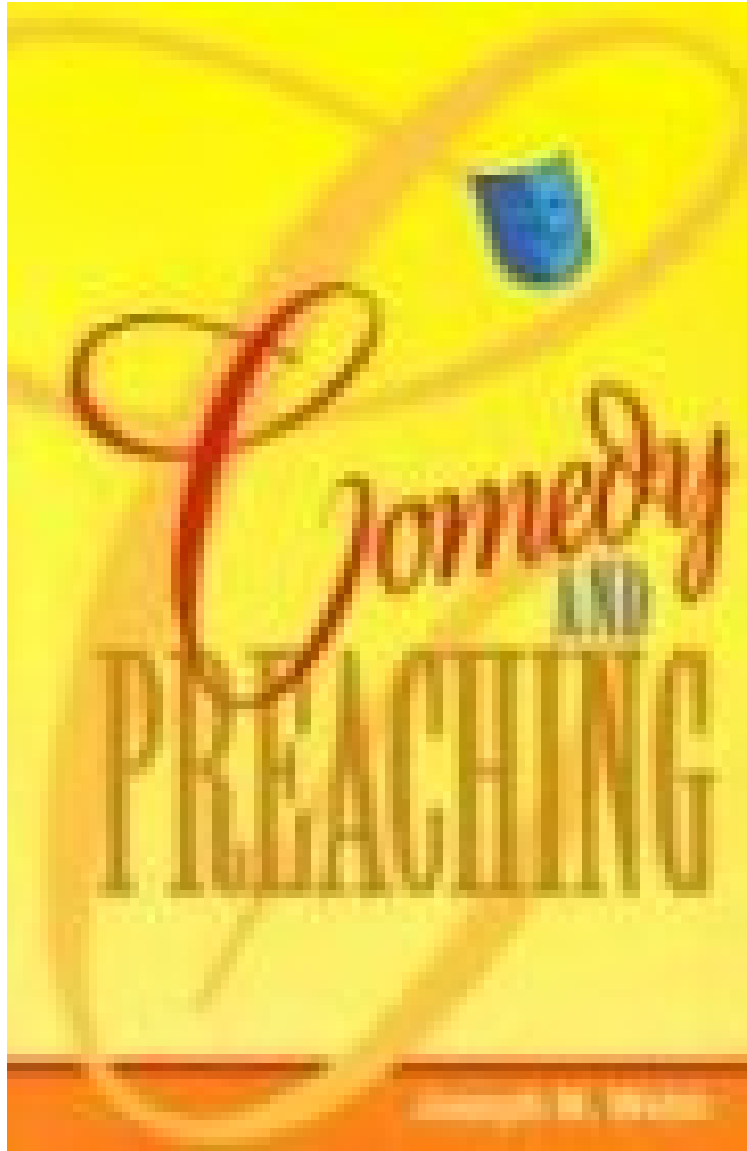


Comedy and Preaching

Joseph M. Webb

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Joseph M. Webb : Comedy and Preaching before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Comedy and Preaching:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy Garry MooreAwesome book!12 of 12 people found the following review helpful. How to be funny--Great mechanics, weak theologyBy Thomas LuttrellThe purpose of Comedy and Preaching is to teach preachers the principles they can learn from professional comedians. Rather than simply telling a few jokes to keep people entertained, Webb shows how laughter is an important way to share God's

grace. Comedy is not merely a few jokes, but rather the combination of an event or story, plus irony and metaphor told through the preacher's imagination and his personality. Webb is honest in saying that there are times when comedy is appropriate and times when it is not. Some topics are serious and should not be taken lightly. Laughter is okay only when it appreciates and takes the subject seriously. Laughter is not appropriate when it is at another person's expense, and sarcasm is not appropriate because it is hostile and based on hatred. Nevertheless, laughter is a way to transcend the limits of human weakness. Laughter is a reflection of celebration and hope. Webb believes that not all laughter is good, and not all laughter should be condoned. But when people understand that, then they can find appropriate kinds of humor to use. I didn't really agree with a lot of Webb's theological justification. It sounded a lot like salvation by works (either community or individually) and like it promoted a "social gospel" instead of personal life-changing. Also, he has a Post-Modern view of the sermon, where the authority is not based in scripture, but rather the preacher and the event. I believe that a true Christian preacher should always be expounding on scripture, or we lose our Biblical authority (*sola scriptura*). We should try to make the Bible relevant to today by using various techniques, and not substituting the Bible with non-inspired sources. However, I don't think you have to agree with his theology to get the important mechanics from this book. According to Webb, there are five dimensions of comedy: immanence, doubting, incongruity, ambiguity, and solidarity. Some qualities of a "comic" sermon are: 1) It has purpose 2) It involves a range of emotions 3) It helps us deal with the world we live in 4) It is Biblical 5) It offers unfailing hope 6) It is playful 7) It is original and spoken through preacher's own experience. The comic sermon is honest and frank, and yet it is probing and sometimes nosy. It helps us to realize our dependency on God and provides promises as hope. The comic sermon has more impact if the humor is part of a narrative story. Within the framework of a story, incongruities or "ironies" are used to make people think and face the inconsistencies of reality. Five forms of incongruities or "ironies": 1) The Anticipated and the Unanticipated 2) Ambition vs. Achievement 3) The Ideal and Actual 4) Individual vs. Institution 5) The Normal and the Abnormal. Webb also talks about hyperboles, metaphors, parables, and developing a comic persona. Webb says that we are the funniest when we act like ourselves and loosen up. He also stresses the importance of speaking extemporaneously and sounding spontaneous. Though I didn't agree with a lot of his theology, this book is a great resource that I will be drawing from a lot in the future. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Inspired me to be a better preacher? Yes. By Martin Garrison This book explains how Fred Craddock preaches, better than Craddock does. This isn't really about being funny, rather it's about communicating the gospel through story and metaphor and parable. All ways which a listener is more likely to be into. I've read many books on preaching, (Craddock, Buttrick, Long, Lowry). This book is absolutely top of my list.

Webb gives a theologically and energetically grounded how-to on the celebration of comedy within preaching.