all things.

Daniel 6:1-6

DANIEL 6:1-5

It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom one hundred and twenty satraps, to be over the whole kingdom; ² and over these, three governors, of whom Daniel *was* one, that the satraps might give account to them, so that the king would suffer no loss. ³ Then this Daniel distinguished himself above the governors and satraps, because an excellent spirit *was* in him; and the king gave thought to setting him over the whole realm. ⁴ So the governors and satraps sought to find *some* charge against Daniel concerning the kingdom; but they could find no charge or fault, because he *was* faithful; nor was there any error or fault found in him. ⁵ Then these men said, “We shall not find any charge against this Daniel unless we find *it* against him concerning the law of his God.”

MAN BEHIND THE PULPIT: REFLECTIONS OF CHRIST

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Daniel 6:1-6

EXCELLENCE in WORK, SPIRIT, LOYALTY, and SERVICE to God!

The life we live is imperative to be a CREDIBLE WITNESS!

MAN BEHIND THE PULPIT: THE ROLE OF A SPIRITUAL FATHER

1 Corinthians 4:14-16

1 CORINTHIANS 4:14-16

I do not write these things to shame you, but as my beloved children I warn *you*. ¹⁵ For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet *you do not have* many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel. ¹⁶ Therefore I urge you, imitate me.

VIDEO: UNASHAMED OF IMITATING THE
FAITHFUL IN CHRIST (4:17-8:56)

MARKERS OF BIBLICAL PREACHING

MARKERS OF BIBLICAL PREACHING: A RIGHT MOTIVATION AND ATTITUDE

1 Corinthians 9:15-23

1 CORINTHIANS 9:15-22

But I have used none of these things, nor have I written these things that it should be done so to me; for it *would be* better for me to die than that anyone should make my boasting void. ¹⁶ For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for necessity is laid upon me; yes, woe is me if I do not preach the gospel! ¹⁷ For if I do this willingly, I have a reward; but if against my will, I have been entrusted with a stewardship. ¹⁸ What is my reward then? That when I preach the gospel, I may present the gospel of Christ without charge, that I may not abuse my authority in the gospel. ¹⁹ For though I am free from all *men*, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win the more; ²⁰ and to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews; to those *who are* under the law, as under the law, that I might win those *who are* under the law; ²¹ to those *who are* without law, as without law (not being without law toward God, but under law toward Christ), that I might win those *who are* without law; ²² to the weak I became as weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all *men*, that I might by all means save some. ²³ Now this I do for the gospel's sake, that I may be partaker of it with *you*.

MARKERS OF BIBLICAL PREACHING: A RIGHT MOTIVATION AND ATTITUDE

1 Corinthians 9:15-23

Preaching was not a career to Paul, it was a calling... the compelling of his inner man.

The “Why” of preaching is equally important as the “how.”

“I’ve looking into the eyes of too many... people, to ever be carefree again!” – Richard Rogers

“If you can do anything else – do it. If not, preach!” – Cline Paden

MARKERS OF BIBLICAL PREACHING: A RIGHT MOTIVATION AND ATTITUDE

"Many a morning have I stood on the porch of my house, and looking northward, have seen the smoke arise from villages that have never heard of Jesus Christ. I have seen, at different times, the smoke of a thousand villages—villages whose people are without Christ, without God, and without hope in the world"
David Livingstone

We must have the "fire in our bones," knowing that the truth is the only hope of mankind.

Romans 1:16-17

ROMANS 1:16-17

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. ¹⁷ For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."

MARKERS OF BIBLICAL PREACHING: BOLD TRUTH PROCLAIMED

1 Thessalonians 2:1-5

1 THESSALONIANS 2:1-5

For you yourselves know, brethren, that our coming to you was not in vain. ² But even after we had suffered before and were spitefully treated at Philippi, as you know, we were bold in our God to speak to you the gospel of God in much conflict. ³ For our exhortation *did* not come from error or uncleanness, nor was *it* in deceit. ⁴ But as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, even so we speak, not as pleasing men, but God who tests our hearts. ⁵ For neither at any time did we use flattering words, as you know, nor a cloak for covetousness—God *is* witness.

MARKERS OF BIBLICAL PREACHING: BOLD TRUTH PROCLAIMED

1 Thessalonians 2:1-5

Paul preached in BOLDNESS and HONESTY.

2 Timothy 4:3

2 TIMOTHY 4:3

Preach the word! Be ready in season *and* out of season.
Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and
teaching.

MARKERS OF BIBLICAL PREACHING: BOLD TRUTH PROCLAIMED

1 Thessalonians 2:1-5

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2 Timothy 4:3

Biblical preaching consists of three balanced elements:

- * REPROOF
- * REBUKE
- * EXHORTATION

Preaching that does not balance these, focusing only on one, is NOT BIBLICAL!

MARKERS OF BIBLICAL PREACHING: THE SPIRIT COMMUNICATED

When it comes to the attitude communicated through the pulpit, the old cliché could not be more true:

“People don’t care how much you know, until they know how much you care!”

Matthew 9:35-38

MATTHEW 9:35-38

Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people. ³⁶ But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd. ³⁷ Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. ³⁸ Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest."

MARKERS OF BIBLICAL PREACHING: COMPETENCE

It is assumed that biblical preaching will infuse the message with the TRUTH of GOD'S WORD. However, competent preaching is planned, coordinated, and well executed.

A competent pulpiteer will consider:

- * The Message – What is the text communication in its biblical and historical context?
- * The Audience – What factors impact their ability to listen?
- * The Messenger – How he is uniquely suited to communicate the subject?

MARKERS OF BIBLICAL PREACHING: OBJECTIVE OF THE SERMON

When crafting a sermon, what objective should the preacher have in mind? What does he want to accomplish?

INFORMATION? Preaching must inform. Listeners cannot be influenced without biblical truth, but, is information the truest OBJECTIVE of preaching?

Acts 2:36-38

ACTS 2:36-38

“Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.” ³⁷ Now when they heard *this*, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Men *and* brethren, what shall we do?” ³⁸ Then Peter said to them, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

MARKERS OF BIBLICAL PREACHING: OBJECTIVE OF THE SERMON

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Acts 2:36-38

MOTIVATION! People masterfully communicated volumes of imperative information, but he did so in order to provoke the response of verse 37.

The primary aim of preaching is to motivate listeners to action. Men who only inform their audience are NOT PREACHERS, they are merely TEACHERS!!!

MARKERS OF BIBLICAL PREACHING: PRACTICAL COMMUNICATION

What is the most biblical form of preaching? Is it expository, textual, topical, historical, biographical? Is biblical preaching filled with dozens of texts or centered on one?

Homiletical philosophies differ in regard to their answers.

However, one thing is abundantly true – We **MUST**
COMMUNICATE IN WAYS THAT LISTENERS CAN GET THE MOST
FROM OUR MESSAGES!!!

Is it better for listeners to remember one idea for a week or ten for an hour? Is it better for them to be impressed with the speaker's use of the text, or remember a story for months?

MARKERS OF BIBLICAL PREACHING: PRACTICAL COMMUNICATION

Biblical preach could rightly be defined as following a New Testament example:

PETER – Peter worked his way through Old Testament passages in Acts 2, building a rational case for Christ's identity, sacrifice for sin, and Israel's sin. He convicted his audience powerfully.

PAUL – Paul preached on Mars Hill, blending references to their cultural understandings with rational observations to make the Case for Christ. He also saw marvelous results from his preaching.

JESUS – Jesus' sermons were packed with relevant, down-to-earth illustrations that his listeners understood and related with. He was the first "story-telling" preacher! No one can question His results.

UNIQUE CHALLENGES OF THE 21ST CENTURY

UNIQUE CHALLENGES OF THE 21ST CENTURY: CHANGING ETHICS

Formerly Prominent Outlooks:

Utilitarianism focuses upon the consequences for ALL those affected rather than simply the individual engaged in the action itself. Self-Interest is not a concern, but rather a democratic concern for everyone, or more accurately, the greatest number of people. “The ends justify the means.”

Altruism is the more giving cousin of utilitarianism. This moral theory considers the self-interest of everyone other than the person engaged in the action.

UNIQUE CHALLENGES OF THE 21ST CENTURY: CHANGING ETHICS

Formerly Prominent Outlooks:

Egoism is self-interest... what is good for the agent performing the action.

The Philosophy of the Day:

Relativism is the opposite of *objectivism*, in that it asserts that there is **no objective right or wrong**. Morality is therefore *relative*, in that it changes with different individuals or cultures. Therefore, there are no set standards of right and wrong; NOTHING is INHERENTLY good or evil. There are two common forms of relativism: *individual relativism* and *cultural relativism*.

UNIQUE CHALLENGES OF THE 21ST CENTURY: AN AGE OF SKEPTICISM

Skeptics often point to the biblical revelation about God as a “proof” that the Bible was devised by men. They accuse the Bible of being unethical.

They point to:

* Seemingly Immoral Permissiveness. ***Exodus 21:7-9***

EXODUS 21:7-9

“And if a man sells his daughter to be a female slave, she shall not go out as the male slaves do. ⁸ If she does not please her master, who has betrothed her to himself, then he shall let her be redeemed. He shall have no right to sell her to a foreign people, since he has dealt deceitfully with her. ⁹ And if he has betrothed her to his son, he shall deal with her according to the custom of daughters.

UNIQUE CHALLENGES OF THE 21ST CENTURY: AN AGE OF SKEPTICISM

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* Seemingly Immoral Permissiveness. ***Exodus 21:7-9***

* What is Interpreted as an “Evil” Nature in God.

2 Sam. 24:1-4, 10-15

2 SAMUEL 24:1-4

Again the anger of the LORD was aroused against Israel, and He moved David against them to say, "Go, number Israel and Judah." ² So the king said to Joab the commander of the army who was with him, "Now go throughout all the tribes of Israel, from Dan to Beersheba, and count the people, that I may know the number of the people." ³ And Joab said to the king, "Now may the LORD your God add to the people a hundred times more than there are, and may the eyes of my lord the king see *it*. But why does my lord the king desire this thing?" ⁴ Nevertheless the king's word prevailed against Joab and against the captains of the army. Therefore Joab and the captains of the army went out from the presence of the king to count the people of Israel...

2 SAMUEL 24:10-15

And David's heart condemned him after he had numbered the people. So David said to the LORD, "I have sinned greatly in what I have done; but now, I pray, O LORD, take away the iniquity of Your servant, for I have done very foolishly."¹¹ Now when David arose in the morning, the word of the LORD came to the prophet Gad, David's seer, saying, ¹²"Go and tell David, 'Thus says the LORD: "I offer you three *things*; choose one of them for yourself, that I may do *it* to you."¹³ So Gad came to David and told him; and he said to him, "Shall seven^[a] years of famine come to you in your land? Or shall you flee three months before your enemies, while they pursue you? Or shall there be three days' plague in your land? Now consider and see what answer I should take back to Him who sent me."¹⁴ And David said to Gad, "I am in great distress. Please let us fall into the hand of the LORD, for His mercies are great; but do not let me fall into the hand of man."¹⁵ So the LORD sent a plague upon Israel from the morning till the appointed time. From Dan to Beersheba seventy thousand men of the people died.

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2 Sam. 24:1-4, 10-15

* Apparent Moral Double-Standards. ***1 Sam. 16:1-3***

1 SAMUEL 16:1-3

Now the LORD said to Samuel, “How long will you mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? Fill your horn with oil, and go; I am sending you to Jesse the Bethlehemite. For I have provided Myself a king among his sons.” ² And Samuel said, “How can I go? If Saul hears *it*, he will kill me.” But the LORD said, “Take a heifer with you, and say, ‘I have come to sacrifice to the LORD.’” ³ Then invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do; you shall anoint for Me the one I name to you.”

UNIQUE CHALLENGES OF THE 21ST CENTURY: EMERGING GENERATIONS

Two generations are coming to prominence in the 21st century. Each have distinct ethical and philosophical perspectives.

Millennials: Born in the mid 1980s and 1990s, they are disenchanted with rational modernism. Characterized by education and a lack of challenges growing up, they embrace relativism and spirituality while rejecting organized religion. They are motivated less by materialism than previous generations and often far less ambitious toward personal achievement. Raised by “helicopter parents.”

Homelanders: Born in the 2000s, the generation is less aggressive than their predecessors and less decisive. Raised by “lawnmower parents,” they struggle with self confidence and assertive decision making.

UNIQUE CHALLENGES OF THE 21ST CENTURY: RELATIONSHIP OVER RELIGION

Moralistic Therapeutic Deism, a term coined by Smith and Denton in their research for Notre Dame, describes, “an adherence to a do-good, feel-good spirituality that has little to do with the Triune God of Christian tradition and even less to do with loving Christ enough to follow him into the world.” MTD encourages religious motions with minimal commitment.

This may be why 64% of young people say that church attendance is optional. They can be “good,” and even “Christian,” without church.

Therefore, Jesus can be adored, while His church is despised!

UNIQUE CHALLENGES OF THE 21ST CENTURY: DESIRE FOR AUTHENTICITY

Millennials treasure authenticity. To be “real” is much more important than being “right.” This does result in some positive Christian attributes:

- Unashamed transparency
- Selfless service
- Relationships across social barriers
- Openness toward the mystical

EFFECTIVE PROCLAMATION TO 21ST
CENTURY LISTENERS

VIDEO: FRANCIS CHAN – STANDING
ON GOD'S TRUTH

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION TO 21ST CENTURY LISTENERS: WRONG RESPONSES

How do we respond to this unfamiliar culture? We begin by observing what **MUST NOT** be done.

1. We Must Not Alter The Message! Rational truth must never be sacrificed to relativism. ***John 8:43-45***

JOHN 8:43-45

Why do you not understand My speech? Because you are not able to listen to My word. ⁴⁴ You are of *your* father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own *resources*, for he is a liar and the father of it. ⁴⁵ But because I tell the truth, you do not believe Me.

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION TO 21ST CENTURY LISTENERS: WRONG RESPONSES

How do we respond to this unfamiliar culture? We begin by observing what **MUST NOT** be done.

1. We Must Not Alter The Message! Rational truth must never be sacrificed to relativism. **John 8:43-45**
2. We Must Not Compromise the Importance of Preaching! Preaching remains God's chosen instrument to speak His truth.
3. We Must Not Resort to Fear in Preaching. Lashing back at this generation through the pulpit will not be effective.

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION TO 21ST CENTURY LISTENERS: WRONG RESPONSES

4. We Must Not Avoid Subjects That Challenge Present Mindsets.
5. We Must Not Make Contemporary Issues Our Axe to Grind.

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION TO 21ST CENTURY LISTENERS: AVOIDING POLITICS

American Christians struggle mightily to separate their faith from their nationalism. When this struggle impacts the pulpit, the church suffers.

Political polarization is exaggerated by the questioning of MOTIVES. We do not simply disagree, we do not understand how other can hold such a position, and nefarious motives are assigned.

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION TO 21ST CENTURY LISTENERS: ADDRESSING GENERATIONAL ISSUES

1 Thessalonians 4:1-7