

Homiletics

The Art of Preaching

February 2019

Week 1 of 3

Picture a large auditorium, a capacity crowd. The look on their faces is one of rapt attention, the atmosphere is electric, at times you could hear a pin drop, at other times the people burst into thunderous applause or enthusiastic response. The crowd is spellbound, some laugh, some cry – there seems to be a profound encounter taking place. Standing in front of them is a person full of the Word of God weaving his (or her) words like a fine tapestry under the anointing of God, holding their attention and drawing them deeper into the picture he is painting. When the message is over the hearers are spurred by the Holy Spirit to respond – the crowd surges forward in answer to a call to salvation and deeper commitment to the awesome God to whom they have just been introduced, eagerly experiencing a life-changing encounter with Christ through the Holy Spirit.

Sound good? Would you like to be part of that picture? Do you dare to believe that God could use you in such a way? IT CAN BE DONE!

Homiletics can be described as the art of preaching – the ability to explain scripture, offering practical guidance in a pertinent, memorable and impactful way.

Introduction – Why Preaching?

God has ordained that preaching should be one of His primary means of communicating His Good News to men. As such, preaching is a vital and powerful part of the church's curriculum. The emphasis of Body Ministry in the 1970's and 80's moved away from formal preaching because "one had a testimony, one a revelation..." and so the service became an open time of sharing. This is biblical and vital in any service; small group or corporate meeting, but this should not be at the expense of prepared preaching. The time has come for preaches in the tradition of John the Baptist, Paul, Elijah, Jonah, to speak the Word of God into the Church and the nations. **Will you be one of these?**

God only had one Son and He made Him a preacher. CH Spurge said, "If God has called you to be a preacher, don't stoop to becoming a king!" A revival, renewal and restoration of Word-based Prophetic Preaching have accompanied every revival, renewal, or restoration in the history of the church. **Will you accept the challenge?**

Homiletics is a tool in the hand of the preacher, to be used by him. We must never allow ourselves to become slaves to a set method of preaching, illustrating, or preparing. NB: the tail must not wag the dog! We must continuously be trying new, creative, Spirit-led homiletics, up to date and in tune with our audience.

Continually striving to keep fresh, presenting God's Word in attention grabbing ways!

So The Act Of Preaching Should Be An Act Of Worship, Over The Text As The Preacher Exults In The God Of The Word.

So here we are then, now what?

I trust that your heart has been stirred, not only by the importance the Father places on preaching but also by the challenge to be part of something so close to His heart.

Over the duration of this training we aim to combine Doctrinal foundations and down to earth skills with practical exercises i.e. on the job training, yes, you too will be expected to preach in front of all of us here!

Rick Warren says, "people who are willing to train for extended periods BEFORE beginning to serve are usually not very effective when they finally start serving. They tend to be professional students who enjoy learning about ministry more than doing it."

We must move away from bless me, couch potatoes, getting fat with the latest teaching to muscle-rippling, fine toned bodies, impatiently straining for action, ready to bless others!

Topics we will cover:

- Bad news, Good news, Great news.
- What to aim for.
- The validity of preaching.
- The vehicle for preaching.
- Before you move your lips – message, audience, method, messenger.
- Preaching as a form of communication.
- Preaching styles – more than one way to skin a cat.
- Communication imperatives.
- The preparation of a sermon.
- Objective based preaching.
- The SCORRE method.
- How to talk "goober".
- Physical preparation – notes, body, voice, language, dress.
- Anointing – how do I get it!
- When the wheels fall off.
- All dressed up and nowhere to go.
- Summary.

So don't sit back! Fasten your seat belt and get ready for the rollercoaster ride of **Homiletics Training**.

BAD NEWS, GOOD NEWS AND GREAT NEWS.

You may be thinking this is impossible; I could never do it and why am I here anyway, you may even be dreaming up an excuse to get out of the next session, never mind the session when you have to preach! Before you run out screaming, I have news for you...

Bad news: Excellent communication skills come only as a result of very hard work. Some find it easier to talk in front of an audience than others do, but no one is naturally born with the gift of being an excellent communicator. These skills must be developed. Effective communicating is so challenging that the work is never done. There's always room for improvement. Our goal is to see you apply this training time to whatever level of *talent you feel you have. Add much hard work, and begin to grow into the excellent communicator God has called you to be.
*Matthew 25:14-30

Good news: Good communication can be learnt. By applying the principles of Homiletics, you can develop into excellent communicators in a relatively short period of time. What has taken others years to learn from experience, we can learn from their mistakes in a few days and put to work immediately.

Great news: Excellent communication is 50% heart. Imagine listening to two pianists of equal ability, one playing technically correct, the other with feeling and heart, which has a more profound effect on you? This cannot be learnt, but comes as a result of God gripping your heart with a subject of message and you delivering it with passion and conviction.

WHAT TO AIM FOR.

Over the coming weeks we will become better communicators and preachers. Much of our development will come from sober assessment from yourself, your spouse and just about everyone else who heard you.

We will use the following "crit sheet" to evaluate our performance so study it now and as we deal with the how to, you should see it all slotting into place. If you prep yourself according to the crit, your message will immediately become better!

SPEAKING/PRESENTATION SKILLS - EVALUATION SHEET

Name: _____

Date: _____

SUBJECT	TIME		COMMENTS
	TARGET	ACTUAL	

CRITING CRITERIA	COMMENT
A. DELIVERY:	
<i>Voice</i> Volume - loud enough? Varied? Pitch - varied? Use of emphasis? Speed - varied? Too fast? Pause - correct? Ooohs and ayahs? Diction - clearly understood?	
<i>Hands and Mannerisms</i> Distracting? Too rigid? Idiosyncrasies needing to be tamed? Expression (smile, enthusiasm)? Passionate?	
<i>Audience Contact</i> Were they involved? Did it interest? Did it relate to audience? (adults, youth, children)	
B. CONTENT:	
<i>Introduction</i> Signposts?	
<i>Main Body</i> Interesting/ informative? Was it Biblically accurate? Clear signposts?	
<i>Conclusion</i> Summary? Final thought?	
<i>Language</i> Use of irritators? Simple and clear?	
<i>Timing</i> Within target?	

<i>Notes</i> Used correctly? Distracting?	
<i>Visual Aids/Illustrations</i> Good to look at? Used correctly? Relevant? Did it add to message?	
<i>Challenge (Selling/Persuasive stepping stones)</i> Does it challenge me? Does it make me want to change?	
	<i>Overall Impression</i>
5 = <i>Excellent</i> , 4 = <i>Good</i> , 3 = <i>Fair</i> , 2 = <i>Can Improve</i> , 1 = <i>Must Improve</i>	

1 THE VALIDITY OF PREACHING – IS IT WORTH THE EFFORT?

1 Cor. 1:17 "For Christ did not send me to baptise, but to preach the gospel - not with words of human wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power."

1 Cor. 1:18 "For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God."

1 Cor. 1:21 "For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe."

1 Cor. 1:22-24 "Jews demand miraculous signs and Greeks look for wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling-block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God."

Cor. 2:1-5 "When I came to you, brothers, I did not come with eloquence or superior wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. I came to you in weakness and fear, and with much trembling. My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, so that your faith might not rest on men's wisdom, but on God's power."

Cor. 2:15 "For we are to God the aroma of Christ among those who are to be saved and those who are perishing."

2 Cor. 2:17 "Unlike so many we do not peddle the word of God for profit. On the contrary, in Christ we speak before God with sincerity, like men sent from God."

Acts 20:20 "You know that I have not hesitated to preach anything that would be helpful to you but have taught you publicly and from house to house."

Acts 20:24 "However, I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me - the task of testifying the gospel of God's grace."

All people, saved and unsaved, need to hear from God. These scriptures and others, show that preaching is not only a valid means for God to reach out to man, but that preaching is imperative to salvation, maturity and pushing back the boundaries of darkness and seeing His Kingdom established.

"Conscientious biblical preaching is an indispensable necessity for the glory of God and the glory of His church." John Stott

"Preaching is not just an option for those silver tongued fellows, with the gift of the gab and an infliction of the preachers itch." DJ Reed

"The way to hell may be wide, but the Father has planted the Cross squarely in the centre of that road and that people have to squeeze past it to enter into hell."
Terry Kruger

People are rushing full tilt into hell and must be stopped in their tracks by hearing from God, but unless we, through preaching make them aware of what they're doing, they may just squeeze past without even realizing what they have done!

1 Peter 4:10-11 "Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen."

Three convictions of God

Those God would use to preach, need the following convictions about who God is, the kind of God we believe in determines the kind of sermons we preach.

1. God is light, He wants to be known.

Every preacher needs the assurance and encouragement this brings. Seated before us are people in a wide variety of states, some estranged from God, others confused, even bewildered by the complexities of life, still others covered with the darkness of unbelief and sin, blinded by the prince of darkness.

2. God has acted, He has made Himself known.

He has taken the initiative to reveal Himself in deeds, generally in creation, specifically in redemption. God has planned a rescue mission whose outworking is central to human history, and we can be part of it. Not only has He acted but will continue to invade our experience wherever there are faithful, faith-filled men and women who will allow Him free reign.

3. God has spoken, He has explained His actions.

By the Living Word – Jesus, the Written Word – the Bible, and the Spoken Word – prophecy and prophetic preaching.

God is living, redeeming and self-revealing. As we preach we must be convinced that we are bearers of a divine message.

RECAP

DEFINITION OF HOMILETICS

Art: is your creative ability (your personality, you), there is no right or wrong way. Be yourself. R.T. Kendall: "If you imitate a man's anointing all you end up with is his idiosyncrasies."

Science: relates to what works and what does not work (i.e. principles of communication, use of gestures, eye contact etc.)

DEFINITION OF PREACHING

Preaching is a presentation...

Of the _____ WORD (JESUS)

From the _____ WORD (BIBLE)

By the _____ WORD (SERMON)

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

THE PURPOSE OF PREACHING

a. to i) _____ the mind
ii) _____ the heart and
iii) _____ the will to apply God's truth

b. to promote _____

c. to i) capture _____
ii) clearly _____
iii) convincingly _____
iv) produce _____

d. to God

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

e. _____ - to get people to decide for Christ

f. - _____ - to equip, edify, teach, develop

g. _____ - to correct incorrect doctrines, address issues / events / crises

FILL IN THE BLANKS

1. Homiletics is the science and art of the preparation and delivery of sermons

2. Living, Written, Spoken

3. Truth, servant

a. i) Instruct

ii) Stir

iii) Motivate

b. Clarity

c. i) Interest ii) Explain iii) Persuade iv) Change

d. Glorify

e. Evangelism

f. Christian growth

g. Confrontation

2 THE VEHICLE FOR PREACHING – THE PREACHER.

1) The preacher must be born again.

The preacher's job is to call men to be reconciled to God; truth demands that he knows what he is talking about.

2) The preacher must know the Word of God.

We must have some experiential knowledge of the Word of God. Preaching is not saying what we want to say, or what people want us to hear. It is the proclamation of what God has in mind to say to the people who are sitting there. The truth must be working in the preacher's life before he lays it before his congregation.

3) The preacher must be hearing from God.

The life of a Christian is not a static one, but dynamic, so the preacher who is called by God to speak directionally to others must be able to hear God himself.

4) The preacher must be living a life of obedience to God.

In order to be able to speak directionally and with conviction to others, he must be working out the principles and concepts he preaches in his own life and home.

5) The preacher must be living a life of balanced godliness.

When the preacher becomes known to his hearers, what he preaches must be confirmed and augmented by what his hearers know him to be. He must walk the talk. You create your own credibility.

6) The preacher must be a man of prayer.

In order to be hearing God, the preacher must spend time at the feet of his Master. The devotional time of the preacher must be the time when he lays his soul bare before his God, and when God communicates with him. He must not drift into a prayer life that is functional and professional i.e. the only time he prays is when he is asking God for a sermon, or when he is praying for "his" church. A preacher must pray for God to give him the word for the occasion, and he must pray for his congregation, but his first priority in prayer must be his own relationship and love life with the Father. Dudley Daniel gives this guideline, pray for two-thirds and prep for one-third of your time.

7) The preacher must be qualified in terms of 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1.

Though the preacher may not always be an elder, the qualifications for eldership should be applied to the preacher. Preaching involves leading people somewhere. To lead you must go ahead and show the way.

8) The preacher must live a life of brokenness.

Brokenness is what characterised the preaching and the life of Paul. To die well, lay down own defence, for example Jesus' trial. The preacher that knows nothing of true biblical brokenness (or humility) will never be able to comfort the sorrowing or those broken by the wiles of the devil, or in the hand of the Lord. When bringing biblical rebuke or exhortation to people, the harshness in the attitude of the unbroken preacher will only serve to make the rebel's rebellion seem legitimate.

9) The preacher must be a man who lives in fear of God, fear of God more than fear of man.

Proverbs 29:25 "The fear of man brings a snare."

The man who lives in the fear of men will not have the courage to preach the things that man must hear. The fear of the Lord is the best cure for the fear of man. The fear of the Lord is also a motivation to overcome shoddiness or laziness in the life of the preacher. It is also, a motive to overcome temptation and besetting sins.

10) The preacher must know the ways of the Spirit of God.

The impartation of spiritual, and even practical truth, is the work of the Spirit and not accomplished by our clever talk. Learn to “hear” while you speak. Prep as though there is no Holy Spirit and preach as though there are no notes.

11) The preacher must be called by God to preach.

If you know that you preach under a personal mandate from the King of Kings, to do so you will come over with an authority that will be convincing. Called men have a mark upon them that both humbles them and gives them confidence. It is a mark that is discernable to all who are currently moving in the Spirit. It is that which will bring conviction even to the unbeliever.

12) The preacher must be motivated by a love for God and the people whom he is ministering and NOT just by a love of preaching.

The motive for preaching is of paramount importance. The preacher with unmixed motives will cause his hearers to say, “what a wonderful saviour!” But those with the other kind of motivation will result in people saying, “what a wonderful preacher!” People need to hear God’s words and not yours.

2.1. THE PREACHER’S ENEMY

Who are the enemies of the preacher? Many would be quick to point out that they are the people who resist the message, balk at the challenges, and criticise the preacher. Some would point out that they are their own enemies in the matter of preaching, e.g. there are many inner struggles with feelings of inadequacy, condemnation, and even failure at times. However, these are not the main enemies of the preacher. What is often overlooked is the unseen battle raging between the Kingdom of God and the realm of darkness for the lives and minds of men, woman, youth and children. The preaching of the anointed Word of God will always be the most powerful instrument, sharper than a two-edged sword (Hebrews 4:12), penetrating the spiritual darkness and liberating and transforming people to be more like Christ. The Word is a target to satan. He will try to resist the preaching of it, confusing, side-tracking, silencing and snatching away the seeds from the minds of people before they take root and produce fruit. Should they take root, satan will try to choke them to death by the cares and worries of this life (Matt.13:19-22).

a)The war starts with preparation.

For the unsuspecting, chaos erupts around them, problems intensify, urgent demands command immediate attention, time seems to disappear and exhausting fatigue sets in. One is easily convinced that all this is just the nature of the pastoral ministry, and that it is perfectly normal to be tired at the end of the week when most preachers have to prepare for Sunday.

For the visionary elder who has to be ready, full of inspiration and revelation Sunday after Sunday, trying to prepare can produce pure panic. The effect on his caring family that surround him during this crisis hour, is often very negative as

tensions rise as Sunday gets closer and closer!! Preparation is not only a matter of getting the message ready, but preparing for the conflict.

In addition to the attack on the preacher, we must bear in mind that a strategy is planned by satan to hinder the people from coming. He will upset them with domestic problems, conflict, sickness or in other areas. E.g. a crisis at work causing an employee to miss a meeting.

Although there are some practical steps to be taken (which will be dealt with under "The Preachers preparation") the real answer is aggressive spiritual warfare, intercession and faith. Here are some guidelines.

- Recognise and anticipate the inevitable war. We have to keep reminding ourselves that it is real. It is usually disguised and not readily visible and we are not always aware of it. The Bible gives stern warnings about the enemy and the conflict, and considers it to be normal for the Christian. How much more so for the spokesperson for God! (2 Cor. 10:3-5, James 4:7, Eph. 6:10-18, Matt.6:13, 2 Tim.2:3).
- We have to make sure we and our families are free from bondage, and that satan has nothing in us, nor any unlawful authority over us inadvertently given to him by ourselves, or by others in authority over us on our behalf. (cf. Luke.4:6 where satan says "...for it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to". "it" here refers to the "exousia" or authority, that was "paradidomi" surrendered, yielded, given up to him, by whom? Not God, but by the human race as it worshipped, honoured, served satan!)
- Live in the safety of the spiritual armour of Eph. 6, which to my mind is more of a "life style" than a mystical suit of armour we have to put on.
- Do some earnest praying, calling on God to command His angels, (Heb. 1:14, Psalm 91:11) to fight and work on our behalf for the sake of the Kingdom. We need to cover ourselves, our families, our circumstances and our people. By doing this we prepare the spiritual atmosphere of the meeting to prevent the "birds of the air" coming and snatching the seeds and devouring them before they can take root (Matt. 13:4).
- Go against satan and his angels in the Mighty Name of Jesus Christ!

Stop him from interfering with our God-given mandate to proclaim God's Word to His people. Force satan to release our people and their circumstances (whom God has placed under our authority as elders) so that they will be free to attend and to receive the Word.

We need to make sure we understand God's structures of authority delegated to us, and the relevant areas of jurisdiction placed under us. We have to exercise that authority over the enemy with faith and aggression. (Matth.11:12. Luke 16:19, 1.Peter 5:8-9, Eph.6:10-13)

b.) The war continues and intensifies when we preach.

- Even before we start to speak, attempts can be made to distract or unsettle us. People, who feel they must confront us on an issue or complain, will often tackle us just before the meeting. It is amazing the way

people are driven (often by forces they cannot identify themselves) to get through to the preacher to unload some emotional issue which could easily wait for later, unsettling and distracting him from the task before him.

- While we preach we are in spiritual warfare, there is a conflict raging. Jesus said we are to “cast out demons” while proclaiming the Word (Matt. 10:8, Luke 9:1-2). The Word preached under the power of the Spirit directly confronts demons, demonic strongholds on the minds of people, and the thoughts, values, and ideas of the fallen sinful nature. It is a confrontation between the Kingdom of God and the realm of darkness. There are many testimonies of how freedom and deliverance have taken place while the Word is preached. Mind-sets are broken and ideas and values are changed. It is often the preacher’s experience to feel absolutely worn out after preaching under the anointing.

While we are called to war, we must do so with confidence and expect victory. Jesus said that the very gates of Hades, (considered by many as the very headquarters of Satan) will not be able to hold back the invasion of the church as it marches and ministers by the power of the Holy Spirit. (Matt. 16:17-19)

Although the conflict may not always be as bad or as intense, it is far better to always anticipate, be alert and prepared for the devil who “prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour” (1 Peter 5:8-9 NIV). Where we have done our homework, preaching will be easier, and more effective. A far worse situation is where we do not prepare for war, do not reckon with the enemy, and as a result, we preach with little or no results, and do not understand why!

2.2 THE PREACHERS AUTHORITY

“The preacher should realize that the “Bigger Bang” occurs every time the word is proclaimed.”

Analysing Letter 11 and the author’s 6 points, answer the question “what does the Word do?” Unpack the 6 points he lists and add another 4.

If only every preacher could believe this: that the Word of God is the answer to all of Life. Instead, the world has infiltrated our Christian thinking and seduced us to preach self-help sermons from self-help books and moral encouragements rather than the authoritative, inerrant and sufficient Word of God.

The Word affects the change. Not the preacher. Not the special effects. Yes God can use the music and the ‘jars of clay’ but the Word, therein lies our hope. Why? This world looks for truth and tries to define it over and over. The world is longing for an absolute, a standard that we can unquestionably rely on.

What does the Word do?

- The Word Initiates: In the beginning was The Word – and by Him all things were made. The Triune God spoke and the earth was formed. The word brings LIFE. John 6: 68 Simon Peter answered Him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.” The word of God creates life when they are uttered.

- The Word Finishes: Is 40:8 His Word is there in the beginning and in the end. He even says that not one thing will be changed about the book of the Law. It was relevant 200years ago and is still relevant today. It is still changing lives and

bringing life. It will remain the same.

- The Word Sustains: As preachers we reveal the sustaining nature of the word of God. In the tough times and in the easy times it is the word of God that sustains us. Heb "He holds all things together by His word". The sun rises and sets because He speaks it that way. John Piper says, "the stars in the sky obediently shine."

- The Word Informs: Our human nature is a searching one. Searching for answers, for the meaning of life. Every religion tries to answer this. Psychologists try to give answers to peoples problems. People fight over who's right and who is wrong. Because it is the absolute that we can rely on, we can turn to it for all our answers. It answers the why we exist, who am I type questions and brings understanding and wisdom to those who would hear. Intellectually people rely on their IQ but the Word brings the truth to anyone, and everyone who would listen and learn.

- The Word Connects: In the pages of the Bible we find our King. It is so easy to, as the Pharisees do, Search the scriptures and love the Law but miss that God is to be found on every page in every book. It connects us with our Saviour. It shows us our king. All we need to do is search the scriptures for Him. We learn about the Father in the word and about the Spirit and His dealings in and through us. The word takes the immortal untouchable God and makes Him tangible in the expressions and stories and accounts.

- The Word Guides: The word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path. It leads us within the broad riverbanks of the will of God and directs us in his incredible favour. If we keep close to it, it keeps us safe, secures our families and marriages. It brings wisdom to those who seek it and direction to those who are lost. It is the road map of our eternal success and the crumbs on the path that we can follow home.

- The Word Breaks Down: The word has the power to break down the hardest heart and it self erected protective walls. It takes a heart of stone and makes it a heart of flesh. It is like a hammer, says Ezekiel that breaks the stone and we can rely on the word of God to reach any person, no matter how far they have drifted from God. The Word is able to break down defences of insecurity, offense and even pride. It destroys anything that does not honour God. It is enough reason for us to dig deep into the covers of the Bible so that continually it keeps our hearts from the self centred bias towards a cold sinful state.

- The Word Washes: Eph 5 Talks about the washing of the word of God. We live in a world that pollutes our souls. We spend a while in the word cleansing our souls and minds only to get them polluted again in a world that is relentless, but the very place we're called to go make a difference. Being under the word is cleansing and refreshing and you walk out like out of a shower after a long day.

- The Word Mirrors: The word is a measurement tool. We stand before it like a mirror and see what we look like compared to the standard that God sets. It encourages us to change and helps us along the way. It is our perfect standard and we can

rely on it for gracious and truthful correction and measurement.

- The Word Heals: Psalm 107:20 "He sent out His word and healed them, and delivered them from their destruction." The Word of the Lord is powerful to accomplish all that He intends. One of those things is to heal. The Word of God heals us from physical disease and also from the spiritual infirmities that we are bound by. It sets us free and binds up the broken. It strengthens the weak and restore to a state of strength, health and delight. The word of God is powerful. Let the preachers never be indifferent to the Word or forsake the ancient scriptures for self help remedies without power to heal.

3 BEFORE YOU MOVE YOUR LIPS

3.1. The message - Why say anything at all?

Of all the communicators in the world, none have a more important message or more potential for dynamic and powerful delivery than those with the message of Jesus Christ. The most effective communicators are always those with an important cause in which they believe intensely. Unless you are convinced of your message, no one else will ever be.

a) You have to be convinced to be convincing.

The privilege of preaching God's word comes with a price and a certain amount of pain -YTPEE! No homiletics course, book or pay cheque will get us through the tough times. Sharing the message of Christ's love is a challenge of unequalled importance and urgency. Only if we are convinced of the importance of our task, convinced this is what God wants for us and a sense of calling outweighs the price and pain, will we be carried through the tough times?

b) The audience - Who's listening?

The Anglican Church in the UK was loosing 1000 members a week a few years ago. They were forced to take a long, hard look at what they were offering people of the '90's. They realized they had tried to keep the external package - liturgy, dress, style of worship, etc. the same and alter the gospel it contained! Realizing they has lost contact with their audience, they decided to change the package and return to the gospel in its simple power, and the Alpha course was born. Holy Trinity Church Brompton grew from about 300 to more than 6000 in a very short time. What was the trick?

- They returned the source of power-the gospel, not man made systems.
- They identified, targeted and then challenged their real audience in a way relevant to them.

c) People will listen if we just speak their language

Remember, your audience may change every time you speak. Make sure you speak to those listening in an appealing way, not the way you're comfortable - there's no excuse for saying "this is how I minister, take it or leave it." Paul said: "I became all

things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some." 1 Cor. 9:22
"Though I am free and belong to no man, I make myself a slave to everyone to **win as many as possible.**"

1 Cor. 9:19

This covers: Language - slang, large words.

Choice of subject - not just pet causes. How you present it.

Keep current by asking: Who are they?

What work/school do they do/attend?

What do they read - magazines/newspapers, etc?

What do they listen to - music?

What do they watch - TV/films?

What do they wear?

3.2. The method - How will they hear my voice?

Our audience will change. If we don't change with them, our message will not be heard. Remember the Holy Trinity Brompton and the Alpha course? Our message will never, needs never and must never change, but our method of communicating it must be updated constantly. Today more things compete for our attention than ever before. Yet even in this entertainment age - people have needs which aren't being met. They need to know that some-one cares, to hear, often for the first time that God really loves them and wants to know them more - not just that they must go to church or become Christians. Today people have very little sense of self worth, and have a desperate need to feel involved. Our method will determine a large part of our success.

a) The message is the message

If the method we use is successful it will massage the truth of the message into people willing to receive.

Our message, vital and eloquent as it may be is often lost in the barrage of other voices constantly shouting conflicting and confusing messages at those we want to reach. In order to get our message heard, we must get close to our listeners. Even then there are others with opposing messages who are also close enough to make their message clear, e.g. peers, relatives, adverts, etc. Some times our audience vacillates our message and another's. How do we overcome this? To make our message heard we cannot shout it from the confines of our church buildings. We must venture out and draw close to those with whom we wish to communicate.

If we want to be part of the Holy Spirit's plan to see life changing commitment from our listeners, we must reach out to where they are and lovingly, gently touch them and lead them to meet with Jesus. People will listen if they feel we care. Unless we show them we care how can we convince them Jesus does?

3.3. The messenger - Look who's talking

If we understand the importance of our message, if we understand our audience and if we know how to make ourselves heard, then we must ask how to prepare

ourselves for the task. Having looked at the Vehicle of Preaching, these four must cover the kind of person that makes a good communicator.

a) We must be committed to practice what we preach.

Our life is the greatest illustration our audience will ever see. It shows whether the truth and power of our message is true and effective. We don't necessarily have to be the most eloquent, but to be really effective we have to believe in our message enough to give it and deliver it with passion. Far more than being slick, or impressive we need to be real. To have a faith in Christ seen in evidence in our everyday lives. How can we possibly motivate people to a commitment that we are unwilling to make ourselves? We must practice what we preach.

b) We must be committed to being ourselves,

Trying to copy someone else's style or mannerisms only dilutes who you are. You are the messenger, the only "you" God created, and called to this time and place. Impersonating Billy Graham or any other Christian celebrity simply because it works for them - only gets in the way and upstages who you are and what you have to say. The most valuable paintings are originals, not copies of originals. We all want to listen to someone with a quiet confidence in who they are and the word they preach. Be released to be who you are, you don't have to be like any one else. Jokes are good, but if you can't remember the punch line don't try to constantly entertain us with your sense of humour. Can you imagine Paul the apostle opening with- "I heard a good one this week - Two Jews walked into a bar...!" Possibly Andrew or Peter, but not Paul. The most important skill in communicating is to find your own strengths, and use them to your (and the listeners) best advantage. We must all be broadening our abilities and skills, but never at the expense of who we are.

c) We must be committed to Glorifying God.

We are called to reflect God's brilliance not to bathe in the limelight. With so many people watching and listening, and even doing what we say, it's all too easy to think that we're the special ones. As preaches we are servants of the people. We must never feel as though we're entitled to any special treatment because we're the speaker. Ensure that you pass all glory on to the King. Don't fall into the trap of pride. Beware of the three G's: *Gold, Gals & Glory*. Always reflect His light.

d) We must be committed to excellence.

If we act as representatives of the king of kings, we must strive for perfection. Preaching is more of a calling than a profession. We are responsible for doing the best we can, but it's God's blessing that makes the difference and brings results. Moses stuttered, Paul admitted to not being eloquent - in fact he once bored a man to death! He spoke for so long that someone fell asleep and fell out of a 3rd story window! Acts 20:9 God often chooses the talents we're least confident about for us to serve Him with. Even when we feel as though our talk went over like a lead balloon, God may use it to do His greatest work. Remember God is not hindered by our bad - or good preaching! It is God's work.

This is however no excuse for sloppiness, slackness or poor preparation. Someone said, "Failure to prepare is not spiritual, it's criminal!" Our audience can sense it when we are unprepared, or distracted. When it comes to communicating God's word, we must accept a very high standard, before God. The preparation of (1.) Ourselves (2.) Our message must be given time and diligence. Excellence includes the jokes we make, illustrations we use, and-whether we're honouring in our reference to others or not. Never forget what we say or how we say it reflects not only on us, but more importantly on our God.

4 PREACHING AS A FORM OF COMMUNICATION.

4.1. Communication Imperatives:

- Clarity of speech comes from clarity of purpose.
- Believability comes in direct proportion to a quiet sense of confidence - know your source and your identity.
- Words live forever and so they must be handled with care. Know the power of speech.
- How they hear is as important as what you say - know your audience.
- Having the truth is only half the battle - know your craft.
- Knowing when is as important as knowing what - know your timing.
- Simplicity means to say one thing well.
- Take your calling seriously but don't be anxious about yourself - know where your responsibility begins and ends.
- Never under estimate your oppressors, but always count your hidden resource - know your enemy and your allies.

Jesus' model of communication.

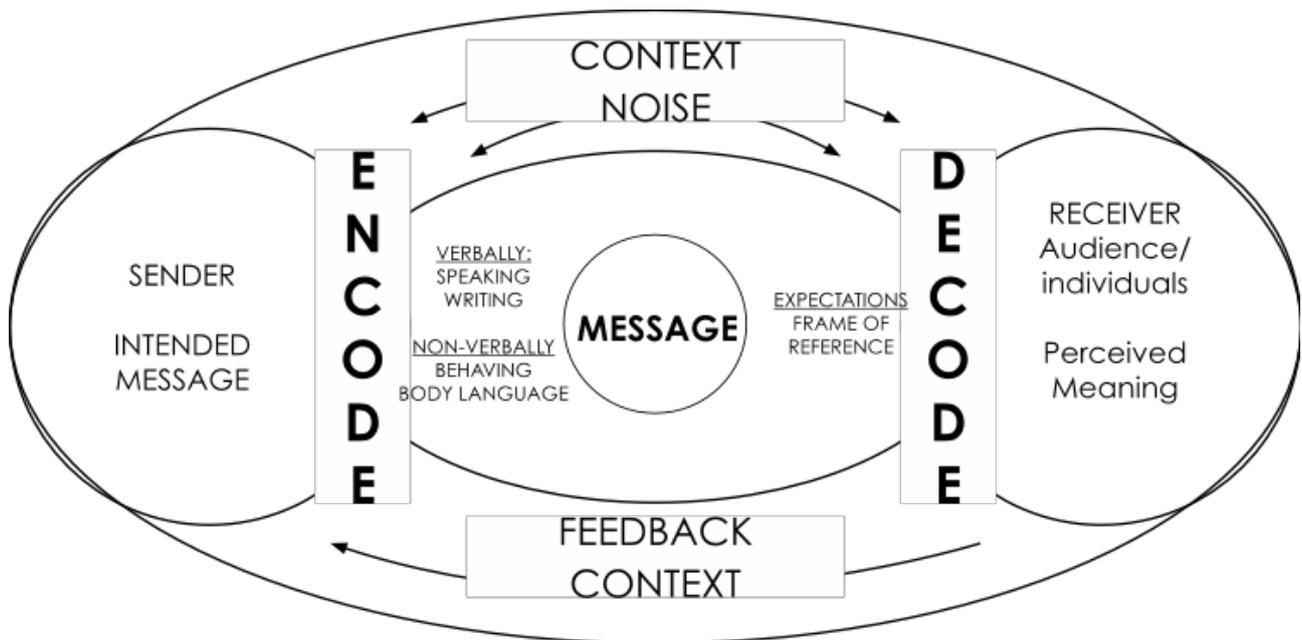
1. Logos - essence of the message
2. Ethos - the *credibility* of the messenger
3. Pathos - *appeal* to inner motives of the hearer

Ravi Zacharias says

1. State your theology i.e. message
2. Explain it in the genre of the day.
3. Illustrate, write it from the kitchen table.

4.2. The Process Of Communication

To communicate well we need to have some understanding of the dynamics - what actually happens - of communication.



Communication involves the following factors:

- 1.) A meaning in the mind of the sender.
- 2.) A coding of that meaning by the sender.
- 3.) A context in which the communication takes place otherwise called noise.
- 4.) A message containing the meaning sent by the sender.
- 5.) A decoding of the message by the receiver of the message.
- 6.) Feedback or response from the receiver to the sender.

a) All communication is cross cultural.

Even within the same race group communication is coloured by the point of view of the sender and the receiver. No communication takes place in a vacuum - there are always beliefs, presuppositions, understandings and concepts in people's minds. People often hear only what they expect to hear, e.g. when you say church what do you mean? - What do people understand? This is determined by your point of view. We as communicators need to attempt to close in on our receivers, to narrow the gap between what we say and what they hear. We must develop into "receiver orientated communicators." Remember Paul? When God inspired men to write the bible - He didn't use the language of heaven or even classical Latin though some would have us believe this! He spoke in the language of the hearer and idiom of his day.

Our communication will be evaluated not on how well we spoke, but on how much the receivers understood and accepted. As with the message and method, of communication, the way we communicate effects our audience negatively or positively.

To communicate well we must study the perspective of the insider in a cultural group. The outsider's point of view is vital for objective evaluation. But our communication rests on speaking like an insider. This is vital in the terms or jargon, illustrations or topics we choose. The best way to learn to communicate well is to learn to know the receivers. Again, look at Jesus' example.

If we have to speak in a way new to the receiver, e.g. in Teaching, we must take the receiver out of his frame of reference and into the communicators. When we teach, e.g. when convincing the unsaved of his sin, the sin concept may even be foreign to him. Even when teaching like this, we must:

- 1.) Use the receiver's frame of reference as much as possible.
- 2.) Get close and take them "by the hand" step by step into our understanding of what we mean.

E.G: First bring someone to a belief in the bible as God's word, before you quote it.

Find something you can use in where they are - common ground, and build on that.

Don't take for granted that you see things the same way.

b) Stereo-typing the communicator

People quickly make a first impression and put others in boxes as to what they expect from them.

A communicator must preach out of any stereotype to gain credibility. He must be seen to be human, not just a "talking head". If people feel they know what to expect, they may write off what we say as unbinding; just our personal.

Hobbyhorse. They may even "switch off" because they think they know what's coming. If the receiver despises the communicator no matter how persuasive his message is, it will have very little effect. The receivers must feel as though they can identify with the communicator or they will feel "that's fine for you, but what about me?"

Jesus was always offending stereotypes and empty customs. Yet He was approachable, and one who people could identify with.

4.3. Preaching styles

More than one way to skin a cat.

In very broad categories, there are four main types of preaching styles and methods.

- a) Expository
- b) Topical
- c) Biographical
- d) Didactic

To some extent, every preach will include all four.

a) Expository/ Exegetical Preaching or Teaching.

"To take a text, a portion of scripture of any length and delve into the meaning of words, phrases, sections, customs and contexts - This is then explained to the audience and applied to their life situation." D.J Reed. Any number of points can be expounded, depending on what the preacher discovered as he "exposed" the text, in his preparation. Often alliterations or acrostics are used to help the hearers

analyse and remember what was said. Someone said:" Put handles on your sermon, so that people can carry it home with them."

All preaching should be expository to some degree. We should be "breaking open" God's word for our listeners. If nothing else, we have a responsibility to do honest exegesis as we prepare ourselves and our message.

Some expository outlines

Matthew 14:25-32

- v. 27 The Courage that Christ offered.
- 28 The Command that Peter obeyed.
- 30 The Circumstances that overwhelmed.
- 31 The Comfort of Christ's omnipotence.

Another way of looking at the same scripture:

- v. 30 Sinking times are Praying times.
- 30 Short prayers are long enough
- 31 Man's Extremity, God's opportunity.

John 20:19-22

- v. 19 The Church locked up.
- 19 The Christ looked in.
- 21-22 The church launched out.

b.) Topical preaching

- To take a topic, relevant to the situation or people, and preach the biblical perspective on it. Scriptures from the breadth of the bible are analysed, and the facts presented are interpreted, from which conclusions are drawn. Care must be taken to prepare thoroughly to ensure our stance is a biblically balanced conclusion, by comparing scripture with scripture.

Always ensure that you find your thesis in scripture and add the argument to it. Never allow your own ideas and presumptions - no matter how strongly you believe it to dictate and then try to - "find a scripture" to support what you already have decided! After all- anyone can "have a scripture" for almost anything! It is important that we allow God to talk to us through scripture, and not just presume to. Speak for Him.

Some Topical Outlines

The love of God

- 1.) Originated in God - John 3:16
- 2.) Offered by God 1 John 4:9-10
- 3.) Offered to man - Romans 5:5

The knowledge of God

- 1.) Your slate - Psalm 103:4
- 2.) Your situation - Psalm 44:20-21

3.) Your situation - Psalm 6:5-8

c) Biographical preaching

To study and preach on a bible character life and times. It generally includes a survey of the persons life, or part of it. Character traits are observed, conclusions, observations are made of them applied to the lives and situations of the heavens. Often the characters values, principles, performance, successors and or failures are used to reinforce that application of Kingdom values and principles in our lives.

The biographical outlines
Jonathan: the man God used.

1 Sam 14:1-23

1. The company he left v.1-3
 - a considerable company -600
 - a complacent company - sitting under a tree.
2. The confidence he had - v.6,10
3. The confession he made - v.6
4. The company he kept - v.6
 - armour bear and God.
5. The conquest he enjoyed -v. 14-16,20

Conclusion: The person who goes to battle in the name of the Lord, with the Lord and with loyal and faithful followers, will be victorious. No matter what the odds may be.

d) Didactic Preaching

To teach, causing listeners to form questions. Didactic preaching is more a style of preaching than a sermon type. The aim is to preach in such a way as to involve your audience and draw them into what you are saying, you want them to " finish your sentences" for you- even if just in their minds. When a preacher tells an audience something, they evaluate it as his. When he causes them to reach his conclusion, in their own minds, they accept it as their own. One can use rhetorical or responsive questions, or even say what they may be asking. " But how on earth can I say what you ask?" The goal here is to make the listeners part of what you are saying and keep them stimulates, so they don't drop off!

4.4. Teaching Principles

a. There must be creative re-statement, reiteration. This occurs in the bible. People need to be told over and over again.

Tell people:

1. What you are going to say
2. What you are saying
3. What you have said

- b. Always elicit feedback to see if the audience is listening and understanding. Never take this for granted. Ask questions, pause and then go on. Get people to think. Ask questions, even rhetorical. "are you there?"
- c. Always follow the example of Jesus in using homespun illustrations. Everybody loves a story.
- d. Sometimes only reveal the basic elements. Do not give too much at a time.
- e. Start from what the audience already knows. Paul always preached from general revelation to specific revelation. Do not inundate the listeners with new information. Know where they are at.
- f. Do not give too much theoretical information. Be practical!