



# Agros: Find, Train, Support

3/18/23 Farm Team Gathering  
“Shop Talk” Discussion Guide

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## ***Preaching & Preachers by Martyn Lloyd-Jones***

### Chapter 1: The Primacy of Preaching

“...the most urgent need in the Christian Church today is true preaching; and as it is the greatest and the most urgent need in the Church, it is obviously the greatest need of the world also... the primary task of the Church and of the Christian minister is the preaching of the Word of God.” (17, 26) Do you agree? Why/why not?

What modern cultural or religious attitudes pressure us to diminish the primacy of preaching?

### Chapter 2: No Substitute

“So I would sum up by saying that it is preaching alone that can convey the Truth to people, and bring them to the realisation of their need, and to the only satisfaction for their need. Ceremonies and rituals, singing and entertainment, and all your interest in political and social affairs, and all else cannot do this... What men and women need is to be brought to ‘a knowledge of the truth’; and if this is not done you are simply palliating symptoms and patching up the problem for the time being.” (50) Where do you see the church, in an effort to meet needs, drifting from relevance to redundancy?

Lloyd Jones: “[many conclude] that man is sick, man is unhappy, man is the victim of circumstances. They believe therefore that his primary need is to have these things dealt with, that he must be delivered from them.” What are some concrete examples of these conclusions about man’s condition? How are we tempted to alter our ministry to meet them?

Why do you think counseling is becoming more popular as a form of Christian ministry? How does Lloyd-Jones caution us about counseling?

### Chapter 3: The Sermon and the Preaching

“But why must it be preaching? Why this particular form? Cannot this be replaced by a kind of ‘dialogue’, as it is now called, or exchange of views? Should we not rather encourage more questions at the end of sermons, and a dialogue between the minister and the people who have come to listen, all, of course, within the realm of the Church?” (56-57) Why do people dislike the particular *form* of preaching?

Lloyd-Jones divides preaching into two elements: the sermon and the preaching. How are these different, and why is the difference a “vital distinction”?

### Chapter 4: The Form of the Sermon

“My basic contention is that the essential characteristic of a sermon is that it has a definite form, and that it is this form that makes it a sermon. It is based upon exposition, but it is this exposition turned or molded into a message which has this characteristic form.” (83) What are you more likely to preach: a sermon with form but little exposition or a sermon with exposition but little form? And how is exposition molded into a message different?

Lloyd-Jones recommends that the form of a sermon include exposition, headings, progression, and application. What are these, and why are they important?

### Chapter 5: The Act of Preaching

“What is preaching? Logic on fire! Eloquent reason! ... It is theology on fire. And a theology which does not take fire, I maintain, is a defective theology; or at least the man’s understanding of it is defective. Preaching is theology coming through a man who is on fire.” (110) He talks a lot about passion, pathos, and warmth of a preacher. What room is there for different personalities in the pulpit? Are some personalities just not fit for preaching?

What are some good sources of passion? What are some dangerous sources of passion?

### Chapter 6: The Preacher

“I would say that the only man who is called to preach is the man who cannot do anything else, in the sense that he is not satisfied with anything else. This called to preach is so put upon him, and such pressure comes to bear upon him that he says, ‘I can do nothing else, I must preach.’” (118) What biblical examples or verses could be used to support Lloyd-Jones’ suggestion that the preacher must be conscious of a call? Are there any dangers in making too much out of ‘calling’ theology?

Lloyd-Jones has strong opinions when it comes to homiletics. Where do you agree or disagree with his convictions?

### Chapter 7: The Congregation

“...the preacher does not need to know the details [of his congregation’s problems]. Why not? Because he knows that all the people in front of him are suffering from the same disease, which is sin – every one of them. The symptoms may vary tremendously from case to case, but the business of the preacher is not to medicate symptoms, it is to treat the disease. The preacher therefore should not be over-interested in the particular forms the sin takes.” (145) What characterizes a sermon that addresses the root of sin vs. a sermon that is over-interested in the particular forms that sin takes?

### Chapter 8: The Character of the Message

“Nature cries out for the nutriment that is appropriate to it; and if you know people whom you think are Christians, and who themselves think they are Christians, but who do not want the preaching of the Word, and do not revel in it, and rejoice in it, and want as much as they can possibly get of it, I suggest that the right question to ask about them is, ‘Are these people Christians?’ This behavior is contrary to nature.” (168-69) How can we engage in evangelistic preaching that speaks to non-Christians and edifies the Christian at the same time?

### Chapter 9: The Preparation of the Preacher

“One of the most fatal habits a preacher can ever fall into is to read his Bible simply in order to find texts for sermons. This is a real danger; it must be recognised and fought and resisted with all your might. Do not read the Bible to find texts for sermons, read it because it is the food that God has provided for your soul, because it is the Word of God, because it is the means whereby you can get to know God. Read it because it is the bread of life, the manna provided for your soul’s nourishment and well-being.” (184) How does reading the Bible, not to find sermon texts, prepare us in essential ways for preaching?

What are some good habits that help you seek God in his Word rather than merely seeking a sermon in his Word?

## **“Doctrine of the Church” by Jonathan Leeman**

### Lecture 1.1: Why the Doctrine of the Church Is Crucial

Leeman illustrates the importance of local church membership by comparing it to the necessary relationship between justification and sanctification. What does he mean? Do you agree or disagree?

### Lecture 1.2: The Importance and Unimportance of Knowing Your Context

Leeman believes our doctrine of the church should be governed by “elements” and “forms.” What is the difference between these, and what governs each?

### Lecture 1.3: How to Read the Bible Institutionally

To form our doctrine about an institution, like the Church, Leeman recommends using six guidelines. 1) Begin with authorial intent. 2) Ask who is authorized to do what. 3) Determine how to fulfill an authorization by distinguishing between elements and forms, and then by using wisdom. 4) Heed canonical horizons and covenantal administrations. 5) Be sensitive to different kinds of authority. 6) Recognize some rules and authorities are heavier than others. Read Matthew 18:15-20 and discuss the institution of the Church according to these six guidelines.

### Lecture 1.4: The Bible’s Priest-King Storyline

Leeman argues that every believer fills the office of priest, watching over the purity of God’s dwelling place, and the office of king, advancing the borders of God’s dwelling place. Therefore, any doctrine of the church that prevents or excuses any believer from fulfilling these offices is erroneous. What are examples of such errors in our doctrine of the church?

### Lecture 1.5: The Gospel and the Universal, Invisible Church

The New Testament provides many metaphors or images of what the Church is (family, nation, body, branches, etc). Leeman warns that many erroneous doctrines of the Church through history came from over-emphasis on or failure to understand one of these metaphors. When forming our doctrine of the Church, what should govern our interpretation of these metaphors? Discuss this example: Does the metaphor of the Church as a body with Christ as the head prevent a church from having any positions of authority?

## **Sermon Outline of 2 Timothy 4:1-5**

How would you make an exegetical outline of this passage?

How would you make a sermon outline of this passage?

What would be your sermon in one sentence?