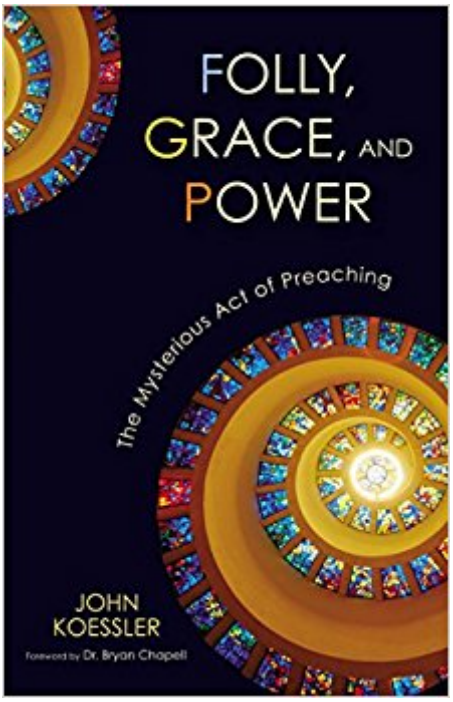
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Folly, Grace, And Power: The Mysterious Act Of Preaching



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Synopsis

When you stand before your congregation, what do you hope to accomplish when you preach the Word? If people have Bibles and the freedom to read and pray on their ownÃ¢â ¬â ¢why do they need you? In short, what do you bring to the table? Author, pastor, and professor John Koessler answers those questions and many more. Why does one sermon have a powerful effect on the audience while another falls flat? Why should listeners heed what the preacher says? Is human language adequate for facilitating an encounter with God? What is the point of preaching a sermon? Folly, Grace, and Power is a must-read for pastors, seminarians, and lay leaders charged with the task of preaching GodÃ¢â ¬â„¢s word. This essential book is both a stern reminder of the sacredness of the awesome Ã¢â ¬Å“jobÃ¢â ¬Â• of being a preacher, as well as a how-to that reveals the key to speaking powerfully on GodÃ¢â ¬â„¢s behalf.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

John Koessler has written for Discipleship Journal, Leadership, Moody Magazine, Decision, and Christianity Today. He has served as a pastor and currently is chair of the pastoral studies department at Moody Bible Institute in Chicago. He is the author of several books including True Discipleship and God Our Father. He holds degrees from Wayne State University, Biblical Theological Seminary, and Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. He has made numerous radio and television appearances. He lives in northern Indiana with his wife and sons.

Most books devoted to exploring the mandate to preach the Word of God focus on homiletical

method. They help young preachers craft an introduction and a conclusion. They help young theologians with good exegetical skills. They discuss tone, body language, and eye contact.John KoesslerÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s new book, Folly, Grace, and Power: The Mysterious Act of Preaching is different. KoesslerÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s book is about the theology of preaching. The author explains, ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“Our preaching has the capacity to mediate the true presence of Christ. We display ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Ëœthe light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of ChristÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ (2 Cor. 4:6). This dignifies preaching. But it does not elevate the preacher beyond measure. The all-surpassing power comes from God, not from us. We are nothing. God is everything.ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• This mindset permeates the remainder of the book as Koestler sets forth a biblical case for preaching.Central to the message of this book is the sovereignty of God. The author observes, ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“We have influence over the dynamics of delivery, but not the ebb and flow of the Holy Spirit. He breathes on whomever he wills, and there are many times when we are unable to sense his presence or easily discern his purpose ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â¦ A sermon which thunders in one service falls flat in another, and we cannot tell why.ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â•In an age where propositions have for the most part been relegated to the cemetery, Koessler argues that good preaching includes both propositions as well as story: ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“GodÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s Word, of course, includes both proposition and story, employing argument to address reason and narrative to affect the heart. Both exert an important influence on the will. But it is the Spirit, ultimately, who convicts.ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• Here, the author stands with Jonathan Edwards who essentially argued the same in his magisterial volume, Religious Affections.The sovereignty of the Spirit of God is emphasized as well: ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“He (the Holy Spirit) works in the preacher to ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Ëœgive ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ words and boldness and then through what is preached to produce faith in those who hear ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â¦ GodÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s Spirt also uses the sermon to stir the heart. The Word of God gains entry by the gate of the mind, but its ultimate target is the heart, where faith is exercised (Rom. 10:10).ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• This affection-oriented theme permeates the volume and makes it especially appealing to anyone convinced by the preaching methodology of Jonathan Edwards and the New England Puritans.The author explores the importance of authority in preaching, a subject that causes postmodern sympathizers to cringe. Koessler warns, ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“Preaching with divine authority does not guarantee a smooth path. We would like to think that God-given authority gives us leverage ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â¦ But the same Bible that gives us our authority also offers ample proof of the congregationÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s capacity for discounting that authority.ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• Preaching with authority will, however, be costly. Thomas Long adds, ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“If the word comes from God in the biblical text, the

preacher remains true to that word, regardless of the reaction or the cost.ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â•There is much to commend in this thoughtful volume. Preachers, young and old alike should devour this work and find encouragement in John KoesslerÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s fresh approach to preaching.

I've read a lot of books on preaching. This one is unique. It's not a "how-to" manual for how to craft or create a sermon. Nor is it a formula for producing sermons that will bring your hearers to their knees each week. This book is a theology of preaching. At its core Folly, Grace, and Power wrestles with the mysteries and paradoxes that preaching creates. Is preaching the word of God? Is it the word of man? Who should the preacher take his cues from to learn the art of preaching? Where does the gospel stand in the midst of preaching? Each of these questions is wrestled with by an excellent writer and preacher. Chapter 8 alone, Preaching as Gospel alone is worth the price of the book!I highly recommend this book for anyone who stands in the pulpit week after week as a source of encouragement in the task of preaching and exhortation to faithfully preach the gospel.

I really liked the way in which preaching is viewed in such high regard. It is a monumental task to help others prepare for eternity.

I was a bit skeptical of the title, but Koessler did it again. Great book, easy to read, packed with solid advice from professionals. This book takes the mystery out of preaching while also emphasizing the theological emphasis of preaching which is beyond human understanding.

More books need to be written encouraging pastors to be theologians in the pulpit. Preaching is not just another speech, but rather it is a way in which Christ is mediated to the congregation.

I really liked this book. I read it quickly and quite honestly, it was a refreshing breeze to my soul. I needed to be reminded about why my preaching is important, and also, all the paradoxes that exist in this process. I would highly recommend this to veterans and rookie pastors.

The book was as described, which is good. I have not had a chance to read it yet, but expect that it will help me.

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