



## Bible Teaching – Guiding Principles

### **Biblical Focus**

It is vital that our teaching should be centred on God's Word, however, it is the means to an end (knowing, obeying and serving God) and not the end in itself.

*"...go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you..."* Matt 28:19-20

*"All Scripture is God-breathed and useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."* 2 Tim 3:16-17

*"It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ."* Eph 4:11-13

### **Teaching Aims**

The underlying aims of the teaching programme can be summarised as follows:

**Our aim is that those who are taught are:**

- **Challenged to obey God's living Word, and**
- **Equipped, by God's Spirit, to serve**

There are different aspects to our teaching programme:

### **Morning/Family Service**

- Intended to be the primary teaching service of the church to provide relevant Bible teaching, covering the whole sweep of the Bible and applied to everyday living and the needs of the congregation – including giving a clear gospel challenge when appropriate.
- Aimed at meeting the needs of the very broad range of people who attend YCC. This requires the teaching to be both balanced and accessible - we try to provide a balanced programme both in terms of subjects and speakers and we expect clear, everyday language (no jargon) with good use of visuals.

### **Evening Service**

- Intended to provide additional teaching to go into more depth or to complement the morning teaching.

### **Housegroups**

- Intended to enable us to encourage one another in our relationship with God through prayer, Bible study and fellowship.
- Learning how the Bible applies to our lives through informal discussion in an open and supportive environment.



## Bible Teaching – Bringing Balance

*"Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth" 2 Tim 2:15*

What do we mean by "correctly handling the word of truth"? To answer this and expand on the way we seek to balance the various facets of Bible teaching we have used a framework from John Stott<sup>1</sup>.

Authentic Christian preaching and teaching is:

### **biblical and contemporary**

Our preaching should bridge the gap between the ancient world of the Bible and our contemporary culture. In other words it needs to explain and illuminate the biblical text – but not in isolation – instead, applying it to the realities of (post-)modern life. *"relating the ancient text to the modern context"* – John Stott.

### **authoritative and tentative**

Preaching and teaching the Bible recognises the innate authority of God's Word but is humble enough to recognise that our interpretations are just that – interpretations. *"God has spoken, everything else is commentary"* – Rob Bell.

### **prophetic and pastoral**

By prophetic here we mean bringing spiritual insight to the issue at hand and a real challenge to the way we live. This is balanced by being sensitive to and addressing the pastoral needs of the congregation. Again, not abstract and theoretical ideas but principles applied to everyday life and people's real situations.

*"Preaching is to disturb the comfortable and to comfort the disturbed"* - Chad Walsh.

### **gifted and studied**

We recognise those who are gifted by God to preach and teach His word. Again this is balanced by the expectation that teaching will spring from careful and prayerful study of Scripture.

*"I would study three times as much...[and]...I would give more time to prayer"* – Billy Graham (on being asked what he would change if he had his ministry over again).

### **thoughtful and passionate**

Our teaching of God's word should engage both mind and emotions. Our preaching should be coherent, structured and thought-provoking. Not dry and unengaging but passionate and inspiring instead.

*"What is preaching? Logic on fire!"* – Martyn Lloyd-Jones

Once again we recognise that to find the balance of all the above characteristics in one individual or one sermon in isolation is a tall order – we can achieve this balance through using different speakers with their differing styles and approaches.

---

<sup>1</sup> Based on an article by John Stott which appears in 'Preach the Word' edited by Greg Haslam. Published by Sovereign © 2006. Also published in *Christianity* magazine.