

The
PREACHER'S Fellowship



CFBC | Saturday mornings | 8am

SCHEDULE:

1. Preparing the Preacher (PREPARATION)
2. The Importance of the Spirit (PNEUMATOLOGY)
3. Preaching the Main Point (THE BIG IDEA)
4. Thesis Statement & Purpose (THESIS)
5. Making an Outline (OUTLINE)
6. Packaging & Illustrating (STRUCTURE)
7. Introduction & Conclusion (TAKE OFF & THE LANDING)
8. Be an Engaging Preacher (ENGAGE!)
9. Preaching the Gospel (GOSPEL!)
10. Bring the Text to Bear (APPLICATION!)
11. Fire, Urgency, & Passion (PASSION!)

Preach the Word - 2 Timothy 4.2

I. Preparing the Preacher — *PREPARATION*

PREACHING — Definitions:

An expositor: is a student of Scripture seeking to discover the meaning of the text, what the original author meant by what was written. Then he packages the truth in such a way that people will be engaged, understand, remember, and know how to apply what was preached. **An expositor:** is a herald of truth, a proclaimer of doctrine, a crier of revelation, a messenger with an authoritative message. One called upon by the King to command, reprove, rebuke, exhort, correct, encourage, and comfort people with the Truth (Jack Hughes).

Expository preaching: is the presentation of biblical truth, derived from and transmitted through a historical, grammatical, Spirit-guided study of a passage in context, which the Holy Spirit applies first to the life of a preacher and then through him to his congregation (Martin Lloyd Jones).

SALVATION

Sinner saved by grace

Sinner called by God

Sinner commissioned to preach

Sinner burdened for souls

Sinner dazzled by the gospel

Sinner weak to show God's power

An overwhelming sense of weakness should not be regarded as an evil, but should be accepted as helpful to the true minister of Christ (Charles Spurgeon).

cf. Richard Baxter, *The Reformed Pastor*

PRAYER

Psalm 119:18

Pray as a dependent, humble man, & worshipful man

Look at Jesus' life & ministry (esp in the gospel of Luke).

“An effective man in the pulpit must be a faithful man in the closet.”

BIBLE-SATURATION

We fail in our duty to study God's Word not so much because it is difficult to understand, not so much because it is dull and boring, but because it is work. Our problem is not a lack of intelligence or a lack of passion. Our problem is that we are lazy (R. C. Sproul).

See Ezra 7:10

HOLINESS

1 Timothy 3:2-3; cf. 2 Timothy 2:15 (cp. 1 Tim 6:11-14)

There can be no passion and divine energy if you come to God with unclean hands.

Without a sacred weight of character, the most splendid rhetoric will win only a short-lived applause; with it, the plainest scriptural instructions are eloquent to win souls. Eloquence may dazzle and please; holiness of life convinces... The pastor's character speaks more loudly than his tongue (Robert L. Dabney).

Mortify sin, dear brothers!

“It is easier to declaim against a thousand sins of others than to mortify one sin in ourselves” (John Flavel).

THEN...

After this, one is ready to stand & proclaim: “Thus says the LORD...”
(remember James 3:1)

Preaching is not an end in of itself; preaching is the declaration of God's Word to mankind that man might repent of his sin & come to saving faith (Alex Montoya).

“If you don't preach expecting change then people won't change.”

Consider:

Isaiah 6

Ezekiel 1-3

“Preach the gospel; the gates of hell shake ... it is the Master's mandate” (Charles Spurgeon)

I fear none of us apprehend as we ought to do the value of the preacher's office. Our young men do not gird themselves for it with the spirit of those who are on the eve of a great conflict; nor do they prepare as those who are to lay their hands upon the springs of the mightiest passions, and stir up to their depths the ocean of human feelings (James W. Alexander).

Through our preaching the Lord seeks to change men's lives. We are to be evangelists, to awaken men to their high calling in Christ. We are to be heralds, proclaiming the messages of Ogd to men. We are to be ambassadors, calling men to be reconciled to God. We are to be shepherds, nursing and caring for men day by day. We are to be stewards of the mysteries of God, giving men the proper Word for their every need. We are to be witnesses, telling men of all that God has done for them. We are to be overseers, urging men to live their lives to God. We are to be ministers, preparing men to minister with us to others. As we reflect on each of these phases of our work, what emphasis each gives to the importance of preaching! What a task the Lord has given us! (Mark Steege)

For Further Study:

Olford, Stephen. *Anointed Expository Preaching*

Lloyd-Jones, D. Martyn. *Preaching & Preachers*

Mayhue, Richard & Thomas, Robert. *The Master's Perspective on Pastoral Ministry*

Kent, Homer. *The Pastor & His Work*

II. The Importance of the Spirit – PNEUMATOLOGY

“The greatest essential in connection with preaching is the unction & the anointing of the Holy Spirit” – Lloyd Jones

Introduction:

“Because the Church has lost Holy Ghost fire, men go to hell-fire! We need a vision of a holy God” (Leonard Ravenhill).

“At this hour we need men drunk with the Holy Ghost” (Leonard Ravenhill).

Definition of the Unction of the Holy Spirit: “It is the working of God which works in and through the preacher mightily.”

This is the “thunder and lightning” of preaching (George Whitefield)

The Spirit in Prayer:

“The ultimate requisite for the effective preacher is complete dependence upon the Holy Spirit” (John Broadus).

John 14:16-17

Breathe on me, Breath of God,
Till I am wholly Thine;
Until this earthly part of me,
Glows with Thy fire divine.
— Dr. Edward Hatch (19th c.)

“Light praying will make light preaching. Prayer makes preaching strong – the God who answers prayer does this – and makes it stick” (EM Bounds).

The Spirit in Preparation:

The Right Meaning of the Text

“Unless we have the spirit of the prophets resting upon us, the mantle which we wear is nothing but a rough garment to deceive” (Charles Spurgeon).

The Right Mending of the Manuscript

They seem to have all the necessary knowledge, but that knowledge is not sufficient, something further is needed, is indeed essential. The knowledge indeed is vital for you cannot be witnesses without it, but to be effective witnesses you need the power and the unction and the demonstration of the Spirit in addition (Martin Lloyd-Jones).

The Right Mining of Divine Power

This accession of power, or if you prefer it, this effusion of power upon Christian preachers is not something once for all; it can be repeated, and repeated many times (Lloyd Jones).

The Spirit in Delivery:

Filled with the Spirit

Micah 3:8 I am filled with power-- With the Spirit of the LORD-- And with justice and courage To make known to Jacob his rebellious act, Even to Israel his sin.

God uses Spirit-filled men to shake nations for God.

Preaching in the Spirit

1 Thessalonians 1:5

“The divine Spirit will sometimes work upon us so as to bear us completely out of ourselves. From the beginning of the sermon to the end we might at such times say, “Whether in the body or out of the body I cannot tell: God knoweth.” Everything has been forgotten but the one all-engrossing subject in hand” (Spurgeon).

Luke 4:18 the Spirit of the LORD is upon me **because** he has anointed me to preach.

Results from the Spirit

When the anointing of the Spirit is present there is power & blessing (Jerry Vines)

Illumination:

Luke 24:34 (opened their minds to understand the Scriptures)
 Eph 1:17-18 (spirit of wisdom & of revelation in the knowledge of Him)
 Ps 119:18 (open my eyes to behold wonderful things from your Law)
 Ps 119:33-34 (Teach me O Lord ... give me understanding)

Our sermons will accomplish nothing apart from the Spirit's work of illuminating our congregations (John MacArthur).

The Spirit in Regeneration:

The Only Preaching that Produces Results

“The unregenerate must be persuaded that the things preached are good, lovely and excellent. They must be persuaded that only faith in God can bring them to the height of all happiness. They must be persuaded of the sinful depravity of their souls and their utter inability to do any good acceptable to God without first being born agains by His Spirit” (John Owen).

“The gospel is preached in the ears of all; it only comes with power to some. The power that is in the gospel does not lie in the eloquence of the preacher; otherwise men would be converters of souls. Nor does it lie in the preacher's learning; otherwise it would consist in the wisdom of men. We might preach till our tongues rotted, till we should exhaust our lungs and die, but never a soul would be converted unless there were a mysterious power going with it the Holy Ghost changing the will of man. Oh Sirs! We might as well preach to stone walls as preach to humanity unless the Holy Ghost be with the Word to give it power to convert the soul” (Charles Spurgeon).

The Spirit in Application:

The Acceptance & Implementation of the Truth

Acts 1:8 you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."

1 Corinthians 2:4 and my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the **Spirit** and of **power**...

The greatest gift of all to the preacher is the gift of the unction of the Spirit.

The Spirit in Sanctification:

Everything in the life of the Church is dependent upon the Spirit and how he incorporates the Word in the lives of the people.

“The church must get excited to pray for the influences of the divine Spirit; and the church should frequently meet for this purpose ... in that duty we explicitly acknowledge, not only to Him, but to our fellow creatures, that nothing but the influences of His Spirit can render any means effectual, and that we are entirely dependent ... on His sovereign will” (Edward Payson).

“We are enabled to obey God firstly by an inward, spiritual, ruling principle of grace ... by virtue of the life and death of Jesus Christ according to the terms of the new covenant... by which God writes his laws in our hearts and enables us to obey them by the Holy Spirit” (John Owen)

“Present-day preaching, with its pale interpretation of divine truths, causes us to mistake action for unction, commotion for creation, and rattles for revivals” (Leonard Ravenhill).

The Spirit will neither spare us nor cheat us if we will expose ourselves to His infallible scrutiny. Jesus said unto the blind man: “What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?” He said unto him, “LORD, that I might receive my sight” (Mark 10:51). Let us, too, pray for sight – upward, inward, and outward. Then like Isaiah, as we look *upward*, we will see the Lord in all his holiness; as we look *inward*, we will see ourselves and our need for cleansing and power; and as we look *outward*, we will see a world that is perishing and in need of a Savior! . . . Then only will there be *unction* in the pulpit and *action* in the pew (Leonard Ravenhill).

You say: I want this anointing. How do I get it?

Jerry Vines says: “Tarry long in asking God to give you His divine anointing.”

EM Bounds says: “This anointing comes to the preacher not in the study but in the closet.”

For Further Study:

Azurdia, *Spirit Empowered Preaching*

Heisler, *Spirit-Led Preaching*

Olford, Stephen. *Anointed Expository Preaching*

Lloyd-Jones, D. Martyn. *Preaching & Preachers*

III. Preaching the Main Point – *THE BIG IDEA*

Introduction:

“Our concern is to discern the truth of God in the text ... [and] what God is saying through what He has said’
is our concern and goal”
(Stephen Olford)

Definitions:

What is an expositional sermon that preaches the main point? A sermon that takes the main point of a passage of Scripture, makes it the main point of the sermon, and applies it to life today.

The Main Point is also called the Big Idea, the text idea, the exegetical idea, the central idea, the thesis, or proposition statement.

“A sermon should be a bullet, not buckshot. Ideally each sermon is the explanation, interpretation, or application of a single dominant idea supported by other ideas, all drawn from one passage or several passages of Scripture” (Haddon Robinson).

Biblical Support:

According to Scripture, God accomplishes what he wants to accomplish through speaking (see Gen. 1:3, Isa. 55:10-11, Acts 12:24). This means that if preachers want their sermons to be filled with God's power, they must preach what **God says**.

The Bible has many examples of this kind of preaching and teaching: Levitical priests taught the law (Deut. 33:10), Ezra and the Levites read from the law and gave the sense of it (Neh. 8:8), and Peter and the apostles expounded Scripture and urged their hearers to respond with repentance and faith (Acts 2:14-41, 13:16-47).

On the other hand, God condemns those who “speak of their own imagination, not from the mouth of the Lord” (Jer. 23:16, 18, 21-22).

“Any single sermon should have just one major idea. The points or subdivisions should be parts of this one grand thought. Just as bites of any particular food are all parts of the whole, cut into sizes that are both palatable and digestible, so the points of a sermon should be smaller sections of the one theme, broken into tinier fragments so that the mind may grasp them and the life assimilate them ... Every sermon should have a theme, and that theme should be the theme of the portion of Scripture on which it is based” (Donald G. Miller [1957]).

Preaching Philosophy

Preaching that makes the main point of the text the main point of the sermon makes God's agenda rule the church, not the preacher's (9Marks).

The preacher's careful investigation of the specifics of the text helps to lead to an accurate assessment of the doctrinal and theological significance of the text ... the preacher is concerned with the intended truth (doctrine) in the text and that truth viewed (theologically) as part of God's purposeful revelation (Stephen Olford).

How to Identify the Main Point of a Text:

Assumptions:

1. Pray frequently
2. Live purely
3. Read keenly
4. Read contextually

Find the main theme by asking & answering: “What is the text about?”

Once you've done all this work with the text, identify and summarize the **main point** of the text. If you can't summarize it in one sentence, you've still got work to do (9Marks).

The **goal** — summarize your text in a single sentence; a single thought.

E.g. "If I could sum everything I want to say in this sermon up in this one statement, it would be..."

What is the main point of this text? What is it saying and how does it say it? Putting this in one sentence will bring cohesiveness to your sermon and tie the points together in a unified theme.

A story does not consist of details collected together to offer you numerous launch points for vaguely connected ideas and insights. The story consists of details deliberately chosen to help make the story work, to make the main point effective. Be sure to grapple with the main point more than you hunt for "preaching points" (Peter Mead).

Helpful Questions to Ask & Grapple With:

1. What does this text reveal about GOD?
2. What does this text reveal about MAN?
3. How does this text guide one to the cross of CHRIST?
4. Is there a promise to keep, a command to obey, a principle to follow, a sin to avoid?

Example:

Jeremiah 29:10-14

Matthew 8:5-13

Context! Context! Context!

Sometimes the theme or central idea does not 'stand up to be counted'; rather the preacher must gain a sense of the theme from the context (Stephen Olford).

Examining the context of the passage will help identify the writer's central idea (Wayne McDill).

Example:

James 1:2-4 -- trials, faith, maturity, endurance, completeness?

Have a Clear, Crisp, Concise, Cogent Central Idea/Theme of Your Sermon

Write and re-write it

The Act of Preaching that Dominating Theme

This dominating theme is the central truth of the text.

This dominating theme must be the unifying element of the sermon.

This dominating theme should be imprinted on everyone's mind when they leave.

This statement takes the heart of the author's idea and words it in such a way that the timeless and universal statement of theological truth is clear for all to see.

"I have the 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 crystal. I find that the getting of that sentence is the hardest, the most exacting, and the most fruitful labor in my study ... I do not think any sermon ought to be preached, or even written, until that sentence has emerged, clear and lucid as a cloudless moon" (J.H. Jowett).

For Further Study:

Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching*

McDill, *12 Essential Skills for Great Preaching*

Olford, Stephen. *Anointed Expository Preaching*

*Robinson, *Biblical Preaching*

Vines & Shaddix, *Power in the Pulpit*

IV. Thesis Statement & Purpose — *THE PROPOSITION*

“Tell them what you’re gonna tell them; then tell them; then stop talking.”

GETTING TO THE MAIN POINT (continued)

Specifics on the thesis/main point of the text

This is the target I am aiming for in the exposition — that one statement that clearly encapsulates the entire sermon which accurately represents the entire biblical text studied. It is this one statement that we want our people to retain after they hear the sermon (John MacArthur).

The thesis is often found in the **main verb** of the paragraph/text

Ephesians 5:18-21

Every expository sermon is a unit with ONE major theme or topic, rather than a rambling through a text verse after verse.

STAYING ON THE MAIN POINT

Sermon is **NOT**

- Running Commentary
- Human Thoughts
- Preacher's Hobbyhorse

Sermon **IS**

- Accurately finding the main point of the text
- Accurately presenting the meaning of that text
- Accurately applying that main point of the text
- Accurately presenting the material in a memorable way

The preacher's task is **NOT**

To create our own message
To create a central theme

The preacher's task **IS**

To communicate the author's message
To find the author's central theme
To build a message around that theme
To make that theme the central part of all we have to say.**

FINDING the thesis/central theme

1. Find it in a single statement in the passage
2. Find it in the central idea from the larger context
3. Find the central idea from recurring ideas
(Douglas McDougall, "Central Ideas, Outlines, & Titles," in *Preaching*, 188-92).

An exegete does not understand the passage until he can state its subject and complement exactly. While other questions emerge in the struggle to understand the meaning of a Biblical writer, the two—what is the author talking about and what is he saying about what he is talking about—are fundamental (Haddon Robinson).

"Whether a sermon has two points or ten points, it must have one point; it must be about something." The proposition identifies that one point. It is the sermon reduced to one sentence. In an expository message the proposition is the exegetical theme of the passage put into the form of a timeless truth and stated in a single sentence" (John Broadus).

ALWAYS tie the sermon back to the gospel ---

In this sense, the sermon should always intend to produce change/an effect.

THESIS STATEMENT (the proposition)

Remember that the audience can tell a statement is a main idea only by how you say it. They don't see the bold print or underlining. Place your division statements in

prominent positions (in your notes). What you say first and last is remembered (Wayne McDill).

Examples:

Today I want to show you that God is love so that you will ...

I want to propose to you four terrifying realities of hell so that you may repent, believe in Christ, and be saved!

I want to give you five reasons to trust God's sovereign goodness in your trials so that *when* trials invade, you can stand firm on the rock of Christ.

Repent today so you can find life!

When we make any declarative statement, we can do only four things with it: we can restate it, explain it, prove it, or apply it. Nothing else. To recognize this simple fact opens the way to understanding the dynamic of thought (Haddon Robinson).

Put your proposition to the test

Use these qualities to evaluate your propositions you formulate (from Jerry Vines):

- 1. Promising** — It indicates the course of the discussion to follow; it gives the information that the sermon intends to cover.
- 2. General** — This is a generalization reflecting the timeless, universal truth of the passage.
- 3. Simple** — Most of the time (but not always), the proposition should be a simple sentence.
- 4. Clear** — This statement must be clear, crisp, and easily understandable.
- 5. Comprehensive** — This should comprehend the entire thought of the message. That is to say, this proposition statement is the gist of the entire sermon in one sentence.
- 6. Important** — This remark should be so important that it bears repeating frequently throughout the sermon.
- 7. Sermonic** — This statement must express or imply some response or change on the part of the audience.

The proposition becomes the refrain of your message (Jerry Vines).

So what?

The proposition helps you think through what you hope to accomplish in your message from this particular text, to these particular people, at this particular time, in this particular setting.

Putting this to Practice:

Ephesians 1:3-14

Psalm 117

The thesis statement helps sum everything up & bring everything together nicely. But you also need to remember that the main point & thesis statement of your sermon *should also* reflect your desire to inform, inspire, motivate, challenge, encourage, rebuke, and persuade change toward the beauty of the gospel & the glory of God.

Concluding Thought:

Charles Simeon describing the proposition, said, “Every sermon should have, like a telescope, but one object in [its] field.” He continued to explain how a preacher should determine what that one object should be: “as soon as the [text] is chosen, the first enquiry is, What is the principal scope and meaning of the text? I beg every young minister especially to remember this.” He says that once we have discovered the text’s principal meaning, the next step is to express it in a “categorical proposition.” This is “the great secret of all composition for the pulpit” (quoted from John Stott *Between Two Worlds*).

For Further Study:

John Broadus, *On the Preparation & Delivery of Sermons*.

Jerry Vines & Jim Shaddux, *Power in the Pulpit*.

John MacArthur, ed. *Preaching: How to Preach Biblically*.

V. Making An Outline – *THE OUTLINE*

We come now to the form of the sermon. I am ready to confess that this is undoubtedly, in my opinion, the most difficult matter that we shall have to deal with. It is the most difficult, but at the same time I would emphasise that it is also one of the most important (Lloyd-Jones).

In the desire to make a sermon seem free and spontaneous there is a prevalent dislike to giving it its necessary formal structure and organism. . . . True liberty in writing comes by law, and the more thoroughly the outlines of your work are laid out, the more freely your work will flow, like an unwasted stream between its well-built banks (Phillips Brooks).

Indeed, the preparation of sermons involves sweat and labour. It can be extremely difficult at times to get all this matter that you have found in the Scriptures into this particular form (Lloyd-Jones).

This topic could cover topics such as the sermon outline and the arrangement of material in the sermonic delivery.

Introduction:

An outline is important: *like a well-maintained railway, the discipline of outlining a text will keep the preacher's train of thought from wandering off and ultimately getting stuck in a bog of fuzzy thinking. The train of ideas is pulled by the core concept. Every other aspect of the sermon must follow that concept down the same track (Wayne McDill).*

Did You Know? By the middle of the 4th c. AD, sermons began to reflect a more intentional use of both structure and style (Jerry Vines).

Certify that the main divisions of the text *function* as the main divisions of your sermon

The benefits of an outline:

1. Makes the main points of the sermon clear for the audience
2. Allows the audience to track with you
3. Assists the congregation to remember the main points of the sermon

Different Kinds of Sermon Outlines:

For an expositional sermon working through a text:

The text provides the subject and the major divisions of the sermon.

For a topical-expositional sermon working on a given theme:

The major points/ideas can form the outline of the sermon (and each point could survey a particular verse/text).

For a biographical sermon observing the life of a person:

The major points could come from his life, theology, points of emulation, points of warning.

Don't Plunge Into these Preaching Pitfalls!

1. Communicate the message — don't just outline it!
2. Find the outline — don't create it!
3. Let the passage dictate to you; don't dictate to it!
(Douglas McDougall)

Proper Hermeneutics:

We must understand how the author put the biblical text together... in this way, not only can we preach what the author says, but we even emphasize how he said it (Tom Pennington)

Key Words — *and, then, now, but, however, so that, in order that, therefore, on the one hand.*

Remember! We're not to force an outline on a text, but allow the text to inform our outline.

Watch Against Eisegesis:

Eisegesis — *leading or bringing something into the text that isn't originally there.*

Don't find a text that supports what you want to say & force an outline upon a given text.

Keep the Main Point of the Text the Main Point of Your Sermon!

The purpose of the expositor is to follow the path established by the biblical author and not to create his own trail (Douglas McDougall).

Practical Thoughts on Outlining:

Some principle qualities of outlining can be unity, order, proportion, and progress (Broadus).

1. The sermon outline should reflect how the author wrote and divided his text.
2. The sermon outline should grow out of the proposition/thesis statement.
3. The sermon outline should define the key word in the transition sentence (truths, imperatives, reasons why, etc.)
4. The sermon outline points should not overlap, but each point should contain a single idea
5. The sermon outline should ordinarily show progression through the biblical text
6. The sermon outline should (usually) be limited in number — from two to ten.
7. The sermon outline points should be parallel
 - a. Parts of speech
 - b. Alliteration *can* be helpful (but don't try "too" hard)
 - c. Word endings ('—ing' or '!')
8. The sermon outline should be put in timeless principle form (abstain from use of proper names, places, people, incidents, etc.)
9. The sermon outline should be in the 2nd person "you" format

Consider: Brian Chapell's *F-O-R-M*

1. **F** – Faithful to the Text
2. **O** – Obvious from the text
3. **R** – Related to the Gospel
4. **M** – Moving toward a Climax

Common errors in sermon outlines:

- lack of connection to the proposition
- lack of symmetry
- redundancy... need to combine some points
- too complicated
- wrong divisions
- no textual basis

HELPFUL EXAMPLES:

1. **Repeated Phrases/Chorus** (e.g., Psalm 42 — triumph in times of turmoil!)
 - a. Cry for vindication (vv.1-2)

- b. Confirm your longing (vv.3-4)
- c. Counsel your soul (v.5)
- 2. **Flow of the Passage (change in narrative events)** (e.g., 2 Chronicles 20)
 - a. Be prepared — trouble is coming (vv.1-4)
 - b. Be praying — trust is priority (vv.5-13)
 - c. Be plucky (bold!) — triumph is God's (vv.14-25)
 - d. Be praising — thanksgiving is crucial (vv.26-32)
 - e. Be protected — transgression brings discipline (vv.33-37)
- 3. **Theology/Counseling Principles** (Ephesians 4:25-30)
 - a. Put off lying & put on the truth (v.25)
 - b. Put off anger & put on control (vv.26-27)
 - c. Put off stealing & put on working hard (v.28)
 - d. Put off ungodly speech & put on godly speech (vv.29-30)
 - e. Put off sinful life patterns & put on godly life patterns (vv.31-32)
- 4. **Parallel points in the narrative** (Mark 4)
 - a. The unreceptive heart
 - b. The superficial heart
 - c. The preoccupied heart
 - d. The prepared heart
- 5. **Further examples** (John 21:1-11)
 - a. You must live your life to the glory of God (1-3)
 - b. You must obey God in all that he commands (4-6)
 - c. You must bow in worship before almighty God (7-11)

The Crowning Caveat:

Every man of God has a given personality and because preaching is an *art* as well as a science, one can and should employ his own artistic tendencies to create sermonic masterpieces that are faithful to the text, engaging to the audience, and applicable to everyone present.

The object of these main headings or divisions is to make clear this central doctrine or proposition. But there is a definite form to all this. As the musical composer in the introduction to his symphony, or in the overture to his opera, generally lets us into the secret of the various motifs he is going to take up, so the preacher should indicate the main theme and its various divisions in his general introduction. He must then work these out in detail and in order in his sermon. So the matter is to be divided up in this way into a number of subordinate propositions (Lloyd-Jones, *Preachers & Preaching*, 77).

For Further Study:

Brian Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching*.

Douglas McDougall, "Central Ideas, Outlines, & Titles" in *Preaching: How to Preach* ed. by MacArthur Jerry Vines & Jim Shaddux, *Power in the Pulpit*.

John Broadus, *On the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*.

Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *Preachers & Preaching*.

VI. Packaging and Illustrating – *THE STRUCTURE*

Structure is not what preaching is all about. It is a vehicle meant to allow the substance—the content—of the sermon to be more effectively communicated. It is a means to an end (Jerry Vines)

Introduction:

Skill. This does not refer merely to style and delivery, but also to the collection, choice, and arrangement of materials. All who preach eminently well — and the same thing is true of secular speakers — will be found, with scarcely an exception, to have labored much to acquire skill (John Broadus).

I. ELEMENTS OF THE SERMON

Develop each thought in the outline by anchoring it to part of the text, validating the connection, explaining it, illustrating it, and applying it (Greg Scharf).

What should a sermon include?

Consider:

Nehemiah 8:1-12

1. The reading of the biblical text
2. The explaining of the biblical text
3. The applying of the biblical text

When you make a declarative statement, you can only do 4 things: (1) restate it, (2) explain it, (3) prove it, (4) apply it. Nothing else. To recognize this simple fact opens the way to understanding the dynamic of thought (Haddon Robinson).

Cf. Acts 2, 7, 13, 15, etc.

Or to consider it a bit differently:

1. **Explanation** - *This is what the text says & this is what the text means!*
 - a. Context
 - b. Word studies

- c. Historical data
- d. Theological issues

2. Argumentation - *This is why you should believe it!*

- a. Scripture (cross-reference)
- b. Exegetical details
- c. Logic
- d. Authorities (commentaries, church history, quotations, etc.)

3. Illustration - *This is what it looks like!*

- a. Every illustration should serve as a window to let additional light in on the truth. Illustration should either clarify the truth humanize the truth, or emphasize the truth.
- b. Robert Hall, William Carey's mentor before he left for India, gave Carey some very straightforward advice on his preaching. Listen to what he told him: "Hall criticized [Carey's] sermons as too matter of fact. They lacked windows. 'There are not enough likes in them, whereas the Master was always saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is like seed or treasure or leaven.'"

4. Application - *This is what you should do with it!*

Each main point of the outline will always include explanation and will usually include illustration and application as well. Argument is not always necessary. Usually your explanation will come first. If there's argument, it will normally come next. Application and illustration may occur several times woven throughout the main division (Tom Pennington).

A sermon is, by definition, persuasive speech. Preaching is intended not only to declare the ideas from Scripture: it is also to persuade the hearer to accept those ideas and act on them. Preaching that does not aim to persuade is not preaching in the best sense. Our sermons are not on a par with television commercials, to be shrugged off as another pitch for our product. Our message is a life-and-death issue (Wayne McDill).

II. ORGANIZING THE SERMON (the package)

The point is that the forms necessary in organizing a manuscript, the visible design, may betray the preacher, may make him think his design is clear when to the listener it is thoroughly jumbled. The only design useful to the listener is a design he can grasp through his ears, an audible movement of thought (Henry Grady Davis).

Rhetorical Outline

Introduction

Body

Conclusion

Motivated Sequence

Attention

Need

Satisfaction

Visualization

Action

Plea!

From: Wayne McDill, *12 Essential Skills for Great Preaching*, 203.

III. ILLUSTRATING THE TRUTH

What Illustration is NOT:

- storytelling
- forcing an illustration to fit one's agenda
- essence of the sermon
- inaccurate (make sure you have your facts right)
- the "shock factor"

What Illustration IS:

Illustrating means to shed light on something. Illustrations bridge the gap between explanation and application. Some make the thought clearer; others help us picture ourselves obeying it; but all good illustrations move us toward the intended response (Greg Scharf)

Illustrations help you **see** in your mind's **eye** what you have been *hearing* about so far. You do this with words.

Illustrations appeal to the imagination through vividly portrayed scenes and stories. This is the kind of language that triggers the imagination in our hearers.

Cf. 1 Thess 2:7; 11-12

It can be short, pregnant stories, a personal story, anecdotes, church history/biographies
It can be cross-references to other Scriptures, current events, literature, hymns, parables

E.g.

You might as well try to cross the Atlantic in a paper boat as to get to heaven by your own good works (Cynddylan Jones).

Good illustrations are far more easily remembered than bright sayings and trains of argument. It is a not uncommon experience with preachers to find that their finest sentences and most profound observations easily slip the memory, while some apparently trivial anecdote or illustration remains. [Don't you hate it when that happens; you pour out your heart on justification and in a passing comment you refer to something trivial and afterwards five people mention that and ignore the theme of the sermon.] If these can be made so apt as necessarily to recall the argument or train of thought, so much the better (John Broadus).

Ramesh Richard in his book *Preparing Expository Sermons* explains the **specific steps for presenting an illustration well**. He identifies **five** steps,

1. **Make the Point!** (Your good works cannot save you...)
2. **Transition to Illustration!** (Now, imagine with me for a moment...)
3. **Illustrate**
4. **Transition to Audience!** (That's how it is with us...)
5. **Restate or Review the Point!** (Our good works, no matter how good they be, can't save!)

IV. THE REASON THIS IS IMPORTANT

Preaching is communication. If your people aren't listening – that is, if they're not engaged in what you're saying – then you might as well be in a bathroom preaching to the wall.

Engage! (get the attention!)

Follow! (keep the attention!)

Change! (do something with what you've heard!)

Believe! (call for belief in the gospel & submission to Christ!)

John Stott called this: *preaching between two worlds* (you are a bridge-builder) between the ancient world of the Bible and your people's world here and now.

AW Tozer puts it well:

There is scarcely anything so dull and meaningless as Bible doctrine taught for its own sake. Truth divorced from life is not truth in its Biblical sense, but something else and something less. . . . No man is better for knowing that God in the beginning created the heaven and the earth. The devil knows that, and so did Ahab and Judas Iscariot. No man is better for knowing that God so loved the world of men that He gave His only begotten Son to die for their redemption. In hell there are millions who know that. Theological truth is useless until it is obeyed. The purpose behind all doctrine is to secure moral action. (And so, the purpose behind each sermon is to secure some moral action!)

For Further Study:

Brian Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching*.

Haddon Robinson, *Biblical Preaching*.

Jerry Vines & Jim Shaddox, *Power in the Pulpit*.

Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *Preachers & Preaching*.

VII. Introduction & Conclusion—*The Take Off & The Landing*

Introductory Thoughts:

I. INTRODUCTION TO THE SERMON

However he begins, the minister should make the most of his first twenty-five words to seize attention. An ear-grabbing opening promises that what follows may be worth...everyone's time." (Haddon Robinson)

Purpose:

Not only does an introduction introduce you to the audience, but your introduction should introduce your audience to the subject of your sermon idea, to your central idea, or in the case of an inductive sermon, to your first major point. The characteristics of effective introductions grow out of that purpose (Haddon Robinson).

1. **Secure the Interest!**
2. **Create a Need!**
3. **Introduce the Theme!**

An introduction should command attention!

The people don't (always) know a need exists. Every sermon must meet a need—fallen man needs to be reconciled to a holy God. And regenerated men need to be reminded of the gospel of grace!

Paul O'Neil, writer for *Life Magazine* writes:

“Always grab the reader by the throat in the first paragraph, sink your thumbs into his windpipe in the second, and hold him against the wall until the tag line.”

People simply are asking: *Why should I listen to you? Why should I be here?*

Helpful Tips:

There are three types of preachers:

- (1) those to whom you cannot listen;

- (2) those to whom you can listen;
- (3) those to whom you must listen*

During the introduction the congregation usually decides the kind of speaker addressing them that morning." (Haddon Robinson)

Introduction Data:

1. Biblical context
2. Church history
3. Occasion
4. Personal experience
5. Historical setting
6. Biography
7. Life situation
8. Problem
9. News item
10. Quotation
11. Reference from literature
12. Geography, culture, customs
13. Anecdote
14. Imagination
15. Humorous incident
16. Striking statement

“You must attract the fish to your hook, and if they do not come you should blame the fisherman and not the fish. Compel them to stand still awhile and hear what God, the Lord, would speak to their souls” (Charles Spurgeon).

Marks of a Good Introduction:

1. Brevity - short
2. Variety
3. Relevancy - show the need of the sermon
4. Tension - create an awareness of what you intend to accomplish
5. Appropriateness - set the proper mood
6. Conviction - show that you yourself are interested in your own sermon
(from Jerry Vines)

Leslie Tizard, in his book on *Preaching*, accurately gives the importance of this:

“Whoever will become a preacher must feel the needs of men until it becomes an oppression to his soul.”

II. CONCLUSION OF THE SERMON

Like a skilled pilot, you should know where your sermon will land & how to gently land the plane.

The practical, forceful, urgent, application, poignant conclusion of a sermon is one of the distinguishing marks that separates it from a lecture.

Consider: *ask yourself: what do I want my hearers to take with them on Monday morning? Your conclusion should answer this so that you drive the main point home on the hearer's heart, mind & will.*

Purpose:

1. **Review the theme!**
2. **Apply the truth!**
3. **Plead for change!**

The conclusion should move like a river, growing in volume and power. It should not be like a stream that loses itself in a marsh (John Broadus).

Helpful Tips:

You preach for a verdict! Preach for change! Preach to convert!

A sermon moves the guns into position. Now is the time to fire the shot at the listener's mind and emotions (Haddon Robinson)

The conclusion must solicit a verdict from the hearers. They must respond to the message. This is unavoidable, However, the preacher must detail for the congregation how they are to live in the light of the truth of the sermon. They must be forced to choose for themselves whether they will or will not comply with, or conform their lives to the truth of the Scriptural passage (Alex Montoya).

Though preaching is more than mere pleading, there is a sense in which, like a barrister addressing a jury, you should be out, from the beginning to end, for a verdict. And the conclusion should only be, like his most impressive, most telling appeal, to clench all that has been already said (John Oman).

The conclusion makes possible the oratorical drive (O.S. Davis).

If you have a good golf game but horrendously putt you're going to lose every time.

1. Don't add new material in the conclusion
2. Make a conclusion clear & specific
3. Let your conclusion reflect the demands of the passage you just preached
4. Avoid prolonging your conclusion — especially with calls for decisions.
5. Be direct and brief
6. When you begin a conclusion, avoid lapsing back into the sermon. **Conclude!**
7. Direct the conclusion to cause people to change their beliefs and/or behavior.
8. Try to conclude with something for everyone: unbelievers and believers, young Christians and mature Christians
(Richard Mayhue)

Elements that Can Be Involved:

Gospel presentation

Forceful application

Concise summarization

Lasting impression

A good reminder: repeat, repeat, and repeat some more! Drive the point home!

Don't be afraid to be intensely personal & urgently driven in your appeals!

Preaching is personal encounter. It brings a person face to face with the Living God!

It is not a good sign that many preachers have lost the unembarrassed urgency of importuning men for God (John Broadus).

Good concluding words by William Sangster:

“Having come to the end, stop. Do not cruise about looking for a spot to land, like some weary swimmer coming in from the sea and splashing about until he can find a shelving beach up which to walk. Come right in, and land at once. Finish what you have to say and end at the same time. If the last phrase can have some quality of crisp memorableness, all the better, but do not grope even for that. Let your sermon have the quality that Charles Wesley coveted for his whole life: let the work and the course end together.”

For Further Study:

Haddon Robinson, *Biblical Preaching*

John A. Broadus, *On the Preparation & Delivery of Sermons*

VIII. Be An Engaging Preacher — *ENGAGE!*

INTRODUCTION

How can I engage & captivate my congregation & make them hang on every word --- still be an expository preacher, still make people long & hunger for the truth so they wanna come back and hear the sermon.

Some assumptions that *must* be in place:

1. You must be saved
2. Must be walking in the Spirit
3. You must let the Word of God work on your own heart before working it on the hearts of others
4. You must soak your sermon prep in prayer
5. You must handle accurately the Word of Truth
6. You must preach with full dependence on the Holy Spirit



The preacher is **NOT** responsible for the response of his listeners to the truth.

HOW TO ENGAGE YOUR PEOPLE

We should be more mentally engaging as preachers. Preaching is two-way communication.

No man likes to travel over a flat country; better a steep climb occasionally than a monotonous stretch of prairie. It is not enough for a preacher to declare the truth. God makes raw meat, but the cook must create an appetite by furnishing the feast aright. No man can hold an audience by the bald presentation of abstract facts. The trouble is, we are often content to be dull; we are too indolent or indifferent to be interesting (James Burrell)

4 keys to bear in mind:

1. ATTENTION

You want to win people's attention at the outset so that they listen to you.

The preacher's duty is to *persuade* men concerning the truth of Christianity. So arrest the attention of your hearer; chain him to you so he cannot move for the next hour.

2. INTEREST

“Interest includes attention but interest is when people want to hear you and they want to know what you're going to say ... Interest is when people are hungry to receive what you have to say. Interest makes people pay attention & listen” (Jack Hughes).

3. SIMPLICITY

The preacher should have a large vocabulary at his command, though he may customarily use only a small portion of it. A child can express its simple wants by the use of less than a hundred words (James Burrell).

[A Minister must be] a plain preacher, suiting his matter and style to the capacity of his audience (1 Cor. 14:19). Some ministers, like eagles, love to soar aloft in abstruse metaphysical notions, thinking they are most admired when they are least understood. They who preach in the clouds, instead of hitting their people's conscience, shoot over their heads (Thomas Watson).

4. REMEMBRANCE

How will people remember?

People learn primarily by seeing -- either with the eye or with the mind!

WORD PICTURES --- “any word, phrase, story, analogy, illustration, metaphor, figure of speech, trope, allegory, graphic quote, historical reference, cross reference, comparison used to help the listener see, imagine, experience, sense, understanding, remember, and/or relate to abstract facts” (Jack Hughes)

The best of preachers, namely Christ, was a consummate master of this art. His sermons were picturesque to the last degree. He found ‘tongues in trees, sermons in stones, books in the running brooks and homiletic figures in everything. Consequently He was never dull, however profound; but was always impressive and well within the intellectual range of average men (James Burrell).

Good principle:

Think of more difficult to understand truths as larger spikes and easy to understand truths as tacks. A small tack can be tapped in quite easily but large spike takes many blows (Jack Hughes)

PROOF/EXAMPLES

Romans 9
2 Timothy 2
Isaiah 53
Psalm 1
Matthew 5-7

The Bible is the greatest picturebook in print. The preacher may well search the Scriptures for illustrations as well as for the promises of eternal life. He will never exhaust their rich content and the illustrations from that source will have all the more value because of the sacred associations which cluster around them (Dean Brown quoted in John Broadus).

Watson (speaking about a Christian's love for God)

He who is in love, his thoughts are ever upon the object. He who loves God is ravished and transported with the contemplation of God. ‘When I awake, I am still with thee’ (Psalm 139:18). *The thoughts are as travellers in the mind. David's thoughts kept heaven-road, I am still with Thee. God is the treasure, and where the treasure is, there is the heart.* By this we may test our love to God. What are our thoughts most upon? Can we say we are ravished with delight when we think on God? *Have our thoughts got wings? Are they fled aloft?* Do we contemplate Christ and glory? Oh, how far are they from being lovers of God, who scarcely ever think of God! ‘God is not in all his thoughts’ (Psalm 10:4). *A sinner crowds God out of his thoughts. He never thinks of God, unless with horror, as the prisoner thinks of the judge.*

Watson (speaking of God's effectual call whereby the Spirit draws a sinner to salvation)

This is the loud call. The Word is the instrumental cause of our conversion, the Spirit is the efficient. *The ministers of God are only the pipes and organs; it is the Spirit blowing in them, that effectually changes the heart.* ‘While Peter spoke, the Holy Ghost fell on all them that heard the word’ (Acts 10:44). *It is not the farmer's industry in ploughing and sowing, that will make the ground fruitful, without the early and latter rain. So it is not the seed of the Word that will effectually convert, unless the Spirit put forth His sweet influence, and drops as rain upon the heart.* Therefore the aid of God's Spirit is to be implored, *that He would put forth His powerful voice, and awaken us out of the grave of unbelief. If a man knock at a gate of brass, it will not open; but if he come with a key in his hand, it will open: so when God, who has the key of David in His hand (Revelation 3:7) comes, He opens the heart, though it be ever so fast locked against Him.*

J.C. Ryle (Sermon: A Women to Be Remembered)

But it is good for us all to mark these things. It is good to be reminded that God can punish sharply those who sin willfully and that great privileges misused bring down great wrath on the soul. *Pharaoh saw all the miracles which Moses worked; Korah, Dathan and Abiram had heard God speaking from Mount Sinai; Hophni and Phinehas were sons of*

God's high priest; Saul lived in the full light of Samuel's ministry; Ahab was often warned by Elijah the prophet; Absalom enjoyed the privilege of being one of David's children; Belshazzar had Daniel the prophet hard by his door; Ananias and Sapphira joined the church in the days when the apostles were working miracles; Judas Iscariot was a chosen companion of our Lord Jesus Christ Himself. But they all sinned with a high hand against light and knowledge, and they were all suddenly destroyed without remedy. They had no time or space for repentance. As they lived, so they died; as they were, they hurried away to meet God. They went with all their sins upon them, unpardoned, unrenewed and utterly unfit for heaven. And being dead they yet speak. They tell us, like Lot's wife, that it is a perilous thing to sin against light, that God hates sin, and that there is a hell.

Or, more briefly:

Godliness being engraved in the heart by the Holy Ghost, as with the point of a diamond, can never be erased (Watson)

An impatient man is like a troubled sea that cannot rest (Watson)

Many come to hear the word preached for its eloquence. They come to a sermon as to a music lecture or as to a garden to pick flowers but not to have their lusts subdued or their hearts bettered. They are like a foolish woman who paints her face but neglects her health (Watson)

Squirrels learn to penetrate most bird feeder defences over a period of time. It seems that whatever barriers you put up they find another way to get at the seed. In the same way Satan often learns to penetrate your defences over a period of time. Like a squirrel, he usually does not try to destroy the barriers you have erected; he tries to go round them. Satan will always seek to tempt you at a point of weakness (Jack Hughes).

You must lay the axe of repentance to the root of every sin, then with confession throw it into the fire (Jack Hughes).

When lust or rash anger burns in the soul, Satan warms himself at this fire. Men's sins feast the devil (Thomas Watson).

God is a sea of goodness without bottom and without banks (Thomas Watson).

Every sin is a drop of oil on hell's flame (Thomas Watson).

Knowledge without repentance will be but a torch to light men to hell (Thomas Watson).

CONCLUSION

The word of God is a hammer (Jer. 23:29). Every blow of the hammer is to fasten the nails to the building; so the preachers words are to fasten you the more to Christ; they weaken themselves to strengthen and settle you. This is the grand design of preaching, not only for the enlightening, but for the establishing of souls; not only to guide them in the right way, but to keep them in it (Thomas Watson).

For Further Study:

John A. Broadus, *On the Preparation & Delivery of Sermons*

David James Burrell, *The Sermon: Its Construction & Delivery*

John Carrick, *The Imperative of Preaching.*

Jack Hughes, *Expository Preaching with Word Pictures*

Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *Preaching & Preachers.*

Charles Spurgeon, *Morning & Evening*

IX. Preach The Gospel! — *GOSPEL!*

“As all roads lead to London, all scripture leads to Christ” (Charles Spurgeon)

INTRODUCTION

Luke 24:25ff

The Christ who saves is the Christ who is revealed to us in the whole of Scripture. Therefore, we should find the Holy Spirit convicting and saving sinners through the message of the whole Bible (Eric Alexander).

PRESUPPOSITIONS

1. All Scripture is true
2. All Scripture is profitable
3. All Scripture is applicable
4. Conversions are our aim

The grand object of the Christian ministry is the glory of God. Whether souls are converted or not, if Jesus Christ be faithfully preached, the minister has not laboured in vain, for he is a sweet savour unto God as well in them that perish as in them that are saved ... Yet as a rule, God has sent us to preach in order that through the gospel of Jesus Christ the sons of men may be reconciled to Him (Charles Spurgeon).

HERMENEUTICS

1. Begin with interpreting the OT first, then move to the NT.
2. All of Scripture climaxes in Christ, but not every verse speaks about Christ.
3. The gospel is not in every verse — but every verse can lead to the cross.

The Bible has a saving influence because it is all about Jesus Christ. We do not have the Bible simply for its own sake, but because it brings us into a relationship with Jesus Christ (Philip Ryken).

APOSTLES

Remember: the Apostles had no authority to propagate their own fancies, but to spread Christian faith (Matthew Henry).

When the Apostles preach (the book of Acts) we find that they preach OT texts and give the gospel in nearly every sermon (Acts 2, 3, 5, 13, 15, 17, et al).

Spurgeon said: “Our cry should be that of Rachel: ‘Give me children, or I die!’ If we do not win souls, we should mourn as the husbandman who sees no harvest, as the fisherman who returns to his cottage with an empty net, or as the huntsman who has in vain roamed over hill and dale.”

In the early Church, Irenaeus wrote *Demonstration of the Apostolic Preaching* (2nd century Church Father/theologian) where he walked through the Old Testament and the glorious plan of God's redemption, unfolding from Adam all the way through Malachi and then into the New Testament.

HOW TO PREACH THE GOSPEL IN ANY SERMON

The Reminder of the Gospel:

1. God's Holy Character
2. Man's Sinful Condition
3. Christ's Sufficient Sacrifice
4. God's Amazing Grace
5. Man's Spiritual Fruit

“We must be most of all clear upon the great soul-saving doctrine of the *atonement*; we must preach a real bona fide substitutionary sacrifice, and proclaim pardon as its result. Cloudy views as to atoning blood are mischievous to the last degree. . . . We must preach substitution straightforwardly and unmistakably, for if any doctrine be plainly taught in Scripture it is this: “the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with his stripes we are healed” (Charles Spurgeon).

The Relevance of the Gospel:

It is always relevant, always necessary, always worthy of mention. Thus, it is never old, outdated, antiquated, irrelevant, or preliminary to move on to bigger doctrines.

God is the same; man has not changed; Christ's death is still sufficient; faith alone in Christ alone is still the only way a sinner can be saved. So then: “by any means, by all means, labour to glorify God by conversions, and rest not till your heart's desire is fulfilled” (Spurgeon).

The Reiteration of the Gospel:

Make your chorus the same as Paul's: "but we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block and to Gentiles foolishness" (1 Cor 1:23)

If we preach the Bible's story line, we will preach Christ and the gospel, because that story-line revolves around him.

Preaching, when truly Christian, is distinctive (Jay Adams).

All of Scripture focuses on an aspect of our fallen condition that requires and displays God's provision (FCF = the Fallen Condition Focus). *Preaching that remains true to this God-glorifying purposes specifies an FCF indicated by a text and addresses this aspect of our fallenness with the grace revealed by the text.*

Find the character of God!
 Find the grace of God!
 Find the judgment of God!
 Find the prophecies of Christ!

Find man's depravity; find God's character; find grace → run to the cross!

If you're going to preach the whole "purpose of God" then you must preach Moses as well as Mark, Jonah as well as John, Psalms as well as Paul, Proverbs as well as Peter, Leviticus as well as Luke, Habakkuk as well as Hebrews, Ruth as well as Revelation.

Find the gospel in such passages and preach the meaning of the text with appropriate application to the gospel!

If you do this, you're in good company. Spurgeon said:

"Today there is not very much gospel about; the church has given it up; a great many preachers preach everything but the living truth. This is sad; but it is a strong reason why you and I should teach more gospel than ever. I have often thought to myself -- other men may teach Socialism, deliver lectures, or collect a band of fiddlers, that they may gather a congregation; but I will preach the gospel. I will preach more gospel than ever if I can; I will stick more to the one cardinal point. The other brethren can attend to the odds and ends, but I will keep to Christ crucified. To the men of vast ability, who are looking to the events of the day, I would say, 'Allow one poor fool to keep to preaching the gospel.' Beloved teachers, be fools for Christ, and keep to the gospel. Don't you be afraid: it has life in it, and it will grow: only you bring it out, and let it grow" (Spurgeon's sermon on *The Mustard Seed*, 1890).

CONCLUSION

Preach the gospel in every sermon. That doesn't mean that every sermon must be an evangelistic message. But it should contain the gospel. Every sermon should show how we are great sinners, and how Christ is a great Savior. When you've completed your manuscript or sermon outline, re-read it and ask, "Is the gospel clear?" Submit your homily to the "Orthodox Jewish rabbi" test: If an Orthodox Jewish rabbi could preach your sermon, then you're not proclaiming Christ crucified (Jeramie Rinne).

For Further Study:

Bryan Chapell, *Christ Centered Preaching*

Charles Spurgeon, *Lectures to My Students*

Dever, Duncan, Mohler, Mahaney, ed. *Preaching the Cross*

A young man had been preaching in the presence of a venerable divine, and after he had done he went to the old minister, and said, "What do you think of my sermon?" "A very poor sermon indeed," said he. "A poor sermon?" said the young man, "it took me a long time to study it." "Ay, no doubt of it." "Why, did you not think my explanation of the text a very good one?" "Oh, yes," said the old preacher, "very good indeed." "Well, then, why do you say it is a poor sermon? Didn't you think the metaphors were appropriate and the arguments conclusive?" "Yes, they were very good as far as that goes, but still it was a very poor sermon." "Will you tell me why you think it a poor sermon?" "Because," said he, "there was no Christ in it." "Well," said the young man, "Christ was not in the text; we are not to be preaching Christ always, we must preach what is in the text." So the old man said, "Don't you know young man that from every town, and every village, and every little hamlet in England, wherever it may be, there is a road to London?" "Yes," said the young man. "Ah!" said the old divine "and so from every text in Scripture, there is a road to the metropolis of the Scriptures, that is Christ. And my dear brother, your business in when you get to a text, to say, 'Now what is the road to Christ?' and then preach a sermon, running along the road towards the great metropolis—Christ. And," said he, "I have never yet found a text that had not got a road to Christ in it, and if I ever do find one that has not a road to Christ in it, I will make one; I will go over hedge and ditch but I would get at my Master, for the sermon cannot do any good unless there is a savour of Christ in it." (Spurgeon's sermon on 1 Peter 2.7 "*Christ is Precious to Believers*", 1859)

X. Bring the Text to Bear! – *APPLICATION!*

True biblical preaching ought to be a life-changing endeavor (Mike Fabarez).

Application says: “this is what you must do what what you’ve heard today” (Tom Pennington)

Introduction:

The Primacy & Efficacy of the Holy Spirit

John 16:8-10 affirms that it’s the Holy Spirit who brings conviction.

Ezekiel 18:1-29 [sermon]; 18:30-32 [clear application]; cf. 33:30-33

John 13:17 "If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them."

The Applicational “Neglect” Today

Many homileticians have not given application the attention it deserves (Haddon Robinson).

Despite the importance of application, few modern evangelical scholars have focused on this topic. In fact, most hermeneutic textbooks give it only brief coverage, and many major commentary series only mention application with passing remarks to help readers bridge the gap from the biblical world to the modern world. Perhaps many assume that sound application is more ‘caught than taught.’ This is probably true, but sound application often seems hard to find, much less to catch (William Klein).

The Importance of the Issue

Matt 7:24-27 - the only difference between those who build a house on the sand and on the rock is that one applied what he heard to his life and the other didn’t apply what he heard!

Never forget: God's Word always demands a human response!

This includes the idea of: persuasion. It is not enough to convince men of truth, nor enough to make them see how it applies to themselves, and how it might be practicable for them to act it out; but we must *persuade men* (John Broadus).

The Reality of Application

How do you know if application is *really* happening?

1. In preaching, boldly point out what needs to *be* changed, and then help your people to change.
2. In preaching, provide very helpful implementation points so that the application can be practically applied.
3. A good sermon is one that bears fruit. SO, does your message transform believers' lives? Does it bring about *change*?

Change! The key word is Change!

To carry the vote and fire the zeal of our congregations, this, gentlemen, is our true business. If we are to be successful, there must be vigorous intellectual activity, but it must be directed by a definite intention to produce a definite result ... we shall preach to no purpose unless we have a purpose in preaching. Archbishop Whately said of some preacher that 'he aimed at nothing, and hit it' (R.W. Dale).

The Puritans talked about "preaching through to the heart"

John Wesley made comments such as:

I expect my preaching to get through to the heart... I observed none wounded, nor anything more than a calm, dull attention... I cannot find my way to the hearts of the people of Perth... I made a pointed application to the hearts of all that were present.

The Example of Application:

John the Baptist — John 3.3-9 [sermon]; John 3.10-14 [specific application]

Stephen — Acts 7.2-50 [sermon]; Acts 7.51-54 [application]

Jesus — John 6.35-50; *8:30-58; Luke 21.5-36

Peter — Acts 2.14-40 [esp. vv.38-40]

The entire book of Hebrews (it's a sermon! cf. Heb 13.22 — “word of exhortation”)
Esp. Ch.2:1-4; Ch. 3-4; 6:1ff; 10:19-39; 12:12-13:7

Preaching is essentially a personal encounter, in which the preacher's will is making a claim through the truth upon the will of the hearer. If there is no summons, there is no sermon (John A. Broadus)

Beginning the Application:

1. Make sure your life is changing
2. Make sure your application is accurate

Biblically Accurate Application Principles:

Preachers want to be faithful to the Scriptures, and going through seminary, they have learned exegesis. But they may not have learned how to make the journey from the biblical text to the modern world. . . . Sometimes we apply the text in ways that might make the biblical writer say, ‘Wait a minute, that’s a wrong use of what I said.’ This is the heresy of a good truth applied in a wrong way (Haddon Robinson).

Helpful principles for arriving at accurate application:

(adapted from Mike Fabarez, *Preaching that Changes Lives*, pp.37-54)

1. *Put yourself in the author’s sandals — what did he intend?*

The most powerful application of any passage is always what the Holy Spirit intended when He inspired that passage. Every expositor should use all the exegetical tools at his disposal to strive to discern exactly how the Spirit and the human writer intended the first readers to apply that passage. Although every passage has only one meaning, it can have several legitimate applications (Jerry Vines & Jim Shaddix)

2. *Camp on the imperatives*
3. *Decide whether you are in prescriptive/descriptive material & determine whether the text was given to serve as a template for others to follow.*

4. Use and compare other clear imperatives to keep your determinations on track.
5. Does God's character arise in this text that leads to a particular application point?
6. How does the text address man's depravity and the consequences of sin?

To Summarize: in your reading & studying of a biblical text, simply ask yourself: *So What? What does this have to say to my people?* How can you apply it to your own life? Then, take that principle (utilizing a proper hermeneutic without unnecessary spiritualizing/allegorizing the text) and apply it specifically to the minds, hearts, will, and conduct of your listeners.

In the elaborate doctrinal part of Jonathan Edwards' sermons the great preacher was only getting his guns into position; but that in his *applications* he opened fire on the enemy. There are too many of us, I am afraid, who take so much time getting our guns into position that we have to finish without firing a shot (R.W. Dale)

Conclusion:

Application Attributes:

1. **Personal:** "you" do this.
2. **Varied:** direct/indirect application
3. **Decisive:** call to action!
4. **Appealing:** don't be afraid to exhort!
From Vines & Shaddix, p.183-84

Recognize that the chief purpose of application is not simply to give people something to do. *Application gives ultimate meaning to the exposition.* Even if the explanation of a sermon were to define every Greek and Hebrew word for prayer, were to quote at length from Calvin, Luther, and EM Bounds on prayer's meaning, were to cite fifty passages that refer to prayer, and were to describe the prayer practices of David, Jeremiah, Daniel, Paul, and Jesus, would the listeners truly understand what prayer is? No. Until we engage in prayer we do not really understand it. Until we apply a truth, understanding of it remains incomplete. This means that until a preacher provides application, exposition remains incomplete (Bryan Chapell).

"Where the application begins, there the sermon begins" (Charles Spurgeon)

For Further Study:

Jerry Vines & Jim Shaddix, *Power in the Pulpit*

John A. Broadus, *On the Preparation & Delivery of Sermons*

John Stott, *Between Two Worlds: The Challenge of Preaching Today*

XI. Fire, Urgency, & Passion! — *PATHOS & PASSION!*

Preach the Word of God that it comes across with great passion, with great energy, with great fire (Alex Montoya)

You cannot read the New Testament without sensing that the preachers were electrified by the power of the Gospel and swept off their feet by the wonder of the great revelation which had been committed to their trust. There is something wrong if a man charged with the greatest news in the world can be listless and rigid and dull. Who is going to believe that the glad tidings brought by the preacher means literally more than anything else on earth if they are presented with no verve or fire or attack, and if the man himself is apathetic, uninspired, afflicted with spiritual coma in unseeing by his attitude what he says in words (W. A. Criswell)?

Introduction:

Spurgeon's story

A man once came & asked Spurgeon: *“what must I do to draw a crowd to hear me preach?”*

Spurgeon replied: *“Simply douse yourself in gasoline, strike a match, and set yourself on fire. Then people will come to watch you burn.”*

A dull minister creates a dull audience. A dull preacher is a contradiction in terms. A dull preacher may stand in a pulpit and talk but he is not a preacher. Dullness in preaching is impossible (John Broadus).

By Definition, What Is Preaching?

Preaching is theology coming through a man who is on fire. A true understanding and experience of the Truth must lead to this. I say again that a man who can speak about these things dispassionately has no right whatsoever to be in a pulpit; and should never be allowed to enter one (Lloyd-Jones).

A preacher is a man under commission and under authority. A preacher comes to the congregation as a sent messenger (Lloyd-Jones).

Passion is a strong emotional feeling

Conviction is a strong emotional belief in something

Intensity should manifest itself with an urgency, tenacity, and gravity in what is being preached. It is the by-product of passion and conviction.

Never forget — People will be unwilling to believe and obey something they don't think the preacher believes and obeys.

A dumb minister is of no more use than a dead physician (Thomas Watson).

Why Preach with Urgency?

Preaching should never be without passion because we preach a message that has eternal consequences. We are talking about weighty subjects which that have gravity (Jack Hughes).

Preach against sin

Always think of Judgement. Think of the judgment of sin. Sin is the enemy of God and of the soul. It is a ruthless enemy. And it needs to be assaulted by preachers. Preach urgently against sin (Alex Montoya).

Preach for a Verdict

Preach towards a verdict. Call men to a verdict. You must do something about this message. We must persuade men (Alex Montoya).

Zeal in a minister is as proper as fire on the altar. Some are afraid to reprove, like the swordfish which has a sword in his head but is without a heart. So they carry the sword of the Spirit about them, but have no heart to draw it out in reproof against sin. How many have sown pillows under their people making them sleep so securely that they never woke till they were in hell (Thomas Watson)!

Preach the Glorious Gospel

If there are any homiletical techniques that are being neglected today in the pulpits of churches around the world it is the emotive techniques mentioned above. Preachers are failing to preach with gravity, conviction, passion, authority and intensity. Many preachers aren't heralds, criers, and proclaimers of truth, they are those who suggest, share, and offer the truth. They come across not as authoritative but as unsure salesmen peddling snake oil which they know in their hearts doesn't work (Jack Hughes).

Conclusion:

You are not simply imparting information ... you are dealing with souls, you are dealing with pilgrims on the way to eternity, you are dealing with matters not only of life and death in this world, but with eternal destiny. Nothing can be so terribly urgent (Lloyd-Jones).

How to Preach with Passion & Fire?**1. Let the Text Own You**

Make sure you know the truth & the truth has captivated you.

2. Trust in the Power of Scripture

You might be wondering how to be passionate in your preaching. Many things might be said but the primary source of passion is faith in the Word of God. When the preacher is definitively convinced about what he is preaching and understands the consequences of what he is saying, he will be passionate because he knows that the glory of God and the eternal souls of people are at stake (Jack Hughes).

3. Spiritual Work Demands Spiritual power

Genuine passion is a spiritual dynamic. It all seems to come down to, and flow from, the heart. A heart captivated by a passionate God. A heart filled with the Word of God. A heart walking in step with, beating in time with, the Spirit of God. A heart moved with compassion for the people to whom it will preach. Gripped by God, saturated in the Word, filled with the Spirit, and crystal clear on the urgency of the task of preaching that particular text to those particular people at that particular time. A genuinely passionate preacher is truly a potent tool in God's hand (Peter Mead).

4. Develop a Deep Compassion**5. Smell the Smoke of Hell Before Every Sermon**

The true biblical preacher knows both the sting of sin & the horrors of hell. Hence, he preaches with the near judgment of sin before him, and the final judgment of hell on the horizon! Urgency is in his voice. His steps are quickened by the necessity of rescuing souls! There is no time to waste (Alex Montoya).

Preaching today is so often passive, apathetic, impotent, soft, spineless and lame. It lacks fervor, heat, and heart. It is passionateless. What can turn preaching around? What can restore fire-breathing, white-hot power preaching in our day? The answer is quite simple. Preachers must become gospel maniacs. Preachers must become captivated and re-captivated by the Lord Jesus Christ and the gospel (David Eby).

Conclusion:

The Plea

Now is the time for the strongest men to preach the strongest message in the context of the strongest ministry (John MacArthur).

“Take your life and pour the truth on you and when you preach, preach with great passion and fire to the glory of God” (Alex Montoya).

Speak to your people as to men that must be awakened either here or in hell! . . . Oh, speak not one cold or careless word about so great a business as heaven or hell. Whatever you do, let the people see that you are in good earnest. . . . Men will not cast away their dearest pleasures at the drowsy request of one that seemeth not to mean as he speaks, or to care much whether his request is granted or not (Richard Baxter).

For Further Study:

Alex Montoya, *Preaching with Passion*
Art Azurdia III, *Spirit Empowered Preaching*
Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *Preaching & Preachers*
Mike Fabarez, *Preaching that Changes Lives*
Steve Lawson, *Famine in the Land*
Zack Eswine, *Kindled Fire*