

sources, but they often exhibit a kind of scholarly parochialism which diminishes the caliber of the dictionary.

One could go on at length citing these kinds of inconsistencies, omissions, and other problems. But these matters pale in comparison to the overall success of the endeavor and to its importance for the study of the Phoenicians and the world in which they lived.

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Loscalzo, Craig A. *Preaching Sermons That Connect*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1992. 165 pp. \$10.99.

Challenged by the problems of preaching to people today, Craig A. Loscalzo has written a book designed to help preachers preach sermons that "connect." Given the present critical attitude toward preaching, for preachers to expect a hearing just because they are preachers is naive. Loscalzo argues that "preachers more effectively communicate and persuade when they intentionally identify with their congregations" (17).

Highly influenced by Kenneth Burke's *A Rhetoric of Motives*, Loscalzo argues that while persuasion is indigenous to preaching, it should be sought through "identification" rather than manipulation. What this means and how it is to be achieved is the burden of the book. For Burke, persons are persuaded when preachers talk the talk of their hearers through speech, gesture, tonality, order, image, attitude, and idea. He does not mean to suggest that preachers avoid confronting their congregations with the demands of the gospel. But as one who has a personal stake in the issue, he argues "we face a better chance of achieving our purpose in preaching if we focus on points of agreement rather than on places where [we] disagree" (23). Identification promotes authentic relationships, authentic relationships nurture trust between preacher and congregation, and trust enables the preacher to present sermon "content" with confidence that lives will be changed.

Loscalzo sees the principle of identification demonstrated in the ministry of Moses, Amos, Ezekiel, Paul, and Jesus, with "incarnation" as the ultimate paradigm of identification (55). Hearers need to know that the preacher is as human as they are, but that he or she is also trustworthy, keeps promises, and is a person of faith.

Loscalzo cites Burke's premise that communication is always "circumstantially founded" as the reason for preachers to "evaluate the congregation in terms of their scene and the circumstances that make it up" (83). The world scene, the political scene, the economic scene, the cultural scene, the religious scene, and the congregational scene all need to be understood and analyzed if one is to preach through identification.

An important and practical chapter is devoted to strategies for designing sermons that will connect. Strategies such as *attitude* toward the message of the

sermon being prepared, *interest* in what the hearers are interested in, *form* in keeping with the nature of the message and its movement, and *language* in saying the right thing in the right way are recommended and developed. The book closes with three sample sermons and a chapter on "delivery" (147-157).

Loscalzo's concern for identification in preaching is timely and timeless. Kyle Haselden, in his book *The Urgency of Preaching* (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), quotes Martin Luther as saying, "I endeavored to make Moses so German that no one would suspect he was a Jew" (71). As radical and anti-Semitic as that may seem, it speaks to a concern, as Loscalzo points out, that has always attended the proclamation of God's Word. It is this concern that has caused authors of more contemporary books on preaching to cry out against "pontification" and "moralization." Loscalzo's book is perhaps the only recent one that has dealt with the issue in a more comprehensive and complete way.

There is a precaution, however, which he acknowledges. The preacher can "over-identify." In *Gauging Sermon Effectiveness* (Dubuque, IA: Priority Press, 1960), Sylvester F. Macnutt writes concerning the improper use of the editorial "we":

When the preacher politely includes himself among certain types of sinners (for example, thieves) whose sins are utterly unbecoming the priesthood, he distracts his audience. To say 'we sinners' is humble, but for the priest to exaggerate in order to identify himself with the congregation is false. . . . A good preacher identifies himself with the problems of the people, but not with all their sins. His people want the pastor to be holy, strong enough to pull them out of the pit—not himself crawling at its bottom (63).

Be that caution as it may, Craig Loscalzo has written a much needed and helpful book. In these challenging and, occasionally, frightening times, "identification" is critical. God's Word is always relevant, but He calls upon His servants to demonstrate through preaching that it is so.

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Maxwell, C. Mervyn. *Magnificent Disappointment: What Really Happened in 1844 . . . and Its Meaning for Today*. Boise, ID: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1994. 175 pp. Paperback, \$10.95.

Magnificent Disappointment commemorates the 150th anniversary of the Great Disappointment of 1844 when Millerite Adventists expected the second coming of Jesus. C. Mervyn Maxwell, Emeritus Professor of Church History at Andrews University, presents the 1844 event as a "magnificent disappointment" because it led Adventists to the discovery of "a special message about Jesus" (5). While Adventists share much of their soteriology, christology, and eschatology with other Christians, they are unique in their understanding of the specific character of Christ's high-priestly ministry in the context of the end time.