

Reader's reactions

Book Author: Thomas G. Long

Title: *The Witness of Preaching*

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I have only preached around ten times in my life. My first attempts were somewhat disastrous, the only consolation being that from that point, things could only improve!

In preparation for my earlier ventures into preaching I always felt a great deal of anxiety. This was not so much because of 'public speaking nerves' or doubting my perspectives. The anxiety came more from wondering if this was actually a sermon or *'just a nice wee talk'*? What was the difference? How does one go about preparing so that people can truly encounter the Word?

If I had read Thomas Long's book before attempting sermons, I may have spared myself some unnecessary stress and perhaps the congregation some unnecessary confusion!

For the novice and veteran alike, Long provides a very full and varied account of a number of



approaches to preaching. He is open-minded regarding several forms of preparation and delivery and offers an even handed critique of each approach.

Whilst I could see myself using each 'style' there are those that have a deeper resonance than others. In this sense the book has helped me uncover more about my own voice and how that might more naturally come through.

Of chief note, is Long's encouragement to try different approaches for different texts or contexts and practical advice on how they might be prepared. The encouragement to develop a number of styles, rather than just one, may be an obvious suggestion to a veteran preacher, but came as encouraging news to this particular novice.

There are probably bits of the book that I disagree with, but I was so taken with how helpful it is I have clean forgotten any objections I may have had.

Thoughtful, deep, reflective and practical, I would strongly recommend this book for anyone new to preaching - those in the early stages of developing their style of preaching, as well as those wishing to find new models that might refresh their regular approach.

Please note that the views expressed in these materials are those of the individual writer and not necessarily the official view of the Church of Scotland, which can be laid down only by the General Assembly.



Additional Resources

Resourcing Mission



<http://www.resourcingmission.org.uk/> is host to Starters for Sunday as well as key mission resources from the Church of Scotland, for download and purchase, and has an online booking facility for Mission & Discipleship events (eg National Youth Assembly). Please check back regularly, as new items are being added all the time. We welcome all feedback so if there is something you'd like to see on this new site that isn't already there, please use the 'Website Feedback' option on the 'Contact Us' page.

Prayer Resources

These materials are designed to be a starting point for what you might look for in Prayers. You may also be interested in looking at our publication **Pray Now 2013**. Please click [here](#).



Music Resources

The hymns mentioned in this material are ideas of specific hymns you might choose for this week's themes. However, for some excellent articles on church music and ideas for new music resources, please check out our online music magazine **Different Voices** which can be found [here](#).

Preaching Resources



These materials are designed to be a starting point for **what** you might preach this Sunday. If you would be interested in looking at our free materials on **how** you might preach, please click [here](#) to see our [Preachers Perspectives](#) web page where we have asked twelve preachers to share the insights they have gathered through their experiences of writing and delivering sermons regularly.

