

A Theology of Preaching in the Reformed Tradition
(A Drama in Five Acts)

I: -- Jesus preaches -- (i) about the kingdom (see especially his parables)
(ii) about himself.

II: -- Jesus dies, is raised, and appears repeatedly during the forty days between his resurrection and his ascension.

Here the risen Jesus (i) interprets to those to whom he appears (chiefly the apostles) the meaning of the scriptures; **he** is the substance of scripture.

(ii) conscripts, informs and commissions the apostles as the normative witness to him: they are part of the Resurrection event.

This period is crucial for correcting and amplifying the community's understanding of Jesus Christ.

III: -- At the conclusion of the forty days Jesus ascends.

- (i) this doesn't mean he's gone away and is now absent or is less proximate, vivid or intimate.
- (ii) it does mean that the Easter Victor is now the ruler.

IV: -- The apostles preach in Christ's "name" (=person, presence, power, nature (character) and deserved reputation).

They preach him in the totality of his reality.

Those who hear the apostles preaching Christ are seized by Christ himself and are brought to faith in him through the power of the Spirit.

V: -- We preach, and through our preaching, thanks to

- (i) the presence and power of the Holy Spirit
- (ii) the use the Spirit makes of the normative prophetic/apostolic witness to JC (not *Reader's Digest*) our hearers meet **Christ himself**. Note the force of Luke 10:16 -- there is no "as if."