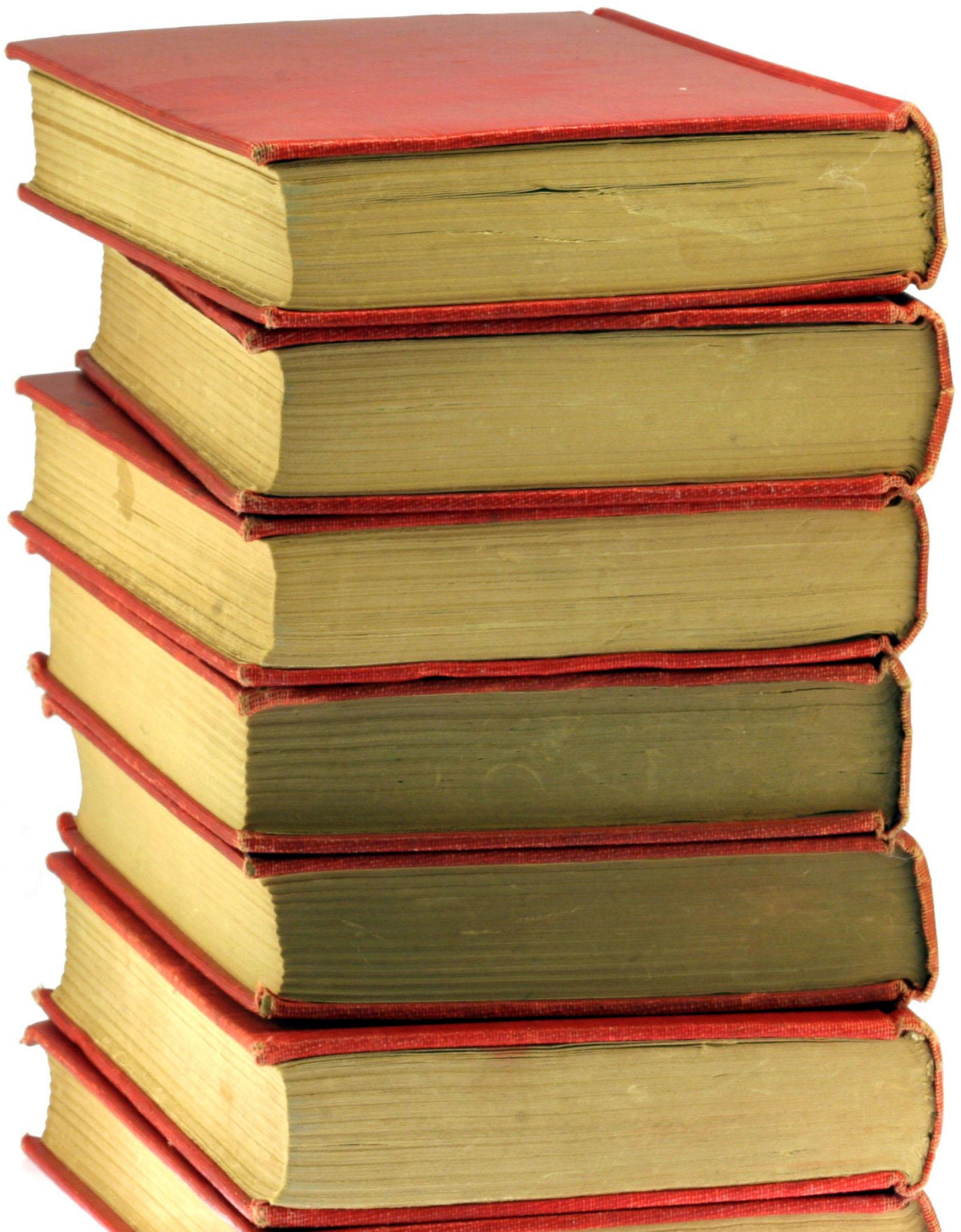


Homiletics

Peter Howard Browne



COURSE OBJECTIVE

To practically equip Bible students with sermon writing and delivery skills, basic public speaking principles and to instill in them Biblical confidence and ministry communication enthusiasm.

RECOMMENDED READING

WIERSBE, W	THE ELEMENTS OF PREACHING	TYNDALE HOUSE
SANSTER, W	THE CRAFT OF SERMON CONSTRUCTION	PICKERING & INGLIS
SUMMERS, W	PUBLIC SPEAKING	PENGUIN BOOKS PRESS
BRAGA, J	HOW TO PREPARE BIBLE MESSAGES	MULTNOMAH
GIBBS, A	THE PREACHER AND HIS PREACHING	WALTERICK PUBLISHERS
BRISCOE, D.S.	FRESH AIR IN THE PULPIT	INTERVARSITY PRESS
McARTHUR, J	EXPOSITORY PREACHING	WORD PUBLISHING
JEARY, T	INSPIRE ANY AUDIENCE	TRADE LIFE BOOKS
PIPER, J	THE SUPREMACY OF GOD IN PREACHING	KINGSWAY PUBL.
HYBELS, BRISCOE	MASTERING CONTEMPORARY PREACHING	MULTNOMAH
LLOYD-JONES, M.D	PREACHERS & PREACHING	HODDER & STOUGHTON
GARLOCK, J	HOMILETICS COURSE, CFNI, DALLAS, TX	

“Let us rejoice with one another that in a world where there are a great many good and happy things for men to do, God has given us the best and the happiest, and made us preachers of His truth.” Phillips Brookes (1877)

“And moreover, because the Preacher was wise he still taught the people knowledge; yes, he pondered and sought out and set in order many proverbs. The Preacher sought to find acceptable words, and what was written was upright – words of truth.” Ecclesiastes 12:9-10

“They read from the Book of the Law of God, making it clear and giving the meaning so that the people could understand what was being read.”

Nehemiah 8:8

NOTE:

1. This course is about learning the rules, letting them break you – and then you breaking the rules.
2. The main thing in preaching is keeping the main thing the main thing – which is delivering the Truth of God in a way that is CRYSTAL CLEAR, remaining ACCESSIBLE TO HEARERS, that HONOURS GOD and INSPIRES PEOPLE.
3. Art speaks of your personality – God does not want you to look like a clone of your favourite preaching guru – so let your (sanctified) personality shine through. Be you and not someone else.
4. Science speaks of *what works and what does not work*. Regardless of where you preach, if you violate the “science”, for example, of voice projection (people can’t hear you) you will not help the cause of the Kingdom.
5. At the end of this manual you will find **a list of words and phrases** that correspond with the **fill-in-the-blank** sections in several of the chapters. This is designed for self-teaching. A test with answers is also provided. You will also find a “crit” sheet – which will help hone your sense of clarity. It is not intended to discourage people, so use it wisely if you are “criting” others.

“This notion of the out-of-dateness of the Bible is utterly absurd, but it is implanted in people’s minds. I regret to say, to a great extent by the clergy. People say that the Bible is a boring book; that it belongs to the past, but they don’t say that about Shakespeare because the people who teach Shakespeare are zealous for Shakespeare.” Malcolm

HOMILETICS: The art and the science of the preparation and delivery of Biblical messages

1. DEFINITION OF HOMILETICS

- Art:** is your creative ability (your personality, you), there is no right or wrong way.
- Science:** relates to what works and what does not work (i.e. principles of communication, use of gestures, eye contact etc.)

2. DEFINITION OF PREACHING

Preaching is a presentation.....

- Of the _____ WORD (JESUS)
From the _____ WORD (BIBLE)
By the _____ WORD (SERMON)

Preaching is the communication of God's _____ , by God's _____ .

3. THE PURPOSE OF PREACHING

- a. to i) _____ the mind
ii) _____ the heart and
iii) _____ the will to apply God's truth
- b. to promote _____
- c. to i) capture _____
ii) clearly _____
iii) convincingly _____
iv) produce _____
- d. to _____ God

NOTE: These goals / purposes are accumulative. To be clear you must also be interesting. To persuade you must be all of the above. To produce behavioural change you must be all the above.

- e. _____ - to get people to decide for Christ.
- f. _____ - to equip, edify, teach, develop
- g. _____ - to correct incorrect doctrines,
address issues / events / crises.

4. PREPARATION FOR PREACHING

1. **SPECIFIC:** ad hoc preparation (sit down and specifically and intentionally prepare for next Sunday).
2. **GENERAL:** a reservoir of knowledge drawn from life experience, background, past sermons (heard, read, preached), music, observing the culture and human behaviour, general study and exposure to information and knowledge.

WARNING: 1. Experienced preachers must guard against the temptation to rely purely on the general preparation source (can result in staleness). 2. Inexperienced preachers need to commit to lifestyle of ongoing study and personal growth. However, they usually appear to deliver “fresher” material because (as a result of an awareness of a limited general source), they focus on specific preparation.

5. ENEMIES OF PREACHING

- a. _____ - the # 1 fear in the world is the fear of public speaking. Accept that nerves are perfectly natural – due to an injection of chemicals into the bloodstream to enable you face a crisis. *Antidote:* acknowledge your strength – the Holy Spirit. Prepare your material (“know-how” takes care of fear). Arrive early – familiarize yourself with the building, the pulpit, microphones, assess your audience. Slow down your breathing – take a few breaths just before you get up to speak. Slow down your introduction – fear makes you speed up.

- b. _____ - watch your motive. Why are you preaching? Is it to impress? Who is to get the glory – you or God? Egotistical preachers bless nobody (except themselves!) which undermines the very purpose of preaching.
- c. _____ - your audience is brighter than you think. Take time to prepare your material, think it through, and rehearse your material. Make sure that your notes are “user friendly” – they must be your asset not your enemy.
- d. _____ - “Blessed is the brief preacher, for he / she shall be invited again.” Your sermon does not have to be eternal to be immortal. Don’t think you can hold a crowd because someone else can – capacities, anointings, experience levels, relational bridges with the audience differ.

WIERSBE: *“Better that our people get a hold of one or two meaty truths and put them to good use, than that they become lost in a maze of sermonic material and have nothing to show for it.”*

6. THE 3 MOST IMPORTANT ELEMENTS OF SERMONS

Your sermon, if it is to be *effective*, needs to exhibit:

- i) a memorable structure
- ii) vivid illustrations and
- iii) the touch of God (the anointing)

Success is measured:

Not in volume or emotive delivery but in the answer of the following:

‘How much did your audience take away with them? Can your audience, in one sentence, summarise your message. Was God honoured?’

A. MEMORABLE STRUCTURE

We want our audience to be able to follow our train of thoughts as we move them to a definite goal or climax.

Structure is necessary because:

1. It is the _____ which helps the preacher gets where he wants to go.
2. It is to the sermon what the human _____ is to the body.
3. It disciplines the _____ to _____ his / her thoughts and prevents a sermonic traffic jam.

- NOTE:
- a. Submit yourself to homiletical rules until you discover and develop your own unique approach.
 - b. Organisation in a sermon must be a servant and not a master.

WIERSBE: *“What a marvelous outline!” is not the highest compliment a preacher can receive. Far better for us to hear, “You showed us the Lord today, and He met our need.”*

B. VIVID ILLUSTRATIONS

Jesus, our preacher exemplified, made extensive use of illustrations. We call them parables, e.g. The Good Samaritan.

1 . The Purpose of Illustrations

- a. to _____ the truth of a message.
- b. to _____ that truth to the heart.
- c. to _____ the will to respond.
- d. to _____ a picture in the mind.
- e. to _____ stimulate interest and identification.

2 . The source of illustrations

- a. **Your own life:** you have already lived out more illustrations that you could ever possibly use.
- b. **The Media:** newspapers, magazines, TV, films, academic works, surveys, statistical material and on and on.....
- c. **Other sermons:** always quote your source, never pas it off as your own creation (that's deceitful).
- d. **Observing:** life, people, animals, the planet, customs, culture, idiosyncrasies, sport.
- e. **The Bible:** events/actions/attitudes/characters/other passages which reinforce/clarify/explain your point.

3 . Cautions

- a. Make sure your illustration is _____ .
- b. Make sure they are _____ . Check sources / facts.
- c. Be sensitive to the people e.g. suicide story.
- d. Never base your sermon on an illustration, no matter how good it is. Base it on the_____.
- e. Never relate as your own, an illustration from the life of another person. It is dishonest and could embarrass your credibility.
- f. Avoid books of illustrations – chances are people have already used the illustration on your audience.
- g. Strive to be _____.

C. THE TOUCH OF GOD

A sermon without the touch of God upon it is merely a talk. It may even be a good sermon, but it will never be a great sermon.

How do we experience the touch of God on your sermons?

1. Realise you are merely the_____, privileged to carry the_ _____.
2. Recognise the need of God's_____.
3. Do your "homework" – live a spiritually deep life.

WIERSBE: *“The message must be a living entity. It must grow out of the soil of our soul, and its roots must come from deep within your own experience and the study of God’s Word.”*

FREDERICK BEUCHER: *“Often, I am afraid, the Church is a place where preachers preach not out of their depths, but out of their shallows.”*

WIERSBE: *“It is not enough to have the authority of the Word behind the sermon; one must also evidence the power of a life lived under the authority of the Word. The pulpit is no place for borrowed blessings. They must flow out of the Minister’s fellowship with God in order to be fresh and exciting.”*

4. Make preaching an act of _____. WIERSBE: “If our preaching is an act of worship, we will want to give of our best. We will also seek to honour Him, not glorify ourselves or try to show people how learned or clever we are.”
5. Ask the _____ to influence your thoughts, gestures, ideas, presence in the pulpit.

John Stott on Preaching

Preachers are still the key people; the church is always a reflection of the preaching it receives. It is not an exaggeration to say that the low standards of Christian living throughout the world are due more than anything else to the low standards of Christian preaching and teaching.

If we (as preachers) can recover true expository preaching as being not only exegesis but an exposition and application of the Word of God, then congregations will learn it from us and go and do the same thing themselves. We need to help our congregations to grasp and use the hermeneutical principles that we are using ourselves. We need to be so careful in the development of our evangelical hermeneutic that the congregation says, “Yes, I see it. That is what the text means, and it couldn't mean anything else.” The worst kind of preaching allows people to say, “Well, I am sorry, I don't agree with you. I think you're twisting Scripture.”

HOMILETICS: The preparation and delivery of Biblical messages

TYPES OF SPEECHES

1. **Formal:** written out, memorized, prepared, often read out, seemingly less animated.
2. **Extemporaneous:** prepared in content and form but delivered naturally (e.g. news, political speeches) as though it is impromptu. Appears spontaneous. Aim for this type of sermon delivery.
3. **Impromptu:** prepared on the spur of the moment, improvised, ad libbing. This is the least encouraged type of speech.

TYPES OF SERMONS

1. **Textual:** a sermon in which the main divisions of the sermon are based upon the Text. (The text itself provides the outline e.g. 2 Thess 3:3)
2. **Topical:** a sermon in which the main divisions of the sermon are based upon the topic (subject) rather than one text (e.g. “Reasons for unanswered prayer”).
3. **Textual – Topical:** a sermon in which the main divisions are suggested in the Text but are developed by the preacher (e.g. The Good Samaritan).
4. **Expositiorial:** a textual sermon which is generally based on a larger passage which is analysed in greater detail. (Could be one verse but it is gone into in great detail).

THE STRUCTURE OF A SERMON

The structure of a sermon is what the skeleton is to the human body.

A sermon is a list of ideas you intend to convey. Your sermon is ONE BIG IDEA comprising smaller ideas which add up to it.

BIG IDEA = LITTLE IDEA + LITTLE IDEA + LITTLE IDEA

e.g. Apples = yellow apples + red apples + green apples

The person listening needs to leave with your list of ideas.

TITLE

1. Tells your audience where you're going e.g. "*Developing a passion for Jesus*"
2. Promotes _____, _____, stimulates _____, and arouses _____.
3. Keep it simple.

INTRODUCTION

Tells the audience what you're going to say, prepares their minds and secures their interest (light a fire).

BODY

Discuss the issue at hand (tell them what you promised you'd tell them in the introduction and the title).

CONCLUSION

Wrap up – tell them what you said you'd tell them. Don't introduce new ideas. Your conclusion should be brief. *Never* say, "and in conclusion...." unless you *really* intend to conclude!!!

MEMORABLE STRUCTURE

Tips:

1. Use the same parts of speech for your list of ideas e.g. all nouns, verbs, adjectives.
2. Keep them more or less similar in length e.g. "Position, stand and see" (2 Chronicles 20:17)
3. Ensure they are balanced in terms of importance. Don't list trivial things with important things.

RULES OF DIVISIONS

1. _____ of the subject. They must *add up* to cover the subject. They must deliver the promise you made in the title. For example, a sermon about apples: Apples are yellow + red + green – there are no other colours. A sermon on faith: Faith = saving faith + healing faith + mountain moving faith.
2. _____ - they must not overlap. They must *stand on their own* in their own right e.g. red apples + dark apples, are not mutually exclusive categories (red is dark). Why have 2 points when this really is only one point?
3. _____ - must be based on one point e.g. apples are divided on the basis of colour (not red apples + sour apples + expensive apples - here the differentiation is colour, taste and cost – 3 different themes in their own right requiring separate handling.

“Categories of gender in the congregation”: male & female.

“Ages of people in congregation”: young & old

TREATMENT OF THE DIVISIONS

Each division (major point or LITTLE IDEA) must contain the following:

1. An _____ (who, what, where & why – what is actually being said here?)
2. An _____ (create a picture in the mind, clarify the explanation)
3. An _____ (what does this mean to the hearer, how does it affect them. This is the place of challenge).

TRANSITIONAL SENTENCES (T.S)

This is the statement that links each division to the next.

SERMON OUTLINE

PLACE:

DATE:

TITLE: BIG IDEA

TEXT:

INTRO: LIGHT A FIRE / CAPTURE INTEREST

T.S.

1. FIRST LITTLE IDEA

(EXPL) CONTEXT
(ILLUS) CLARIFICATION
(APPL) CHALLENGE

T.S.

2. SECOND LITTLE IDEA

(EXPL) CONTEXT
(ILLUS) CLARIFICATION
(APPL) CHALLENGE

T.S.

3. THIRD LITTLE IDEA

(EXPL) CONTEXT
(ILLUS) CLARIFICATION
(APPL) CHALLENGE

4. CONCLUSION

SERMON OUTLINE

PLACE:

DATE:

TITLE:

TEXT:

T.S.

1.

(EXPL)

(ILLUS)

(APPL)

T.S.

2.

(EXPL)

(ILLUS)

(APPL)

T.S.

3.

(EXPL)

(ILLUS)

(APPL)

CONCLUSION:

HOMILETICS: The preparation and delivery of Biblical messages

TOOLS FOR PREACHING

1. Bibles. Keep as many translations as possible. Some versions clarify verses which seem obscure in other versions.
2. Concordances Strong's is probably the best – helps you derive Hebrew and Greek meanings of words. Many computer programmes are available.
3. Commentaries Don't place too much emphasis on commentaries – they are useful to explain obscure verses, but are really just someone else's opinion.
4. Books As per recommended reading list and others. Leaders are readers and readers are leaders!

MISCELLANEOUS TIPS FOR PREACHING

WARNING:

These tips can be a blessing to you – removing obstacles that prevent people really “hearing” you - or they can become a noose of performance around your neck.

At the end of the day we want the folk to see and hear God, not clever communicators.

1. **Eye contact:** it is crucial as...

- a. It _____ the importance of the audience.
- b. It _____ the attention of the audience.

Eye contact no-no's:

- a. Failure to make eye contact (don't preach at the ceiling or a spot on the wall) Note: fear is often the cause – see Jer 1:8
- b. Looking at the front row only (the rest of the audience will not feel included).
- c. Looking at one person only.
- d. Looking at your notes continually.

2. Gestures

- a. Keep them _____ (audience size / point being made)
- b. Avoid _____ (distraction)
- c. Avoid _____ (schoolmaster)

3. Dress

Dress is relevant because the message (sermon) is conveyed by the *totality* of who you are, how you are perceived and what you say.

- a. Neat, clean
- b. Appropriate for the audience, occasion
- c. Distraction: avoid flashy clothing.

4. Voice and related issues

Your voice is the chief vehicle used to present your material.

- a. Volume – will depend on the size of your audience, hall, pa system etc.
Your volume must not be a distraction / irritation (too soft or too loud). Use volume creatively.
- b. Pronunciation – the act of pronouncing or uttering, articulation.
 1. Clarity – people need to know what you're talking about.
 2. Speed – speaking too quickly can affect your pronunciation.
 3. Familiarity – use words your audience will understand and relate to (e.g. teens and business people)
 4. Naturalness – don't (EVER, EVER, EVER) assume a "pulpit persona" – be yourself but strive to do your best in terms of articulation, pronunciation and projection.
- c. Vocabulary – your choice of words.
 1. Appropriate – use words your audience will understand.
 2. Familiar – use words you understand or you could use them out of context.
 3. Enrichment – be committed to personal growth in the area of your language command. Suggested exercise: Reader's Digest – "It pays to enrich your word power". Extensive use of dictionaries, especially when reading and you stumble on words with which you are not au fait. Crossword puzzles.
- d. Microphone craft
 1. Arrive early and familiarise yourself with the pa system, mic 's etc.
 2. Introduce yourself to the sound technician – ask him specifics, like where is the best place to clip the mic, etc. Tell him how you want your levels.
 3. Regard the mic as a friend – it is not an enemy.

4. Do not tap the mic, or worse, blow into it and say “is this on?”
5. Be professional – do not apologise for your ignorance of mic craft – don’t even admit it! It distracts your audience, which is the last thing you want to occur before you even begin.
6. Adjust your mic to the correct height before you begin!!

e. Humour

1. Keep it appropriate.
2. Be careful when using humour in a foreign culture (what is funny here may be highly offensive there – the opposite may also apply).
3. Don’t use it against your host in a destructive way.
4. It must add to the sermon content – it must not be a disjointed comedy side-show.
5. It needs to be part of who you are – if you are not *naturally* funny outside the pulpit, don’t try to be so in the pulpit.

f. Posture

1. A confident stride is better than a timid slouch.
2. Shoulders back, stand up straight, don’t slouch, and don’t lean.
3. Incline your body slightly towards the audience – it implies an interest in them.

Assignment:

1. Using (2 Thess 3:3) write a Textual outline
 2. Write a Topical outline on “Reasons for Unanswered Prayer”
- Note 1: Don’t write many pages, just give an outline with key words
- Note 2: Use the EXACT SAME format as per page 10.
Actually write the words: Place: Date: Title etc etc.

**HOMILETICS: The preparation and delivery of
Biblical messages**

FIVE EVANGELICAL LEADERS

CHRISTOPHER CATHERWOOD

THE ESSENCE OF PREACHING

The best teachers, John Stott has written, are “those who remain students all their lives”. The study of Scripture is thus a primary responsibility for the preacher. A minister’s study of the Bible should always be comprehensive –Stott reads the whole Bible every year, following the Murray McCheyne schedule recommended to him by Martyn Lloyd-Jones. Such study should be open-minded; one’s own prejudices should be put aside to receive what the Bible is really saying. It should also be expectant; the Bible can freshen the reader and banish spiritual staleness.

A preacher should also be in touch with the real world, as Stott has said, the best preachers are always diligent pastors. (Some feel that he made a mistake when he left the full-time pastorate of All Souls in 1970). They should listen to their congregations and ensure that they **read widely in contemporary secular literature** to see what people around are thinking without in any way compromising themselves with the spirit of the age.

Thus, in 1974 John Stott set up a reading and study group to examine key current topics. He often **consults with specialists** before preaching on major contemporary issues, to ensure his facts are correct, and that he is aware of the different sides in the debate. Those who visit his study have seen his **filing system**, one that is legendary in its thoroughness. He blocks off **special time for study** (while recognizing that this might not always be possible for hard-pressed ministers with no pastoral assistance).

At All Souls he saw to it that the talents of his entire congregation were used, which helped to free him from administrative chores that distracted him from his more important duties. Thirty years ago he bought a cottage in Wales where he goes to read and write and sometime to relax with his favourite hobbies – orthinology and photography.

To Stott, in Surgeon's words, **"to be unprepared is unpardonable presumption."** In his book, Stott gives details of how a good preacher should prepare himself for a sermon. **Personal preparation** is essential. He has, he writes, "always found it helpful to do as much of my sermon preparation as possible on my knees, with the Bible open before me, in prayerful study." Then the preacher must **meditate on what the text meant then** and how it **applies today**, and what the passage's "dominant thought" is. A sermon, as opposed to a lecture, **"aims to convey only one major message."** Structure is also essential, as long as it arises naturally from the Text. The language of the sermon should be as "simple and clear as possible."

Above all, **"he who preaches Christ must know Christ."** What one **does** is *as important* as what one **says**; "the practice of preaching cannot be divorced from the person of the preacher," and consistent Christian living, in loyalty to Christ, is the preacher's "prior responsibility." **Sincerity is vital**, and Stott, especially in his early days, urged lay friends in the congregation to be as honest as possible with him as to the content and effectiveness of his preaching.

As Christians, we should, he believes, **"feel what we say."** Preaching should involve both mind and heart, and Stott agrees with Martyn Lloyd-Jones that it should be **"logic on fire."** True "preaching is never superficial activity; it wells up out of our depths." It should, in Newton's words, **"break a hard heart and ... heal a broken heart."** The preacher is a **humble man**, dependent on the "power of the Holy Spirit ... Only Jesus Christ by His Holy Spirit can open blind eyes ... give life to the dead and rescue slaves from satanic bondage."

3. _____ - a) Ask the Holy Spirit to lead you and guide you into all truth.
- b) Read the passage over and over (50 times is not unrealistic!)
- c) Ask questions: Who? What? Where? Why? How? So what? What is the context of this verse in the chapter / letter? What is the historical condition of the time?
- d) Where does this leave your Y2K+ hearers and yourself?
- e) Develop an eye for main characters, interactions, cause-and-effect statements, memory for other cross-referencing Scriptures that add to the passage at hand.

UNDERSTANDING CONTEXT

DEFINITION

The parts of a written or spoken communication which precede or follow a word, sentence or passage and affect its meaning.”

“The surrounding environment, circumstances, and facts which help give a total picture of something.”

CHAPTERS AND VERSES

We cannot rely on the standard chapter and paragraph divisions in our Bibles. “Many instances of unfortunate chapter and paragraph breaks occur and cause the reader to miss the point or obscure the full significance of a writer’s meaning.” (John MacArthur). e.g. (2 Cor 7:1) – see what the “therefore” is there – for!!

The context of the verse is the chapter, which finds its context in the book / letter, which finds its context in whichever Testament it is in.

Wrenching a verse _____ of context is a cardinal sin! A text without a context is a pretext! (an excuse to preach your own ideas).

STEPS TO DETERMINING CONTEXT

1. Understand that a text does not exist in isolation or in a vacuum.
2. Understand the syntax (“the discipline that examines how words, phrases and clauses are joined together”) and the structure of a passage lie at the very heart of true expository preaching.
3. Understand that each passage has its own unique flow or structure.
4. Understand that the passage, chapter and entire book has a central theme or argument which the author is communicating.
5. Understand the need for careful study of exegetical (“ studies of individual words”) and syntactical material. This is time consuming and at times, tedious.

DETERMINING THE CENTRAL IDEA OF A PASSAGE

John Mac Arthur: “Our task is not to create our own message.” It is rather to communicate the author’s message. Our task is not to create a central theme, but rather to: 1. find the author’s central theme, 2. build a message around that theme and, 3. make that theme the central point of all we have to say.”

EXEGETING AN ENTIRE LETTER / BOOK

Ephesians 4:1 begins thus: “As a prisoner of the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received.”

Preachers make a grave mistake if they view that verse in isolation from the rest of the letter.

PRACTICAL STEPS

1. Research the recipients of the letter.
2. Discover the defining characteristics of the culture in which they were immersed.
3. How did that culture affect the church?
4. Identify the main themes that run through the letter.
5. Are said themes arranged in a specific way?

In response to the above you may discover that, for instance,

1. The recipients are Christian believers in a place called Ephesus.
2. Ephesus was a commercial and religious center of Asia Minor, famous for the Temple of Dianna. The practice of magic was a cornerstone of the local economy. Paul's ministry there seriously affected the occult industry. See the uproar in Acts 19:17-20, 23-24.
3. Potentially the temptation into old occult practices was strong because of possible persecution. The culture was hedonistic, materialistic and occult-focused. The average Christian needed to know **who they were in Christ**.
4. a. Chapters 1-3 POSITION / WEALTH e.g. 1:7-18
b. Chapters 4-6 PRACTICE / WALK e.g. 5:1,25
c. SIT (POSITION), WALK (CHOICES), STAND (WARFARE)
5. Paul is saying: "Before I tell you **how** to behave (ch 4-6), let me tell you **who** you are (ch 1-3). Isn't that just like the Father? I can easily (with His strength) pull off ch 4-6 **because** of the truth of my **identity** in ch 1-3.

Assignment:

1. Read through the Letter to the Romans
2. Describe the main idea in each chapter
3. What are the natural classifications in the following two sections:
Chapters 1-11 and chapters 12-16?
4. How does Romans 1:17 fit into the context of the entire letter?
5. Romans 8:12-17 is possible because which verses in the other chapters?

General Comments on Preaching

Preaching is God's idea:

- In His wisdom God has chosen the foolish things to confound the wisdom of the wise.
- He has chosen preaching as the tool of announcement that His Kingdom has come.
- He has not changed His mind on this.
- Jesus came preaching the Kingdom of God. (Lk 12: 14) He sent His disciples out to preach and cast out demons – in that order.

Preaching is the primary task of the Church:

- The church has been commissioned with preaching the Good News.
- It's the preaching of the Gospel that saves men and women.
- When you show a Jesus film, it's not the film that gets them saved; it's the 5 minute sermon at the end.
- It is the role of the modern preacher to help restore the place of preaching in the hearts and minds of men.
- Paul reminds Timothy to PREACH the Word.
- We are not to make an apology for this commisioning to preach.
- (Acts 17:23) READ – "I am going to proclaim to you."

There is power in preaching:

Things happen when people preach - lives change - especially when you preach a transforming Gospel!

Martyn Lloyd-Jones: "Preaching addresses us in such a manner as to bring us under judgement; and it deals with us in such a way that we feel our whole life is involved, and we go out saying, 'I can never go back and live just as I did before. This has done something to me; it has made a difference in me. I am a different person as a result of listening to this.'"

Epictetus: Philosopher – "The philosopher's lecture room is a surgery. When you go away you ought to have felt not pleasure but pain, for when you come in something is wrong with you. One man has put his shoulder out, another has an abscess, another a headache. Am I the surgeon then to sit down and give you a string of fine sentences that you may praise me and then go away – just as you came in? Tell me', he says in a challenge to a philosopher – and an equally good challenge to the preacher – Tell me, who after hearing your lecture became anxious about or reflected upon himself? Or who as he went out of the room said, "The philosopher put his finger upon my faults. I must not behave that way again?"

(Jer 23:29) "Is not my word like fire, declares the Lord, "and like a hammer that breaks a rock in pieces?"

- Lives are changed.
- Minds are liberated.
- Worldviews are corrected.
- Realities established.

- Preaching, like worship is a *political act*. Unless our preaching is a steady diet of psychological pep talks and soothing how to's.
- When we preach, we say *we have no King but Jesus*.
- We'll give Caesar his taxes but God gets the worship.
- Acts of the Apostles – the religious leaders wanted to shut up the apostles because they were “*filling Jerusalem with their teaching and were turning the city upside down.*”
- The world has tried to muzzle preachers throughout the history of the church. Stephen, the first martyr was murdered because of a sermon he preached. *There is power in preaching.*

Preaching is a holy privilege:

Phillips Brookes (1877) “*Let us rejoice with one another that in a world where there are a great many good and happy things for men to do, God has given us the best and the happiest, and made us preachers of His truth.*”

(2 Tim 4:1) READ Paul writes with holy sobriety – he winds up his fist: “*In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of His appearing and His Kingdom, I give you this charge ... PLANT CHURCHES? No. GOVERN DILIGENTLY! No!*” “*I give you this charge – charge is no small thing – it is a trust given, a responsibility of serious proportions – PREACH THE WORD!!*”

- This is how we must approach preaching.
- We cannot be flippant and casual.
- This is holy ground and we should treat it like it is!

Passionless preaching is unforgivable:

Passionless-anything is unforgivable in the extreme!

- Is there a *more blasphemous* way to live?
- Some of the greatest, most passionate preachers came from the shores of places that are now spiritually dark. What caused the change? They stopped preaching the Word with power and authority.
- Passion has everything to do with conviction, not personality.
- Passion has to do with *enthusiasm* = GK: “en-theos”.
- Passionless living has absolutely no place in the life of any Christian anywhere!!

Richard Baxter: The Reformed Pastor: “*I preach’d as never sure to preach again, and as a dying man to dying men.*”

- Preachers ought to be gripped by the Text.
- Preachers ought to be like men with fire shut up in their bones.
- If it grips the preacher it will grip the audience.

Piper: Scientist Charles Meisner re **Albert Einstein’s** attitude to organised religion and preaching 50 years ago: “I do see the design of the universe as essentially a religious question – that is, one should have some kind of respect and awe for the whole business. It’s very magnificent and shouldn’t be taken for granted.

John Piper says, “Einstein must have looked at what the preachers said about God and felt that they were blaspheming. He had seen much more majesty than they

had ever imagined and they were just not talking about the real thing. They did not show a proper respect for the Creator of the universe.”

Elders govern from the pulpit through preaching:

Paul writes to **Timothy** and to **Titus** and in both he says elders should teach.

In both those letters Paul tells the 2 men that the job they are there to do will only be done with sound teaching and courageous preaching.

The mechanisms by which the Kingdom will be established by them **is preaching and teaching.**

In fact, *Paul cannot conceive of an elder who does not teach.* Why?

- ✓ Because preaching is one of the key places where an elder exercises authority.
- ✓ Because the pulpit is the place where direction is set, discipline is exercised and the sheep fed, watered and pastored.
- ✓ Because preaching is a father’s role and elders are fathers in the house.

Some of *the greatest breakthroughs* we have had in the past, and *increases in momentum* had to do with a fresh burst of anointed preaching from the elders.

The compelling power of a lived sermon:

(2 Tim 3:10-17) Gandhi: *“My life is my message, my message is my life.”* (Acts 8:12)

- *“But when they believed Phillip as he preached the Good News of the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptised.”* There is no shortcut here either.

In fact, your life is *a more widely heard sermon than you think.* Paul called the saints *“epistles read by many”*. So are the preachers – read by the congregation and the community.

WIERSBE: *“The message must be a living entity. It must grow out of the soil of our soul, and its roots must come from deep within your own experience and the study of God’s Word.”* *“It is not enough to have the authority of the Word behind the sermon; one must also evidence the power of a life lived under the authority of the Word. The pulpit is no place for borrowed blessings. They must flow out of the preacher’s fellowship with God in order to be fresh and exciting.”*

FREDERICK BEUCHER: *“Often, I am afraid, the Church is a place where preachers preach not out of their depths, but out of their shallows.”*

Preparation honours God and inspires people:

(Eccles 12:9-10) *“And moreover, because the Preacher was wise he still taught the people knowledge; yes, he pondered and sought out and set in order many proverbs. The Preacher sought to find acceptable words, and what was written was upright – words of truth.”*

- **Personal Preparation** – issue here is Credibility: He was WISE – so people listened to him.
- **Material Preparation:** he PONDERED, and SOUGHT OUT, and SET IN ORDER many proverbs.

(Neh 8:8) *“They read from the Book of the Law of God, making it clear and giving the meaning so that the people could understand what was being read.”*

- MAKING IT CLEAR (Col 4:4)“Pray that I may proclaim it clearly as I should.”
- GIVING THE MEANING
- SO THE PEOPLE COULD UNDERSTAND

Dan Baumann in Leadership Handbooks of Practical Theology:

“Quality preaching does not happen by accident. It is the result of hard work, creative thinking, careful research, and a dependence upon the Holy Spirit. In other words, there is no shortcut to homiletical excellence.”

Martyn Lloyd-Jones – The Act of Preaching

1. **The whole personality of the preacher must be involved.** Phillip Brookes: “Preaching is truth mediated through personality.” Body, mind, emotions. Demosthenes: he was asked what the first great essential in oratory was; his reply was “Action!” Second? “Action”. Third? “Action!”
2. **Authority.** Never apologetic. He is there to declare something, as an ambassador of God Most High!
3. **Freedom.** Not too tied to his notes. Needs to be open to the inspiration of the moment and of the Holy Spirit – Who is able to do whatever He pleases.
4. **He derives something from the congregation.** There is an element of exchange in true preaching. The eagerness and responsiveness of the audience lifts the preacher.
5. **Seriousness.** He is dealing with serious matters – it is not a light and trivial thing. He is speaking to them from God and about God; he is speaking about the state of their hearts. Richard Baxter: “I preached as never sure to preach again and as a dying man to dying men.”
6. **Liveliness:** The preacher must never be boring or dull. Lloyd-Jones: “There is something radically wrong with dull and boring preachers. How can a man be dull handling such themes? This is the most interesting, the most thrilling, the most absorbing subject in the universe; and the idea that this can be presented in a dull manner makes me seriously doubt whether the men who are guilty of this dullness have ever really understood the doctrine they claim to believe and which they advocate.”
7. **Zeal:** He must always convey the idea that he is himself gripped by what he is saying. “If he has not been gripped nobody else will be.” Lloyd-Jones: “He is so moved and thrilled by it himself that he wants everybody else to share in this. He is anxious to help them, anxious to tell them the truth of God. So he does it with energy, with zeal and with this obvious concern for people.” Pastor in England preaching on Jeremiah (“fire shut up in his bones”). “The good man was talking about fire as if he were sitting on an iceberg. He was actually dealing with the theme of fire in a detached and cold manner; he was a living denial of what he was saying, or perhaps I should say, a dead denial.” Journalist: 2 speakers. “The difference between the two speakers was this; the first spoke as an advocate, the second as a witness.”

8. **Warmth:** He must never be clinical. He must be moved by what he is saying. Employ heart and head. He must have rapport with the people.
9. **Urgency:** The Gospel cannot be postponed. Lloyd-Jones: "There is no place for calm, cool scientific detachment in these matters."
10. **Persuasiveness:** Paul – "we beseech you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God."
11. **Pathos:** This should derive from your love for the people. Richard Cecil: "To love to preach is one thing, to love those to whom we preach is quite another." Lloyd-Jones: "Can a man see himself as a damned sinner without emotion? Can a man look into hell without emotion? Can a man listen to the thunderings of the Law and feel nothing? Or conversely, can a man really contemplate the love of God in Christ Jesus and feel no emotion? The whole position is utterly ridiculous."
12. **Power:** "If there is no power, it is not preaching. True preaching, after all, is God acting." (1 Thess 1:5) "Preaching is theology coming through a man who is on fire. The chief end of preaching is to give men and women a sense of God and His presence." Lloyd-Jones: "I can forgive a preacher almost anything if he gives me a sense of God, if he gives me something for my soul, if he gives me a sense of that, though he is inadequate himself, he is handling something which is very great and glorious, if he gives me some dim glimpse of the majesty and the glory of God, the love of Christ my Saviour, and the magnificence of the Gospel. If he does this, I am his debtor and I am profoundly grateful to him."

HOMILETICS: The preparation and delivery of Biblical messages

1. PREACH ACCURATELY – “Scratch People Where They Itch”

“All preaching involves a ‘so what?’” A lecture on the archaeology of Egypt as interesting as it might be is not a sermon. A sermon touches life. It demands practical application. One way to bore your audience is to tell them things they *do not need to hear*. Or tell them so many things that they never know exactly what it was you said anyway!!

HOW DO YOU PREACH ACCURATELY?

- A. Know where people “live” – what are their fears, hopes, dreams, pains, joys.
- B. Draw them “imaginatively around your preparation desk.”
- C. Understand the times – what are the collective issues facing all South Africans (or wherever you live), now? These, undoubtedly, will affect them too.
- D. Plan well in advance. Last minute preparation isn’t really worth a minute because it’s probably not going to be fresh.

2. PREACH POSITIVELY

- A. Don’t focus on the negative continually.
- B. Focus on the positive as much as possible.
 - Which of the above statements is a positive statement? A or B?
 - Why?
- C. Write a sermon title on Hell: negatively and then positively
 1. _____
 2. _____

3. PREACH PASSIONATELY

Passion is about believing deeply, being convinced and persuaded. If it does not live in you, it probably won’t live in them. If you are to light a fire with your preaching, it needs to be lit in you first.

JOHN PIPER: *“Spurgeon was anything but an intellectual elitist. There has scarcely been a pastor with more popular appeal. His messages, however, were full of God and the atmosphere was charged with the presence of awesome realities.”*

4. PREACH CREATIVELY

The _____ your predictability, the _____
your _____ .

The _____ your predictability, the _____ your
_____ .

- Howard Hendricks

We tend to be predictable and dull, not because we want to, necessarily, but usually because we didn't take the time to think enough ahead in advance. Sing – preach – sing – go home. Who said it had to be like that? Shout at the people and sit down. Is that preaching? Is a lecture the best way for people to learn? Get creative – you serve a creative God!

5. PREACH AUTHORITATIVELY

HADDON ROBINSON: *“Preaching with authority means you've done your homework. You know your people's struggles and hurts. But you also know the Bible and theology. You can explain the Bible clearly. Preachers aren't being authoritarian when they point to the Bible. When Billy Graham explains: “The Bible says ...” he's relying, not on his own authority, but another – God's Word – and he shows how that authority makes sense.”*

ACTS 4:13 – the authority of the disciples was rooted in their _____ with Jesus.

Write the verse here:

ACTS 17:1-3 – Paul was authoritative because he was _____.

Authority and boldness are not just a question of _____ - it is a deep, inner conviction of what you believe and in Whom you believe.

2 TIMOTHY 2:15 – Paul was _____ because he knew the Word and therefore was not _____.

6. PREACH FOR A VERDICT

What a *shocking* – unimaginable, irrational - thing it is to lead a church, a cell group, to preach a sermon and never expect any fruit from your labours!

Preach for a verdict. John Maxwell says, “Take the order!” Imagine a waiter explaining all the specials but then never actually taking the order?!! Call the people to something.

Expect your **ORTHODOXY** (Latin: ortho – “straight”, doxy – “teaching” to result in **ORTHO** (“straight”) **PRAXIS** (“practice”)

WILLIAM H WILLIMON: "About three weeks ago a woman came out after the service and said to me, " I know you would never want to hurt anyone with what you said, but I was really hurt by the sermon today." Suddenly, I caught myself thinking, "Why would you ever think we wouldn't want to hurt you?" I'm sorry; the material demands it! The thing that makes preaching tough is not simply how to have a coherent thought within 20 minutes or how to modulate the voice. The hard thing is Jesus! If we had something like Disneyland to preach, it would be easy. But we have Jesus to preach, and that makes bringing that to speech - with our language and culture and our sin – just really hard."

MYTHS PREACHERS PERPETUATE

FIRST MYTH: “WINGING IT IS ENOUGH”

Your confidence or experience could easily become your greatest enemy. Some feel preparation is an obstacle to the move of the Spirit. Nothing could be further from the truth. Without preparation we have a lot of shallow preachers preaching, not out of their depths but out of their shallows. And worse, preaching simplistic sermons that have not been adequately thought through. The source of this myth is an incorrect exegesis of Mark 13:5-11. The context there (“in that hour”) is one of persecution. When this happens you will be given words to speak by the Holy Spirit. You can therefore go with the flow and relax. But this passage is definitely not speaking about preaching in general.

2 TIMOTHY 2:15

1. **BE DILIGENT:** “Constant in effort to accomplish what is undertaken, attentive, industrious, done with painstaking care and perseverance.”
2. **TO PRESENT YOURSELF TO GOD:** Not approved in the sense that He will love you more and you must earn brownie points, but in the sense that you will make yourself more useful to Him because you have presented yourself to Him as an act of worship.

3. **A WORKER WHO NEED NOT BE ASHAMED:** “Affected or influenced by shame, feeling insecure, fearing shame or ridicule.” Principle: the level of shame is directly proportional to the level of study and knowledge of the Word. (Hosea 4:6) “My people perish (are ashamed) through lack of knowledge”.
4. **A WORKER WHO RIGHTLY DIVIDES THE WORD OF TRUTH:** Divides – “dealing righteously with a thing, cutting it straight.” We could say rightly “exegeting” the Word, digging for its deeper meaning.

2 TIMOTHY 3:14-17

The purpose of learning, of wisdom, of instruction is seen in v 17:

‘That you may be _____.’ “ GK = _____.
 You have what you need for spiritual service. You’re thoroughly equipped.

GOD WILL NOT PUT WORDS IN YOUR MOUTH IF YOU HAVE NOT STUDIED AND PREPARED, UNLESS YOU ARE IN A CONTEXT OF PERSECUTION.

2 TIMOTHY 4:2

“Be ready” is a Greek military term: “to stay _____, to stay on _____.
 Ready for what? Ready to “preach, convince, to rebuke, to exhort.”

SECOND MYTH: “ORDER = TRADITIONALISM = DEATH”

Discipline (unlike legalism) never gets in the way of a man or woman of God.
 Homiletical structure never gets in the way of the anointing. But worship of structure and order (where that becomes the main thing) will produce death.

THIRD MYTH: “PEOPLE HAVE TO LISTEN TO ME PREACH”

Nothing could be further from the truth. They may look like they’re listening but don’t bet on it!! They don’t owe you a thing. Every inch of effectiveness or application you want them to move into will have to be fought for. You are competing with a butterfly that just flew in, hard seats and weary behinds, worrying thoughts, crying children and ten thousand other distractions.

HOMILETICS: The preparation and delivery of Biblical messages

INCREASING YOUR EFFECTIVENESS AS A COMMUNICATOR

By John C. Maxwell
Pastor's Update, May 1993

1. COMMUNICATOR

Public Speaker

1. Puts the message before the people
2. What do I have?
3. Techniques
4. Content orientated
5. Goal: Complete the message

Communicator

- Puts the people before the message
- What do they need?
- Atmosphere
- Change orientated
- Goal: Complete the people.

2. AVOID THE BIG TEN—COMMON PROBLEMS IN COMMUNICATION

1. Initial rapport is not established
2. Stiff body movement.
3. Material presented intellectually, not involving the audience emotionally.
4. Poor eye contact, facial expressions.
5. Humour lacking.
6. Lack of competence in presentation.
7. Low energy and enthusiasm.
8. Message not owned by messenger.
9. Boring language and material.
10. Lack of audience participation.

3. BELIEVE IN WHAT YOU SAY — CONVICTION

Ordinary people become extraordinary communicators when they are fired up with conviction!

4. BELIEVE IN THE PEOPLE TO WHOM YOU SPEAK — expectation

Put "tens" on the foreheads of the people. Have a high view of the people to whom you are preaching. Believe in them and in the power of the Holy Spirit to transform them.

The Four "b's" of Successful Speaking:

1. Believe in your God.
2. Believe in yourself.
3. Believe in your subject.
4. Believe in your audience.

5. LIVE WHAT YOU SAY — INTEGRITY

Book Recommendation: *Teaching to Change Lives* Howard Hendricks, Multnomah Press, 1987.

"All Communication has **three** essential components *intellect, emotion, and volition*: in other words thought feeling and action. So whatever it is I want to communicate to another individual, it involves something I *know*, something I *feel*, something I am *doing*." — Howard Hendricks.

TWO THINGS A LEADER CANNOT BORROW

1. A vision.
2. A message.

6. KNOW WHEN TO SAY IT — TIMING

The stone thrown at the right time is better than gold thrown at the wrong time.
(Persian Proverb)

Tips for Good Timing:

1. Be audience orientated.
2. Have enough self-confidence to take a risk.
3. Be impact conscious rather than image conscious.
4. Have a responsive audience.

7. KNOW HOW TO SAY IT — CREATIVELY

The *higher* your predictability, the *lower* your impact.
The *lower* your predictability, the *higher* your impact.
— Howard Hendricks

8. KNOW WHY YOU SAY IT — APPLICATION

1. Focus on your audience.
2. Develop an action-oriented thesis.
3. Ask for the order. Preach for a verdict.

9. HAVE FUN SAYING IT — HUMOUR

When a communicator takes himself seriously = Rigid
When a communicator does not take himself seriously = Relaxed.

10. SHOW IT AND THE PEOPLE DO IT — INFLUENCE

People do what people see.
People feel what people see.

11. SAY IT AND THE PEOPLE OWN IT — IDENTIFICATION

1. Say it simply.
2. Know your audience.
3. Include your audience.

12. SAY IT AND PEOPLE DO IT — INFLUENCE

Communication is causing people to change! These are the listener conditions needed for a favourable response:

1. Responsible attitude
2. Perceived benefit
3. Ability to understand
4. Ability to implement

HOMILETICS: The preparation and delivery of Biblical messages

HOW TO “GET” A MESSAGE

- 1. BE (BECOMING) THE MESSAGE:** It is not possible to separate who you are from what you say. There is an expectation in the heart of God that His children live authentic lives that reflect who He is. We cannot sustain the impression we are something contrary to who we really are for the long term. Some people reject the Gospel – not because the Gospel seems unpalatable but – because the carriers of the Message are inconsistent and live inauthentically.

(ACTS 8:12) *“But when they believed Philip as he preached the good news of the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.”* The issue is credibility. Q: How credible are you? Before God, as best as you know how, are you living carefully under His gaze? Do things add up in your life? The assumption here is not perfection, just a heart that is hungry for God, quick to repent and willing to allow the transforming power of the Holy Spirit to do its perfecting / maturing work.

ED FOREMAN: *“Do what you know, what you live, what you believe. Doing overcomes fear every time!”*

Foreman has stumbled onto truth here: it is better to submit to God’s transforming power from the *inside out* than to try to keep up the unbearably difficult farce of being what you are not. It’s just too great a burden to bear!

DAVID PEOPLES: *“You are an unknown quantity for only 120 seconds. After that everything you say will be heard in the context of the impression from your first two minutes.”*

Peoples says that what I am, and who I really am, will soon be evident as I begin to speak. If the topic is not burning in me, my audience will be able to tell. Conversely they will warm to the fire if it is burning in me. When the “thing” is living in you, you will speak with greater authority and greater confidence. The greatest compliment you can receive is, *“you can really see that she lives what she preaches.”*

JUDY CHAFFEE: “Ninety-three percent of the believability of your message is not the content or words you use. It’s not what you say but how you say it.”

How you say it can never be good enough as a Christian communicator. Impacting your audience means that the totality of who you are shines through. If we go the humanistic route (that Chaffee may be espousing), we can get into all kinds of weird stuff that can only damage the cause of Christ, and create a climate of unreality and performance that will not help produce fully devoted followers of Christ.

2. BE SENSITIVE TO THE HOLY SPIRIT: At this point some people get weird – which gives the whole business of hearing God bad press. Jesus said, “*My sheep hear My voice.*” It is a normal thing to hear Him. Naturally supernatural and supernaturally natural. We have made it something strange and the domain of the (usually so-called super-spirituals) few specialists. There is an every-day quality to the voice of God. He speaks far more than we listen. Remember He *wants* you to bring revelation to His Church. He *wants* us to be impactful so that the Church transforms. We are working *with* Him. We make it difficult.

So we ask Him, “*Lord, what do you want me to talk about?*” And then we patiently wait for His answer. It may come in unusual forms. I’ve received preaching ideas during a funeral, in the shower, listening to the radio in my car, during my devotions (just be careful you are not always looking for sermons when you should be feasting yourself), in conversations, music I heard, sitting in conferences, talking with Jan, on planes, mowing the lawn. In recent months I have preached on *transformation* (which our team has developed into a series and the sermons have borne much fruit in people’s lives), and it was just the word “transformation” that came to me. Learn to trust your hearing apparatus. “*My sheep hear My voice.*” Never prescribe the method God uses to speak to you. He will not be put into a box either.

Practical issues: If it is just a word you “get” (like transformation), begin by consulting a *dictionary* to find the true meaning. Then begin *unpacking the word* as much as you can (synonym sifting), writing down all the relevant elements of the word. For example: “transformation” – write the dictionary definition – then write, “people change when they transform, butterflies metamorphose, so is there any lesson I can learn from biology and science. Takes effort, can be costly, painful. Why do we kick against it? – fear of

change, will God be gentle with me? How does this impact on my concept of God? Next, ask the *Holy Spirit to quicken verses* to your mind (and / or, then consult a concordance) – Romans 12:1 f comes to mind, and suddenly a flood of Scriptures, Bible events will result. Your problem may now be what should I leave out? Are there words in the Text that need to be unpacked to their original Greek or Hebrew meaning? Then creatively think of *illustrations* you could use. Any stories of struggles you may have had being transformed?

3. BE SENSITIVE TO YOUR AUDIENCE: Preachers and teachers are leaders. And leaders live with their eyes wide open. They are trend spotters, situation analysts, and students of human behaviour. They are proactive, with their fingers on the pulse of modern reality. They know what people are thinking, feeling, dreaming about. They read the culture continually. They live close to people – they are not recluses who come down from the mountain armed with their sermonic weapons once and a while to “let the people have it”. Relationally deficient teachers and preachers do more harm than good in the long run. To be a preacher or teacher means you are in the people business. Your talk is about them, not you!!

a. Take the time to pre-check your audience.

Who will be there? What are their ages, background, marital status, education, ethnicity etc? What do they need? Talk with former presenters, the event planner, or the person who invited you. What will the audience be expecting from you? If you have been assigned a topic make sure you have understood it correctly. Will they be able to relate to what you are saying? Are they already familiar with your topic, which may mean you will need to be less simplistic or “basic”.

b. Identify the four types of audience members

Tony Jeary’s book, *Inspire Any Audience*, quotes David Freeborn who says you are more than likely to encounter the following types in any audience:

1. PRISONERS

“look for crossed arms, both literally and figuratively. He does not particularly want to be there. In fact he would rather be anywhere other than indoors listening to another talk. Someone else made the decision for him by sending him to this seminar.”

2. VACATIONERS

“look for the relaxed mood combined with an over-relaxed attitude. This person volunteers to go to any seminar. He’s happy to be here but for the wrong reasons.”

3. GRADUATES

“look for frowns, rolling eyes, smug looks and crossed arms. He thinks he does not need to be here because he already knows this stuff.”

4. STUDENTS

“look for smiles, enthusiastic nodding and the merciful habit of laughing at your jokes. This is the attentive, hardworking, perfect audience member who wants to hear what we’ve come to say. He is eager to learn and share and, like a sponge, ready to absorb all he can to help him be more effective personally and professionally.”

c. Assess the needs of a local congregation

If your congregation is a Biblically Functioning New Testament Community the lead elder will not dominate the preaching schedule. If you are asked to preach, make sure you “flow” with what God is currently emphasizing. We tend to rush on from one good topic to the next. Help message in the truth from your (different) angle. Or as Dudley Daniel says, “preach into the gaps.” A useful teacher / preacher is a good “gapologist” – they’re not out to make a name for themselves with their “best, hot number”, but want to help humbly serve the entire congregation with their best interests at heart.

What people need and what they want are not necessarily identical. Never preach to the crowd’s preferences. Give them what they need at that particular time in their journey. Understand that the audience lives in a context which we call culture. They are susceptible to the culture, which has an insidious influence on them. The things people outside the church battle with also affect your people. So you can be sure that rising petrol prices, societal tension, moral disintegration are relevant to them as well.

d. Consult others

You gain more in the long run if you include people in the process of helping you hear God. Bounce your sermon / teaching idea off others – you’ll be amazed how helpful they can be (giving you insight you may never have thought of, clarifying theological points, inspiring you with

creative ideas on how to present it in a more impactful way than you would have imagined on your own). Check with experts in the field you are going to address. Pride, arrogance and ignorance isolate people – humility (“what do you think about this idea?”) opens the door for great Holy Spirit revelation to flood in and produce a far significant product in the end. You make the choice.

e. Understand learning methods

People learn in different ways and at different paces. Some groups and individuals may need to have an issue massaged in more repeatedly than others. You may need to speed it up or slow it down. You may need to use more visuals, more role-plays, handouts etc. Never assume you can use the same old same old methods.

HOMILETICS: The preparation and delivery of Biblical messages

THE SUPREMACY OF GOD IN PREACHING

DON'T DISHONOUR GOD

When we make the needs of man the purpose of preaching, we dishonour God and perpetuate an awful blasphemy that man is the center of all reality. We then bring up a self-obsessed generation that believes the deception that the Cosmos is ordered around them. We make their needs, preferences, tastes, and demands our priority and we come to realise, usually too late, that we have brought up an adolescent monster.

JOHN PIPER: *"It is not the job of the Christian preacher to give people moral or psychological pep talks about how to get along in the world; someone else can do that."*

Our job as preachers and teachers, he says, is to make sure they hear *"God-entranced preaching. They need someone, at least once a week, to lift up his voice and magnify the supremacy of God."*

He says, *"Preaching that does not have the aroma of God's greatness may entertain for a season, but it will not touch the hidden cry of the soul: 'Show me Thy glory!'"*

HOW DO WE HONOUR GOD IN PREACHING?

1. **WE PREPARE AS AN ACT OF WORSHIP:** this is holy business. This is privilege we are talking about – not a job, not a pain, not some flippant, easy, little casual thing. *This is about God, about His Word, His Ways, His Kingdom. These are His people we are addressing.* We are working with His compliments. We don't scribble some thoughts on the back of an envelope during the worship. We take our time – hours at least – to hear God, to study, to craft a script, to rework it, to think it through, to rehearse it so as to familiarize ourselves with the content, to pray that God would come (or we have nothing!).

2. **WE LIVE A DEEP LIFE AS AN ACT OF WORSHIP:** this is holy business. If I am asked to preach, I respond with joy (and with alacrity) because it is merely an extension of the life I am living. I am living ready to be asked. Not perfect, but as far as I can ensure, I am hungry for God and willing to walk with Him in a serious way. I am becoming my message. I am living in an increasingly authentic way. People can see it. Fruit is being produced and I am moving on in God. I am learning to worship God in the market-place of my life. A song is often on my lips. Joy is the atmosphere in which I live. I have hassles but they do not defeat me.

3. **WE LIVE A PREPARED LIFE:** always looking at life like a leader: purposefully, carefully, prayerfully, thoughtfully. Nothing misses our attention – we live wide-awake. We are preparing before being asked to preach – we have sermon material backed up in a holding pattern, ready to be launched. We read the newspaper with preacher’s eyes – scouring for clues as to what the culture thinks and how the Gospel can penetrate, what our people are being exposed to. We read widely, because we know that *leaders are readers and readers are leaders*. Reading disabilities and illiteracy do not disqualify people from leading – the point is leaders must exhibit a curiosity that causes them to ask the “why” questions of life.

4. **WE READ OUR TEXT WITH PASSION:** want to know how to dishonour God and turn people off? – just read God’s Word dispassionately. If *you* are excited about the text, they will be. “Friends, I want us to turn to a magnificent piece of Scripture...” They will be amazed, because, for the first time they would have been asked to associate magnificence with Scripture. If we don’t lift the eyes of our people to the greatness of God, who will? Read the text many times *before* you read it to the audience. Learn your way around difficult pronunciations (especially Hebrew names). Pick up the rhythm of the sentence. Identify the emphasis needed. Learn to breathe in an appropriate way so that the dramatic tension is sustained. (Don’t be overly theatrical, but do watch your emphasis). John Mason was asked why Thomas Chalmers, a Scottish preacher who lived many years ago, was so effective. He replied, “It is his blood-earnestness.” Preachers must rediscover God-given passion for their task of preaching and teaching. Our people need to hear us preach with blood-earnestness. Their very future could depend on it.

JOHN WESLEY: “O give me that Book. At any price give me the Book of God! I have it: here is knowledge enough for me. Let me be a man of one book.”

MALCOLM MUGGERIDGE: “This notion of the out-of-dateness of the Bible is utterly absurd, but it is implanted in people’s minds. I regret to say, to a great extent by the clergy. People say that the Bible is a boring book; that it belongs to the past, but they don’t say that about Shakespeare *because the people who teach Shakespeare are zealous for Shakespeare.*”

5. **WE SEEK HIS GLORY AND NOT OUR OWN:** we respond appropriately to man’s accolades. We remember we are but vessels – privileged vessels, as someone said “ *beggars showing other beggars where to find bread*”. Premature promotion has robbed many gifted men and women of their destiny. Our character needs to be attended to. Gifting and even anointing will never be enough. Piper says, “*you can mark it down that if you are a preacher God will hide from you much of the fruit He causes in your ministry. You will see enough to be assured of His blessing, but not so much as to think you could live without it. For God aims to exalt Himself, not the preacher.*” The most gracious thing God can do for a preacher or teacher who refuses to learn humility, is to keep from them opportunities to infect the audience with their pride. What may seem like men closing doors, could very well be God’s doing – for the sake of the preacher, whom He loves desperately. God wants to qualify us, not disqualify us.

JAMES STEWART: the aims of genuine preaching are “*to quicken the conscience by the holiness of God, to feed the mind with the truth of God, to purge the imagination by the beauty of God, to open the heart to the love of God, to devote the will to the purpose of God.*”

6. **WE HONOUR THE BRIDE OF CHRIST:** we recognize that the people we are addressing are, first and foremost, His bride. We are to deal carefully with them. **This means:** a) they are not an audience for our ego, b) we are to keep “them free”, as commanded by Galatians (we don’t lay “heavies “ on them), c) we don’t use the pulpit to discipline people we should be seeing face-to-face according to Matthew 18, d) we don’t give them a superficial diet of irrelevant sermons, e) we live our message so as not to cause confusion in their minds, f) we do not adopt a “pulpit persona” (we are authentic in and out of the pulpit / teaching context), g) we don’t let them get away with a distaste for applying the truth they have just heard.

7. **WE TELL THE PEOPLE THE TRUTH:** Decades of humanism has led man to believe that he is the centre of all reality. He has wheeled his little throne into the Throne Room and defiantly set up shop. We have homogenised, sanitised, anaesthetised and quantified everything in a self-absorptive attempt to recreate our own reality. And to make that reality as pleasant as possible. Anything that upsets this little scenario is excised as quickly as possible in an attempt to regain Camelot. Scratch a little beneath the surface and we find *unbelievable superficiality*. Something is superficial, says John Piper, when the main thing is not regarded as the main thing. God is the main attraction in the Cosmos. This is all about Him. He is the reason we gather. In Him we live and move and have our being. When you preach about the transcendent God and when you push your hearers in the direction of inconvenient, apostolic, self-denying lifestyle, you begin to discover that the kingdom of self is fiercely defended territory. The age in which we live needs courageous preachers - those who will not flinch in the face of an aggressive culture.

WILLIAM WILLIMON: *"When I stand up and say, "Orgasm is not the goal of human life," you've got a pretty good audience there."*

This may come as quite a shock for your hearers because that is what life has been reduced to: how much pleasure can I get out of it? I'm here for the party - as someone once said, "we're the idiot generation, entertaining ourselves to death." - don't complicate my life with God-stuff. (And, tragically, I'm not talking here about non-Christians only!!!). They add: "but if you have to give me God-stuff, then I want to dictate the diet."

Eugene Peterson agonises on this very point: *"Am I keeping the line clear between what I am committed to and what people are asking of me? Is my primary orientation God's grace, His mercy, His action in Creation and covenant? Am I committed to it enough that when people ask me to do something that will not lead them into a more mature participation in these realities, that I refuse? I don't like to think of my visits I have made, counselling given, marriages performed, meetings attended, prayers offered - one friend calls it sprinkling holy water on Cabbage Patch dolls - solely because people asked me to do it and it didn't seem that it would do any harm and, who knows, it might do some good. Besides, I knew there was a pastor down the street who would do anything asked of him."*

Malcolm Muggeridge: *"The Church, like most institutions of our society, is scared, and is anxious to ingratiate itself with people, rather than to tell them the truth."*

Your hearers live in what Eugene Peterson calls "soggy suburbia". They expect to be comforted and caressed. Many of them came into the Kingdom on a defective theology. They were told that the Good News is "come to God and all your problems will be solved". God was presented as a Father Christmas in the sky with a bag of goodies. No-one told them there was a price to pay (called costly discipleship) - that the holy, awesome God offers us a full and free amnesty, if we will but bow our knee and pledge lifelong allegiance to His rule. Isaiah 52:7 tells us that the Good News (the Israelites rejected in Romans 10) is: ... YOUR GOD REIGNS.

WILLIAM H WILLIMON: *"About three weeks ago a woman came out after the service and said to me, 'I know you would never want to hurt anyone with what you said, but I was really hurt by the sermon today.'" Suddenly, I caught myself thinking, "Why would you ever think we wouldn't want to hurt you?" I'm sorry; the material demands it! The thing that makes preaching tough is not simply how to have a coherent thought within 20 minutes or how to modulate the voice. The hard thing is Jesus! If we had something like Disneyland to preach, it would be easy. But we have Jesus to preach, and that makes bringing that to speech - with our language and culture and our sin – just really hard.*

Preaching that does not result in behavioural change is not true preaching. And behaviour can only change when it is challenged, head on. Preach for a verdict. Preach with transformation as the goal. Preach with passion - because a weak, softly, softly approach will not do it. Willimon says, *"When somebody comes and says to me, 'I've never heard anything like this before. Where'd you get this?' I say, 'Of course you haven't heard this before. This is America, where there are powerful forces against you hearing this. You've got to get dressed and get down here on Sunday mornings to hear stuff like this."*

Tell the people the truth. Tell them what Jesus told them - but, make sure you tell them in the way Jesus told them. Out of a heart of love, broken with the sinfulness of the human condition. Truth must never be used as a battering ram, but it must break through the defences if it is to be fruitful. Tell them the truth. And always be aware of your own frailty and propensity to sin. This will keep you from being a Pharisee.

PREACHING ASSESSMENT

PREACHER : _____

DATE : _____

TOPIC : _____

OBSERVATIONS

1. Clarity of Theme	1	2	3	4	5
2. Passion Levels	1	2	3	4	5
3. Audience Rapport	1	2	3	4	5
4. Apparent Preparedness	1	2	3	4	5
5. Introduction Liftoff	1	2	3	4	5
6. Clarity of Response Appeal	1	2	3	4	5
7. Theological Sense	1	2	3	4	5
8. Cultural Relevance	1	2	3	4	5
9. Use of Illustrations	1	2	3	4	5
10. Momentum	1	2	3	4	5
11. Christo-Centricity	1	2	3	4	5
12. Absence of Religious Clichés & Culture	1	2	3	4	5
13. Voice Modulation & Projection	1	2	3	4	5
14. Body Language & Posture	1	2	3	4	5

COMMENTS :

OBSERVER :

DEFINITIONS

1. Clarity of Theme : is it clear where the speaker is going? Can you summarize it in 1 sentence?
2. Passion Levels : does it burn authentically in the speaker? Is he / she excited re the topic? Was the text read passionately?
3. Audience Rapport : Is he connecting with the audience? Eye-contact?
4. Apparent Preparedness : Does it appear that he has spent quality time preparing?
5. Introductions Lift off : Did he / she hit the road running? Was interest captured immediately?
6. Clarity of Response Appeal : Is what he's asking the people to do in response to the sermon very clear?
7. Theological Sense : Is the message Biblical?
8. Cultural Relevance : Can a Y2K+ audience relate? Does he / she refer to current events / issues?
9. Use of Illustrations : Are they relevant? Do they facilitate understanding?
10. Momentum : Did he maintain the flow throughout the message?
11. Christo-Centricity : Is Jesus Christ exalted? Is He the pivotal person of history and salvation?
12. Absence of Religious Cliches and Culture : Does the message have appeal to the unchurched?
13. Voice Modulation and Projection : Volume, tone etc.
14. Body Language and Posture : Relaxed, open, friendly

HOMILETICS: The preparation and delivery of Biblical messages

1. Define homiletics
2. Preaching is a presentation of the _____, by the _____, from the _____
3. One of the goals of preaching is:
4. The three most essential elements of a sermon are:
 - i)
 - ii)
 - iii)
5. The structure is to the sermon what the _____ is to the human body.
6. A textual sermon is one in which the main divisions of the sermon are based on the _____
7. The sermon you are least encouraged to preach is a _____ sermon.
8. Each division must contain 3 things:
 - i) An _____
 - ii) An _____
 - iii) An _____
9. Statement which links each division to the next is called a _____
10. Eye contact is important because:
 - i) It _____ the importance of the audience
 - ii) It _____ the attention of the audience
11. Gestures
 - i) Keep them _____ (audience size)
 - ii) Avoid _____ (distraction)
 - iii) Avoid _____ (school master)
12. List 2 benefits of using a title
 - i)
 - ii)
13. Illustrations create a _____ in the mind
14. Big idea = _____ + _____

TEST ANSWERS

1. The science and art of the preparation and delivery of sermons.
2. Living word, spoken, written.
3. Promote behavioural change, instruct the mind, stir the heart, motivate the will to apply God's truth.
4. Memorable structure, vivid illustration, touch of God.
5. Skeleton.
6. Text.
7. Topical.
8. Explanation, illustration, application.
9. Transitional sermon.
10. Affirms, secures.
11. Appropriate, repetition, pointing.
12. Tells audience where you're going, promotes clarity, direction, stimulation, expectation, arouses interest.
13. Picture.
14. Little idea, little idea.

Chapter One – fill in the blanks

1. Homiletics is the science and art of the preparation and delivery of sermons
2. Living, Written, Spoken
3. Truth, servant
4. Instruct, stir and motivate
5. Clarity
6. Interest, explain, persuade, change
7. Glorify
8. Evangelism
9. Christian growth
10. Confrontation
11. Fear
12. Ego
13. Being unprepared
14. Motor mouth
15. Vehicle
16. Skeleton
17. Preacher
18. Order
19. Clarify
20. Apply
21. Prompt
22. Create

23. Stimulate
24. Pertinent
25. Accurate
26. Word of God
27. Original
28. Messenger
29. Message
30. Anointing
31. Worship
32. Holy Spirit

Chapter 2 – fill in the blanks

1. Clarity
2. Direction
3. Expectation
4. Interest
5. Accumulatively exhaustive
6. Mutually exclusive
7. Based on a single principle of differentiation
8. Explanation
9. Illustration
10. Application

Chapter 3 – fill in the blanks

1. Affirms
2. Secures
3. Appropriate
4. Repetition
5. Pointing

Chapter 5 – fill in the blanks

1. Approach
2. Application
3. Action
4. Out