

The Essentials of Expository Bible Teaching

Contemporary Biblical Preaching



by Keith Glasgow

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INTRODUCTION

Paul exhorted young Timothy: "Preach the Word" (2 Tim.4:2). Both parts of this phrase are important:

* It is the Word of God which we must bring to the people;

* The Word must be preached.

Samuel Chadwick said: "Preaching can never be a profession, it must always be a passion". True preaching is hard to define. It is more than merely presenting truth or even expounding the Scriptures. It is an overflow, the releasing of a message which has gripped the preacher and cannot be contained. It is God taking a person and transcending their natural speaking talent so that they speak: "as one who utters the oracles of God" (1 Pet 4:11).

Preaching God's Word is a serious occupation. It is not to be done lightly. The preacher must approach the task with reverence and awe.

WHY PREACH?

Preaching today remains a powerful and effective means to effect people's lives.

a. An AUTHORITATIVE voice in our anti-authority culture

"We preach (herald) Christ crucified" said Paul (1 Cor. 1:23). The preacher is a herald who proclaims a message that has been entrusted to him without fear or favour. The authority behind preaching resides not in the preacher: his oratory skills, his personality or even his spiritual gift; but in the biblical text he expounds.

Preaching is proclamation - speaking as God's own mouthpiece. Just as the people of Jesus day were amazed at His teaching because 'He taught as one who had authority', so the people of today are looking for a sure word of authority to believe. P.G. Forsyth said "What the world is looking for is an authoritative gospel in a humble personality".

b. A UNIQUE voice in our high-tech world

How does a local preacher survive alongside the greatest communicators in the world whose tapes and videos reach millions of people. How can we overcome feeling intimidated?

When we preach in the power of the Holy Spirit something unique takes place. God's Spirit who has inspired the Word of God and who dwells in the preacher, also moves in the congregation. It is a "speech event" (to coin the phrase of theologians). A preacher is called to preach as one who speaks the oracles of God - with "charged language".

"Preaching is not merely a word about God and His redemptive acts, but a word of God, and as such is itself a redemptive event" (Sidney Greidanus).

Definition:

Preaching the Word involves a dynamic verbal communication of the meaning of Scripture, derived from a thorough study of the text, which has first had an impact on the mind and heart of the preacher, and then through him is applied to his listeners with a view of bringing about change.

1. The Purpose of Preaching

a. To Communicate

In expository teaching we let the text speak. We are the mouthpiece for the text. We must let the text set the limits and define the goal of what we are to preach, rather than imposing on a passage our own message. What makes preaching powerful is when God's Word becomes the word for the congregation.

Effective biblical preaching takes place when you get the word out of the "then" and into the "now". Preachers can tend to both extremes; immersed in the world of the past and pouring over the Greek text, or alternatively, focusing on the contemporary needs and thinking of today's world.

"The effective preacher is on the razor's edge. He is serious in his study, yet he plugs into the contemporary human situation and gets the word out of the then into the now" (Joel Gregory).

We do not strive to make the Bible relevant for the listeners. We do not bring light to a dark book! Rather a book that is filled with light brings Divine illumination into our dark world. Our task is to allow the Word of God to illuminate our congregations by getting that Word out of "then" into "now".

We are to present the truth in such a way that it is driven "like nails firmly fixed" in the minds and hearts of the hearers (Eccl. 12:11).

b. To Convince

Some believe that we should simply present the facts and "let the Holy Spirit do the rest". This is not Scriptural. The Lord Jesus used logic as He reasoned with His contemporaries (Luke 11:17-23, 20:41-44). Paul likewise: "As His custom was...reasoned with them...explaining and proving..." (Acts 17:2, 3). Peter also exhorts us to "be ready to give a reason" for the hope that is in us (1 Peter 3:15).

We should not rely on "persuasive words of wisdom" (1 Cor.2:4), but be so convinced of the truth that we "persuade men" (2 Cor.5:11). The Holy Spirit is sent to "convince the world" (John 16:8), and He indwells, endowers with gifts, and empowers the church for this purpose.

Persuasion is moving a person from disbelief or doubt to acceptance of a certain belief. It normally happens over a period of time, thus an audience would normally be made up of people with a variety of different levels of acceptance concerning any given subject.

In order to preach persuasively you need to:

1. Be convinced yourself.
2. Know the mind of your audience, building on what knowledge and beliefs they already have.
3. Be able to refute real or anticipated counter arguments in a non-offensive manner.

Types of Argument:

1. Inductive

This method starts with particulars and ends with a statement of truth.

Example:

I. Particulars

- a. Drinking (alcohol) is bad for your health.
- b. Drinking lowers your resistance against evil.
- c. Drinking contributes to many social evils. (crimes, accidents, divorces.)
- d. Drinking can easily become addictive.
- e. Drinking gives the “appearance of evil”.
- f. Drinking can stumble a weak brother.
- g. The Holy Spirit’s fullness should be the believers resource during times of stress.

II. Statement of truth

Therefore: A Christian should not drink.

With inductive argument you gain the ear of those who do not agree with the statement of truth you are communicating. The consequences for the use of this type of reasoning can be dramatic!! (Stephen was stoned! Acts 7, 8)

2. Deductive

This form of reasoning moves in the opposite direction from the inductive reasoning. It starts with a statement of truth and then goes on to give subject to that belief with particulars.

Example:

I. Statement of truth

The baptism of the Holy Spirit is not an experience subsequent to conversion.

II. Particulars

(Because:)

- a. One cannot be a Christian without receiving the Holy Spirit (Rom.8:9b).
- b. All believers are baptized into the body of Christ (1 Cor.12:13).
- c. We are never commanded or exhorted to expect or seek a baptism in the Holy Spirit.
- d. etc...
- e. etc...

The book of Romans is an example of deductive reasoning.

c. To Counsel

The preacher is also a pastor (shepherd). He must guide, guard and feed the flock of God.

The Word of God is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness (2 Tim. 3:16), and so the 'man of God' who is thoroughly equipped (v. 17), will be able to preach the Word in the way God intended it to be used.

The Holy Spirit is the 'Paraclete' (one called alongside to help), and the preacher can be used by the Spirit to achieve this purpose.

As a counsellor in the pulpit, a preacher can address problems and issues that he knows his congregation are facing. His role is to comfort and to disturb, to give advice and to warn. He can encourage, motivate, strengthen the faith and inspire hope in those in his care.

d. To Compel

Application gives real purpose to preaching. Often the great omission in the great commission is the word "observe". Our task is not merely to inform the mind - that will never make disciples; we are to "teach them to observe" all that Christ has commanded.

Although preaching to inform (with truth), preaching to convince (with reason) and preaching to counsel (with wisdom) can of themselves motivate the listeners, there is another dimension of preaching which compliments these and produces action; that is emotion.

Emotion must be in balance with truth and reason. It should never be ignored, nor should it be over used.

When building a sermon:

- * The foundation is truth.
- * The structure is reason.
- * The floor is wise counsel
- * The paint or wallpaper is emotion.

All four combine to present something which will be both unshakable and attractive.

Picturesque language, good narratives and anecdotes, poetry, and the body language and style of the preacher can all contribute to the emotional effect of a message.

ASSIGNMENT #1

Read through Stephen's sermon in Acts 7 & 8, then list out the particulars that make up his inductive argument. At the bottom write the statement of truth he concludes his argument with.

PARTICULARS:

STATEMENT OF TRUTH:

Expository preaching

Definition:

"Expository preaching is the Spirit-empowered explanation and proclamation of the text of God's Word, with due regard to the historical, contextual, grammatical and doctrinal significance of the given passage, with the specific object of invoking a Christ-transforming response" (Stephen F. Olford).

Paul's charge to Timothy in 2 Timothy 4:1-5 applies equally today. We are to preach with the same sense of responsibility and accountability. "The true idea of (expository) preaching is that the preacher should become a mouthpiece for his text, opening it up and applying it as a word from God to the hearers, talking only in order that the text may speak itself and be heard, making each point from his text in such a manner" (Westminster Directory, 1645, paraphrased).

Bill Hybels: "You don't get a well-fed church from serving *fast food!*"

BIBLICAL AUTHORITY FOR EXPOSITORY PREACHING

"Preach the Word" (2 Timothy 4:2).

1. Old Testament Example

(*Nehemiah 8:8*).

Reading the Text: "They read from the book of the Law..."

Revealing the Truth: "They...gave the sense"

Relating the Thrust: "They...caused them to understand".

2. New Testament Examples

Our Lord, Peter, Stephen, Phillip, and Paul preached expository messages.

(Luke 24:47; Acts 2:14-36; 8:26-35; 1 Tim.4:13; 2 Tim.2:15)

ADVANTAGES OF EXPOSITORY BIBLE TEACHING:

- a. It provides greater resources for proclamation and gives endless material from which to preach.
- b. It guards against preaching only the preacher's main interests and topics.
- c. It forces you to deal with difficult subjects.
- d. Members in the congregation will not think you are 'getting at them' when relevant or controversial subjects come up naturally in the course of teaching through a book of the Bible.
- e. Hearers will learn how to discover and apply God's Word for themselves, through the example shown them from the pulpit every week.

Observations about consecutive exposition in books:

- a. It allows for good use of study hours. The many hours of study necessary for a good understanding of a Bible book will be well worth the effort when a whole series of messages are preached from the book.
- b. It provides continuous “context” for congregation. They connect with what you have taught previously and follow on with you to the next passage you will be dealing with.
- c. You not only preach a message, you gradually teach through the whole Bible.
- d. By working through a Bible book a little at a time, there is a far greater probability of explaining each passage accurately.

2. Preparation In Preaching

a. The Preparation of the Messenger

1 Tim. 4:16 “Take heed to yourself and to your teaching”.

Bishop William Quayle says “Is preaching the art of making a sermon and delivering it? O, I know that is not preaching! Preaching is the art of making a preacher, and delivering that”!

A man once asked George Verwer how long it took him to prepare the powerful message he had just preached. George answered, “It took a life-time”. Although the preparation of a sermon is done at a desk, the content is drawn from the accumulation of many years knowledge and experience.

To be effective, a preacher must have first applied the message to himself. The late Jim Smith of Havelock North used to say: “We are not called to practice what we preach but to preach what we practice”!

Knowing God

The preacher must first have a personal knowledge of Christ as Saviour. To fail in this point disqualifies a person, no matter how great his knowledge about God is. He would be like the blind leading the blind (Matt. 15:14). He would be unable to receive (discern) the things of the Spirit of God (1 Cor. 2:14).

However, knowledge of God is far more than a personal encounter at conversion. Like Paul, our desire should be “That I may know Him”. We are to “grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ”.

This involves consecutive and comprehensive Bible study, hand in hand with a learning experience of God’s involvement in our daily lives. An example could be found in 2 Cor. 1:3-4. The truth that God is the “Father of all mercies and God of all comfort” is doctrinal knowledge of God. This becomes a learning experience when He “comforts us in all our affliction”, and so prepares us for ministry to others.

1. Personal Preparation

- a. The Moral Life of the preacher - he must be above reproach
- b. The Mental Life of the preacher - he must be disciplined and alert, well informed
- c. The Marital Life of the preacher - he must be a godly leader and example
- d. The Manual Life of the preacher - he must have integrity and diligence in his work

2. Pastoral Preparation

A preacher must be totally identified with his people. He must face the realities of sin, need, hurt, and grief within the church and deal with them. This will involve him in counselling, visiting, and fellowship (see Eph.4:7-12).

*** Know your congregation**

The key to effective communication is to have a clear understanding of the target audience, before preparing a message. Too many sermons are like the arrow of the Syrian soldier, who “drew his bow at a venture, and struck the King of Israel between the scale armour and the breastplate” (2 Chron.18:33).

Paul recognized target audiences of his day and adjusted his message and approach in order to increase acceptance among each group (1 Cor.9:19-22). He was sensitive to limitations imposed by the culture and prejudices of his audience (Acts 17 c/f 1 Cor.2:4). Jesus also varied His approach to the different types of audiences He had.

A Bible teacher or evangelist who fails to do personal work becomes a “Preaching machine”. The gift of a teacher given to the church by Christ is called a “pastor-teacher” for good reason (Eph.4:12)!

ASK YOURSELF:

1. Who is my audience (age, sex, background, prejudices, sub-culture)?
2. What are their questions (thoughts, feelings, struggles, pains, needs)?
3. Which of those questions shall I address in this sermon?

How do we discover the questions they are asking?

Live with the people -

- * Think with them (reading what they read, watching T.V. programmes they watch),
- * Relax with them (tennis, golf, picnics, tramping, etc),
- * Counsel with them - realizing the inadequacy of our spiritual band aids when faced with a family haemorrhage (Tim Timmons).

“Preach to the suffering, and you will never lack a congregation. There is a broken heart in every pew” (Joseph Parker).

*** Love Your Congregation**

This is a key to preparing yourself and your congregation for the teaching of God's Word. When the people are convinced of your genuine love for them, they will take the most direct and heaviest challenges from the pulpit.

To fail in love will cause you to become a 'resounding gong and a clanging symbol' (1 Cor. 13:1). The great chapter on Christian love (1 Cor. 13) is sandwiched in the middle of a whole section of teaching about the use of gifts. The gift of teaching like all others must be used with a motivation of love. We are called to 'speak the truth in love' (Eph. 4:15).

b. Preparation of the sermon

Tools:

Good tools are essential. Just as Sherlock Holmes needed his magnifying glass, we need aids to help us arrive at the true meaning of the passage of Scripture we are studying.

* A good study Bible. The NKJV and NASB are perhaps the most accurate for detailed study

* At least one other (modern) translation of the Bible.

* Concordance (Youngs, Strongs or Bible Software).

* Bible dictionary and/or encyclopedia.

* Word study books (Vines, Vincent, Spiros Zodhiates).

* Commentaries:

“Overview” Commentaries - useful for grasping the major theme and flow of a book

Textual commentaries which give insights into the grammar and use of the particular words chosen by the author

Devotional commentaries which correlate the passage with other Scriptures, and apply it to Christian life and witness today.

* Articles on books in Bible Dictionaries and Encyclopedias

* Special studies on the particular book, human author, or type of literature

* Source books/software of illustrations and anecdotes.

STEP 1

OBSERVATION - the initial study of the text

Observation answers the question "What does this text say?", where interpretation answers the question "What does this text mean?"

I. Select a biblical text for your message

A teacher can look at his congregation through the lens of his text or he can look at a text through the lens of his congregation.

Select a text in the light of your knowledge of those to whom you are to preach, or in response to what the Lord has been saying to you personally in your devotional or study time. Ask yourself what passage would address the needs, deficiencies, problems, hurts and anticipated dangers you see in your congregation.

How much text?

a. Individual words - unpack appropriate words, giving meaning, tense, mood, purpose and application (eg. hope, patience, repentance). Martin Lloyd Jones often used this method.

b. A phrase or a part of a sentence (C.H. Spurgeon was the great textual preacher).

c. The biblical paragraph (about 3 to 10 verses). Alexander MacLaren used this method. Most of our preaching today is going to come from expounding a paragraph of scripture.

d. A Bible chapter.

e. An entire Bible book - G. Campbell Morgan used this method.

Problems when Selecting the Text

a. Selecting a text because of an "assumed" message, which the text in fact does not proclaim or affirm. The text is Lord over the preacher just as Jesus is Lord over the preacher.

b. Selecting a text carelessly without regard for its context. There are three levels of context - first the immediate context, then the book context and finally the canonical context.

c. Selecting a text that has too many messages for the preaching occasion.

d. Selecting a text that is inappropriate for a particular group of people (eg. too complicated for a youth service / too long for the time allowed)

Questions to ask when selecting Text

1. What are the "boundaries" of the text?

In what sense is the text a unit?

What are the divisions in the literature that define the text as a literary unit?

Does the text have a main theme or thought which ties it together?

2. Does the occasion provide the time and place to properly present this text and this theme?

3. If only part of the text is to be read, what portion contains the essential elements of the theme to be presented?

II. Analyse the text

This analysis is not the detailed study of a passage, but the total saturation of your mind with the Scripture you are to preach from. You are to read and re-read the text, looking for the following:

The Background of the Text

Research practices, customs and historical background which could affect the interpretation of the passage. Look at the passage in context with the structure and major theme of the whole book in which it is found.

What genre is the literature?

The Big idea of the Text

Saturate yourself in the passage until you can discern the one unifying idea that galvanises the text into a whole. Ask yourself "What makes this passage a section? Why does it start here and finish there? What main thought or idea is central to the passage?"

The big idea is discovered by answering the question "what is the passage talking about?" When you think you have found the big idea, check to see if it relates to all of the text, not just part of it. Ask yourself "Does every verse have something to say about this big idea?"

The Break-down of the Text

Analyse the structure of the text. What divisions are there, and how does each section relate to the others and to the big idea of the passage? Each section you are studying must have its own separate idea or thought, and each of these must relate to and compliment (add something to) the one big idea in the passage.

The Burden of the Text

The thrust of text (WHY was it recorded in Scripture?)

** Ask yourself questions to find the main message of the text:*

What was on the heart of the author? What was the message he was trying to get through?

What is the primary application of the whole text to the reader (then and now)?

How does this apply today?"

Who does it apply to?

When does it apply?

ASSIGNMENT #2

Write down a brief analysis of James 1:2-12 under the headings provided:

The Background of the text:

The Big idea of the text:

The Breakdown of the text:

The Burden of the text:

WRITE IT DOWN

Write the big idea at the top of a page, and then list below it the sections that you can see in the passage. Below, write what you believe to be the burden of the text (the burden and the big idea are often very similar). The burden should be written as you would possibly preach it. For example, if the big idea of the text is 'perseverance through trials', your burden may be "We must persevere through trials".

Now take a blank sheet of paper for every section of the text, and write on the top of each one the main thought of that particular section. Then write out all that is significant in that section, along with questions or subjects you may wish to research. Also, illustrations, Bible references and other ideas will come to mind which can be noted on the appropriate piece of paper as a reminder for later when you will be fully developing the sermon.

STEP 2

INVESTIGATION - Discovering the meaning of the text

Basic principles of biblical interpretation:

1. God spoke to be understood - **simplicity** - look for the natural meaning.
2. God spoke in precise context - **history** - look for original meaning.
3. God spoke without contradicting Himself - **harmony** - look for the general meaning.
4. God speaks through what He spoke - **modernity** - look for the contemporary meaning.

(Dr. John Stott)

Hermeneutical Principles

There is always only one interpretation of any given text, where there may be several applications.

1. Respect the straight forward meaning of the text. The Bible should be interpreted literally wherever possible, in it's natural and normal sense. Do not forget it was originally written to people who were often illiterate and uneducated.
2. The meaning of the text is governed by the immediate context as well as the broader context of the whole book in which it is found.
3. Use Scripture to aid in the understanding of Scripture.
4. Remember the diversity and progress within Scripture as a unit.
5. Use the clear to help explain the unclear or less clear.
6. The whole focus of Scripture - the centrality of Christ.

ASK THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

- a. Are there any indications of purpose, editorial comments, or interpretive statements about the events in the text?
- b. Are theological judgements made in the text? (eg. Judges 17:6 - Is this story given as an example or as a warning? If so, in exactly what way?)
- c. Is this instance a norm or an exception?
- d. What message was intended to those to whom the passage was first written?
- e. Why would the Holy Spirit have included this account in Scripture?

The Illumination of the Holy Spirit

We must approach the study of Scripture with a deep sense of inadequacy to be able to interpret the text by mere human intellect, education, experience or Bible knowledge (1 Cor. 2:6-14). We are to pray for illumination (Psa. 119:18, Eph 1:17-18). The indwelling Holy Spirit is our teacher (Luke 24:45 c/f John 14:26, 1 John 2:27).

Illumination is the opening of the 'spiritual eyes' of the preacher to understand the revealed Word of God. It is not revelation, but understanding of the revelation given in the Word. The same Holy Spirit who inspired the writers now illumines the readers (2 Peter 1:20-21).

Some things to remember :

- a. Not everything in Scripture can be fully understood (Deut. 29:29).
- b. Human teachers can be instruments of illumination - both verbally or written down in commentaries and books (Eph. 4:11-12).
- c. The Spirit's work does not take away from the necessity of hard work. It is not a short cut to Bible Study! Any new insights which we believe the Spirit has brought to us, we must judge by what the rest of Scripture says (Acts 17:11).

Procedures for Investigation

a. Literary analysis

What genre is the book? Why was it written? What bearing does the context of the whole book, and the surrounding chapters have on the text being investigated?

b. Syntactical analysis (Mechanical analysis)

Analysis can be likened to the 'exploded' parts of a gear box in an auto spare parts manual. The exploded view allows you to look at each individual part and see how it fits in with the whole.

The word syntax comes from a Greek word which means 'how statements relate with one another' (clauses, paragraphs, sentences, and phrases)

EXAMPLE: 1 Peter 1:3-5

Determine what is dominant and what is subordinate in this passage? Subordinate clauses and phrases are those which support, confirm, qualify, or in some way add to the main point.

The dominant phrase is '**Praise be to the God and Father**'

What kind of God and Father? (first level of subordination)

* **'of our Lord Jesus Christ'**

* **'He has given us new birth'**

How did He give us new birth? (second level of subordination)

* **'It was 'in His great mercy'**

* **'It was 'into a living hope'**

* **'It was 'through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead'**

* **'It was 'into an inheritance'**

What kind of inheritance? (third level of subordination)

* **'can never perish',**

* **'spoil',**

* **'fade',**

* **'kept in heaven'**

For whom is it kept? (fourth level of subordination) -

* **'for you'.**

Analyse by use of questions

Matthew 28:18-20 *“Then Jesus came to them and said, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.*

Therefore go

and make disciples of all nations,

baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

teaching them to obey everything I commanded you.

and surely I am with you always...”

What is the big idea? - *The main verb is “make disciples”*

What has “All Authority...” got to do with making disciples?

Our responsibility (to make disciples),

Our right (to make disciples),

Our recognition (of the One who builds His church)

What has “go” got to do with making disciples?

Evangelism that is to be pro-active ... penetrating the world

What has “baptizing...” got to do with making disciples?

Commitment of faith and identification with Christ

What has “teaching...” got to do with making disciples?

Evangelism ends with the maturity of new Christians

What has “I am with you always...” got to do with making disciples?

Encouragement to do it, and perseverance

c. Verbal analysis

a. Unknown words - look for words that require definition.

b. Key words - the context will help identify words which are significant to the understanding of the meaning of the passage. For example, in John 15:1-16, the words "remain in" and "fruit" are crucial to a correct interpretation of the passage.

c. Emphasized words - words that relate to the dominant theme, that are repeated, or are prominent for other reasons. A good textual commentary will identify words that are emphatic in the Greek, or are emphasized because of the particular construction of the sentence in the Greek text.

d. Connecting words (but, therefore, and, so, etc.). Look for repetition - contrasts - progression, unusual usage (where the expected word is not used).

Looking into significant words -

1. What does the word mean?

2. Is there any other significant use of the word in the book? (or elsewhere)

3. How was the word used in non-biblical literature contemporary to the author?

d. Theological analysis

The investigation of the doctrinal and theological significance of the text:

*** within the thought of the author**

Paul's use of the expression "in Christ" consistently relates to the Christian's position in union with Christ. However, when John quotes Jesus using a similar term "in me" (John 15:1), the meaning is the Christian's fellowship with Christ.

The term 'eternal life' in John's Gospel has a different meaning than the way the term is used in the synoptic Gospels.

*** within the context of biblical revelation**

A passage may seem to teach that Christians can lose their salvation, but needs to be understood in light of other Scriptures which clearly show the eternal security of the believer.

*** in harmony with the author's theological emphasis**

In 1 Corinthians Paul speaks of worldly wisdom as being an enemy of the cross and a barrier to people's faith in Christ. However, in Proverbs and Ecclesiastes, the author encourages us to seek after wisdom.

*** in harmony with general biblical theology**

Every preacher should have his own theology. Having studied Bible doctrines and the text of Scripture from Genesis to Revelation, the Bible teacher should have strong convictions about every area of theology. This becomes a grid through which the interpretation of every individual passage is passed.

When a certain passage is not in harmony with that theology, either the preacher's convictions need to be evaluated and changed, or he must interpret the passage in question to line up with his theology.

WRITE DOWN

While working through the investigation procedure, there will be many insights, thoughts and research ideas that come to mind. Write these down on the pages you have set up for each section of the passage.

ASSIGNMENT #3

Write out a syntactical analysis of James 1:2-12, showing what is dominant and what is subordinate, and what relationships each sentence, clause or phrase has with the whole.

STEP 3

ORGANISATION - putting the sermon together

1. Principles of Organisation

Approximately half of sermon preparation time should be spent researching the text and taking notes. You should end up with 3 to 5 times more material than you will be able to use when preaching the message. You must then bring order out of the chaos of the material. This process will bring unity and movement to the sermon.

Three components of an expository sermon:

*The **Dominating Theme** (Subject) - GIVES UNITY*

*The **Integrating Thoughts** (Structure) - GIVES MOVEMENT*

*The **Motivating Thrust** (Significance) - GIVES PURPOSE*

Previous study under 'OBSERVATION', will now help in developing the main theme and structure of your sermon.

The **Big Idea** of the Bible text is to be expanded into the **Theme** of the sermon.

The **Breakdown** of the Bible text is to be developed into the **main points** of the sermon.

The **Burden** of the Bible text becomes the **Thrust** of the sermon.

a. GIVE YOUR SERMON UNITY

The theme of the sermon

The sermon must possess a central theme, "...a summary statement of the unifying thought of the text" (Greidanus). This "sermon in a sentence" or master thought of the sermon becomes a sermon thesis - a simple statement with an active verb that catches the unity of the sermon.

The theme needs to emphasise one point, becoming the governing statement for the sermon, determining which material from your study is "in" or "out", guaranteeing unity.

The theme needs to be like a bullet, not buckshot. Sermons tend to have too many (often unrelated) ideas. By developing a theme and sticking to it, you can remove the unrelated ideas and maintain unity.

Jowett says *"I have a conviction that no sermon is ready for preaching, not ready for writing out until we can express its theme in a short pregnant sentence, as clear as a crystal. I find the getting of that sentence the hardest, the most exacting and the most fruitful labour in my study"*.

To help establish a sermon theme, ask yourself:

1. What is the precise subject that I am going to preach? (derived from the passage of Scripture).
2. What am I going to be saying about the subject?

Example: John 15:1-8

Big Idea: Dynamic Discipleship (verse 8 shows that the point of Christians being branches in the Vine and bearing fruit is to 'be becoming' His disciples. We are true disciples as we remain in a dynamic relationship with Him.)

Once you have identified the big idea, you must determine what the passage says about the big idea and form these 'compliments' into one sentence which becomes the theme.

What does the passage say about the big idea?

1. True discipleship involves a dynamic relationship with Jesus Christ.
2. The purpose is to produce the fruit of Christ's life in and through us.
3. We must rely on Christ to produce the fruit, and this will happen when we remain in close fellowship with Him.

Theme: *True discipleship is a dynamic relationship with Christ where, in dependence on Him, His life and works are produced in us.*

b. GIVE YOUR SERMON MOVEMENT

Structure gives movement to the sermon.

The movement of the message relates directly to the text you are preaching. We must not impose an outline on the text. The form of the sermon springs out of the text itself.

If you will structure the sermon by the form of the text, you can be sure that the outline of the sermon is biblical. You will be making dominant what the inspired author made dominant, and making subordinate what he made subordinate.

The 'Breakdown' of the text discovered under 'Observation' can now be examined more closely to determine the main thought of each section. These thoughts all have something to say about the theme of the whole passage, but at the same time truly represent their section. Thus they are 'Integrating Thoughts', and become the main points of the sermon.

Forming a sermon outline

Why should we use form at all when today the idea of narrative and dialogue is more appealing to some?

The outline serves 3 important purposes -

*** It makes the sermon more pleasing to the listener.**

From our early years we are taught to categorise and pigeon-hole. It is the way we think. We feel more comfortable where everything is set out in order.

*** It helps the sermon to be more persuasive**

*** It makes the sermon easier to remember**

How to form an outline:

1. Make a “principilised” outline of the integrating thoughts, keeping in mind your dominating theme from which your outline must flow. The outline should express the integrating thoughts, and should lead to the motivating thrust.

Example - John 15:1-8

Principle #1 - True discipleship (v.8) is maintained by a close and vital relationship with Christ (as a branch in the Vine)

Principle #2 - The purpose of our dynamic relationship with Christ is to produce fruit, and this requires us remaining in close fellowship with Him.

Principle #3 - The production of fruit is not possible by ourselves, therefore we must rely on His life and power to work in and through us.

The resulting outline which expresses these principles:

Dynamic Discipleship

- 1. Realising our vital relationship with Christ**
 - 2. Remaining in vital relationship with Christ**
 - 3. Relying on our vital relationship with Christ**
2. The outline should be biblical, logical (reflect the logic of the text as well as being logical itself), applicable, and memorable
Alliteration and rhyme help with the memorisation of the outline (both for the preacher and the hearer)
3. All headings must be distinct from each other, yet relate to each other
4. Points need to be locked into the theme
5. The outline should be easy to follow and have no more than 5 points (normally 3)
6. Make it as visual as possible - help people to visualise the outline.

c. GIVE YOUR SERMON SUBSTANCE

Under each of the main headings in the outline, organise the material appropriate to that section. Where possible follow the natural sequence of the biblical text

Give background, explanation, insights into words, and illustrations as you are expounding each section.

FLESHING OUT YOUR SERMON

Work through the sub-points which are important to the theme, developing each one by the following:

- 1. Restate** (say in another way)
- 2. Explain** (give the meaning)
- 3. Prove** (give reasons for believing and obeying)
- 4. Correlate** (give other Scriptures to support or enrich)
- 5. Illustrate** (to help explain or to drive the point home)
- 6. Apply** (make it relevant - show how it relates practically to life)

Organise this material into a structured form under each major point. Be careful not to be too structured, with points under points under the main points.

ASSIGNMENT #4

Write the dominating theme of James 1:2-12, based on the 'Big Idea' and what the passage says about it.

Big Idea:

What does the passage say about the big idea?

Theme:

STEP 4

THE FINISHING TOUCHES

d. GIVE YOUR SERMON PURPOSE

The Motivating Thrust of a sermon

The motivating thrust is the accumulated impact of all the applications of the theme. Your sermon must pack a punch. It must have a message. It must move people toward change, growth and maturity.

Be careful not to be too academic in your teaching of Scripture. Keep the main thrust of what you teach as a personal challenge or application.

e. GIVE YOUR SERMON PASSION

Preaching has been described as "Truth through personality". The message must grip you. It must be applied to your heart and impressed on your mind by the Spirit of God.

INCARNATIONAL PREACHING (John1:14)

Just as the Eternal Word became flesh, and revealed the truth of God to mankind, so preachers are to become vehicles for the Word of God to be revealed to this generation. The truth must become a part of the preacher, not just passing through his lips. Pray the sermon through on your knees. Open yourself honestly before God as you apply it to yourself.

The great prophet Jeremiah felt the heart beat of God as he preached to his contemporaries. He wept as God would weep. He was angry with the Lord's anger. He mirrored the mind and the emotions of the One who sent him.

THEN...

Prepare the conclusion

Prepare the introduction

Write the sermon out in full

There are many advantages in writing out a sermon in full:

1. It gives you confidence that you 'have it together'
2. It helps clarify areas that may be difficult to understand and explain
3. It gives you an good idea of the time needed to preach the sermon
4. It stops rambling in the pulpit
5. It enables you to look for picturesque ways to communicate the truth

Prepare notes

Sermon notes should be easy to follow, using highlighter pens to colour code headings, points, Bible verses, and illustrations.

Write as little as possible to force you to look up at the people and not down at your notes. Use prompt words to encourage extemporaneous preaching.

Once preparation of the message has been completed:

1. Prayerfully Review the Sermon

Go over it while you keep your congregation in mind. Make sure it flows.

2. Prayerfully Rehearse the Sermon

As you kneel in prayer, go over the entire sermon before a holy God. This solemn discipline will reveal whether or not further adjustments need to be made or if you have His approval. Only then are you ready to preach.

Common failures

- a. Too much material - trying to cover too much ground.
- b. Too little preparation
- c. Notes are too full, forcing the preacher to read them
- d. Insufficient illustration.
- e. Insufficient application.
- f. Lack of physical movement.
- h. Too impersonal.
- l. A weak introduction or close
- j. Too long!

OTHER TYPES OF SERMONS

Topical Sermons

The task is to reveal from the whole of Scripture what God has said about a certain subject. A topical sermon may be based on a passage of the Bible, but it is not restricted to it. Beware of using a Bible passage as a springboard for a sermon that has no primary relationship with it.

- a. Make a diligent search of all that the Scriptures say concerning the subject. Caution: the temptation is to force Scriptures to make a point about the subject which they do not teach.
- b. Establish a theme. This is important as your topic may be too big to handle in one sermon.
- c. Topics are best explored with the use of the questions: what? why? how? who? where? when? so what?

Theological Sermons

This is an extension of topical preaching where the subjects are doctrinal. Doctrine need not be dry and boring! The preacher should allow the truth to so captivate his heart that he preaches the great fundamentals of our faith with passion and zeal.

- a. Be objective and comprehensive in covering the doctrine. Take care that you put emphasis where God puts emphasis, avoiding hobby horses or over-reaction to error being taught by others.

b. Books written on the subject are a great help, but the best way is to study the Scriptures alone and come up with your own theology before checking it against what others have written.

Historical Incident

This is a sermon which is derived from a Bible narrative, where lessons are taken from it and applied to the audience. God's people enjoy a well put together sermon based on a Bible story. Nearly one third of the Bible is narrative.

The story is the key to determining the theme, and as the story is unfolded during the sermon, so the spiritual truths are explained, emphasized and applied (watch out for over-spiritualisation). See 1 Cor. 10:11.

1. Determine what the primary focus of the author was. Biblical narrative was very carefully written. Authors were selective in what they included, governed by their underlying purpose.
2. Look for an emerging pattern in the story - a unifying framework which the author built into the story. Preachers often avoid narrative sermons because of the difficulty in translating the form of the narrative text into a sermon structure.
3. Look for the main message in the story (the theme).
4. Narratives convey the experiences of people, and are therefore normally application oriented. Look for the main application (the motivating thrust).

Biographical sermons

A biographical sermon is the analysis of a biblical character in order to apply lessons, warning and encouragement from the record of his/her life. After serious research and a skilful presentation, the congregation should be able to identify with the character, gaining insight into 'how they ticked' - what motivated them, what was commended by God and what He was displeased with.

Read and study all the Bible references to the person.

Put yourself in their shoes and imagine how you would feel, think or act.

Take notice of what the biblical writers have been moved to reveal about them, and why. Select the outstanding events of their lives and how they fit into the whole plan of God's purposes (eg. Esther, Ruth).

Be careful not to make judgements where God doesn't.

List all their major virtues, qualities, weaknesses and failures.

Try and discover why they were great, weak, good, bad etc... (eg. Daniel).

Research historical and cultural background.

Read books (eg. A. Whyte) and biographical sermons.

ASSIGNMENT #5

Form an outline for a sermon based on your theme and breakdown of James 1:2-12.

Theme:

Breakdown:

Principle thoughts in each section:

Outline:

Evangelistic sermons

Priority truths in the gospel:

1. The person of Christ

Never forget that the gospel IS Jesus Christ. We are not merely preaching a doctrine about a man who lived and died and rose again - we are presenting the living Lord Jesus Himself as the answer to the problem of sin and death.

2. The Cross

That forgiveness is offered on the sole basis of Christ's death which was:

- a. Voluntary - He was not compelled to die
- b. Sacrificial - He did not deserve to die
- c. Substitutionary - 2 Cor.5:21 (transfer of punishment and guilt).

3. Faith

That justification is by faith alone. God only accepts those whom He declares righteous through their faith in the person and work of Christ (that He is God, the Son, and died for our sins and rose again).

4. New Birth

That new birth is an absolute necessity for salvation. New birth is change of nature involving:

Cleansing - "washing of regeneration".

Receiving a new life - "renewal in the Holy Spirit" (Titus 3:5).

Receiving the "divine nature" (1 John 3:9).

Primary elements in gospel preaching

1. Keep it simple

Preach so that a child in the audience can understand. Keep in your mind that the unsaved in your audience could be hearing the message for the first time.

Remember Paul who said "We preach Jesus Christ and Him crucified". He did not preach with eloquent wisdom, "lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power".

The power of the cross is in the simple gospel message, which is foolishness to the perishing but to those who are called, it is the power and wisdom of God (1 Cor. 1:21 - 2:5).

2. Speak with authority

We are commissioned to go in the Name of Jesus Christ. We are His personal ambassadors. Jesus said "He who receives you, receives Me (Matt. 10:40)". "If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven, if you retain the sins of any, they are retained" (John 20:23).

We are called to speak "as one who utters the oracles of God" (1 Pet.4:11). Someone said of D.L. Moody: "Moody's power is in the way he has his Bible at the tip of his tongue".

Put a lot of “Thus says the Lord” in your messages. The authority of the Bible is the sure foundation for effective gospel preaching.

3. Preach Christ

We are not merely preaching the work of Christ; what He did for us and what He can do in us; we are preaching Christ. He is our message! He said “come unto Me and I will give you rest”. He said “I am the way” not “I will show you the way” or even “make the way” - “I AM...no one comes to the Father except by Me”.

4. Make your sermon one long appeal

The gospel demands a verdict - it calls for a decision. Don't leave the appeal to the last five minutes - always be appealing and prepare their hearts and minds for the final call to commitment.

The appeal (a call to commitment) at the close is vital:

- a. It is biblical (Exd.32:26; Josh.24:15; Acts 2:38, 39).
- b. It forces the listeners to clearly see which side they are on.
- c. It gives them an opportunity to make a firm decision.
- d. It reinforces a mental decision - clinches it - seals it forever.
- e. It gives opportunity for counsel and follow-up.
- f. It remains with a person as a landmark which they can look back to as the time they came to Christ (as the O.T. monuments were to the Children of Israel).

Caution

1. No over-emotional motivation (let God do the work of saving).
2. No pressure, manipulation or deception.
3. No long drawn out appeals.
4. No incentives. An appeal is not a gimmick to catch souls, but a serious call to commitment. Make sure they know exactly what to do.

ILLUSTRATIONS

a. Reasons for using illustrations

- I. To bring clarity to the point being presented.
- II. To relax the listeners and help them follow the exposition. After 6-8 minutes of exposition your audience are brain weary and need time out to relax their minds.
- III. Visually-orientated illustrations are needed to capture and retain the attention of contemporary congregations.
- IV. To help make a permanent impression. By including an illustration, people will remember the illustration and therefore will remember the point that it underscored.
- V. Illustrations assist the preacher in proving a point.

b. Qualities of good illustrations

- I. They need to be understandable - clearly presented: not needing explanation.
- II. They need to be pertinent - they must be appropriate to the point of the sermon being explained.
- III. They need to be credible - give their source and include specific details.
- IV. They need to be accurate - information in an illustration should be correct.
- V. They need to be fresh - retire old, trite, worn-out, overgrown illustrations.

c. Sources of illustrations

- I. Personal stories - the congregation wants to be in touch with your own humanity.
- II. Biography - used both biblical and secular.
- III. Sciences - draw from the studies of biology, chemistry, botany etc.
- IV. Magazines and periodicals - National Geographic and Readers Digest etc.
- V. Source books and software of illustrations
- VI. The congregation - must be used with discretion.

d. Using illustrations in preaching

1. Vary the types of illustrations from sermon to sermon.
2. Avoid multiple illustrations for the same point; one good illustration is enough.
3. Use illustrations to illuminate a specific truth, not as decorations.
4. Make a transition back to the specific point after completing the illustration. Link the illustration with the point in your sermon.

APPLICATION

The major component necessary for better preaching is the call for specific action arising from the sermon text. The question must always be asked "What practical suggestions can be given to help people respond to what is said?"

a. A Theological necessity.

You have not correctly exegeted a passage of scripture unless you can apply that passage to the lives of the people who are listening. The New Testament is constantly applying truth in a practical way to the lives of believers. God's truth is not given merely to fill our minds. It is meant to be applied.

The word of God is not just for teaching doctrine, but for reproof, correction and training in righteousness (2 Timothy 3:16). God gave pastor/teachers to produce the same results in the lives of Christians as the Word of God (Ephesians 4:11).

b. A Homiletical necessity.

The primary purpose of preaching God's Word is to effect change and growth in the lives of the hearers. Do not leave the practical application of a text to the congregation.

Application is the responsibility of the teacher not the learner. The word hear and the word obey in the Hebrew are the same word "Shamar". As far as God is concerned you haven't learned unless you have obeyed!

What are the characteristics of effective sermon application?

I. Application should be specific, relating to that congregation at that time. Avoid generalities.

II. The application should be practical, helping the congregation to understand what they can do to change behaviour by word, deed, thought or attitude.

How to apply God's Word

1. Pick out one idea for application - you cannot apply everything.

2. Make certain that the application is biblical and true to the text. People must become convinced that an application is biblical before they will be willing to change. Support the application with other Scriptures where possible.

3. Personalise the truth - so that the listeners are able to see for themselves that they do not measure up, or need to change.

4. Persuade (exhort, encourage and seek to convict)

5. Give them something specific to do. Look for creative ways to help the listeners to act on what has been said. If the message is on the subject of relationships between husbands and wives, a practical application may be to suggest that couples get together that day and write out 2 goals for their relationship over the next year.

INTRODUCTIONS

The purpose of introductions

With the introduction over, the congregation should not only know what your subject is, but want to hear what you have to say about it.

a. It should prepare an audience to hear what you are going to talk about, similar to a prelude in a symphony. It should create attention, gain interest, open the mind, state the theme and stress its importance.

b. It should lead directly to the first point of the sermon outline.

c. It should relax the audience, and build bridges to the congregation. It gives them time to get used to you as a person.

d. The introduction should not contain any of the main sermon material. It is not the main course, it is the appetizer.

Qualities of effective introductions

a. Brevity - effective introductions should not be more than 10% of the

total message. Keep it simple, short and to the point. The first 10 words are of extreme importance.

b. Appropriateness - they must fit that sermon, for that congregation, at that time.

c. Interesting - the first two minutes of the sermon will tune in or tune out the audience

d. Varied - don't begin every sermon the same way; plan variations (quotations, shocking statements, biography, object lessons).

Types of introductions

1. Use a dramatic narrative - help people to visualize by painting a picture.

2. Provide the historical setting of the passage. Eg. some of the Psalms.

3. Share geographical elements of the biblical text.

4. Relate the customs of the day, the people, etc, appropriate to the text.

5. A striking personal experience told in first personal narrative.

6. A profound statement or shocking proclamation. (eg. "The might of the mite"!).

7. An interesting current news item that has caught the attention of the entire congregation.

8. The statement of a life-situation problem.

9. A quotation (reference to a contemporary best selling book).

10. A humorous incident.

11. The explanation of a striking sermon title.

12. A unique and eye-catching object lesson.

Pitfalls in sermon introductions

1. Avoid all verbal and visual distractions.

2. Never begin a sermon with an apology.

3. Avoid elaborate greetings and responses.

4. Don't use inappropriate humour.

5. Don't refer to the last time you have preached that particular sermon.

6. Don't introduce the first point of the message, rather than the central theme.

7. Avoid using colourful material that is unrelated to the central theme of the sermon.

CONCLUSIONS

A conclusion culminates the application of all that has been said in a brief, direct and personal challenge. Make it clear what you expect the listeners to do.

More preachers fail at this point than any other in sermon preparation and delivery.

Qualities of a good conclusion:

1. It needs to be natural and appropriate for that text and sermon.
2. The conclusion must be personal in it's appeal; you are talking directly to each listener.
3. Be specific with concrete applications
4. Make the conclusion an emotional high point.
5. The conclusion should be orally forceful and vigorous.
6. It should be brief, lasting only two or three minutes.
7. Summarize without making it sound like a summary. In effect you should be able to state your sermon theme.

Types of conclusions:

- a. An illustration that gathers all the application of the message in to one exhortation.
- b. Stating the theme and the major points vigorously, forcefully and personally.
- c. The conclusion could be a benediction followed by an invitation.
- d. A poem or striking statement serves well as a conclusion.

Pitfalls in sermon conclusions:

- a. Avoid the broken promise conclusion saying "in conclusion" when it doesn't happen.
- b. Avoid blaming the clock for concluding the sermon.
- c. Do not introduce new material in to the sermon conclusion.

Practical Considerations for the conclusion:

- a. Master the sermon conclusion verbatim.
- b. Prepare your conclusion first and prepare the sermon toward that aim.

TRANSITIONS

Effective transitions in a sermon are like smooth gear changes in a car. The structure (outline) should help, not hinder the flow of the sermon. Each new major point should be connected with the previous.

Don't forget that you know your sermon, your congregation doesn't! You know where you are going - they don't. Transitions are vital to keeping your listeners with you as you lead them along the path of the sermon.

The "fully stated" transition states the proceeding point and the point to follow, using the words "not only... but also...".

Other ways to make a transition:

Use the question "Is that all?" and then move on to the next point.

Say "We have seen ... Now let's see ..."

ASSIGNMENT #6

Take an interesting word, phrase, or idea from James 1:12, and develop it under the headings below:

Word, phrase or idea:

1. Restate (say in another way)

2. Explain (give the meaning)

3. Prove (give reasons for believing and obeying)

4. Correlate (give other Scriptures to support or enrich)

5. Illustrate (to help explain or to drive the point home)

STEP 5

SERMON DELIVERY (communication)

“To be listened to is the first thing, therefore be interesting.

To be understood is the second thing, therefore be clear.

To be useful is the third thing, therefore be practical.

To be obeyed is the fourth thing, therefore “speak as the oracles of God”

(A.P. Gibbs)

Preparation of heart and mind before preaching

Where possible, during the minutes just prior to speaking, a preacher should switch off from the service and activities going on around him. It is good to remember a small acrostic:

Please God (preach for His glory and praise)

Rely on God (for memory, clarity of speech and Divine help)

Expect God to work (to illumine, challenge and motivate the hearers)

Anointing of the Holy Spirit (claim this as you stand in His name)

Confess any sin (any attitude, thought or action you are aware of)

Hear-burn! (become gripped with the main thrust of your message)

Before opening your mouth to say the first words of the sermon, take time to look at your notes and familiarise yourself with the introduction.

Preaching involves an enthusiastic and challenging delivery, implementing both non-verbal and verbal communication.

a. Non-verbal communication

Psychologist Albert Murabian says that in delivered speech 7% of the impact is verbal, 38% is vocal, and 55% is facial. Obviously in preaching the content (verbal) will constitute more than 7%. Nevertheless, the facial involvement is a significant feature in communicating.

Research and experience agree that if non-verbal messages contradict the verbal, the listeners will be more likely to believe the non-verbal language.

Dress and appearance

A preachers appearance should be conservative, dignified and normal.

Body position

You should stand erect, with head and shoulders back.

Gestures

Four kinds of gestures:

- a. Index finger gesture - gives mild emphasis and location.
- b. Closed fist or closing of the palms gesture - expresses extreme forcefulness.
- c. Palms up gesture - positive, affirmative and inviting.
- d. Palms down - gesture indicates rejection or negativism.

Gestures should be definite, varied, appropriately timed. Above all be natural.

Eye contact

This is the most powerful and important factor in non verbal communication. Preaching is a form of conversation. You preach to people one by one.

1. Hook up visually with people, especially during the introduction to the sermon. If a person in the congregation does not see you looking in their direction during the entire sermon, your message will not be as personal and direct.

2. Eye contact should be inclusive, corner to corner, wall to wall.

3. Don't favour one side of the congregation over another. Be careful not to miss the front row.

4. Don't settle your eyes on anyone when making a challenge or rebuke.

b. Verbal Communication

* **Know yourself** - be conscious of your own style and your limitations. Style is the choice of words and the individual manner in which you use them to communicate your message. Good style has a touch of individual freshness, while remaining within accepted norms of verbal communication.

Style is something you have already. It is not something you acquire. True preaching is more caught than taught. For this reason, preachers often begin by modelling those whom they would desire to emulate (either consciously or unconsciously). After time and experience they develop their own style.

*** Be yourself**

* **Be humble and transparent** Preach knowing that you need the message as much as those to whom you are preaching.

Be transparent - share how the text challenges you, or how you are still growing in the area you are preaching on.

Be Open to reason - admit there are other views on the meaning of difficult passages. Don't be arrogant in your presentation of the truth. Preach convictions, but acknowledge other views. Hold preferences loosely.

* **Be authoritative** Remember God's call is to proclaim **His** Word.

Qualities that mark good preaching:

I. Rate of speech - not too fast or too slow, not too predictable. George W. Truitt, a master of sermon delivery, found that in his typical sermon, the rate that he spoke varied from 60 words per minute through to 210 words per minute. The average was 130-140 words per minute. When you are expounding a passage, and explaining the material, your rate should obviously be slower. When you are challenging people's will and guiding them in a certain direction, then the rate should speed up.

II. Pauses - a brief pause is for absorption, longer pause is for getting attention, interim pause is for times of transition.

III. Pitch - the variation of the tones of speech (high or low).

IV. Volume - a conversational but dynamic delivery is the most accepted among contemporary audiences today. Be sensitive to the elderly and hard of hearing. Check with the sound technician about the distance to stand away from the microphone. Beware of trailing off at the end of sentences.

V. Projection - "throwing the voice forward", using appropriate breathing techniques.

VI. Emotion - Good delivery arises from feeling what you are saying. Be enthusiastic. Be urgent - excited - authoritative. Expect the hearers to be attentive.

VII. Confidence - God's messengers should never be characterized by hesitancy or a tentative manner. If you are not confident of the message, don't preach it! When the congregation detects your nervousness, they too will become nervous.

VIII. Warmth - minister to the hearts of the audience. Your concern for them should be genuine. Put your heart into the work. Sincerity and earnestness tear down barriers and allow for real interpersonal communication.

Mistakes to Avoid

- a. Acting like the final authority.
- b. Making private matters public.
- c. Belittling people's experiences.

Communication

You stand on the razor's edge between the past biblical revelation and the present human situation. Take your technical study and transfer it in to the popular contemporary language of the people.

Communication means a meeting of meanings. For example, if you ask someone for a screwdriver and they bring you a drink of vodka and orange, the meaning you attached to the word 'screwdriver' and the meaning the person attached were completely different. But to ask for a screwdriver to fix your car, will result in a meeting of meanings.

ASSIGNMENT #7

Write out (briefly) an introduction and conclusion to the outline you prepared on James 1:2-12

INTRODUCTION:

CONCLUSION:

For communication to occur across an auditorium or across the centuries, those involved must share things in common (language, culture, a world view, communication forms). The preacher may deliver his message, but only his hearers can give it meaning. "It's not what you say that's important, it's what they hear" (Rev. Tom Houston).

1. Be Conversational

Preaching is an interpersonal communication, not merely something you do in the presence of an audience. The words of the speaker are expressions of his personality, mind and heart.

2. Be clear

Be articulate - watch for lip laziness. Open your mouth wide, breathe from your stomach.

3. Use emphasis

a. Bodily emphasis.

If the non-verbal messages do not agree with the verbal, listeners will believe the non-verbal.

Use your hands for emphasis, but don't think about them. Don't be riveted to one square foot of the platform; move about a little. Do not lean on the rostrum, grasp the lectern or put your hands in your pockets.

b. Verbal emphasis

Add force to important words with increased volume.

Use rhetorical questions or have them guess the key word before using it.

Use pause to create a dramatic emphasis on what you have just said.

Keep your sentences short.

4. Be picturesque

Good speakers use specific verbs to picture what they are saying vividly. Rather than the verb 'walked', an alternative could be 'trudged', or 'staggered' or 'tottered'. Make good use of adverbs, metaphors (comparisons), hyperboles (exaggeration), antithesis (contrast), similes (resemblance), and anecdotes (stories).

If you are telling a story, give the actual narrative ("get out of here" she said - rather than: she told him to get out of there). It is better to re-live a story than to tell it as a report. The audience should experience the incident vicariously. Make use of all the five senses. Cause them to hear it, see it, smell it, feel it, taste it.

5. Beware of distractions

a. Body distractions - mannerisms and stance and even clothes.

b. Verbal distractions - filler words (er, um, ar) unnecessary slang and jargon, nervous clearing of throat, pronunciation, and the continual use of a favourite word.

6. Keep the message moving on track

Keep the theme in your mind as you move through your outline. The title you give your message can help you do this.

Preserve a logical sequence of ideas. Don't take your audience on detours, no matter how exciting or instructive they may seem to you.

7. Use visual aids

Use visual aids as much as you can, but do not let them restrict you (master you). Only present one idea on any visual aid, and limit the wording.

8. Avoid cliches

Many expressions have lost their power by excessive use. Cliches are worn out expressions which should be eliminated from our vocabulary.

Agree to disagree

Clear as a crystal

If the truth were known

To make a long story short

Few and far between

After all is said and done

Be that as it may

It stands to reason that

You know what I mean

It goes without saying

Last but not least

9. Facilitate memory

* Memorisation is easier when the listeners have understood the sermon, have seen the relevance of the truths taught and have had them applied practically to their lives.

* Focus on the facts that are most important and teach them in a way that they are easy to commit to memory (EG. the outline of the sermon)

* Encourage the listeners to review and repeat the main theme of the message.

Communication is aided by:

The preacher feeling personally responsible for the congregation to learn

In Deuteronomy 4:1, the word "teach" has the same Hebrew root as "to learn" in Deuteronomy 5:1. The prefix and the tense of the word "teach" in Deuteronomy 4:1 really has the meaning "to busy" oneself, to cause one to learn. According to the Bible, we haven't taught if they haven't learned.

The preacher expecting a positive response from the congregation

"Expectations are rooted in the past, influence the present and impact the future." Expectations empower people to respond positively. Show that you really do believe in them. Look for opportunities to "blossom" your congregation with a compliment.

ASSIGNMENT #8

Write out one section of the sermon on James 1:2-12 (as you would preach it)

JESUS THE TEACHER

The common people heard Jesus gladly.

The title 'teacher' is used of Jesus no less than 45 times. Though often used as a title of address, it is also found on the lips of Jesus as a self-designation (Matt.23:8, Matt.10:24-25, John 13:14-14). Also the Aramaic title Rabbi is used of Jesus 14 times.

It was not just what Jesus taught but who He was (His personality and authority) that attracted people to hear Him.

He used the following techniques:

1. Overstatement

He overstated a truth in such a way that the exaggeration forcefully brought home the point He was making (Luke 14:26, Matt.5:29-30).

2. Hyperbole

Hyperbole is exaggeration to the point where literal fulfillment or portrayal is impossible. In Matt:23:23-24 there is an example of hyperbole (straining out a gnat and swallowing a camel!) and also in Matt.7:3-5 (the beam in your own eye).

3. Pun

In Matt.23:23-24 the pun is not evident in an English translation. In the Aramaic (in which Jesus probably spoke these words), there is a clear play on words. Jesus is not merely contrasting the size of the camel with the size of a gnat, but an Aramaic camel and gnat both look alike and the words sound alike. See also Matthew 16:18 and John 3:8.

4. Simile

A simile is a comparison between two things, using connectives such as "like" or "as" or "than" (see Matt.10:16, 12:40, Luke 17:6, 13:34, Matt.23:27).

5. Metaphor

In contrast to a simile where an explicit comparison is made ("the eye is like a lamp for the body"), the metaphor itself is the comparison (the eye is the lamp of the body) (Mark 8:15, Matt.5:13, 14-16, 9:37-38, Luke 13:31-32, John 6:35, 8:12, 15:5).

6. Proverb

A proverb is terse, pithy saying that contains a memorable statement. The following could be considered as proverbs "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Matt.6:21). (See also Matt.6:34, Mark 3:24, Mark 6:4, Luke 9:62).

7. Riddle

Jesus used riddles as follows: Matt.11:12, Mark 14:58, Luke 13:32-33.

8. Paradox

These appear to be contradictory, but must be understood in the light of the beliefs and values present in Jesus' day (Mark 10:43-44, Mark 12:41-44 and Matt.23:27-28. Mark 10:14, 31:45, Matt.10:34-36).

9. Questions

(Mark 8:27-32, Matt.17:25, Luke 10:36. See also Mark 3:1-4, Mark 11:27-33).

10. Figurative actions

At times Jesus communicated through specific actions (Luke 19:1-6, Mark 2:15-16, Mark 3:14-19, Mark 1:9).

11. Parables

Parables are the most characteristic form of Jesus' teaching (about 35% of His teaching in the synoptic gospels). A parable is a short fictitious story that teaches a truth or a moral principle.

Extemporaneous Preaching

F.O. Whitesell states 15 advantages of the extemporaneous method of delivery:

It follows the biblical pattern.

It is the method most natural for one who has a message from God and speaks with passion and concern.

It clearly demonstrates reliance upon the Holy Spirit for help and guidance in delivery.

It stimulates the mind.

It makes room for animation and freedom in gestures.

It gives face to face contact and good opportunity for eye to eye contact with the audience.

It allows the speaker to observe the reactions of his audience and adjust himself to them.

It gives the speaker a sense of freedom, power and individuality he otherwise could not have.

It frees the speaker from having a pulpit or speaking stand before him.

It develops the power to think on one's feet and therefore to have confidence that one can speak anywhere on any occasion.

It improves the speaker's memory.

It reveals the mastery of the message, of oneself, of the occasion and of the audience.

It produces great vigour and force in style.

It calls for better preparation than any other method because one must thoroughly absorb material in spirit and in truth.

It gives the speaker greater joy and self satisfaction, in delivery and after delivery, than any other.

Preaching a life-changing sermon

Luke 4:16-30

I. The promise of the anointing (4:18)

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel..." (4:18).

Although the passage Jesus read from Isaiah 61 relates primarily to Himself, we are sent in His name and are endued with 'power from on high' in order to accomplish His mission. When Jesus breathed on the apostles and said "Receive the Holy Spirit", the occasion was His commissioning them to go and preach the message of forgiveness (John 20:21-23).

Jesus Himself was filled with the Spirit from birth, but anointed with the Holy Spirit at His Baptism. His anointing was for service, as He was about to commence His public ministry. We, likewise should be continually filled with the Holy Spirit, but claim the anointing of His Spirit for service.

There are conditions necessary for the Spirit's anointing on your ministry:

a. A Holy Life (3:22)

God was "well pleased" with His Son's life. We cannot expect to preach an anointed message if we do not live an anointed life!

b. A Yielded Life (Matt.3:15)

Baptism was a symbol of humble yieldedness to the will of God. In going down into the water, Jesus accepted the pathway of servanthood and sacrifice which ended at the cross of Calvary.

c. A Prayerful Life (Luke 3:21)

While Jesus was praying, the Holy Spirit came upon Him to anoint Him for service.

II. The purpose of the anointing (4:18-19)

Anointed to preach

*"The Spirit of the Lord is on Me ... He has **anointed Me to preach...to proclaim ... to release ...**"*

It is clear from this passage that the purpose of the anointing was service. God's Spirit anointed Jesus to preach.

Anointed to minister to people's needs

"... the poor ... the prisoners ... the blind ... the oppressed ..."

The primary application of the Isaiah 61 passage is the future reign of Christ when He brings in the fulfilment of the year of Jubilee. However, as He said in Luke 4 that these words were being fulfilled before their eyes, we can legitimately apply them to our ministry in His name today.

III. The power of the anointing (4:14, 22, 28)

Jesus clearly taught that the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples would empower them to serve Him. He said they would be *"clothed with power from on high"* (Luke 24:49), and *"You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you"* (Acts 1:8).

Paul said *"But I will come to you very soon, if the Lord is willing, and then I will find out not only how these arrogant people are talking, but what power they have. **For the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of power**"* (1 cor. 4:19-20). Then He said in 2 Cor. 13:3 *"Since you are demanding proof that Christ is speaking through me. He is not weak in dealing with you, but is powerful among you"*.

General Observation EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

To be given to someone who has often listened to you speak, for their general impression of your strengths and weaknesses.

Name of preacher/teacher:

The purpose of this questionnaire is to help the person named above to identify both strengths and weaknesses in the art of communicating to an audience. Please be honest and objective.

1. General effectiveness *(circle appropriate answers)*

1. Does he/she show evidence of good preparation? yes / no
2. Does he/she speak at a level that the average person can easily understand? y / n / sometimes
3. Is the content in his/her message normally good / mediocre / poor
4. Does he/she use enough illustrations? y / n
5. Is his/her delivery of the message normally good / mediocre / poor
6. Does he/she normally follow a progression of thought well? y / n

2. Speech

1. Does he/she show signs of nervousness (tense, awkward)? y / n
2. He/she speaks too:
 - a. softly
 - b. loudly
 - c. monotonously
 - d. fast
 - e. indistinctly
 - f. unenthusiastically.
 - g. other:

3. Physical activity

1. Does he/she use distracting hand movements? y / n
2. Does he/she hardly use his hands at all? y / n
3. Does his/her eyes keep good contact with the audience y / n
4. Does he have a bad "gesture" habit? y / n

4. Any specific suggestions:

5. As far as you can see, what are his/her:
Strengths

Weaknesses

Preaching Critique Form

Name of preacher/teacher

Please be generous to the person you are evaluating. The purpose is to encourage, yet point out any obvious improvements that should be worked on.

TITLE:

OCCASION:

THEME:

1. Structure

Introduction: (comments)

Main points: (comments)

Conclusion: (comments)

What was the motivating thrust?

Illustrations

Pertinent? sufficient? credible? appropriate length? graphically told? good transition back to sermon?

2. Speech

1. Show signs of nervousness (tense, stiff, awkward)?
2.
 - a. too soft
 - b. too loud
 - c. too fast
 - h. monotonous

3. Physical activity

1. Hand movements - none, natural, distracting, awkward, gripping pulpit, hand in pocket
2. Body language - too much movement, not enough movement, stiff, slovenly, overbearing, timid
3. Eye contact with the audience - good coverage, prone to one area, very little, too much at notes
4. Gestures - related to speech, not related to speech, distracting, awkward, inappropriate

4. General effectiveness

1. Was there evidence of good preparation?
2. Was it easily understood?
3. Was the content of the message good / mediocre / poor?
4. Were there parts that were not explained properly?
5. Was it communicated in a convincing way?

Strong Points:

Need Improvement: