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New's "Live listen tell: The art of preaching" (book review)

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Book Reviews



New, G. (2017). *Live listen tell: The art of preaching*. Carlisle, UK: Langham Partnership. 68 pp. \$11.99. ISBN 9781783681624

This book is a quick and refreshing read that will guide readers through the process of sermon preparation and hearing God through the Scriptures. By drawing on life and Scripture, for example the road to Emmaus narrative in Luke 24, Geoff New illustrates that preachers are living a story, listening to a story and telling a story. This book encourages the reader to pay particular attention, through prayer, to the story to which they are hearing from God. He shows how to prayerfully listen to the Scriptures in preaching preparation and how the fruit of this leads to a sermon – and impacts the way we live, listen and tell.

As we live, listen and tell, we ourselves as well as our listeners will experience hope and light.

What New offers in this book is a crucial but often missing step in the process of sermon preparation. Preachers first need to hear God from the text for themselves, something that many homiletic books assume but seldom give guidance on. In this book, the author takes you step-by-step from listening to God through *lectio divina* and the Ignatian Gospel Contemplation to formulating a sermon outline. This will change your sermon from merely transmitting facts to transforming lives by enabling others to listen to God as well.

New has given the homiletic world a gift, a new spiritual model, under which preachers can tune in to God's voice with freshness, creativity and transforming power.

This book is not a theological book that is difficult to read. It is instead a manual which gives preachers the joy of knowing “we can do it.”

Live, Listen, Tell will assist a beginning preacher and non-English speakers because New suggests practical guidelines of “living a story, listening to a story and telling a story” which will lighten the burden of preachers from Asia and around the world. He emphasizes that the Bible is full of stories of immigrants who live, listen and tell and reminds us that the essential skills of a preacher are to “read the Bible aloud, think deeply, pray honestly and rest quietly.”

Before you can speak God's word, it has to speak to you. But how do you hear it speak? That is the question New answers in *Live, Listen, Tell*.

New has been a Presbyterian minister in New Zealand for the last 20 years. Currently he is the Dean of Studies at Knox Centre for Ministry and Leadership in New Zealand.

I strongly believe that this book is an invitation for all to live a story, listen to a story and tell a story together.

Reviewer

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