

1: Preaching as Internal Interreligious Dialogue: A Harvard Case Study | Homiletic

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How to Inject Imagination into Your Preaching: Given that numbing lack of variety in form, it is no wonder many congregations and not a few preachers have grown bored with the sermon as the centerpiece of Protestant worship. Perhaps it is time to recover two elements that were once hallmarks of great preaching: Textual sermons begin with the text. The preacher chooses a single passage does not move beyond its original meaning. Topical sermons begin with a subject. Topical preachers take the gist of a text and develop a sermon around it, sometimes using several texts from various parts of the bible to support the topic. Both forms are good and certainly have their place. Yet there are many other sermon forms used by highly respected preachers of the past. He then uses elements of the story as symbols for the moral state of America, its leadership, and the church in the mid-twentieth century. King was a highly effective preacher who practiced something like Midrash, the Jewish tradition of interpreting a text imaginatively. This interpretive method sees a biblical text as laden with meanings, some yet to be discovered, and not merely as wagon used to carry a single theological proposition. This imaginative style of interpretation is very much in keeping with the holiness tradition of preaching I recall hearing years ago. Yet as preachers and their audiences became more intellectual, creative preaching was all but abandoned. Preachers became historical-critical scholars, and congregations came to expect Bible lectures on Sunday morning. Here are ten types of creative sermons that may push the preacher to greater imagination and creativity, and may help draw hearers deeper into the text. I recently heard a great allegorical message by Lenny Luchetti on the subject of the church, using the story of Jacob, Rachael, and Leah. Allegorical sermons work best with a familiar scripture, probably a narrative or perhaps a poetic text. Open letters sometimes appear as op-ed pieces in a newspaper, addressed to a prominent leader or celebrity. Martin Luther King Jr. The open letter is a good way to address controversial topics without embarrassment to the hearer because the communication is ostensibly directed at a third party. Monologue A monologue casts the preacher the role of a character from Scripture, literature, or history. The preacher remains in character for the entire sermon, which is a speech delivered by that character to the audience. The preacher might choose to appear in costume as well. The advantage of a monologue is that it instantly creates a dramatic setting and hooks the reader. Monologue can be difficult because it calls for the preacher to maintain the character and recite the entire message. Dialogue A dialogue is similar to a monologue except that there are two speakers. In a dialogue, the audience of the message is the other person involved in the dialogue. A dialogic sermon can be done dramatically, with each speaker in character, or naturally, with the speakers as themselves. A dialogue can be a good way to explore a controversial or hard-to-understand subject because each speaker can present a different point of view and question the other speaker. Tag Team A tag-team sermon is similar to a dialogue in that there are two or more speakers but different in that the speakers address the audience rather than one another. In a tag-team sermon, the speakers simply take turns presenting elements of the message. People with different areas of expertise can make an effective tag team: This is more of a preaching technique than a sermon form. Even so, it requires a bit more creativity and imagination than a simple textual or topical message. Narrative A narrative sermon is a story told with running commentary by the preacher that adds insight, interpretive information, and application. The simplest method is to retell a Bible story while adding details, supplying thoughts or dialogue for the characters, describing the setting in more detail, and commenting on the principles, discoveries, or truths that emerge from the story. As people read less and depend more on audio and video for information, imaginative storytelling is likely to become a more popular form of preaching. It is similar to a narrative sermon but includes a broader story—“not just one episode but an entire life. Dramatic Reading Here the preacher reads a piece of literature adding dramatic emphases through voice, movement, and gestures. The reading could be a biblical text, a sermon written by another preacher, a poem, a story, or another literary form. The preacher

might briefly introduce the reading and may give a brief closing comment, but the real work is done by the text itself. I recently heard Steve Emery deliver a dramatic reading sermon on the subject of prayer. After a one- or two-minute introduction, Steve read the story verbatim, creating voices for the various characters, adding dramatic pauses, and using his deep bass voice to bring the story to life. It was highly effective.

Recitation In a recitation, the preacher quotes a piece of literature verbatim. It could be a passage of Scripture, a poem, or even another sermon. My father, Norman G. Wilson, occasionally recites the Sermon on the Mount as a sermon. His disciples came to him, and he began to teach them. People listen closely to a recitation, possibly to see if the preacher will do it perfectly! It is a remarkably effective way to get people deeper into a text. As such, nearly every sermon is an essay. A creative essay, however, takes the personal and literary nature of the form more seriously. While most textual and topical sermons are developed using conventional rhetoric, a creative essay may rely on personal narrative, creative imagery, literary quotations, or other methods. A creative essay might be used to critique a popularly held idea, to offer a manifesto, or to make observations on the current state of church or society. A creative essay would most likely be read verbatim. Textual and topical sermons will likely remain the staple of American preaching for some time. Yet the recent rise of narrative preaching demonstrates that audiences are now as suspicious of facile propositions as they once were of imaginative allegories. What is the most effective sermon you have heard or given?

2: Should preaching be in dialogue format? | Psephizo

Comment: International shipment available. A used item that may have some cosmetic wear (i.e. shelf-wear, slightly torn or missing dust jacket, broken spine, creases, dented corner, pages may include limited notes and highlighting, liquid damage) All text in great shape! will ship best condition whenever available.

Amos, the herdsman from Tekoa, declared that he prophesied not out of personal choice, but because God took him from following the flock and inducted him into the prophetic ministry Amos 7: Isaiah, the aristocrat, heard the voice of the divine Sovereign calling for a messenger and knew that the call was meant for him Isa. Micah felt that he was possessed by his message and the power to deliver it Mic. Jeremiah, the shy and sheltered youth of Anathoth, found himself conscripted into a position from which his timid nature caused him to shrink Jer. Ezekiel was set as a watchman over Israel in order that he might warn them to turn from their wicked ways Ezek. Lutterworth Press, , p. The prophets reveal the fount of their inspiration in the accounts of how they were led into the prophetic ministry. They lived constantly under the lengthened shadow of this initial experience with God. It affected the totality of their life-relationships. Prophetic Inspiration A consideration of that deep, inward, personal, spiritual experience by which the prophets were inducted into the prophetic ministry brings one face to face with the mystery of inspiration and revelation. That the prophets were organs of revelation and that they were inspired by God is undeniable if one accepts the claims of the Old Testament as valid. The Hebrew prophets stepped forward on the stage of history with a word which they claimed to have received from God. Clarendon Press, , p. According to Philo, the revelation from God came to the prophet while in a state of mental unconsciousness and inactivity. The prophet was to the Spirit what a flute would be in the hands of a musician. The prophet was wholly passive while the divine Spirit was active and imparted to him that knowledge of the divine character which he chose to reveal. Harvard University Press, , II, Philo, no doubt, held these views of prophetic inspiration because he found that type of ecstatic phenomenon present in Greek thought and culture. James Hastings New York: Since Philo was attempting to interpret the Old Testament so as to show its similarity to the philosophy of Plato, it was only natural for him to interpret prophetic inspiration in Platonic terms to prove his point. The Hebrew would have thought in terms of the Spirit coming upon the individual and taking possession of his faculties. The experience of inspiration among the great Hebrew prophets was always considered a result of the divine initiative and was not sought as an end within itself. The view of prophetic inspiration held by Philo is definitely not Hebraic and therefore untenable if one would come to a genuine understanding of Old Testament prophecy. It is interesting to notice that the New Testament is silent as to the manner in which God spoke to the prophets. It simply says that prophecy is of divine origin 2 Pet. In rejecting the opinions of the Montanists, who looked upon the state of inspiration as being a condition of ecstasy and madness, Origen believed that the prophets received their oracles while in complete possession of their rational consciousness. Davidson, Old Testament Prophecy, ed. Clark, , p. He speaks of the prophets as men of the highest type of moral character who were selected by God to be the depositories of his holy oracles. The view of inspiration held by the Apologists prevailed in the church, with only slight modification, until some time in the nineteenth century, when a new interest in prophecy was awakened by fresh investigations into Old Testament questions. In reaction to the findings of scholars who sought to study the Old Testament in its historical setting, Hengstenberg, an outstanding leader in the school of rationalistic-orthodoxy, in the first edition of his Christology of the Old Testament, reverted to the position of Philo and the early church. He taught that the prophets received divine revelations while in a state of complete ecstasy in which the rational powers were suspended, their own agency ceased, and they became completely passive under an overpowering of the Spirit of God; so as Philo says, the prophets were interpreters whose organs God used to impart his revelation. Hengstenberg, The Christology of the Old Testament, trans. Morrison, , first edition, I, In his second edition Hengstenberg modified his views but continued to hold that the prophets received their oracles from God while in a state of ecstasy. Hengstenberg went too far when he stated that all of the prophetic oracles came while in a state of ecstasy. This cannot be proved from the Old Testament records. Hengstenberg and the school of rationalistic-orthodoxy made the

same mistake that the Apologists made, only in another direction. The Apologists said that the prophets experienced no ecstasy, and then Hengstenberg said that ecstasy was a distinguishing characteristic of the prophetic state. There are some scholars who like to emphasize the fact that the prophets were religious geniuses. Prominent among these is C. Of these religious experts, Dodd says that it is possible to study their antecedents and environment and to account for the direction which their genius took, but that it is impossible to define that unique quality which made them prophets. Christ is said to be the supreme religious genius and the climax to a great succession of religious experts. However, his emphasis on the divine initiative in this matter of inspiration and revelation is conspicuous by its absence. That the prophets were men of superior intellectual ability cannot be disputed. But let it be said that these prophets were not spokesmen of God just because they had superior intellects. Their oracles came to them as a result of something more than concentrated cogitations. This knowledge of God, as a result of the divine initiative in an act of self-disclosure, qualified them to speak as his interpreters. Clark, , pp. Some have thought of the prophets as mystics. Meek, Hebrew Origins 2d ed. Davis has said, There is a great difference between the mystic and the prophet. For the mystic, time is swallowed up in eternity. But for the prophet time still persists, but penetrated by eternity. Robinson contends that the very name nabi prophet implies ecstatic behavior, and that it would not have been used if the prophets had not been ecstatic. This is inconclusive, since the philology is more than doubtful and words have a history as well as a derivation. Harper Brothers Publishers, , pp. The Johns Hopkins Press, , p. That there was a large element of abnormality in the canonical prophets is unquestionable. But this does not necessarily prove that every prophetic utterance was given either while in a condition of ecstasy or as a result of an ecstatic experience. The real test of a genuine oracle was not its being an ecstatic utterance but rather its content. At no time did the great prophets consider an oracle as authentic just because it was ecstatic. The Old Testament records do not reveal a definite formula for receiving a message from God. Methodist Book Concern, , p. T and T Clark, , p. The prophets do not speak of a resolution or purpose, formed by themselves, to devote themselves to the prophetic ministry. They describe a moment in which they received a call from God. His Life and Times New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, , pp. The extraordinary religious experiences of the great prophets were not only emotional but had a content as of intelligible speech. This is a far cry from the religious experience of the ecstatic bands during the days of Samuel 1 Sam. The great prophets had an irresistible inner compulsion to deliver a message which they had received, and the message and the commission were parts of the same spiritual experience Hos. Its Life and Culture London: In trying to understand these experiences of the prophets, which happened over twenty-five hundred years ago, one must beware of beginning with some modern psychological explanation of prophetic phenomena and illustrating it with examples selected indiscriminately from the Old Testament at its various levels and even from pseudographical apocalyptic books. The Clarendon Press, , p. Certain allowances have to be made before the religious life of the prophets can be discussed in modern psychological terminology. To appreciate the Old Testament prophets properly, an understanding of the primitive Hebrew psychology is a necessity. Little had been done in this field until quite recently. Clark Clark, , but this work is by no means adequate in the light of modern research. Duckworth, , pp. Other scholars have accepted his main conclusions. On the other hand, some would ascribe the beliefs of the prophets in divine inspiration to an unscientific age when man did not bother to raise questions. Divine revelation will always elude complete comprehension by man. Concerning an understanding of this mystery. Robinson says, Our study of the prophets can shew us the experience of those who believed they stood in the council of God, what ideas they held of themselves and of Him, what apparent characteristics distinguished them from others. This is the province of psychology—the psychology of the Hebrews in general and of the Hebrew prophets in particular. But, fascinating as such studies are, they are only preparatory to the real thing. In the last resort, we shall know as much or as little of the prophetic consciousness as is the degree to which we share its essential and central experience. An actual examination of the call-experience, which is the very central core of the prophetic consciousness, should begin with these matters in mind. It was not an induction into an undefined ministry. Of necessity it was vitally connected with some particular occasion, because the Hebrews did not deal in abstractions as did the Greeks. The spiritual and the physical were inseparably connected in their experiences, the one merging into the other or else emerging

from it. The Westminster Press, , p. The call of God to Jeremiah is disappointing to those who love the spectacular and melodramatic. The account of how Jeremiah became a prophet of God, found in the first chapter of his prophecies, bears the marks of simplicity when compared to those of Isaiah and Ezekiel. Francisco, *Introducing the Old Testament* Nashville: Broadman Press, , p. The thirteenth year of the reign of Josiah, the boy king of Judah, was also the death-year of Ashurbanipal, king of Assyria. For better than a hundred years the fortune or misfortune of Judah had been dependent upon the will of the Assyrian ruler.

3: Biblical Dialogue Preaching

Dialogue is also useful in preaching as a way of enhancing community within the congregation. Dan Kimball, in his definitive description of the practice of the emergent church sees the sermon as an act that integrates the life and worship of the community together.

Before looking at how we might take the best of both together, two observations about monologue. First, those usually clergy who have theological training do have something valuable to bring to congregations. Christians who take their discipleship seriously want to know how to read the Bible well, they want to learn how to think through difficult issues, they want to grow in confidence in faith—and church leaders have theological resources which can address these questions. Preaching is key way in which such questions can be regularly addressed. I was in conversation yesterday with a well-known national Christian leader, and he commented to me how often Christians asked him their questions about the Bible—and where they can find answers. Knowledge is power, and although this power can be misused, it can be deployed to empower others. Second, monologue is far from dead in our culture, despite what claims about postmodern culture might suggest. Radio listening continues to grow, and Radio 4 regularly features monologues—shorter in Thought for the Day and longer in A Point of View, a minute monologue, often quite dense in ideas, repeated twice a week. And thousands of people regularly pay exorbitant sums to be subjected to extensive monologues lasting 2 hours or more—delivered by stand-up comics. So how can I add elements of dialogue to my monologue delivery of preaching? These are the things I and others have tried. First, and most easily, find a way of picking up questions arising from preaching, perhaps through small group leaders, or from conversation. A group from our 9 am service go to the local Costa for coffee, and if I am not contributing to the Tom Finnegan comments on the previous post: Encourage people after the service that you are open to talk to them about anything the sermon spoke to in their lives. Twitter is a more demanding way of doing something similar. Secondly, link your small group material with Sunday sermons by providing questions, study guides, and an opportunity for thinking about application. We did this for about two years at one point in our church in Poole. It can be very effective—but, be warned, it can feel like quite hard work. This offers all the benefits of dialogue, but does it in a controlled and managed way, so for example only those who feel confident about posing questions need be involved. I have quite often, when asked to speak on something related to how we read the Bible, offered an additional session like this afterwards; it gives permission for the persistent but unanswered question to be aired. The first half is a fairly standard but short non-conformist service, including songs, reading and sermon. However, they then split into different groups you choose which group. One of those groups is a discussion with the preacher. As a visiting preacher, I found this helpful. Again, these need to be managed well, including offered a way of asking questions anonymously. Paper and pencil, and a box to post questions in just ahead of time, works well for this. Finally, what about trying it? Make sure you manage the interaction well, and ensure that the conversation is not dominated by those with the biggest personalities. In my experience, this needs more preparation than a sermon in anticipating the range of possible questions, and confidence to engage them—but you save on the preparation involved in planning your delivery, such as writing notes. More from my site.

4: Preaching and Dialogue - Common Street Spiritual Center

Adding dialogue to monologue preaching June 16, June 15, by Ian Paul There has been some fascinating discussion in response to my two previous posts on why monologue preaching doesn't work and why dialogue preaching isn't practical.

This paper was first presented to the Evangelical Homiletics Society in October of Preaching can seem a little one-sided, particularly when the listener disagrees with what the preacher is saying. In the early years of my ministry I decided that I would preach directly to an area of controversy in the life of the church. I had the pulpit, which meant that I had all the power. One man was particularly upset about what I had to say. It does, however, illustrate the problem listeners can have with monological sermons. The listener has no way in. If the sermon is safe and all are in agreement, there might be little problem, but if the preaching is a little more adventurous in its intent and there is potential for dissension, the listener is shut out. This is one of the reasons so many find our preaching wanting. Preaching that ignores the listener will not seem relevant to the very ones the preacher wants to reach. Perhaps the time has come to encourage greater dialogue in the preparation and presentation of our preaching as a means of involving listeners more fully in the process. The Potential for Dialogue in Preaching The current interest in dialogue results, in part, from a broader cultural move toward a greater sense of inclusiveness and a deeper sense of humility among those who would speak to others. Postmodern winds have blown away the overconfidence felt by many public speakers, leaving in its wake a more tentative and open stance to listeners. This softer, more Socratic approach to communication may be less familiar to preachers, but it has now become a preferred means of knowledge acquisition Phillips , It works like this: In a real way the conversation has progressed Pagitt , At its best, this kind of communication is democratic, humble and has the potential for an exponential impact. Whether it is preaching, remains open to debate. Many preachers will find it difficult to go this far, perhaps because of principle, or perhaps because of the cultural expectations developed in our churches. There are several reasons, however, why a heightened attention to dialogue would be a welcome thing for biblical preachers. Dialogue is welcome because the listener matters. The listener has dignity in the communication process Anderson , and must be respected for her or his right to dissent or to enhance the sermon through insight or application that she or he is better positioned to provide. Increased dialogue in preaching would help us deal with power and authority issues in our preaching. Sermons that are given from the pulpit can tend toward a popish kind of power that gives a sense the sermon cannot be challenged or discussed McClure , Authority in the sermon is then located in the place of the pulpit and in the person of the preacher rather than in its proper location, which is the Word of God. There is hardly a preacher who wants her hearers to leave with the notion that they must access the truth of God through the preacher. But that is precisely the message speaking perpetuates: When communities are convinced they are better off with a unified understanding of God that is best articulated by trained presenters, we end up with people who cannot translate what they hear in church to the way they live their lives Pagitt, I find that the Baptist in me resonates with this concern. The sermon belongs to the people who as believers serve as priests to their own interest under the Chief Priest, Jesus Christ. The preacher, then, who oversteps his or her authority, makes it difficult for the listener to hear from God, own what is said, and ultimately apply its truth in life. Preachers, in short, need to get themselves out of the way. The place of the preacher is not as the eloquent and authoritative orator. It is as a fellow-listener, struggling to understand and to help others do the same. Dialogue can encourage this. Dialogue is also useful in preaching as a way of enhancing community within the congregation. Dan Kimball, in his definitive description of the practice of the emergent church sees the sermon as an act that integrates the life and worship of the community together. Ways to Engage in Dialogue in Preaching Dialogue in preaching is not new. Whether we want to go as far as Pagitt in terms of a major reconstruction of the sermon form, there are several ways to encourage a more dialogical approach. Many of these things have long described the best in biblical preaching. I am not, then, so much championing a new thing as I am encouraging a refocus on an aspect of our preaching that might be under-utilized. The following themes would help us increase or enhance the level of dialogue in our preaching of the Bible: It is in

the small group movement where dialogue truly reigns and as far as I am concerned, if the intent of the group leader is to help people hear and respond to God through the Scriptures, he or she is preaching. However, even in the traditional sermon, there could be room for some discussion. If he can do it in a church of that size, it might be possible for the rest of us as well. We could learn here from some of the teaching techniques normally reserved for the Sunday School classroom. Asking questions, utilizing incomplete questions, and other such techniques invite the response of those who listen. I think it important that preachers work to discern those problems and sticking points that listeners will bring to the things they hear from us. A sermon is never complete until the listener applies it. That is to say that the sermon is more than what the preacher says. It may be that the presentation of the sermon may be one-sided, but the truth is that the listener is participating whether it is evident or not. Listeners sift what they hear, retaining things that strike them as meaningful and intending those things that seem to them to be powerful in their life. So then, whether or not there is audible dialogue, there is internal dialogue for the listener at least. Preachers can encourage more of this by focusing on application. Inviting specific people to the platform at strategic points in the sermon to interview and give testimony are an excellent way of involving people in the process. Such people endorse the things the preacher says from the perspective of the listener. The interviewee becomes a kind of proxy for the rest of the listeners who feel a greater sense of inclusion as they listen. Increasingly, preachers are looking to others to enhance the process of sermon preparation. Others bring together teams of people from within the church – the preaching pastor meets with the powerpoint designer, the worship leader, and other trusted people to talk the sermon through in conversation. Enhancing a sense of dialogue can be as simple as adjusting the tone of the delivery. A sermon in the grand style that feels heavy and authoritative discourages participation by the listener. Simply changing from the second person to the first person plural makes a remarkable difference. Joseph Devito says that effective conversations are open, empathetic, positive, immediate, satisfying, and expressive Devito , Listeners can be encouraged to participate in the sermon through the taking of notes. Fill-in-the-blank handouts can be helpful as long as they are not too prescriptive. Some people like to take detailed notes on the sermon outline. Others prefer a more personal journal-like written response. Still others find value in purposeful doodling, storyboarding the sermon as it progresses. Instead of note-books, perhaps we could give out sketch-books or modeling clay to those so inclined. Offering the listener opportunity to evaluate the sermon is another way of giving an opportunity for dialogue if only after the fact. While preachers can find this intimidating, we will give the opportunity not only to help us improve our skills, but also to give the listener a meaningful channel through which they can share the things they are thinking about what they have heard. Not many years ago in the churches that I preached it was common practice for the congregation to sit down politely after the final hymn so that the preacher could make his way to the back door so as to shake the hands of everyone there. Sheer numbers make this impractical in many churches today. I feel a certain loss in this. Some of the best dialogue I have had with people is in the immediate aftermath of listening to the sermon. Whether or not the preacher stands at the door, it is important that the preacher is accessible somehow to hear from those who have listened. Deliberate channels of communication need to be made available to the people or they will feel distanced and personally irrelevant. The Limits of Dialogue So far, this paper has been largely positive in its encouragement toward finding ways, perhaps incremental, to enhance the dialogical nature of our preaching. There are, however, limits. While dialogue invests authority in the various participants, this investiture is not always warranted. I remember asking my father about the adult Sunday school class in our church when I was still a boy. Not being of sufficient age, I had never been able to attend, but I was curious as to what happened there, given the size and popularity of the class. While wisdom is sometimes gained through an abundance of counselors, sometimes more voices simply add to the noise. Effective dialogue requires the intention of a focused leader who comes purposefully to the event with the idea that we will learn specific things. It may be the discussion surprises with insight not anticipated, but this does not obviate the preacher from the obligation to lead. Preaching is, in many ways, a leadership function and the best preachers come prepared to lead the people to an understanding and application of the things that God is saying in his Word. Preachers need to lead intentionally. They need to come with an agenda. This is what we mean by proclamation. Preachers are pro-claimers, which is to say that they have a message in mind and they

intend to be persuasive. It may be that the traditional form of the sermon might be more efficient in this regard than a more open dialogical approach. A well-conceived monologue allows the preacher to control communication such that the impact of the message is intended and deliberate. The best preachers come purposefully with something to proclaim. Limiting dialogue can ensure that the sermon remains locked into the purposes the speaker has in mind without straying off topic toward interesting irrelevancies or even to an alternate or dangerous understanding of the nature of the truth. For example, the last many years have seen the development of an interest in dialogue between religions. It is felt that through such open conversation, greater understanding can develop that can only be productive in the pursuit of the common ends desired by spiritually concerned people everywhere. Dialogue, in these cases, could keep us from killing each other. It could also have the effect of changing us in ways not imagined. Further, to engage dialogue dishonestly, without an openness of heart and mind toward the other seems neither fitting nor fair.

5: Preaching as Dialogue – Integrative Preaching

Progressional Dialogue & Preaching: Are They the Same? 5 Interestingly, I tried to access this statement again when writing this article (July/August of).

Encourage people after the service that you are open to talk to them about anything the sermon spoke to in their lives. Connect the sermon series with what is happening in small group Bible study during the week because small groups are the most practical place for dialogue. I tried a dialogue sermon when I was in Bible college and, even with fellow students who are theologically educated the major downside was that I had put in hours of preparation and they had put in none – except for one who I had primed in advance to bring a useful insight into the Greek text because his language skills were far superior to mine. This highlights the major downside of dialogue preaching unless you can get everyone to do some preparation. You can see the videos here: I had really hoped that we might have got away from a model of ordained ministry where the minister is the only person who has vision and everyone else just follows them. On sermon forms – which is where we started! Rick Stordy Reply Ian as ever this has been a very provocative and thoughtful challenge to much of what we do in our preaching. Can I join in slightly to the push-back in terms of a plea for at least some thoughtful, prayerful monologue within gathered worship? I say this I think from both a systematic-theological and liturgical viewpoint. The wisdom of the church down the centuries has been by the centrality of word and sacrament: I wonder if the prayerful exposition of Scripture is not itself a sacramental act? In other words, it embodies the address of God to his people? And though there quite a few places where God enjoys dialogue with human beings in Scripture, primarily he speaks, we listen. Is that not best symbolised by at least some monologue in our gathering, where we humbly shut up for a while, even if before a further discussion? And arguably our world is over-full of voices – however well-informed or otherwise witness the EU Referendum debate. Might we not model something different in the church, namely: David Shepherd Reply Rick, And though there quite a few places where God enjoys dialogue with human beings in Scripture, primarily he speaks, we listen. Part of that at least I would hope would include a monologue of some kind. I have a feeling that somewhere else on this blog Ian has referred to research that suggests many churchgoers want more meaty, thoughtful sermons – not less! Perhaps the answer to bad monologues is not none, just better. In the gospels, when describing the vast following which Jesus attracted, the word, multitudes, is used 80 times. By contrast, the capacity of first-century synagogues has been estimated at around So, I believe that the most significant factor in deciding on how far one can introduce dialogue is the size of the audience, and several here have provided approaches for dealing with that. Certainly, beyond employing them rhetorically, Christ who is indeed the model for all preachers was completely comfortable in responding to questions from all quarters, in a public forum and regardless of the motivation of those who posed them. We need to challenge ourselves to develop that level of reliance upon the Holy Spirit to encourage and respond to all kinds of questions. This is the kind of exemplary faith that, even under hostile inquiry, believes in the Holy Spirit. As Christ put it: When you are brought before synagogues, rulers and authorities, do not worry about how you will defend yourselves or what you will say, for the Holy Spirit will teach you at that time what you should say. Thanks for your further thoughts! Bernard Randall June 16, at That age comment was specifically about the idea of having the comments of the congregation tweeted in and projected on a big screen in church, live, as the sermon is taking place. Younger people might cope with the multitasking implied in listen-tweet-read-tweet again, older ones not so much, I think. Apart from on Psephizo, of course. Stephen Harrison Reply At my parish church in rural Gloucestershire we are currently without an incumbent and rely on the usual mix of retired clergy and keen lay folk to lead our services. Gradually over the past twelve months, under the guidance of one of the retired clergy, the sermon element of this service has morphed in to what could be more accurately described as a Bible Study session. We concentrate on the Gospel reading for the forthcoming Sunday main service. People come having read the passage beforehand, some even with notes they have made. If this is dialogue rather than monologue it is certainly working for us. Rick Stordy Reply David of course I take your point about the sermon not being

scripture â€” though I am probably not alone in praying and hoping that when a sermon faithfully unfolds Scripture it is, albeit in a less strong sense, the Lord speaking to his people, along the lines of 2 Peter 4: Much as Jesus himself used plenty of interaction at least in some parts of the Synoptics compared with John , there are also plenty of extended monologues in his own teaching styleâ€¦ Rick Stordy.

6: Adding dialogue to monologue preaching | Psephizo

Preaching must involve dialogue, he saysâ€”but it is an inner dialogue, where the preacher imagines and anticipates what his or her listeners might be thinking or wanting to say. The difficulty here is that this is not in fact a dialogue!

7: The Prophetâ€™s Call â€” A Dialogue With God: As Seen In Jeremiah | Preaching Source

Dialogical Preaching (part 1) Letting the audience have a say in the sermon. Bob Hyatt. See theme. Editor's note: This quarter, PreachingToday has focused on the idea of group sermon preparation.

8: Sermons about Dialogue - www.enganchecubano.com

Before going on to explain why I believe this about the act of preaching, I'd like to chew on the monologue versus dialogue issue for a moment. As many of you know, and even experienced, among some Christian circles preaching-as-monologue is being replaced with preaching-as-dialogue.

9: Preaching: Monologue or Dialogue? | Ray Fowler .org

The preaching task is rooted in the greater task of the Church's dialogue with the world. As a servant to dialogue, the preacher shares intimately in this task.

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