

# Preaching the Powerful Gospel



Kevin Rutherford

# **Preaching The Powerful Gospel**

Kevin Rutherford

# **COPYRIGHT**

Copyright 2011  
by Kevin Rutherford;  
all rights reserved

For Print versions of  
this book, please contact:  
[rodrutherford@comcast.net](mailto:rodrutherford@comcast.net)

# **LAYOUT**

Formatted for E-book by:  
Aaron Cozort  
ANAC Educational Enterprises  
[www.anac-online.com](http://www.anac-online.com)

## A NOTE ABOUT COPYRIGHT

We recognize that it would be very easy to take a book which does not have DRM (Digital Rights Management), such as this one, and distribute it to other people illegally (i.e. give, transfer, or email it to them without them having to purchase it). While we understand the risks of not using DRM, we believe our customers will make the honest choice to respect the many hard hours of labor that have gone into this book which is being sold for such a modest price.

Thank you for not breaking the copyright.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Syllabus	6
1) The Power of Words	10
2) The Foundation of the Sermon	27
3) Studying for Your Sermon	45
4) Preparing An Outline	68
5) Sermon Presentation	130
6) The Preacher's Appearance	169
7) Teaching A Bible Class	183
8) Conducting A Personal Bible Study	200
9) Portraits of Powerful Preachers	218
10) Balance in Preaching	240
11) How A Preacher Should View Himself	268
12) Letters To Preachers	281
13) Be Thankful	296
Review	309
Self-Test	318
Key To Self-Test	329
Notes on Public Speaking	331

# SYLLABUS

**Lesson one:** Give a 2-3 minute speech introducing oneself.

**Lesson two:** Read lessons one and two. Answer the questions at the end of each chapter. Quote Ezra 7:10 in class and give a 5-7 minute speech on how something works. One 8 ½ x 11 sheet of paper will be allowed for notes.

**Lesson three:** Read lesson three and answer the questions at the end of the chapter. Quote John 3:16 in class. Students who have not given the 5-7 minute speech should do so.

**Lesson four:** Read lesson four and answer the questions at the end of the chapter. Quote Acts 17:2, 3. Read a short Bible chapter to the class.

**Lesson five:** Read lesson five and answer the questions at the end of the chapter. Quote 2 Timothy 3:16, 17. Students who have not already done so should read a short Bible chapter to the class.

**Lesson six:** Read lesson six and answer the questions at the end of the chapter. Quote 1 Peter 4:11. Choose a sermon topic and begin collecting notes for that sermon. Give a copy of the notes to the teacher.

**Lesson seven:** Read lesson seven and answer the questions at the end of the chapter. Romans 1:16 is the memory verse. Make a sermon outline from your notes and turn the outline in to the teacher.

**Lesson eight:** Read lesson eight and answer the questions at the end of the chapter. Quote John 12:48 in class.

Review, refine, and practice (a whole bunch) preaching your sermon. One student should be prepared to preach his sermon in class.

**Lesson nine:** Read lesson nine and answer the questions at the end of the chapter. Quote Hebrews 4:12. One student should preach his sermon in class.

**Lesson ten:** Read lesson ten and answer the questions at the end of the chapter. Quote Psalm 119:105. One student should preach his sermon in class.

**Lesson eleven:** Read lesson eleven and answer the questions at the end of the chapter. Quote 1 Corinthians 3:5. One student should preach his sermon in class.

**Lesson twelve:** Read lesson twelve and answer the questions at the end

of the chapter. Quote 2 Timothy 4:1-5. One student should preach his sermon in class.

**Lesson thirteen:** Read lesson thirteen and answer the questions at the end of the chapter. Quote Philippians 4:6-8. One student should preach his sermon in class.

# CHAPTER ONE

## THE POWER OF WORDS

### EVIL WORDS

Evil men have used the power of words to hurt people. Adolf Hitler is a good example. The images of Hitler on the old black and white films show a very forceful and dynamic speaker. He was a wicked man who preached with both venom and an aura of authority. His presence and personality consumed his audience. He fueled and fanned the fires of hatred and mobilized a nation for war. This he was able to do with the power of words.

Hitler was not the first to powerfully, and persuasively use words to convince men to commit wicked acts. Dare we forget that Satan brought sin into this world by the effective use

of words? In fact, he changed God's message by adding just one word (Genesis 3:1-6). Concerning the fruit of the tree in the middle of the garden God had said, "*You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die* (Genesis 3:3)." In seeking to convince Eve to take the fruit, the serpent said, "*You will not surely die* (Genesis 3:4)."

## **GOOD WORDS**

Words have not always been used to persuade men to do evil. Good men with good words have persuaded others to do what is right. Men such as Elijah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel have used the power of words for good. God has chosen to reveal His Will to us in words (1 Corinthians 2:13). The powerful Word of God is able to prick the hearts of men and women because it is God's power to save (Romans 1:16). The writer of *He-*

*brews states, "...the Word of God is living and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart (Hebrews 4:12)." Recognizing the power of spoken and written truth, God warned us not to add to, nor take away from His Word (Deuteronomy 4:2; Revelation 22:18, 19).*

The significance and power of words is well portrayed in Proverbs 25:11, which says, "*A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in settings of silver.*" Proverbs 15:1 tell us, "*A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.*" Clearly, the right words at the right time, and spoken in the right manner are very effective. Remember: **WORDS ARE POWERFUL WHEN CHOSEN WELL!**

Many have recognized the importance of words. Batsell Barrett Baxter said, “Words are the tools with which the speaker works. They are the bridges over which his ideas are transported into the minds of his hearers.”<sup>1</sup> Tom Holland referred to words as “language symbols which convey the thought of the speaker...”<sup>2</sup> Because words are so important they must be carefully chosen. In his book, *Speaking for the Master*, Baxter lists certain qualities of word choice. Among those he includes: clarity, simplicity, familiarity, exactness, and good taste.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, he says we need to be vivid, concrete, and specific in the words we choose.<sup>4</sup>

When words are carefully chosen they are powerful. In his *Manual on Non-Boring Preaching* Jerry Moffit writes, “An excellent speaker has members of an audience on the edge of

their seats with their ears wide open. Then he skillfully tosses great chunks of God's Word into open hearts."<sup>5</sup> Important words carefully chosen can be powerful when used by an excellent speaker. Moffit says, "An excellent speaker can burn sinful thoughts right out of a heart, unleash the power of God's Word in the human mind, and lift a sinner to a new life."<sup>6</sup>

## **THE HEART BEHIND THE WORDS**

Matthew chapter twelve records a time when the Pharisees accused Jesus of casting out demons by the power of Satan. Jesus responded to their accusation with a stinging rebuke. When rebuking these evil men Jesus made an important statement concerning their hearts (Matthew 12:34-37). He told them their evil comments came from evil hearts. The Pharisees were using the power of words to try

to turn the people against Christ. The words they spoke were wicked because their hearts were wicked. By contrast, Jesus points out that good words come from the hearts of good men. Jesus said, “*A good man out of the good treasures of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things* (Matthew 12:35).”

Ezra understood the importance of a good heart behind good words. Concerning Ezra, the Bible says, “*For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the Law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach statutes and ordinances in Israel* (Ezra 7:10).” Ezra’s preaching began with his heart. With his heart he chose to seek the Law of the Lord. Knowing God’s Word is a prerequisite to preaching. Ezra determined in his heart to gain knowledge of the Word of God. Bible study is of the utmost

importance for anyone who desires to preach. One who does not properly study his Bible does not ever belong in the pulpit. After all, it is the Word of God that we must be preaching (2 Timothy 4:2). We dare not stand in the pulpit in ignorance, for in so doing we risk teaching error (Matthew 15:9; Matthew 12:36; James 3:1).

In addition to gaining knowledge of God's Will, Ezra made application of it to himself. He found the Law of the Lord and then he practiced what the law said. He studied it, understood it, and put it into practice. Practicing what one preaches is evidence of sincerity. If a preacher says one thing and does another, people will soon discover him to be a hypocrite. Paul soundly rebuked some of the Jews for teaching one thing and doing another (Romans 2). Paul said, "*Therefore you are inexcusable, O man, whoever*

*you are who judge, for in whatever you judge another you condemn yourself; for you who judge practice the same things (Romans 2:1).*” Paul points out the consequence of hypocritical behavior in verse twenty-four of the same chapter. *“For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you... (Romans 2:24).*” When preachers don’t know the Bible, and don’t apply the Bible, they will hurt the cause of Christ.

The story is told about the preacher of old who had a special coat he wore while he was preaching. As long as he wore the coat he felt and acted like a preacher. However, when the preacher would come home after preaching all day Sunday he would put the coat on a hook and say, “Hang there, preacher, until next week.” This man felt as if he only had to act like a preacher on Sunday. However, every preacher

must “walk the walk” as well as “talk the talk,” whether or not he is wearing his “preaching coat.” A preacher must not pretend to be pious on Sunday, then turn around and be riotous on Monday.

Ezra gained knowledge of God’s Word, made application of it, and then he taught it to others. Clearly Ezra had a good heart. His was a heart determined to know what God demanded, and determined to give God what He commanded. A good man with a good heart generally makes a good preacher. Because words are powerful when chosen well it is very important that the heart from which the words come is pure and sincere.

In the book, *Public Speaking for Dummies*, Malcolm Kushner writes concerning the impact of a speaker’s character on his credibility. Kushner

states, “Character is the most important factor in how your audience judges your credibility.”<sup>7</sup> On the subject of character and sincerity, Tom Holland says, “In order to preach well one must live righteously.”<sup>8</sup> Batsell Barrett Baxter wrote that, “Sincerity of conviction is the foundation upon which enthusiasm may legitimately be built.”<sup>9</sup>

## **ATTITUDES OF THE HEART IN THE PULPIT**

Because words are powerful we must be careful how we use them when preaching. Some brethren seem to have a misconception with regard to the purpose of preaching. There are preachers who seem to believe the pulpit is the perfect place for exacting revenge upon the members, or even the elders. Preachers have publicly satisfied their desire to “get even” by angrily blasting the brethren from the pulpit.

This kind of public self-vindication is inappropriate. It will do nothing but tear down the church, cause division, and turn visitors away. Problems between the preacher and the congregation need to be worked out at other times.

The pulpit isn't the place for seeking the esteem and praise of men either. Haughty Haman in the book of *Esther* just loved the praise of men. His arrogance eventually brought him crashing down. King Saul was another whose over-inflated ego led to his own ruin. Preachers will fall like Haman and Saul when they preach for the praise of men. Preaching for praise often tempts the preacher to tickle itching ears and lead souls astray. One's preaching should encourage the people to praise God and not the man who delivers God's message.

Another attitude inappropriate in the pulpit is uncontrolled anger. Some preachers just seem to be plain mean. Nearly every Sunday they will stand before the congregation and angrily blast all present, and maybe some that are not. Reproving and rebuking a congregation are certainly a part of preaching and must be done (2 Timothy 4:2). However, we must not forget to do some exhorting. We should also consider the fact that even the reprov- ing and the rebuking are to be done with “all longsuffering and doctrine.”

## **WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED?**

Words are powerful when chosen well. Words can influence people in a positive way or in a negative way. Because words are powerful when chosen well, the heart behind the words must be a good heart. Ezra had a good heart. He determined in his heart to

know the truth, make application of it to himself, and then preach it. Not all preachers are like Ezra. Some preach from poor motives and bad attitudes. A preacher should not preach to exact revenge or seek the praise of men, and preachers should control their tempers.

### **Today's Assignment:**

Stand before the class, and with a two to three minute speech, introduce yourselves to the rest of the class. Discuss the following: full name, place of birth, hometown, family, career, etc. Please speak within the time limits. Learning to speak within assigned time limits is very important. Most speaking opportunities will come with time limits.

### **Assignment for the next class meeting:**

1. Quote Ezra 7:10 in class.
2. Read lessons one and two, the answer the questions at the end of each chapter.
3. Be prepared to give a 5-7 minute speech on how something works. One 8 1/2 x 11 sheet of paper will be allowed for speaking notes.

### **Questions from lesson one:**

1. Who was the first to use words to persuade someone to commit evil?
2. Who was the first to pervert God's teaching by adding one word?
3. What did God use to reveal His Will to mankind?
4. What does Hebrews 4:12 tell us about the power of the Word of God?

5. What did God say about teachers in James 3:1?
6. Finish this statement: “Words are powerful when...”
7. What kind of heart produces evil words?
8. What kind of heart produces good words?
9. What did Ezra purpose in his heart to do before he taught others?

## ENDNOTES

- 1 Batsell Barrett Baxter, *Speaking for the Master: A study of Public Speaking for Christian Men* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1954), 115.
- 2 Thomas H. Holland, *Sermon Design and Delivery* (Nashville: Penmann Press, 1967), 108.
- 3 (Baxter 1954, pp. 118-120)
- 4 (Baxter 1954, 116)
- 5 Jerry Moffit, *A Manual in Non-Boring Preaching: How to Speak so that People Listen Up!* (Austin, Firm Foundation Publishing House, 1982, as found in Denton Lectures CD-Rom), Chapter 1.
- 6 (Moffit 1982, ch. 1)

- 7 Malcolm Kushner, Public Speaking for Dummies (Foster City, IDG Books, 1999), 18
- 8 (Holland 1967, 17)
- 9 Batsell Barrett Baxter, The Heart of the Yale Lectures (Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 1947), 47

# **CHAPTER TWO**

## **THE FOUNDATION OF THE SERMON**

### **PREACHERS ARE NOT ENTERTAINERS**

We live in a nation that spends a great deal of time and money on entertainment. There is nothing wrong with entertainment and recreation as long as it is clean and in reasonable amounts. We all need to relax from time to time. However, there are too many people who live to be entertained. They work hard to have money for entertainment, and look forward to spending every non-working and non-sleeping hour being entertained. Unfortunately this “thrill me” mindset has affected the way people view Christianity and worship. When people demand that their worship be

entertaining they have changed the focus of worship from God to man. God says He is to be the One worshipped, not man (John 4:24).

Rock-n-roll bands, jazz bands, choirs, pianos, organs, clowns, and circus acts are all used in “worship” today. Some folk are not satisfied unless the preacher becomes a part of the entertainment event. It is believed that he needs to be a stand up comic, a deeply emotional storyteller, and a mighty motivation speaker all rolled into one. The preacher is seen by a new generation as the headlining act in a well-choreographed show. Preachers are no longer preachers, but rather entertainers in the eyes of many.

In a discussion with a member of a denomination I learned why their preacher was so popular. He was a

very good drummer. He would preach for fifteen minutes and then play on the drums for fifteen minutes. In a very large denomination the older, more mature and dignified preacher left to go and teach in a denominational seminary. Taking his place was a young man who removed the "altar," and extended the "stage." During the course of one of his "sermons" he ran across the long stage and jumped to the ground. As soon as he hit the ground he began to do some push-ups. There is no doubt this young acrobatic preacher can put on quite a show. But is that what God wants? Does God want a show? Though these are examples of events that occurred within churches founded by men, it would not surprise me to hear of similar acts taking place in the Lord's church.

There are those who have taken religious entertainment a step further

and have suggested that preaching is totally ineffective and completely out of style. “Fill the time with drama productions, or poetry readings instead,” some cry. In the mid to late 1980’s, I remember hearing some members of the Lord’s church proudly pronounce the passing of preaching. To them, preaching was a completely useless endeavor.

What these misguided souls have forgotten is that preaching is specifically authorized by God as the method for transferring knowledge of His Will. Jesus proclaimed God’s Will through preaching (Matthew 3:1; 4:23; 9:35). The early church did the same (Acts 8:4, 12; 15:35; 20:25). In fact, God even authorized preaching in worship (Acts 20:7-9). We dare not prematurely declare the death of preaching, because God demands preaching (1 Corinthians 1:18-25; Titus 1:3)!

## **WHAT IS PREACHING?**

Tom Holland wrote, preaching is “...the act of righteous manhood on fire with the Truth of God, seeking to bring the souls of men to Christ.”<sup>1</sup> That which preachers are on fire with is the “Truth of God.” Preaching is the presentation of God’s Word through interpretation, explanation, application, and sometimes illustration. The preacher must use common sense methods of determining the meaning of the text (hermeneutics), organize a way of explaining the meaning to the hearers, apply it to their lives, and sometimes illustrate it to aid in understanding.

### **THE TRUE FOUNDATION OF THE SERMON**

Fundamental to any definition of preaching ought to be an emphasis

upon the fact that the Word of God is being presented. John Broadus wrote a book entitled, *A Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*. In his book Broadus speaks of the importance of correctly interpreting the text so that it may be effectively and truthfully preached. Broadus states, "To interpret and apply his text in accordance with its real meaning is one of the preacher's most sacred duties. He stands before the people for the very purpose of teaching and exhorting them out of the Word of God."<sup>2</sup> John Broadus also said, "But using a text, and undertaking to develop and apply its teachings, he is solemnly bound to represent the text as meaning precisely what it does mean."<sup>3</sup> In other words, preaching is the presentation of the Word of God, and as such the preacher must be careful to ensure he is preaching the real meaning of the text. The preacher must interpret the

text before preaching, and then he must explain the text to the hearers.

We must never forget the Scriptures are the foundation for the sermon (1 Peter 4:11). The Scriptures are the only thing that can make a man spiritually complete (2 Timothy 3:15-17). Furthermore, the Gospel of Jesus Christ is the power to save men (Romans 1:16). It is that power which can cut to the heart like no other message (Acts 2:36; Hebrews 4:12). Consequently a real sermon must be based upon the solid foundation of God's Word. The preacher must go to the Holy Scriptures for the text that will be the basis for his sermon. A message without a scriptural text for a foundation is not a sermon. Sermons must be based on Scripture and filled with Scripture. By being filled with Scripture I mean that every point made in the sermon must have Scriptural backing.

In his book, *Sermon Design and Delivery*, brother Holland lists five reasons why the Word of God should be preached. Those reasons are as follows: 1. Wisdom for salvation comes from the Word, 2. All spiritual needs of men are supplied by the Word, 3. The Bible is the standard of authority in doctrine and morality, 4. Men will turn to fables if the Word is not preached, and 5. The Word of God will be the standard on the day of judgment.<sup>4</sup>

## **THE USE OF ILLUSTRATIONS**

While we understand that the Scripture text must be the basis and foundation for the sermon, it is also understood that illustrations can help the listener in his understanding of the Scriptural text. Real life (as in Old Testament examples) and fictional stories (or poetry) can be excellent tools

in helping to explain truths. The Lord used parables to illustrate the truths He taught. Batsell Barrett Baxter explained, “The wise preacher knows he must paint pictures if he would move men; hence he searches for appropriate illustrations to make his lofty spiritual concepts real.”<sup>5</sup>

Warning! There is a danger in using illustrations. To be an effective preacher one must learn to use illustrations. However, if one uses too many illustrations he becomes a defective preacher. There are preachers who never teach any error, but spend little time focusing on the Scriptures. Focusing on fascinating stories while using very little or no Scripture in the sermon will not get the job done. Some preachers will even make a cute story the sermon itself. This is wrong! This is not preaching! This is tickling itching ears and will set folks up

for apostasy and disaster. Preachers who use too many illustrations and too little Scripture have given in to the entertainment mindset of our modern age. As John Broadus says, “Do not use every illustration that occurs to you, nor seek after them for their own sake.”<sup>6</sup>

## **A PICTURE OF POOR PREACHING**

The people of Jeremiah’s day were stubborn. Instead of repenting of their sin they had made their faces harder than rock (Jeremiah 5:3). In doing so they became foolish and ignorant (Jeremiah 5:4). The people eventually came to the point where they hated to hear the truth and much preferred to hear error (Jeremiah 6:10). These people were religious, and they were listening to religious leaders, but they were not pleasing God.

Unfortunately the priests and the prophets of Jeremiah's day were giving the people what they wanted. For example, the prophets lied about impending punishment (Jeremiah 5:12; 6:14). The idea that these religious people would be punished was repugnant to them. They were content to live their lives in sin and wanted to hear nothing about punishment for sin. The preachers of their day (the prophets) told them what they wanted to hear. They wanted to hear that everything was okay when it wasn't. This is precisely the "feel-good," "offend no one" approach to preaching that has made many televangelists very wealthy today.

Jeremiah said the prophets of his day had become wind because they did not preach the Word of God (Jeremiah 5:12). Their message was all fluff and no substance. It was a feel

good message that became very popular, but there was no substance to their message because they were not preaching the Word. The people loved these weak sermons and despised the Word of God (Jeremiah 5:30, 31). They were being fed a diet of spiritual cotton candy when they needed some spiritual meat. Preaching without the Word of God has no spiritual value.

The world today is full of preachers who are just like the prophets of Jeremiah's day. The denominations constantly preach their ecumenical, grace only, doctrine that pleases the ears of many. Some Gospel preachers have totally given in to error in order to please the people while others simply refuse to preach anything hard. Either way, these preachers who have become wind are setting congregations up for apostasy.

## **PICTURES OF POWERFUL PREACHING**

Jeremiah was a powerful preacher. He urged the people to seek the old paths (Jeremiah 6:16). He preached a mighty message of condemnation and future destruction (Jeremiah 5:14-17). He even rebuked the religious leaders and the weak willed prophets (Jeremiah 6:13-15). Jeremiah was not afraid to directly address and refute false doctrine (Jeremiah 7:4), and, in fact, all of his sermons were filled with a “thus says the Lord (Jeremiah 5:14; 6: 9, 16, 21, 22, etc.).

We need preachers today who are powerful like Jeremiah. Preachers who will not give in to modern trends, but who will instead urge Christians to seek the old paths are more like Jeremiah. We must have preachers who are not afraid to step on the toes

of those who are in error (Galatians 4:16). Gospel preachers must have the courage to rebuke those who teach error (2 Timothy 4:2).

Paul was also a powerful preacher. His preaching was powerful because he reasoned out of the Scriptures (Acts 17:2). Paul frequently quoted the Old Testament (Acts 13:33, 34, 35, 41, 47). Paul's preaching was powerful because it was based upon Scripture and it was filled with Scripture! The foundation of every sermon must be the Word of God!!!

## **WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED?**

Preachers are not entertainers. Because they are not entertainers they should not seek to establish their sermons upon stories, poems, or illustrations. The sermon should be founded solidly and securely upon the Scrip-

tures. Illustrations are fine when used appropriately, but they should not be the foundation for the sermon. Poor preachers tell the people what they want to hear rather than what they need to hear. Powerful preachers preach God's Word whether people want to hear the truth or not.

### **Today's assignments:**

Quote Ezra 7:10, Give a 5-7 minute speech on how something works. One 8 ½ x 11 sheet of paper will be allowed for notes.

### **Assignment for the next class meeting:**

Read lesson three and answer the questions at the end of the chapter.

Quote John 3:16 in class. Students who have not given the 5-7 minute speech should do so.

## Questions from lesson two:

1. Should preaching be a part of a well-choreographed entertainment event which some call worship?
2. What method did God authorize for the presentation of His Word?
3. What is preaching?
4. What is the foundation of the sermon?
5. What was wrong with the preachers of Jeremiah's day?
6. What was right with Jeremiah's preaching?
7. What did Paul emphasize in his preaching?

## **Review of Lesson 1:**

1. Words are powerful when chosen well.
2. Words can be used for good or evil.
3. Preachers must preach good words from a good heart.
4. Ezra purposed in his heart to seek the truth, obey the truth, then teach the truth.

## ENDNOTES

- 1 Thomas H. Holland, *Sermon Design and Delivery* (Brentwood, Penmann Press, 1967), 17
- 2 John A. Broadus, *A Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons* (New York, Harper and Brothers Publishing, 1926), 32
- 3 (Broadus, 1926, 32)
- 4 (Holland, 1967, pp. 26-31)
- 5 Batsell Barrett Baxter, *The Heart of the Yale Lectures* (Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 1947), 172
- 6 (Broadus, 1926, 242)

# **CHAPTER THREE**

## **STUDYING FOR YOUR SERMON**

### **THE IMPORTANCE OF PROPER STUDY**

Inspired men in the first century did not have to worry about what they were going to say (Matthew 10:19, 20). The Holy Spirit gave them the very words God wanted them to speak (Luke 12:11, 12). While they were inspired, we are not. No man today is given the gift of miraculous knowledge. Miraculous knowledge ended with the completion of the New Testament (1 Corinthians 13:8-13). When God's revelation to man was completed there was no longer any need for men to be inspired. The Holy Spirit left a record of inspired teaching for us. That record is the Bible (2 Timothy 3:16, 17; 1 Corinthians 2:13)! To

speaking the message of the Holy Spirit today we do not wait for inspiration, but rather we study and proclaim the inspired Bible.

Because we are not inspired, we must take the time to study (2 Timothy 2:15). We cannot preach what we do not know, and we dare not preach another Gospel (Galatians 1:6-9). We are going to have work at being prepared to preach. If a man doesn't like to study, then he doesn't need to preach.

The Psalmist wrote, "*The law of Your mouth is better to me than thousands of coins of gold and silver.*" (Psalm 119:72) The love for the Scriptures expressed in Psalm 119 must characterize the heart of every preacher. Preachers must spend time reading, meditating upon, and thoroughly studying the Scriptures. We must

come to the point where we love Bible study and are very excited about the treasures of knowledge we gain from digging into the Scriptures. What a great delight it is for those who love God's Word to learn something new about the Bible. Each time we study we grow in knowledge. Each time we thoroughly examine the Scriptures we grow in our love for the Scriptures, for God, for mankind, and for our eternal home. Preachers must study, and they must enjoy doing so.

I was once told of a college student who was preaching for a small country congregation on the weekends. This student wanted to stand in the pulpit and have something to say, but he didn't want to put any time into preparation. He decided he could borrow sermon outlines from fellow preacher friends and simply read them off in the pulpit. His friends decided he

should be taught a lesson. When the lazy preacher asked for a sermon outline one Sunday morning he was given a special one. This one was filled with incorrect Scripture references. When the young man got up in the pulpit and tried to turn to the passages he found they were all wrong. I am sure he was thoroughly embarrassed. Hopefully he learned to put time into studying for his sermons.

When we are standing in the pulpit and preaching the Gospel we are involved in one of the most important works in the world. Because of this we must make sure that proper preparations are made. James wrote, "My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment (James 3:1)." Preachers who do not recognize the gravity of their task may regret their lax attitude on the day of judgment. Preachers must study!

## **THE PROPER MATERIALS FOR STUDY**

The first book a preacher needs to get his hands on is a copy of the Scriptures. If a preacher has no other Bible study materials besides the Bible itself he can preach. Having several versions available for personal Bible study may be helpful. However, you will want to be careful to use only reliable translations when preaching. Preach only from those translations or versions which were produced by those who believe every word of the Bible is inspired by God. Make sure the translators were of a mindset that caused them to come as close to interpreting the original in an accurate fashion as possible. Read the preface of your translation to find out what the mindset of the translators was.

The only book a preacher must

have is the Bible. However, there are many non-inspired works that can be of benefit in studying. I would highly recommend every Christian get a good Bible dictionary and concordance. *Strong's Comprehensive Concordance of the Bible* is the one I would most recommend. This is a valuable tool for finding scripture references, doing topical studies, and looking up Greek and Hebrew definitions. Strong's is an easy and invaluable tool to use.

Sometimes good commentaries can be helpful. With any commentary, whether written by denominational preachers, or preachers from the Lord's church, always remember the author of the commentary is not inspired, and is subject to error. I would recommend that you make every effort to understand the passage in its context prior to ever consulting a commentary. Do your best to deter-

mine the correct contextual meaning before you color your thinking with the comments of another. If you are still having trouble understanding the verse you may then want to consult a commentary. Use commentaries sparingly and carefully.

Those who wish to go a little deeper in their study may want to consult some of the Hebrew and Greek tools available. One will often find a wealth of wonderful information from such tools. But remember knowing how to use Biblical language tools does not make one an expert in Biblical languages. The number one best, most important way to understand the meaning of a word in the text is to examine that word in the light of the immediate context, chapter context, book context, covenant context, and Biblical context. Context is crucial and context is key in all Biblical inter-

pretation. Context trumps the Greek and Hebrew word study tools.

One may also look at a variety of other resources for information. Looking at articles in brotherhood publications may help. Tracts can also be a good source of information. For up to date statistical, historical, and scientific information, you can't beat the internet or local library. Many times I have gone to the library to research world religions, evolution, denominational doctrines, etc. I have gone to the internet and used search engines to find similar information.

Many preachers have computers, and will be able to find reference tools such as concordances on computer discs as well as online. Some Bible software programs can be very helpful in helping the Bible student to do a topical study.

In the end, the only tool the preacher really must have is an accurate copy of the Bible. Everything else is from men. Each of us must learn to think for himself! We must all study the Scriptures daily, whether we are preachers, teachers, elders, deacons, or new converts (Acts 17:11).

## **THE MOST IMPORTANT BOOK TO STUDY**

The Bible is obviously the most important book for any one to study. This is even more significant for those who wish to preach. If you don't know the Bible, then you don't have anything to preach. Pep talks based upon a bunch of cute stories are not sermons. Every sermon must be based upon a Biblical text or texts to be a true sermon. Let us "...speak as the oracles of God (1 Peter 4:11)." You must understand, emphasize, and preach the text.

When studying the text for the sermon it is important to keep it in context. There is an old expression that says, "A text taken out of context becomes a pretext." How true that is! If we want to accurately and truthfully proclaim the Gospel we must study all passages in their context. We should look first at the immediate context (surrounding verses) to determine some important facts. Who is speaking, to whom is he speaking, what is the setting, and what is the historical context. Once we have looked at the immediate context we need to look to the chapter context. Reading the entire chapter from which our text is found may keep us from twisting the Scriptures to our own destruction. Beyond the chapter context we must study the book context. We may want to find out to whom the book was written, and why it was written. From there we can go on to study the Testa-

ment context. While some Old Testament principles are still true today, the Old Law has been nailed to the cross (Colossians 2:14-17). The New Testament is the law that is binding upon us today (Hebrews 9:15-17).

After determining the Testament context we should figure out how this text fits into the general Biblical context. Knowing the Bible well will make a big difference in our ability to understand a passage of Scripture. Allowing other passages to comment upon and interpret more difficult passages is very important. We must not interpret any passage of Scripture in such a way as would contradict other simpler verses. The inductive method of Bible study involves collecting all the verse one can find on a particular subject before drawing a conclusion. Scientists use similar methods in collecting data and making conclusions based upon the data.

In examining the text it can be of benefit to us to look at some of the key words in the text. Some texts will emphasize one theme and may repeat a particular word several times. Those are “key words” and can be studied using some of the tools mentioned earlier in this chapter. While you may go deep into your contextual study of those verses that provide the foundation for your sermon, you may not wish to present all of the research you have done when you preach. When it comes time to putting the outline together you will need to “pick and choose” which information is the most pertinent.

Also, when studying the text, don't ever try to force your personal beliefs into the Scriptures. Many a soul has done this to his own peril and destruction (2 Peter 3:16). We must be open and honest in our Bible study. We

need to let the text tell us what to believe rather than trying to force what we believe into the text. When we let the text speak to us we will begin to see ourselves as God sees us. The Bible will act as a mirror reflecting our souls allowing us to recognize those areas in our spiritual lives that need to be changed (James 1:22-25). If we are going to preach, we had better preach what God said, and not what we want Him to say.

## **TAKING GOOD NOTES WHILE YOU STUDY**

Taking good notes will help familiarize your mind with the subject. The information we have studied seems to stick to our minds a little better if we write down key bits of information from our research. Taking good notes will also help prevent us from leaving out important information. Some of

us are just plain forgetful and need good notes to remind us of all pertinent thoughts, and facts.

In taking good notes you will want to go through the text you will be using and either outline it, summarize it, or paraphrase it in your own words. This is not for preaching purposes but rather for your study. Write down key words and the definitions of them. Record on your notebook paper any additional verses that pertain to the one you are studying. You may even want to write down historical, statistical, geographical, or scientific information you have found to help illustrate or explain the passage. Any information you think you may use in the sermon needs to be written down on lined notebook paper or keyed into a computer (or tablet). You may not use it all when you put your sermon together, but keeping good notes like

this will help you to know your material very well.

Once you have taken good notes you will need to arrange them. Do this by writing a rough draft of your outline with only the main points completed. Then look at your notes and see which information goes under each of the main points. Include all that is applicable to the sermon and leave out the rest. For the sake of time and simplicity you probably will not be able to include all of the researched information in your sermon. You may want to keep some of the excess information for future reference.

## **HOW MUCH SHOULD I STUDY?**

We are all limited by time. There are only 24 hours in a day and we need some of that time for eating, relaxing, and sleeping. If a person doesn't sleep

he can't think straight and he can't preach well. However, a person needs to study long and hard before he gets up to preach. How much should I study? A person should study enough to know his material well. An expression I often heard from my university and school of preaching professors was "preach from the overflow." In other words, you need to know the material so well that it will roll easily off of the tip of your tongue when you preach. Know the material so well that you will not have any trouble coming up with appropriate information to effectively make each point.

Part of the time spent in preparing to preach ought to be devoted to rehearsing the sermon. It is a good idea to go to a basement or some other private place where you can preach your sermon out loud a number of times. The best place to practice your sermon is

in the pulpit where you are going to be preaching the sermon. However, it is often difficult to find private practice time in a church auditorium. Those who know their sermons well will feel much more comfortable when it comes time to preach them in front of people. While you want to practice them to the point of knowing them very well I do not recommend that you memorize your sermons word for word. Some preachers may be able to preach effectively by memorizing each word, but most will not. Memorization of each word often makes for a robotic type of presentation and leaves the preacher at risk of forgetting what comes next. Don't memorize the sermon but be able to present it with a good amount of eye contact.

Practicing before a mirror can sometimes help a preacher prepare. He can look at his facial expressions, ges-

tures, posture, and movement. Distracting mannerisms may be detected this way also. It is far better to distract yourself while preaching before a mirror than to distract the congregation when preaching before them. I recommend you rehearse your sermon at least three times before you preach.

## **BASIC TIPS FOR STUDY**

Guy N. Woods wrote a book entitled, *How to Study the New Testament Effectively*. In that book he emphasizes the following three rules for effective Bible study:

1. "One must study regularly fifteen minutes each day and, if at all possible, at the same hour."<sup>1</sup>
2. "One must study under strictly conditioned and controlled circumstances."<sup>2</sup>

3. “One must have the basic books essential to this work.” These basic books are: a Bible, English dictionary, Bible dictionary, and a concordance.<sup>3</sup>

In a book called, *How to Study*, Thomas F. Stanton gives the following helpful hints for studying.

1. Preview the material. Try to get a clear picture of the organization of the material.<sup>4</sup>
2. Question. “The more you are trying to find the answers to good intelligent questions as you study, the more effective your learning will likely be.”<sup>5</sup>
3. Read. “The keynote to effective reading is *reaction*, that is, thinking hard about what you are reading.”<sup>6</sup>

4. State. “Say over in your own words what you have just read.”<sup>7</sup>
5. Test. “Test how much you remember then repair weaknesses...”<sup>8</sup>

## **WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED?**

Preachers are not inspired which means they must study to be able to preach. Preachers must be conscientious in the study and preparation of their sermons because they will receive a stricter judgment. While there are many books that may be helpful to a preacher in his study, the only book he must study is the Bible. When studying for your sermon, be sure to keep the verses you are studying in their proper context. Take good notes while you study, and then arrange those notes within the rough draft of your sermon outline. You should study enough to know your material

well, and you should practice preaching your sermon.

### **Today's assignment:**

Quote John 3:16, and students who have not given the 5-7 minute speech should do so.

### **Next class assignment:**

Read lesson four, and answer the questions at the end of the chapter. Be prepared to quote Acts 17:2,3 and read a short chapter from the Bible to the class.

### **Questions from lesson three:**

1. Are you inspired by God?
2. Why do you need to study?
3. What materials are helpful for Bible study?

4. What kind of study tools may be helpful?
5. What is the most important thing to study?
6. Why should you take good notes when you study?
7. How much should you study?

### **Review of Previous Chapters:**

1. Words are powerful when chosen well.
2. Ezra determined in his heart to seek the truth, obey the truth, then preach the truth.
3. The foundation of the sermon is the Word of God.
4. Good preachers preach the truth even if it is not what the people want to hear.

## ENDNOTES

- 1 Guy N. Woods, How to Study the Bible Effectively (Nashville, Gospel Advocate Co, 1992), 16
- 2 (Woods, 1992, 17)
- 3 (Woods, 1992, 18)
- 4 Thomas F. Staton, How to Study (Nashville, How to Study, 1982), 17
- 5 (Staton, 1982, 19)
- 6 (Staton, 1982, 20)
- 7 (Staton, 1982, 20)

# **CHAPTER FOUR**

## **PREPARING AN OUTLINE**

### **TYPES OF SERMONS**

Sermons can be categorized in a number of different ways. One way to determine the type of sermon is to look at the aim or the purpose of the sermon. A sermon may be designed to encourage the congregation. Discouragement is one of the Devil's favorite tools. He can destroy good works, tear down congregations, and draw Christians back into the world with this tool. Faithful Gospel preachers will often face discouragement, but they must never allow this potentially devastating emotion to destroy their work or their faith. One way for evangelists to remain encouraged is to preach encouraging sermons.

On one occasion I was accused of having some horrible motives for standing for the truth and doing what is right. The accusation hurt me for a while because of what was said and who said it. For a few days I was discouraged. During those few days I began reading the 31<sup>st</sup> Psalm and determined to read it every day for a week. After I had read it a few times I felt better. I was so encouraged by Psalm 31 that I decided to outline the Psalm and preach it. The preaching of that encouraging text boosted me up and also encouraged a number of others in the congregation. Encouraging others can encourage the encourager. Too many times, pain, temptation, or persecution brings Christians down. We love our brethren. Because we love them we need to frequently remind them of the hope, peace, joy, and contentment that can be found in Christianity. All Christians become discouraged from

time to time. Those who remain discouraged will die spiritually. Use the power of the Gospel to boost them up with sermons of exhortation.

Another sermon may simply have as its aim that of supplying important information to the congregation. A lack of knowledge destroyed the children of Israel (Hosea 4:6). The same type of ignorance can destroy congregations of the body of Christ. Many congregations are going into apostasy in this twenty-first century because elders are not making sure the preacher and Bible class teachers are doing their job. They must frequently present informational lessons on the fundamentals. Children have grown up in Christian homes not knowing what the church really is, or who God really is. We must not allow this to happen anymore! Preachers must spend time delivering basic informational

sermons about the church of Christ, salvation, worship, etc.

Another possible purpose for a sermon is that of persuading the listener to take a particular action. To some degree all sermons are designed to be persuasive, but some more so than others. We should preach to convince sinners to obey the Gospel. Congregations and individual Christians must sometimes be persuaded to repent. Sometimes a church may fail in a particular duty or responsibility. Such churches need to be persuaded to correct the situation. The apostle Paul worked very hard in the synagogues and cities to persuade people of the truth. This he did because he loved the souls of men and wanted them to be saved. Let us use the Word of God skillfully; along with the talents God has given us to persuade men and women to escape the clutches of the

Devil. “Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and doctrine (2 Timothy 4:2).”

Sermons may also be categorized by their structure. Some sermons are referred to as “topical,” or “subject” sermons. A topical sermon is one that is organized around a particular subject or topic, as the name suggests. The topic for the lessons will come from the main text, while other passages may supply the points and sub points for the sermon. A concordance is an invaluable tool in preparing for this type of sermon. One may use the concordance to reference passages that deal with the subject to be discussed. For example, one may be preaching a sermon on the topic of “baptism.” He can go to the concordance and find every verse in the Bible that contains the word “baptism.” It is always benefi-

cial to look up as many verses on the particular subject as possible while researching for the sermon. However, it is not always possible to use all the verses in your sermon. When you study the passages dealing with your subject, take good notes, and then arrange those notes in a logical fashion for an outline.

I have repeatedly heard people criticize topical sermons. Some have even suggested they should never be used at all. Such a radical approach is unfounded. God did not put everything that deals with a particular subject in one chapter of the Bible. To gain a Biblical perspective on a subject one must look to more than one scripture. Consider as an example a sermon on the question, "What must I do to be saved?" One might decide simply to read Romans 10:9-10, and suggest that only belief and confession are nec-

essary for salvation. Take the church as another example. One may wish to preach a sermon on one aspect of the church, but if he wants to give an overview of identifying characteristics of the New Testament church he is going to have to use a topical sermon. Topical sermons have their place.

Another type of sermon construction is called “textual.” A textual sermon lies somewhere between a topical sermon and an expository sermon. A textual sermon is one in which the topic and the main points all come from the text chosen. Other Scriptures may be brought in to reinforce what is said, but the logical organization of the sermon is seen in the main text. Textual sermons allow the preacher to use the organization laid out by the Holy Spirit, while bringing in other pertinent passages.

The third type of structure for sermons is expository. An expository sermon is one in which the theme, main points, and sub points all come from a single passage. That passage may be a few verses, an entire chapter, or a book. Everything necessary to an effective and organized sermon is found in the one passage of Scripture. In order to properly preach this kind of sermon we must know the text very well. When we preach expository sermons we are allowing the Bible to speak to people in the way it was organized by God. This type of sermon also helps the preacher and the members grow in their appreciation for the Word of God.

Sermons may be categorized according to purpose or structure. The most effective preachers are those who vary the type of sermons they use. Unless there is a variety in types of sermons

used it is very likely the congregation will soon grow tired of the local evangelist's preaching. In addition, preaching the whole counsel of God will require structuring sermons in a variety of ways (Acts 20:26, 27).

## **METHODS OF ORGANIZING MATERIAL FOR PRESENTATION**

No preacher should stand in the pulpit unprepared to preach. The exception to this is if some emergency arises requiring someone to fill in at the last moment. Even then, it is good for a preacher to have a sermon or two slipped inside his Bible, pocket, or memory for such an occasion.

Previously we discussed the importance of diligent study in preparation for preaching. Once the diligent study has been done, the notes from that study must be organized. The infor-

mation gathered must be presented in a logical order if the sermon is to be effective. Preachers who ramble will lose the listener very quickly. On the other hand, preachers who are organized are more likely to make their point in a more effective manner. There are different methods of organizing the material for presentation.

A word for word manuscript is one method of organizing the notes for preaching. Preachers who do this don't have to worry about straying from the theme of their lesson, nor do they have to worry about what they are going to say, unless the lights go out. Everything he needs is right there in front of him. Some preachers can use a manuscript very well. However, this method is not recommended. There are some obvious disadvantages in using a manuscript for preaching. Usually this method makes for

poor eye contact, and may sound more like reading than speaking. The hearer may also get the impression the preacher is not well prepared even if he has spent hours on his material. Using a manuscript can make it more difficult to use gestures, facial expressions, and good body movement in the pulpit. If a manuscript user loses his place it is may not be so easy to find where he was in the sea of words that lay on the paper in front of him.

Some preachers like to preach without notes. Many books have been written on preaching without notes. Preaching without notes really impresses those who listen to the noteless preacher, and some preachers are able to preach without notes very effectively. Some preachers will outline the material ahead of time, memorize the outline, and then leave the outline behind. Others may scratch notes

into their Bibles and preach only from those notes that fit into the margins. Of course, there are also preachers who have just preached the same sermons over and over again so many times that they no longer need notes of any kind. No doubt each preacher who goes into the pulpit without a manuscript or an outline in his hand prepares for his presentation in his own way. This author preaches from time to time without notes of any kind. However, proper study and an organized outline are prepared in advance. The outline is then left behind. This way the sermon is presented in a logical form without rambling.

There are certainly some important advantages to preaching without notes. This kind of preaching makes for excellent eye contact, and when done well can contribute to a smooth flowing style that is pleasing to the

ear. Of course, there are also some disadvantages. For some, this method will make it more likely they will stray from the subject. One thing may remind them of another that has little to do with their main point, but because they have no notes in front of them to keep them on the right track they become verbally disoriented. There is also the possibility the preacher may forget a point or two, or perhaps even his whole sermon. In my public speaking classes I saw many a poor soul freeze in horror in the middle of a noteless speech because they had forgotten what to say next. For some preachers, preaching without notes may also limit the number of subjects they cover and the number of passages they use. Some sermon subjects and passages lend themselves to this type of preaching while others do not. For example, it is much easier to preach an expository sermon without notes

than it is to preach a topical sermon without notes. One older, well-experienced preacher told me he wished he had learned to use an outline. He always preached without notes and did so very effectively. However, preaching without notes limited him to some degree. Despite his effectiveness in using this method, he still believes he would have done better if he had learned to use an outline.

Another danger that can present itself in preaching without notes is that some will try to memorize every word they are going to say. They want the lesson to be perfect so they will write out everything in advance and memorize it. Very few preachers can do this. Even fewer can do this effectively. The end product of this type of presentation is usually cold and robotic.

The most common method of organizing one's notes for presentation is outlining. Outlining the material helps the preacher to see the logical and natural flow of the sermon. With an outline the preacher may organize his sermon in a clear and effective way. Because of the format of an outline it should be fairly easy for the preacher to glance down at his paper at any time and quickly find his place. In other words, a proper outline will highlight the main thoughts allowing for better flow and improved eye contact.

An outline may become a disadvantage if it is not used properly. Some end up reading their outlines word for word, while others find it difficult to remember the details of some information not included on the paper. These problems can be overcome with time and a deliberate effort to improve. It

is also possible for a preacher to lose his outline. If he is too tied to the outline he may be in trouble if he ever arrives at his preaching appointment to find his material is not with him.

It is my opinion that a word for word manuscript should never be used because it inhibits the presentation. It is my opinion that preaching without notes can be done effectively, but an outline should always be behind the sermon even if the outline is not used when the material is presented. I believe the best way to capably and consistently preach in an effective and organized manner is to use an outline.

To highlight the importance of preaching from an outline some quotes from some well-known experts in the field of preaching and public speaking may be of benefit. Tom Holland gives three ways in which a sermon outline

helps a preacher. “The sermon outline should be an asset to the preacher’s logical reasoning in sermon preparation.”<sup>1</sup> “The sermon outline should give the preacher confidence in delivery...”<sup>2</sup> “The sermon outline will...be a definite aid to the preacher in the presentation of the sermon.”<sup>3</sup>

John Broadus says, “The discussion, or body of the discourse, must be constructed on some plan...”<sup>4</sup> “Men who rely on their powers of absolute extemporizing, or who imagine themselves to possess a quasi-inspiration, usually stagger and stray in every direction, following no definite line, and accomplishing very little...”<sup>5</sup>

In his book, *The Ten Commandments for Public Speakers*, Stephen D. Gladis writes, “Who should use an outline?” “Anyone who wants to make sure that the speech is organized logically and

that it is both complete and proportioned.”<sup>6</sup> Gladis also states, “Whether you are an experienced professional public speaker or a rank amateur, the outline will keep your ideas organized and logical.”<sup>7</sup> Gladis further writes, “Preparation means having their facts straight and having those facts in an organizational pattern that makes sense.”<sup>8</sup>

## **PREPARING A SERMON OUTLINE**

Now that we have established the importance of developing a sermon outline let's talk about how to put one together. First of all, proper research and background study must be done before one can complete an outline. Once the research is done, the notes from that research need to be organized. Those notes cannot be organized unless you first know what you hope to accomplish with your ser-

mon. Ask yourself, “What is the main purpose (thesis) of my sermon?” You should always have one overall theme and purpose. Everything in the sermon will point toward and support that purpose. Once you know where you are going, then you can figure out how to get there. As Batsell Barrett Baxter said, “The sermon should develop one theme well, rather than several themes sketchily.”<sup>9</sup>

It may be helpful for you to write your thesis down. Stephen Gladis says, “Your thesis is the ‘bottom line’ of your speech. When you strip away all the words and the superstructure, the thesis is the essence.”<sup>10</sup> In one sentence write down what you hope to accomplish with the sermon. You can use this to organize your outline and you may want to include it somewhere on your outline. Some preachers will even put the thesis on their outlines

prior to the introduction. It may not be good to read the thesis to the congregation as you begin. However, it may be beneficial to occasionally include the thesis statement as a part of your introduction.

When you get ready to organize your study notes into an outline, you will want to choose the type of outline. The *Harbrace College Handbook* lists two types of outlines. There is the “topic” outline which “...expresses the major headings...and subdivisions in phrases.”<sup>11</sup> The advantage to this type of outline is its brevity.<sup>12</sup> Another type of outline is the “full sentence” outline in which full sentences are used for each point.<sup>13</sup> This type of outline is much more specific.

Not only must you choose the type of outline that best suits you, but you must also choose the style of outline

that is easiest for you. By the “style” of outline I mean the use of numbers and letters to identify the various points and sub points. Below are some examples of outline styles, all of which are similar.

1. From the *Harbrace College Handbook*:<sup>14</sup>

I. Major Idea.

A. Supporting Idea.

1. Example or illustration for supporting idea.

2. “ “.

a. Detail for example or illustration.

b. “ “.

B. Supporting Idea.

II. Major Idea.

2. From *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*:<sup>15</sup>

- I.
  - A.
    - 1.
      - a)
        - (1)
        - (2)
      - b)
    - 2.
  - B.

II.

3. From *Speaking for the Master: A Study of Public Speaking for Christian Men*:<sup>16</sup>

- I.
  - A.
    - 1.
      - a.
        - (I)
          - (A).
          - (B).
        - (II)
      - b.
    - 2.

B.

II.

Baxter says, “Select a consistent set of symbols to show the relationship between main points and subordinate points.”<sup>17</sup> Choose the numbers, letters, and layout that suits you. The examples just given should help you to decide how you would like to arrange your outlines. Also, you may want to refer to the sermon outlines found at the end of this chapter to see how the author has outlined some material. In the end there is no particular format that you must follow. Choose a format that is easy for you to use.

At the top of your sermon outline you will want to put the title of the sermon. The *Harbrace College Handbook* talks about choosing an appropriate title when writing, and gives the following suggestions for choosing a title:<sup>18</sup>

1. “An appropriate title fits the subject matter.”
2. “A good way to begin developing a title is to try condensing your thesis statement without becoming too vague or too general.”
3. “A good title may also arouse the readers’ curiosity by asking a question.”

There are many reasons why a preacher will want to put titles on his sermon outlines. He can record those titles in a sermon log. Keeping track of when and where you preach your sermons can be very useful. If you don't title the sermon you will have no good way of cataloguing them. Sermon titles may be used on recordings of the sermon and may also be used to advertise. Some congregations like to put next Sunday's sermon titles on

the sign out front, while others like to advertise the titles ahead of time in the bulletin. Titles are important for those reasons. Choose a title that may attract attention but don't go too far and become irreverent in your title choices. These are sermons, not novels, or movies.

Put the title at the top of the outline. The Scripture text should be located under the title, followed by the thesis statement. After this add the introduction. This is simply the order in which you will find these components on the outline. This is not necessarily the best order in which to develop the outline as you study. For example, one preacher suggests the introduction should never be written until the body and conclusion are completed. There may be some merit to this. You can't introduce a subject if you don't know where you are going with it. However,

there may be times when beginning with the introduction is appropriate.

Introductions are very important. With the introduction a preacher should gain the attention of the congregation, begin to develop a rapport with the congregation, and introduce the subject he is discussing. John Broadus says the two purposes of an introduction are “to interest our hearers in the subject,” and, “to prepare them for understanding it.”<sup>19</sup> Stephen D. Gladis says, “In a nutshell, the purpose of the introduction is to tell the audience what you’re about to tell them! Structurally that consists of four parts: The attention getter, the need to know, the thesis, and the preview.”<sup>20</sup>

Most explanations of the purpose of introductions discuss the need to get the listener’s attention. Batsell Barrett Baxter says, “In the beginning the

speaker's first desire is to get the *attention* of his hearers."<sup>21</sup> Tom Holland gives a number of suggestions as to how to get the attention of the listeners: "Begin with something specific, explain the context of the passage, use a striking quotation, use a story, or quote a current news item."<sup>22</sup> The *Harbrace College Handbook* says, "To arouse interest, you might begin your introduction with a startling event, a cleverly phrased statement, or an anecdote."<sup>23</sup> The same handbook later suggests, "Sometimes an interesting fact or unusual detail makes an introduction effective."<sup>24</sup> The book, *The Ten Commandments for Public Speakers*, tells of speakers gaining attention through: short stories, hypothetical situations, startling statistics, and humor.<sup>25</sup>

While working to gain the attention of the listener and to interest them in

the material you are about to discuss, remember two very important facts: 1. The power of the message is always in the Gospel and not in theatrics or emotionalism (Romans 1:16); 2. The sermon is a part of the worship service, and as such must be conducted in a decent and orderly fashion (1 Corinthians 14:40). In others words, get the attention of the listener but do not get carried away. Every powerful preacher is also a disciplined preacher who is careful not to make a fool out of himself with odd antics in the pulpit.

Following the introduction on the outline will be what some label “discussion” or others “body.” This is the main part of the sermon. This is the meat and substance of what you are preaching. This section of the sermon must be logically arranged, and well laid out for effective delivery. In the body of the outline there are main

points and sub points. Each main point supports the thesis that was introduced in the introduction of the sermon. If you have any main point that does not directly address the purpose of the sermon eliminate it. Under each main point are the sub points. Each sub point must support the main point it is listed under. If the sub point does not support the main point you need to take it out.

Think of a sermon as an athlete. An athlete cannot perform well if his body is covered in fat. On the other hand, the athlete will perform better if the fat is gone and the muscle is toned. Slim down those fat sermons. Take out any point that does not need to be there. Use only the most powerful points, and only those that directly address the matter at hand. Far too many preachers preach sermons filled with fat and fluff. Take out the lard

and tone it up! Stick to the main purpose (thesis) of the sermon and do not stray.

The type of sermon you choose will determine the order of the main points. If it is an expository or textual sermon, allow the scripture text itself to determine the order. If the sermon is topical, then organize the main points with the strongest, most effective, and most powerful points coming toward the end. This is especially important in the case of a sermon designed to persuade the hearer to take a particular course of action.

How many main points should I have? You should have just the right amount. Usually that is not more than two or three. You might get away with four or more, but the more you have the less likely it is they will be remembered. For simplicity, for effec-

tiveness, and for time, two or three is usually best. When preaching we are not trying to be verbose. We are trying to say as much as we can with as few words as possible. That means we are specific with our choice of words and to the point.

The conclusion follows the body of the sermon. While the introduction is important for getting attention and introducing the subject, the conclusion is important for bringing everything together and driving the thesis home. View the conclusion as the climax. Everything in the sermon builds toward this end. Don't fail to work hard on the conclusion. The sermon will lose its effectiveness if the preacher does not know how to end. Don't ramble on. Don't repeat the sermon. Don't finish and fade away with barely a whimper. Finish strong. John Broadus said, "The conclusion ought

to have moved like a river, growing volume and power, but instead of that the discourse loses itself in some great marsh, or ends like the emptying of a pitcher with a few pour drops and dregs.”<sup>26</sup> Don’t let your sermon lose itself in “some great marsh.”

Tom Holland listed some things that will weaken a conclusion, which include: making it too long, dwelling too much on an emotional appeal, apologizing for preaching too long, trivial thoughts, and saying the worn out old phrase, “now in conclusion.”<sup>27</sup> The book, *Public Speaking for Dummies* offers some suggestions for strengthening a conclusion, such as: referring back to the introduction, using a quotation, asking a question, asking for help, or asking for a commitment.<sup>28</sup>

## **USING ANOTHER PREACHER’S OUTLINE**

In the denominational world there is a big uproar over whether or not it is ethical for one preacher to use another preacher's outlines or sermons. While there are some true Gospel preachers who may feel the same way, most that I have encountered do not. Members of the church of Christ frequently and freely share their sermon outlines with fellow preachers. They understand they are preaching the truth, the truth doesn't change, and the message they are preaching is the same one that was preached in the first century. The Gospel is free for all men. Gospel preachers have not come up with something new, unique, or different. If they have, it is false doctrine.

I have in my personal library a number of sermon outline books. I don't remember when the last time was that I used one of them. They mostly col-

lect dust. However, they have their place and serve their purpose. They are excellent tools for the young inexperienced preacher. They may also be of use when preachers want to examine the style of other's preaching in order to improve their own. Now, why do you suppose these books are published? The reason these books are published is because the author wants other preachers to use his outlines and preach them. Max Patterson has put together a number of commentaries on various books of the Bible. In the back of each book he includes some sermon outlines developed from his study of that particular Bible book. When he teaches that material he always encourages preachers to take his sermon outlines and preach them.

When my brother was a student at the Memphis School of Preaching he was so busy with his school work that

he had little time to prepare for his Sunday preaching appointment. For that reason I would mail him bundles of my sermon outlines. Some of his friends would take those outlines and copy them also. On any given Sunday two to four preachers would be preaching my sermons. Was I upset? No. I had given the sermon outlines for that purpose.

My dad has given me several of his outlines for that purpose. I have preached some of them. Occasionally I will take someone else's outline and make it my own by changing it to suit my style. I may change the wording or the main points. I may add to or subtract from the information, or perhaps change the introduction and conclusion. When I am done it is essentially my own all though the basis for the sermon came from someone else's outline.

At the local monthly preacher's meetings that I attend, preachers often bring sermon outlines to share with the others. For one such meeting I was given the assignment of developing a number of brief sermon outlines from the book of Revelation to give out to the preachers present. The intended purpose was for them to take those outlines and develop them to suit their own style.

Having said that it is okay to use other preacher's outlines let me now give a strong warning! Don't make it a habit to adapt other preacher's outlines. Ninety-nine percent of my sermon outlines are the result of my own personal Bible study. I do this because I like to think for myself. I prefer to see the Bible as my source for sermon outlines because it is the truth and saving power. Also, when developing my own sermon outlines I

gain knowledge of the subject that allows me to preach freely, fluently, and easily from the overflow of knowledge and preparation. Your most effective sermons will most likely be those that you have developed yourself.

Is it okay to use the outlines of other sound and faithful preachers? Usually. Is it fine to do that exclusively? No. Make sure most of your sermon outlines are developed entirely by you. This book has been giving you the basics that will allow you to do so. Be your own man. Do your own thinking. Study the powerful gospel and preach it with all your might!

## **A SERMON OUTLINE EXAMPLE**

To give you an idea of the type of arrangement I use in my sermon outlines I have included a sermon I preached a few years ago. Note the layout of the outline as well as the content.

# **THE PROPHETS BECAME WIND**

(Jeremiah 5:12)

## INTRODUCTION:

1. His own people hated him.
  - a. They hated him because of the message he preached.
  - b. Many of them wanted him killed so that they would not have to listen to his message anymore.
2. His message was not pleasant.
  - a. He was preaching a harsh, negative, critical message of repentance and doom.
  - b. They just wanted to hear “feel good” sermons without any substance to them.

c. Jeremiah was sent to preach to Judah at a time when sin and violence ruled the land, where the religious leaders were corrupt, and the preachers of the day refused to preach God's Word.

3. Sounds a lot like today doesn't it?

a. True Gospel Preachers who stand up for what is right and who are not afraid to reprove, rebuke, and exhort are often hated.

b. People want to hear nothing but "feel good" sermons that have no real substance to them.

c. Too many folk reject any kind of preacher or sermon that might just make them feel guilty.

4. Unfortunately too many Gospel preachers have given in to the demands of our hard-hearted society.

- a. People don't want to hear the Word of God, so preachers fill their sermons with cute stories, and rarely read, quote, or even give a specific reference to a Scripture.
  - b. Preachers within the Lord's church have learned to preach messages that contain no error, but yet do not contain any real substance.
5. This kind of preaching is going to destroy the church.
- a. As Israel was destroyed for lack of knowledge so too the church will be injured by ignorance (Hosea 4:6).
  - b. All of this and the people love to have it so.
6. Listen carefully this morning as we discuss:

- a. A picture of poor preaching.
- b. A picture of powerful preaching.
- c. The power in preaching.

## DISCUSSION:

### I. A PICTURE OF POOR PREACHING.

A. The people of Jeremiah's day were stubborn.

1. Instead of repenting of their sin, they made their faces harder than rock (Jeremiah 5:3).

2. In doing so they became foolish and ignorant (Jeremiah 5:4).

3. The people came to the point where they actually hated

to hear the truth (Jeremiah 6:10).

4. Were they religious? Yes! Were they listening to religious leaders? Yes! Were they pleasing God? No!

B. The prophets and priests gave in to the desires of the people.

1. The prophets lied about impending punishment (Jeremiah 5:12; 6:14).
  - a. The idea that these religious people would be punished was repugnant to them.
  - b. They were content to live their lives in sin and wanted to hear nothing about punishment for sin.

- c. The preachers of their day told them what they wanted to hear, which was that everything was okay.
2. The prophets did not preach the Word of God and because of this Jeremiah says they have become wind (Jeremiah 5:12).
  - a. Their message was fluff and of no use.
  - b. The preachers were full of hot air.
  - c. There was no substance to their message because they were not preaching the Word.
  - d. The people loved these sermons without substance (Jeremiah 5:30, 31).

C. The world is full of preachers today who are just like the prophets spoken of in Jeremiah.

1. The denominations constantly preach an ecumenical, grace only, doctrine that pleases the hearing of many.
2. Some Gospel preachers have totally given in to error in order to please the people.
3. Other Gospel preachers who are not preaching error are still setting up their congregations for total apostasy because they refuse to preach anything hard.
4. Some preachers simply do not refer to the Bible very much, if at all.

- a. Their sermons are full of cute stories and pretty poems, but not Scripture.
- b. They don't read, quote, or even properly refer to Scriptures in their sermons.
- c. These kinds of preachers have become wind.

## II. A PICTURE OF POWERFUL PREACHING.

- A. Jeremiah was a powerful preacher.
  1. He urged the people to seek the old paths (Jeremiah 6:16).
  2. He preached a powerful message of condemnation and future destruction (Jeremiah 5:14-17).

3. He rebuked the religious leaders and weak willed prophets of his day (Jeremiah 6:13-15).
4. He directly addressed and refuted false doctrine (Jeremiah 7:4).
5. He preached the Word of God, and his sermons were filled with “thus says the Lord (Jeremiah 5:14; 6:9, 16, 21, 22, etc.).”

B. We need preachers today who are powerful like Jeremiah.

1. Preachers who will not give in to modern trends but rather urge Christians to seek the old paths (Jeremiah 6:16).
2. Preachers who will not be afraid to step on the toes of

those who are in error (Galatians 4:16).

3. Preachers who will rebuke those who teach error and refute the error (2 Timothy 4:2).
  4. Preachers whose sermons are filled with the Scriptures.
    - a. Sermons must be based upon Scripture.
    - b. Every point made in the sermon must be Biblical.
    - c. Preachers should read some Scripture, quote some Scripture, and at the very least state the reference so people can look it up.
- C. Powerful preachers are balanced in their preaching.

1. We must declare the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:26, 27).
2. We must reprove, rebuke, and exhort (2 Timothy 4:2).
3. We must do it all with love (Ephesians 4:15).

### III. THE POWER IN PREACHING.

#### A. What makes powerful preaching powerful?

1. Is it the talents of the preacher?
  - a. Some are more gifted than others in their ability to speak publicly.
  - b. This can make the preaching more effective.

- c. However, false teachers usually sound good.
2. Is it the illustrations used by the preacher?
- a. Illustrations should be used in sermons and can effectively help people to see what the speaker is saying.
  - b. However, while illustrations can be helpful we must remember cute stories, and pretty poems won't save souls.
  - c. Sermons strong on illustration and weak on Scripture are not true sermons.
3. Is it the Word of God?
- a. Yes it is!

- b. The power to save is not in the man, but rather in the message if he is preaching the truth (Romans 1:16).
- c. The doctrine of men won't save anybody (Matthew 15:9).
- d. It is the Word of God that must be preached, because it is the truth that saves us from our sin (John 17:17; John 8:32).
- e. When preachers preach they must preach as the oracles of God (1 Peter 4:11).

B. Notice the example of Paul in his preaching.

1. Paul reasoned out of the Scriptures when he preached (Acts 17:2).

2. Paul frequently quoted the Old Testament Scriptures (Acts 13:33, 34, 35, 41, 47).
  3. Paul's preaching was powerful because it was based upon Scripture and it was filled with Scripture!
- C. We need more powerful preachers like Paul today.

1. Let us preach the pleasant sermons of peace, love, and hope.
2. But let us not fail to preach the painful sermons of righteousness, temperance, and the judgment to come (Acts 24:25).
3. We must always preach in love even when hammering on

hardened hearts (Ephesians 4:15).

## CONCLUSION:

1. Jeremiah said of the preacher's of his day, "the prophets have become wind."
  - a. Their message had no substance to it because it wasn't the truth.
  - b. Their message had no substance to it because they were not preaching the Word of God.
2. We can truly say of so many of the preachers of today, that they have become wind.
  - a. I know of a preacher who is very popular among sound and un-sound brethren alike, but his message is full of wind.

- b. A lot of people respond to him and not the Gospel because he doesn't preach the Gospel.
  - c. He may occasionally mention a Scripture but sometimes even then he takes it out of context.
  - d. I have heard him preach entire sermons without referencing a single Scripture, quoting a single passage, or opening his Bible to read any of it.
  - e. He has learned to play entirely upon the emotions of people, and evoke many positive responses, unlike Paul who appealed to reason and the Scriptures and received many negative responses.
3. You brethren need to think for yourselves!

- a. You need to make sure you search the Scriptures daily to see if what you have been told is the truth (Acts 17:11).
  - b. You need to learn to rightly divide the Word of truth (2 Timothy 2:15).
  - c. You need to demand only those preachers whose sermons are based upon the Scriptures, and are filled with the Scriptures, whether of me, or any visiting preacher.
4. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is the power to save the souls of men (Romans 1:16).
- a. It must be studied, practiced, and preached.
  - b. It must be obeyed.

- c. Have you obeyed the Gospel and become a New Testament Christian?

## **WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED?**

We learned that there are different types of sermons. Sermons may be designed to fulfill a particular purpose. Encouragement, information, and persuasion are examples. Sermons may be categorized by their difference in structure also. Topical sermons are organized around a particular subject with scripture references coming from a variety of passages. Textual sermons are centered upon a particular passage with all of the main points coming from that passage. Additional verses may be brought in to support the main points or sub points. An expository sermon is one in which the particular text chosen supplies all the information necessary for a complete

outline. No other verses are needed to preach the sermon.

There are various ways of organizing one's material for preaching. One may use a word-for-word manuscript, preach with an outline, or preach without notes. The method most recommended by this author is using an outline. Even if one likes to preach without notes an outline should be behind the sermon to keep the speaker organized and on track.

### **Today's Assignments:**

Quote Acts 17:2,3 and read a short Bible chapter to the class.

### **Assignments for the next lesson:**

Read lesson five and answer the questions at the end of the chapter. Quote 2 Timothy 3:16, 17. Students

who have not already done so, should be prepared to read a short Bible chapter to the class.

### **Questions from lesson four:**

1. In what two ways may a sermon be categorized?
2. Name three different types of sermon structure.
3. What is a topical sermon?
4. Explain a textual sermon.
5. What is an expository sermon?
6. What three methods are commonly used to organize the sermon material for presentation?
7. What are some advantages to using a sermon outline?

8. Name two purposes for a sermon introduction?
9. How should you view the conclusion of the sermon?
10. Should you use another preacher's outlines most of the time or should you use your own sermons most of the time?
11. Finish this sentence: "Say as much as you can with..."

### **Review of Previous Lessons:**

1. Words are powerful when chosen well.
2. The Scriptures are the foundation for the sermon.
3. Preachers must study hard and prepare well.

## ENDNOTES

- 1 Thomas H. Holland, Sermon Design and Delivery (Brentwood, Pennmann Press, 1967), 45
- 2 (Holland, 1967, 46)
- 3 (Ibid)
- 4 John A. Broadus, A Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons (New York, Harper and Brothers Publishing, 1926), 76
- 5 (Ibid)
- 6 Stephen D. Gladis, The Ten Commandments for Public Speakers (Amherst, Human Resource Development Press, 1990), 37
- 7 (Gladis, 1990, 38)

- 8 (Gladis, 1990, 39)
- 9 Batsell Barrett Baxter, *The Heart of the Yale Lectures* (Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 1947), 147
- 10 (Gladis, 1990, 32)
- 11 John C. Hodges, Mary E. Whitten, Suzanne S. Webb, *Harbrace College Handbook* (San Deigo, 1986), 368
- 12 (Hodges, 1986, 369)
- 13 (Ibid)
- 14 (Hodges, 1986, 368)
- 15 Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1987), 36

16 Batsell Barrett Baxter, *Speaking for the Master: A Study of Public Speaking for Christian Men* (Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 1954), 91

17 (Ibid)

18 (Hodges, 1986, 374)

19 (Broadus, 1926, 267)

20 (Gladis, 1990, 40)

21 (Baxter, 1954, 99)

22 (Holland, 1967, 97)

23 (Hodges, 1986, 371)

24 (Hodges, 1986, 372)

25 (Gladis, 1990, 40)

26 (Broadus, 1926, 209)

27 (Holland, 1967, 99)

28 Malcolm Kushner, Public Speaking for Dummies (Foster City, IDG Books, 1999), 148-150

# **CHAPTER FIVE**

## **SERMON PRESENTATION**

The basis of the sermon is the Word of God. When the truth is preached the preacher has accomplished something. Ensuring that the sermon is Biblical is the most important factor in preaching. Presenting the material comes second to this. However, improving one's presentation ability will often result in greater effectiveness. Every preacher must preach to the best of his abilities. Every preacher must work hard to improve his abilities for as long as he preaches. A well-presented sermon is more persuasive and holds the attention of the hearers more effectively. As Batsell Barrett Baxter says, "Good sermons may fail because of ineffective delivery..."<sup>1</sup>

### **ENTHUSIASM IN PREACHING**

When we stand before a congregation and preach the truth we can know that we are doing something very important. Preaching the saving gospel of Christ is the primary function of the New Testament church. The last words spoken by our Lord while on this earth included the command to go and preach (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15,16; Luke 24:42; Acts 1:8). These are the marching orders of the churches of Christ. We must preach the Word in order to save the lost and strengthen fellow Christians. It is because of the saving power of the Gospel you and I can affect eternity with our preaching. The importance of the task and the glory of the Gospel should cause us to be enthusiastic when we preach.

When we love the truth and have worked hard to prepare a sermon we should be excited to preach. Once

that sermon is completed we ought to feel as if we as if we can't wait to step into the pulpit and start preaching. If we were chained down we would break the chains into pieces just to get into the pulpit to preach. Knowing you have prepared your material well and have practiced the presentation of it sufficiently will give you an energy and zeal that should come through in the pulpit.

The old expression, "enthusiasm is contagious" is certainly true. If the preacher cannot speak enthusiastically, he may have a hard time motivating members of the church. Sleepy, dull preachers may sometimes cause congregations to become sleepy and dull. Generally speaking it is more difficult to sit and listen to the monotone drone of unenthusiastic preachers. The material being presented may be Biblical and well organized, but if it is not pre-

sented with enthusiasm and energy it will be less effective. Baxter wrote, “Too many preachers have been sincere without having that contagious enthusiasm so necessary to the moving of their audiences.”<sup>2</sup>

A word of warning concerning enthusiastic and dynamic preaching should be given. We need to remember that when we are preaching we are doing that which requires the utmost in reverence and dignity. We are serving the Almighty Father by presenting His Word to people. Standing in the pulpit to proclaim God’s message is not a situation to be taken lightly. Preaching is not a stage show performed for the purpose of entertaining the audience. It is not the place for dancing and prancing.

## **USING YOUR VOICE**

The enthusiastic preacher will learn to us his voice effectively. Some are naturally gifted with wonderful voices, which are strong and clear. Sometimes men have a tremendous tone and quality to their voices. Others are not as well blessed. However, even those with weaker voices can work to improve their speaking. The voice is a powerful tool, which, when wisely used, can impact the audience in a tremendous manner.

Every public speaker must speak up. If the people cannot hear what you are saying, then you are wasting their time. While a few younger people may be able to pick up on what the soft-spoken preacher is saying those who have trouble hearing will not. We should learn to speak up by projecting our voices from deep within. This is especially important if one speaks before a congregation where no mi-

crophone and amplifier are present. The preacher must always speak loud enough for everyone to hear. Don't mumble the members to slumber. The book entitled, *The Heart of the Yale Lectures*, gives this advice with regard to the preacher's voice: "The voice is best when without calling attention to itself it presents the message to the listener loudly enough to be heard and clearly enough to be understood, and yet without noticeable strain."<sup>3</sup>

If we are going to speak up we are going to have to know how. It doesn't necessarily come naturally. One of the things we need to work on in order to have a stronger voice is our breathing. In the book, *Fearless and Flawless Public Speaking with Power, Polish, and Pizazz*, Mary-ellen Drummond gives the following tips for effective breathing: "Breathe deeply, from the abdomen instead of the chest."<sup>4</sup>

Drummond also wrote, “Slower deeper breathing provides more oxygen and helps us relax.”<sup>5</sup> Concerning the voice, John A Broadus writes, “Whatever improves the general health will improve the voice, especially muscular exercise, and particularly such as develops the chest...”<sup>6</sup>

Not only should we speak up, we should speak clearly. We should say each word carefully and distinctly while making sure we do not run them together. Each of us will have an accent derived in part from the places we have lived, but we must work to pronounce words in such a way that anyone from any region of the country will be able to understand us. We should try to avoid slang and colloquialisms unless we do so for illustration or emphasis.

Speak up, speak clearly, and use in-

flexion in your voice. This means you will vary both the volume and the tone of your voice. Deeper tones can indicate authority, something ominous, or something very serious. Higher tones may indicate a question, frustration, or surprise. Higher volumes can be used to emphasize a point, while lower volume can be used to impact a congregation with sadness, grief, or frustration. Inflection will be used appropriately when we allow the meaning of the message to control the tone and volume of the voice. The book, *A Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*, gives a number of tips for managing the voice when preaching, among the which is, “Exercise variety in pitch, force, and speed.”<sup>7</sup>

## **USING GESTURES WHEN PREACHING**

Gesturing with one’s arms and hands serves a legitimate purpose in

preaching. Not only do they help keep attention, they help to illustrate what is being said. I once read a description of the gestures used by Patrick Henry when he presented his famous “Give me liberty or give me death” speech. Patrick Henry was very effective and influential with what he said because of the words he chose and because of the gestures he used. He used gestures brilliantly to portray the meaning of the words he was speaking. Gestures help people to see the words. Stephen D. Gladis writes, “Good speakers actually draw pictures naturally for audiences.”<sup>8</sup>

Gestures should always be used appropriately. They need to be comfortable and relaxed, not stiff and artificial. “In general, one should never repress a movement to which he is inclined...”<sup>9</sup> “On the other hand, never make any gesture from calculation.

It must be the spontaneous product of present feeling...”<sup>10</sup> The way one moves his hands and arms needs to flow naturally from what is being said. In other words, “Do whatever you would normally do in a conversation with two or three people.”<sup>11</sup> Knowing the sermon well, and standing back a little bit from the pulpit will aid in improved use of gestures. While the preacher should avoid standing stock still when he preaches he should also avoid the extreme of flapping and flopping. Preachers should not wave and waltz in such unnatural ways as to make the preaching an unforgettable performance of foolishness.

## **USING FACIAL EXPRESSIONS**

Don't be stone-faced throughout the sermon. While the stone-faced preacher may have a heart of gold, he might give some the impression of hav-

ing a heart of steel. People like to see the preacher smile once in a while. A smile often indicates friendliness and concern. A relaxed expression on the face of the preacher will help relax the hearer. We don't want to relax the listener to the point he falls asleep, but we do want him to feel at ease in listening to what we have to say.

Like gestures, facial expressions should flow naturally from what is being said. We don't need facial contortionists in the pulpit entertaining the crowd with their silliness. Make the expression appropriate to the occasion and the message. A sad face for sad topics, a happy face for happy topics, and a sober look for serious matters, etc. The more a person preaches the more relaxed he should become in the use of facial expressions.

## **POSTURE IN THE PULPIT**

When a person is standing with his legs apart, elbows slightly bent, and hands in the shape of fists he gives a certain impression to those around him. Either he is ready for action, or he is mad and ready to hit someone. A slouching person with his hands in his pockets may give the impression of being laid back. It may also indicate a casual attitude toward what is happening. Body language communicates! Our gestures, facial expressions, and even our posture can send signals to those listening to us. Sometimes those signals are sent even when unintended. We should carefully consider our posture when preaching.

We may change our posture while preaching to illustrate what we are saying. Just don't let your posture distract from what you are saying. Gen-

erally speaking, the preacher should stand up straight. This indicates an understanding of the importance of worship and the dignity of the task at hand. Although he should stand up straight he should not be stiff. The preacher needs to be flexible and ready to gesture or move in the pulpit. Relax the posture a little, but don't overdo it. We don't want to spend the entire lesson leaning against the pulpit with our hands in our pockets. Remember, casual posture may betray casual attitudes.

In *Public Speaking for Dummies*, Malcolm Kushner gives a list of do's and don'ts for posture in speaking.<sup>12</sup>

1. Stand up straight.
2. Lean slightly toward the audience.
3. Don't lean on the podium.

4. Don't stand with your hands on your hips.
5. Don't sway back and forth.
6. Don't stand with your arms folded on your chest.
7. Don't stand with your arms behind your back.
8. Don't stand in the fig leaf position.
9. Don't bury your hands in your pockets.

## **FOOT MOVEMENT**

Some foot movement behind the pulpit is beneficial. Movement in the pulpit can help maintain attention and may even be used to illustrate a point. Certain visual aids will require a preacher to move around also. A

speaker who is relaxed before a crowd will find some movement flowing smoothly and naturally as he speaks. Many preachers have found that natural motion in the pulpit helps to make their presentation more effective.

What preachers need to avoid are distracting movements. Too much movement will distract from the message. A preacher who stalks back and forth on the stage like a savage beast in captivity will distract from his message. For the same reason, a preacher should try to avoid nervous and repetitive movements such as rocking from one side to another. Nervous bodily action will be picked up quickly by the audience and will distract them throughout the rest of the sermon.

## **GOOD EYE CONTACT**

Probably the one thing my speech and preaching teachers emphasized

more than anything else was good eye contact. The preacher's message is more likely to get through if people feel as if he is speaking directly to them. A preacher should be able to look up from his outline and look people in the eye. We need to limit looking down, looking at the wall, looking at the ceiling, or looking at anything other than the people present. The preacher may look at those things but he must spend more time looking at the people. As he does so the preacher should look into different sections of the congregation. Looking at a person in one part of the auditorium will make everyone else in that section think you are looking at them also. When looking at different people in various sections, make sure your head movement is natural. We don't need oscillating fans behind the pulpit. A preacher who looks side to side in a mechanical way will distract from his message.

There are many benefits to good eye contact in speaking. For one, it may give the impression to the hearers you are sincerely convicted in your beliefs. You are so sure of what you are preaching that you are willing to stand in front of people and look them straight in the eyes. Of course, this does not prove sincerity but it certainly gives the impression of sincerity. Make sure it is more than an impression or you will lose your soul. Good eye contact can also help keep people's attention and let them know you have properly prepared your material.

## **DEVELOP YOUR OWN STYLE OF PREACHING**

It is common for young preachers to look up to older, more experienced preachers. This is a wonderful thing if kept in perspective. It is good because the young can learn so much from the

old. Those who have preached for many years usually know what they are doing. The danger of looking up to a preacher too much is that some younger preachers may try to imitate the older preachers to an unnatural degree. We don't need carbon copy preachers. These are preachers who try to imitate the look, the sound, the word usage, and even the style of other preachers. Each preacher should learn to develop his own style. Doing so will help him to be more comfortable when preaching. Baxter says, "The preacher needs to be original in the sense that he develops his own style rather than imitating the style of another."<sup>13</sup>

While each preacher should develop his own way of speaking, a few things should be kept in mind. Make that style smooth flowing and energetic. Every preacher needs a style that al-

lows the words to flow smoothly from the mind to the mouth, and from the mouth of the preacher to the mind of the hearer. “The best of all speaking styles is the plain, natural style of animated conversation. While the formal, artificial manner of speaking leaves congregations cold, the warm, personal, conversational mode enables the preacher to reach the hearts of his hearers.”<sup>14</sup> “Conversational speaking is merely enlarged conversation, somewhat louder, somewhat better organized, and somewhat more formal.”<sup>15</sup>

Along with style qualities to consider we should mention language and choice of words. *The Ten Commandments for Public Speaking* recommends using simple words and concrete language.<sup>16</sup> John Broadus suggest the use of words that the audience understands and those which “exactly ex-

press our thoughts.”<sup>17</sup> Don't forget, words are powerful when chosen well, and say as much as you can with as few words as possible.

Some characteristics of style should generally be avoided. Yelling all the time is one of those characteristics. A man who stands up in front of a lot of people and screams at the top of his lungs while the public address system cries for mercy may leave the wrong impression. Folks may decide the preacher is just plain mean, angry, or perhaps half-crazy. While there will certainly be times for the preacher to raise his voice for emphasis, one who does nothing but shout will probably turn people away from the truth unnecessarily. The truth is objectionable to some and will turn many away even when it is preached lovingly. We certainly don't need to turn people away because of a mean-spirited or bitter

method of delivery. We are to speak the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15).

Preacher should try to avoid the “bookish professor style” also. No offense is intended to professors whose brilliant minds have earned them their degrees and the right to teach. But we must not develop an over-educated style of preaching which does not communicate to the average audience. Use short and simple words where possible and don’t drone with an incessant hum. Wake up, be lively, and communicate effectively. “Monotony is utterly destructive of eloquence.”<sup>18</sup>

## **USE OF VISUAL AIDS**

Preachers don’t need to use visual aids all the time. Some speaking situations may be conducive to the use of visual aids while others may not. Speakers have used visual aids for

centuries. One has but to read the Old Testament prophets to see how often they used visual aids. When used properly they can reinforce the lesson in such a way that the congregation is more likely to remember what is being said.

If you are going to use visuals, use them properly. Make sure they enforce what is being said and are not just being done for shock, impact, or showmanship. If a person decides to use some type of electronic equipment, he needs to make sure he knows how to use it. If he hasn't practiced with it he may find himself embarrassed in the middle of his presentation. We also need to be prepared to go on with the sermon should the visual aid equipment malfunction during the presentation.

PowerPoint is a computer software program that is very popular today. Many preachers are using this program to illustrate their sermons and to help the listener to understand and recall the information. There are a number of good reasons to use PowerPoint. For example, it helps people to see the organization of the sermon, it helps keep peoples' attention, it may help the hearing impaired to have some idea of what you are saying, etc. I would recommend that in any use of PowerPoint you be very careful not to put too much information on the slides. Big letters and few words make PowerPoint more effective. PowerPoint was designed simply to highlight important thoughts, and is best used in that fashion.

Be aware that the use of a projected display program like PowerPoint can affect your style of preaching. This

gives you something else to concentrate on and think about while you are preaching. You want to make sure that what you are saying and what is on the screen go together. You will need to be concerned about remotes, batteries, projector bulbs, and computer problems. With all of the extra thinking involved in using such software you may find PowerPoint inhibits your style. I use PowerPoint for almost every lesson that I put together for my home congregation. When I first began using it I had to make a mental effort to bring the enthusiasm and dynamic presentation back into my preaching. Until I got used to it, PowerPoint felt like a burden that was slowing me down and holding me back. Though I have regularly used PowerPoint for a number of years now, I still feel a greater sense of freedom when I preach without a projector, a screen, and a remote.

Christopher Witt has been a speech consultant for CEO's for about thirty years. He has written a book entitled, *Real Leaders Don't do PowerPoint: How to Sell Yourself and Your Ideas*. The number one reason he gives for not using PowerPoint is found on page 211 of his book. Witt wrote concerning PowerPoint, "It is best suited for presenting information, not for influencing or inspiring an audience." On page 215 Mr. Witt says, "When you have to use PowerPoint, use it sparingly and to your advantage. Keep it in its place, so it doesn't upstage you." Below are some tips from Christopher Witt concerning the creation and use of PowerPoint slides.

1. Make them visible.
2. Make them visual.
3. Use Fewer of them.

4. Blank out the screen whenever possible.
5. Talk to the audience, not to the slide.
6. Avoid clip art.
7. Avoid pointers.
8. Explain the content when you first show it.

## **READING SCRIPTURES FROM THE PULPIT**

Some preachers refuse to read any passages from the Bible while preaching. No doubt each one has his reasons. This author believes reading out of the Bible when preaching is important. When the preacher holds up his Bible and reads to the congregation he is making a clear point. The point is

that what he is saying is coming from God's Word. Reading from the pulpit reinforces the fact that all preaching must be from God's Word. Of course, simply reading a long passage and sitting down is not preaching. Reading too many passages, or one that is too long, may detract from the lesson, but some reading should be done.

When the preacher wants the congregation to follow along with him he should clearly announce the passage and repeat it to be sure he was heard correctly. Then he should pause for a moment to give the crowd time to find the passage. If a preacher is concerned about disrupting the flow of his speaking he should be giving the contextual background to the verse while the congregation is turning to it. This will aid in understanding and will ensure that there is no "dead air" in the sermon. Once the passage is

found it is important to read the verses clearly and deliberately. Don't read too fast. This can make the sounds run together. Don't read too slowly. This will break the continuity. While reading, the preacher should be careful to observe punctuation. Stop at a period or pause at a colon and semicolon. Read with force when there is an exclamation mark and raise your voice at the end of the sentence when a question mark is present. Don't forget to use inflection in your voice also. You can do this by varying the tone and volume of your voice appropriately.

The best way to read a passage well is to know it well. Read it over and over ahead of time and understand what it means. If a person knows who was speaking, to whom they were speaking, and what the speaker meant, then he will read the passage better.

We can put the proper feeling into the passage as we read it if we know what is going on in the context.

Our reading will not only improve with an understanding of the text, but it will also improve with a love of God's Word. If we don't enjoy reading the Bible privately, we probably will not read it well publicly. On the other hand, if it thrills us to hear the sound of Scripture we will most likely learn to read it well from the pulpit.

## **PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE, AND THEN PRACTICE SOME MORE**

One of the biggest problems new preachers face is stage fright. Fear of speaking in public is common. For most people it must be overcome. The two most effective methods of overcoming stage fright are experience and practice. Experience comes with time.

For practice you must make time. The more one practices his sermon in private, the less nervous he will be in public. All preachers should rehearse their sermons each week. The sermon should be preached out loud at least three times before Sunday. "Because you will deliver your speech out loud, you must practice out loud."<sup>19</sup>

Find a basement, storeroom, attic, wooded area, or empty church building and practice. Sometimes it can help to practice in front of a mirror. While practicing, work on your gestures, facial expressions, foot movement, voice, and style. Critique yourself often. You may even want to video-record yourself for this purpose. It is hard to know what we sound like or what we look like when preaching unless we record ourselves. The more you practice and critique yourself the smoother your delivery will be.

Another benefit to practicing your sermon is time control. Very few preachers can effectively hold a congregation's attention too much past thirty minutes. Forty minutes should be the maximum a preacher should preach unless a particular speaking assignment has required him to spend more time preaching. Also, it may be the case that certain texts or subjects require more time to properly develop. But you must remember that people's minds cannot focus on one sermon for very long. One of my college professors spoke of modern man's inability to concentrate for more than twenty or twenty-five minutes. The television may have had a lot to do with us losing the ability to concentrate for longer periods of time. Whatever the cause, we need to keep that in mind when preaching. Remember to say as much as you can with as few words as possible, and it is better to leave

them wanting more than to have them thinking you should have quit ten minutes ago.

I found a quote from the book, *Speak up with Confidence: How to Prepare, Learn, and Deliver Effective Speeches*, to be very interesting. The author states, “It is my conviction, based on years of being put upon by all manner of public speakers, that twenty minutes is the absolute maximum that anyone should allow for a speech.”<sup>20</sup> The author of, *Public Speaking for Dummies*, says, “If you conclude five minutes early, people in the audience will be thrilled. If you conclude five minutes late, they’ll be impatient and possibly angry.”<sup>21</sup>

## **WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED?**

Be enthusiastic when you preach, but don’t lose your dignity. Use your

voice effectively by adjusting the volume and pitch appropriately. Speak up and speak clearly. Use gestures, facial expressions, and foot movement in the pulpit. All movements, expressions, and gestures should flow naturally from what is being said. Develop your own unique style of preaching but don't forget to preach in a conversational manner. The most important thing a preacher can do to ease stage fright and to improve his preaching is to practice frequently.

### **Today's Assignment:**

Quote 2 Timothy 3:16, 17. Students who have not already done so should read a short Bible chapter to the class.

### **Next Assignment:**

Read lesson six and answer the questions at the end of the chapter.

Quote 1 Peter 4:11. Choose a sermon topic and begin collecting notes for that sermon. Give a copy of the notes to the instructor.

### **Questions from lesson five:**

1. What should motivate a preacher to be enthusiastic?
2. Name three things you should do with your voice.
3. What benefits do gestures provide?
4. Can facial expression communicate?
5. What kind of posture should a preacher avoid?
6. Can nervous movement in the pulpit distract from the message?
7. What are some advantages of good eye contact?

8. Should you strive to exactly copy the style of another preacher?
9. What should you do before using electronic visual aids in preaching?
10. List some tips for effective public Bible reading.
11. Why should a preacher practice his sermon out loud?
12. Is it important for a preacher to watch his time?

### **Review of Previous Lessons:**

1. Words are powerful when chosen well.
2. Seek, do, and then teach.
3. The foundation of the sermon is the Scriptures.

4. Study hard and prepare well for your sermons.
5. Learn to develop outlines for all of your sermons.
6. Practice frequently to improve the presentation of your sermons.

## ENDNOTES

- 1 Batsell Barrett Baxter, *The Heart of the Yale Lectures* (Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 1947), 17
- 2 (Baxter, 1947, 47)
- 3 (Baxter, 1947, 195)
- 4 Mary-Ellen Drummond, *Fearless and Flawless Public Speaking with Power, Polish and Pizazz* (San Diego, Pfeiffer and Company, 1993), 16
- 5 (Drummond, 1993, 17)
- 6 John A. Broadus, *A Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons* (New York, Harper and Brothers Publishing, 1926), 486
- 7 (Broadus, 1926, 495)

- 8 Stephen D. Gladis, *The Ten Commandments for Public Speakers* (Amherst, Human Resource Development Press, 1990), 90
- 9 (Broadus, 1926, 506)
- 10 (Ibid)
- 11 (Gladis, 1990, 90)
- 12 Malcolm Kushner, *Public Speaking for Dummies* (Foster City, IDG Books, 1999), 247
- 13 (Baxter, 1947, 147)
- 14 (Baxter, 1947, 195)
- 15 Batsell Barrett Baxter, *Speaking for the Master: A Study of Public Speaking for Christian Men* (Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 1954), 61

- 16 (Gladis, 1990, 69)
- 17 (Broadus, 1926, 379)
- 18 (Broadus, 1926, 494)
- 19 (Gladis, 1990, 99)
- 20 Jack Valenti, *Speak up with Confidence: How to Prepare, Learn, and Deliver Effective Speeches* (New York, William Morrow and Company, Inc. 1982), 41
- 21 (Kushner, 1999, 91)

# **CHAPTER SIX**

## **THE PREACHER'S APPEARANCE**

### **APPEARANCE AND REVERENCE**

God demands reverence. By His very nature He deserves and must have reverence. He is the Divine and All-Powerful Creator of the Universe. He is the Ruler of Heaven and Earth. God deserves nothing less than the utmost in fear, reverence, and respect (Psalm 89:7; Hebrews 12:28, 29). The reverence we have for God must be felt deep within our hearts and must be clearly manifested in our actions. The way we serve God, the way we talk about God, the way we use God's name, and even the way we worship God, will clearly indicate how much reverence we feel toward Him.

As preachers of the Gospel of Jesus Christ we must never forget the importance of the work we are doing. It is a great honor and privilege to be able to proclaim God's Word. When we are involved in teaching others we must make sure that we show forth a high level of reverence for God. One of the ways we can show reverence is by dressing appropriately for the occasion. When God told Jacob to go to Bethel and worship Him, Jacob gave orders to his household to get cleaned up and change their clothes (Genesis 35:1-7). Jacob made a special effort to clean up and put on different clothes before he would go to worship God. He did this to show reverence for God.

Keep in mind we are not trying to bind anything that God has not bound. We do not find a Scripture that says men must wear suits and ties to church services and women

must wear dresses. Despite this we do find many Scriptures that teach us to show proper reverence for God (Hebrews 12:28,29). One cannot show proper reverence for God, or an appreciation for the importance of worship when he shows up in cut-off shorts and an Elvis Presley T-shirt.

It is fully understood that some may dress their best for worship and that best may not be a suit and tie. I have been told of many farmers in the past that had two pairs of overalls. One pair was used during the week for work, while the other pair was only used on Sunday for worship. By setting aside a set of clothing those men were showing reverence for God even if they were wearing a pair of overalls. I also recognize the fact that our society as a whole reached a level of conservative attire in the 1950's. Since that time there has been a slow change to-

ward more casual attire. That casual dress code is more common in business than before, and is more commonly seen in worship. However, if we have better we should do better.

The powerful preachers of the past wore camel skins, and near rags, but they lived in times of great poverty. They did the best they could. The general prosperity of our society allows most people to have at least one set of dress clothes for special occasions. Worshipping God is a special occasion. It is more important than going to a funeral, or a wedding and most people still dress up for those events.

While seeking to avoid binding where God has not I still think it very important that preachers give special attention to what they wear. If a man is going to do some preaching, and he can afford a suit and tie, he should

go out and get one. There are some stores that sell suits at a great discount. Those are the kinds of places where I buy my suits, and you would be amazed at how many compliments I get on my suits. Most folks don't know I'm wearing "cheap" suits.

Granted, not all preaching situations will lend themselves to wearing a coat and tie. I was born in Africa, and have been on some missionary journeys to Africa as an adult. Generally speaking, when standing under a brush arbor made of elephant grass, under the hot African sun, and among some of the poorest people in the world, the coat and tie are not necessary. Interestingly enough you will still see many of these very poor Africans wear a "hand-me-down" coat and tie on Sunday. It may be old and dirty, but if they have it they will wear it.

When we leave our nice houses and drive in our nice cars to our nice church buildings on Sunday, the least we can do is wear nice clothes. This still shows respect for God and the occasion. We must give our best to the Lord in every way, including in the way we dress for worship. That may be khaki pants and a sports shirt, or it may be a coat and tie. Just don't forget we are coming together to worship in the presence of God.

## **APPEARANCE AND EFFECTIVENESS**

While a nice appearance should be important for all Christians it is a must for preachers. Some may not think it is important to devote a chapter to the preacher's appearance. To those I would suggest you consider the fact that a person's appearance might often determine the amount of respect

he receives from other people. Right or wrong people are judged by their clothing and level of cleanliness. Consider carefully the words of Malcolm Kushner in his book, *Public Speaking for Dummies*: “You can’t judge a book by its cover - but people do it all the time. You’re going to be judged by the way you look. So dress the part. Good grooming will improve your credibility. In lots of studies, two people are sent into a store to buy something. One person is dressed like a bum. The other person is dressed in impeccable business attire. The well dressed person always receives much better service.”<sup>1</sup> The last thing we want to do is turn people away from the message we have prepared because of the way we are dressed.

Preachers should be in the habit of checking their appearance before preaching or teaching, if possible.

Check to see if the tie is straight, the hair is combed, the zipper is up, and the shoes are shined and tied. Before leaving the house make sure your socks match and your clothes don't clash. You may need your wife's help for this one. We must check our appearance, not for vanities sake, but because we don't want anything to distract from the message we are preaching. It does no good to preach when all the women in the building are wondering why your shirt, pants, coat, and tie all clash, or if people are wondering if you have ever heard of a comb. "Dress conservatively. You want your audience to focus on you - not on what you're wearing."<sup>2</sup>

The color of your clothes will also affect the way people receive you. All you have to do is look at the President of the United States of America to see the truth in this. It is very important

for a president to dress in such a way as to indicate he is someone dignified who has something important to say. For this reason, presidents often wear dark colored suits, white or dark colored shirts, and conservative ties. The ties may be bright in color but they will not be decorated with cartoons and other distracting images. The suits we wear should be dark in color. When I was studying “Mass Communications” in college my professor was a professional newscaster. She taught us to wear dark conservative colors if we wanted people to listen to what we were saying. Take note of these color tips given in the book, *Fearless and Flawless Public Speaking with Power, Polish, and Pizazz*: “A dark suit is the most powerful look for business.”<sup>3</sup> “Black is the most powerful color of all.”<sup>4</sup> “Navy blue is referred to as a sincere color...”<sup>5</sup>

Addressing souls with the Gospel is far more important than addressing the nation with the State of the Union Address. Learn a lesson. Dress in such a way as to command respect. Dress in such a way as to indicate authority. Dress to be respected and to show reverence for God.

## **WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED?**

Dress the part. Your level of effectiveness in preaching is related to what you wear. Dress to show respect to God and dress to gain respect from the listeners. Conservative colored suits, white shirts, and ties with conservative patterns are the most effective.

### **Assignments for today:**

Quote 1 Peter 4:11. Turn in a copy of the sermon notes to the instructor.

## **Assignments for next lesson:**

Read lesson seven and answer the questions at the end of the chapter. Romans 1:16 is the memory verse. Make a sermon outline from your notes and turn a copy of the outline in to the teacher.

## **Questions from lesson six:**

1. What two things did Jacob do before worship?
2. Can we bind a church dress code?
3. Can we show respect for God by the way we prepare for worship?
4. Do all preaching situations require a coat and tie?
5. Will a preacher's cleanliness and appearance affect his preaching?

6. How does the president dress when giving the State of the Union Address?
7. What are the two best colors for a preacher to wear?
8. Do presidents wear ties with distracting cartoons or images on them?
9. What color “is the most powerful color of all” and which portrays dignity and authority?
10. What color best portrays sincerity?

### **Review of Previous Lessons:**

1. Words are powerful when chosen well.
2. Preachers must be sincere.

3. Seek, do, and then teach.
4. The Scriptures are the foundation for the sermon.
5. Study hard and prepare well because you are not inspired.
6. Always develop a sermon outline because it helps you see the logical flow of your material.
7. Speak up and speak clearly.
8. Use your voice, gestures, movement, and facial expressions effectively and appropriately.
9. Practice your preaching frequently and wear conservatively colored suits

## ENDNOTES

- 1 Malcolm Kushner, *Public Speaking for Dummies* (Foster City, IDG Books, 1999), 23
- 2 (Kushner, 1999, 252)
- 3 Mary-Ellen Drummond, *Fearless and Flawless Public Speaking with Power, Polish, and Pizazz* (San Diego, Pfeiffer and Company, 1993), 75
- 4 (Drummond, 1993, 77)
- 5 (Drummond, 193, 78)

# **CHAPTER SEVEN**

## **TEACHING A BIBLE CLASS**

### **THE IMPORTANCE OF BIBLE CLASSES**

Our children spend a minimum of thirty hours per week in school. The school system recognizes the importance of spending a lot of time in the classroom. Many of our school systems are trying to set up classes for students at younger and younger ages. It is widely recognized that early influences and education in a child's life can have a major impact on the knowledge and actions of those children once they are grown.

It is baffling to me to see so many Christian parents put so much emphasis on a child's secular education while not bringing their children to

Sunday school. It seems as if success in the field of education and in the material benefits it may bring are more important than success in the spiritual realm and the eternal benefits it will bring. The Bible classes of the church are very important to the formation of strong, moral, upstanding, spiritually minded people. The two hours per week most churches provide for Bible class ought to be seen as two of the most important hours in the week for a child.

Many congregations are working hard to figure out ways to keep young people interested in the church as they grow older. Some believe entertaining the children will keep them in the church. Others believe providing recreational facilities will keep them in the church. In reality all of these will fail. The only way we are going to keep our young people interested in the

church as they grow into adults is to ground them in the truth. They must know who God is, what the church is, and what the Bible says. They must be given opportunity to question and they must be provided well-researched answers. They will stay in the church if their religious beliefs are of their own conviction based upon solid evidence and the timeless messages of truth found in the Scriptures.

Bible classes cannot firmly ground our young people by themselves. Most of the work must be done in the home through the parents Christian examples and Bible teaching. However, the Bible classes can help. We need to work very hard in preparing our Bible classes for our children so that we might ground them firmly in the truth.

Bible classes are beneficial to adults as well. Adults must constantly be in-

volved in Bible study if they are going to keep themselves from being pulled away by Satan and the world. Many are in sore need of a systematic and organized study of the Bible. Ignorance of God's Word will always destroy God's people (Hosea 4:6). An adult class well taught can produce a tremendous amount of fruit in the lives of Christians.

Sure, Bible classes can do much good, but is there a Scriptural basis for churches conducting Bible class programs? Yes. It is important for Christians to study as frequently as possible (Acts 17:11). Elders have a responsibility to feed the flock (Acts 20:28). Christians must be able to rightly divide the word of truth (2 Timothy 2:15). Christians must be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks for the reason behind our hope

(2 Peter 3:15). All of these things require Bible study and Bible teaching. Elders have the authority to set up times when Christians assemble for joint Bible study (Hebrews 13:17). If they do not find a way to feed the flock they will lose their souls (Acts 20:28). The authority to feed the flock gives the elders the authority to use Bible classes for that purpose.

## **PREPARATION FOR THE BIBLE CLASS**

The teacher should put enough effort into his Bible class so that he actually gains more from teaching than the students gain from being in the class. Good teachers will challenge themselves to research and study the material well. When teachers do that they will grow tremendously. The teacher grows spiritually from his study of the Bible, the reviewing of his lesson, and the presentation of the material.

Bible class teachers will not properly prepare unless they are motivated. One thought that ought to motivate them is the heavy responsibility placed upon them. The warning given in James 3:1 applies as much to Bible class teachers as it does to preachers. The Bible class teacher can affect the future of a child's life and his eternal destiny. Teaching is not a responsibility to be taken lightly. Teachers should have enough fear and reverence for God to prepare their lessons thoroughly, and to put forth their best effort when presenting the material. Teaching requires time, work, and responsible behavior. It is not a work for the unlearned, immature, or lazy.

There are many important things to keep in mind when preparing the lessons. First of all we need to consider the material. If a textbook is being used, the teacher should read the ma-

terial thoroughly to check for doctrinal error. Many of the Bible class books being published today are either full of error or “cotton candy.” Cotton candy looks good and tastes good, but it has absolutely no nutritional value. Much of our Bible class material looks pretty and has great visual aids. It may even be easy to teach because of its format and it may be “fun” for the students, but it is often empty of everlasting value. This kind of material provides little in the way of spiritual nutrition. Know the textbook well, but most importantly emphasize the Biblical text. For more information on how to study the Biblical text please refer to chapter four, and don’t forget to prepare enough material for the time allotted.

Once the Bible study is completed, the teacher may want to consider the use of visual aids. All that we really need in our Bible class is a Bible.

Every teacher should be able to teach any age straight from the Bible. Yet, visual aids such as attendance charts, posters, learning charts, and bulletin boards can add much to the learning experience. Other tools can be used effectively also. Marker boards, chalkboards, overheads, slides, video presentations, computer presentations, etc. are among the many tools available.

Regular reviews for the students and the use of repetition can reinforce the teaching as well as visual aids. We want our students to remember as much as possible. If they hear the same truths frequently they are much more likely to remember them than if they had only heard them once. Flash cards and review games may be used for younger ages, while reviews at the beginning or end of each lesson in adult classes will help.

While it is important for the teacher to be prepared for class, it is also good if the student can be prepared. The preparation of the student will depend upon the teacher, the student, and if the student is a child, his parents. The teacher should make sure the students know what material will be covered in the next lesson. If there is a book, the students should be encouraged to read the next chapter and the Biblical text. Teachers may also want to give out other assignments such as Biblical research or memory verses. The student should come prepared and willing to listen. He should be willing to perform any “homework” that may be assigned also.

## **DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PREACHING AND TEACHING**

A sermon centers on one theme. A Bible class does not necessarily need

to have one main theme in order to be effective. For this reason one may go into much greater detail in his teaching when in a Bible class situation. Fuller notes can be used effectively and more time can be spent on each point. While good eye contact is important to teaching a Bible class it is not as significant as in preaching. It is fine to look down at the notes more often.

Another difference between preaching and Bible class teaching is listener feedback. Most preachers do not usually receive any immediate verbal feedback while preaching, unless it is in the form of an "amen." Preachers may take yawning, sleeping, frowning, nodding, or shaking of heads as feedback, but none of that is verbal. When teaching a Bible class, the preacher should not only expect verbal participation from the class, but he should

also encourage it. A good Bible class teacher will encourage feedback by asking questions, requesting comments and questions, and by speaking in an informative, energetic, and interesting fashion.

While questions and comments should be encouraged, the teacher needs to keep in mind that he must be prepared to respond. Always respond in such a way as not to embarrass the person who spoke. Respond in a manner that will encourage further participation. Know the material well enough to be able to answer most if not all questions that might be asked on that subject. Anticipate the questions in your preparation. If you don't know the answer then say so. Encourage them for asking the question and tell them you will do some study and try to provide them the answer at a later time.

Be prepared for comments. Sometimes comments are made that contribute well to the study. At other times comments will be made that are just plain wrong. If the one commenting has taught false doctrine the teacher needs to correct the comment. He needs to do this in a loving, gentle, and calm manner. While some comments may be wrong because of genuine ignorance, other comments may be made in order to cause problems in the class or in the church. Troublemakers should be answered in a firm but kind way. Also, watch out for those who love the sounds of their own voices. Sometimes you will find individuals who think they should be teaching the class instead of the instructor. They may dominate the discussion if you allow them. Be authoritative, firm, kind, and remain in control to the best of your ability. You may have to say to someone, "We need

to go on for the sake of time,” then just pick up where you left off and go on.

## **SIMILARITIES BETWEEN PREACHING AND TEACHING**

Many similarities exist between the two. Both must be Biblically based and sound, both need to be presented with enthusiasm, both must be properly prepared, and both come from a sincere heart. We must love the souls of men and truly desire to help them to go to heaven. Bible class teaching and preaching are two of the most important works in the world. Do both with a controlled passionate conviction.

## **WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED?**

Bible classes are an important work of the church. Both the teacher and student should come prepared for

class. The teacher must challenge himself to work hard enough on his lessons so that he gets more from the class than the student does. Bible class teachers must learn to deal with immediate feedback in the form of questions and comments from the students. Teachers must also learn to take and keep control of the class. In both preaching and teaching we must teach with controlled passionate conviction.

### **Assignments due today:**

Quote Romans 1:16. Turn in a copy of your sermon outline to the instructor.

### **Assignments due next lesson:**

Read lesson eight and answer the questions at the end of the chapter. Quote John 12:48 in class. Review,

refine, and practice preaching your sermon. One student should be prepared to preach his sermon in class.

### **Questions from lesson seven:**

1. Why are Bible classes important?
2. Prove that we have authority for Bible classes.
3. Do Bible classes require proper preparation?
4. Name some differences between preaching and teaching.
5. List some similarities between preaching and teaching.
6. Is it sin to fail to attend Bible class (when capable)?

7. If using a textbook for class, what should the teacher check the book for?
8. What should be emphasized in a Bible class?

### **Review of Previous Lessons:**

1. Words are powerful when chosen well.
2. Seek, do, and then teach.
3. The foundation for the sermon is the Scriptures.
4. Study hard and prepare well.
5. Always develop a sermon outline.
6. Improve your use of voice, gestures, expressions, and movement in the pulpit by practice and self-critique.

7. Dress in conservative colored suits.
8. Teach and preach with controlled passionate conviction.

# **CHAPTER EIGHT**

## **CONDUCTING A**

### **PERSONAL BIBLE STUDY**

#### **THE GREAT COMISSION**

Shortly before He ascended into heaven Jesus said, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age (Matthew 28:18-20)." The Lord clearly commanded His followers to take the Gospel to the lost (Mark 16:15, 16). One only has to look at the early church to see that evangelizing the world should be a priority. Nowhere is this more clearly seen than in Acts,

chapter eight. Persecution caused the Christians to flee Jerusalem, but as they fled they preached the Gospel (Acts 8:4). The persecution was designed to destroy the church but it caused the church to grow instead. Phillip was one of these early Christian evangelists. He went to the city of Samaria and preached publicly to the multitudes. There was a clear interest in finding opportunities to preach to as many people as possible at one time. In addition Phillip took the time to go and preach to one individual. The time he spent with masses was productive. The time he spent with the Ethiopian was also productive. As you read the record of people like Phillip and Paul working hard to teach others you gain a sense of urgency. Clearly these Christians were diligently involved in taking the Gospel to the lost because they believed the Gospel was the power to save men from their sins (Romans 1:16).

In many places, the church today is lacking that sense of urgency. The church in many locations seems to have lost confidence in the saving power of the Gospel. Sometimes I wonder if Christians really do believe that one cannot be saved unless he hears and obeys the Gospel of Christ. If we still believe in the saving power of the Gospel, the unique nature of the Lord's church, the cleansing power of the blood, and the importance of obedience in response to the grace of God, then why aren't we more active in evangelism? I believe, in part at least, it is because Christians have become so distracted by the world. Materialism, doctrinal error, and apathy have caused the church to leave its first love. We must be on fire with urgent zeal when it comes to teaching the lost. Whatever may keep the local congregation from evangelizing their community must be overcome. Souls

are lost, dying, and going to torment by thousands every day. Do we really care?

If we care we will use every available and Scriptural means at our disposal to reach the lost. In congregations that I have worked with, we used radio, television, mail, door knocking, placing flyers on doorsteps, newspaper ads and articles, a web page, as well as personal invitation. It was our goal to do everything within our power to make sure that all people within our region knew of the church. There are many tools available to churches today that will enable them to get the message out. Let us use all that we can afford!

## **TALKING TO THE LOST**

While the church should use all of the available media it can afford to get

the Gospel into the community, nothing will surpass the effectiveness of individual Christians talking to other individuals. The one on one contact between neighbors, friends, and family members will result in more conversions than anything else. Every individual member in the congregation should be encouraged to talk to the lost about their souls. We all need to be alert to opportunities to talk to people about Christ. In fact, the Christian example we live ought to spark many such opportunities. When people know we will assemble with the saints at every opportunity, and when they see we are honest, fair, kind, and generally Christ-like they will often begin to ask questions. Let us be ready to give answers to those questions (1 Peter 3:15).

As opportunities come our way to talk to others about Christ, let us

make sure that we watch our attitude. Peter encouraged us to give an answer in a meek manner (1 Peter 3:15). Paul taught us to speak the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15). In addition, the Holy Spirit encouraged us to preach the truth with all longsuffering (2 Timothy 4:2). If we come across in a rude, degrading, obnoxious, or conciliatory manner, there is a good likelihood we will push people away from the truth. Speak the truth without compromise, but do so with love.

Because we love the lost we should make an effort to interest them in further Bible study. We might suggest free Bible lessons by mail if we have a good correspondence course we could use. Better yet, we may suggest setting up a time when both parties can sit down with an open Bible to study together. If there is interest, suggest a certain day and time. It is always good

to get a definite commitment from the person as to day, time, and place.

Many Christians who talk to others about salvation become very disappointed with the results. We need not forget the lessons learned in the parable of the sower (Luke 8:4-18). We must sow the seed even though the seed will not produce fruit in the hearts of everyone. In fact, the majority will not listen to the truth (Matthew 7:13, 14). Why is that? There are a number of different reasons. Some will not accept the truth simply because they are contentious (Romans 2:8). Others will not obey the truth because they have been hindered by false teachers and family members (Galatians 5:7; Titus 1:14; 2 Timothy 3:6; Matthew 11:34-39). There are those who will not respond favorably toward the truth because they do not love truth (2 Thessalonians 2:10). Some have

pleasure in unrighteousness and don't intend to listen to any message that would condemn their sinful lifestyle (2 Timothy 2:12; 2 Peter 2:2). Another reason the truth does not always bear fruit in the hearts of those whom we teach is because some of them are simply not sincere (2 Timothy 3:7; John 6:26). Despite a majority of negative responses to the gospel we must not give up in trying to interest others in the freeing power of truth (John 8:32). Eventually we will find some who are open minded and who will receive the truth (Acts 17:11, 27).

## **CONDUCTING A BIBLE STUDY**

It is always wise to take another Christian with you when you go to conduct a personal Bible study. A second person can provide moral support and be a witness should anything unusual occur during the study. Be prepared!

Unusual things to occasionally occur. I had a Bible study with a woman who became so upset during the course of the study she tried to injury herself physically. She beat her head against some wood, and stabbed herself repeatedly with a set of keys. A man with whom I once had several Bible studies always kept an empty whisky bottle and a big knife close at hand. Eventually he got mad and chased my partner and I out. These true stories indicate the importance of taking a partner with you when you go to a personal Bible study.

When two go together on a Bible study they should agree before hand which one of them will conduct the study. You don't need two people continually interrupting each other. Once the two of you arrive, take a brief moment to talk generally. This helps to ease the tension this kind of situation

often creates. When you are ready to start, lead in prayer. Following the prayer emphasize the importance of each Bible student using the Scriptures as his final authority, and checking the Scriptures for themselves (Acts 17:11). Once the study begins, the one who has been designated to lead the study should do most of the talking. His partner should say very little. Any tension between two Christians will likely drive the prospect away.

Not only should we decide ahead of time who will lead the study, but we should also decide in advance which method of Bible study we intend to use. One should be well familiar with the method chosen. There are a number of methods and aids that can be used. One may use a video course, or multi-lesson booklets. Bible correspondence courses can also be used in personal Bible studies. Some may

simply want to open up their Bible and go through various passages of Scripture that deal with issues pertinent to salvation. This method is the hardest and requires the most amount of Bible knowledge. However, this can be one of the most effective ways to study with the lost, and is the method I most recommend. The person who chooses to conduct the study in this way needs to make sure he is organized. Subjects such as authority, sin, the blood of Christ, the plan of salvation, the church of Christ, and Christian living should be dealt with in any Bible study method. If one is going to conduct the Bible study with only the Bible open before him he is going to need to know where to turn in the Bible to show what God says concerning these issues.

Whatever method is used for the Bible study, one will need to remember

a few basic things about Bible studies that will help him to be more effective. Below are some general suggestions:

1. Bring your Bible and an extra one just in case the person with whom you are studying does not have one. Make sure the extra Bible is the same translation you are using. You may also want to use the same published edition so that you can give out page numbers as well as verse references.
2. Take a notepad and pen with you. Use this to write down important Scripture references, or to illustrate a point you are making. Write neatly and leave your notes with the prospect.
3. Try to remain focused on the subject at hand by putting off any questions that do not immediately

relate to the subject being studied. They may have questions about the beasts in Revelation chapter thirteen, but they do not need to identify those beasts in order to be saved. Deal with those things that directly affect their salvation first. Use your note pad to write down all unrelated questions and take a look at those at a later date.

4. Arrive on time for the study. Do not be early, and do not be late. Do your best to knock on their door at exactly the time agreed upon. If you are too early or too late, you may unnecessarily upset your student.
5. Be polite and friendly at all times, even if they become upset with you. Smile a lot.
6. Do not hesitate to leave if you feel as if you are in any physical danger.

7. Don't forget you are representing the church so dress neatly and be clean.
8. Don't overstay your welcome. It is better to set up an appointment to come back and study, than it is to stay so long the student loses interest.
9. Don't try to trick the convert and slick-talk them into quickly being baptized. Use the Bible to convict them and don't baptize them until they are truly ready.
10. If you are unable to convert the person, do your best to end the study on a friendly note. Their hearts may be closed now, but the future may bring a change. Don't leave a bad taste in their mouths.

## **WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED?**

We must be busy evangelizing the community in which we live. We must work hard to set up and conduct personal Bible studies with people in the community. When conducting a Bible study always go with a partner and always arrive on time. Make sure you know ahead of time which of the partners will conduct the study. If the prospect will not become a convert try to end the study on a friendly note if possible.

### **Assignments for today:**

Quote John 12:48. One student should be prepared to preach to the class.

### **Assignments for the next lesson:**

Read lesson nine and answer the questions at the end of the chapter.

Memorize Hebrews 4:12. Another student should be prepared to preach his sermon in class.

### **Questions for lessons eight:**

1. What did Jesus tell His disciples to do to all nations?
2. Does the church have a responsibility to reach the lost today?
3. Should the church use all Scriptural methods available today for reaching the lost?
4. Can a congregation please God when it is doing nothing to take the Gospel to the community?
5. What is the most effective way of reaching the lost?
6. Why is it important for Christians not to go alone to a Bible study?

7. List three reasons why some people do not accept the truth.
8. Will the majority receive or reject the truth?
9. List five of the ten tips given for conducting a personal Bible study.

### **Review of Previous Lessons:**

1. Words are powerful when chosen well.
2. Preachers must be sincere.
3. Seek, do, and then teach.
4. The Scriptures are the foundation for the sermon.
5. Study hard and prepare well because you are not inspired.

6. Always develop a sermon outline because it helps you see the logical flow of your material.
7. Speak up and speak clearly.
8. Use your voice, gestures, movement, and facial expressions effectively and appropriately.
9. Practice your preaching frequently.
10. Wear conservative colored suits when you preach.
11. Preach and teach with controlled passionate conviction.

# **CHAPTER NINE**

## **PORTRAITS OF**

### **POWERFUL PREACHERS**

#### **JEREMIAH**

Jeremiah began his work as an Old Testament prophet and preacher when he was young (Jeremiah 1:6, 7). When God told Jeremiah to go to work preaching His Word, Jeremiah expressed concern about being so young, but God promised to be with him. Jeremiah was not given an easy task as God's spokesman. He was to "root out and pull down, to destroy and to throw down, to build and to plant." (Jeremiah 1:10) Some preachers find it easy to destroy and throw down, but they never build and plant. Such unbalanced preachers wreak havoc on the church and need to repent.

Jeremiah was to root out wickedness and plant righteousness in a culture that was completely corrupt. Israel had turned against God to pursue paganism (Jeremiah 2, 3). Jeremiah warned them of the punishment that would soon come if they refused to repent. (Jeremiah 4-6). This message was not popular. People did not want to be told they were wrong. The Jews did not want to believe that their precious city and sensual way of life could be destroyed. They preferred to trust in lying words (Jeremiah 7, 8). Because the message Jeremiah preached was unpopular the people hated him to the point of wanting to kill him (Jeremiah 11:18-23). This caused the great prophet to become terribly discouraged. After all, he was doing the work God wanted him to do, and for that work his life was threatened.

Jeremiah complained about his situation, but God's reply reveals something very interesting about God's expectations. God replied to Jeremiah's complaints by saying, "If you have run with the footmen, and they have wearied you, then how can you contend with horses?" (Jeremiah 12:5) This is a powerful passage preachers! Imagine an infantryman in ancient times going into battle on foot. He wades in among his enemies fighting valiantly while becoming weary. In the end he complains to his commander who lets him know they are going to have to fight soldiers on horses in the future. Infantry fighting cavalry is a difficult task indeed. God was telling Jeremiah things were going to get worse. Jeremiah needed to learn to handle the adversities he was currently facing, because more difficult challenges were yet to come. Preachers, when you start complaining about smaller prob-

lems, remember Jeremiah 12:5. More and more complex problems will face you. If you can't handle the smaller problems and learn from the smaller problems you will not be prepared when more difficult issues arise.

Opposition to Jeremiah continued to grow as Jeremiah further preached the very unpopular message of repentance. After being punished by Pashhur the priest Jeremiah became discouraged again (Jeremiah 20). Pashhur struck Jeremiah and put him in stocks. Jeremiah turned to God and complained. He questioned God about his circumstances. He decided to give up preaching, but in the end he found the strength to go on. Jeremiah wrote, "Because the word of the Lord was made to me a reproach and a derision daily. Then I said, 'I will not make mention of Him, nor speak anymore in His name. But His word

was like a burning fire shut up in my bones; I was weary of holding it back, and I could not.” (Jeremiah 20:8, 9)

Throughout his years of preaching Jeremiah faced hatred, threats, and punishment from those who refused to accept the truth. There were times when Jeremiah felt like giving up because of the way he had been treated, but he kept on preaching. In the end God gave him the strength to continue. Preachers, learn from Jeremiah. Learn that you will be opposed for preaching the truth. Understand that you will grow weary in your work at times. Recognize the fact that God will give you strength to keep going if that is your desire.

## **PAUL**

Now let us look to the New Testament for an example of a preacher

who endured much, yet who continued in his work. Paul was a preacher under pressure. As soon as he began preaching he began making enemies (Acts 9:20-25). It was not his goal to make enemies. It was his goal to save souls. Though the truth may be preached in love, it will still anger some people. Paul's first preaching was done in Damascus. The religious people who were in error refused to accept the Gospel, and began plotting to kill Paul. This was just the beginning.

Paul's summary of the persecutions he had endured for preaching the Gospel shows just how determined this man was to do what was right (2 Corinthians 11:22-33). There were people outside the church who wanted to hurt Paul. There were people inside the church who wanted to hurt Paul. Paul's own conscientious approach to his work also became a point of stress

and suffering for him at times (2 Corinthians 11:28). Preachers, you may need to read what Paul endured before you start complaining, and see what he suffered before you decide to give up.

Acts 20:17-38 gives Gospel preachers precious insight into the manner in which God wants us to do this work. Paul was reviewing his work and conduct with the elders from the church at Ephesus. He spoke about “serving the Lord with all humility, with many tears and trials which happened to me by the plotting of the Jews; how I kept back nothing that was helpful, but proclaimed it to you, and taught you publicly and from house to house...” (Acts 20:19, 20) Notice the full depth to which he devoted himself. He gave himself completely to the work. Through tears, and trials, both publicly and in private he held nothing

back. He preached the whole counsel of God. In so doing, he gave them what they needed whether it was popular or not (Acts 20:26, 27).

Clearly Paul's purpose was not to please men. Preacher's pay attention! Paul did not preach to please men. Too many preachers in the church today have discovered they can grow in power, influence, and even wealth by preaching to please men. Preaching to please men also means one can avoid a whole lot of conflict in this life. However, those who preach to please men rather than God will not be prepared to face the Lord in the judgment. Paul wrote to the churches of Galatia, "For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ." (Galatians 1:10).

Paul's work with the churches of Galatia is a good example of the types of

problems evangelists may face. Paul had worked hard for these Christians, and at one point they loved him dearly for preaching the truth. When speaking of the love these brethren once had for him Paul wrote, “For I bear you witness that, if possible, you would have plucked out your own eyes and given them to me.” (Galatians 4:15) Though these brethren had at one time loved Paul so strongly, their love for him had grown very cold. They had been influenced by false teachers who had turned them against Paul. This brought Paul to wonder, “Have I therefore become your enemy because I tell you the truth?” (Galatians 4:16) Sometimes, Christians who once loved the preacher, and who the preacher still loves dearly will turn against the preacher.

I am not a fan of the works of William Shakespeare. I have no doubt

he was a literary genius with regard to his abilities, but quite frankly some of his work is just dirty and immoral. However, I would ask you to consider for a moment Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*. In that scene during which Caesar is stabbed multiple times by his enemies Caesar sees a friend approach and thrust in a knife. His friend was Brutus. Caesar said, "And you too Brutus?" The sense of disappointment felt by Caesar at such a moment is something which many Gospel preachers have felt. Those in the church whom they felt they could trust had turned against them. Those in the churches of Galatia who had loved Paul so much, had become his enemies.

Sometimes preachers bring problems upon themselves because of their own faults. Such preachers shouldn't be preaching. These are the preach-

ers who excuse their own bad attitude and poor approach by saying “I was preaching the truth, and they just didn’t want the truth.” Such preachers should quit. The truth must be delivered without compromise (Galatians 2:5). However, the truth must be delivered in love and with meekness and godly fear (Ephesians 4:15; 1 Peter 2:15).

Though some preachers bring problems upon themselves because of their bad attitudes, there are times when preachers like Jeremiah, and preachers like Paul are persecuted simply because they have preached the truth in love. Because of their dedication to God they have behaved righteously, but for all of this some brethren will hate them and seek to hurt them. Some will stab them in the back, while others will thrust the knife in through the heart and twist it around while

staring straight into the eyes of the preacher.

Preachers, let's remember the mentality of the apostle Paul. Paul pressed on, reached forward, and pressed toward the goal (Philippians 3:7-16). He was able to find peace within by entrusting God with his cares (Philippians 4:6, 7). Paul learned to be content in whatever state he found himself because he knew he could do all things with the help of Christ (Philippians 4:10-13). Lean on God. Look to God. Rely upon God. Trust in God. Speak frequently to God, and you can be a faithful, powerful, and persistent preacher.

The work of an evangelist is complex. It goes far beyond the pulpit and the classroom. The complexity of people's lives becomes the complexity of the preacher's work. The far-reaching

effects of sin in the hearts and minds of men require preachers to continually turn to God in prayer for wisdom. The conscientious and compassionate Christian evangelist will find great joy in his work, but he will also find great discouragement. Rely on God. With the help of God you can go on.

## **POWERFUL PREACHING PASSAGES FROM PAUL**

Listed below are passages of Scripture that present some important facts about the manner in which Paul preached the powerful Gospel:

1. Acts 17:1-4.
  - a. Paul reasoned with the people rather than stirring them up into a mindless emotional frenzy.
  - b. Paul reasoned with them from the Scriptures.

## 2. Acts 17:22-34.

- a. It is important to know something about your audience.
- b. Start where they are in their understanding.

## 3. Acts 18:24-28.

- a. Eloquence with ignorance must be corrected.
- b. Eloquence with truth is powerful.

## 4. Acts 20:17-38.

- a. Preaching involves serving the Lord with all humility.
- b. Paul kept back nothing they needed to hear.

- c. Repentance was preached.
- d. Paul was willing to endure tribulation to preach.
- e. Paul preached the whole counsel of God.
- f. Preachers should not be covetous.

## 5. Romans 1:14-17.

- a. Show no partiality in preaching (cf. Acts 19:34, 35).
- b. The power is in the Gospel, not the preacher.

## 6. 1 Corinthians 2.

- a. The focus in preaching is on Christ.

- b. Persuasive words of human wisdom will save no one.
- c. Paul did not preach the wisdom of this age, but rather the wisdom of God.
- d. Not everyone will accept pure Bible preaching.

7. 1 Corinthians 3:5-7.

- a. God is everything.
- b. Preachers are nothing.

8. Galatians 1:6-10.

- a. Preach the true Gospel.
- b. Preach to please God rather than men.

9. Galatians 2:4-14.

a. Do not yield to false brethren.

b. Oppose hypocrisy.

## 10. Ephesians 4:15.

a. Speak the truth.

b. Speak the truth in love.

c. Speak the truth in love to edify the brethren.

## 11. 1 Thessalonians 2.

a. Be bold in preaching even if it means you must suffer.

b. Do not be deceitful.

c. Preach to please God rather than men.

d. Do not use flattery, nor be covetous.

- e. Be as gentle as a nursing mother.
- f. Give your life to preaching.
- g. Conduct yourself morally and wisely.
- h. Exhort, comfort, and charge as does a father his children.
- i. Encourage the Christians to walk worthy.

## **WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED?**

If preaching is done the right way it will not always be easy. The right way is to preach the truth honestly, with conviction, in love, in humility, and without compromise. When Jeremiah and Paul preached the truth they were opposed by some who hated them. Though Jeremiah specifically spoke

of times when he became discouraged and wanted to give up, through God he found the strength to continue preaching. The apostle Paul found himself in many difficult and painful situations yet he looked to God for the strength to continue. A preacher must continually listen to God by studying the Bible, but he must also continually speak to God through prayer. Every preacher must learn to pour out his heart to God in prayer and trust in God's powerful help.

### **Today's assignments:**

Quote Hebrews 4:12. One student should preach his sermon in class.

### **Next assignments:**

Read lesson ten and answer the questions at the end of the chapter.

Memorize Psalm 119:105. One student should preach his sermon in class.

### **Questions for lesson nine:**

1. When preachers “destroy and throw down” what must they also do?
2. Did God want Jeremiah to give up in the face of persecution?
3. God told Jeremiah if he couldn't run with the footmen how would he be able to run with the \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Why couldn't Jeremiah hold back from preaching even when he was so weary?
5. Did Paul hold anything back from the church at Ephesus?
6. Why was Paul innocent of the blood of all men?

7. The churches of a particular region had turned against Paul, though he loved them and they had once loved him. What is the name of that region?
8. Who did Paul rely on to help him through difficult times?
9. The truth must be delivered in love and with meekness and godly \_\_\_\_\_.
10. To whom must the preacher pour his heart out?

### **Review of Previous Lessons:**

1. Words are powerful when chosen well.
2. Preachers must be sincere.
3. Seek, do, and then teach.

4. The Scriptures are the foundation for the sermon.
5. Study hard and prepare well because you are not inspired.
6. Always develop a sermon outline because it helps you see the logical flow of your material.
7. Speak up and speak clearly.
8. Use your voice, gestures, movement, and facial expressions effectively and appropriately.
9. Practice your preaching frequently.
10. Wear conservative colored suits when you preach.
11. Preach and teach with controlled passionate conviction.
12. Work hard to set up and conduct Bible studies.

# **CHAPTER TEN**

## **BALANCE IN PREACHING**

### **THE IMPORTANCE OF BALANCE IN LIFE**

At our annual youth Bible camp one of our elders was asked a very interesting question by a ten year boy. The boy wanted to know why God made fleas, ticks, and girls. The elder responded by saying, “ask me that question again in a few years.” Literally thousands of questions have been asked of me simply because I am a full time evangelist. Those questions range from the very important to the relatively insignificant. One unusual question that was asked me is “Why did God make mosquitoes?” The answer I gave at the time was, “To make us look forward to heaven more because there are no mosquitoes in heaven.”

While the answer given was supposed to have some humor in it the reality is that God has created all things for a purpose. Mosquitoes feed the bats and the birds, which points to the balance in nature that God has designed.

How many times have you heard nutritionists and others telling us that we must eat a balanced diet for maximum health? If we eat fast-food hamburgers every day of our lives we are probably setting ourselves up for a heart attack. Eat them occasionally and with a balanced diet and the danger from such food is greatly reduced if not completely removed. Even some things that are considered good and healthy for us can hurt if we get too much. There must be balance for good health.

By the same token we must be balanced spiritually for good spiritual

health. Those who cannot be balanced spiritually often end up hurting themselves as well as others. Spiritual balance includes standing firmly upon the Word of God while departing neither to the left nor to the right. How sadly lacking this type of balance is in the lives of many Gospel preachers.

## **GOD IS BALANCED**

*“Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off (Romans 11:22).”* God is fair and just. He is both a God of love and a God of vengeance. God is kind and merciful in that He gives man ample opportunity to repent and turn to Him. However, when man stubbornly refuses to take advantage of those opportunities

to turn to God He will experience the wrath of God. This is the story of the Bible from beginning to end. God is a perfectly balanced being.

Coming from a perfectly balanced being one would expect to find a perfectly balanced revelation. The Bible is exactly that. The central theme of the Bible is salvation through Jesus Christ. The Bible is filled with messages of hope. In that regard it is the most positive document that exists in this world. On the other hand the Bible contains many negative messages, including messages of doom for all those who would reject God's Word. God is perfectly balanced, His Word is perfectly balanced, and Christians must strive for balance.

## **GOD COMMANDS BALANCE**

Doctrinal balance is of the utmost of importance in every Christian's life

and especially in the lives of those who preach. The warning was given to the Jews not to add to nor take away from God's Word (Deuteronomy 4:2; 12:32; Proverbs 30:6). They were to remain firmly upon the Word of God without departing either to the left hand or the right hand. When the Jews wanted to pass through Edom they promised to remain on the "King's Highway," turning neither to the left nor to the right as they traveled (Numbers 20:17). If we are traveling our King's Highway (Matthew 7:13, 14) we most certainly do not want to part either to the left or to the right. Doing so will cost our souls.

The book of Revelation contains a very strong New Testament warning against adding to, or taking away from the Word of God (Revelation 22:18, 19). While the specific application of this verse is to the book of Revelation there

is no doubt this principle applies to the entirety of God's Word (2 Timothy 2:15). Unfortunately there are many who become unbalanced in doctrine by adding to the Word of God. These are those who take their opinions and bind them as law (Romans 14). Our "anti" brethren would certainly be among this number. On the other side of the coin there are those members of the church who have devised clever and cunning ways to circumvent the law of God. They have come up with clever expressions and flat out denials of simple truths in order to justify sin. These brethren have sometimes been referred to as "change agents." They are just as unbalanced as our "anti" brethren only to the opposite extreme. Let us make sure we do not become unbalanced in doctrine.

Balance in preaching is specifically commanded by God. Paul said,

“Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching (2 Timothy 4:2).” We must preach those hard messages that step on the toes of the members and we must preach those joyful messages that bring great hope to Christians. We must deal with difficult issues and with those that are simple. We must preach the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth! Avoid the trap of preaching nothing but sermons of rebuke. A steady diet of sermons of rebuke will make a hard, mean, and negative group of folk out of any congregation. Even the hard messages of prophets such as Isaiah were interspersed with messages of hope. Isaiah was condemning the Jews and urging repentance. The failure to repent would result in their destruction. Not a pleasant message! However, Isaiah is referred to as “The Messianic Prophet”

because of the frequent messages he gave concerning the hope of the Jews through the coming Messiah.

On the other hand, be sure to avoid preaching nothing but positive sermons. Christians need “positive” sermons as long as they are Biblically based and Biblically sound. Christians need to be reminded of the hope, joy, and peace that God offers. Christians need to be reminded of the glories of their final reward in heaven. Preach the positive sermons that encourage the congregation, but don’t preach them exclusively! Congregations that hear nothing but sermons that make them feel good will end up being weak. Those same congregations are frequently the ones that are set up for doctrinal departure because there has been no balance in the pulpit.

While we are on the subject of preaching in a balanced way, let's deal with the manner in which a man preaches. A man ought to preach in such a way that it becomes clear he does not intend to compromise the truth in any form or fashion (Galatians 2:4, 5). However, a preacher cannot allow his determined stand for the truth to become an excuse for preaching in a bitter way. I have heard preachers preach the truth in such a manner that gave the impression of bitterness and hatred for all who would dare be wrong in any Scriptural matter. A sense of arrogance and the feeling that this person is looking down at everyone else is the kind of religious preaching some "sound" brethren are guilty of. I heard one preacher yell throughout his entire sermon. He had an angry look on his face and screamed so loud it seemed as if the speaker system in the church building was begging for mercy.

The fact is, we must preach the truth without compromise, but we must do so in love. Paul encouraged Christians to stand for the truth, but do so by speaking “*the truth in love* (Ephesians 4:14, 15).” Do you remember what Paul said about love in 1 Corinthians 13:1-3? If you don’t, then go and read it again. Stand for the truth! Never compromise! Don’t give in to the left or to the right! However, always make sure you do so in love. Listen very carefully to the word of Peter. “*And who is he who will harm you if you become followers of what is good? But even if you should suffer for righteousness’ sake, you are blessed. ‘And do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled.’ But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who ask you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear; having a good conscience, that when they defame you as*

*evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed. For it is better, if it is the will of God, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil (1 Peter 3:13-17)."*

## **PAUL'S EXAMPLE OF BALANCE IN PREACHING**

Acts chapter twenty record's Paul's message to the elders from the church at Ephesus. In that record we find a remarkable example of one who was balanced in his work as a preacher. Paul was humble and compassionate in his work at Ephesus (Acts 20:19). Though humble and compassionate he was not afraid to preach a strong message of repentance (Acts 20:20, 21). Paul preached with joy and warned with tears (Acts 20:24, 31). Clearly the manner in which Paul preached was balanced.

Paul was not only balanced in how

he preached but also in what he preached. He said, “*Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God* (Acts 20:26, 27).” Every preacher ought to read those verses from time to time to remind themselves of their duty. We must preach the whole counsel of God if we are to be free of the blood of all men. If I am afraid to preach the truth in a particular matter then I will be lost! I must preach it all and I must be balanced. I must preach the hard sermons of rebuke, and I must preach the gentle sermons of hope! I must step on toes and I must build the people up! Preach it all! Be balanced!

## **BALANCE IN A PREACHER’S LIFE**

Preachers are often viewed through a different set of eyeglasses. People don’t want to look at preachers in the same

way they look at other Christians. To some degree that is warranted. After all, a full time evangelist is not (usually) an elder, nor is he a deacon. Furthermore, he does a work that many other members in the congregation won't do. In addition he must make a concerted effort to "walk the walk as well as talk the talk." He is different to a degree. Nonetheless we need to be careful about putting preachers into a different category from Christians. A preacher is a Christian, and a human being. He is a man with dreams, desires, needs, and temptations like other people.

The preacher is a man that needs to be just as balanced in his approach to life, as does any other Christian. While God always comes first in any Christian's life we do not spend every waking moment in service to God (Matthew 6:33). A Gospel preacher

needs to be involved in recreational activities (with moderation) and he needs to take his vacations. Jesus began to feel the pressures of His very hectic workload and decided it was time to take a break (Mark 6:30-32). He and His disciples had worked hard and needed a break. Jesus tried to find a place where they could be alone for a while to take that break but the crowd would not let them. If Jesus recognized a need to take a break and get away from the demanding mobs, preachers ought to as well. While preaching, of necessity, will consume much of a preacher's life he must not let it consume all of his life. He must get rest. He must be balanced.

I believe many preachers neglect an important aspect to life that will help them with their balance and will also help them with their preaching. That is exercise. I know Paul said there

isn't much profit in it, but there is some profit in it (1 Timothy 4:8). Bodily exercise will improve a preacher's appearance, and stamina. Improving those aspects of his life will improve his effectiveness in the pulpit. Bodily exercise helps a preacher with his breathing, blood flow, and general health. Those who exercise regularly and get enough rest think better and do their work better. The improved blood flow to the brain and increased oxygen throughout the body do wonderful things for preaching.

Perhaps the most important area in which a preacher needs to remember balance is family life. Preachers often fail to balance their work and their families. The end result is that the families suffer. Both wives and children can suffer from a lack of attention when the preacher fails to spend enough time with them. He must look

for times to be alone with his wife, and he must look for times to be alone with his family. He should guard those times with all diligence and let nothing but the greatest of emergencies interfere with his family time. Woe to the preacher whose wife says to him, "I believe I would have more of your time and attention if I were one of the members with a problem."

It has been a regular habit of mine since marriage to take one day of the week off and designate it as my family day. I will do what I can do to keep things from interfering with that time. In addition I will spend what evenings I can with my family. Each night we have family devotional in which we read the Bible, sing, pray, and the children are drilled in their memory verses. I value this family time and guard it as carefully as I can. What a shame it is when a preacher saves the souls

of many but loses the souls of his family. While good fathers may sometimes see their children reject Christ, it is far more likely that terrible pain will come to those fathers who have neglected their children. Don't do it! Don't neglect your family! If your family is not happy you may be inhibited in your work as a preacher anyway. Remember to balance work and family. All work and no play make the preacher a failure.

## **BALANCING STUDY AND VISITS**

If a preacher does not put in the hours necessary to develop strong, Biblical sermons it will show on Sunday. He must make sermon preparation a priority. However, a preacher cannot spend all of his time studying. He must spend some time helping out the members. He can do this by listening to them when they come to talk to

him, visiting them when they are sick, and by going to be with them when a loved one has died. I have heard preachers say they do not want to go and do hospital visiting because that is not their job. When we read Matthew chapter twenty-five I don't see how we can miss the fact that visiting the sick is an important work for every Christian, including the preacher. If a preacher takes the time to be with Christians when they are suffering, those Christians will be more likely to show interest in what the preacher has to say on Sunday. The balanced preacher spends time studying, spends time visiting, and spends time evangelizing in the community.

## **BALANCE REQUIRES DISCIPLINE**

Balance in doctrine requires honest, sincere, and diligent Bible study. Balance in life requires constant ef-

fort and maintenance. Balance requires discipline. Discipline may be called “self-control,” or “temperance.” It is admonished upon Christians as a “fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:23),” and as a Christian virtue which is to be added to our faith (2 Peter 1:6). Paul often spoke of Christians in a figurative way as athletes (Hebrews 12:1, 2). Athletes must be disciplined in order to succeed, and so too must Christians.

The application of discipline to balancing the preacher’s life will reap tremendous rewards. A preacher will be more likely to be balanced in his eating habits if he is self-disciplined. It requires discipline for a preacher to do his work. He must often be a self-motivator. However, he must also be disciplined enough to drop his work where it is and go and spend some time with his family.

## **THE DANGERS OF LOOSING ONE'S BALANCE**

We all know the dangers of loosing one's physical balance. Often injury and pain are the result. When I lived in Minnesota I lost my balance on some hard packed snow. My feet flew into the air and I landed on my shoulders. The neck reacted like a whip and smacked my head on the ice-covered driveway. A temporary neck brace and an occasionally tight neck are the results. The results of losing one's balance spiritually can be much more devastating.

Certainly one who is not balanced in the doctrine he preaches will be in trouble on the day of judgment (Acts 20:26, 27; Revelations 22:18, 19). What more terrible consequence can there be than to lose one's soul because he was too afraid to preach

the whole counsel of God (Revelation 21:8)? But it is not just a failure to be balanced in doctrine that can hurt a preacher. I have known preachers who have become so strict that they eventually can't live with themselves and depart from the truth altogether. There are those who have stood up so straight they have fallen down. A man who tries to discipline himself to avoid all influences of our modern culture is called a Catholic Monk and he is lost. Gospel preachers should understand the need to fit in with our society in any way that does not involve compromising the truth, or violating Scriptural authority for religious practices. Too many times those who are wound too tight explode.

Please keep in mind I am not advocating any kind of compromise. Never compromise! Never give up on the truth! Always do what is right and

preach what is right! However, don't forget to be a real person. Preachers are real people too.

## **WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED?**

God is a balanced and He commands balance. Preachers must be balanced in doctrine, preaching, and in life. A preacher should never neglect his family or his physical health. Proper balance in life and preaching requires self-discipline. Never compromise the truth, but don't wind yourself up so tight you think you are the only one in the world standing for the truth. Preachers who get wound too tight often fall apart.

### **Assignments for today:**

Quote Psalm 119:105. One student should be prepared to preach his sermon in class.

## **Assignment for next class:**

Read the review material in the book. Take the practice exam in the book. Know the material throughout the rest of the book well and be prepared for a final exam.

### **Questions for lesson ten (True/False):**

1. Balance is not important in life.
2. God is perfectly balanced in character.
3. God doesn't mind if we tamper with His word by adding our opinion to it.
4. It is a sin to take away from God's revelation to man.
5. We must preach those sermons that step on toes as well as those which encourage.

6. Paul was a very unbalanced man when it came to his work as a preacher.
7. Paul was free from the blood of all men because he had preached only those parts of the truth that didn't offend anyone.
8. Preachers should remember to be balanced in life as well as in doctrine.
9. Balance requires self-discipline.
10. Preachers that are wound too tight often explode.

### **Review from previous lessons:**

1. Words are powerful when chosen well.
2. We must determine in our hearts to know the Will of God, apply the Will

of God, and then go and teach the Will of God.

3. The pulpit is not the place for revenge, or for seeking the praise of men.
4. The pulpit is the place to preach the truth in such a way that men and women are encouraged to live godly lives.
5. Preaching is, "...the act of righteous manhood on fire with the Truth of God, seeking to bring the souls of men to Christ."
6. The Scriptures are the foundation for the sermon.
7. Because we are not inspired we must study diligently.
8. The only book a preacher must have is the Bible.

9. Keep the text in context.
10. Take good notes when you study.
11. A topical sermon receives its subject from the main text. The main points and sub-points may come from other passages.
12. A textual sermon receives its subject and main points from the central text. The sub-points may come from other verses.
13. An expository sermon receives its subject, main points, and all sub-points from one passage.
14. Preaching with an outline is the recommended method of organizing material for presentation.
15. Say as much as you can with as few words as possible.

16. The voice, gestures, posture, facial expressions, and bodily movement all affect the delivery of the sermon.
17. Be enthusiastic when you preach.
18. Look people in the eye when you preach.
19. Develop your own style of preaching.
20. Practice your sermons out loud before you preach them.
21. Dark colored suits are the most effective clothes to wear.
22. Good Bible class teachers will challenge themselves to research and study the material well.
23. The church must evangelize!

24. Always take a partner with you when going on a personal Bible study.
25. The male must lead in the worship service.
26. Worship God with reverence.
27. The New Testament gives us the authorized pattern for worship.
28. Balance is necessary in preaching.
29. Preachers must preach those sermons that are hard hitting as well as those sermons that produce great joy.
30. Preachers must preach the truth without compromise, but they must also do so with love.
31. Preachers should not neglect their families.

# CHAPTER ELEVEN

## HOW A PREACHER SHOULD VIEW HIMSELF

### INTRODUCTION

Preachers must make sure they do not fall into the trap of thinking too highly of themselves. True, their work is important, but they could do none of it without the blessings supplied to them by God. Preachers who become arrogant will often cause great harm to come upon the church, and will ultimately come crashing down in shame (Proverbs 6:16-19; 16:18). When Paul was in danger of “*being exalted above measure*” a thorn in the flesh was given to him to keep him humble (2 Corinthians 12:7-10). Don’t exalt yourself above an appropriate measure. To help put you in your place consider what Paul wrote in his first letter to

the church at Corinth about preachers. These passages will show us how a preacher should view himself.

## **AS A MINISTER** **(1 CORINTHIANS 3:5-9)**

The brethren in the church at Corinth were behaving in an immature fashion when they chose to take sides over preachers (1 Corinthians 1:10-17; 3:1-4). In order to help them to have the proper mindset toward preachers Paul wrote, *“Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers through whom you believed, as the Lord gave to each one? I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase.”* (1 Corinthians 1:4-7) Do you see how Paul puts the emphasis upon God rather than preachers? God is the one who blessed the work and caused

the growth. Verse five shows us that preachers are ministers. Ministers are servants. We are not the masters, but rather we are the slaves. We are not the served, but rather we are the servants. Preachers are servants.

Verse seven is particularly powerful in this context. In essence it tells us that preachers are nothing. So, mighty preacher, before you get all puffed up with your own distorted sense of self-worth, just remember that you are nothing. It is God who gives the increase. We are simply His servants. When I was a teenager I went with my family to a Gospel meeting being conducted at a congregation not too far from where we regularly worshipped. What I saw in that meeting so amazed me that I can vividly recall the scene in my mind today. The visiting Gospel preacher strode regally to the stage with a long royal like robe

draped over his shoulders. Two deacons followed him to the pulpit when it was time for him to preach. When the preacher was ready to preach the deacons carefully lifted the royal robe from off the shoulders of the preacher. Though I was young at the time I was struck by what appeared to be arrogance such as I had never seen before in the church of Christ. Perhaps this preacher had forgotten he was just a minister (servant) and God was the one who deserved all of the glory.

## **AS A STEWARD** **(1 CORINTHIANS 4:1-5)**

Paul wrote, *“Let a man so consider us as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.”* (1 Corinthians 4:5) In speaking of preachers Paul once again emphasizes the fact that we are servants. But what kind of servants are preachers? Stewards.

Stewards are those who care for something that belongs to someone else. Preachers must preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We are stewards of the Gospel. We must use the Gospel in the manner God sees fit. Let us be wise in our study, wise in our interpretation, and wise in our preaching and application.

It is in this context that Paul said, *“Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful.”* (1 Corinthians 4:2) Preachers, we are those who must give an account to God for the manner in which we have handled the Word of God and in which we have conducted ourselves. Preachers who do not grasp the significance of being accountable to God as stewards will very likely get themselves into trouble. We are ministers and stewards who are accountable to God.

## **AS ONE WHO IS FALLIBLE (1 CORINTHIANS 9:24-27)**

All Christians must consider the importance of self-control. We must work hard to discipline ourselves as do athletes. We must run to win and we must fight with purpose. This is just as, or perhaps more important for Gospel preachers. Paul recognized the possibility that he could fall away and lose his salvation even though he was a preacher who had saved others. He said, "*But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.*" (1 Corinthians 9:27) Preachers must recognize the clear possibility of losing their souls. We must stay on the look-out for our old enemy (1 Peter 5:8). There is not a faithful preacher of the Gospel of Jesus Christ that Satan does not want to bring crashing down. He will

love it, the world will love it, and the church will suffer because of it. Be aware that you are fallible.

Sometimes our fallibility is brought dramatically to our attention when someone criticizes us. If that criticism is unfounded we ignore it and move on. But be careful not to dismiss all criticism. Sometimes people may rightly point out something you may have said in a class or in a sermon that is wrong. Don't be so arrogant that you won't listen. Don't be so concerned about portraying an image of perfection that you are not willing to honestly look at the facts and admit when you have made a mistake. Humbly correct the error and try to do better in the future.

**AS A MEMBER OF THE BODY  
(1 CORINTHIANS 12:12-31)**

Christians are those who have been baptized into one body (1 Corinthians 12:13). That one body into which we have been baptized is the church (Ephesians 1:22, 23). When we were baptized into Christ we were added by Christ to His church (Acts 2:47; Galatians 3:27). As members of the body of Christ we have a specific role to play. We are a part of the body with a specific function. Our function is that of preaching.

While recognizing our function as preachers let us not in any way diminish the role that other parts of the body play. Sometime members place preachers high upon some unnatural plain which in their mind is unattainable for mere mortals. Christians should never think of preachers in this fashion. Unfortunately, sometimes it is the preacher that elevates himself in his mind. Preachers must remem-

ber that every member of the body is just as important as he is (1 Corinthians 12:20-26).

Sometimes the church focuses its praise upon well-known preachers, but I am convinced the non-preaching members who are humbly working behind the scenes to please God are just as vital to the church and just as important to God. Preachers are simply one part of the body.

## **WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED?**

Preachers need to be careful they do not think too highly of themselves. Preachers must view themselves as ministers, stewards, those who are fallible, and as another part of the body. As another part of the body we are no more valuable to God than any other Christian. Preachers begin walking a very dangerous pathway when they

arrogantly seek to elevate themselves in the eyes of men. Preachers must remember it is God who gives the increase, and we are nothing. We will be saved by the mercy of God, and it is He who deserves all glory and praise.

### **Today's assignments:**

Quote 1 Corinthians 3:7. One student should be preaching in class.

### **Next assignments:**

Read chapter twelve and answer the questions at the end of the chapter. Memorize

2 Timothy 4:1-5 and be prepared to quote it in class. Another student should be prepared to preach in class.

### **Questions from lesson eleven: (true or false)**

1. There is great danger in preachers being exalted above measure.
2. The glory for good that is done in preaching should be given to the preacher rather than God.
3. Preachers are servants.
4. Preachers need not be concerned with their stewardship of the Gospel.
5. It is required in stewards that they be found faithful.
6. Can preachers fall from grace?
7. Preachers are infallible.
8. Preachers are more valuable than all the other members.
9. Preachers are special, miraculous, supernatural, superior Christians.

10. Preachers are nothing.

### **Review of previous material:**

1. Words are powerful when chosen well.
2. The heart behinds the words must be right.
3. The foundation of the sermon is the Bible.
4. Preachers are no longer inspired and must therefore study.
5. The most important aspect to preaching is a strong Biblical content.
6. Being able to speak effectively will add strength to your preaching.
7. The way you dress can affect whether or not people listen to you.

8. You should dress for preaching in such fashion as shows respect and reverence.
9. Preachers must not think too highly of themselves.
10. It is God who gives the increase.

# CHAPTER TWELVE

## LETTERS TO PREACHERS

Preachers should take the time to study Paul's inspired letters to Timothy and Titus at least once each year. While the material in these books has application to other Christians as well, the focus of these letters is upon the work of preachers.

### WAR (1 TIMOTHY 1:18-20)

Preaching is war. Not war in the physical sense with guns and swords. Rather, preaching is wading into spiritual battle while wielding the spiritual sword against our ancient enemy. Paul told Timothy to “...*wage the good warfare.*” (1 Timothy 1:18) Physical war is horrifying. Physical war is grotesquely destructive. We don't see

the same physical destruction in the war to save souls the souls of men. However, we do see plenty of spiritual slaughter as the souls and minds of men become terribly twisted with the darkness of wickedness. We are warring against sin. We are fighting to save the souls of men and women. We are working hard to help people to find their way out of darkness and desperation. Do not doubt that it is a war. Do not doubt that your soul may become casualty to the war.

After Paul told Timothy to wage the good warfare he spoke of two who had failed (1 Timothy 1:19, 20). Hymenaeus and Alexander were withdrawn from by Paul for blaspheming God. They had apparently been faithful soldiers at one time like Paul and Timothy. However, they allowed Satan to make shipwreck of their faith. This terrible and ancient enemy that

preachers battle against every day has taken many mighty spiritual warriors down. Don't let him take you down. Wage the good warfare to the very end.

**WARN**  
**(1 TIMOTHY 4:1-16)**

Our adversary, the Devil, will make sure that doctrines of demons and lies in hypocrisy will abound. Many people will find their hearts hardened by Satan's false doctrines. It is the preacher's responsibility to warn the brethren of such error. Preachers must reject profane and old wives' fables and remain firmly planted upon the truth. Only the truth can save souls before their hearts are hardened beyond the possibility of repentance.

We will not recognize error, nor will we know the truth if we do not give attention to reading, to exhortation, and

to doctrine. We must study hard to know how to help others when they have been deceived by error. We must study hard to prevent our own souls from being lost. Paul told Timothy to *“Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.”* Study it, practice it, and preach it. Save yourself as well as those who hear you. So let us *“labor and suffer reproach because we trust in the living God...”*

**RUN**  
**(1 TIMOTHY 6:11, 12)**

Preachers need to know when to run. There are some things that preachers need to run from. In this context Paul is telling Timothy to run from the love of money. The love of money can cause preachers to compromise the truth. The love of money can result in

preachers giving up preaching. “*But you, O man of God, flee these things...*”

Not only are there some things we need to run from, but there are some Christian characteristics we need to run to. Run to righteousness. Pursue “*godliness, faith, love, patience, and gentleness.*” These are the traits that must be seen in the life of the preacher.

Let us run from covetousness, run to righteousness, and “*fight the good fight of faith.*” What are we fighting for? You must know. If you don’t know what you are fighting for you will not be motivated to fight. We are fighting to lay hold on eternal life. What could be more valuable? The blessing of being able to live forever with God in heaven must remain forefront in our minds as we preach the powerful Gospel year after year. We con-

fessed our faith in Jesus Christ before men and now we tell others about that faith. We firmly believe in that confession of faith and are willing to devote our lives to that confession. In fact we are willing to give our lives for that confession.

**ENDURE**  
**(1 TIMOTHY 1:13-2:10)**

Preachers must hold fast to the pattern of sound words. That pattern of sound words is the Gospel of Jesus Christ as revealed by inspiration in the pages of the New Testament. That pattern shows us how to work and worship in such a way as to please God. That is the only pattern that leads to eternal life. It is the only pattern which must guide our lives, and it is the only pattern which must saturate, and motivate our preaching.

Holding fast the pattern of sound words means we won't let go. We won't let go of the truth even if we must endure hardship. Paul told Timothy to *"be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus."* He wanted Timothy to recognize the importance of being able to *"endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ."* Preachers must endure hardship like soldiers, train like athletes, and work hard like farmers. Most conscientious preachers will find preaching difficult at times, but with their trust in the Lord they will continue, they will convict, and they will conquer.

## **PREACH**

### **(2 TIMOTHY 4:1-8)**

The charge given to Timothy was to preach the Word! No matter what happens to us in this life we must continue to preach the Word. We must

not let Satan cause us to give up. We must not allow his helpers to bring us down. We must not give in to compromise and error. We must preach the Word! Nothing else will save. All else will destroy.

Preachers will often find themselves in situations where those who are around them are sympathetic toward the truth. At such times preachers can boldly proclaim the truth to the sound of rousing “amens.” But sometimes we find ourselves in a den of devils. Sometimes we find ourselves among those who call themselves brethren yet they do not love the truth. These will hate us, these will lie about us, these will seek to destroy us, but still we must preach the Word (John 8:16-31)!

When we preach the Word we will seek to “*convince, rebuke, and exhort.*”

This we shall do with longsuffering and teaching. Sometimes preachers can forget to preach with longsuffering. Be careful not to confuse patience with compromise. Efforts must be made to bring the erring back to the truth. That requires patience. We must seek to convince people of their error, rebuke the false teaching, and exhort them to return to Christ. This requires longsuffering. The acid-tongued, bitter-mouthed, anger-filled preacher with a heart full of venom will often do more harm than good and he will never be longsuffering. Paul told us to preach the truth with longsuffering and teaching. This means we will patiently show them way.

Preaching the Word may cost your life. It cost Paul his. Though you may love people, and though you may be longsuffering in your preaching you will still find those who will hate you.

Those who hate you for preaching the truth in reality hate the truth and are turning their backs on God. Some, who did not love the truth, killed Paul. Preach the Word! Even if it means you must die for so doing.

**PATTERN**  
**(TITUS 2:7, 8)**

Paul told the preacher Titus that he must in all things show himself “*to be a pattern of good works.*” Preachers must not just tell Christians how to live. Preachers must show Christians how to live. Like it or not you are in the fishbowl. Christians are looking at you. If you give them the right example you will please the Lord (1 Corinthians 11:1). If you don’t you may discourage them and you will lose your own soul.

In doctrine you must show integrity. Be honest with yourself. Be hon-

est with the Biblical text. Don't try to force your views into the text. Let the Bible tell you what to believe. Preach what the Bible says with deep conviction and you will be able play a part in developing a deep love for the Word of God in the lives of others. We must preach the truth because we believe the truth.

When you know the truth, believe the truth with all your heart, and live the truth, those who oppose you will not be able to find a real accusation against you. They will have to lie and make something up. Be guilty of nothing more than "*sound speech that cannot be condemned.*"

## **WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED?**

Preaching is war. It is a spiritual war that we wage with love, gentleness, righteousness, and kindness. It is a conflict of eternal consequences. We

must run from evil, endure hardship, preach the Word, fight the good fight, and be an example to others. Preaching is not for the weak. Preaching is for those who soldier on in faithfulness though weary and worn. When the battle bruises and the conflict cuts we must continue. The wounded warrior leans upon his sword, the Word of God, as he bows before His eternal God in prayer. Through the Word and through the prayer he finds the courage to fight another day. "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." (Philippians 4:13)

### **Today's assignments:**

Quote 2 Timothy 4:1-5. One student should preach his sermon in class.

### **Assignments for next class period:**

Read lesson thirteen and answer the questions at the end of the chapter.

Quote Philippians 4:6-8. One student should preach his sermon in class.

### **Questions from lesson twelve:**

1. What are preachers to wage?
2. What two men failed in the spiritual battle?
3. What should preachers warn Christians about?
4. What did Paul tell Timothy to run from in 1 Timothy 6?
5. Preachers must endure like \_\_\_\_\_, train like \_\_\_\_\_, and work like \_\_\_\_\_.
6. What must we preach?
7. You may be required to die for your preaching. (true or false)

8. Every preacher must show himself to be “a pattern of \_\_\_\_\_ .”
9. What cannot be condemned?
10. What will help you to find the courage to fight another day?

### **Review of previous material:**

1. Must the heart behind the words must be right.
2. Words can be used to hurt and harm.
3. Words can be used to help and heal.
4. The Bible is the foundation for the sermon.
5. Study well in preparing your sermons.
6. Seek to be a balanced preacher.

7. Preach the truth without compromise.
8. Preach the truth in love.
9. Dress to show reverence for the occasion when preaching.
10. Preachers are servants.

# **CHAPTER THIRTEEN**

## **BE THANKFUL**

### **THE ELIJAH SYNDROME**

Elijah was a faithful and courageous prophet of God. He preached during a time when many in Israel had turned against God. Some of the prophets of God had been killed and the evil queen Jezebel was seeking to kill the others. Being human, Elijah was subject to discouragement like any preacher of today. As Elijah complained he reminded God of how zealous he had been for the Lord God of hosts (1 Kings 19:14). It was after this that he boldly declared to God, "I alone am left." Elijah thought he was the only one left still serving God. He wasn't. God informed him there were 7,000 more in Israel still faithful (1 Kings 19:18).

Sometimes preachers suffer from the “Elijah Syndrome.” They work very hard until fatigue and discouragement catch up with them. When they are tired and discouraged they can sometimes begin thinking their problems are worse than they really are. In such times it is easy to forget to look upon our blessings and be thankful.

## **AN ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE**

Let's be like Paul. Paul was a preacher who suffered much, and yet he always seemed to be able to remember God's blessings. He wrote to the church at Thessalonica and said, *“Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”* (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18) We should rejoice for what God has done for us. We should focus upon the pos-

itive and powerful providence of God in our lives. We should fully trust in Him and frequently pray to Him with a grateful heart.

Remember what Paul wrote to the church at Philippi from the confines of prison. *“Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say rejoice! Let your gentleness be made known to all men. The Lord is at hand. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”* (Philippians 4:4-7) Paul further expressed his ability to be content in good and in hard times because he always trusted in the Lord’s ability to take care of him (Philippians 4:10-13). Paul was able to recognize God’s blessings all the time. Paul did not

allow the difficulties of persecution to drain the gratitude from his heart. He knew that he had been blessed and he rejoiced because of it.

## **GRATEFUL FOR SALVATION**

We are called preachers because we preach the good news of salvation. We want others to be filled with joy and peace because they have heard and obeyed the Gospel. We seek to motivate them to please the Lord and to endure difficult times by telling them about the heaven to come. Are we hypocrites? Do we not understand the good news is about our salvation as well? Do we not realize that God will help preachers during difficult times and give us peace? Do we think only the brethren can be encouraged by thoughts of heaven? If we want the congregation to be joyous for salvation then we must be joyous. Paul

said, *“And the grace of our Lord was exceedingly abundant, with faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.”* (1 Timothy 1:14, 15) Rejoice, be happy, count your blessings, thank God, you are among the saved!

## **GRATEFUL FOR PREACHING**

This whole book has emphasized the importance of preaching. Those who are blessed with the opportunity to preach the powerful Gospel must be grateful for that blessing. Paul had killed Christians and yet he was still given opportunity to become a Christian himself. He rejoiced in his salvation and was grateful God gave him the opportunity to preach. Paul wrote, *“And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me, because He*

*counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry.*" (1 Timothy 1:12) Paul thanked Jesus Christ for the opportunity to serve as a preacher. We should be thankful also.

It is easy for preachers to focus too much on the negative aspects of preaching. Preaching is complicated and sometimes discouraging. However, God has blessed us with the opportunity to be co-workers with Him. We plant, we water, and God gives the increase (1 Corinthians 4:5-9). Who could be a better co-worker than God?

We should be grateful for preaching because studying to prepare our sermons is time spent in diligent meditation upon God's Word. The word of God produces faith in our hearts and increases faith in our hearts (Romans 10:9, 10). How many Christians have the opportunity to spend as much time studying the Bible as we do?

Gratitude for the opportunity to be a minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ should also be motivated by the importance of the work (Romans 10:14-17). Everyone needs a sense of purpose and a job to do. Our purpose is to save souls. How many people can say that about their jobs? Let's thank God for the opportunity to preach.

## **GRATEFUL FOR THE CHURCH**

In the church we see the eternal wisdom of God (Ephesians 3:8-11). The design for the church is perfect in every way. However, the church is made up of Christians and Christians are people, and people are imperfect. Sometimes Christians behave in ungodly ways toward preachers. That can really hurt. Are you going to let that get you down? Many preachers have quit preaching and some have given up their faith all together because of

the mean-spirited character of some wicked members of the church. It is very easy to focus on such brethren and forget all of the wonderful brothers and sisters in Christ who humbly and faithfully serve the Lord. Remember the humble servants and be encouraged by their dedication.

Have you noticed how much Paul talks about his gratitude for his fellow Christians? Read what Paul wrote in the introductions to his letters. *“First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.”* (Romans 1:8) *“I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given to you by Christ Jesus.”* (1 Corinthians 1:4) *“I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine making request for you all with joy, for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now...”*

(Philippians 1:3-5) *“We give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of your love for all the saints...”*

(Colossians 1:3, 4) *“We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers, remembering without ceasing your work of faith, labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ...”* (1 Thessalonians 1:2, 3)

*“We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is fitting, because your faith grows exceedingly, and the love of every one of you all abounds toward each other...”*  
(2 Thessalonians 1:3)

## **WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED?**

We learned the importance of remaining grateful during difficult times. God has blessed us so often and in so many ways. How dare we darken our hearts with ingratitude. God will always take

care of us if we always follow Him. We should be thankful for our salvation, for the opportunity to preach, and for our brethren. These are just a few of the many thousands of blessings God has given to preachers. *“Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him and bless His name. For the Lord is good; His mercy is everlasting, and His truth endures to all generations.”* (Psalm 100:4, 5)

### **Today's assignments:**

Quote Philippians 4:6-8. One student should preach his sermon in class.

### **Questions from lesson thirteen:**

1. When are preachers likely to begin to lose their sense of gratitude toward God?

2. Name three things for which we should be grateful?
3. In everything give \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Should we encourage rejoicing and gratitude among our brethren for salvation and not rejoice and be grateful ourselves?
5. Why should we be grateful for preaching?
6. Did Paul ever express gratitude for his fellow Christians?
7. Why did the Psalmist say we should be thankful to God and bless His name?
8. Explain the Elijah syndrome.
9. How many were still faithful to God in Elijah's time?

10. What can make problems seem bigger than they really are?

### **Review of previous material:**

1. Must the heart behind the words must be right.
2. Words can be used to hurt and harm.
3. Words can be used to help and heal.
4. The Bible is the foundation for the sermon.
5. Study well in preparing your sermons.
6. Seek to be a balanced preacher.
7. Preach the truth without compromise.

8. Preach the truth in love and hold fast to the pattern of sound words.
9. Dress to show reverence for the occasion when preaching.
10. Preachers are servants who are to endure hardship as good soldiers.

# **REVIEW**

## **Chapter One: The Power of Words**

Words are powerful when chosen well. Words can be used for good or evil. This means that having the right heart behind the words is very important. Preachers need to make sure they have the right attitude before entering the pulpit.

## **Chapter Two: The Foundation of the Sermon**

The New Testament teaches us that preaching is an important part of God's plan. Preachers should not consider themselves to be entertainers, but rather those who are opening, explaining, and applying the Scriptures. Preachers must make sure Scriptures provide the foundation for every sermon they preach. Faithful preachers preach the powerful Gospel.

## **Chapter Three: Studying for Your Sermon**

No one today is given the gift of miraculous knowledge or inspiration. This means that preachers must study hard in order to properly prepare their sermons. Evangelists must spend much time in reading the Bible and in taking notes. Always consider the passage in its context.

## **Chapter Four: Preparing a Sermon Outline**

Sermons can be categorized by purpose and/or by structure. Purposes include; edification, exhortation, education, etc. The structural types are topical, textual, and expository. There are different ways of organizing the material for presentation. The most efficient way is to prepare a sermon outline.

## **Chapter Five: Sermon Presentation**

Be enthusiastic when you preach while remembering the dignity of the occasion. Learn to use your voice well by breathing properly, pushing the sound out, and by changing the volume and pitch of your voice appropriately. Gestures, facial expressions, posture, and foot movement in the pulpit can improve the effectiveness of your presentation when used appropriately. These should all be varied in the sermon and should flow naturally from what is being said. Do your best to maintain good eye contact with the congregation. Use a lively conversational manner of preaching but be sure to develop your own style of presentation.

## **Chapter Six: The Preacher's Appearance**

No dress code is ordered by the Scriptures. However, we must remember the significance of preaching and dress appropriately. What we wear says something about how important the occasion is to us. Our clothing also affects the way people listen to us. Dark conservative suits with white shirts and solid colored ties make the most effective clothing for preaching in the pulpit.

## **Chapter Seven: Teaching a Bible Class**

Bible classes are a very important and effective tool in combating the evil influences of the world. Proper preparation is very important for a Bible class. For a Bible class you need to be prepared to answer questions and respond appropriately to verbal feedback. Bible classes give you opportunity to delve more deeply into some material than do sermons.

## **Chapter Eight: Conducting a Personal Bible Study**

Preachers should seek opportunities to talk about the Gospel to those who are not Christians. When you are able to have a personal Bible study with one who is not a Christian it is a good idea to take another Christian with you. Decide ahead of time who will guide the study. Always be polite, friendly, and patient when you are involved in a Bible study.

## **Chapter Nine: Portraits of Powerful Preachers**

Jeremiah was a powerful preacher because he stood with the truth when almost everyone else was against him. He was hated and persecuted but he kept on preaching the. Though there were times when he was greatly discouraged and spoke of giving up he

kept on preaching and remained a faithful servant of God.

Paul was a powerful preacher because he always looked to God for strength in difficult times. Paul refused to give up preaching though he suffered persecution many times. Paul was an ideal preacher because he preached to please God rather than men.

## **Chapter Ten: Balance in Preaching**

God is balanced. God's creation is balanced. God expects His ministers to be balanced. Preachers need to seek balance in doctrine, in preaching, in living, and in time management. Balance requires great discipline, but there is great danger in losing one's balance.

Balance in doctrine means preaching the truth without compromise,

but doing so in love. Balance in doctrine means avoiding the temptation to depart from the truth either to the left or to the right. Balance in preaching means using different types of sermons. Balance in living and time management means resting appropriately, spending time with family, and taking care of yourself as well as others.

## **Chapter Eleven: How Should a Preacher View Himself**

Too many preachers view themselves more highly than they ought. Sometimes Christians elevate preachers to a status that is unscriptural. Preachers need to view themselves as ministers. A minister is a servant. Preachers need to be faithful stewards who recognize they are capable of making mistakes. Preachers should view themselves as simply being another

part of the body no more important to God than any other part of the body.

## **Chapter Twelve: Letters to Preachers**

The New Testament books of 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus were written primarily to preachers. Preachers should read these books through at least once each year. From these letters to preachers we learn that preachers must wage a good warfare, warn the brethren against error, endure afflictions, and preach the Word without compromise.

## **Chapter Thirteen: Be Thankful**

Too many preachers spend too much time complaining. The work of preaching can be very difficult and discouraging. However, we must be careful to avoid the “Elijah Syndrome.”

Elijah became so discouraged he came to believe he was the only one doing the right thing. We need to remember God's blessings especially when we are discouraged. God has blessed us in many ways. We should be thankful for each of these blessings. Those include; salvation, the opportunity to preach, and our fellow Christians.

# SELF-TEST

## Fill in the Blank:

1. Words are powerful when chosen \_\_\_\_\_.
2. “For Ezra had prepared his heart to \_\_\_\_\_ the Law of the Lord, and to \_\_\_\_\_ it, and to \_\_\_\_\_ statutes and ordinances in Israel.”
3. “My brethren, let not many of you become \_\_\_\_\_, knowing that we shall receive a \_\_\_\_\_ judgment.”
4. A text taken out of context becomes a \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Sleepy, dull preachers may sometimes cause congregations to be \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

6. A preacher should be able to look up from his outline and look people in the \_\_\_\_\_.
7. Develop your own \_\_\_\_\_ of preaching.
8. The two most effective methods of overcoming stage fright are \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
9. Say as much as you can with as \_\_\_\_\_ words as possible.
10. Jeremiah was told to “root out and pull down, to destroy and to throw down, to \_\_\_\_\_ and to \_\_\_\_\_.”

### **Short Answer:**

1. Name the three types of sermon structure.
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_

b. \_\_\_\_\_

c. \_\_\_\_\_

2. What is the recommended way of organizing sermon notes for preaching?

3. Christopher Witt gives at least 8 tips for creating PowerPoint slides. Name three of them.

a. \_\_\_\_\_

b. \_\_\_\_\_

c. \_\_\_\_\_

4. What expression did Jeremiah use to describe the power of the Word of God inside of him?

5. Why was Paul free from the blood of all men?

6. Who did Paul say strengthened him so that he could press on in difficult times?
  
7. What did Paul reason from when preaching?
  
8. What did Paul tell Timothy to do in preaching besides convincing (reproving), and rebuking?
  
9. What did Paul tell Titus to show himself a pattern of?
  
10. Name the three blessings for which preachers should be grateful that are mentioned in the book.
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_

### **True or False:**

1. One should take out any informa-

tion from a sermon that does not address the thesis.

2. Every public speaker must learn to speak up.
3. Prancing quickly back and forth in front of the congregation is an example of effective foot movement in the pulpit.
4. The book, *The Ten Commandments for Public Speaking*, recommends using simple words and concrete language.
5. Preachers should scream throughout their sermons.
6. If you are going to use visual aids, make sure that you practice with them.
7. When using computerized display aids in sermons you should rely

completely on the display for your ability to continue the sermon.

8. It is better to leave them wanting more than to have them think you should have quit ten minutes ago.
9. Bible class teachers should be prepared for verbal response from the audience.
10. It is wise to go alone when conducting a personal Bible study.

### **Multiple Choice:**

1. What clothing is most effective for preaching in the pulpit on Sunday?
  - a. Blue jeans and a t-shirt.
  - b. Cut-off shorts and an under-shirt.
  - c. Khakis and a polo.

- d. A dark colored suit, white shirt, and solid tie.
2. The right way to preach the truth is...
- a. Honestly.
  - b. With conviction.
  - c. In love.
  - d. All of the above.
3. How should we give a defense of the faith?
- a. With meekness and fear.
  - b. With anger and bitterness.
  - c. With arrogance and proud look.
  - d. None of the above.

4. 1 Corinthians 1:7 teaches us that preachers should view themselves as...
- a. The greatest beings on planet earth.
  - b. Nothing.
  - c. Charismatic leaders of cults.
  - d. Perfect.
5. What is required of stewards?
- a. They be found faithful.
  - b. They run from responsibility.
  - c. They serve snacks on every flight.
  - d. All of the above.
6. How should preachers respond to criticism?

- a. By punching the critic in the nose.
  - b. By weighing the criticism carefully and making changes if necessary.
  - c. By reminding the critic that preachers are perfect.
  - d. None of the above.
7. How should preachers view their relationship to other members of the body?
- a. They are superior to the other members in every way.
  - b. God loves them more.
  - c. They are no more important than any other member of the body.

d. They have a responsibility to diminish the importance of all other members.

8. What are we fighting for?

a. We are fighting for the souls of men.

b. We are fighting for our own souls.

c. We are fighting to defeat Satan and sin.

d. All of the above.

9. What should preachers pursue?

a. Godliness.

b. Covetousness.

c. Drunkenness.

d. None of the above.

10. What must we do with the pattern of sound words?
- a. Change the pattern.
  - b. Ignore the pattern.
  - c. Criticize “pattern theology.”
  - d. Hold fast to the pattern of sound words.

# KEY TO SELF-TEST

## Fill in the blanks:

1) well, 2) seek, do, teach, 3) teachers, stricter, 4) pretext, 5) sleepy, dull, 6) eyes, 7) style, 8) experience, practice, 9) few, 10) build, plant.

## Short Answer:

1) topical, textual, expository, 2) outline, 3) make them visible, make them visual, use fewer of them, blank out the screen when possible, talk to the audience not the slide, avoid clip art, avoid pointers, explain the content when you first show it, 4) fire burning in his bones, 5) declared the whole counsel of God, 6) Christ, 7) Scriptures, 8) Exhort, 9) good works, 10) salvation, preaching, the church.

## **True or False:**

1) True, 2) True, 3) False, 4) True,  
5) False, 6) True, 7) False, 8) True, 9)  
True, 10) False.

## **Multiple Choice:**

1) d, 2) d, 3) a, 4) b, 5) a, 6) b, 7) c,  
8) d, 9) a, 10) d.

# NOTES ON PUBLIC SPEAKING

While we must always remember that the power to save souls is found in the Gospel of Jesus Christ (Romans 1:16), let us not fail to recognize the ways in which we can increase our effectiveness in communicating the Gospel. It is no sin to be eloquent in speaking the truth. It is a sin to be eloquent in speaking error. With this in mind consider the following notes from various books written on the subject of public speaking.

***Real Leaders Don't do  
PowerPoint: How to Sell  
Yourself and Your Ideas***

by Christopher Witt  
with Dale Fetherling

Christopher Witt has been a speech consultant for CEO's for about 30 years.

**Jacket Cover** – “Content is king. Delivery is important, but it is only the helpful-or unhelpful servant of your message. So build each speech around one, and only one, ‘Big Idea.’”

**Page 6** - “Almost 2,500 years ago Demosthenes, the father of Greek oratory, cited four elements of a great speech: (1) a great person, (2) a noteworthy event, (3) a compelling message, and (4) a masterful delivery.”

**Page 11** - “Who you are is inseparable from what you communicate. I don’t just mean that your actions speak louder than your words. Of course they do. I mean that your character—who you are, what you’ve done, what you value—shapes the message your listeners hear.”

**Page 12** - “That’s because speakers are only credible when what they say is in sync with who they are.”

**Page 17** - “So the first rule of public speaking is this: You are a walking, talking message. Everything about you and everything the audience knows about you supports-or refutes-what you say.”

**Page 24** - “Military leaders before a battle, political leaders in time of crisis, coaches during halftime, preachers all the time-they know that what people often need is not more instruction, but more inspiration, not more ‘how to,’ but more ‘you can.’ And successful leaders in every endeavor know it, too.”

**Page 27** - “If you’re going to go to all the trouble of preparing and giving a talk, you might as well say what you strongly believe, something an audience needs and wants to hear.”

**Page 43** - “Caring for an audience-their hopes, goals, and betterment-

links all great speakers. Without that caring, you're merely filling a slot on some agenda, and you will never influence or inspire audiences."

**Page 76** - "But clearly the words you use and what they mean are more important than how you say them."

**Page 77** - "The words you choose can either clarify your message or confuse it, strengthen it or undercut it. Vigorous speaking is concise."

**Page 87** - "...well-focused brevity is the hallmark of a good speech."

**Page 88** - "...you want to leave your audience wanting more of you, not less."

**Page 95** - Introductions: What not to do

1. Don't start with a joke.

2. Don't waste time on pleasantries.
3. Don't apologize.

### **Pages 96-98** - Seven Ways to Start a Speech

1. Tell a personal story.
2. Ask a provocative question.
3. State a startling fact.
4. Make a bold assertion.
5. Cite a penetrating quote.
6. Refer to a current event.
7. Mix and match the above.

### **Pages 119, 120** - How to be clear and not confusing.

1. Set one goal.

2. Start big. Show them the big picture.
3. Limit how much information you provide.
4. Make a recommendation.
5. Keep it conversational. Speak as if you're talking to friends or colleagues. Use simple, plain-English words. Don't try to impress by using big words or jargon.
6. Tell a story.
7. Specify what you're asking of your listeners.
8. Keep it bite sized.
9. Don't bore them.
10. Go light on the visual aids.

**Page 141** - “A speech’s conclusion is arguably its most important part. The ending must be brief but powerful, because it’s what your audience will remember most.”

**Page 141** - “To get the response you want from your audience at the end of your speech, you need to say something worthwhile. Say it well. And having said, drive it home.”

**Page 199** - “No one, except maybe a professional comedian giving a humorous speech, should start with a joke.”

**Page 201** - “Humor puts your listeners at ease, which is especially important if you are addressing a topic your audience might find challenging or discomfoting.”

**Page 201** - “The easiest way to put appropriate humor into your speech is to poke fun at yourself...”

**Page 202** - “Laugh at yourself, your foibles, your mistakes, and you make it easier fo the audience to laugh quietly with you. So mention something amusing that happened to you or your family or your organization-just be sure it illustrates a point in your speech.”

**Page 203** - “...limit how often you use humor. After all, as amusing as you can, you still want to be taken seriously.”

**Page 205** - “The way you stand. You don't want to look as though you can be pushed over or pushed around. You want to look solid and grounded, like a person capable of standing strong against the winds of change and opposition.”

**Pages 206, 207** - Two basic guidelines for the way you move and gesture. “First, be yourself. And second, be purposeful.”

**Page 206** - “The more you focus on communicating your message, on connecting with your audience, and on accomplishing your goal, the more you’ll be yourself. And the more natural you are, the less you’ll need to invest thought and energy into how you move and gesture.”

**Page 207** - “If you want to move and gesture more powerfully, be natural. And the best way to be natural is to be confident.”

**Page 211** - Reasons for not using PowerPoint.

1. “It is best suited for presenting information, not for influencing or inspiring an audience.”

2. "...PowerPoint doesn't require you to make connections or tie the bits and pieces together."
3. PowerPoint will not "...help you shape how an audience thinks and feels or stir them to action."
4. "It hog's people's attention."
5. "It's time consuming."

**Page 215** - "When you have to use PowerPoint, use it sparingly and to your advantage. Keep it in its place, so it doesn't upstage you."

**Pages 214, 215** - Tips for PowerPoint slides.

1. Make them visible.
2. Make them visual.

3. Use fewer of them.
4. Blank out the screen whenever possible.
5. Talk to the audience, not to the slide.
6. Avoid clip art.
7. Avoid pointers.
8. Explain the content when you first show it.

# ***Give Your Speech, Change the World: How to Move Your Audience to Action***

by Nick Morgan

Nick Morgan is the founder of Public Words, a communications coaching company.

**Page 1** - “The only reason to give a speech is to change the world.”

**Page 2** - “There is something essential about the intellectual, emotional, and physical connections a good speaker can make with the audience, something that cannot happen on the printed page. There is something powerful about the chemistry that happens in the moment of contact that no other medium can produce.”

**Page 3** - “We still need speeches. We need them to move audiences to action.”

**Page 6** - “If you can unlock your passion about the subject, and give that to the audience, you will be charismatic. The audience will not be able to take its eyes off of you.”

**Page 13** - “To succeed in a presentation, you have to reach your audience with both head and heart.”

**Page 22** - “Listening is exhausting work, and people don’t retain much of what they hear. How can you improve on the low retention rate? First, it’s a matter of structuring the content so that it is organized and delivered the way the audience needs to hear it.

Second it’s a matter of ruthless focus. Think in terms of getting one idea across to your audience; if your audience will only remember one thing, what would you tell them? Throw everything else away.”

**Page 26** - “Rehearse. It’s the single most important step you can take to become a better speaker.”

**Page 30** - “Ultimately great public speaking comes from passion.”

**Page 33** - “Public speaking is structured conversation.”

**Page 39** - “Contrary to popular belief, PowerPoint slides don’t increase retention rates much, if at all. Indeed, most PowerPoint presentations are in fact speech outlines put together for the speaker’s benefit, not the audience’s. The result is a distraction that actually drives comprehension down, as the audience tries to match the words on the screen with what is coming out of the speaker’s mouth. You’re giving the audience twice as much to do and two places to look. Bad idea.”

**Page 47** - “Recall that audiences only remember something like 10 to 30 percent of what they hear. If we think of a speech as a very limited act of persuasion, then it follows that we need to be very clear what we’re trying to persuade the audience of.”

**Page 50** - “Focus your talk on one idea, the essential idea for your audience.”

**Page 75** - “The real secret is to have a logical structure that is clear and transparent for the audience.”

**Page 80** - “Audiences want speeches that have a clear, simple, logical structure.”

**Page 86** - “By the way, don’t think that you have to tell a joke. That’s one of the oldest bits of advice in the trade, and it has helped many a speech fall

flat within the first few minutes of beginning.”

**Page 86** - “The best way to open a presentation is with a parable—a story with a point or moral.”

**Page 87** – Using Jesus as an example in His parable of the seed in Matthew 13:4-9. “...no irrelevant detail, an implicit moral at the end, and a topic that the audience can understand.”

**Pages 92, 93** - Don’t use the tell them what you are going to say, say it, and then tell them what you said method. “Don’t summarize. Instead, give them a call to action.”

**Page 115** - The importance of rehearsal. “A speech is never real until you give it. You can’t experience it solely on paper-or PowerPoint.”

**Page 116** - “If you’re not rehearsing at least three times before a significant speech, then you’re not taking the event seriously enough for success.”

**Page 131** - Concerning PowerPoint slides. “Simplify them. A slide should be instantly understandable, or at least graspable, without elaborate explanation. Period.”

**Page 136** - “Practice making smooth transitions between your topics-or your slides, if you use them.”

**Page 138** - “...they learn best from simple pictures.” “Don’t get fancy.” “...keep in mind that simpler is usually better.”

**Page 139** - With reference to PowerPoint. “Don’t think of it as wallpaper that’s always there behind you, but a discrete moment in your talk when

you turn to an illustration because it's too difficult to put the idea into mere words.”

**Page 139** - A few simple rules for PowerPoint

1. Use it for illustrations.
2. Use it sparingly for words.
3. Make your headline a complete sentence.
4. Don't use the clip art and animation.

**Page 140** - “Stick to a full-sentence headline, a few bullets, and perhaps a kicker, if you must use words. Better: just a few pictures. Best: no slides at all.”

**Page 145** - “Your work on reducing fear should begin long before the ac-

tual speech. You can increase your comfort by thoroughly researching the topic, planning out what you want to say, and rehearsing.”

**Page 145** - “Many speakers try to ‘wing’ their remarks, and suffer accordingly.”

**Page 158** - When everything sounds like a question “It makes the listener nervous, uncomfortable, and uncertain as to whether the speaker knows what he or she is talking about.”

**Page 159** - “You don’t want to smile inappropriately, but the studies show that smiling people are generally taken to be more likeable and more attractive, so you’d be crazy not to crack a smile whenever you can.”

**Page 197** - “Focus on the audience in the moment of delivery.”

“Read the audience constantly for signs of how it is absorbing your message.”

**Page 226** - “You need to begin by shifting your focus from your own symptoms to the audience’s reception of your presentation. Concentrate on them. Make eye contact for five to six seconds with people in the front, left and right, and the back. Watch their body language. Are they engaged? Have they checked out?”

**Page 226** - “Here’s a radical thought: Don’t use any slides at all. You won’t miss them, and the audience won’t either. It will remove one barrier between you and the audience, and you will be one step closer to becoming an audience centered speaker. Your charisma quotient will go up automatically.”

**Page 226** - “Charisma comes from the honest expression of emotion, when something real is at stake. To be a successful speaker, you have to confront yourself, perhaps for the first time, and decide who you are and what you stand for. When you are able to share that with an audience, they will stand up and cheer, because you will have forgotten about yourself and your nervousness and given something real to them.”

***Present Like a Pro: The Field  
Guide to Mastering the Art of Busi-  
ness, Professional, and Public  
Speaking***

by Cyndi Maxey and  
Kevin E. O'Conner

Cyndi Maxey is "...a communications consultant and speaker who specializes in communication that drives profitable performance."

Kevin E. "O'Connor is "a leadership consultant and speaker who specializes in developing technical professionals."

**Page 3** - Three things to prepare for speaker success.

1. Be different.
2. Be deliberate.
3. Be determined.

**Page 10** - Aristotle's view summarized. "Ethos is the power of personal character. Logos is the power of proving a truth through logic. Pathos is the power to stir up emotions in the listener. The best presenters find a way to use all three powers in the right combination: who you are, what you say, and how you say it."

**Page 10** - "The best presenters communicate naturally as real people. They don't try to be someone they are not."

**Page 20** - "Words are powerful: They can help or they can hurt your presentation and your audience."

"Your audience will respond to you differently depending upon the words you choose."

**Pages 36, 37** - "Play your voice like an instrument. It's an incredible thing-

your voice. Did you know that you have a capability for diction, enunciation, pitch, volume, tone, pause, emphasis, and tempo? There is no excuse for having a one-note presentation. Monotone speakers are either totally unaware of their natural capabilities or just plain lazy.”

**Page 49** - “Practice, according to the pros, does more than anything else to set you up for success.”

**Page 53** - “You can have brilliant mind and stunning delivery skills, but if you don’t practice, no one will notice. You’ll try to wing it, and you’ll only end up grounding yourself.”

**Page 64** - “The first four minutes are the crucial time when an audience decides if you are worth listening to. Give them the attention they deserve.”

**Page 125** - “Set a positive, more comfortable tone with your introductions

and opening. Be enthusiastic, but maintain your calm as you begin.”

**Page 138** - “Audiences love self-depreciating humor, especially when the speaker is someone who has earned their respect in other ways. People love to laugh at other’s mistakes and, mostly, they love to laugh in a clean way.”

**Page 159** - “Humility goes a long way for presenters, especially the expert ones.”

**Page 185** - “Be very aware of how you dress for your presentation...Many people will use your appearance to fortify their impressions of you, both good and bad.”

**Page 198** - “The microphone can be a loyal friend if you treat it right.”

**Page 200** - “You succeed when you release a burning conviction of self-confidence, a deep respect for the audience, and an emotional connection to the content.”

**Page 201** - “Respect for the audience is a key feature of the great speakers.”

***Simply Speaking: How to  
Communicate Your Ideas with  
Style, Substance and Clarity***

by Peggy Noonan

Peggy Noonan as in author, columnist, presidential speech writer, national lecturer, reporter for Time magazine, and regular columnist for Good Housekeeping.

**Page 9** - "...twenty minutes is more than enough time to say the biggest, most important thing in the world. The Gettysburg Address went three minutes or so, the Sermon on the Mount hardly more. It is usually and paradoxically true that the more important the message, the less time required to say it."

**Page 18** - "The fact that you are limited, that you can't pack everything on or in, can liberate you. The fact that

you can't say everything, the fact that you have to winnow your thoughts down to the essentials, means that you can get to the heart of the matter quickly. You don't have to add things that are marginal, extraneous; you can stay with what engages you and explore what is important. You don't have time to take false trails, so you don't get lost."

**Page 30** - Jamie Humes was a speech-writer for seven presidents. He said, "...an audience can be convinced only when they see you care about what you are talking about."

**Page 31** - Humes is the one who came up with the expression "People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care."

**Page 62** - "Even normal people now think a good speech has to make peo-

ple cry. And they think the way to do it is to use a lot of rhetorical flourishes and sentimental stories.”

**Page 63** - “...you should never try to make them cry. You should try to make them think, or help them, think.”

**Page 63** - “The most moving thing in a speech is always the logic. It’s never flowery words and flourishes, it’s not sentimental exhortations, it’s never the faux poetry we’re all subjected to these days. It’s the logic, the thinking behind your case. A good case well argued and well said is inherently moving.”

**Page 65** - Ronald Reagan “...was often moving, but he was moving not because of the way he said things, he was moving because of what he said. He didn’t say things in a big way, he said big things.”

**Page 75** - “Speeches actually have to say things. And great speeches are great because they say great things. Speeches that consist merely of the stringing together of pretty words and pretty sentiments are not great, and never live.”

**Page 145** - “For you the speech giver the only answer is to be yourself in your presentation.” “...you are the only you. So you might as well be you, and have a good time.”

**Page 181** - “The people who come to lectures are pretty intelligent. If they were dumb they’d be home watching TV. Instead they’re out, eager to hear what you have to say. So they’re smart. So don’t talk down to them.”

**Page 188** - “Go into the room where you’ll speak before the audience gets there and go up to the podium. Look out at the room. Get used to its size.”

## **Pages 205, 206 - Summary**

1. Don't be afraid, "Every great speaker in history has flopped somewhere along the way, most of them more than once."
2. "...think logically about the case you are making, and make it."
3. Speak as though you are "...speaking with concentration and respect, to a friend."
4. "The most moving thing in a speech is always the logic."
5. "Use humor when you can."
6. "Give your speech before you give it."
7. Use your own gestures.

**STRICTLY SPEAKING:**  
**REID BUCKLEY'S INDISPENSABLE**  
**HANDBOOK ON PUBLIC SPEAKING,**  
by Reid Buckley

Reid Buckley is the founder and head of the Buckley School of Public Speaking which trains celebrities, professionals, and executives in public speaking

**Pages 3-10** - Things One Should Not Do

1. Don't be arrogant
2. Never begin a speech with a joke
3. Shun the conditional tense, e.g. "I would suggest," "I would submit to you."
4. Spurn rhetorical flourishes, "I'd like to begin by..." "Think about it"

5. Avoid vulgar, with it, and faddish phrases.
6. Do not quote anything from anyone unless you have read the book.
7. Never allude to something that does not fit in with who you are.
8. Do not show disrespect to your audience.

### **Pages 12-22** - Things You Should Do

1. Convey humility of spirit.
2. Lightly salt your speech with topical wit.
3. Never use a story that does not argue to the core of what you are saying.
4. Be brief.

5. Use an anecdote that sums up and pleasantly illustrates your thesis.
6. Try to get five minutes to yourself before you speak.

**Page 141** - Tips on how to write the speech brilliantly

1. Resolve never to be a bore.
2. Use the simplest language possible.
3. Make sure your logic is clear from paragraph to paragraph.
4. Place any word over four syllables and sentences longer than 25 words under suspicion.
5. Weed out tired images and clichés.

**Pages 159, 160** - Appearance

1. Get a haircut
2. Trim your beard or shave
3. Check clothing for cleanliness and freshness
4. Be conservative
5. Beware of certain colors and patterns.
6. Leave your jewelry at home.
7. Take command of the lectern and audience.
8. Express your presence through your posture.
9. Make the most of your appearance.
10. Keep your purpose foremost in your mind.

**Page 168** - Concerning eye contact. “Individualize the audience.” “Concentrate on faces.”

**Page 174** - Training the Tongue

1. Pronounce the word correctly
2. Articulate the word clearly.
3. Enunciate
4. Use crisp diction.

**Page 178** - “Few sounds produce such extraordinary effect as that of the sudden cessation of sound, dropping on an audience like perfect silence at the base of a waterfall.”

**Page - 191** - Pace of the speech

1. Speak at a comfortable rate.

2. Better to be deliberate than to rush.
3. A deliberate pace is not a plodding pace
4. Pause between thoughts, clauses, sentences, paragraphs, segments.
5. Vary the pace according to the content

## **Page 209** - Gestures

1. Must arise from the emotions.
2. Must conform to the personality.
3. Must go with what you are saying.
4. Must be easily interpreted by the audience yet disciplined.
5. Appropriate to the time, place, and message.

1. Utterly inappropriate on some occasions.
2. A curse if poorly delivered.
3. The best humor is personal narrative.
4. If you must tell a canned joke, chose one at least a generation old.
5. Humor must serve a purpose unrelated to itself.

# HOW TO WRITE & GIVE A SPEECH

by Joan Detz

## **Page 23** – Things to Leave Out

1. Irrelevant Details
2. Boring Details
3. Any information you can't verify.
4. Anything you wouldn't want to see quoted in print the next day.
5. Anything you wouldn't want to be reminded of next year.

## **Pages 26, 27** - Using Quotes

1. Use Variety
2. Avoid lengthy or complicated quotes.

3. Blend the quotation into the text.
4. Appear comfortable with the quotation.
5. Use quotations judiciously. “A speech should reflect your thoughts.”

## **Page 31** - How To...

### **Write a Good Speech**

1. Make it simple
2. Make it short

### **To Write a Great Speech**

1. Make it simpler
2. Make it shorter

## **Page 32** - The Never Fail Formula

1. Tell them what you are going to tell them.
2. Tell them
3. Tell them what you told them.

**Page 32** - “The opening is the toughest part. If you don’t hook your listeners within the first thirty seconds, your cause is probably lost.”

**Page 32** - “It can be risky to begin your speech with a joke.”

**Pages 32-33** - Ideas for starting a speech

1. Praise the audience
2. Try self-depreciating humor.
3. Ask some questions.

4. Use a light-hearted story to illustrate some statistics.
5. Use imagery.
6. Tell a story.

**Page 39** - Cautions about Beginning

1. Skip fillers and jump right into your first line.
2. Avoid trite openings.
3. Don't be insincere or flash a phony smile.
4. Don't fake enthusiasm

**Page 43** - "Keep things moving. Use strong transitions to help the audience follow your ideas."

**Page 52** – “Speak properly, and in as few words as you can, but always plainly; for the End of the Speech is not ostentation, but to be understood.” – William Penn

**Pages 55, 56** - How to Make it Simple

1. Avoid jargon
2. Avoid euphemisms
3. Avoid vague modifiers e.g. “very.”  
“Use words or phrases that say precisely what you mean.”
4. Don't speak in abbreviations
5. Don't speak in unfamiliar language
6. Simply your phrases.
7. Avoid fluff

8. Sharpen your sentences – shorter is better and more powerful.

9. Vary the length of your sentences.

**Page 68** - Advice from George Orwell

1. “Never use a long word where a short one will do.”

2. “If it is possible to cut out a word, always cut it out.”

3. “Never use the passive when you can use the active.”

4. “Never use a foreign phrase, a scientific word or a jargon word if you can think of an everyday English equivalent.”

5. “Break any of these rules sooner than say anything barbarous.”

**Page 78** - “Don’t focus on jokes that beg for loud laughs because this usually backfires. Instead try to develop a ‘light touch’ of humor.”

**Page 79** - “Your safest bet for good humor in a speech is to poke gentle fun at yourself.”

**Page 81** - “Never say anything about yourself that you might regret later.”

**Page 120** – Audio/Visual aids are unnecessary if they:

1. Contribute no new information to your speech.
2. Fail to help the audience understand or appreciate your message.
3. Actually detract from your role as a speaker.

**Pages 125, 126** - How to look your best

1. Dress conservatively
2. “Your appearance should not interfere with your message.”
3. Dark suit, white or blue shirt, conservative tie with a touch of red, long dark socks, well shined shoes, no pens sticking out of pockets, no coins or keys to bulge your pants.

**Pages 130, 131** - Practice your delivery

1. Read it aloud to yourself
2. Stand in front of a mirror
3. If possible, practice it on site.

**Page 132** - Audiences begin to form their opinion about you when they first see you.

1. Be well groomed.
2. Don't carry loose papers.
3. Walk in a brisk manner.
4. Be polite.
5. Listen carefully to other speakers.
6. Pay attention to the person who is introducing you.

**Page 134** - "When you look at people, they believe you care about them. They believe you are sincere. They believe you are honest."

**Page 136** - "It's not necessary (or even advisable) to choreograph you body

movements in advance. You'll find that they spring naturally from your message, from your belief in what you're saying. If you put energy and thought and life into your message, your body movements will take good care of themselves."

**Page 136** - "The more energy you give to your audience, the more charisma you will develop."

## ***Using Stories and Humor:***

### ***Grab Your Audience***

by Joanna Slan

**Page 21** - “Experts tell us that the longest an audience can sustain interest is 20 minutes, unless you offer a change of pace. Stories offer an effective way to change pace while continuing to drive home important information.”

**Page 47** - “But research becomes theft when you take other people’s material and pass it off as your own.”

**Page 136** - “It is unethical to use another speaker’s story and tell it as your own. You will never be accepted as a professional if you do.”

**Page 144** - “You can use another speaker’s story or information with permission.”

**Page 175** - “Handling unexpected problems with light-hearted humor rather than anger will distinguish you as a professional whom meeting planners will want to invite back.”

**Page 188** - “If your humor makes a point, it supports your ideas and helps your audience move from one thought to the next. Pointless humor confuses the audience. Worse, when pointless humor bombs, you look really silly because your comments had no purpose at all.”

**Page 195** - “Never start a presentation with a joke.”

***Taking Center Stage:  
Masterful Public Speaking  
Using Acting Skills You  
Never Knew You Had***

by Deb Gottesman  
and Buzz Mauro

**Page 21** - Reinventing the process of constructing a speech.

1. “Decide what you want your audience to do.”
2. “Assemble the information that they must have in order to do it.”
3. “Interpret the information in such a way that they are persuaded to do it.”

**Page 40** - “Almost every speech, from the most inspirational to the most businesslike, will benefit from the injection of something personal.”

**Page 42** - “No matter how serious you think your message is, a little lightness will make your speech more effective.”

**Page 51** - “But don’t put together a big slide show just because everybody else is doing it, or you may end up with extraneous or confusing materials that detract rather than aid.”

**Page 51** - “But there are, of course, many good reasons to use visual aids, depending on the situation. If done well they can add liveliness and variety. They improve retention, because people are more likely to remember things that they see as well as hear. And some information is most effectively expressed in visual form.”

**Page 69** - “In public speaking as well as in theater, the audience takes its cue from the performer. If you’re excited, they’ll get excited; if you’re indifferent, then they will be too.”

**Page 103** - "...powerful public speaking requires the speaker to be in absolute control of the physical as well as the psychological aspects of communication."

**Page 104** - "When you're fully engaged in communicating with your audience, much of how your body is behaving should just take care of itself."

**Page 108** - "Actors devote a lot of attention to developing a posture that is 'straight-up,' which means standing tall, feet firmly planted on the ground, head floating comfortably atop a fully aligned spine."

**Page 109** - "If you want people to see you as someone whose authority they should respect, posture is key."

**Page 109** - "The key to developing purposeful expressiveness is simply to make sure what you are doing with

the muscles in your face matches your words, tone, and overall point of view about your message at any particular moment.”

**Page 115** - “Powerful messages demand powerful delivery. Which means you must make sure you are heard, understood, and believed by every listener in the room. The speaker who lacks the ability to project has a hard time making his audience sit up and pay attention.”

**Page 116** - “Simple adjustments in breathing-moving from shallow chest breathing to deep diaphragmatic breathing-can produce remarkable improvements in all aspects of vocal communication, including increasing your volume and helping you sustain your energy over the course of a long speech.”

# BIBLIOGRAPHY

All Scripture quotations are from the New King James Version unless otherwise noted. The Holy Bible, New King James Version. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1996.

Baxter, Batsell Barrett. Speaking for the Master: A Study of Public Speaking for Christian Men. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1954.

Baxter, Batsell Barrett. The Heart of the Yale Lectures. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1947

Broadus, John. A Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishing, 1926

Buckley, Reid. Strictly Speaking: Reid Buckley's Indispensable Hand-

book on Public Speaking. New York, McGraw-Hill, 1999.

Detz, Joan. How to Write and Give a Speech. New York, St. Martin's Griffen, 1992.

Drummond, Mary-Ellen. Fearless and Flawless Public Speaking with Power, Polish, and Pizazz. San Diego, Pfeiffer and Company, 1993

Gladis, Stephen D. The Ten Commandments for Public Speakers. Amherst, Human Resource Development Press, 1990.

Gottesman, Deb, and Buzz Mauro. Taking Center Stage: Masterful Public Speaking Using Acting Skills You Never Knew You Had. New York, Berkley Publishing, 2001

Hodges, John C., Mary E. Whitten, Suzanne S. Webb. Harbrace College Handbook: 10th Edition. San Diego, 1986

Holland, Thomas H. Sermon Design and Delivery. Brentwood, Penmann Press, 1967

Klepper, Michael M., Robert Gunther. I'd Rather Die Than Give a Speech: The Comprehensive Guide for Public Speaking. Burr Ridge, Irwin Professional Publishing, 1994.

Kushner, Malcolm. Public Speaking for Dummies. Foster City, IDG Books, 1999.

Moffit, Jerry. A Manual in Non-Boring Preaching: How to Speak so that People Listen Up! Austin, Firm Foundation Publishing House, 1982. As found in Denton Lectures CD-Rom.

Maxey, Cyndi CSP and Kevin E. O'Conner CSP. Present Like a Pro: The Field Guide to Mastering the Art of Business, Professional, and Public Speaking. New York, St. Martin's Griffin, 2006.

Morgan, Nick. Give Your Speech, Change the World: How to Move Your Audience to Action. Boston, Harvard Business School Press, 2005.

Noona, Peggy. Simply Speaking: How to Communicate Your Ideas with Style, Substance and Clarity. New York, Regan Books, 1998

Slan, Joanna. Using Stories and Humor: Grab Your Audience. Massachusetts, Allyn and Bacon, 1998.

Staton, Thomas F. How to Study. Nashville, How to Study, 1982.

Turabian, Kate L. A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations. Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1987.

Valenti, Jack. Speak up with Confidence: How to Prepare, Learn, and Deliver Effective Speeches. New York, William Morrow and Company, Inc. 1982.

Witt, Christopher with Dale Fetherling. Real Leaders Don't do PowerPoint: How to Sell Yourself and Your Ideas. New York, Crown Business, 2009

Woods, Guy N. How to Study the New Testament Effectively. Nashville, Gospel Advocate Co, 1992.