

IV. Course Outline

Class 1, September 4th

Unity: A Display of God's Glory in the Local Church

Class 2, September 11th

Church Membership: The Context for Unity

Class 3, September 18th

Preaching: The Foundation for Unity

Class 4, September 25th

Prayer: God's Power Creates Unity

Class 5, October 2nd

Ordinances: Foreshadowing Unity in Heaven

Class 6, October 9th

Church Governance: Godly Authority Fostering Unity

Class 7, October 16th

Church Fellowship: Building a Bond of Unity

Class 8, October 23rd

Church Leadership: Submission for the Sake of Unity

Class 9, October 30th

Disagreement in the Church: A Test of Unity

Class 10, November 6th

Church Discipline: Preserving God-Glorifying Unity

Class 11, November 13th

Giving: Sacrifice for the Sake of Unity

Class 12, November 20th

Worship: Celebrating God-Given Unity

Class 13, November 27th

Evangelism: A Harvest of Unity

LIVING AS A CHURCH



Class 3: Preaching

The Foundation for Unity

I. Introduction: God Creates His People through His Word

- Ezekiel 37:7, 10
- Ezekiel 16:4-7a
- Mark 1:38

Christianity is unique because it centers on a message of historical fact (I Corinthians 15:4-5)

II. The Unique Role of Preaching in a Church

Assertion: God creates His people through His word—and he accomplishes that primarily through preaching.

Preaching is unique because preaching is communal in nature

Where in Scripture do we see the centrality of preaching to the church (above and beyond the centrality of God's word)?

- Levites as teachers to the people of Israel
- Jesus' instructions to his disciples (Luke 9:2)
- Paul's instructions to Timothy (2 Timothy 4:2)
- Romans 10:15-17

Characteristics of Preaching that Make it Critical to the Mission of the Church:

1. Preaching provides an external perspective
2. Preaching is backed by the united testimony of an entire church (advantage of congregational authority)
 - Implication #1: Consider both quality of preaching and health of congregation when you join a church
 - Implication #2: Our unity at CHBC is necessary to maintain solid preaching (Ephesians 4:14)

III. How Preaching Promotes Unity

A) *Preaching Clarifies a Message Around Which to Unite*

Unity showcases the power of the gospel message; preaching proclaims and celebrates that message

Implication #1: We Should Look for Gospel-Centered Preaching

More than just sermons that explain the way of salvation; sermons filled with the gospel

“What makes this sermon uniquely Christian?”

Implication #2: Our Responsibility to Confront Unbiblical Preaching

Guidelines:

- Recognize your ability to be mistaken
- Do not hold back thoughtful criticism (but criticism ≠ complaining)
- Consider time and place of conversation
- Protect the ability of others to trust their leaders

Encourage those who preach Biblically

B) *Preaching Fosters Spiritual Growth*

It is difficult to underestimate the positive impact of many years of good teaching in a church

Implication #1: Focus on *type* of Preaching that will Best Grow a Congregation

Definition of *expositional* preaching: point of the sermon is the point of a particular passage of Scripture

Advantages of consistent expositional preaching

1. Exposed to full spectrum of Scripture
2. Pastor preaches more than he already knows

Implication #2: Preaching Must be Applied

How do we strengthen application as a church?

C) *Preaching Creates a Biblical Vision for Ministry*

Preaching is the only reliable basis for establishing the unique vision and “personality” of a local church
→ Preaching must be a shared experience

Benefits of preaching as a shared experience:

1. Preaching best applied in relationships with others
2. Preaching reinforces God’s word as cornerstone of our existence as a Church
3. God uses preaching to shape a message specifically for a congregation

IV. Conclusion

- Recognize responsibility as members for what is preached
- Pray for those who preach
- Apply preaching together as a church