

Garlock, JohnKeys To Better Preaching

6. The Preacher—A Speech-Maker?

This chapter argues that preaching, though a spiritual activity, is still governed by the ordinary rules of good public speaking. It surveys the main kinds, styles, and purposes of speech and shows how each applies to Bible preaching.

Key takeaways

- A noble purpose does not exempt a preacher from mastering speaking technique. Because God's message matters most, His speakers need the finest skills—everything a good public speaker knows, and more.
- Speeches vary by formality: formal (words fixed beforehand, even if memorized), extemporaneous (ideas planned, wording free—the usual sermon style), and impromptu (no preparation).
- Many styles serve preaching: drama, role-playing, interpretive reading, storytelling, Q&A (Socratic), audio-visual aids, discussion, debate, and lecture. Lecture is oldest and most common because it conveys the most facts fastest—but it bores most easily.
- Storytelling is especially powerful; Jesus taught heavenly truths through familiar earthly ones this way.

- Every speech aims at one or more purposes: to be interesting, clear, and convincing, and to produce action. A sermon should do all four or it fails.

Passages worth keeping

“A preacher should know everything any good public speaker knows . . . and more.”

States the chapter's central claim about the preacher's duty to skill.

How it connects

The next chapter turns from method to aim—what effective preaching is actually for.