



# **The Word Made Plain: The Power And Promise Of Preaching**

*James Henry Harris*



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Preaching mediates the word of God into a cultural matrix. And no American preaching has done so more effectively and powerfully than African American preaching, claims noted homiletiician James Harris.

Known for its rhetorical strength, social-justice orientation, and dead-on connection to the community's lived experience, black preaching is here analyzed and proposed as a model for all preaching. Harris grounds black preaching in the self-understanding of the historic black church and its most prominent preachers, from Martin Luther King Jr. to Samuel Proctor. Harris also explores the hermeneutical and aesthetic dimensions of preaching, especially at the intersection of sacred text and the broader culture. He then lays out the specific distinguishing characteristics of black preaching, including verbal cadence and rhythm, use of gestures, and, most thoroughly, the narrative model of the sermon. His last chapter, "Preaching Plainly," provides specific instructions on how to put the sermon together employing this model.



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