

Preaching Styles: Honey & Vinegar

A Senior Project

presented to

the Faculty of the Communication Studies Department
California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Bachelor of Arts

by

Logan Tavelli

June, 2011

© 2011 Logan Tavelli

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION.....2

HOMILETICS: THE CALL.....4

FRANCIS CHAN7

JONATHAN EDWARDS8

BILLY GRAHAM.....12

PARALLELS AND DIFFERENCES15

CONCLUSION.....16

PERSONAL REFLECTION18

WORKS CITED.....20

INTRODUCTION

During my freshman year of college my interest in church started to grow. With the geographical separation from my family and the love that I felt was missing in my daily life, it seems understandable that a seventeen-year-old young man would want to branch out and check out something that claimed to have a deeper meaning for one's life as well as fulfillment and love through a relationship with God. At the time, did I know all of this stuff? Maybe not.

I saw some signs around campus, wound up in a van on Sunday, and off I went to a church. When I arrived at the church most things seemed very hip, slightly new age, including the people who were nice and friendly. The worship band was modern and seemed to appeal to the younger, college age, audience. I got involved in the church, went to little events; however, eventually I simply went back to doing things the way I wanted to do them.

Fast forward. Two years later I end up with a group of people who preach the gospel to the poor, feed them, and would most likely be considered closely related to the modern day "home fellowship" or "house church" which people may explain by comparing it to scripture found in the book of Acts. I found so much love and joy at this place, and for the first time in my life the scriptures came alive to me. It was as if I was formerly reading in near darkness and then someone had turned on the lights.

With relation to the "home fellowship," I recently watched a teaching given by Mark Driscoll, the Pastor of Mars Hill Church in Seattle, where he described four different types of modern churches: The Emerging Evangelicals, the House Church Evangelicals, the Emerging Reformers, and the Emergent Liberals. Mark Driscoll categorized his church as falling into category three, "the Emerging Reformers." Within the teaching Driscoll gives a basic review of the four different types of churches, which understandably may have been filtered through his

theological worldview. His reasoning with regard to the scripture seemed logical and easy to follow. And he acknowledged that while Christians met from house to house in the book of Acts, there were also larger gatherings in the Temple Courts. One may see something in Mark Driscoll's teaching on the Emerging Church. Keep in mind that this is one sect with four different branches (according to what Driscoll is seemingly implying.) Now, within a larger picture of things, one may find that this branch is really simply one of the many branches of a larger tree. In running with this tree analogy let me describe how some may read into this. The tree that I will be referencing is not biblical in nature or in the sense that the Bible says "A good tree cannot bear bad fruit..." (Bible.cc, New International Version, Matthew 7.18). Instead, while picturing this tree, one might see the source as "churches found within Christendom," large branches as "different churches found throughout history," and small branches as "where the different churches are at today." Now with this analogy tucked away, keep in mind that I am not taking a position as to whether all of the churches are branches stemming from the early church, found in the book of Acts, or products rooted in the heart of Man.

As we have seen already there are many different categories that a person can use to fit different churches into different molds. Mark Driscoll is a self-proclaimed Calvinist, yet his church would be categorized in the Emerging Church movement. Calvinism is the basic belief that people are predestined to be called out of the world and into God's family, meaning that if someone is going to be saved, God already knows, which means that there is little emphasis on freewill and more of a focus on predestination. Throughout this paper I will be studying the preaching styles of men who come from different churches, theological backgrounds, and time periods. Each of these men would be placed on different parts of the analogical tree found above. I will be examining the preaching styles of Jonathan Edwards, Billy Graham, and Francis Chan.

Jonathan Edwards, much like Mark Driscoll, was a Calvinist. Billy Graham is one of the best-known Evangelists still living. Francis Chan is well recognized for his book “Crazy Love.”

There have been people in the past who have studied preaching styles. One example of this is a paper written by James T. Maguire where he conducts research comparing hortatory and interactive preaching in the Catholic Church. However, this paper was published in 1980 and dealt with Catholicism. It also dealt with an actual study rather than close readings of different Pastors and sermons. Another example was a paper done which examined a certain style of preaching found within the black community.

The question remains: what is the purpose of studying different methods of preaching? Throughout this paper I will analyze three different speeches given by three different preachers. My goal is to examine what is more important: the style of preaching or the message. There are many people who believe that as Christians you are more likely to draw flies with honey than vinegar. Jonathan Edwards is well known for his Fire and Brimstone style. Graham on the other hand is considered to be more positive. And then there is Francis Chan, who preaches a gospel that includes hell, but in a manner that seems quite humble.

HOMILETICS: THE CALL

“The essential task of preparation to preach is fundamentally a divine undertaking. Cooperate we must. Initiate and guide we cannot; that is God’s twin function” (Demaray 13).

In its simplest form Homiletics is defined as the “art of preaching” (“Homiletics,” Merriam-Webster Online). And while it is easy to find many books that state how one should preach, there are few that recognize the Call upon a preacher’s life. As the author of the book *An*

Introduction to Homiletics points out: “Many a son has been ‘called’ by a father only to find the decision is wrong.” Later he states, “Fare wiser the mother who explained why her boy, a graduate of a Scottish theological college, did not take a pastorate his first year out of training” (Demaray 14). What does this mean?

Recently, I met a wonderful middle-aged gentleman who was a proclaimed Catholic. I myself am not Catholic; however, we got to talking and I found that this man’s life was very centered on God. Later, I came to find that my friend was on the way to Mass when we met. Eventually, the differences in our faiths began to appear in our conversation, which was normal; however, I found that my friend brought up an incredible point. As he stated, and this is from a vague recollection, “I went to this one church with a Pastor and all. It was a Christian Church. However, one thing I did not understand: One day the son of the Pastor became a Pastor as well. He did not go to school for it or anything.” I started to see from my new friend’s account the curiosity in his finding. Here he is, a man of devout faith, in a religion where men go to Seminary for years in order to train to be church leaders. Now, I know many men of God who have had Pastoral callings and not gone to Seminary. Either way, this is beside the point. The topic that my friend brought up was a good one. Out of all the men that went to that Church, what are the odds that the Pastor’s son would be chosen for a Pastoral calling?

Ultimately, we have all met them. You know, those people who can light up a room by their storytelling. People who are so captivating that you can stay up late at night listening to the same story you have heard twice before. There are people out there who initially seem so innately qualified to minister the gospel, so special, and yet occasionally God rises up a man like Moses. Here is what did not happen in the book of Exodus:

1. God calls Moses.
2. Moses listens to God and instantly obeys Him.
3. God tells Moses what to tell Pharaoh.
4. Moses boldly rushes into the Pharaoh's chambers and proclaims "Let my people go!"

No. That simply did not happen. God rose up a weak man in order to confound the wise, much like is stated in 1 Corinthians 1. Now this is only one example; however, my point is that sometimes the person with the Pastoral calling in a church is not the incredible orator in the first row or the son of a preacher man. Not that there is anything wrong with these two types. Sometimes it is the guy whose wife dragged him to church, and one day he hears the call.

Demaray relates this call, to the call Paul found in the book of Romans, "THE CALL IS INITIATED BY GOD. To preach is God's choice before it is mine. Notice how Paul begins the longest of his epistles: 'Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called . . . set apart' (Rom. 1:1). He is called 'to be an apostle,' he says, and set apart 'for the gospel of God'" (Demaray 13). After the call of the Preacher, Demaray goes on to write about the anointing and illumination found from God that takes place in the Preacher's life (Demaray 17, 25).

Ultimately, preparing to speak with a certain audience is normal. Utilizing the art of persuasion may seem counterintuitive to the call placed on a person's life from God, at least in the sense that the Truth should speak for itself. To persuade men from the wrath to come by truth, love, and sound logic seems fine. However, when persuasion looks more like trickery, this simply will not do.

FRANCIS CHAN

According to francischan.org, “Francis Chan is the best-selling author of books, *Crazy Love & Forgotten God*, and the host of the *BASIC. Series.*” And from what I have heard, “*Crazy Love*” is not as flowery as the title of the book may lead a person to believe. “Francis is the founding pastor of Cornerstone Church in Simi Valley, California, and is the founder of Eternity Bible College” (francischan.org). I think Francis Chan’s appeal to Christians is his ability to tell the truth about God and Hell in a loving and humble way, a way that says, look I actually believe this is real, and I care enough about you to tell you about it. This is shown in a sermon that Francis Chan gave entitled “Lukewarm and Lovin’ It.” In this piece Francis speaks on what it means for a Christian to be lukewarm and how he worries about the people who go to his church.

I have this haunting fear, that many of the people that attend Cornerstone Church, even if you have been coming for years and you grew up in the church or whatever else. I have this fear that some of you, possibly many many of you are going to hell. It keeps me up at night. I read the Bible and I go man, the Kingdom of heaven is like a guy who just sold out, is that what we have here? Some of you are, I know you are. But I have this other fear of like people that like being lukewarm and people that are there. Do you understand the reality of what I said? I’m talking about hell. Have you heard that word so many times that you just have grown numb to it? Eternal punishment. And it’s like what in the world am I doing up here then? (Youtube, “Lukewarm”)

Since Francis Chan is relatively recent in comparison to when Jonathan Edwards and Billy Graham first appeared on the scene, there has not been as much written about his style and delivery. However, what is very unique about Chan’s style is his ability to leave the onlooker feeling defenseless. In the previous segment Chan is addressing people at his church. He is speaking to fellow believers. So as a believer, if you are to watch Francis Chan and think: “Well what he is saying is in line with the Bible, and it seems as though he has passion about it so as to be true to him...” The Christian could

not say “but I feel as though he is attacking me.” This special ability to call people out in an indirect manner sets Chan apart from some preachers, but his ability to say these things out of true concern, well that puts Chan’s inspired preaching on another level. I do not mean to elevate Francis Chan; however the point might seem relevant to a struggling pastor. Perhaps, in addressing an audience, the only thing that will actually produce these admirable qualities is actual concern for the audience. Where this concern comes from is another story.

JONATHAN EDWARDS

Jonathan Edwards preached “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God” during the summer of 1741. This time was known as the Great Awakening (Adams and Yarbrough 27). According to an article published in *The American Historical Review*, “...the American Great Awakening, the English Evangelical Revival, and the Scottish Cambuslang Wark, were perceived by many participants as parts of a single God-inspired phenomenon” (O’Brien 811). These events occurred in the “late 1730s and 1740s” (O’Brien 811). However, before Edwards gave his famous sermon in 1741, he lived the life of a young scholar. He studied Latin at age seven and at the age of ten “Edwards dated his interest in spiritual matters to... ‘a time of remarkable awakening’ in his father’s congregation” (Gura 22). “He entered Yale College at the age of thirteen and ‘childhood ended for Jonathan Edwards’” (Evans 16). While you or I may have been concerned with pre-algebra at thirteen, Edwards was busy reading John Locke’s *Essay on the Human understanding* (Evans 16).

The vocabulary utilized in “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God,” shows Edward’s approach as a Scholar. It is quite clear that his text could paint a vivid picture for his audience. Jonathan Edward’s style was quite harsh. In fact, “... ‘Sinners’ exemplifies what is called fire

and brimstone preaching designed to terrify auditors with its vivid depictions of hell's torment" (Adams and Yarbrough 1). However, if what Jonathan Edwards is saying is the truth, the question remains, is his style harsh or does the truth hurt? Here is an example of this, from the "Sinners" piece:

So that it is not because God is unmindful of their wickedness, and does not resent it, that he does not let loose his hand and cut them off. God is not altogether such an one as themselves, though they may imagine him to be so. The wrath of God burns against them, their damnation does not slumber; the pit is prepared, the fire is made ready, the furnace is now hot, ready to receive them; the flames do now rage and glow. The glittering sword is whet, and held over them, and the pit hath opened its mouth under them (Ccel.org, "Sinners").

By using words like "burns," "damnation," and "rage", Jonathan Edwards is clearly appealing to people's fear. A majority of the "Sinners" text is devoted to the topic of Hell and God's Wrath, while Edwards mentions that the only thing holding this back is the "mere pleasure of God" (ccl.org). Evans notes in his book on Revival leaders that, "Edwards' basic appeal was to fear. He preached sermons in a terrible way because he felt the condition of the church made it necessary to preach the terror of the Lord. So he did not seem to be much different from Stoddard who likewise put a heavy accent on fear in his appeals" (Evans 24). In the Adams and Yarbrough article, they support this finding by noting that "These sermons were meant neither to instruct nor to persuade for their audiences were already instructed and persuaded. They were meant primarily to remind congregations of what they already knew and believed to give congregations opportunities to review and possibly experience anew his repetitive Calvinist theme of election and predestination" (Adams and Yarbrough 25, 26). And while I may not agree that Edwards had a Calvinistic agenda and was not actually concerned for the audience, we find

here separate authors reminding us that Edwards was preaching to the choir. Or in other words, people who were familiar with the gospel. Examples of this are also seen throughout the sermon:

Yea, God is a great deal more angry with great numbers that are now on earth: yea, doubtless, with many that are now in this congregation, who it may be are at ease, than he is with many of those who are now in the flames of hell (Ccel.org, "Sinners")

Before separating Edwards into a category of unbiblical and harsh, one might want to review a scripture found in the book of Jude stating, "And others save with fear, pulling [them] out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh." (Bible.cc, King James Bible, Jude 1.23). It may surprise some that this verse is found in the New Testament. A very respected man in the Christian Faith, Leonard Ravenhill, once spoke of Jonathan Edwards, "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God," and the events that took place in Edward's sermon.

I've thought repeatedly this week of that awesome sermon, one of the greatest ever preached in America. Back in the 1700's, it was preached by Jonathan Edwards. We're told he brought his manuscript and he had a candle there. And he wasn't very good looking. And uh he had a big nose. And he thumbed and he read with monotonous, you know, routine. He read that sermon "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God." And people fell off their seats and they clung to the pillars that were holding the gallery up. And he didn't say "oh friends please excuse me I never meant to embarrass you like that, there's some psychological phenomena going on here." But while they were laid out he'd just lash them with the Word of God. And people cried out in their despair. There was a reason for it because before he had prayed over and over and over again "oh God, stamp eternity on my eyeballs" (Youtube, Bercot.)

From this segment found in one of Ravenhill's sermons we find that Edwards used a manuscript, was not particularly handsome, and was quite possibly not dynamic in speech.

Edward's sermon also appears to have had an impact on his audience.

As one might notice, Edward's text in the "Sinners" piece is much different than Chan's close reading segment. The sermon that Chan gave, "Lukewarm and Lovin' It," certainly had an outline, however, it left room for Chan to possibly speak from his heart. One can see this in the beginning of his sermon as he jokingly talks about throwing the two dollars in the previous sermons. In addition, the selected scripture on PowerPoint added to this evidence. Lastly, Chan's use of filler words may indicate an impromptu section: "But I have this other fear of like people that like being lukewarm and people that are there." In relation to this, Jonathan Edwards's draft format followed a specific evolution.

Before Whitefield came, Edwards used the complete manuscript, carefully written out in a small booklet (3 7/8 by 4 1/8 inches) stitched together by hand. Unlike Grandfather Stoddard and his father, Timothy, Jonathan read his sermons word for word while his elders memorized theirs. After Whitefield, however, Edwards adopted the new practice in New England of speaking freely from loose notes, a concession to the imprompty [sic] delivery of the Englishman (Evans 26).

Whitefield was a contemporary of John Wesley's (Pollard 41). "Even Bolingbroke was moved to say that Whitefield had 'the most commanding eloquence I ever heard in any person'" (Pollard 41). It makes sense that Edwards would be influenced by such a man. "Whitefield is constantly trying to startle, even to frighten and one must admit that the effect is vivid enough. He was, moreover, completely in earnest, and if he was candid about others, he had no hesitation in being candid about himself" (Pollard 41).

There are times where a person will hear something that instantly sounds very true based on personal testimony. For me this happened in the case of this quote, "Almost every natural man that hears of hell, flatters himself that he shall escape it; he depends upon himself for his

own security; he flatters himself in what he has done, in what he is now doing, or what he intends to do.” I once heard a joke about what a certain man would do in Hell, and sadly according to Edwards, people think that they will be the exception to the rule, or will turn from wickedness before time runs out. If the danger of what Edwards is preaching is true, should one consider his message harsh or loving?

BILLY GRAHAM

Billy Graham is one of America’s most well known Evangelists. Many people used to flock to his conferences when he would come to their towns: “His sermons are heard on more than a thousand stations by twenty million people across America and on thirty short-wave stations around the world on the program called ‘The Hour of Decision’” (Kilgore 13). However, the start of Billy Graham’s ministerial career may have been noticed “[a]t a church revival meeting where eighty-one persons were converted under his preaching;” the quote goes on to say that “it seemed manifest to Graham and to the Baptist pastors around him that he was destined for the ministry” (Kilgore 14).

While some may argue whether God chose Graham to carry a message, the consensus seems to be that Graham seemed to be like many other preachers of the time, but for some reason his conferences were having an impact on people: “Miss Rajkumari Amrit Kauer, member of India’s parliament, said: ‘Billy Graham is one of those rare jewels who tread this earth periodically and, by their lives and teaching, draw millions of others closer to God’” (Kilgore 57).

Graham’s message was clear and that is why people could listen to him. Graham once stated “ ‘Preach with your natural voices. . . . You don’t talk in a chant. Then why preach that way?’” (Evans 115). As Tom Allan stated in Evan’s book on Revival Leaders, “The verdict

simply is: ‘We understand what this man is saying’” (Evans 115). Billy Graham was known for the simple saying “the Bible says...” (Kilgore 18), and he was a man who stuck to the scripture: “He believes that there is intrinsic worth in the quoting of Scripture: ‘Salvation is of the Lord. My job is only to sow the seed’” (Kilgore 19, 20). On Thursday October 6th 1955 Graham addressed the Empire Club of Canada in a sermon entitled, “Is There an Answer?”

What is it? What is the answer? We forgot one thing this Man said. He was born a man, but He was the God-Man, walking in human flesh; and He said this: "Ye must be born again." What did He mean by this? That is a strange statement. He said it to an educated man, to an intellectual. He said it to a great leader. He said to Nicodemus: "Ye must be born again." He said that human nature must have a renaissance, a turn-about, it must be changed. You find lying, cheating, bigotry, greed, hatred and immorality wherever you go. Go to India, go to China . . . I defy you to go any place in the world where you don't find these things. It is a disease of human nature, and the Bible calls it sin. Jesus Christ said that a man must be born again, he must have a change of human nature, he must be transformed. And Jesus said that He could do it (Sermonindex.com, “Is There An Answer?”).

In this passage Graham lays out what could arguably be one of the most important teachings found within the Christian Faith: the Rebirth. I was encouraged after writing the previous sentence to find a book by Graham in the library called “How to be Born Again.” If Graham wrote an entire book on the matter, he probably thought the subject was quite important. Back to the text. Graham easily explains the character of one man (Nicodemus) in just a few seconds by calling him “educated,” “intellectual,” as well as “a great leader.” Within two short paragraphs Graham lays out the problem of evil, examples of evil, the solution, as well as the effects of the solution.

While some have criticized Graham, he has proven in the past to be above reproach. “Some critics complained that the invitation hymn, ‘Just As I Am,’ had a hypnotic effect and so effected persuasion. Graham dropped the hymn, but it made no difference in the response”

(Evans 117). As mentioned earlier there was something different about Billy Graham. Something quiet yet set apart. A religious person might attribute it to something supernatural, while a skeptic might say “right place, right time,” or simply “the answer is found in his rhetoric.” The Bible says of Jesus “Seeing the people, He felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and dispirited like sheep without a shepherd” (Bible.cc, New American Standard Bible, Matthew 9.36). Perhaps the success of Graham’s preaching can also be attributed to his ability to speak to each sheep on a personal level. Billy Graham addressed the individual (Kilgore 62).

As mentioned in Bill Adler’s “The Wit and Wisdom of Billy Graham,” Graham effectively used parables in order to convey his message. The following is a list of parable/analogy topics simply found in Adler’s book: Neighbor in the Wagon, What a Wonderful Pig, Little Ant, Science, Three Little Men, Little Girl Learning Beethoven, The Gulf Stream, etc. The book is short in length and simply includes memorable quotes from Billy Graham.

On page 149 is a short excerpt from Graham’s Ninth Sermon, the Charlotte Crusade, given in 1958:

I heard about a man some time ago who had a watermelon patch, and some young rascals in the community were stealing him blind. So he said, “All right, I’ll get ‘em.” So he put up a sign in his watermelon patch that said, “One of these melons is poison.” He went to bed and got up the next morning, and sure enough they hadn’t stolen a watermelon. Everything was the same, except the sign had been changed. It now read, “Two of these watermelons is poison” (Adler 149).

Now as a Christian I see that Graham is demonstrating a biblical principle that is not returning evil for evil. However, one does not need to have previously read the Bible to understand Graham’s point. Simple stories like this lead the audience to logical conclusions.

PARALLELS AND DIFFERENCES

“They have healed the wound of my people lightly, saying, ‘Peace, peace,’ when there is no peace” (Bible.cc, English Standard Version, Jeremiah 6.14).

There is no point in putting a Band-Aid over a bullet hole. This is something that all three of the preachers analyzed in this paper understand quite well. From a sinner in the hand of an angry God, to a lukewarm Christian sitting in a modern day church, all three preachers understood that there was a problem. Addressing the problem would take much more than saying “all is well,” or “everything is ok!” I believe that the true Christian preacher knows that in the long run, the most comforting word is the Truth. Jonathan Edwards made this very clear, “when they expected nothing of it, and while they were saying, Peace and safety: now they see, that those things on which they depended for peace and safety, were nothing but thin air and empty shadows”(Ccel.org, “Sinners”). If there is a perceived problem, and people are saying that everything is fine, eventually the people will no longer want to bear with the lie.

Francis Chan demonstrates how compassion for people is moving. Loving the people around you is a key concept in the Bible, and is second only to a Christian’s Love for God. Ultimately, the Love that Chan demonstrates is clearly seen in his sermons.

The notion that Jonathan Edwards appealed to fear is quite real, however sometimes the crazy person yelling in a crowded area is seeing something that you are not. “Perhaps there was the underlying feeling of love also. Gerstner claims that Edwards was convinced of the need for a fear approach as much from love to man as from obedience to God. The preacher, like the Old Testament prophet, was on the one hand concerned for his people and on the other anxious to be faithful to his calling” (Evans 25). Love does not always look like a smile or a hug. Sometimes

discipline is found within Love. This can be seen in Hebrews 12.6 where it is written, “For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives” (Bible.cc, English Standard Version, Hebrews 12.6).

Billy Graham’s style shows that he was not too concerned with playing a part. He wanted to be himself. And being himself was effective. Graham represents a vessel, Chan the engine, and Edwards the propeller. Fear prompts action, Love is central, and perhaps all God is looking for is someone to say, “...Here am I. Send me!” Much like the Prophet Isaiah did in part of Isaiah 6.8 (Bible.cc, New International Version, Isaiah 6.8). While the mechanical analogy may be farfetched, ultimately obedience to God is key.

It might initially appear easy to separate all of these men into different categories. There are most likely people living today who would not have associated themselves with Jonathan Edwards’ approach to preaching, but find Chan’s approach easier to stomach. However, with the glaring differences, one should also look at the similarities within the messages. Both Graham and Edwards speak about the negative condition of the heart. Both Chan and Edwards warn their congregations that if they do not turn from sin they will spend eternity in Hell. And lastly, both Chan and Graham are very likable people, with an urgent message.

CONCLUSION

Style is quite noticeable in a preacher. It is one of the first things we as an audience may notice besides the preacher’s physical nature. However, there are many things that have the power to convince, but as to the means of conversion the scripture is clear. Conversion by the Holy Spirit is not something tallied on Wikipedia. It is a change found in the inward man.

When under the gospel men are made preachers, God works in them a saving knowledge of himself, gives them a sense of the sympathy between God and man,

of the spiritual love which appeals from the infinite to the mortal; and then says to them, 'Take this revelation of Jesus Christ in you, and go out and preach it.' Tell what God has done for your soul, not in a technical way, but in a large way; take the truth revealed in you, and according to the structure of your understanding, your emotive affections, the sentiments of your own soul, filled with the power of the Holy Ghost, go and preach to men for the sake of making them know the love of Christ Jesus, and you will have a power in you to make that preaching effective (Beecher 8, 9).

I believe many, if not all, of these words to be true. To quote Billy Graham and the Bible: "The Bible says..." (Kilgore 18) that "Therefore if any man [be] in Christ, [he is] a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (Bible.cc, King James Bible, 2 Corinthians 5.17). It is possible to teach people tips on how to make them quicker, faster, stronger, or even a better person in the eyes of men. However, God desires a complete transformation in people.

Towards the start of this paper I addressed two questions. The first being what the purpose of studying different methods is. The second being what matters more, the style or the message. I have addressed both answers throughout the body of this paper, but to conclude...

Studying different methods of preaching is useful because it deals with the initial judgments the audience makes when viewing the preacher. One might think "well this person looks strange," or "why is that guy weeping during his message?" while neglecting to see the spiritual impact targeting such a reaction.

Another point, and this is almost more dangerous, is this: When people see a style of preaching they are attracted to, they might like the style, and think that everyone who preaches with that style is preaching the same message; whether that be the Gospel message or anything else. This is a trap. The reason being is that there are people who preach with the same style, but completely different doctrines. One doctrine might say that all people get annihilated instead of

going to Hell. Another might be absent of Hell. In this regard, a person should focus on whether the message preached is in line with scripture and birthed from God, rather than how the message makes one feel. In relation to the point I made earlier, as well as a concept I have heard in a past sermon, if a soldier is wounded in battle, that soldier would much rather have someone tell the truth about the circumstance and address the problem, than walk up with a huge smile and announce that everything is going well.

The reason why style is not nearly as important as the message is because a person who is willing to deceive can practice style, but there needs to be a heart change to conform to the message of Jesus Christ. In this matter evidence of conversion is more noticeable. If the person is no longer a slave to the old way of life once practiced, the fruit of this person's life will be beautiful and abundant.

PERSONAL REFLECTION

As I look back on my years attending Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, the topic of this paper seems relevant. As a Christian, it becomes clear that sometimes you have to sacrifice things based on your faith. The Bible says not to be conformed to the image or pattern of this world. Sometimes one may try to separate his or her work life from a relationship with God. However, God is in the details too.

I do not want to be a Christian who can win numbers on the streets based on my fancy rhetoric, because then I would be winning souls to me and not God. There is a glaring difference when the Holy Spirit is not present in preaching. There is no power. And the power I am referencing now has to do with God's Words administering healing inside of a person. How does one study rhetoric and the art of persuasion and not let that slip into his or her relationship with God? The Bible speaks on humility, how "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble"

(Bible.cc, New International Version, part of James 4.6). In my mind these two avenues run in different directions. Instead of fixing things from the outside by reading self-improvement books, the Bible is full of the only words that can administer positive spiritual inward change in a human being.

This essay began with part of my testimony and it will end the same way. Toward the end of the second year in college I met a God who drastically shifted the foundation of my life. Now, he influences the shows I watch, the music I listen to, the essays I write, and the songs I sing. The best part of this project was watching the video by Francis Chan, “Lukewarm and Lovin’ It.” That sermon brightened up my day because although I had to examine myself, and search within me, I found that a work of God was taking place. There are still things at work in me. There are probably things that I do not even know about. However, the ultimate satisfaction I have found is a relationship with Jesus Christ, more precious than gold or anything found on this earth.

Works Cited

- Adams, John C., and Stephen R. Yarbrough. "Sinners" in the Hands of An Angry God, Saints in the Hands of Their Father." *Journal of Communication & Religion* 20.1 (1997): 25-35. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 26 May 2011.
- Adler, Bill. *The Wit and Wisdom of Billy Graham*. New York: Random House, 1967.
- Beecher, Henry W. *Yale Lectures on Preaching: First, Second, and Third Series*. New York: Fords, Howard, & Hulbert, 1892.
- Bercot, David. "YouTube - The Judgment Seat of Christ - Leonard Ravenhill (FULL)." *YouTube - Broadcast Yourself*. Web. 08 June 2011. <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b-I1x2X3Cro>>.
- Demaray, Donald E. *An Introduction to Homiletics*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1794.
- Evans, W. Glyn. *Profiles of Revival Leaders*. Nashville: Broadman Press, 1976.
- Francis Chan / Welcome. Web. 08 June 2011. <<http://www.francischan.org/#/about-francis>>.
- Gura, Philip F. *America's Evangelical*. New York: Hill and Wang, 2005.
- "Homiletics - Definition and More from the Free Merriam-Webster Dictionary." *Dictionary and Thesaurus - Merriam-Webster Online*. Web. 06 June 2011. <<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/homiletics>>.
- Kilgore, James E. *Billy Graham the Preacher*. New York: Exposition Press, 1968.
- O'Brien, Susan. "A Transatlantic Community of Saints: The Great Awakening and the First Evangelical Network, 1735—1755." *The American Historical Review* 91.4 (1986): 811-832. Google Scholar.
- Online Parallel Bible: Weaving God's Word into the Web*. Web. 08 June 2011. <<http://bible.cc/>>.
- Pollard, Arthur. *English Sermons*. London: F. Mildner & Sons, 1963
- Quimby, Rollin W., and Robert H. Billigmeier. "THE VARYING ROLE OF REVIVALISTIC PREACHING IN AMERICAN PROTESTANT EVANGELISM." *Speech Monographs* 26.3 (1959): 217. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 26 May 2011.
- "Read Free Text Sermons." *SermonIndex.net Audio Sermons*. Web. 06 June 2011. <<http://www.sermonindex.net/modules/articles/index.php?view=article&aid=207> 0>

"Select Sermons | Christian Classics Ethereal Library." *Welcome to the Christian Classics Ethereal Library! | Christian Classics Ethereal Library*. Web. 06 June 2011. <<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/edwards/sermons.sinners.html>>.

"YouTube - Luke Warm & Loving It." *YouTube - Broadcast Yourself*. Web. 06 June 2011. <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pBhqrtMqrv8>>.

"YouTube - Mark Driscoll on the Emerging Church." *YouTube - Broadcast Yourself*. Web. 06 June 2011. <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=58fgkfS6E-0>>.