



# Preaching God's Compassion (Fortress Resources for Preaching)

*LeRoy Aden*

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## **Preaching God's Compassion (Fortress Resources for Preaching) LeRoy Aden**

This is a book about human suffering and the church's efforts to minister to those who are suffering. It uses the resources of contemporary pastoral care to understand situations of suffering. For the most part, however, it focuses on pastoral preaching, that is, on the oral proclamation of God's Word from the perspective of caring for or comforting people in need.

While many books have been published on suffering and on pastoral preaching, few have combined these into a single concern, as does this volume. The authors represent the respective disciplines involved: Aden, pastoral care, and Hughes, preaching. The book has been written from within the Pauline/Augustinian tradition as seen from a Lutheran perspective.

The book begins with reflections on the reality of human suffering and an examination of several ways in which we try to make sense of suffering. It then focuses specifically on the believer's struggle with suffering, the church's attempt historically to address suffering, and the minister's pastoral relationship with troubled parishioners. After dealing with some of the practical differences between counseling and preaching, the book proposes a functional approach to pastoral preaching and describes the form of the pastoral sermon.

Centering on five particular situations of suffering—loss, illness, violence, fear, and failure—the book suggests ways in which the pastor can preach to parishioners who are experiencing one or more of these traumas. Three sample sermons illustrate how to preach on God's gracious activity, while avoiding "psychologizing the text" and reducing the gospel to cheap therapy for individual problems.

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