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The transforming power of God's Word



Nehemiah 8:1-12
Jonathan Lamb

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Dynamic images

- A fire in Jeremiah's bones, a hammer that breaks rocks
- The sword, living and active
- The seed which produces a harvest
- 'The scriptures - the things concerning himself'

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The Word of God and the heart of preaching

- Its centrality
 - 8:1,3,13,18; 9:3; 13:1
- Its authority
 - 8:1 'which the Lord commanded for Israel'

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The Word of God and the heart of preaching

•'We thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the word of God which is at work in you who believe.' 1 Thess 2:13

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Some implications

- Biblical preaching must be centred on God's Word
 - The Bible passage establishes our authority
 - The Bible passage defines the message

Some implications

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- Biblical preaching must be immersed in God's Word

Some implications

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- Biblical preaching must be immersed in God's Word
 - 'Give attention to the public reading of scripture, to preaching and to teaching ... Put these things into practise, devote yourselves to them, so that all may see your progress. Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching.'
- 1 Tim 4:11-16

Some implications

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- Biblical preaching must expound God's Word

Some implications

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- Biblical preaching must expound God's Word
 - To declare as a herald
 - To announce the good news
 - To witness or testify to the facts
 - To teach, to lay out the facts

Some challenges

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- Biblical illiteracy and the loss of confidence in the Bible
- Restoring the centrality of the Bible in church life

The teacher and the work of preaching

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- Making it accessible
 - 8:1,2,3,5,9,13
- Making it clear
 - 8:2,8,12
- Working together
 - 8:4,7,8

Some implications

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- Biblical preaching must be focussed

Some implications

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- Biblical preaching must be focussed
 - 'Exegesis is loving God enough to stop and listen carefully to what he says.' (Eugene Peterson)
 - Understanding the primary message of the Bible passage

Some implications

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- Biblical preaching must be focussed
- Biblical preaching must be clear

Some implications

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- Biblical preaching must be focussed
- Biblical preaching must be clear
- Biblical preaching must be relevant

Some challenges

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- Restoring confidence in preaching

Some challenges

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- Restoring confidence in preaching
- Strengthening training and modelling

The congregation and the purpose of preaching

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- They were expectant
 - 8:1,3,5,13,16
- They were serious
 - 8:3,6
- They were obedient
 - 8:9,10,12; 9:38; 10:29

Some implications

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- Biblical preaching must call for change

Some implications

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- Biblical preaching must call for change
 - 'But thanks be to God that you ... have become obedient from the heart to the form of teaching to which you were entrusted.' Romans 6:17

Some implications

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- Biblical preaching must call for change
- Biblical preaching must engage the listener

Some implications

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- Biblical preaching must call for change
 - Biblical preaching must engage the listener
 - Biblical preaching must proclaim God's grace in Christ
 - 'For what we preach is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servant's for Jesus' sake.'
- 2 Cor 4:5

The dynamic power of God's Word

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'This is what preaching is all about: it is not simply laying out the truth of the message, but it is the invasion of the living God through his word into the mind, heart and will of the hearer.'

