EXPOSITORY PREACHING HOMILETIC THEORY: BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION, VALUES, AND POLITICS IN THE TWENTY FIRST-CENTURY

The purpose of this study to examine the role of expository preaching, its innate characteristics and its espousal by pastors and theologians to affect personal and social values and politics in the twenty-first century. My examination begins with an investigation of the historicity that led to the development of the expository homiletic theory. Inherently, the expositor has subscribed to a methodology that encompasses the consideration of a passage or text in a context which involves a study of the original biblical language, grammar, syntax, and cultural background of the text. The expositor also attempts to didactically uncover the original meaning of the text based on its cultural context in order to communicate and disseminate divine truths that emanate from the text. The exposition typically involves an exegetical and hermeneutical method to uncover practical divine truths succinctly that will affect personal and societal change. My study begins with an investigation of the historical basis for practicing expository preaching from the early first century of Christianity to the twentieth century in order to demonstrate its advocacy by theologians, pastors, and church leaders in the formation of their biblical theology and social agenda. There are innate characteristics in the expository method that underlie a proclivity toward or adherence to deeply embedded historical beliefs that were derived from the first century. This belief system pervades the preparatory and delivery aspects of contemporary homiletic theory. The purpose is to delve into the historical concepts and uncover the intrinsic modes of thought and process foundational to expository preaching. My study includes an anthology of the sermonic material and homiletic practice of the foremost expositors, theorists, and homileticians. The analysis includes discovery of the facets of their hermeneutical and homiletic processes to elucidate the basis of their adherence to their (at times) pragmatic, propositional and moralistic expository style which is shrouded in personal, political and social agendas. I delineate the basis for the perfunctory relationship between the translation methodology which theologians pursue and their acquiescence with the need for purity and literalness in understanding the original biblical texts written in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek. Expository theologians perpetuate a need for reading and preaching primarily based on the original text and replicating the exact words of God in the sermonic moment. These theologians desire to re-express the original tonal voice and images of the biblical text for twentieth and twenty-first century Bible readers. My analysis includes a demonstration of the influence of an exegetical, hermeneutic, and translation methodology that not only increases or builds church denominations but also affects social and political change. I will also attempt to demonstrate the ideological and political conflicts between theologians, pastors, and leaders in an effort to show their approach and impact and their level of effectiveness in national and social arenas. I assert that the support of expository preaching has emboldened and furnished both practitioners and congregants with a historical methodology in which they reproduce and propagate divine truths to bring about personal, social, and political change.