Meyer examines preaching from the biblical perspective of the Old and New Testaments. He posits his book as “unique in that . . . the whole Bible alone can give a holistic answer to what preaching is” (14). Meyer seeks to establish a biblical view of preaching through its support from the whole of Scripture. As the ministry of the Word involves all of Scripture, the entire biblical text establishes the precedence and paradigm for preaching.

Meyer expresses his motivation to write this book from his and others’ need to grow in understanding preaching from a biblical basis. In addition to learning more about preaching from the biblical text, the preacher can grow in his preaching of the biblical text. Meyer declares his purpose, “My prayer is that this book will help preachers in the pulpit and people in the pew catch the stunning vision for preaching found in Scripture” (309).

Meyer arranges the book into five main parts followed by three appendices. In the first part, Meyer provides an overview of the Scripture’s perspective on the ministry of the Word. He identifies three biblical categories that describe preaching as stewarding, heralding, and encountering. Meyer emphasizes that “the ministry of the [W]ord in Scripture is stewarding and heralding God’s word in such a way that people encounter God through [H]is [W]ord” (21, author’s italics).

In examining the biblical theme of preaching, Meyer surveys the overall narrative of the Bible. He argues that “[T]he Bible is not a textbook on preaching; it is a story” (36). Therefore, he discusses the biblical narratives that cover the scope of the Bible. Meyer then devotes chapter four to introducing ten paradigms that frame the biblical theology of preaching. Each paradigm represents a shift in the biblical narrative with a key person or persons whom God called to steward His Word faithfully. Meyer discusses each paradigm in light of the call and fall narratives. The call narrative represents God’s will for the person to steward and herald His Word in order for the people to encounter God. Conversely, the fall narrative depicts the failure of that person to fulfill God’s purpose in the stewardship of His Word. The narrative culminates with Jesus’ fulfilling the call perfectly through His stewardship of the Word and absolute obedience to God in every aspect of His life.

The second part expounds in detail the ten paradigm shifts of the ministry of the Word mentioned in part one. Meyer devotes a chapter to each paradigm of stewardship with a detailed discussion of the narrative with illustrations and applications for preachers today. These paradigms follow the biblical story from the stewardship of the covenant of creation in Genesis to the stewardship of the pastor in the latter New Testament.
In part three, Meyer discusses expository preaching in light of the biblical theology established in the paradigms. Meyer avoids putting forth a strict definition of expository preaching but maintains the focus on “biblical convictions and their corresponding principles of method” (238). Meyer explains that expository preaching “is a philosophy and not merely a method; it is concerned with one’s understanding of the totality of the task of preaching” (257). He demonstrates exposition of a biblical text through showing how to identify the main idea of the passage. In chapter nineteen, Meyer provides a defense of expository preaching against the argument of insufficient biblical precedence for it.

Part four examines two topics from systematic theology, Scripture and sin, to determine the approach to preaching that best communicates such truths. Meyer proposes expository preaching as the “philosophy that puts great stock in the specificity of what God has revealed” (291). Meyer devotes a chapter to analyzing the strengths and weaknesses of topical preaching. He concludes, “[A] preaching ministry with a steady diet of expository preaching is the best strategy for the long-term health of the body of Christ” (297).

Part five concludes the book with applications for better stewardship of the Word. His primary application focuses on making much of the Christ and less on the preacher. The preacher should focus on the ministry of the Word and its authority and preeminent place in the life of the church.

The appendices offer further insight into Meyer’s purpose in writing this book and its unique contribution to homiletics. He also provides an appendix with valuable references on other preaching books.

Meyer accomplishes his purpose in providing a book that examines preaching from a perspective that encompasses all of Scripture. This paradigm of Word stewardship involves biblical figures beyond those roles typically compared to modern preaching such as priests, prophets, and apostles. The biblical narrative demonstrates that “God calls various people to steward [H]is [W]ord” (75). The Word that God spoke throughout history bestows upon His people implications to faithfully obey and herald His Word for His divine purposes.

Two strengths of this book are its arrangement and argument. Meyer arranges the book in a logical way that allows readers to grasp its ideas whether the interest is theological or practical. His argument for biblical preaching based on the story line of Scripture is unique and compelling. Meyer also provides a unique defense of expository preaching, particularly in proving it as the biblical method against arguments that deem it unprecedented biblically.

One weakness of the book comes in part four and its purpose in the text. This part only provided a partial treatment of the topics of systematic theology pertinent to preaching. Other than the chapter on topical preaching, this part seems repetitious and unsupportive to the theme of the book. Another weakness derives from some of the content in the appendices. In the appendices, Meyer provides language such as the purpose for this
book and its unique contributions. This information could have been more helpful for the reader in the beginning of the book.

Overall, this book arrives as a valuable resource for the preacher or biblical scholar who desires to understand the theological implications of preaching. Meyer expresses his “deep-seated concern that preachers no longer tremble at the task of preaching and do not devote the time necessary for true preaching to flourish” (314). A biblical theology of preaching restores the sense of awe in the call and motivates the preacher to faithful stewardship of the Word.

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