

SERMON PREP HOW TO

Certificate Path - 9.11.23

I. GENERAL SERMON PREP

I) Context

- What type of book is this (law, historical, prophetic, psalms, wisdom, gospel account, epistle)? What is the theme or main argument of the book? What has the writer previously said? Who is he writing to? When is he writing?

II) Text Work

- You need to have looked at every word in the text in the original language or you will not be able to confidently teach and preach it.
- Blue Letter Bible is free—get the app, bookmark the website.
- Print off your text triple-spaced, then work through it as you examine the original language. Underline adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, **verbs**, **nouns**, **pronouns**, **names of God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit, He, Him, His, You, Your, etc.)** etc. so you know exactly what each word is. Write synonyms or cross-references under the words so you can help people, in the act of preaching, better understand what each word in the text does and does not mean.

III) Divisions/Main Doctrinal Points

- What are the doctrinal and practical points in the text? This serves as the bones or outline of the sermon.
- If you have sub points, state the main point in the sub point if at all possible. Write them like you will say them. Each point or sub point needs to be a statement that can stand on its own, being understood by all. (Bad example: "I. Strengthened by grace." Good example: "We are doing Shepherd School so that you would be strengthened by grace.")
- Short booklets to read:
 - Read and put into practice the booklet edited by Brett called *A Directory for Preaching: Directions Concerning the Preaching of the Word of God According to the Westminster Assembly of Divines in their Directory for Public Worship.*
 - Once you understand what to aim for, read and apply J.C. Ryle's booklet *Simplicity in Preaching: An Exhortation for Preachers of the Word of God to Aim at Simplicity in Language and Style, By Being Both Plain and Direct.*
 - Once you understand what to aim for and how to be simple, for help in application, read and put into practice the booklet edited by Brett called *Preaching and Application: Some General Observations Concerning Preaching, and Especially Application.*

IV) Doctrine/Big Idea/Theme

- What is the doctrine or big idea or theme of these verses of Scripture? Sometimes this can be a rephrasing of your outline but other times it has to be remain more general and capture the bigger picture. It should be short and to the point, rather than long and elaborate. If people are taking notes, they should be able to write it down.

2 Timothy 3:14-17

14 But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it

Handwritten notes:
 "manthano"
 present active imperative (Remain) Abide Stand
 "pistoo"
 secretly persuaded confidently assured
 being aware considering
 perfect active indicative (You have known)

15 and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

Handwritten notes:
 young child infant babe
 powerful strong capable
 "pistis"
 through faith in Christ Jesus

16 All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,

Handwritten notes:
 "pas" "graphe" "theopneustos"
 God-Breathed
 Paul may have even coined this term
 helpful serviceable advantageous
 conviction of bad behavior or doctrine
 restoration to a better behavior or healthy doctrine
 discipline Eph. 6:4 "fathers..."
 purity of life correctness in thinking, feeling, and acting

17 that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

Handwritten notes:
 "anthropos"
 fit apt perfect special aptitude
 "sufficient" "pas"
 Mt. 5:16 "Let your light shine..."
 Ti. 2:14 "Christ gave Himself for us to redeem us... to purify for Himself"

OUTLINE/DOCTRINE EXAMPLE OF 2 TIMOTHY 3:14-17

bones / outline / main doctrinal points / doctrine / big idea / thesis

INTRODUCTION.

DOCTRINE. Christians must stand firm on the Scriptures because they are perfectly sufficient to be used by God to justify, sanctify, and equip for His glory.

OUTLINE. In this text there is one imperative, and one main reason for the imperative. Now, concerning the reason, there are nine specific explanations attached to it.

I. YOU, CHRISTIAN MAN, MUST ABIDE IN THE SCRIPTURES (1 Tim. 3:14).

2 Timothy 3:14 “But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it”

II. YOU, CHRISTIAN MAN, MUST ABIDE IN THE SCRIPTURES, BECAUSE THEY ARE SUFFICIENT (1 Tim. 3:15a).

I) The Scriptures are sufficient to teach even young children (v. 15a).

2 Timothy 3:15a “and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings,”

II) The Scriptures are sufficient to bring you to faith in Christ Jesus (v. 15b).

2 Timothy 3:15b “which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.”

III) The Scriptures are because it is proceeds from the mouth of God (v. 16a).

2 Timothy 3:16a “All Scripture is breathed out by God”

IV) The Scriptures are sufficient to profit you in the ways you most need to profit (v. 16b).

2 Timothy 3:16b “and profitable”

V) The Scriptures are sufficient for doctrine (v. 16c).

2 Timothy 3:16c “for teaching,”

VI) The Scriptures are to reprove (v. 16d).

2 Timothy 3:16d “for reproof,”

VII) The Scriptures are sufficient to correct (v. 16e).

2 Timothy 3:16e “for correction,”

VIII) The Scriptures are sufficient to train you for righteousness (v. 16f).

2 Timothy 3:16f “and for training in righteousness,”

IX) The Scriptures are sufficient to make you fit and equipped to glorify God in all of life (v. 17).

2 Timothy 3:17 “that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.”

(i) Good works are what God saved us to! (Ephesians 2:10)

- **Ephesians 2:10** “For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”

(ii) Good works are how we glorify God! (Matthew 5:16)

- **Matthew 5:16** “let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.”

(iii) Good works are why Christ died! (Titus 2:14)

- **Titus 2:14** “[Jesus] gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.”

CONCLUSION.

II. SPECIFIC SERMON PREP (*MEAT*)

Under every heading/division/point:

I) Explain (*black*)

- Mostly try to carry it in your mind, unless you need to write out brief definitions or explanations. This will help you look in the eyes of the listeners more and not be so glued to your notes. Do not get bogged down in talking about everything interesting. Get to the point. When you first begin to preach you will need to write down a lot more of the explanation than you will once you have progressed.
- “Preach the word” (2 Tim. 4:2a).

II) Cross reference (*gold*)

- Short, not long passages.
- If you need to quote a longer passage, consider summarizing it and then quoting one verse.
- “Be ready in season and out of season” (2 Tim. 4:2b).

III) Questions (*red “Q” before*)

- Make the listeners audit their soul.
- “For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths” (2 Tim. 4:3-4).

IV) Children (*red text*)

- Address the children specifically with a point or metaphor that they should be able to more easily understand.
- “Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.” Ephesians 6:1

V) Illustrate (*green*)

- Metaphors, figures of speech, word pictures.
- Preach like Jesus, His prophets, and His apostles.
- Sometimes the text is a metaphor, figure of speech, or word picture, so you do not need to use illustrations in your notes as much.

VI) Apply (*orange*)

- **Be direct, not vague.** Talk to souls, not to ceilings. Nominal Christians should squirm in their seats if they will not repent. Say “you” or “you and I” generally rather than “we.” Say “you must” or “you and I must” or “You have to” or “You and I have to,” generally speaking, when there is an imperative verb, rather than “you should” or “we should” or even “we must.” The only time it is OK to turn an imperative verb in the text into an indicative point in the sermon is if the indicative increases the intensity of the point. When there is a plural exhortation or command, “we” is most appropriate. When there is an example to follow or an inference without an imperative, “should” is most acceptable.
- Make an application to the person(s), sometimes bold as a lion and sometimes tender as a lamb. Be like Christ who said, “Woe to you” sometimes and “Come to me” other times.
- “Reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching” (2 Tim. 4:2c).

CASES, USES, AND CLARIFICATIONS TO HELP IN PREACHING THE WORD

(i) The Many Cases of Hearers (9)

In each case there are children, young adults, adults, and the aged.

1. Sinners, Ignorant and Empty
2. Sinners, Hard and Violent
3. Sinners, Soft and Tender
4. Sinners, Near the Kingdom
5. Saints, Small
6. Saints, Straying
7. Saints, Sleeping
8. Saints, Suffering
9. Saints, Solid

(ii) The Multiple Uses of Scriptural Truth for Application (8)

1. Instruction (inferences from the text *or* plain truths propositionally taught in the text)
2. Reproof (thinking)
3. Rebuke (doing)
4. Warning to Sinners or Saints (repent before it is too late *or* watch out)
5. Examination (trial/testing)
6. Awakening (to unconverted persons or sleeping saints)
7. Comfort/Encouragement (come and live in Christ)
8. Exhortation (go and die for Christ)

<i>Cases & Uses for Application</i>	Use for...	Use for...	Use for...	Use for...	Use for...	Use for...	Use for...	Use for...
Sinners, Ignorant and Empty	Instruction	Reproof	Rebuke	Warning	Examination	Awakening	Exhortation	
Sinners, Hard and Violent	Instruction	Reproof	Rebuke	Warning	Examination	Awakening	Exhortation	
Sinners, Soft and Tender	Instruction	Reproof	Rebuke	Warning	Examination	Awakening	Exhortation	
Sinners, Near the Kingdom	Instruction	Reproof	Rebuke	Warning	Examination	Awakening	Exhortation	
Saints, Small	Instruction	Reproof	Rebuke	Warning	Examination	Awakening	Exhortation	Comfort
Saints, Straying	Instruction	Reproof	Rebuke	Warning	Examination	Awakening	Exhortation	
Saints, Sleeping	Instruction	Reproof	Rebuke	Warning	Examination	Awakening	Exhortation	
Saints, Suffering	Instruction	Reproof	Rebuke	Warning	Examination	Awakening	Exhortation	Comfort
Saints, Solid	Instruction	Reproof	Rebuke	Warning	Examination	Awakening	Exhortation	Comfort

(iii) The Three Main Helps for Clarification of Doctrine and Application (3)

1. Question and Answer.
2. Objection and Answer.
3. “Boys and Girls.”

III. HELPFUL ADDITIONS FOR PREACHING

I) Quotes (*blue*)

- Short and to the point.

II) Catechism (*purple*)

- The Baptist Catechism, An Orthodox Catechism, Westminster Larger Catechism.

III) Creeds and Confessions (*purple*)

- Orthodox Creeds and Confessions, The 1689 Baptist Confession of Faith, Synod of Dort.

IV) Hymn quote (*blue*)

- One verse, preferably. This can help the listeners understand why we sing this particular song.

IV. CLOSING CHECKLIST FOR PREACHING

I) Gospel / Christ / Call to repentance and faith

- Where are you calling for the verdict and making certain Sola Fide and Solus Christus are clear?
- “Do the work of an evangelist” (2 Tim. 4:5).

II) Am I preaching a big God, the one true and living God, or is my sermon more man-centered?

- Jesus does not say please. God does not need you. The Holy Spirit is not a gentleman. The Triune God is the Creator and Sustainer of everyone and everything.
- “God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth” (The Baptist Catechism Q8).
- “His dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom endures from generation to generation; all the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, and he does according to his will among the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand or say to him, ‘What have you done?’” (Daniel 4:34-35).
- “I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom:” (2 Tim. 4:1).

III) Intro and Conclusion

- Your introduction should be so that if you stopped, the congregation would beg you to get back up by saying, “You have to preach this sermon” (Steven J. Lawson).
- The conclusion should lead you right to the throne of grace, where you will go before God on behalf of the people to ask His forgiveness and blessing.

- Do not write your intro or conclusion until the main part of the sermon has already been written.
“Do not build your front and back porch before you build the house” (Steven J. Lawson).

IV) Memorize and Pray

- “Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, or stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night” (**Psalm 1:1-2**).
- “So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth” (**1 Corinthians 3:7**).

Tips for the Act of Preaching

- *Lift your voice or sit down.* Speak so as to be heard or do not speak. Do not preach to a microphone; preach to the souls in the congregation. Act as though the microphone were not there and lift up your voice like a trumpet. If you do not, you will not command the attention of the room. Speak as if you are heralding the very words of God, because you are.
- *Preach to the people, not the ceiling.* You are talking to souls, not robots. Act like it. Act like life and death are on the line, because they are. Look in the eyes of your hearers. Speak like you would in a conversation when you are passionate about something.
- *Speak clearly.* Do not slur your words. You need to enunciate. Possibly you need to slow down your cadence.
- *Pause after sentences now and then,* especially if the statement is emphatic or impactful.
- *Read the Scriptures slowly and powerfully,* pausing on the commas and periods, emphasizing the prepositions and verbs.
- *Pause after you read a verse or passage of Scripture.* Do not rush to get the reference read so that you can start giving your commentary.
- *Repeat your points and sub-points.* Repeat your points and sub-points. Repeat your points and sub-points.
- *Explain every text of Scripture you read or reference.* Do not give me a cross reference without summarizing or explaining or emphasizing what you have just read.
- *Do not be monotone or come across angry.* Change your inflection appropriately. Do not end your sentences with the same tone (down/up/middle).
- *Smile.* You are not a herald of woe; you are a herald of joy. Act like it!