

## Expository preaching necessary for true revival, Stephen Olford says

by Jeff Robinson  
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### Preaching the Word

Stephen Olford, founder and senior lecturer of the Stephen Olford Center for Biblical Preaching, speaks at Southern Seminary April 15. Olford was on campus for "Power in the Pulpit," a series of sermons intended to strengthen pastoral skills.

*Photo by David Merrifield*

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--Anointed expository preaching is absolutely necessary if the church is to experience true revival, Stephen Olford recently said at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Olford, founder and senior lecturer of the Stephen Olford Center for Biblical Preaching in Memphis, Tenn., was on campus in April for the annual Power in the Pulpit conference, a series of sermons intended to strengthen pastoral skills. His son, David, was the other featured speaker.

"All across the land we see men, women, boys, and girls turning aside to myths and fables," Stephen Olford said. "Every day [in America] a new cult arises. Perhaps one of the most sinister is the New Age movement with its tentacles in most every area of life, especially in corporate life.

"We need to read the times, but we need to heed the trends in light of all this.

There must be a return to anointed expository preaching of the Word of God calling for a divine verdict."

Olford, 84, is the voice of the daily radio program "Encounter," which is heard on Christian stations in the United States, Canada and overseas. He has authored several books, including perhaps his best-known work "Anointed Expository Preaching," co-written with his son and ministry partner, David. David is president of Olford Ministries International.

The elder Olford told students that expositional preaching will develop in believers a comprehensive Christian worldview and enable them to confront cultic and doctrinal error.

Authentic expository preaching does not fail to bring out Christian doctrine, which Olford says is critical to build up the church on orthodox moorings. Olford pointed out that doctrinal preaching is not popular today because it does not address erroneous "felt needs."

Preaching from 2 Timothy 3, Olford unpacked the apostle Paul's understanding of the subject.

"In every period of church history there has been heresy and apostasy, and it's no different today," he said. "Men and women will not endure sound doctrine. I've heard men say, 'If I preach like that, what you call expository preaching ... people won't accept it.' So what? 'People will leave me.' So what?"

Paul said that people will not endure sound doctrine, meaning that some will turn away from biblical preaching, Olford said.

"It is in that context that Paul says, 'Preach the word.' We don't budge on that issue," Olford said. "It's all this business of trying to bend the Word as it were to conform with our age, when Paul says, 'be not conformed under (any) circumstances.' This is a mighty imperative.

"You haven't preached a message if you haven't expounded from Scripture that dominating theme that you are seeking to get across, which is doctrine. The church is built on doctrine."

Olford, who has spent 63 years in ministry, said he has seen evangelical churches become filled with "nonsensical preaching" as well as people merely "playing church."

One devastating movement that has infiltrated the church is liberalism along with its derivative, humanism, he said. Thanks to these twin evils, he said, doctrines such as the inerrancy of Scripture and the deity of Christ have been cast aside and replaced with a false man-centered gospel. This has pervaded both preaching and corporate worship, he added.

"When the apostle Paul says, 'they will turn aside to fables,' and 'they will not endure sound doctrine,' I think of the way in which the Jesus Seminars are trying to discredit the deity and sovereignty of our glorious sovereign Lord," Olford said. "I think of the theologians who are trying to explain away eternal punishment and other essential doctrines."

"I think of the experience-seekers, who are confusing young believers, especially concerning the person and work of the Holy Spirit, and on and on I could go. A good deal of our preaching today and worship, so-called, are matters of 'how I feel,' or 'what I need,' or 'how I factor in the equation.' God doesn't come into our thinking, it's all man-centered humanism. Anointed expository preaching is the remedy for such nonsense as this."

SOURCE: <http://www.baptist2baptist.net/b2barticle.asp?id=99>.