

Leland Ryken & Todd Wilson (ed), *Preach the Word* (Crossway, 2007)

This is a collection of essays to honour Kent Hughes when he retired from 25+ years as senior pastor of College Church in Wheaton, Illinois. It caught my eye because when I was a 21yr old seminary student I had an interview with Kent Hughes in the hope of picking up an internship at the church while I was at seminary. I was not successful...but I've tracked and admired his expository ministry ever since.

Some passing quotations intrigued me. Don Carson's definition of preaching as "re-revelation" (172), for starters. What about Martin Luther? "We must get the Word from our lips to people's ears; the Holy Spirit can carry the Word from their ears to their hearts" (202). One writer quoted Langham's Chris Wright: the Christian life is not so much about the benefits associated with "applying the Bible to our lives", as it is "applying our lives to the Bible".

The writers slipped often into insightful exposition (under the guise of being essays) with Jon Dennis on 2 Timothy 2 a highlight for me – but why give it the title, "Multiplying Men"? I find the bald gender-exclusivity of this wing of the church to be infuriating. They do not seem to be on the look-out to include women in how they write. And they just love 1 & 2 Timothy, don't they?! Nevertheless there are some very helpful chapters here. Leland Ryken on the "Bible as Literature"; Bruce Winter's application of the 'warfare' passages to today's challenge of cultural programming; JI Packer's reminders from the ministry of Charles Simeon – to preach is "to bring out of the text what is there"; and Don Carson on the 'perennial and peculiar' challenges of the 21st century. Some really good stuff!

The chapter which impacted me the most was David Helm: "Few Are Not Enough: Training a Generation of Preachers". He takes us to Norwich, Cambridge, and London in the build-up to the 'preacher-led movement' we know as Puritanism. In these three we find preaching workshops, a residential training scheme, and a pastoral community – but existing quite independently. Helm argues that it is the convergence of these same three strategies which need to be born anew if we are to see a renewal in biblical preaching in our own day. I couldn't agree more – and happy to give my life to work for such a convergence.

Paul Windsor