



Introduction to Homiletics

Developing a Teaching Gift

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Introduction



Texts

- Preaching with Purpose - Jay Adams
 - not a general purpose preaching book, but a short book that makes many good points
- Biblical Preaching - Haddon Robinson
 - good introductory preaching book
- The Preacher and His Preaching - A.P. Gibbs
 - covers a lot of material
- The Supremacy of God in Preaching – John Piper
 - Not a general text, but a definite “must read”



Introduction

- spiritual gifts can be developed (Acts 18:24-26)
- developing our gifts will:
 - make us more useful to the Lord
 - build us up as Christians
 - make our churches stronger
 - help us to be obedient
- failure to develop gifts means we will not achieve our potential for the Lord, individually or corporately



The Need to Develop Gift

- most churches spend considerable effort developing the gifts of their teachers - courses, seminary, seminars, books
- But some churches don't spend this effort
- And in these churches...
 - most men don't teach themselves
 - many men never get helpful feedback
 - there is no regular discipleship
- we don't have to do what other churches do, but doing nothing isn't a virtue
- A lack of training is not acceptable
- by following the Biblical principle of developing spiritual gifts, we can strengthen the teaching in our churches



The Need to Develop Gift

- “The greatest proof that the Bible is inspired is that it has withstood so much bad preaching.” – A.T. Robertson
- “What is now needed is a revival of confident, intelligent, relevant, biblical preaching, which will further ... growth and build up mature disciples of Jesus Christ.” – John Stott



Varieties of Speaking Gifts

- 3 gifts are typically associated with pulpit ministry
 - teaching (Romans 12:7)
 - encouraging (Romans 12:8)
 - evangelism (Ephesians 4:11)
- this course concentrates on teaching
- Note: many books do not distinguish between teaching, evangelism and exhortation, and try to suggest that a generic “preacher” be trained in all of these



Varieties of Ministries

- there are different gifts and different ministries and different effects (1 Cor 12:4-6)
- a teaching gift could be exercised in many places
 - pulpit
 - Bible class
 - Sunday School or Youth Group
 - one-on-one
- this course concentrates on pulpit teaching
- many principles are applicable to other teaching venues



Your Audience



A Listener's Bill of Rights

- the message shall be true to the Bible
- the message shall be applicable to the listener's life
- the message shall be well presented
- the message shall use my gift
- the message shall reflect the work I put into it
- the preacher's life shall be a credit to the message



Your Listeners Deserve...

- Your very best...
- every time...
- as led by the Holy Spirit...
- from the Word of God



“Borrowed” Sermons

- don't plagiarize - even the world knows its wrong
- don't use another man's sermon or the essence of his content
- don't use a “sermon subscription service”
- “neither will I offer burnt offerings unto the LORD my God of that which doth cost me nothing.” (2 Samuel 24:24)
- **do the work yourself!**
- Note: very occasionally you may want to share another man's materials. This is OK if properly attributed and doesn't happen too often



A Post-Modern Audience

- the modern mindset:
 - values logic and truth
 - believes in science and technological progress
 - values history and accumulated wisdom
- the post-modern mindset:
 - rejects objective truth, morality and reality
 - “there are no absolutes”
 - is suspicious of authority and history
 - values expediency and personal choice
 - values relationships over rules



The Holy Spirit and Teaching



The Role of the Holy Spirit

- “Revelation” - God makes known what is otherwise unknowable.
- “Inspiration” - the means by which God’s revelation was recorded in the Bible
- The work of the Holy Spirit w.r.t. preaching is illumination, not revelation or inspiration
- Illumination - when the Spirit makes the words of the Bible live for us, and gives us spiritual insight (1 Cor 2:9-13)



The Role of the Holy Spirit

- the Holy Spirit does not:
 - give you new truth - **revelation**
 - make your understanding infallible - **inspiration**
 - replace the need for careful Bible study
 - replace the need for responsible interpretation
 - replace the need for human teachers
- the Holy Spirit does:
 - guide us in existing truth
 - help us select out material to cause an impact
 - know our audience
 - guide us in application
 - give us power to preach



The Role of the Holy Spirit

- **The role of the Holy Spirit is one of applying the Word with power.**
- prayer “unlocks” that power
- we can ask for power in preaching
- we must have a credible life and not grieve the Spirit
- we must be open to the leading of the Spirit, without becoming “random”



Objection!

- Paul said “And my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power” (1 Cor 2:4)
- so we shouldn’t use homiletic techniques!
- BUT... this verse is addressing those who think homiletic technique by itself is sufficient
- AND... Paul’s communications to us are masterpieces of effective, logical and persuasive teaching
- AND... Paul was likely speaking of Greek worldly wisdom
- Holy Spirit AND technique is better than Holy Spirit OR technique



The Role of Prayer

- pray to select a topic or passage
 - pray while studying
 - pray while preparing the sermons
 - pray before preaching
 - pray while preaching
 - pray after preaching
-
- BUT praying does not make your interpretation infallible!



Steps to Preaching

1. determine the passage or topic to preach on
2. study the passage or topic
3. prepare the sermon
4. preach the sermon

- ignore steps 1-3 = irresponsibility
- Ignore step 3 = lack of communication
- step 3 is not optional, even in extemporaneous preaching



Step 1: Determine the Passage or Topic



Deciding What to Preach On

- there are several ways to determine what to preach on
 - it starts with prayer
 - it includes an understanding of the needs of this congregation
 - it is influenced by the ministry previously received
 - it can be guided by the elders of the church



Determine the Passage or Topic

- the decision of topic or passage could be assigned to you, or left up to you
- the passage or topic will be determined by the needs of this congregation - **what do they need to hear?**
- different congregations have different needs at different times
- the passage or topic will determine the type of sermon (expository or topical or textual)



Types of Sermons



Expository, Topical or Textual?

- expository sermon
 - takes a passage and seeks to explain it
 - could be a long passage or a short passage
 - will likely reference many other passages
- topical sermon
 - takes a topic and seeks to explain it
 - could deal with a doctrine, person, place or things
 - will reference many other passages
- textual
 - a sermon built off a single verse
 - often deals with an idea, or used for exhortation
 - likely will not reference many other passages



Expository Sermons

- advantages
 - deals with passages in the order the Holy Spirit provided
 - provides comprehensive treatment of the Bible
 - preacher cannot concentrate on his favourite themes
 - preacher cannot avoid thorny issues
- disadvantages
 - might not provide a comprehensive treatment of the subject
 - less flexibility for the preacher to deal with necessary topics



Topical Sermons

- advantages
 - allows a topic to be dealt with in a comprehensive manner
 - allows us to understand the whole mind of God on an issue
- disadvantages
 - too easy for the preacher to fall into a rut
 - preacher can pick his favourite themes or obsessions
 - preacher can avoid thorny issues (or get blamed if his topic offends someone!)



Textual Sermons

- advantages
 - allows a preacher to drive home a single idea
 - good for exhortation
 - easy to prepare (particularly if preacher is glib)
- disadvantages
 - not useful from a teaching point of view
 - not a comprehensive treatment of a topic
 - too often it becomes a Scriptural “justification” for the preacher’s own ideas. Since the preacher gave a verse at the beginning, he can say whatever he wants
 - does not rest on a foundation of serious, careful Bible study
 - does not adequately feed God’s people



Narrative Sermons

- a variation of the textual sermon
- commonly used with the Gospels and O.T. historical books
- a specific example are the parables

- black preachers commonly preach from narrative portions, while white preachers commonly preach from Epistles
- there is power in telling a story

- don't preach an Epistle like a Narrative, or a Narrative like an Epistle
- Don't preach every book like Paul wrote it!
- Preaching parables is like playing a saxophone – it's easy to do it poorly!



Preaching a Parable

- don't allegorize narrative passages. Don't pretend the obscure things are actually the deeper truths of the word!
 - Augustine on the Good Samaritan was an example
 - Jerusalem = the Heavenly city
 - The man = Adam
 - Robbers = sin
 - Priest & Levites = the Law and the Prophets
 - Samaritan = Christ
 - Inn = the church
 - Innkeeper = Paul
 - Oil and wine = baptism and the Lord's supper
 - Does anyone really think this is what Christ meant by this parable?
 - Allegorizing is a good way to make the text justify whatever we want to make it say



Preaching a Parable

- 3 responsible ways to deal with parables without allegory
 1. Point out the main thrust or message of the parable
 2. Each main character could be significant of an idea
 3. could do a retelling of the story
 - draw out lessons
 - retell in a modern setting
 - relate to the personalities of the characters
 - point out the word picture this passage is presenting
- note the context – the parables had surprising and offensive twists to the original audience
- if handled correctly, narratives and parables can be powerful with post-modern audiences

See: Preaching the Parables, by Craig L. Blomberg



Expository Rhetoric

- “Rediscovering Expository Preaching” - MacArthur
 - “Neither the topical nor the textual method represents a serious effort to interpret, understand, explain, or apply God’s truth in the context of the Scripture(s) used” - p9
 - “Anything less than expository preaching is technically not really preaching at all” - p13 footnote
 - “Simply stated, inerrancy demands exposition as the only method of preaching that preserves the purity of Scripture...” - p24
 - “It follows that it is a serious error to recommend expository preaching as one of several legitimate methods. Nor is it at all satisfactory... to extol the expository method as the best. All preaching must be expository. Only expository preaching can be Scriptural.” - p13 footnote



A Balanced View

- there are fanatics on both sides of the expository vs. topical debate
- less rhetoric is needed! Expository preaching is not tied to Biblical Inerrancy! Topical messages are not inherently superior.
- **a church needs a combination of expository and topical messages to meet the needs of the saints**



Preaching Christ



Preaching Christ

- Our highest purpose must be to preach Christ
- Our goal is three-fold:
 - To help people get to know Christ better
 - To foster personal devotion to Christ
 - To cultivate Christ-like lives
- But preachers sometimes...
 - fail to point people to Christ
 - miss what a passage is teaching us about Christ
 - think a Christ focus isn't practical
 - remember to preach the Gospel, but forget to preach Christ



Preaching Christ from the NT

- Preach on Christ's words in the Gospels
- Show how Epistles have a foundation in Christ's teachings
- Show how Christ's life fulfilled prophecy
- Teach the doctrines concerning Christ
- Teach passages that have Christological significance



Preaching Christ from the OT

- Types and pictures
- Messianic Psalms and prophecy
- The Angel of the LORD
- Show how Christ meets mankind's needs across time
- Use Hebrews to discuss the priesthood
- Show how Christ is better
- Lessons from the priestly line
- Lessons from the tabernacle and priestly garments



Your Authority to Preach



Your Source of Authority

- you are not the source of authority
 - being a preacher doesn't make you special
- your ideas are not authoritative
 - you are not there to show your wisdom
- church doctrine and tradition is not authoritative
 - repeating what people believe and want to hear is not a virtue
- **you only have authority to preach in so far as you teach the very word of God**



Your Source of Authority (cont)

**The meaning of the
text is the message
of the sermon!**

-- Bryan Chapell, Christ-Centred Preaching



Your Source of Authority (cont)

- There is a story, possibly apocryphal, that a certain preacher's notes once had a notation that said "Yell here – point weak"
- Do not use homiletical technique to compensate for weak justification
- You can only teach it if the Bible teaches it



Your Source of Authority (cont)

- “Preachers today have no authority for preaching their own notions and opinions; they must “preach the Word” -- the apostolic Word recorded in the Scriptures. Whenever preachers depart from the purpose and intent of a biblical portion, to that extent they lose their authority to preach.”

(Preaching With Purpose, Jay Adams, p19)




Your Source of Authority (cont)

- a special warning: some preachers handle the Bible correctly, but stray when they give their applications and inferences the same authority as the Bible
- the Bible is authoritative, your applications are not
- let's look at some examples where people read a Bible verse, develop an application, then dogmatically assert that their application is Biblically authoritative



Misuse of Biblical Authority

- eg. Philippians 4:8- *Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.* **Therefore it is a sin to go to movie theatres!**
- eg. Psalm 1:1 - *Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers.* **Therefore Christians should never attend a secular university!**
- e.g. 1 Corinthians 14:40 - *Let all things be done decently and in order.* **Therefore men must wear ties in church meetings!**
- e.g. 1 Timothy 2:9a - *I also want women to dress modestly, with decency and propriety....* **Therefore women must wear black dresses!**
- **these applications may or may not be valid, but none of them are authoritative!**



Step 2: Study the Passage or Topic



3 Steps

- gather the facts
- group and analyze the facts
- interpret the facts

- your goal is to understand the topic or passage
- you will not use all the material in your sermon
- you must understand much more than you communicate



Gather the Facts

- read multiple times
- compare translations
- determine the natural divisions in the text
- look up cross references
- use word study tools, Bible dictionaries, etc.
- consult reliable commentaries



Gather the Facts (cont)

- what words are used most commonly?
- what words are theologically significant?
- what questions does the passage raise?
- what is the flow of thought?
- what other verses address the same topic or people?
- does the Bible present balanced teaching on this topic?
- what are the main points?
- what is the main message?
- how would the original audience understand this verse?
- what is the background?



Analyze the Facts

- group the facts together in categories
- what is the flow of the argument?
- is there anomalous data?
- are there parentheses in the passage?
- is there a chiasmic structure of thoughts? ABCCBA
- how are points supported?
- what is the main message?
- how are you going to communicate the main message?



Principles of Bible Interpretation



Principles of Interpretation

- Consider the Context
 - **This is the most important principle of Bible interpretation!**
 - a text without a context is a pretext for an error
 - the immediate context - what do the surrounding verses say?
→ Rev 3:20
 - deal with the Bible passage by passage. What is the overall theme and train of thought? → Romans chapters 1-4
 - the book context - what is the overall context/theme of the book? → consider Epistle to Hebrews
 - context of the Bible - what does the rest of the Bible say about the same subject? → i.e. topical study



Principles of Interpretation (cont.)

- Interpret the Bible Literally
 - when 2 Christians disagree, it is usually because one (or both) are ignoring this principle → 1 Cor 14:21
 - some large passages must be interpreted literally to make any sense → Ezekiel 40-48
 - interpret literally unless the Bible itself gives you reason to interpret figuratively → Rev 12:9
- Consider the Plain Sense Meaning of the Passage
 - the meaning of most passages is clear
 - if a sophisticated explanation disagrees with what the passage plainly says, the sophisticated explanation is probably incorrect
 - e.g. Romans 13:1-7 → Douglas Moo says “It is only a slight exaggeration to say that the history of the interpretation of Romans 13:1-7 is the history of attempts to avoid what seems to be its plain meaning.”



Principles of Interpretation (cont.)

- Start From What You Understand
 - don't start your interpretation from the verse you understand the least, or from the verse whose interpretation is doubtful → 1 Cor 15:29
- Compare Alike and Contrast Differences
 - different passages will emphasize different aspects of the same truth → compare Psalm 1:1-3 with 1:4-6
 - Hebrew thought used repetition for emphasis → Psalm 3:1
- Consider the Type of Literature
 - narrative, epistle, poetry, prophecy, historical
 - how you interpret a parable and an epistle will be different



Principles of Interpretation (cont.)

- Other Principles

- it is possible for the Bible to use figures of speech (like all good literature) → Deut 1:28
See Bullinger's "Figures of Speech Used in the Bible" for 217 different types of figures of speech in over 8000 passages
- pay attention to grammar (e.g. verb tenses) → Gal 3:16 is a good example of Paul pointing this out
- consider special rules for Bible prophecy
 - prophetic past tense → Romans 8:30
 - prophetic double-fulfilment → Joel 2:28-32 and Acts 2:16-21



Meaning

- what did the text mean to the original readers?
 - we cannot suggest a meaning that the original audience (and the original author) could never have intended
 - this is the “exegetical statement”
- what does the text mean for all peoples and all times?
 - are there timeless principles?
 - this is the “theological statement”
- what does the text mean for this audience?
 - not new revelation! This is where application gets driven home
 - this is the “homiletical statement”



Example: Studying to Prepare a Sermon

- ↑ interpret
- ↑ gather facts
- read the passage
 - break it into logical divisions
 - what is the main thought
 - notice the important features (words, phrases, etc.)
 - write down your thoughts
 - use your study tools
 - consult commentaries
- ↓
- ↓



Study First, Commentaries Second

- “Two things are vital, first personal, first hand work on the text, and then all scholarly aids obtainable. I never take down a commentary until I have done the first-hand work and have my outline. To turn to commentaries first is to create a second-hand mentality. I speak freely, from a brief most carefully prepared.”

G. Campbell Morgan, speaking on his technique for sermon preparation.



Practice Exercise

- break down Colossians 1 into logical divisions
- what are the significant words?
- what are the significant ideas?
- what is the big idea?
- what does this tell us about Christ?



Step 3: Prepare the Sermon



What is a Sermon?

- it is not a stroll through the Bible
- it does not involve finding something to say about a passage
- it is not a Bible school lecture
- it is not a feel good motivational seminar
- it is not our Sunday morning entertainment
- it is not a sharing time

- **A sermon is a decisive thrust of the sword of the Spirit for the accomplishing of a specific purpose**



What is a Sermon? (cont)

- **A sermon is a decisive thrust...**
 - most of the NT addresses specific problems or issues
 - a sermon communicates, it doesn't discuss
- **... of the sword of the Spirit...**
 - the Biblical basis of this sermon provides your only authority to speak
- **... for the accomplishing of a specific purpose.**
 - the Holy Spirit gave us each portion of the Bible for a reason
 - if you don't know what that reason is, you can't communicate it to others



Other Sermon Definitions

- “A sermon is an oral address to the popular mind, upon Scriptural truth contained in the Bible, elaborately treated and with a view to persuasion”

(The Preacher and His Preaching, A.P. Gibbs, p160)

- “[preaching is] truth mediated through personality in the midst of personalities”

(George Sweazey, in “360 Degree Preaching”)

- “Preaching is a manifestation of the Incarnate Word from the Written Word by the spoken word”

(Bernard Manning, in “360 Degree Preaching”)



Goals for a Sermon

- The goal of a sermon is to inform and transform
 - not the mere imparting of knowledge
 - not the mere cleaning up of lives
 - informing gives them the knowledge and tools they need in order to think for themselves and make spiritual decisions for themselves
 - transforming helps them understand the changes they must make to their lives to glorify God through their lives
- To help them understand the person and work of Christ, in a way that makes a difference in their life
 - providing food for worship
 - inspiring and persuading people to be more like Christ!



Goals for a Sermon (cont)

- to know Christ and to be more like Him (Phil 3:10-14)
- “So, then, preach Christ. Preach Him plainly and gratefully, and you will not be tempted to preach about man and his pretended powers and dignity. Preach Christ in all the Scriptures: He is the subject matter of the whole Bible. He is there. Until you have found Him in your preaching portion, you are not ready to preach. Search Him out; preach Him - and hearts will burn.”

(Preaching With Purpose, Jay Adams, p152)



The Preacher's Passion

- “I preached as never sure to preach again, and as a dying man to dying men.” - Richard Baxter

- a passionate preacher is not necessarily one who screams from the pulpit!



Dangers in Preaching

- preacher draws attention to himself
 - at times, Paul could point to his own conduct as an example for the saints to follow (1 Cor 11:1, etc.)
 - but this was not for the purpose of making the saints think how great Paul was!
- preacher wins popularity by telling people what they want to hear (or thinks offending is a virtue!)
- shallow preaching that is long on stories and jokes, but short on content
- sermons that are irrelevant or trendy
 - this is not an academic discourse
 - this is not modern psychology repackaged in a religious form
- preacher is the hero of all his own stories
- preacher becomes professional, or adopts a different manner than the other Christians



Difficulty in Bible Teaching

- typically requires more study time and preparation than an evangelistic or exhortatory sermon
- it takes years of work to develop a teaching gift
- difficult for the teacher to gauge success
 - an evangelist knows if people have been saved immediately
 - it is only over a period of months or years that the Bible teacher knows if he has been successful



Avoid the Ramble Through the Bible

- “if a man quotes a text at the beginning of the sermon and then wanders miles away from it he is not preaching, he is just talking”. Campbell Morgan Bible Teacher, p86
- You must avoid a ramble through the Bible!
- Don't spend all your time repeating the obvious (e.g. John 3:16 – how this is talking about God and not man, love is the opposite of hate...”



Focus, Focus, Focus

- the Holy Spirit has given us this passage for a purpose, and you are communicating that purpose
- what is the thrust? what is the theme?
- in “Biblical Preaching”, Haddon Robinson refers to “the Big Idea”. What is the Big Idea of a passage?
- **if you don't understand the Big Idea, keep studying. You are not yet ready to prepare or preach a sermon!**



Boil it Down and Cut it Out!

- A classic mistake is to try to include all the content you found during your study of the passage
- Don't do this!
- **A sermon is a decisive thrust of the sword of the Spirit for the accomplishing of a specific purpose**
- If your content doesn't relate to your purpose, don't include it.
- You will weaken your sermon, not strengthen it.



Methods of Persuasion

- you want to appeal to the head and the heart
 - there are different ways to move different people
 - inform and transform
- overcome apprehensions and reservations
 - every audience will have them
 - e.g. I can't change, I shouldn't change, the cost is too great, what will people think?
- authority of the Word of God
 - it's a skeptical world that challenges all authority (because most authority lets us down)
 - if I preach my ideas, I have no authority
 - if I preach the Bible, I have real authority



Introduction, Body and Conclusion



Introduction to a Sermon

- you only have a brief time to capture attention
- you can introduce your sermon with a statement, a quotation or an illustration
- don't rely repeatedly on shock value (although periodically it can be effective)
- your introduction should give people some idea of what you are trying to communicate



The Body of a Sermon

- some complain that an introduction, 3 points and a conclusion is too restrictive and unnatural...
- ... however a sermon with no clear structure is worse!
- after you have done your studying, group your material into a number of different points
- remember: **you are communicating**. A sermon is a decisive thrust of the sword of the Spirit for the accomplishing of a specific purpose. **You are not giving a lecture or showing the results of your Bible study.**



The Body of a Sermon

- again, **You are not giving a lecture or showing the results of your Bible study.**
- “Pulpiteers who are fluent enough to expound the technical data of exegesis and still hold the attention of an average congregation have been and are extremely rare. The information gleaned from exegesis must be put in a format that fits the understanding of the person in the pew...” - MacArthur, p147



The Body of a Sermon - Outline

- the outline provides a structure to your sermon
- a good outline can assist in preaching without notes
- an outline should be communication oriented
 - eg. The Purpose of Spiritual Gifts - this is too academic. It doesn't grab people or speak to their needs
 - eg. Why Do We Need Spiritual Gifts in This Church - this is better!
- for an expository sermon, the outline will reflect the natural divisions in the text
- for a topical sermon, the outline will reflect the organization of the facts you learned while studying



Example of a Bad Outline

- “today I want to address 4 topics”
 - the purpose of prayer
 - the power of prayer
 - the passion of prayer
 - baptism
- make sure your outline “flows” and is not disjointed
- Don’t impose your outline on the text



The Conclusion of a Sermon

- this is not an optional extra
- don't discard if running out of time - prune elsewhere
- don't run through your conclusion at hyperspeed
- learn to cut out material on the fly, or practice so you know precisely how long your sermon is
- don't just rehash your main points
- give your sermon a definite end

- this is your opportunity to tie it all together
- this is your opportunity to make a decisive thrust
- this is your opportunity to make the sermon memorable

- an appropriate illustration can be powerful at this point
- an inappropriate illustration can destroy your sermon



Illustrations



Why Use Illustrations?

- clarify truth
- concretize and personalize truth
- make truth memorable
- demonstrate how a principle works
- back a claim
- create interest
- involve the listener

(Preaching With Purpose, Jay Adams, p94)



Why Use Illustrations? (cont)

- they assist argument
- they help the hearer to remember
- they stimulate the imagination
- they rest the audience
- they provide for various classes of hearers
- they bridge difficult places
- they enforce the truth

(The Preacher and His Preaching, A.P. Gibbs, p307-308)



Sources of Illustrations

- Jesus used illustrations from everyday life - Matt 5-7
- Jesus used historical events - Luke 13:4
- nature (Matt 6:28, 1 Cor 11:14)
- current events (Luke 13:4)
- events in the preacher's experience - never betray a confidence!!!
- “Suppose” illustrations - clearly made up and presented as such
- many can be found if the preacher has wide ranging tastes in reading



More on Illustration Sources

- illustrations should be fresh and applicable to the audience
 - e.g. illustrations from agriculture for a rural audience
- books of canned illustrations aren't usually fresh
- most successful preachers keep an illustrations file



O.T. Illustrations

- the Old Testament provides useful illustrations. However, note the following:
 - in today's Biblically illiterate world, OT illustrations are less likely to drive home the truth
 - the Lord Jesus used illustrations from everyday life, rather than OT illustrations
 - the OT is the authoritative word of God. Jesus used it authoritatively, not just as a source of illustrations for the "real" word of God



More on Illustrations

- illustrations drive home truth, they must not replace it!
- not too long, not too detailed
- can introduce a sermon, introduce a point, add strength to a point, summarize a point or summarize a sermon
- spread throughout the sermon, as appropriate
- an illustration must accomplish a specific purpose
 - use a specific illustration to drive home a specific point
 - don't use a weak illustration because it's time to add an illustration



More about your Audience



Who are You Preaching To?

- young and old, rich and poor, male and female
 - people who are convinced and unconvinced
 - people who are hurting, and who have needs
 - people who are sensitive and who are hardened
 - the strong of faith and the weak of faith
 - the Biblical scholars and the Biblically illiterate
-
- does your message meet the needs of all?
 - are your illustrations and applications applicable to all?



Who are You Preaching To?

- many preachers forget there are women in the audience
- most preachers are male, most audiences are 50% female
- are you addressing their needs?
 - women often think in terms of relationships rather than rules
 - women need special encouragement to use their abilities and gifts
- are your illustrations applicable to women?
- are your applications applicable to today's women?
- The Lord Jesus Christ gave illustrations that were specifically addressed to women (e.g. Luke 15:8,9), and so should we



Fallen Condition Focus

- a recent text on preaching focuses on the “Fallen Condition Focus” (FCF)
- it suggests we must be constantly conscious that our audience consists of fallen humanity
- each person has hurts and needs, and no person has sufficient strength of their own

(Christ-Centered Preaching - Chapell)



Application

- “Just as we have no right using a preaching portion for purposes other than that which God intended it to serve, neither do we have the option to “apply” it, as many do, to any and all circumstances that we may choose. Therefore to preach the Bible faithfully in our time, we must find the equivalent to the original circumstance or situation to which God then (and now) applied the warning, the promise, the principle or the command.”

(Preaching With Purpose, Jay Adams, p133)



Types of Statements

- a sermon would be boring if it just imparts knowledge
- It may help to make statements
- ... and make strong statements
 - no true Christian should ever...
- ... and surprise the audience (occasionally)
 - today I am going to shake your confidence in the Bible...
- ... and ask questions and make people think
 - So what was going through his mind at this point?
- ... and present an image
 - Picture yourself there when Jesus appeared to Thomas...



Practice

- a sermon can be extemporaneous (well prepared, but not with specific words or notes ahead of time)
- if you use notes, practice several times (3 to 5)
 - you will commit most of your sermon to memory
 - you will be able to look at your audience
 - you will have greater confidence in speaking
 - you will know how long your sermon is going to be. (You can go overtime by intent, but there is no excuse for going overtime by accident)
 - some sentences need to be delivered precisely. Make sure you read them rather than relying on memory



Step 4: Preach the Sermon



Use of Voice

- modulate the volume (but don't shout)
 - a whisper can be more effective than a shout
- adjust the pace as appropriate
 - faster or slower, can provide variety or a mental break
- Sometimes use cadence or rhythm in your sentences
 - e.g. "You must accept you are a sinner in need of a Saviour before you can accept the Saviour whom God has sent."
- make use of pauses
 - one of the most important methods of giving emphasis
 - see the example on the next page
 - master the ability to pause! But don't overuse it.
- use of voice does not replace content, but it important in communicating content



Example of Questions and Pauses

- Which statement is the most powerful?
 - Plain: “And so Mary found she was pregnant. Her friends won’t understand. Her parents won’t understand. Joseph won’t understand.”
 - Questions: “And so Mary found she was pregnant. What would her friends say? What would her parents say? Most importantly, what would Joseph say?”
 - Questions and Pauses: “And so Mary found she was... pregnant. What would her friends say? What would her parents say? Most importantly, what would... Joseph say?”
- The content is the same, but rephrasing statements as questions involves the listener
- Adding appropriate pauses heightens the emotional impact.
- Overall, the third statement is much more effective



Use of Body

- The motions of your hands and your body can add to the communication, or distract from it
 - Don't grab the pulpit in a death grip!
 - Don't rub your hands together
 - Don't wave your hands in the air
 - Do use some motion to punctuate your points
- Be aware of what you are doing with your hands while you preach



Use your Eyes

- Look at your audience, not the back wall
- Look at everyone in the audience
- By looking at your audience, you will be able to see their expressions:
 - have you been understood?
 - does this point need to be emphasized?
 - does someone need follow-up?
 - is someone showing interest for the first time?



Precision in Expression

- Do not use the word “things”
- using the word “things” means you couldn’t find the appropriate word to use
- e.g. “there are 5 things God wants you to know about Jesus”
- better would be “There are 5 aspects to Jesus’ character that will change your life”



Preaching without Notes

- preaching without notes allows you to look at your audience
- the basis for preaching without notes is a good outline and a strong understanding of the subject matter
- write down your references – nothing looks worse than a preacher who can't remember his references, or gets them wrong!
- theologically significant thoughts should be written down and read, rather than delivered from memory
 - the risk of misstating yourself is too great
 - The more sensitive the issue, the more important you get it right



Discretion from the Pulpit

- don't betray a confidence
 - "good preaching is when they know who you are talking about without you mentioning names" ← WRONG
- don't talk about that which is personal or embarrassing
- Show discretion when speaking about your own family
- be real with your audience, but don't "bleed all over them"
- don't run down other Christians or denominations
- don't make fun of scientists, politicians or people's occupations
 - Why do people make jokes about civil servants in Ottawa?
- don't tell people how to vote
 - your audience is not homogeneous



Conclusion



Conclusion

- Excellence in Bible teaching doesn't happen by accident!
- gift can be developed
- developing gift is hard work
- teaching gifts must be developed
- those in authority have a responsibility to make sure gift is developed
- the future of strong Biblical churches depends on it



Note

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