

5-1-2008

# Preaching with all you've got: embodying the word

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### Recommended Citation

Sancken, Joni S. (2008) "Preaching with all you've got: embodying the word," *Consensus*: Vol. 32 : Iss. 2 , Article 12.  
Available at: <http://scholars.wlu.ca/consensus/vol32/iss2/12>

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opportunity to receive God's grace as we see God's image in the lives of others. Balmer suggests concrete ways of connecting to multi-faith immigrants like learning a neighbor's birth name, offering a gift of home-baked goods or produce, and being attentive to needs. Ongoing relationships with multi-faith neighbors entail commitment in learning about other cultures and religions, keeping abreast of current news from a global perspective, and possibly joining an interfaith organization or volunteering with immigrants.

Balmer's book is accessible for seminarians, pastors and laity. Chapters include insights and stories about those of other religions as well as study questions for deepening understanding or generating group discussion. He also includes several appendices of documents from IGR. Balmer's use of scripture and ministry experience strengthen his argument. But as addressed by Stanley W. Green in the "Afterward" his focus on tolerance risks short-changing the uniqueness of Christ. Green's comments offer a balance to Balmer's work, emphasizing the salvific purposes of God demonstrated in Jesus to which Christians are called to witness.

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## **Preaching with All You've Got: Embodying the Word**

David Day

Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc., 2006

186 pages. \$20.99 Softcover

David Day's *Preaching with All You've Got: Embodying the Word* is a preaching workbook filled with practical advice for the pastor caught up in the week to week business of ministry. He addresses "embodiment of the Word" in four parts: the person of the preacher, the use of words and construction of the sermon, ways in which the sermon can incorporate media and objects from everyday life, and the hearers.

Part One explores the connection of the words of the sermon with the life of the preacher. Day acknowledges the fine line preachers walk between manipulation and persuasive proclamation, encouraging

prayer and careful reading of scripture. Yet he also cautions against boredom, calling preachers to draw on the parts of their personal faith and the text at hand which excite them the most and gives suggestions on how to inhabit the text through imagination. He offers advice concerning the tricky area of personal disclosure in the sermon and, finally, he addresses the performative aspects of preaching.

Next, Day examines the words of the sermon, offering suggestions for fresh retelling of the biblical text and paying close attention to the shape of the narrative and the use of modern-day details to help hearers connect to the text. He encourages preachers to use images, metaphors and concrete instances or examples drawn from a variety of sources to expand on the text. Stories are a non-authoritarian way for congregations to understand aspects of their theology. Day offers a chapter with concrete ways to maintain the surprising freshness of Jesus' parables.

In part three, Day looks for ways to incorporate the everyday world into preaching. He encourages preachers to use popular media, the arts and concrete objects to help embody God's word in the sermon. He dedicates a chapter to the challenges of using PowerPoint in preaching, looking at both advantages and disadvantages and offering techniques to keep technology as "servant" rather than "master" of the preacher (141).

Finally, he turns to the role of the congregation in the sermon. Day sees "the assumption that the sermon requires a response" as reflective of the gospel itself (168). To that end, he offers resources to help preachers be more dialogical and accessible in their preaching so that the congregation is able to "listen attentively" and respond (167) both individually and corporately.

Day's work is highly accessible. Offering good suggestions and resources for the new preacher, his book would be especially helpful for the seasoned preacher looking to energize his or her preaching. While his main ideas are not new, he includes numerous examples, anecdotes, and exercises to support his suggestions, pulling widely from the field of homiletics and citing authors from a variety of backgrounds as additional resources for specific concerns.

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