The Authority of the Pastor

Class session for Introduction to Homiletics at Burmese Bible School

# One source of authority is the character of the preacher.

## Nine Secrets of Real Influence in the Pulpit -- #’s 1-3, 8 of the list relate to the character and person of the preacher.

Summarized in *The Heart of the Yale Lectures* by Batsell Barrett Baxter 1947

1. The most vital element in the persuasion of a congregation is the person who stands in the pulpit. In turn, the paramount qualification of the man in the pulpit is his Christian character. Pp 288,289
2. In order to achieve his maximum effectiveness (and in addition to the possession of a genuine Christian character), the preacher must be sincere, must be earnest, must be original, must be well informed and studious, must possess a strong, healthy body, and must possess a good mind. P. 291
3. The preacher must be confident in his own ability, yet not conceited, must have a high respect and genuine love for his audience, and must possess a strong liking for all of the work of the ministry. P. 293
4. In order to persuade men, the preacher must possess a thorough understanding of his own congregation and of men in general. P. 298

# One source of authority comes from properly understanding the power and heritage of the ministry God has given to the pastor and the pulpit.

1. At the act of ordination, the General Superintendent says, “Take authority to preach the Word of God, to administer the holy sacraments, and to perform the duties of an ordained minister in the Church.” (Discipline of the Wesleyan Church, The) These words recognize that God has given authority to his ministry and that the church is passing a portion of that authority on to you. (Mt. 10:1; Mk 3:15; 6:7; Lk 10:18,19; 2 Cor. 10:8,10; Tit 2:15; Rev. 12:10,11)
2. Every Christian has authority from Jesus, but as clergy we need to exemplify that authority too. (Matt. 28:18-20; 1 Peter 2:5,9; Rev.. 1:5,6)
3. There is an authority that comes simply because we speak God’s Word, which has authority. (Heb. 4:12) We stand in the heritage of those who have the privilege of speaking for God. It is our blessing to know that when we speak, God speaks to people through our words. (Jer. 1:6-12; 20:9; 23:28,29; Ezek. 3:14-17; Isa. 34:4,5; 50:4; Acts 3:25; 13:46; 18:11; 2 Cor. 2:17; 4:1,2; Col. 1:25; 1 Th. 2:13)
4. The privilege of the benediction is derived from the authority of Christ’s benediction and carries out God’s settled intention to bless his people. (Acts 20:32; 2 Thess. 2:16,17; 3:16; Rev. 22:21)

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|  | Event | Scripture | Conclusion |
|  | God in the garden: | Gen. 1:28 | God has a settled intention to bless his people! |
| God blessed Noah | Gen. 9:1 |
| Everyone to be blessed through Abraham | Gen 12:3 |
| Blessing Israel | Nu. 6:24-26 |
| Beatitudes | Mt 5:1-12 |
| Jesus blessed believers | Jn 20:29 |
| Jesus as he ascended | Lu 24:51 |
| Bible ends with two blessings | Rev. 22:7,14 |

1. Not only did the early apostles exercise spiritual authority but they urged the next generation of leaders such as Timothy and Titus to use authority as well. (1 Tim. 1:3; 4:11; 5:1; 5:20; 6:17,18; 2 Tim. 2:2; 4:2; Titus 1:5; 2:15)
2. Authority to administer the sacraments. (Lu. 22:19; 1 Cor. 11:23-26)

# One source of authority is doing the work of preaching well.

## Nine Secrets of Real Influence in the Pulpit -- #’s 4-7,9,10 relate to the sermon itself.

Summarized in *The Heart of the Yale Lectures* by Batsell Barrett Baxter 1947

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1. In order to reach its peak of effectiveness, the sermon must be presented in a style which is clear, concrete, interesting, original, and coherent. Sensationalism and elegance are undesirable elements. The style may profit from the judicious use of appropriate illustrations. Its language must be simple, familiar, and precise. P. 294
2. After thorough preparation, the sermon is most effective when delivered extemporaneously. P. 295
3. The order of service, and the physical setting in which the sermon is delivered must be planned so as to aid the sermon in accomplishing its purpose. P. 295,296
4. The sermon must have a definite purpose, the selection of which is determined by the needs of the congregation. P. 296
5. The most effective approach to the audience is the one which begins with the preacher and audience ‘en rapport,’ which appeals judiciously both to the reason and to the emotions, which makes use of indirect rather than direct appeals, which is audience centered rather than subject-matter-centered, which is positive rather than negative, which appeals to man’s basic motives which repeats the chief elements to be grasped, and which includes the sparing use of humor. Pp. 299,300