



From Pew to Pulpit: A Beginner's Guide to Preaching

Clifton F. Guthrie

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A down-to-earth, practical introduction to the ins and outs of preaching for lay preachers, bivocational pastors, and others newly arrived in the pulpit.

Recent years have seen a considerable increase in the amount of financial resources required to support a full-time pastor in the local congregation. In addition, large numbers of full-time, seminary trained clergy are retiring, without commensurate numbers of new clergy able to take their place. As a result of these trends, a large number of lay preachers and bivocational pastors have assumed the principal responsibility for filling the pulpit week by week in local churches. Most of these individuals, observes Clifton Guthrie, can draw on a wealth of life experiences, as well as strong intuitive skills in knowing what makes a good sermon, having listened to them much of their lives. What they often don't bring to the pulpit, however, is specific, detailed instruction in the how-tos of preaching. That is precisely what this brief, practical guide to preaching has to offer.

Written with the needs of those for whom preaching is not their sole or primary occupation in mind, it begins by emphasizing what every preacher brings to the pulpit: an idea of what makes a sermon particularly moving or memorable to them. From there the book moves into short chapters on choosing an appropriate biblical text or sermon topic, learning how to listen to one's first impressions of what a text means, moving from text or topic to the sermon itself while keeping the listeners needs firmly in mind, making thorough and engaging use of stories in the sermon, and delivering with passion and conviction. The book concludes with helpful suggestions for resources, including Bibles, commentaries, other print resources and websites.

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