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I. THE HOLY BIBLE

Begin with your own reading of the sacred texts of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Lay claim upon the text until the text lays claim upon you. Read at least one of the Synoptic Gospels and then John from start to finish during the year. Compare your favorite translation to at least one other translation. The first step is just you and the text: no commentaries, books, or sermons of others. There is no substitute for knowing for yourself the distinctive characteristics of the gospels and the compelling words and actions of Jesus. “Offer Them Christ” out of your overflow! The greatest freedom and power in the pulpit comes from the greatest discipline and meditation upon the Scriptures in the study. What does the text say to you? What does the text reveal about Jesus? What does the text reveal about human beings? What does the text say to the church? Is there a word of judgment or of grace? How does the text call you and others to change?

II. THE NEW INTERPRETER’S BIBLE


This is the basic commentary which everyone is encouraged to purchase and use for lectionary texts and for non-lectionary texts. There are parallel translations from the New International Version and the New Revised Standard Version. There are Overviews, Commentary, and Reflections as you move through the text. This is a great place to go following your own reading and reflection on the text described in I. THE HOLY BIBLE. (In order to get the most out of this year, please make every effort to purchase these two volumes for use throughout the year. Seek them as birthday or Christmas presents! Churches are encouraged to provide at least $100 for the purchase of these commentaries or other preaching helps.) Each preacher is challenged to read the full commentary on at least one of the Four Gospels during the year and to use these commentaries to research the Gospel text each week, whether it is from the lectionary of self-selected. Explore possible price reductions at District meetings, courtesy of Cokesbury.

Vol. VIII: “Matthew” by M. Eugene Boring
           “Mark” by Pheme Perkins

           “John” by Gail R. O’Day
III. PREACHING FROM THE GOSPEL LECTIONARY


4. David Lott, ed., *New Proclamation, Year B, 2008-09, Advent through Holy Week*. (Demo at newproclamation.com)


6. Each year Cokesbury publishes lectionary based Bible studies for Advent and for Lent. Excellent for group Bible studies or as helps for preaching.

7. WEBSITES

   gbod.org/worship/ United Methodist site, General Board of Discipleship.

   Textweek.com

   clergyresources.net/index.html

   webspawner.com/USERS/GREGORPAGE
IV. PREACHING FROM MATTHEW


V. PREACHING FROM MARK

2. Dave Bland & David Fleer, eds., *Preaching Mark’s Unsettling Messiah*, Chalice Press, 2006. (Features scholars Morna Hooker and Fred Craddock.)
VI. PREACHING FROM LUKE


VII. PREACHING FROM JOHN


VIII. PREACHING FROM THE PARABLES OF JESUS


10. James W. Moore (Sermons)
    “Jesus’ Parables of the Lost and Found,” *Dimensions of Living*, 2006.


    See also *Parables From the Backside* by Kalas, Abingdon.
IX. PREACHING FROM THE MIRACLES OF JESUS


7. CSS Publishing Company has several titles, usually featuring the miracles for the lectionary cycles.

X. PREACHING FROM THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

1. See the books under Matthew and Luke above.

2. William Barclay, *The Beatitudes and the Lord’s Prayer for Everyman*, 1975. (Amazon.com has several.)


XI. PREACHING ON THE SEVEN LAST WORDS OF JESUS FROM THE CROSS

1. William Willimon, *Thank God It’s Friday: Encountering the Seven Last Words From the Cross*, Abingdon.


7. See the Commentaries on the Four Gospels above.

XII. GENERAL BOOKS ON THE IMPACT OF CHRIST


6. William Barclay, *The Mind of Jesus*


XIII. HOMILETIC MAGAZINES

1. *The Living Pulpit* (Theme Based Issues)  www.pulpit.org

2. *Pulpit Digest* (6 issues per year, 12 sermons per issue) Check with Logos Productions, Inc.


XIV. THEOLOGY IN THE UNITED METHODIST TRADITION


Several years ago, Ottalee’s mother gave me a small plaque which reads, “I would rather be a poor man in a garret with plenty of books than a king who did not love reading.” I confess that I have often been poor from the purchase of books, but I have enjoyed spiritual riches the world can neither give nor take away. This Bibliography, lengthy as it is, does not contain many favorite works of the past seventy-five years which would be of great value. I have tried to include books currently in print or recently out-of-print titles which are readily available. Please use what you already have that you have found worthy, and select some of the books from the Bibliography which would help you communicate the grace upon grace that is found in Jesus Christ. Perhaps you could use the list to start your own Book-of-the-Month Club!

The purpose of “Offer Them Christ” from Advent 2008 through 2009 is to help all Holston Conference clergy to become better students and preachers of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. When we become better communicators of this powerful good news, the church will be more empowered to make disciples for the transformation of the world. I am convinced that this emphasis can make a difference in the ministry of any preacher who takes seriously the challenge to preach for a year from Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. I am convinced that it can help move some of our churches from maintenance to mission, from cultural captivity to Kingdom life. I am convinced it can attract some new disciples. John recorded Jesus as saying, “And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.” (12:32) John noted that Jesus said this “to indicate the kind of death he was to die.” (12:33) Being “lifted up” is surely about the cross, but as John presents the hour of Jesus’ glory, it is also about being “lifted up” in resurrection and about being “lifted up” in ascension. Jesus is lifted up on the cross; He is lifted up from the grave; He is lifted up in glory. Wherever we lift up Christ today, He becomes a holy magnet, full of grace, drawing people out of despair into joy, out of doubt into faith, out of death into life. Offer them Christ!

Respectfully,
Grady C. Winegar