

The Christian Worldview Transcript

Date: October 3, 2009

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Guest: Dr. Joel Beeke

Topic: What Made the Greatest Preachers Great

DAVID WHEATON: What Made the Greatest Preachers Great. That is the topic for hour one here on The Christian Worldview where the mission is to think biblically about all matters of life and faith so that we can then live accordingly. And to share the Good News that Jesus Christ is who He claimed to be, the Way, the Truth and the Life and that His Word is both relevant and our basis for living in this modern world. I am David Wheaton, the host of The Christian Worldview, which airs every Saturday live from 8 – 10 a.m. Central time, 9 – 11 a.m. Eastern on 167 stations across this country. Our official website is thechristianworldview.com.

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So glad you joined me this morning. It feels like fall up here in our home station AM 980 KKMS in the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul. We are getting a nice leaf change already. I hope you are having a nice fall wherever you are across this nation.

What Made the Greatest Preachers Great. That is the topic for hour one today. This topic spawns from a conference I went to last week. I know I was talking about that last week, going down to the Expositors Conference in Mobile, Alabama at Christ Fellowship Baptist Church. This is the church of Dr. Steven Lawson. You remember him. He has been on the program several times and is always one of the best guests and great expository preachers.

Earlier this year when I was at the Ligonier Conference, which is R.C. Sproul Ministries in Orlando, Florida, there were two nice southern ladies sitting behind me, older ladies, probably in their 70s or even early 80s. I hope I am not getting their ages wrong, maybe 60s, maybe I should err on that side. They were sitting behind me in the third row. I would sit in the second row every day of the conference at Ligonier. They were from Dr. Lawson's church at Christ Fellowship Baptist in Mobile. I struck up a conversation with them between speaking sessions down there. They said, you have to come down to our Expositor's Conference in September. I had never even really heard of the Expositor's Conference. I didn't even know they had one, but they informed me about it. They went home and they told some of the Elders in their church and lo and behold I got an invitation this summer to come down and attend the conference, so Brodie and I went down last week. I have to say, it was really fantastic.

I say that it was fantastic, because it really gave me a glimpse into how powerful expositional preaching is. I am going to explain exactly what that is if you haven't heard what expositional preaching is. How powerful that really is in a church. How a church is put together and formed, the service, the Elders and the members and so forth. We just had a wonderful time down there. We stayed with a family from the church, the Atwells. Richard is an Elder at the church. Talk about Southern Hospitality. Brodie and I felt so welcomed during our four days down in Mobile and we just really enjoyed meeting them and the rest of the members of the church. The staff was just so hospitable. We enjoyed the southern food. We were eating grits and doing the whole southern thing, us northerners were down there last week. We had a great time.

The Expositor's Conference, the subtitle of the conference was, The History of Expository Preaching From the Reformation to the Present. Now if you haven't ever heard someone preach expositionally you might think that sounds kind of boring, what is that about? Going down to a pastor's conference and hearing two different well-known preachers, Dr. Steven Lawson and Dr. Joel Beeke, he is coming on the program, by the way, at half past the hour today. He is the President of Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary. He is the author and co-author of up to 60 books. He is a publisher of a major publishing house as well. Both of them, Dr. Beeke and Dr. Lawson, were the speakers at the conference. It was about 100 – 125 pastors or people in church leadership who were there from all around the country; even internationally people came in for this.

It was somewhat to John MacArthur's Shepherd Conference, only smaller, but no less powerful in what was being spoken from the pulpit. They divided it into different eras from the Reformation to the present. It started out being the preaching of the Reformers. That was where Dr. Lawson featured Martin Luther and John Calvin. That was on Monday evening. Then Dr. Joel Beeke talked about the preaching of the Puritans. There was a part one on Monday evening and part two on Tuesday morning. Then Dr. Lawson went on to the preaching of the Great Awakening, which was during the early 1700s with Jonathan Edwards and George Whitfield. The Reformation, of course, was during the 1500s, the Puritans were mainly in the 1600s and the Great Awakening with Jonathan Edwards and George Whitfield was in the 1700s.

He was highlighting two or three of the prominent expositional preachers during that time and giving distinctives of why their preaching was so powerful, which was meant to be an encouragement and a push for the pastors who were there to go home to their own congregations and do the same thing that these preachers of the past had done.

He went from the 1700s then to the 1800s, Dr. Lawson gave a lesson on Archibald Alexander who was the first president, I believe it was, of the Princeton Seminary. And then also Charles Spurgeon, who preached so powerfully during the 1800s. He went on to the 1900s and that was the preaching of Dr. Martin Lloyd Jones and James Montgomery Boyce.

After hearing Dr. Lawson and Dr. Beeke preach on all these different preachers, the great preachers of the past, and seeing some of the distinctives of the shared commonalities between these various preachers from different generations. Most of them didn't know each other. They were living in different centuries. Seeing the commonalities of the way they preached, really enforced in my mind that expository preaching, inside the church, is the way there will be revival in this country.

There is nothing wrong with fighting the political battles. Those are just battles. The way to win the war, the way there is going to be revival in people's hearts, the way that there is then going to be revival in the land is through expository preaching.

I talk about expository preaching in a sense that simply it is a preacher who goes book by book through scripture, passage by passage, verse by verse, line by line. It is consecutive preaching. Let's say starting with the book of John. You start with chapter 1, verse 1, read a passage and then go verse by verse and explain it. So it is read it, explain it, apply it and repeat.

You will see this is the characteristic of all these preachers of the past. They didn't flit from passage to passage and preach on topics they felt were going to be helpful for the congregation. They knew the Word was extremely exhaustive in what it dealt with. They know that as they preach through books, they were going to preach in all different types of topics. They were going to let God's Word be spoken out the way it was written down. It would cover all kind of different topics and they would eventually get to everything they needed to get to. Nothing would be avoided. It's line-by-line, precept upon precept, literal, grammatical and historical interpretation of scripture. Not deconstructing the Bible to make it culturally relevant for the day, just preaching from the pulpit.

This expository preaching, rather than sort of a narrative, topical, which can be effective in some situations. I am not saying you never tell stories, they would tell stories from the pulpit, but there is a plan of starting and preaching through scripture verse by verse and covering great books. This was what the great expository preachers of today have been characterized by. People like John MacArthur, R.C. Sproul, Dr. Lawson. These are expository preachers. I just realized how this is really the key. The key to revival in the land is going back to good expository preaching in the church.

The reason I think that is that we are a representative democracy or representative republic or constitutional republic. In other words, we the people are the ones we send to represent us in state and federal government. You look at the situation in the land today and for many Christians we think well how can this be going on? The people who are representing us don't represent our values. Unfortunately they do represent your values because you are the minority right now. As the country has become ever more increasing in its secular, humanistic worldview, then that is who the people elect because they see candidates who think like them and they elect them.

That is why we have people like President Barack Obama in office with his administration who has a very humanistic non-biblical worldview when it comes to governmental policies. Even here in Minnesota we have someone like Al Franken. You think how can Al Franken a comedian from Saturday Night Live with an unbelievably humanistic worldview get elected? Was it voter fraud? Was it Acorn? Well maybe that had a part to do with it here in Minnesota, but that doesn't explain the other 48% of the votes he was able to get. So you have a people who either have a total lack of discernment about what the Constitution calls for in our political leadership or you have a people who actually agree with the worldview of who they vote into office.

So the question is, how do you change that? How do not only want to change the land, but how do you change individual hearts? You could try to do it from a top down approach and wage all the political battles and try to overpower the other side with voter drives and picketing and all this kind of stuff. Not that these battles don't need to be waged, because they do, but the more powerful, important, effective way, I can see, is through expository preaching in the church. Getting back to our churches being stronger. Operating more biblically with the elders and even church discipline. Ever heard of that? That is something that is one of their distinctives of Christ Fellowship and many other churches who adhere to a biblical framework for how the church should operate.

So when you have this expository preaching in the church, it revives, it transforms the people who hear it because the word is supernatural. People are regenerated. They are saved. Then you know what? They get an informed, political worldview because of their Christian worldview. Their values politically will then match up much more with what they believe based on what they are preaching in the church. They don't need to preach about politics.

When you preach the Word of God in church, people's worldview develops and all of a sudden they understand that there is a lot about personal responsibility and my own moral choices, my own personal life and therefore I shouldn't be looking to government to be the arbiter or morality and be dependent upon them. It is sort of the counter-intuitive way of change in the land is through stronger preaching in the churches.

What we are going to do is, starting in the next segment; I am going to give you seven things. There are a lot of notes I took last week down there from all these different preachers. From the Puritans to Luther and Calvin to the great awakening with Edwards and Whitfield, I have about 20 pages of notes. I couldn't possibly condense it into just one segment. But I did break it down into seven things that I saw that were similarities between each of these great preachers of the past that I think would be something that would be important for the pastors of our churches today to be able to grasp.

Then I am going to ask a question. The question is this, what can we do to encourage a new generation of great expository preachers? We are only going to have one segment to answer that question because Dr. Beeke is going to come on in half past this hour. So I am going to ask this question and I am going to give the phone number and I am going to give my seven points in the next segment. The question is, what can we do to encourage a new generation of great expository preachers?

(break)

DAVID: We are talking today about What Made the Greatest Preachers Great. If you just joined the program, I just returned from the Expositor's Conference last weekend down at Christ Fellowship Baptist Church in Mobile, Alabama. Their website is christfellowship.cc. I believe they put up the audio from all the messages from the conference either at that website, christfellowship.cc or newreformation.org. If you want to have an incredible time of spiritual growth, download those messages and just over the next couple of weeks with your family or by yourself, just listen to them one by one. It would really radically alter the way you see the church, the way you see scripture and it would certainly take you to a different level of spiritual growth just by hearing the Word of God preached.

It is wonderful to read the Word and you should, but it is through the preacher, through the pulpit that people are moved, hearts are changed, the land is revived. That is what I really took away from this conference last week. We will get to our phone callers in just a second. We will try to get to as many as we can in this segment before Dr. Joel Beeke, the President of Reform Theological Seminary, who is one of the two speakers at the conference, he will be coming up in just a few minutes on the program.

I wrote down seven things. I have a lot of notes here. Basically what they would do is, Dr. Lawson would take about the preaching of, let's say, the Great Awakening back in the 1700s in the United States. He went over Jonathan Edwards. He went over George Whitfield, who, of course, was the great evangelist. He traveled from town to town on horseback and preached before thousands of people. People were just unbelievably changed and souls were saved and so forth. Jonathan Edwards, we talked about him this summer on the program. He preached sinners in the hand of an angry God, wrote books and just was a very powerful preacher back in that same time period.

So he would talk about the distinctives of that time period, the preaching there and then, of course, the distinctives of the commonalities of how these men actually preached. Going through all of them and thinking about them, I wrote down seven things that I saw from these and then we will take your phone calls as to what we can do to encourage a new generation of expository preachers.

Number 1: All of these men had a very high view of scripture.

Thus says the Lord, this is the Word of God, this is Truth, this is inerrant, this is inspired, this is supernatural, this will transform your life. Because of the supernatural nature of scripture and the fact that it has a supernatural message, life transforming message, an eternity-transforming message of salvation through repentance and faith in Christ. So they had an incredibly high view of scripture. There was no, well let's change it to make it relevant for people. No. They just preached the Word. They knew that they were just the messengers and the Word is the message. That is number 1.

Number 2: They treated the skill of preaching with great sacredness.

In other words, they knew they were in a God-ordained position and didn't treat it lightly. They knew the pulpit was so key and had such a great weighty responsibility to get it right. These men were sober-minded. They were studious. They were prepared when they got up to the pulpit. It wasn't some little twenty-minute sermonette for christianette, as they say. Making you kind of feel good on Sunday. No. These were sixty, seventy-minute sermons going through the word of God. Their audiences would be spellbound, because the Word of God, when it is preached this way, just supernaturally moves people. So high of a view of scripture. Treated their preaching with great sacredness.

Number 3: They preached all of scripture expositionally.

In other words, they didn't pick and chose topics based on what is going on in the news or what they thought people wanted to hear at a specific time or some felt need that they needed to address. They knew that those things would be addressed if they just faithfully preached through scripture. A great example of this was John Calvin. He preached over in Geneva. I think he was in Isaiah. He was on the 32nd chapter and he was preaching it and he was let go from his church. He was gone for two years. Two years later he was brought back. Do you know where he started? The very next verse. They preach expositionally, consecutively, line by line. So high of a view of scripture. Treated their preaching with great sacredness. Preached all of scripture, they didn't pick and chose.

Number 4: They were doctrinally sound.

Doctrine was something they preached. It wasn't meant to be, well that's going to bore people. No, doctrine was the point. They wanted people to have sound doctrines in their hearts because they knew that doctrine is going to affect their behavior. It is characterized by the doctrines of grace, the grace of God and salvation, the grace of God and sanctification. It was very much characterized by that.

Number 5: All of the preaching of these great preachers was God-glorifying, Christ-centered, Spirit-empowered.

Not only did they preach that, but they lived it as well. They have a very high view of God. They never left our Christ from their sermons. They knew that this is ultimately why we preach. We preach to glorify God, to

magnify Christ as the world's Savior and as his Lord. They were, of course, empowered by the Holy Spirit. That is why it was so powerful.

Number 6: Their messages were always plain.

It wasn't a high sounding kind of rhetoric that people couldn't understand. It was a plain message, practical application and always evangelistic. It was always about saving souls. It was never just about feeding just the believers in the church, but if there was anyone who was an unbeliever there, they never forgot about that. There was a gospel message in almost all their sermons.

Number 7: It was bold preaching.

All of these men were characterized and marked by a great passion, a great boldness and a great courage.

So as I look through all my notes, those were the seven things I saw. The question is what can we do to encourage a new generation of great expository preachers?

Let's go first to Nashville, Tennessee and Paul. Paul, welcome to The Christian Worldview. What can we do to encourage a new generation of great expository preachers? Go ahead Paul.

Paul: One of the things is that a lot of people don't realize what it actually is. My wife and I are fairly new Christians. We were going to a church where we were just getting topical, the things of the day. We knew there was something more, so we started looking around. We found a church, a PCA church. I spoke with the preacher and he had been on Acts for two years. So we went and listened to him on a Sunday because we were looking for something new, something to be fed. He was starting in Philippians. He preached Philippians verse 1 and 2 and preached for an hour on those two verses. We came away totally blown away. We have been telling everybody. I think that is how you get the word spread. You have to go out and tell people to stop listening to the stories and start listening to expository preaching. It is the only way you can learn.

DAVID: You know Paul, I am so glad you called today. I can feel the passion and excitement in your voice. That's exactly the way I came away from this conference. That is a great point. Develop your own appetite for expository preaching and share it with others. That is what he is saying. That is what happens. That is one of my points. When you take it in like this, you get excited. All these messages down there were sixty or seventy minutes long. You think, wow, can I sit through a message that long? When the supernatural, inspired, inerrant Word of God is being preached that way in a doctrinally sound matter, you are riveted and it changes you.

Let's go next to Ocean, New Jersey and Ken. Welcome to The Christian Worldview Ken. What can we do to encourage a new generation of great expository preachers?

KEN: One of the things I noticed is, I am a Bible student, I go to Philadelphia Biblical University and one of the things I have seen is that a lot of people who aren't believers in Christ, they have an opinion, but really have no knowledge. They have their own version of what it is. What I always try to challenge them is if you are going to be a judge, you should see all the evidence. God has blessed me with a small Bible study and I started with Matthew because they had no foundational skills. I said all right, we will start with Matthew and really build those blocks up. One of the things that God brought into my life was Chuck Smith. I heard him on the radio and I got his sermons. I probably learned more about the book of Acts just listening him teach to his congregation on my Ipod. Really how I feel we should encourage is when I find people who are challenging me I try to offer to them by saying, what do you know about the book of Galatians?

DAVID: Ken I want to let you go. I want to get to one more person. I know of Chuck Smith. I have not heard him preach, but if he is preaching expositively, that is a winner. Let's go to Salt Lake City, Utah. Sean, what can we do to encourage a new generation of great expository preachers?

SEAN: I was just going to say that a lot of those old teachers, I read them very frequently. One common thing that they have is that they teach on sin. We are all sinners. If that is not there, then we can't understand what the scriptures say and they are teaching false doctrine and everybody received false doctrine.

DAVID: That is a great point. When you preach expositively, you preach all the doctrines of scripture, not just the love and encouragement side of God, but also sin and the wrath and the righteousness of God. This is David Wheaton. Dr. Joel Beeke coming up next.

(break)

DAVID: There is no excuse today for not growing spiritually with the amount of resources out there available to us just on the internet alone. There are so many things you can download and be feeding yourself throughout the week. One of the biggest things I hear is I can't find a good church, there is nothing my region or area. My pastor just preaches light sermons and doesn't preach the whole council of God. That is sad and do what you can to change that, but in the meantime, get online. Listen to the radio. Hear some of the great, godly, doctrinally sound expository preachers. It will change your life in more ways than one.

Dr. Joel Beeke is now joining me. He is the President of Puritan Reform Theological Seminary. He is also the author, co-author or editor of 60 books, including one we will talk about briefly today, called *Meet the Puritans*. He is the pastor of Heritage Netherlands Reform Congregation in Grand Rapids, Michigan. He is also the Editorial Director of Reformation Heritage Books. Dr. Beeke thanks for coming on The Christian Worldview. When do you have time to sleep?

DR. JOEL BEEKE: It is great to be here David. It was great to meet you last week too.

DAVID: Brodie and I really enjoyed spending time with you and Mary. That was such great fellowship and we enjoyed your preaching so much too. I wanted to talk today about some of the things you mentioned last week. But before we get to the actual conference itself, you preached at Christ Fellowship on Sunday morning, two messages there, and Sunday evening as well. Just one quick question on one of your messages that I thought was particularly powerful about being a contagious Christian. Could you summarize for us how does one become a contagious Christian?

DR. BEEKE: Well, contagiousness, of course, is not something we can produce by ourselves. But when the Spirit of God works in us and makes us truly conformed to the Lord Jesus Christ and we then seek to live that out in our daily lives, in every aspect of our lives, every minute of our lives then the Holy Spirit often uses that in the lives of other people so that other people look at us and say, that man or that woman or that teenager has something I don't have and that is something I need. A close intimate walk with the Lord and real love for the souls of other people. So in that way, our lives can be contagious.

What I preached on Sunday morning was the contagiousness of Daniel's life and how he continued for more than 70 years in Babylon through four different kingships and through a whole bunch of attempts to plot against his life.

DAVID: It was a fantastic message. Even those messages before the conference were just as memorable as your two-part series during the conference, which was on the preaching of the Puritans. Why don't you explain to us who haven't had much background with the Puritans? We have heard about the Puritans in elementary school. We get them mixed up with the Pilgrims and so forth. Who were the Puritans and how were they different from the Pilgrims?

DR. BEEKE: The Puritans were mixed in terms of their commitment to the church. They were all committed to the Church of England, but some felt they had to leave the Church of England because the church wasn't reformed enough. Others stayed within and tried to reform the church. What they all had in common was that they wanted to purify the church. They wanted to purify preaching; have biblical sound expository reformed preaching. They wanted to purify personal lives and hence the word Puritan. They were looking to really purify all of society not just your personal life, your family, your church, but also society as a whole.

They differ from the Pilgrims in that the Pilgrims tended to be a little more separatistic. They were a bit more introspective. They ended up looking more just at themselves and staying introverted. The Puritans were for renovating, reforming, transforming all of society.

DAVID: Were they a group of people living in the same proximity when they came to America? They came from England; they came from the Netherlands. You can tell us where else they came from. Or were they individuals sort of mixed within general society that shared a particular set of doctrines?

DR. BEEKE: Initially they went to Massachusetts Bay Colony primarily. There they wanted to set up a city on a hill. They wanted to be an example of a pure society. The Dutch that came over really were a separate movement, though it borrowed from the English Puritans. It was called the Dutch Further Reformation. Some people call it Dutch Puritans, but that is not actually historically accurate. They settled more in New Jersey and New York. So, yes, initially they settled into their own kind of colonies. That was typical, of course, of the whole European continent.

DAVID: Dr. Joel Beeke is my guest this morning here on hour one of The Christian Worldview. He is the President of Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary in Grand Rapids, Michigan. He is also the Editorial Director of Reformation Heritage Books. The website is heritagebooks.org. They have so many titles from Puritan authors that would literally transform your whole spiritual walk by going and getting some of the copies of the books. Joel, maybe you can recommend one or two books that would be good to introduce people to the Puritans that they can get at heritagebooks.org.

DR. BEEKE: I like to start people out reading the Puritans by two books. One was Puritan title itself which is Thomas Watson who is a very pungent writer and a very helpful writer called *Heaven Taken by Storm*. That book deals with how to use all the means of grace, how to pray, how to discipline, how to use the spiritual disciplines, how to meditate, that type of thing in a very practical way.

The second book I would recommend is a book I have actually co-authored called *Meet the Puritans* in which I look with my co-author at the life story of all 150 Puritans that had been re-printed in the resurgence of Puritan literature in the last 50 years. Then we review all 700 titles. People who get this book could read one life story every night like a daily devotional type thing. They are two – four pages. They read easy and then they can look at the books that that particular man has written and they can decide, I want that book and order it and get started reading the Puritans. This book helps put faces behind the books.

DAVID: I know much of your life has been devoted to conserving the memory and the preaching and the doctrines of the Puritans. You can find those books at heritagebooks.org. *Meet the Puritans*. My guest is Joes Beeke, the President of Puritan Reform Theological Seminary.

Put some names, just so people know when we talk about the five or six most prominent Puritans, who the Puritans are when their names come up.

DR. BEEKE: Well we are talking about largely a 17th century movement. We are talking about the prince of the Puritans, John Owen. We are talking about the populizer of Puritans, John Bunyan. We are talking about the eloquent Puritan, Henry Smith. Thomas Goodwin is a big name. There is Thomas Watson, John Flavel. There are a number of very well known authors.

DAVID: Now let's get to the heart and soul of it here. You talked about their preaching and what their lives were like. What were the big distinctives of how they preached and how their churches operated, Dr. Joel Beeke?

DR. BEEKE: I think, first of all, they put the primacy on preaching. They really believed in preaching. They believed that every time they ascended the pulpit that God would change lives. They preached, therefore, with dignity. They preached under the impression of the momentousness of preaching, that they were actually God's mouthpiece. It was a very sacred art for them, a wonderful vocation, not just a job. Their lives really were taken up with it.

When they went to actually preach, their entire lifestyle was behind it. They were holy men. They were prayerful men. They were really committed to living what they preached. Their lives were transcripts of their sermons. I think that is what makes them so powerful.

When they actually went to expound the Word, it was thorough, it was detailed, it was deep, it was searching. They know how to search the conscience. No shallow Christianity here. This is in-depth material that the common man could understand. What they aimed to do, in a nutshell, was to inform the mind with clarity and prick the conscience pointedly to bring a person naked before God, and then to woo the heart passionately so that people would serve the Lord with heart, soul, mind and strength.

DAVID: Well you talked about those three things. That was my next question. How do they appeal to the mind, the conscience and the heart? Why is that so important and such a distinctive of their preaching. Why is that important to do that?

DR. BEEKE: Well, today so much preaching either goes for the mind and doesn't woo the heart and you get intellectual nominalism in terms of Christianity. Other preaching goes for the heart and bypasses the mind and departs from the scriptures and you get emotionalism.

The Puritans saw that you have to reach the whole man. They saw, first of all, that if you don't reach the mind with clarity, mindless Christianity will soon become a spineless Christianity. If you don't reach the conscience pointedly, you won't develop within people a sense of dire need to really be saved from their sins. If you don't reach the heart passionately, you don't really win the man, the whole man.

DAVID: That was a very memorable part of the conference for me was hearing you talk about the importance of expository preaching to the mind, the conscience and the heart. My guest is Dr. Joel Beeke of Puritan Reform Theological Seminary. We will take a break. We will come back and he will answer the two questions, what can we do to encourage a new generation of great expository preachers? And why is expository preaching the best way to preach the Word rather than topically or narratively? More with Dr. Joel Beeke coming up on The Christian Worldview.

(break)

DAVID: We are speaking with Dr. Joel Beeke this morning in hour one of The Christian Worldview. He is the President of Puritan Reform Theological Seminary. He is also the author of many books. You can find out about some of his books at heritagebooks.org. A lot of the books are reformed in their theology or all of them are. He has some good books he recommended if you want to find out more about the Puritans and enrich your own spiritual life that way. One of the books he recommends is his own, *Meet the Puritans*. So go to heritagebooks.org to start learning about that.

Dr. Beeke, before we go on to a couple questions about the types of preaching the Puritans did, tell us a personal story about yourself. How were you saved?

DR. BEEKE: Well I was saved when I was 14. I was brought under this very severe conviction of sin at that time and then I turned to my father's bookcase and started reading the Puritan Paperbacks by Banner of Trust. Largely through those paperbacks, the Lord brought me to gospel of liberty when I was 15 and I felt strongly called to the ministry when I was 16. I was ordained when I was 25 and have now been preaching for thirty some years.

DAVID: Well I want to hear the story about how you read the Puritan Paperbacks after your father had told you to go to bed and turn the light off and you snuck downstairs to read them. That is how good they were. Tell us about that.

DR. BEEKE: My parents went to bed at 11 p.m. and they would call upstairs to me to turn off my lights and go to sleep because it was time to get to bed for the next day. I would look over the banister and when I saw their light was out, I would hop back into bed, turn the light back on and keep on reading the Puritan Paperbacks until about 12:30 – 1 a.m. My soul was just so hungry. I would mark them up; underline them, put question marks in the margin. It is interesting some times now to go back and look at those books and see them all marked up and see how the Lord has let me.

DAVID: I think if your parents knew what you were doing, they wouldn't have been too disappointed. Let's continue on with the preaching of the Puritans. We asked the question to our callers before you came on, what

can we do to encourage a new generation of great expository preachers? Before you answer that, I want you to answer the question that is commonly asked when we talk about expository preaching. Why don't you explain exactly what it is, but more importantly, why is it the best way to preach the Word rather than topically or narratively?

DR. BEEKE: Expository preaching looks at one set of scriptures or one idea that runs through scriptures or follows one Bible book and expounds it verse-by-verse, book-by-book. That way you are guaranteed to get the whole counsel of God. Expository preaching lends itself to preaching the whole gamut of what scripture has to say to us. So it is very panoramic, it is very personal. The preacher can't escape from dealing with every single topic under the sun, just about and it becomes very personal. People walk away feeling, I have really been in the Word and I really know what this Bible book says to me, today, when a series is completed.

DAVID: Didn't Christ teach in parables and stories and so forth?

DR. BEEKE: Oh yes, but when you preach expositively, you are preaching a lot of stories actually. I am going through Genesis right now, and about 90% of Genesis is story preaching, but still you are preaching the very word of God and you are showing thus sayeth the Lord from step to step. Within expositively, of course you use illustrations, but not frivolous stories that are detached from what you are preaching. All your stories, all your illustrations that you use must be based on the scriptures or be illustrative of the point you are trying to make. That doesn't mean, in my opinion, maybe I am different from some of your listeners, it doesn't mean you can't take a break from doing Genesis, for example and preach a great isolated text now and then, or that you can't take a topic now and then and bring that topic to bear on a variety of scriptures. We do that from time to time with good results. Generally speaking, I think the best way to preach is expository preaching straight through the scriptures.

DAVID: Again, Dr. Joel Beeke with us this morning on The Christian Worldview, the President of Puritan Reform Theological Seminary. All the links to what he does is on thechristianworldview.com. His website for books is heritagebooks.org. We only have a few minutes left Dr. Beeke. I asked our callers in the second segment, what can we do as just regular Christians to encourage a new generation of these great expository preachers that we heard about at the Expositor's Conference last week? What can we do?

DR. BEEKE: One thing is pray for them. Secondly, donate generously to scholarship funds of sound seminaries. We have \$250,000 we need to raise every single year for our seminary students for scholarships from around the world. We are serving 14 countries right now and 27 denominations in our student body and we could do so much more if people would realize how important this is and help out financially and prayerfully at the seminary level.

We can also give good books away to potential preachers and to lay people. If the congregations were reading solid reformed literature, they would be helped immensely in this whole area and would feel the need for it much more.

DAVID: I wrote a few things and they intersected. Develop your own appetite for expository preaching and then share it. Send your own pastor to an expository preaching conference like the Expositor's Conference, maybe the Shepherd's Conference. I am not a preacher and this inflames me. I can't imagine if I were preaching what kind of effect that would have on me. Encourage your own pastor to preach like the greats we have been talking about today like Spurgeon and Whitfield and Edwards and D. Martin Lloyd Jones and Luther and Calvin. You mentioned support churches, seminaries, ministries who do the work of training the next generation of expository preachers and praying for them. I think that is a great list, Dr. Beeke.

Last question for you. Doctrine is often thought of as, well that kind of bores people. The Puritans teach doctrine a lot. Why is that important to actually preach the doctrines of the Word?

DR. BEEKE: It is by the doctrines that you mold your life and form the way you live. So doctrines impact your belief system and that in turn impacts your actions and your thought world. By the way, the Puritans didn't only preach the doctrines, but they also preached how you experience those doctrines. They call it experiential preaching. That is what so often is missing today. When preachers preach doctrine, often they only reach the

mind and then people get kind of bored. But if the preacher does like the Puritans and applies this and says here are the uses of this doctrine, then I think we can truly benefit in our personal lives.

DAVID: Dr. Beeke thank you so much for all you are doing. Thanks for coming on The Christian Worldview today. We live in a changing and challenging world everyone. There is one thing you count on. Jesus Christ and His Word are the same yesterday, today and forever.