



Philosophy of Ministry

Biblical Exposition

by Skip Heitzig

We place great emphasis on the exposition of Scripture and teaching the entire Bible chapter-by-chapter and verse-by-verse. We believe that the Spirit of God works through the Word of God in the hearts of the people of God. Exposition is more than merely speaking about the bible or from the Bible; it is the proclamation of the Bible itself. The work of the expositor is to determine what God has said in Scripture and then to convey it to God's people so that God's own voice is heard.

We believe that Bible exposition is inductive: directing the listener to the Bible's own truth without preconceived ideas. We believe that Bible exposition is exegetical: demanding that the pastor critically examine the text with accuracy and basing his message upon observable principles of interpretation.

Informal/ Relaxed Style

by Chuck Smith

Another distinctive characteristic of Calvary Chapel is our relaxed casual style. We don't get involved in a lot of spiritual hype. We don't try to motivate people carnally, and we aren't apt to shout at the congregation. I believe this stems from our belief and trust in Jesus Christ and in the Holy Spirit. We are of the belief that if the Lord doesn't build the house, they labor in vain who build it, so all of our hype and pressure aren't really going to do the job. We simply trust in the work of the Holy Spirit, and of Jesus Christ who is building His church as He said He would. If we have complete confidence that it's His church, that He's going to build it, and that He's going to do His job, then all I have to do is be faithful. I simply need to watch His work, and then the pressure isn't on me. I don't get all hyped or pressured because the work of God isn't my responsibility. It's not my church. It's His church. I believe that it's very important to remember this, because if you try to carry the load and bear the burden, you'll find that it's too great for you. You'll find yourself under pressure to create schemes and hypes, and then you begin to push and manipulate people. That isn't the Calvary Chapel style.

Calvary Chapels are minus the hype. We're not into the carnal pursuit of new programs or spiritual hype to try to appeal to people. It's the Word of God that we trust in, that we teach, that we rely on. It's the foundation upon which we are built. It's inexhaustible. There's no burnout with it. It just keeps going on and on and on.

For this reason, we have a relaxed, casual style that's reflected in our ministry. It's His church so we don't have to sweat it. We're not really into seminars on how to build a church, how to create a user-friendly church, or how to develop a five-year plan. Who knows if we'll even be here five years from now! Let's minister for today!

Servant Leadership

by Damian Kyle

One of the things the Lord has been pleased to bless in Calvary Chapel is its emphasis upon servant leadership. This is the conviction among its pastors that the churches we pastor do not exist to serve us, but that we are called to serve and lay our lives down for them.

Jesus taught that we are not to be like the rulers of the Gentiles who lord their power and authority over others, but rather that the way to greatness in the kingdom of God comes by being a servant. He declared Himself to be our example in this, "The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many" (Matthew 20:25-28).

Pastors who consider themselves to be too important to do anything needed in order to serve the flock entrusted to them reveal that they have come to think of themselves as more self-important than our Lord. As pastors, we cannot represent our "Servant" Lord without being servants ourselves. Pride, harshness, a sense of self-importance, or a dictatorial spirit is inconsistent with Jesus' example.

There are wonderful promises in God's Word for those who choose to live a life of servant leadership, including I Peter 5:5, "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble."

Christ Centered Worship
by Don McClure

Revelation 4:11 “Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.”

When the Lord created man in His image (Gen 1:26) we were created with the glorious capacity to be a reflection of the Lord Himself. We were created to literally share His life, His nature, His character, His love and joy and peace. Thus man at his highest identity is found as he shares his life with the Lord and the Lord shares His life with us. Thus, we were made to worship the Lord as He is so worthy to receive glory and honor and power as we have been made to bring him pleasure. And nothing brings more pleasure to man than when man is pleasing God.

In Calvary Chapel, we love offering ourselves to the Lord and worshiping and praising and rejoicing and resting in Jesus for all He has accomplished for us. We worship Him for what He has done in taking our sin on Himself and giving His life for us. And we worship Him forever living at the right hand of the Majesty on high making intercession for us and presenting us faultless. And we worship the Father and the Son and the Spirit for all they mean to us for the rest of eternity. Yes, worship is the precious gift God has given us.

God's Grace and Love
by Chuck Smith

Grace has been defined as God's unmerited favor. In contrasting grace, mercy and justice, I see that justice is getting what I deserve, mercy is not getting what I deserve, and grace is getting what I don't deserve. I don't deserve the blessing that He bestows daily on my life. In Newell's commentary on Romans 6 he has some great comments on grace, he declares that it is God acting freely, according to His own nature of love, with no promises or obligations to fulfill: and acting righteously in view of the cross it is uncaused in the recipient: its cause lies wholly in the giver. It cannot act where there is cause or desert, it does not help, it is absolute, it does it all. Thus our proper attitude should be, to consent to be loved, though we are aware of how unworthy we are of that love; to refuse to make resolutions and vows to be better, for that is to trust in our flesh; to expect to be blessed, though we know how unworthy we are of those blessings. Satan would have me to focus on myself, and when I do, I can see many reasons for God to withhold His blessings, but when I focus on His grace, I expect and receive abundant blessings that never stop.

Integrity and Morality in Leadership
by David Rosales

When Paul wrote to Timothy concerning the qualifications of an pastor, he made it clear that a pastor was to be “able to teach” (I Timothy 3:2). The question is: was Paul only saying that one of the qualifications of a pastor is that he be able to verbally communicate theology, clearly? If that is the case, then even non-believers who read prepared scripts could qualify as a teacher of God's Word, and thus become a pastor. Many church pulpits are occupied by such men.

Teaching the Bible is different than teaching someone how to read, or write, or to do basic math. It is the communication of spiritual truth, and God's Word is to be communicated by those who have personally partaken in the transforming power of the message that they now give.

Paul said that pastors are to be “examples to the believers” (I Timothy 4:12), because the Word of God is lived out amongst people, and pastors of all people are “walking sermons” before the world, and the churches that they lead.

This means that, as ministers of the gospel, pastors should have lives that clearly line up with scripture, and as such a pastor's life should be earmarked by integrity and moral purity.

Sadly, the gospel message has often been undermined, not only by obvious heretics, but also through ministers who have not “lived out” the gospel and have, by moral failures of every kind, done damage to the message of salvation and transformation that we find in its message.

In Calvary Chapel ministries, we desire to be men who not only talk the message, but also walk the message. We take Paul's admonition to Titus to heart, where Paul instructed Titus to “in all things show himself to be a pattern of good works; in doctrine showing integrity, reverence (and) incorruptibility” (Titus 2:7).

As a group of men birthed by the Jesus Movement, it is our desire to keep Jesus first, to honor His name, and to keep ourselves “unspotted from the world” (James 1:27). Because this is true, we place a high emphasis on not just giving out, but living out the gospel before the world, our family, and those whom God has entrusted to our care.

As Calvary Chapel pastors, we know that the ministry is not a job, a fast-track to fame, a place to show off our talents, or something we try to do because we are not skilled enough to do something else. It is a calling, something that we must do because we long for nothing else. And this longing to minister is undergirded by a hunger to please God, and a desire to walk worthy of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

We are aware that God has entrusted the care of His sheep to us, and because we take such a charge seriously, we guard our hearts, and we minister with integrity, and moral purity.

Equipping the Saints

by Mike Macintosh

When Don McClure, Tom Stipe and I were asked by Chuck Smith to become interns at Calvary Chapel, we were thrilled. The crowds were gigantic and we were thrown into the ocean of ministry. The three of us were at every Bible Study that Pastor Chuck taught, plus we each had two or three studies going on at the same time either on campus or in homes.

Boy, we were blessed to learn deep and rich truths from Pastor Chuck as we sat and listened chapter by chapter and verse by verse through the Bible every Sunday, Monday and Thursday evening and Sunday mornings as well. Two of the early books we heard, along with all the church goers, we learned the depth of Romans. We knew we would die to ourselves, pick up our cross, and follow Jesus. As a side note, I hear of “stars” or “Christian celebrity teachers” having their names and conferences promoted. Pastor Chuck never has or would draw attention to himself. We were not following a man, but someone who always pointed us to Jesus.

We learned about the Walk of the Spirit and having a renewed mind. The book of Ephesians lit me up as I learned that I was God’s workmanship. And that God gives gifts to men, each of us has a gift of a measure of faith. When we learned that Jesus gave men gifts to serve His people, and I think the “Equipping of the Saints” happened with great fervor among us interns.

When I arrived in San Diego, not knowing anyone, not having any cash or savings, my wife Sandy and I arrived by faith. From the beginning I incorporated the things the Holy Spirit had taught me at Calvary Chapel Costa Mesa. Pastor Chuck’s ministry is easily defined. And, it is that definition that I have used to plant new churches and start new para church organizations, to send people all around the world for God’s glory.

Here is the simplicity that I minister and have learned by watching Pastor Chuck serve the Lord:

Win people to Jesus

Disciple that person in Jesus

Send that person for Jesus

Evangelism

by Don McClure

The word evangelism simply means “the spreading of the good news of Jesus Christ by personal witness or public preaching.” Or “a zealous advocacy of a cause.”

Calvary Chapel was born in revival. It’s very birth and growth was because Jesus Christ gave himself for us on the cross, that He might give Himself to us through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, that He might live His life through us sharing the good news. We believe in and love sharing the good news of Jesus and do it with zeal.

Jesus said “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature” (Mark 16:15).

Jesus also said “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world” (Matthew 28:19-20).

And Jesus said “ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

Thus, our Lord Jesus gave to the Body of Christ the incredible privilege and blessing and responsibility and call to go into all the world and share the glorious news that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners and to make disciples.

A foundational aspect of Calvary Chapel ministries is the teaching of the Word of God. After His resurrection, Jesus emphasized the teaching of the Word to Peter when He asked him “Lovest thou me” which Peter affirmed, and then Jesus told him “then feed My sheep.” And the result of good teaching is evangelism. As Pastor Chuck Smith often said “Healthy sheep beget sheep.” And that is evangelism to us.

Evangelism first reveals itself primarily through the Christian's life. Paul says that Christians are "living epistles, known and read of all men" (II Corinthians 3:2). Thus, the great majority of Christians through history have come through the personal witness of Christians.

Calvary Chapels as churches love all manner of public preaching of the gospel, desiring to reach all we can with the good news of Jesus saving us. Thus, there is also many varied methods of preaching Christ; in public open air evangelistic meetings, missionary outreaches around the world and through many media forms. Our desire is "to know Him and make Him known."

Eschatology

by Jack Hibbs

Calvary Chapel Association holds to the Pretribulational Premillennial interpretation of Biblical Eschatology. This view anticipates a literal fulfillment of yet unfulfilled prophecies just as previously fulfilled prophecies have been literally fulfilled (Matthew 5:17-18).

The Pretribulational Premillennial understanding encourages the most obvious and literal interpretation of the scriptures and has proven to be the most reliable and historically accurate form of interpretation of prophetic events (Matthew 24:25, John 14:29).

Pretribulational Premillennial teaches that before the establishment of the one thousand year reign of Christ known as the millennium (Revelation 20:6). Jesus Christ will first remove His church, the bride of Christ, from earth prior to the advent of the Antichrist and the tribulation period of the end times (John 14:1-3; I Thessalonians 4:13-18; II Thessalonians 2:7-8; Titus 2:13).

The Pretribulational Premillennial view espouses the Doctrine of Imminency which delineates between the sudden and joyous rapture of the church (Luke 21:36; I Corinthians 15:50-58; Revelation 3:10) from the global and predictable Second Coming of Christ with the church in judgment (Revelation 19:11-16).

Male Leadership in the Pulpit

by Sandy Adams

Gender matters to God. Masculinity and femininity are not just social constructs. When God created mankind He did so male and female.

And God uses gender to teach important spiritual truths about His relationship with His people. The Bible reveals God as masculine, and His people as feminine. This is why in the Church and in the home, God wants our relationships between the sexes to mirror His relationship with His people. Like Christ, men should lovingly lead – and like the Church, women should willingly follow.

I Timothy 1-3 sets out four qualifications for elders and pastors: moral character, giftedness to teach, divine calling, and male gender. God uses women in strategic ways, but pastoral authority and the teaching of doctrine in the church is reserved for qualified men.

In Calvary Chapel, we have been blessed with a wonderful example of male leadership. Pastor Chuck has been a spiritual father to thousands of young people. He has been a model of biblical masculinity – strong yet gracious. A high priority in the Calvary Chapel philosophy is to help all our men be the servant leader God desires and their family deserves.

Baptism of the Holy Spirit/Gifts

by Malcolm Wild

The task of reaching the world with gospel of Jesus Christ is an impossible one. Impossible, that is, without the equipping and enabling of the Holy Spirit. We acknowledge that to live for and serve the Lord we need the dynamic that the Lord Jesus imparts through the Baptism with the Holy Spirit. He has called us, commissioned us, and promised to equip us (Acts 1:8). The promise of this power (Dýnamis) is a gift for every believer (Acts 2:39) subsequent to the Holy Spirit's work of regeneration and to be received by faith as a separate and distinct work of grace to that of salvation. The Lord has also promised to equip His servants with spiritual gifts for the work of the ministry (I Corinthians 12:4-11). These gifts are for all believers to experience as the Lord wills and did not cease to be manifest at the end of the apostolic age.