

# The Purpose of Preaching

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by David Padfield

**M**any great sermons are recorded in the Bible, such as the Sermon on the Mount (**Matt. 5, 6 & 7**), Stephen's history of the Jewish nation (**Acts 7**), Paul's address on Mars' Hill (**Acts 17**), and Peter's first sermon under the new covenant (**Acts 2**). Men today have very little respect for preaching — maybe it's because they don't know the purpose of preaching. Why do we preach?

## To Explain The Scriptures

This sounds so simple, yet it is often forgotten by men today. In **Acts 7**, one-third of Stephen's sermon was from the Old Testament. His audience knew what the verses said, but he had to explain what they meant and how it applied to them.

When Philip preached in **Acts 8**, he explained **Isaiah 53**. The eunuch wanted to know *"of whom does the prophet say this, of himself or of some other man?"* (**Acts 8:34**).

After Artaxerxes released the Israelites, Ezra, a scribe and priest of God, read the *"Book of the Law of Moses"* to the people. With aid from the Levites, Ezra *"helped the people to understand the law"* (**Neh. 8:7**).

*"So they read distinctly from the book, in the law of God; and they gave the sense, and helped chem to understand the reading"* (**Neh. 9:8**).

## Hold Up The Scriptures As Light

In Apostolic sermons no appeal was ever made to modern theological thought. Men of God simply proclaimed God's word. Jesus said, *"You shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free"* (**John 8:32**).

The apostles never claimed an emotional experience as the basis for salvation. They presented God as having revealed His will to man (**1 Corinthians 2:6-13**). This revealed will was placed into written form, *"by which, when you read, you may understand"* (**Ephesians 3:4**).

## Disturb People In Error

Peter did not soft peddle the truth in Acts 2. He accused his audience of killing the Son of God. As a

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