

Puritan Evangelism

by Al Martin

Al Martin's sermon on Puritan Evangelism explores the distinctives of Puritan methods and messages, contrasting them with contemporary practices to emphasize a return to biblical principles.

Duration: 1:20:28

Scripture: Genesis 1:1, Isaiah 59:2, Matthew 6:33, John 3:16, Romans 3:24, 1 Corinthians 3:13, 2 Timothy 3:16

Topics: "Puritan Theology", "Evangelism Methods"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker begins by sharing his personal journey into ministry and the importance of preaching the word of God. He then quotes J.I. Packer and Thomas Manton to emphasize the true essence of the gospel, which involves repentance, faith, reconciliation with God, and the promise of eternal happiness for believers. The speaker highlights the symmetry and doctrinal depth of Puritan evangelism, contrasting it with the shortcomings of modern evangelism. He emphasizes the need for a scriptural and theological approach to preaching, clearly defining concepts such as sin and its consequences.

Transcript

At the outset, I would like to bring a few words of introduction, which will be rather biographical in nature that I think will help in lending some background to the paper, and then we'll consider a definition of our terms, Puritan evangelism, what do we mean by those terms, and then a few of the sources from which I have drawn the paper, and this is why it will be necessary to do a good bit of reading, because I have a number of quotes in the paper, and I haven't been blessed with a photographic memory that can just take whole paragraphs and memorize them and then give them, as though they were extemporaneous. And then we want to come to the core of the paper, which is what I am calling the distinctives of Puritan evangelism, those areas in which the evangelism of the Puritans was marked in great contrast to the evangelism of our day. I am not touching the areas where there might be basic agreements, such as the free offer of the gospel, the truth that salvation is to be found only in the merits of Jesus Christ.

Some of these areas where the evangelism of our day has been more or less adequate, but I will be speaking of the distinctives of Puritan evangelism in seeking to touch upon those aspects of their evangelism which have well-nigh been lost in the evangelism of the twentieth century. And to cover that, we will look at the message, its content, and then the methods used to communicate it, some of the means by which those methods were employed, and then if we have time, something of the mood or the

climate of Puritan evangelism. By way of introduction, I would like to say at the outset of our consideration of this important theme that I beg your permission to give this biographical introduction.

God thrust me out in His sovereignty into an itinerant ministry back, oh, about ten years ago, and I had nothing to do but to preach night after night, to pray and read the Bible. And at that time there came to my own heart a deep sense of holy fear in the light of 1 Corinthians chapter 3, I believe it's verse 13, where the Apostle Paul said, For the day shall try every man's work, not of what size it is, but of what sort it is. When I stood before my Lord, it would not be primarily the quantity of my labors, but the quality.

And with that holy fear before me, I began to ask God, What is it that I am authorized to preach? For the Lord gave me enough sense to realize it's rather an impudent thing to pray, Oh God, bless that which I am preaching, if I'm not preaching that which He's authorized me to preach. To pray, God, bless the means that I'm employing, if He has nowhere authorized those means. And so this drove me to an intense study of those aspects of biblical revelation, which touched particularly upon the evangel, the message we are to proclaim, and the means by which we are to proclaim it.

And as I studied it, I saw some glaring inconsistencies in the modern methodology and the modern message. I saw very little justification in the Bible for the means that were employed, which were more often psychological than scriptural. But realizing that many a heretic started out by saying, Back to the Bible alone and the son of my fair head, I was scared to come to any finalized conclusions unless I had some confirming voice from that great stream of historic Christianity, and began to pray.

I had nobody to guide me in my reading or my literature. Most of the pastors where I ministered were very negative to me. And the Lord in His providence put a book like Baxter's Call to the Unconverted into my hands.

But I began to read, and there came that witness at the mouth of two or three witnesses, every word shall be confirmed, that these were not some strange concepts that no one else had ever seen in the Bible, but that they were in the mainstream of historic Christianity. And so long before I came to a commitment of the basic God-centered approach to all truth as expressed in Reformed theology, I found much help in these authors whom I have named to you. In the light of these things, it's obvious that I'll not be able to handle this subject with that dispassionate objectivity that seems to be a status symbol in evangelical circles today.

I can't deal with this thing dispassionately. One cannot handle aspects of truth which he's convinced have eternal implications, which bear directly upon the honor and glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, and do so in such a way as to give the impression that there's really not much at stake if you take a divergent view. I'll not be able to consider the subject in such a way as to leave it unrelated to the present hour in which we live and in which we minister.

Now please get this next statement. I feel it's the crux of the whole paper. To the extent that the Puritans captured biblical principles of evangelism and then worked them out in the flesh and blood of actual experience in the context of their generation, to that extent, we are obligated to discover those same biblical principles and embody them in the flesh and blood of the twentieth century ministry.

I have no desire to either begin or perpetrate a cult of antiquity worship, none whatsoever, but I'm greatly concerned that we capture the biblical principles embodied in the evangelism of the Puritans. And where some of these things touch us at sore spots, I make no apologies for I'm greatly disturbed by men who

seem to delight in building sepulchers to the Puritan prophets, but who will not embody their concepts at the price of radically overhauling their own message and methodology in the field of evangelism. And the proof of your theology is in your methodology.

A man can sit and talk to me all day that he believes this, this, and this, but I want to watch him work, and then he tells me what he believes. So that, by way of sort of a biographical background, now a definition of terms. What do we mean by Puritan evangelism, or what do I mean tonight? The word Puritan, I am not limiting our study to those who were cut off from the stated ministry of the Church of England by the Act of Uniformity in 1662, but all those who preceded that band of worthies, and all those who followed them and who drank of the same wells of biblical and experimental Christianity, that kind of Christianity that was characterized by three things.

Doctrinally, it was a broad and a vigorous Calvinism. Experimentally, it was a warm and contagious devotional kind of Christianity. And in evangelism, it was tender, aggressive, and impassioned.

And so in the term Puritan, I'm using it in that broad sense. By evangelism, I'm using the term in this sense, speaking of that distinct proclamation of the evangel, the counsel of God concerning the salvation of men from sin and its consequences. To use the definition which Packer sets forth in his book, *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God*, evangelism is, quote, a work of communication in which the Christian makes himself a mouthpiece of God's message of mercy to sinners.

So we're speaking of that message of mercy to sinners as embodied or as set forth by these Puritans, using the term Puritan in its broad sense. Now, from what sources have we drawn these observations? In general, much of that which will follow in the paper is drawn from the climate of the Puritan expository works where an impassioned proclamation of the gospel and an earnest entreaty to sinners are woven into the warp and woof of the regular expository ministry of the Word of God. Anyone who reads the Puritan commentators will be constantly exposed to these concepts and will be aware of their constant reoccurrence like the pronounced motif in a work of art or music.

When one is reading a weighty treatise like Manton's treatise on sin called *Man's Guiltiness Before God* or William Gernald's *The Christian in Complete Armor*, as you read through, you find these continual strains of an impassioned evangel occurring again and again. But now specifically, the works from which I'll be quoting to a great extent tonight are these, Eileen's *Alarm to the Unconverted*, the book that was graciously given to us by the host church and one which, in my own opinion, is the clearest, most biblical treatise ever written on the subject of conversion. We have spent an entire Sunday school year going through this, exegeting it in our college class, and what a blessing it's been, looking up every passage of scripture and where a principle is touched upon, taking off and sometimes spending the whole class session on it.

Many quotes from Eileen. Secondly, some quotes from Philip Dobridge's famous work, *The Rise and Progress*, a great work of the nonconformist minister of the 1700s, and then Baxter's *Call to the Unconverted* and his book, *The Reformed Pastor*, and then several works of Jonathan Edwards, his sermon, *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God*, his classic work on the religious affections, and then an article by J.I. Packer on Puritan evangelism. I'm so glad this didn't get into my hands until after I had initially prepared the paper because I would have been discouraged, I think, in trying to have some originality, and I got hold of this after I'd originally prepared it and so have added some to the original paper from this book of Packer's.

Now we move to the heart of our study tonight. What were the distinctives of Puritan evangelism? First of all, will you consider with me the distinctives of their message in its content? Now, in a general sense, three things marked the evangelism, content-wise, of the Puritans. First of all, it was eminently a scriptural evangelism.

It is not unusual to find five, ten, or sometimes as many as fifteen distinct phrases in the actual language of the English Bible on any given page of Puritan evangelistic literature. When reading the evangelistic sermons of our contemporaries, one is often disturbed by the fact that the message contains more indications of an acquaintance with Sartre and Freud and Tillich than a heart acquaintance with Moses, Paul, and John. Though the Puritans, for the most part, were certainly learned men and had a broad base of classical learning beneath them, they were men who were absolutely convinced that people are born again not of corruptible seed but of incorruptible by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever, and that the Holy Ghost, though he works sovereignly, but he uses the truth as his instrumentality.

It's obvious that their thought patterns were steeped in the exact phraseology of the English Bible. One is amazed how in one sentence there may be a phrase from some obtuse section of Obadiah and then a familiar phrase from John, all woven into the very thought patterns of these men. And I believe there's no explanation for it but that these men primarily studied their Bibles devotionally and on their knees the Holy Ghost burned the very words of Scripture into their hearts, that when they took up pen to write there was something that the Spirit of God could bring to the conscious remembrance and out flowed Bible passage after Bible passage.

Ah, the wind took my paper. All right, thank you, Walt. That's why I said I better stick with my paper.

The wind's going to blow it away when I leave it and go to other things. Secondly, it was not only eminently scriptural, but it was doctrinal. They were not afraid to let their slip show when they preached the evangel.

They were not out here ringing five bells when they preached the gospel, but their slip showed. Setting forth Christ, they set him forth with a theological articulation and distinguished things that differed. When they dealt with sin, you knew what they meant.

They talked either as sin, as moral rebellion against God bringing upon me legal guilt, or they talked about sin as that inherent depravity of nature which made me unfit for a heaven that was light and a God who is pure and of infinite holiness. And when they were done talking about sin, you knew what they meant. When they dealt with the atonement, even in the practical work like Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, doctrine is dealt with even when he talks about chickens.

In the House of Interpreters, clucking of the hen, she has two kinds of clucks. There's the general cluck four kinds, but the two I'm thinking of tonight. Thank you, Mr. Reisinger.

I'd better be straight on Bunyan. I have his paper insane here tonight. But he makes the distinction between that cluck that she's doing all the time and no chickens come running, and then that special cluck that brings her little ones under her wings, the general call of the gospel, that effectual call to his elect.

Doctrinal principles woven into the warp and woof of the evangelist. And then thirdly, it was symmetrical. There is a beautiful symmetry in the whole counsel of God, and so in Puritan evangelism, one finds indications of this symmetry.

One of the glaring faults of modern evangelism is its lopsidedness. It's a caricature of the true evangelist. Its proclamation of God's grace is in such a way as to make it cheap grace.

Its holding forth of the simplicity of the gospel is such that it makes it contemptible. This you will never find in the Puritan proclamation of the gospel. Where in modern evangelism do you ever read a message on Luke 13, is it? Strive to enter in at the narrow gate.

When the Puritan came to a text like that, he let it say what it meant. That true salvation in conversion is a difficult and a rare thing. And yet when you come to a glorious text, he that believeth on the Son hath life, they let it speak in all of its freeness and all of its gospel glory.

There is that beautiful symmetry in the proclamation of the gospel. Let me read this very clear comment by J. I. Packer on this subject. Thomas Manton said these words, The sum of the gospel is this, that all who by true repentance and faith do forsake the flesh, the world, and the devil, and give themselves up to God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as their Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, shall find God as a Father, taking them for his reconciled children, and for Christ's sake pardoning their sin, and by his Spirit giving them his grace, and if they persevere in discourse, will finally glorify them and bestow upon them everlasting happiness, but will condemn the unbelievers, impenitent and ungodly, to everlasting punishment.

This is the sum of the gospel. Quite different from trust Jesus to take you to heaven when you die. Isn't it? The beautiful symmetry.

The sum of the gospel is this. Repentance, faith, being returned to God, Father, Son, and Spirit, justified, sanctified, and glorified at the end of a perseverance. That's the gospel.

A beautiful symmetry in their presentation. Now specifically, what are the distinctives of Puritan evangelism? In a general sense, eminently scriptural, doctrinal, symmetrical, but now in what specific areas do we find their evangelism different from the evangelism of our day? John mentioned this morning that after you've painted the horse, or drawn the horse, you draw a cow, and you say, horse is not cow. Well, tonight I want to say, horse is not cow.

I think this will be the best way for us to bring out in clarity the distinctives of Puritan evangelism. First of all, their evangelism had as its basis a vigorous biblical theism. The foundation of their evangelism was the proclamation, the setting forth of biblical theism, a proper doctrine of God.

I think the contrast can be best stated by saying this. Modern evangelism says that the most important verse in the Bible is John 3.16, God so loved the world. A Puritan would say, no, the most important verse of the Bible is Genesis 1.1, in the beginning, God.

And anything that happens from there on is going to be doing to ends that he has designed for his own glory. And so they didn't assume that people knew who the God of John 3.16 was. They knew that the concept of atonement, of reconciliation, of forgiveness, of justification, have absolutely no biblical meaning, apart from some basic understanding of the God of the Bible who does affect the reconciliation and who does draw sinners to himself.

And so they would use as the basis of their evangelism a biblical theism. You see this in Ilion, where he comes to that chapter on the miseries of the unconverted, and he expounds how every attribute of God is against the sinner in his unrepentant state, his holiness, his faithfulness, his justice, his purity, until the

sinner is prepared, as the Spirit of God takes that truth and makes it real to him, to receive as good news the fact that that God, whose attributes burn against him in righteous indignation, has provided a way of mercy and escape in his Son Jesus Christ the Lord. Secondly, they were not fearful to use the law of God as an instrument of evangelism.

Now William Guthrie, who would not be classified as a Puritan, but whose work, the Christian saving interest, is certainly in the stream of Puritan thought, says, as some of you may be aware, that God calls sinners four ways. Some he calls in a sovereign gospel way. Saul of Tarsus, breathing out threatenings and slaughters against the Church on his way to Damascus, and God says, it's time for my eternal purpose and the salvation of this rebel to be realized, and so he speaks out of heaven a verse, and when Paul writes about it later, he says, when it please God, that's the word of time, when it please God, to reveal his Son in me, that salvation, when it please God, a sovereign gospel way.

Zacchaeus, a good illustration of it. Some God calls from the womb. John the Baptist, filled with the Spirit from his mother's womb.

Some God calls in the hour of death. The thief on the cross, as Bishop Ryle says, there is one account in the Bible of a deathbed repentance. One that none may despair.

Only one that none may presume. Only one. But there is one.

But there's a fourth way that God calls sinners, and this is his more ordinary way, and it's by a prior law work. Now some of the Puritans were divided on this. Some went into an unbiblical extreme, and people began to feel that unless you had 35 pounds of conviction and 23 buckets of tears, and wept for 13 months, you couldn't come to Christ.

You had no warrant to come. But there are other Puritans, and certainly Ilion is one of them, and Baxter would be another, who did not at all fall into that error, and yet they still had a proper use of the law. They regarded the law in its killing, slaying work as a necessary prerequisite to the right proclamation and application of the gospel.

For example, Doddridge says, after setting the stage by announcing the pattern and goal of his book, quote, as I am attempting to lead you to true religion, and not merely to some superficial form of it, I am sensible I can do it no otherwise than in the way of deep humiliation. He didn't say, if you'll just admit you're a sinner, now we're ready to move on. No, he said, if you're going to have the real thing, it's got to start on the base note.

One dear servant of God says, when God's about to play the chord of grace in the heart of a sinner, he starts with the base note. Isn't that the Beatitudes? Blessed are the want, poor and spirit. That's where God starts his work of grace, and this is what Doddridge is saying.

Therefore, still quoting, supposing you are persuaded through the divine blessing on what you before read to take it into consideration, I would now endeavor in the first place with all seriousness that I can to make you heartily sensible of your guilt before God. Now, see the difference? He does not say, I want you to get, get you to admit that you're guilty. He said, I want to make you heartily sensible of your guilt.

There's all the difference in the world. Heartily sensible of your guilt. For I well know, still quoting, that unless you're convinced of this and affected with this conviction, all the provisions of gospel grace will be slighted and your soul infallibly destroyed in the midst of the noblest means of, end of quote.

Thus using the law, they sought to show men that God stands as an angry judge and his wrath burns toward the sinner. His claims and throne rights have been denied, his laws spurned. Listen to Joseph Ilian as he declares to his hearers that God is against them while they still abide in their sins.

Quote, sinner, I think this should go like a dagger to your heart to know that God is your enemy. Oh, where will you go? Where will you show to yourself? There's no hope for you unless you lay down your weapons and sue out your pardon and get Christ to stand as your friend and to make your peace. End of quote.

He then proceeds to show that the face of God is against the sinner. The heart of God is against him and all his attributes are against him while he remains impenitent. We find a similar concept set forth in Jonathan Edwards' famous sermon, Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God.

I'll not read it, I had a rather large quote, but it's along this same line and expresses the same sentiment. In their use of the law, the Puritans sought to bring men to the realization that their problem was a twofold problem. That of a bad record, a legal problem, and that of a bad heart, a moral problem, both of which made them unfit for the presence of God.

By the one they sought to bring men into a sense of their condemnation, a bad record, and by the other to a place of despair in the light of their depravity, a bad heart. You see, in our day, the gospel has been proclaimed in such a way that men have been made aware only that they've got a little legal problem. They've got a few check marks up in heaven, they've done some bad things.

But the Puritans realized Jesus Christ is a Savior not only from what I've done, but from what I am. And just as no sinner will lay hold of the righteousness of Christ for what he has done that is wrong, until he sees, not the labors of my hands can fulfill thy laws demands, so no sinner will lay hold of an omnipotent Christ to change him in terms of what he is, until he can say foul. And Christ is a Savior from both.

And the reason we've had this division of justification and sanctification, and the root, the theological root of the whole deeper life movement, for having only presented man in his legal... We've got to somehow fix up this guy who says he's got his legal problems solved, but who's obvious. So we've had to concoct everything from, well, you know all the names for it, to somehow get the gospel to the man in terms of what he is. Puritans didn't have that problem.

I read something that was interesting about Charles Spurgeon, who saw the genesis of that which is called, and I don't say this with any disparaging remarks to many of the dear men who are propagating that system of thought, many men of God whose shoes I'm not worthy to shine, but so you know what I'm talking about, I must use the term. He saw the beginnings of the holiness movement, Keswick concept, and he'd never speak at any holiness convention. You know why he wouldn't? He said, the gospel I preach secures not only the justification, but the sanctification of sinners.

Got it? He drank of those wells, and it was the proper use of the law that lay at the foundation of this, for the law reveals not only the bad record, but the bad heart. For after Paul says he was slain by that law, he said, here full of sin in me dwelleth no good thing. And Christ is an objective and a subjective Savior.

Well, I must hurry on to the second or third area. A strong theism was the foundation of their gospel, a right use of the law was one of the first stones, or one of the first beams in the superstructure, and then thirdly, their evangelism was marked by a discriminating application of truth. A discriminating application of truth.

One cannot read long in Puritan literature without being struck with the keenness with which they searched out the differences in their hearers and sought to apply the truth to them in their specific categories. In an excellent article by A.T. Atkinson, we have set before us the three main areas in which this discrimination is evidenced and needs to be set forth in our ministries. One, the difference between the church and the world.

Two, the difference between true and professing believers. Three, the difference between the different stages of spiritual growth. The difference between the church and the world, true and false believers, and the different stages of spiritual growth.

This principle is seen very clearly in the Alarm to the Unconverted by Eilean, in which he actually starts his treatise by clearing away mistakes about conversion and clearly stating what conversion is not. He starts out, conversion is not, taking the badge of Christ in baptism, outward adherence to the form of religion, he has about seven or eight things religion is not. Then when he comes to the marks of an unconverted man, he says there are ten marks that some people carry in their foreheads, and so he deals with them.

The unclean, the profane, the willfully ignorant, ten marks, obvious marks of an unregenerate man. They said, ah, but a number of you have escaped me. Now let me go to twelve marks that are hidden in the heart.

And then he proceeds to lay out twelve categories of unbelievers, and when he's done with his twenty, you fall on your face and you say, oh God, are there but a few that be saved. Why did he do this? Because he realized he had all twenty-two classes before him if he had probably more than fifty or sixty people. And so he was concerned as a wise surgeon or as an able doctor that he would prescribe the right medicine for the right malady, and they were discriminating in their application of truth.

Perhaps there's no treatise that is filled with this from beginning to end like Pilgrim's Progress. How discriminating is that account of talkative. My, you listen to talkative talk about the free grace of God and imputed righteousness, and you say that fellow's got it straight.

The Holy Ghost has really taught him. And you remember Faithful, he got quite enamored with this guy. Christian didn't share his joy.

So he came and said, what's the matter, you a killjoy? Now I'm making bunion twentieth century now. Are you a killjoy? What's the matter? Well, he said, why don't you talk to him about the power of things? And so he begins to. Oh, and he can still mouth it until Faithful begins to be what? Discriminating in his application of truth, and it isn't long before talkative says, I've had enough of these boys, let them go on, I can't take this anymore.

Ignorant. What a picture of multitudes in our day. When they begin to ask him, how do you know you're saved? He said, well, I know I must be because my heart tells me I am.

But upon what basis does your heart tell you that it is? Because my heart tells me that it is. In other words, I must be saved. Utterly ignorant.

The grounds of assurance is not to be found by seeing if I get 13 watts of deuce, but by holding up the standard of that book, which describes what a Christian is, and being as honest and objective as I'll have to be in the day of judgment saying, oh God, am I what your book says a Christian is? And that's the truth that in keen, incisive, discriminating application Bunyan is getting across with ignorance. Mr. Byhams,

you're familiar with him, I'm sure. One of Jonathan Edwards' greatest works, some consider it his greatest, that of the Religious Affections.

Its basic premise is this, to distinguish between a true and the false conversion. Edwards' sermon, hypocrites deficient in the duty of secret prayer. John Thornberry had some mimeographed copies of that and I got it when I was with him some years ago down in Kentucky.

And after reading that sermon, so discriminating. He speaks of this principle, that a true Christian, one who's had a real sight of his uncleanness and his spiritual bankruptcy, even after he knows his sins are pardoned, has much ground to continually come to God because he knows he's weak. His heart is a tinderbox of iniquity and the world is full of sparks.

And he comes to God again and again praying that the sparks will not fell down in the flames of passion and rebellion against God. Has plenty of need to continually come to the throne of grace. But the hypocrite, the only need he's ever been aware of is he knows he's going to die and his conscience tells him he might meet his sins.

So his only need is, I gotta get a sense of forgiveness. And once he gets that, having never discovered the corruption of his heart, he has no sense of need to pray. So what happens? The hypocrite is deficient in the duty of secret prayer until he hears a sermon that a Christian's a praying man.

Then he prays enough to ease his conscience and then he doesn't pray anymore. Well, I tell you, after you read a discriminating sermon like that, you go down on your face and say, Lord, is it I? Is it I? Is it I? Is it I? Now at this point, it might be well to give a word of warning for no doubt some of the Puritans went too far in making fine distinctions which troubled the consciences of the sensitive and were totally unheeded by the indifferent. But if they went too far in this direction, God knows we've fallen so far short.

I don't know who made the comment, but after reading one of the old Puritan works, someone said, oh, that I could be but one of so-and-so's hypocrites. You get it? They've been describing, you can do this and this and this. And that's the extreme.

But there certainly is in the Word of God a discriminating application for when Ilion goes to make his discriminating applications, it's chapter and verse, chapter and verse, chapter and verse. Fourth area in which Puritan evangelism had a distinctive so little known in our day is that they preached the whole Christ to the whole man. The concept of Christ being offered as prophet, priest, and king had apparently worked its way into the warp and woof of the thinking of the men of that age before it became embalmed in printer's ink through the efforts of the Westminster divines.

Therefore, we see no attempts in Puritan evangelism to offer Christ as a savior from the penalty of sin while deliberately ignoring his claims as a sovereign and a lord and his demands that we forsake the love and the practice. The following statement by Ilion is a classic in this regard. Quote, all of Christ is accepted by the sincere convert.

He loves not only the wages but the work of Christ, not only the benefits but the burden of Christ. He's not only willing to tread out the corn but to draw under the yoke. He takes up the commands of Christ, yes, the cross of Christ.

Now notice, written back in the early 1600s, the unsound convert takes Christ by halves. He is for the privileges but does not appropriate the person of Christ. He divides the offices and benefits of Christ.

This is an error in the foundation. Whoever loves life, let him beware here, for this is an undoing mistake of which men are often warned. Now listen, and yet none is more common.

Did you think the dividing of the offices and the benefits of Christ was a 20th-century concoction? No. It's the concoction of the rebel heart of man, and the expression of it may be different in each age, but Eilean said none was more common in his day. Jesus is a sweet name, but men do not love the Lord Jesus in sincerity.

They'll not have him as God offers him, a prince and a savior. They divide what God has joined, the king and the priest, whereas the sound convert takes a whole Christ and takes him for all intents and purposes without exceptions, without limitations, without reserve, for he's willing to have Christ upon any terms, willing to have the dominion of Christ as well as the deliverance by Christ. He says with Paul, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? In reading the covenants, which Puritan evangelists encourage their hearers to use in closing with Christ, one is struck again with this note of presenting the Christ to the whole man.

As an example, in Doddridge's famous work, we find the following words, quote, he puts a covenant on paper for the sinner to make with God, but my heart now bows itself before thee in humble, unfeigned submission. I desire to make no terms with thee, but that I may be entirely thine. Brother Barnard said today, he died to get me, me.

I cheerfully present thee with a blank, entreating thee that thou wouldst do me the honor to signify upon me what is thy pleasure. Teach me, O Lord, what you'd have me to do, for I desire to learn the lesson and to learn it that I may practice it. End of quote.

Again, hear the words which Ilion puts into the mouth of the seeking sinner, quote, therefore I bow my soul unto thee and with all possible thankfulness accept thee as mine and give myself up to thee as thine. Thou shalt be sovereign over me, my king and my God. Thou shalt be on the throne and all my powers shall bow to thee and shall come and worship before thy feet.

Thou shalt be my portion, O Lord, and I will rest in thee. I fly to thy merits. I trust alone to the virtue and value of thy sacrifice and prevalence of thy intercession.

I submit to thy teaching. I make choice of thy government. Other quotes I have but will pass over them in the same sentiment.

Of the anemic, bloodless expression, take Jesus as your personal savior. These are mighty forefathers who knew nothing. Of a gospel that merely got men out from underneath the dangers of everlasting hell, leaving them an option as to whether or not they would bow to their sovereign at some subsequent date, these are spirit-taught fathers who knew absolutely nothing.

Now in the fifth place, another distinction was their clarion call to repentance. Now when I use the term clarion call, I'm not using it for semantic embellishment. I'm using it purposely.

Paul says in 1 Corinthians chapter 14, if the trumpets sound an uncertain note, how should they prepare themselves to battle? You want to get the picture? Here's some fellow that's in his tent out on the battlefield. It's about time for breakfast, and the bugler goes out, and he starts to toot something. So he perks his ears up, and he can't figure out the tune.

Is that mess call, or is that call to arms? So he nudges his buddy, and he says, hey, what's that guy playing? And he can't distinguish the tune. He doesn't know to put his helmet on and get his rifle. Well, the trumpet's sounding, making a lot of noise, but it's not sounding a certain note.

And Paul says, if it doesn't sound a certain note, how are people going to rise up to arms? I'm convinced with all my heart that this is what God wants to do in our own generation, and to do it in the order that he's been pleased in these days, and I can't tell what it's meant to me personally. To convince us that we need a heart that burns with love for sinners, eyes that are filled and spilled down with tears for sinners. Oh, dear ones, unless that is geared to a clarion call of the truth upon which God has put his shield to save sinners, it will be abortive.

Just as preaching that God-owned message without a God-broken heart will be abortive, so to have the tearful heart without the God-owned message will fall short of that which God would do for his glory. And in this area of repentance, the Puritan sounded a clear note. I try to take my five-year-old son with me whenever possible.

Sometimes when I go to the hospitals, I put him in the car, and he even likes to listen to John Bunyan on the little recorder, too. He says, Daddy, turn on Pilgrim's Progress. And as we're traveling around, sometimes we learn hymns together, and I was trying to teach him the hymn, Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing.

Well, a few days before I started working on this with him, or sometime during the period in which I was trying to teach him that hymn, I had the radio on, and there's a Christian FM station in our area, and there was an arrangement of Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing, and it was a piano arrangement, and with an orchestral background. And I knew that it was Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing only because my ear was keen to pick out the tune amidst all the orchestral embellishments, you know, sort of, da-dum-dee-da-dum, da-dee-da-dee-dee, da-da-da-dum, dee-dum-dee-dum, da-da-da-da-dum. And I could hear it there.

Once in a while I'd pick out the note. Now, when I got into the car with my son, and I'm about to teach him Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing, how did I teach it to him? Now, son, this is how you learn it. Da-dum-da-da, da-da-da-da-da.

No, no, I didn't do that. I said, Son, this is the way we sing it. Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing.

Why? Because you see, an ear that is sensitive to a tune that is well learned can pick it out. But an ear that has no previous knowledge will never learn it unless it comes through. Dum-dum-dum, you see? That's what Paul's saying.

If the trumpet doesn't sound a certain note, it's not enough to have a little side reference to repentance, not enough to have a little reference and aside here and there to the fact that it's turn or burn. The admonition of our Lord in Luke 24, 47 was literally obeyed by the Puritans in their evangelism. Jesus Christ said that repentance among all the nations, the example of St. Paul was assiduously followed in Acts 20, 21, repentance toward God, faith toward Christ.

Hear the call of Richard Baxter, quote, It is not enough to mend the old house, but pull down all and build new on Christ the rock and sure foundation. It's not to mend somewhat in a carnal course of life, but to mortify the flesh and live after the Spirit. It's to change your master and your works and end and set your

face the contrary way and do all for the life you never saw and dedicate yourselves and all you have to God.

This is the change that must be made if you will live. That's a certain note, a certain note. So if you will be drunkards or fornicators or worldlings or live after the flesh, you may as well say plainly, we will be damned or you shall be unless you turn.

There's no intimation that Baxter believed that the question was not the sin question, but the son question. He clearly affirmed in these statements that no man can settle the son question who's unwilling to honestly face in the development of the theme of conversion. Ilion states that in true conversion, we turn from sin, the devil, the world and our own righteousness.

And again, we could set forth many quotes, but why did they do this? It's because again, their theology affected their message here. They believed Acts 5:31. God has exalted Christ with his right hand to be a prince and a savior to do what? To give repentance and remission.

They knew that one of the works of the risen Christ and only the omnipotent Christ can do it is to take the sinner who loves his sin, who drinks iniquity like water and turn to God. And the soft peddling of the biblical doctrine of repentance in our day, I'm convinced that tried to think this through and it's interrelationships is inseparably united to a denial of the truth that salvation is of God. For if man contributes to it, you better get demands that man can meet unaided by the Holy Ghost.

You follow me? Don't miss this. If man contributes to that salvation, then you've got to have a standard of demands and terms that man can meet unaided by the Holy Ghost. And it's just plain good horse sense.

If all I need to do to get to heaven is to nod to a few propositions about a man on the cross 1900 years ago, so that when I die, I go to be with him and I don't burn, that's just plain good horse sense to nod my head to those facts, isn't it? Jesus said, the rich so hardly enter the kingdom of heaven. I've thought about it along these lines. A man's usually rich because he knows how to handle money and make money, right? He's got a good business head.

Now, if salvation was simply nodding to some facts in order to assure me that when I die, and I know I've got to die, I won't have to face the consequences of my sin, why a rich man would be the most likely to get saved because he'd have the most keen sensitivity, that's just a good business proposition. Free insurance. Even got tracts that tell you that's what salvation is.

Isn't that right? But Jesus said, the rich man will hardly enter. Why? Because salvation involves not merely the nodding to some facts, but the forsaking of lust, the bowing of the heart to the sovereignty of Jesus. So they emphasize repentance, not with the embellishments of an orchestral arrangement, but with the simplicity.

Turn or burn. And then another area in which we see the distinctives of Puritan evangelism is in their concept of the magnitude of the work of conversion. The Puritans did not believe that true conversion was ordinarily the work of a moment, ordinarily, to be performed in an atmosphere of giddiness and lightness by one whose mind had not been brought to the place of deep sobriety and serious thought concerning the great issues of sin and eternity.

Listen to Baxter as he says, quote, oh sirs, conversion is another kind of work than most are aware of. It's not a small matter to bring an earthly mind to heaven and to show man the amiable excellencies of God, to

be taken up in such love to him that can never be quenched, to break the heart for sin and make him flee for refuge to Christ and thankfully embrace him as the life of his soul, to have the very drift and bent of his life changed and places his happiness where he lives not to the same end, drives not in the same design in the world as he formerly did. In a world, he that, in a word, he that, that's no small thing.

And that's no small thing. We find similar statements in Eileen's alarm. The following is but one of many that I could quote, quote, never think you can convert yourself.

If you would ever be savingly converted, you must despair of doing it in your own strength. It's a resurrection from the dead, a new creation, a work of absolute omnipotence. Are not these out of the reach of human power? If you have no more than you had by your first birth, a good nature, a meek and chaste temper, etc., you're a stranger to true conversion.

This, when our Lord Jesus finished dealing with a man, the disciples cried out in amazement, what? Isn't the plan of salvation simple? Now then, what they said when he got done dealing with a rich young ruler, what did they say? Threw their hands up and said, Lord, who then can be saved? And what was Jesus' answer? Matthew 19, 25. With men, this is impossible. But with God, all things are possible.

Then one last thing concerning the distinctive. They did not usurp the office of the Holy Spirit. One of the sad earmarks of modern evangelism, and when I use the term, remember, I'm not just talking about mass evangelism.

I'm talking about the proclaiming of the evangel in our tracts, in our personal work ministry, and in our classes on personal evangelism as well as mass evangelism. There is a continual attempt and an actual, it seems, though I would not impute false motives to this, some men probably do it in ignorance, but it seems to be a studied attempt to have everything so arranged that if God the Holy Ghost didn't come within a hundred miles, you still have something to show when you're done. Whereas the concept of Puritan evangelism and biblical evangelism is this, whether it's when the saints meet to worship or whether we proclaim the message, if Almighty God doesn't do something, nothing will happen.

That's what Paul meant when he said in 1 Corinthians 2, he said, when I came unto you declaring the testimony of God, I didn't come with enticing words of men's wisdom. Why? Listen to what he said. He said, I did not want your faith to rest in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

That's why he said I came in what? Weakness, fear, trembling, and I wasn't going to garnish the cross with beautiful flowers and cover its ragged, jagged splinters. He said I was going to come with a message and a method so offensive to the natural heart that unless my God broke out of heaven and opened so conscious I was that unless God came from heaven, all my past experience and the thousands of sermons I've preached and all the things I've seen didn't give me one bit of help. I stood before you trembling.

Ah, dear ones, I believe the Puritans had this in great measure. You read Eileen, I can't quote, I haven't even looked at the clock, probably shouldn't. I'll get convicted that I've gone too long.

But you read Eileen at the outset of this book, he says, Oh, God, what shall I do? The sinner is dead. His ears are deaf. His eyes are blind.

He's in the pool of sin. And he said, Oh, God, choose my arrows for me. Lord, how can break through? And he has an allusion there to the creature there, the Leviathan in Job, who has the hide so impregnable

that no instrument can pierce it.

But he said, Lord, how can pierce it with the arrows of thy truth? They didn't usurp the office of the Holy Ghost, either in the proclamation, the method. When it came time to apply the message to an individual, they didn't use this cute little syllogism. You admit you're a sinner.

Yes. Christ received sinners. Yes, you've got it.

You don't feel a thing. You don't know anything's happened. But believe me, you've got it.

Didn't do it. They shut men up to God till he told them. May I share something that has been one of the most precious experiences I've had as a father.

I was catechizing my son one evening, and we had gotten to the question again. What is a change of heart called? He said, regeneration. Who can change a sinner's heart? And he answered the Holy Spirit alone.

He said, Daddy, he said, I want God to give me a new heart. I said, well, that's good, son. He said, Daddy, if I pray to God, will he give me one? We went on the next question.

How can you obtain the help of the Holy Spirit? God has told us we must pray to him. He said, Daddy, I'm asking God to give me a new heart. And he said, Daddy, if I keep asking, God will do it, won't he? I said, yes, son, he's promised.

If you ask, you receive. If you seek, you'll find. And he said, Daddy, you can't tell me when he's done it, but he'll tell me, won't he? I tell you, dear ones, that all I do to keep from breaking down and weeping, I said, oh God, whether he's just parroting something I've told him or whether you've sent a little glimmer of light, I don't know.

But what he said is more sound Bible theology expressed in hundreds of evangelistic methods of our day. Beloved, I don't say these things cruelly, but you've got to look. I've got a little blood mixed with them.

Been privileged to be in meetings where the Spirit of God has been pleased to come and people have been under conviction, sometimes where there's been visible evidence of tears and deep concern. I refuse to create any impression that any overt act was to be identified with the inward reality of the reception of grace. So I wouldn't call them down an aisle or to a room, but tell them to seek God.

And if they had questions and needed help to get more light to come and would stay there till the break of day. But if they had all the right they had, I would know where to come under God by him. I've seen men of God write me off, count me cruel.

And I've handed him my Bible and said, my brother, when I stand before God, I'll be judged on the basis of the message and the method is found in this book. Please show me chapter and verse, principle or precept. It hadn't been done yet.

This is why I'm prejudiced to my Puritan trend. For they encourage me to trust the Holy Ghost, to do his work of conviction, of illumination, of drawing to Christ and then of assuring sinners when he's done the work. Now, just quickly, what method of communication did they use? And here I would state that the matter of method will differ in age to age, according to gifts and style and the rest.

The man suggests three things that characterize the method by which the Puritans communicated this gospel that was doctrinal, symmetrical, scriptural. One that had a strong theism as a platform, used the law wisely, discriminatory in its application of truth, sounded a clear note of repentance, the whole Christ for the whole man, didn't usurp the work of the Spirit. How did they communicate it? Three things I would suggest.

Their communication was, first of all, reasonable. Secondly, it was affectionate or impassioned. Then I thought I had a third.

Let me check my general outline here. Now, those are just the two basic things that I had. When one reads the evangelism of the Puritans, he's stuck with the fact that they're addressing men as reasoning creatures.

They did not come to the unregenerate man with a barrage of pressure directly upon his will, but they are seeking to move the man by way of his understanding. As someone has pointed out in his comment on Doddridge's classic, quote, Doddridge addresses the intellect to shame his readers for their unreasonable neglect of God. By direct charge and natural analogy, he appeals to the conscience to produce conviction of sin.

His use of such argument, however, does not mean that like the rationalist of his day, he's forgotten the limitation. It is his contention that conscience is the voice of God to the sinner, and we continually meet with such phrases as, quote, I put it into your conscience, and, quote, is it so contrary to the plainest principles of common reason? You find this in Elyon's alarm. He tries to show men the unreasonableness of going on in an impenitent state.

The Puritans even dared to answer some of the thorny questions relative to the doctrine of election when they were proclaiming the evangelism. Convinced as they were that every excuse should be torn from the hand of the sinner so that he stands inexcusable before God, it's not surprising to find Elyon reasoning with the sinner in the following manner, quote, you begin at the wrong end if you dispute about your election, prove your conversion, and then never doubt your election. If you cannot prove it, set upon a present thorough turning.

Whatever God's purposes be, which are secret, I'm sure his promises are plain. How desperately do argue? If I'm elected, I'll be saved. Do what I will.

If not, I'll be damned. Do what I can. Perverse sinner, will you begin where you should end? Is not the word before you? What does it say? Repent and be converted that your sins may be blotted out.

What can be plainer? Do not stand still disputing about your election, but set to repenting and believing. Cry to God for converting grace. Reveal things belong to you.

In these, busy yourself. It is just as one has said, they who will not feed on the plain food of the word should be choked with the bones. Whatever God's purposes may be, I'm sure his promises are true.

Whatever the decrees of heaven may be, I'm sure that if I repent, there's not this plain ground for you. And will you yet run upon the rocks? Isn't that beautiful? Because they realized any mental barrier could stand as a block between the soul and its approach to Christ. And so they reasoned with the sinner.

They did as one eminent servant of God said we must do. We must grow with the stick of divine truth and beat every bush behind which a sinner hides until we're God in his nakedness. Why do we do that? Because we're cruel? No, because we know until he gets out from behind that bush, he'll never cry to be clothed in the righteousness.

So the Spirit has reasoned with them. They addressed truth to the mind. They did it by logical order.

They did it by specific naming of sins. It's interesting after Hylian gets through the first 60 pages of his book and you say, my, he's just clobbered all of us. Then he says this when he starts chapter four, while we keep aloof in general statements, he's given those 10.

Yes, he's given the 10 outward marks, the 12 inward marks. And now he says, while we keep aloof in general statements, there's little fruit to be expected. It's the hand fight that does the execution.

David is not awakened by the prophets hovering at a distance in parabolical insinuations. Nathan's forced to clothe with him and tell him plainly, thou art the man. When I read that, I said, Lord, how much closer can you go than just talking? Logical order, specific naming of sins, and then the pressing of questions upon the conscience.

This is something that has struck me, that all the great masters of Puritan evangelism and those who've drunk of the same wells learn to use the question as a probe to conscience. Hylian in some places has whole pages of questions. Let me just take several sentences out of page.

Is it a reasonable thing for you to contend against the Lord? Is it reasonable that an understanding preacher should lose, yea, live quite against the very end of his being? Is it reasonable? Does it make sense? How is it with your soul? You see, probing the mind with the question, forcing conscience to do his work. The Puritan believed that the handle that he had in the dead sinner was his conscience. Only God could do the saving work, but he did it by means of the truth.

I had a man who claimed to be a Calvinist say, after I delivered this paper elsewhere, he said, well, you talk like you believe we ought to preach and so the whole work depends. I said, my dear brother, you and I are called upon to employ every means of the instrument he's put in our hands to study and pray continually. God, how can I communicate the truth to sinners? Packer says in his book, love is enterprising, and if I love sinners, I'll be enterprising to find every legitimate tool that the Holy Ghost has given me to somehow stab and wound the sinner's heart that God might bring into himself.

And a man tells me he loves souls and just goes on week after week saying, naming a few sins and only categorizing people in big general globs and not seeking to be discriminating, that man has no love for souls. Now the ability to do this may be somewhat varied according to gifts, experience, background, but if there isn't a burning attempt to do it, it's because we've got a cold and we don't love sinners. If I saw men in some kind of dire physical plight, not all would be rescued by the exact same means.

If I had any love for them, I would do everything in my power to learn every single means and use it to rescue as many as I could. I believe this is what God wants us to do. Remember what Paul said? The same Paul who said, when it pleased God who separated me from my mother's womb and called me, the same Paul who wrote Romans 9 said, I am become all things to all men that are... Why did he do it? Love is enterprising.

As I said to my people, put in that 20th century vernacular, when Paul saw a man over there, first thing he wanted to get was his ears. First part of any man's anatomy that Paul saw were man's ears. That's right.

Because he said, I've got a message that maybe God will send into the ears of his heart, but they won't go to the ears of his heart till they come to these physical ears. So he starts over to that man. He wants to get his ears and tell his message.

But he sees that in front of those ears is a big Jewish nose. So Paul takes his ham sandwich and he puts it back in his valise. Yeah.

You see, he doesn't come up to that man eating his ham sandwich because he knows that though in front of those ears is a nose, that those nose are attached to a feet. And if he comes up with a ham sandwich, the feet are going to go. And when they go, the nose is going to go.

And to my friend Aby, I become a Jew to the Jews. I only have my kosher food with me. Isn't that what he's saying? Why did he do it? Because he thought he could save the sinner.

No, he's the same. He knew that his task was to proclaim the message accurately to as many people and with earnest intrigue. And that leads me to the second point.

I'll not need to labor it there. Evangelism was affectionate or impassioned. It's a rare thing to find a ministry which both feeds the mind with solid substance and moves the heart with affectionate warmth.

That's a rare thing. Isn't it? That's what our brother Ernie was talking about. Solid substance, but warm overtones of truth.

And wasn't God good to give us a living demonstration of it last night? It's a long time since I've wept halfway through a sermon. And I asked myself later, did he tell any stories that were emotionally touching? Not a one. I even teach young preachers to use illustrations.

Brother Fletcher, you didn't use any last night. He's a close friend. He knows the spirit in which I said that he's my elder in the Lord, and I wouldn't want to be disrespectful.

But we've been together in meetings, and I believe George knows the spirit in which I said that. Was there that which had any natural way? No. What was it? Just the holding forth of the great and glorious doctrines of God's grace in Jesus Christ.

But somehow God the Holy Ghost came and sat on those words. And the time they come out of the mouth of His servant got into our hearts, and our heads were informed with solid substance, and our hearts burned with warmth by the Holy Ghost. That's a rare thing.

The Puritans, I think, captured that. At least I find when I read them, that's what happens. And they did it in their evangelism.

One who's reviewed Doddridge's Rise and Progress said, quote, one feels in reading the book his intense longing for the salvation of the sinner. He conveys this desire in the painstaking care with which he pursues the sinner into every corner of his carnal confidence. Isn't that good? Pursues the sinner, loves him enough to keep after him into every corner of his carnal confidence.

When one is done reading Eileen's Alarm, he's struck again with the clear application of this principle enunciated by Charles Spurgeon when he said, quote, I wouldn't be in if I didn't have one quote from Spurgeon. When I have shot and spent all my gospel bullets and have none left, and little effect seems to be made upon my ears, I then put myself in the gun and shoot myself at them. End of quote.

What did he mean? He meant he would just unzip his heart and plead. Robert Murray McShane wasn't a Puritan by name or by the time in which he was born, but in the doctrines he preached, in his discriminatory application of truth, the use of the law, he fits in here. Some of you perhaps have heard the story.

Someone went to the church where he preached and saw such blessing of God. And the old sextant was there who had been there when Robert Murray McShane was holding forth the word of life. And this man, awed by the sense that this was the place where there'd been such mighty visitations of God, was looking at the different parts of the church and the old sextant took him.

And the man said to the sextant, tell me, having been here, sat under this godly man's ministry, what do you feel was the secret? He said, my friend, go around, sit in that desk. So he did. He walked around, sat in the desk.

He said, now put your head over on the desk. He did. He said, now put your face in your hands and weep.

They walked out of the study. They went out into the sanctuary. And he stood in the pulpit from which Robert Murray McShane sounded forth the glorious gospel of our ever-blessed God and our Lord Jesus Christ.

And he said, you want to know the success, the secret of the success of his ministry? He said, lean over the pulpit. The man leaned over. He said, now stretch out your arm.

He said, now weep again. I sense this in Baxter, Eileen, Dodd-Rich, and even though the personality of the keen, logical Jonathan Edwards would perhaps not lend to the weeping of the eyes, you sense the weeping heart. Oh, beloved, may God give to me, give to you, that distinctive of Puritan evangelism.

And then, last of all, the means. What means were used? I won't go into these details. Perhaps the other things have been more important.

It was pastoral. They didn't make this distinction between an evangelistic sermon and an expository sermon, for the Bible is both an instruction book for the saints on their way to heaven and a guide for those in the broad road as to how to get into that narrow gate and get on the narrow way. And so you find wherever they could legitimately do so, there was the continual sounding out of these great notes of divine revelation.

It would seem that their ministry was not only pastoral, but occasional. It said of Eileen, by his wife, that in the latter days of his life he would preach anywhere from nine to fourteen times, seeming to indicate that when these men sensed that the place or upon the ministry of a certain man, then they would give themselves to more meetings. This would demand more historical study.

I'm not qualified to speak authoritatively in this area. Perhaps someone could do the Church of God's service by following through on this. And then thirdly, it was catechetical.

Baxter's comments are proverbial on the influence of catechetical instruction as a means of evangelism. Of Eileen, it is said that five days a week he followed up his work of Sunday and kept a list of all the people on the streets and catechized regularly. May I commend for your reading along this line of the benefit of catechetical instruction as an instrument of evangelism, an article by John Murray in *The Banner of Truth*, the compilation of their periodicals, volume two, and the last chapter in Shedd's book on pastoral theology and homiletics.

Two excellent articles. What was the result of such a method? In our day, when the quick results, many are responding, take note of this now, to an unknown Christ from a sense of unknown need in terms of unknown conditions. You got it? We're so intent upon quick results, people are responding to an unknown Christ from a sense of unknown need in terms of unknown conditions.

But Puritan evangelism was marked by its thoroughness, and the practice of catechizing was no small part of this thoroughness. I like to think of it in terms of a fireplace, and God says to us as his servants, lay the great logs of my truth in the minds of people. The fireplace is the human mind.

There's no warmth, there's no light from those logs, but they're there in the fireplace. You and I can't give any saving warmth or light to truth, but we can watch truth in the minds of others. And when God sends the fire of his own spirit, there's something to be ignited, and when it begins to burn, it isn't the quick puff of a piece of paper that's been thrown in in the spur of the moment, but it's the continuous glow and long-lasting fire of logs.

That's instruction, catechizing, laying the beams of truth, and calling upon God that he'll take that truth and give the light and warmth that only he can give. So beloved, he's not going to put the logs in there. I've got to do it.

It's my task. The mood or climate of their evangelism? Reverence, sobriety, and urgency. They didn't try to haplify people to Jesus.

They tried to sober them with the great claims of their Creator. The awful nature of sin, there's rebellion against him. But the wonder and the awe that this God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, for whosoever forsaking their own claims to righteousness, desire to retain that usurped crown upon their head, and willing once again for it to rest upon them, come in faith and repentance, that they shall find mercy.

And the mood of their evangelism, you sense, was one of reverence, of sobriety, and urgency. Baxter said, if there's anything, he said, I can't stand it. It's a preacher who tries to make me laugh.

There's a place for the occasional aside of humor, but when it's the studied effect of the history-on-turn preacher and the psychologist-turn-pulpiteer, it's an abomination in the sight of God. Well, I believe the Puritans can teach us much, and I trust that this paper tonight has helped us to want a drink of those wells of biblical principles that in our generation the evangelism that God has authorized may be proclaimed in the power of the Holy Ghost, and that we'll see great multitudes coming, strict and broken, and falling before the foot of the Sovereign Savior. I'm confident in a group this size tonight.

There are some of you who've never been wounded by God's holy law, who've never been brought by the Spirit to bow to King Jesus, who extends mercy to sinners. And I entreat you tonight to seek the Lord while he may be found. Call upon him while he's near.

Speak him in a way of repentance and faith, and you have the promise of God that none is cheated in death.

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