

Homiletics

The Art of Preaching

Week 2 of 3

5 PREPARATION OF A SERMON

“Not preparing isn’t spiritual – it’s criminal!”

True preaching demands hearing what is on God’s heart, allowing it to grip your heart and then encoding it so that it will penetrate the hearts of those listening to you. “The preparation of a sermon should be in the place of diligent and dedicated labour, the painstaking sketching on the canvas of the soul of the preacher and what is to become a divine creation behind the pulpit.” D.J Reed.

Every sermon should contain the following – The Supremacy of Christ – The Centrality of the Kingdom – The Supernatural power of God i.e.. “Prophetic Ramblings” Rigby Wallace.

5.1. KEYS FOR HEALTHY EXEGESIS

Understanding the dynamics and production of structure is superfluous without having substance to fill that structure.

DEFINITIONS:

EXEGESIS Greek: ex = “out of”
 hegesthai = “lead”
 Literally: “TO LEAD OUT OF”

Webster’s Dictionary: “A critical explanation or interpretation especially of Scripture.”

HERMENEUTICS Webster’s Dictionary: “the art or science of interpretation, especially of Scripture.”

Three keys to healthy exegesis

5.1.1. - Your approach must be fresh and expectant. The Holy Spirit is able to quicken a familiar passage to you providing your heart is expectant. Expect God to show you the truths contained in the passage at hand. Ask Him.

5.1.2. - Avoid the temptation to approach God’s Word always “looking for a sermon for someone else”. Understand the difference between getting into the Word for personal application and corporate application.

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

5.2. UNDERSTANDING CONTEXT

DEFINITION

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

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

CHAPTERS AND VERSES

We cannot rely on the standard chapter and paragraph divisions in our Bibles. "Many instances of unfortunate chapter and paragraph breaks occur and cause the reader to miss the point or obscure the full significance of a writer's meaning." (John MacArthur).

e.g. (2 Cor 7:1) – see what the "therefore" is there – for!! Chapters and verses only appeared in 1551AD.

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

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

5.3. STEPS TO DETERMINING CONTEXT

5.3.1. Understand that a text does not exist in isolation or in a vacuum.

5.3.2. Understand the syntax ("the discipline that examines how words, phrases and clauses are joined together") and the structure of a passage lie at the very heart of true expository preaching.

5.3.3. Understand that each passage has its own unique flow or structure.

5.3.4. Understand that the passage, chapter and entire book has a central theme or argument which the author is communicating.

5.3.5. Understand the need for careful study of exegetical (" studies of individual words") and syntactical material. This is time consuming and at times, tedious.

5.4 DETERMINING THE CENTRAL IDEA OF A PASSAGE

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

5.5 EXEGETING AN ENTIRE LETTER / BOOK

Ephesians 4:1 begins thus: "As a prisoner of the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received." Preachers make a grave mistake if they view that verse in isolation from the rest of the letter.

6 INCREASING YOUR EFFECTIVENESS AS A COMMUNICATOR

John C. Maxwell

6.1. Public speaker vs. Communicator

Public Speaker:

- Puts the message before the people
- What do I have?
- Techniques
- Content oriented
- Goal: Complete the message

Communicator:

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

6.2. Avoid the big ten common problems in communication

- Initial rapport is not established
- Stiff body movement
- Material presented intellectually, not involving the audience emotionally
- Poor eye contact, facial expressions
- Humour lacking
- Lack of competence in presentation
- Low energy and enthusiasm
- Message not owned by messenger
- Boring language and material
- Lack of audience participation

6.3. Believe in what you say – conviction

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

6.4. Believe in the people to whom you speak – expectation

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

The Four “b’s” of Successful Speaking:

- Believe in your God
- Believe in yourself
- Believe in your subject
- Believe in your audience
- LIVE WHAT YOU SAY – INTEGRITY

6.5. Know when to say it – timing

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

TIPS FOR GOOD TIMING:

- Be audience oriented
- Have enough self-confidence to take a risk
- Be impact conscious rather than image conscious
- Have a responsive audience

6.6. Know how to say it – creatively

HOWARD HENDRICKS: “The higher your predictability, the lower your impact. The lower your predictability, the higher your impact.”

6.7. Know why you say it – application

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

6.8. Have fun saying it – humour

When a communicator takes himself seriously = Rigid

When a communicator does not take himself seriously = Relaxed

6.9. SHOW IT AND THE PEOPLE DO IT – INFLUENCE

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

7 QUICK-START PREACHING: READ, EXPLAIN, APPLY

Read, Explain, Apply

- Therefore, let us

If we stick to this 3-part template, then the worst our message will be is good. It will always be a balanced message. At first it may seem slightly contrived, but after a while it will become habit. Read it, then explain it, then apply it to everyday life. You will not go far wrong!

Heb 12:26 = Read the scripture

Read in a lively, engaging manner with emphasis. It is sometimes helpful to draw the people in by asking them to read it out loud together, or some variation on this such as the ladies reading a verse, then the men and so on.

Heb 12:27 = Explain the meaning of the scripture using either

- Explanation
- Testimony
- Illustration

Your aim is make the meaning plain (Nev 8v8). You can do this by using quotes from other authors / preachers, by using testimony from your own life that brings it alive, or by using a concise illustration or story.

Stott says, "the Bible teems with illustrations, particularly similes E.g. 'You are the salt of the earth' or the story of the Prodigal Son and Good Samaritan. In this whole matter of using sermon illustrations, we have to find the balance between too many and too few. Illustrations are like windows that let in the light ... but the whole house should not be made of windows!

Heb 12:28 = Apply the scripture to everyday life

This is a vital part. With weak application much of the power of the message can be lost. Think, who is your audience? What application pointers can you give? Often, all that is necessary is to throw out questions and allow the Holy Spirit to bring application to each person.

8 FINDING A MESSAGE

The Place to find the message is in the prayer and the word. Whether our problem is having no idea or too many ideas, in His presence is the only place we can find what He wants.

Practically, look for patterns and trends in what the Holy Spirit is doing, i.e. if He is emphasizing repentance don't preach on gifts! Be aware of God's moving in your context and get behind and support that! Matthew 16:3 Pharisees and Sadducees didn't know how to interpret the signs of the times.

When God has laid something on your heart, ask yourself and Him questions about it, and preach the answers you find – why? Because the audience will probably be asking the same things. Use the five W's and an H: Who Where Why When What & How?

8.1 Choosing a subject or text

By far the most difficult and often frustrating matter is for the visionary elder to choose his text or subject week by week. This of course depends on whether he is committed to building the Kingdom of God or merely entertaining his people and building his own (in that case anything will do!). Mt 16:18

It becomes a matter of determining the Will of the Master concerning the message. It will require being in tune with Him, and alert and observant. The result of properly identifying God's choice is that a conviction develops within us. There is a stirring and moving of the Holy Spirit which is quite wonderful and it is a privilege the preacher enjoys! The Holy Spirit continues to develop the message with thoughts and ideas as time passes. A good idea, therefore, is to set a day aside earlier in the week to spend time in prayer and meditation to settle this choice, and not leave it to the last minute! Make it a priority that is non negotiable and go aside where there will be no interruptions. God in His Omnipotence has many different ways of communicating His will to His preachers. Each of us have to learn to recognise and identify His dealing with us. However, for the beginner, here are some examples of how this can take place.

a) The easiest and most enjoyable of these is simply when "God drops the message into your heart". We know it is from Him, it grips our attention and it "grows" in our thoughts as we think about it. There is excitement, and we can't wait to preach it! Whole outlines can come this way by revelation and may require little effort or research to prepare for preaching. All preachers would like this to happen continuously! However that would be the easy way out, and in the end stunt our growth and development.

b) A close second to a) is when a text or passage "comes alive" to us while we are reading the word. We must, however, be sure that it is for the congregation as well and not confuse it with when God is speaking to us personally for our own correction or encouragement. It must be pointed out, nevertheless, that at times our preaching is born out of our own experience of God's dealings with us. The message must become part of us and fill our hearts if we are going to preach with passion and reality (see 6.2.1). God's leaders often have to go through the "fire and water" first to understand and appreciate where the people are at, and be able to effectively apply the Truth to the situation.

Consider how some of the prophets of the Old Testament had to go through certain experiences in order to communicate God's Word to the people.

c) We may be deeply moved by the life of one of the bible characters and be led to preach a series on them. Here the problem is that the initial enthusiasm we experienced may not be there when we sit down to prepare the second message. The answer is to get down to prayer and hard work, trusting the help of the Spirit to continue to open up the Word to us as we prepare.

d) Jesus Christ builds His church and His leaders are to work with Him. Jesus' own ministry was in partnership with the Father. It was only what He "saw" the Father doing 28 that He got involved with (John 5:19). Pastors often overlook this truth and fail to keep watch to see what the Holy Spirit is "busy with" in the lives of the congregation. He has a program and there are often "seasons" during which He will be addressing certain issues, creating circumstances in the lives of the people to expose ignorance, needs, areas of sin and bondages etc. Recognising His work and identifying these areas, and then preaching relevant truth into such a context is one of the most effective ways to build up the congregation into a powerful and mature people for God. Again the choosing of texts and subjects to preach on in such a context is not so much a great spiritual revelation as common sense and responsibility. Revelation and anointing is needed to prepare and preach the message.

e) An event in the lives of the people or a growing awareness of a need among them may make it obvious that we need to teach on a certain subject such as financial issues and tithing, marriage and relationships, caring for each other etc. (common areas of need in every church.) This means of choosing a subject or text may not seem such a "spiritual" way of going about it. Remember, it is a matter of "determining" what God's Will is, not necessarily always hearing a specific word from Him. Elders are charged with the responsibility to care for the sheep, to teach, guide and correct them. (2 Tim. 4:2; Heb. 12:17.) While it may not be that exciting it is common sense, and God expects us to use our heads! Many preachers are so super spiritual that they are preoccupied with getting some "exciting prophetic revelation" from God when the obvious is staring them in the face! While they are "surfing" the spiritual "internet" to pick up God's Will, their people are dying and scattering for the lack of care!

f) Current issues or events taking place require the light of God's word applied to them. They may be crises, catastrophes, major changes, deteriorating morals, economic and political issues. The visionary elder is a leader of a community of God's people. As such they will look to him to come up with Biblical perspectives, answers and direction relevant to the times they live in. Consider the characteristics of the sons of Issachar mentioned in 1 Chronicles 12:32. Preparing messages to respond to such matters is common sense, hard work and simply part of the responsibility of leaders.

g) Another means can be the choice of one of the books of the bible that we are led to preach through systematically. This is the most difficult, but provides some unique opportunities and advantages. It is an excellent exercise for the preacher to "submit" himself to the particular section that comes up for that week whether it is difficult or easy. He is forced to "tackle" it, pray over it and do the research necessary to receive God's revelation on it. He is forced to learn how to use different approaches, and deal with subjects that are new and challenging. All this develops his preaching skills. We cannot

afford ourselves the luxury of staying within our comfort zones if we are going to be the best for the Master.

8.2 HOW TO “GET” A MESSAGE

As a preacher your message will be heard through the grid of how you come across in the community. For example, an overly withdrawn or sulky person will not be “well-heard”. Those who only come alive in the pulpit never make good preachers. Your EIQ (Emotional Intelligence Quotient) – how you deal with setbacks, how you manage your emotions, impacts on how people “hear” you.

a) Be sensitive to the Holy Spirit

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

So we ask Him, “Lord, what do you want me to talk about?” And then we patiently wait for His answer. It may come in unusual forms. I’ve received preaching ideas during a funeral, in the shower, listening to the radio in my car, during my devotions (just be careful you are not always looking for sermons when you should be feasting yourself), in conversations, music I heard, sitting in conferences, talking with Jan, on planes, mowing the lawn. In recent months I have preached on transformation (which our team has developed into a series and the sermons have borne much fruit in people’s lives), and it was just the word “transformation” that came to me.

Learn to trust your hearing apparatus. “My sheep hear My voice.” Never prescribe the method God uses to speak to you. He will not be put into a box either.

Practical issues: If it is just a word you “get” (like transformation), begin by consulting a dictionary to find the true meaning. Then begin unpacking the word as much as you can (synonym sifting), writing down all the relevant elements of the word. For example: “transformation” – write the dictionary definition – then write, “people change when they transform, butterflies metamorphose, so is there any lesson I can learn from biology and science. Takes effort, can be costly, painful. Why do we kick against it? – fear of change, will God be gentle with me? How does this impact on my concept of God? Next, ask the Holy Spirit to quicken verses to your mind (and / or, then consult a concordance) – Romans 12:1 f comes to mind, and suddenly a flood of Scriptures, Bible events will result. Your problem may now be what should I leave out? Are there words in the Text that need to be unpacked to their original Greek or Hebrew meaning? Then creatively think of illustrations you could use. Any stories of struggles you may have had being transformed?

b) Be sensitive to your audience

Preachers and teachers are leaders. And leaders live with their eyes wide open. They are trend spotters, situation analysts, and students of human behaviour. They are proactive, with their fingers on the pulse of modern reality. They know what people are thinking,

feeling, dreaming about. They read the culture continually. They live close to people – they are not recluses who come down from the mountain armed with their sermonic weapons once and a while to “let the people have it”. Relationally deficient teachers and preachers do more harm than good in the long run. To be a preacher or teacher means you are in the people business. Your talk is about them, not you!!

Take the time to pre-check your audience

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

Identify the four types of audience members

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

- PRISONERS

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

- VACATIONERS

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

- GRADUATES

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

- STUDENTS

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

c) Consult others

You gain more in the long run if you include people in the process of helping you hear God. Bounce your sermon / teaching idea off others – you'll be amazed how helpful they can be (giving you insight you may never have thought of, clarifying theological points, inspiring you with creative ideas on how to present it in a more impactful way than you would have imagined on your own). Check with experts in the field you are going to address. Pride, arrogance and ignorance isolate people – humility (“what do you think about this idea?”) opens the door for great Holy Spirit revelation to flood in and produce a far significant product in the end. You make the choice.

8.3 HOW DO I DECIDE WHAT TO PREACH ON?

4 things determine what I preach on:

a) Staple diet: In any diet there are the basics such as potatoes and vegetables that need to be regularly eaten. Similarly, there are some foundational topics and doctrines to which a growing church needs to be regularly exposed. I make sure that about once a year we do a 3-week series on each of the following: The Church, Grace, Evangelism, Holy Spirit,

and Several Great Doctrines (e.g. Heaven & Hell, The Sovereignty of God etc). Repeating these themes year after year is not 'samey' because we approach the theme from different angles and use a variety of preachers. I also like to annually do a series that preaches all the way through one of the books of the bible (e.g. an 8-part series on Ephesians). I also think a church needs to hear a preach on the topic of giving & finance several times per year. So when planning the preaching schedule for the year, I will spread these series over the year, leaving the remaining 60% of the Sundays free for other 'one-off' preaches.

b) Common Consciousness: There are certain times of year such as Easter, New Year, Christmas, Mothers Day, Fathers Day, Valentines Day and so on that can provide good platforms to preach from. When everyone in the church, and more importantly outsiders, have a common awareness about something then it is a great opportunity to capitalize on their openness and teach what God's Word says about these things.

Also, major events often need preaching into such as elections or natural disasters. In the weeks following the first crash of the Zimbabwe dollar there was a necessity to preach several pastoral and stabilizing messages. South Africa is currently under-going constitutional changes regarding gay marriages, which also warrants preaching into what the bible teaches about homosexuality. Following the Tsunami disaster themes such as "Why suffering?" and "The Sovereignty of God" would have been appropriate and relevant.

c) The state of the church: Those that lead the church will have an antenna for what the church is lacking. Whilst the 'staple diet' series should do much to promote a healthy body, there will be times when you sense the church needs a message on a particular theme and one should respond by preaching into that. For example, recently several women in our church have asked me to preach into the role of women. They tell me that as a new church we have women from many different backgrounds and a teaching into this would help everyone. I recently chatted to an elder of a church who told me that he is just sensing that a casualness to sin is creeping into the church that he leads; he couldn't give me hard facts for his feeling but he knew that a message on holiness was in order.

d) Heart stirring: Other times I am just so excited about a particular passage that I will be unable to resist preaching on it! And other times I will feel a prophetic burden to preach on a certain matter. Maybe this is how the Psalmist felt when writing Psalm 45: "My heart is stirred by a noble theme....my tongue is the pen of a skilful writer....lips anointed with grace".

Which comes first, the text or the topic?

Whilst I almost always preach directly from a bible text, in terms of deciding what to preach on, sometimes the text comes first and other times the theme or topic comes first. If the later is the case, then you need to find a text from which to preach that theme. For example, several weeks back I knew that I should preach into the church being a multicultural, diverse new community. I then, after quite a lot of debate, decided to use Revelation 5 as my root text, although I would have been equally comfortable using several other texts.

9 MAKING AN OUTLINE

The outline needs to be Logical, Sequential and Biblical. The preachers understanding should enable him to logically build an understanding in the minds of the listeners in a “building block” sequential way.

Just like any good essay, every sermon or talk needs an Introduction, a Body, and a Conclusion. An outline may most often have between two and seven main points.

More than seven is generally to many.

A very structured outline would look like this:

Title

Introduction (inch first 50 words)

Body: Point 1 – often with a scripture

1.1

1.2

1.3

Illustration

Point 2 and scripture

Sub-points

Illustration

Etc etc

Conclusion

We must preach like sharp shooters, not machine gunners! An over abundance of information presented at one hearing often hinders, not help, truth being imparted even if it leaves listeners more informed. It can also leave your audience feeling somewhat shell-shocked! Eat an elephant one bite at a time.

God calls us to the formation of lives, not the information of minds.

The more you give in a particular session, the less will be remembered. Points should be logical and ordered in logical and biblical sequence. Alliteration and other devices are good, but again must make sense and not distract from your purpose.

9.1 ONE MINUTE MESSAGE

Title: A Steady Gaze!

Read: Heb 12v2a “Let us fix our eyes on Jesus”

Explain:

Apply:

9.2 FIVE-MINUTE MESSAGE

Title: Free to Run!

Read: Heb 12v1b “let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us”

Explain:

Apply:

Explain:

Apply:

Explain:
Apply:

10 ILLUSTRATIONS

Everyone loves to listen to a story! Your job is to paint a picture in the minds of the listeners, and illustrations play a vital part of painting this picture. Stories or illustrations form life help make the point relate to the people and clarify your subject. Jesus was an excellent illustrator, much of what we call the gospels today are His illustrations which have been recorded. E.g. the “kingdom of Heaven”.

Matt 13: 5...is like a farmer

: 24...is like a sower

: 31... is like a mustard seed

: 44...is like a treasure

: 45...is like a pearl

: 47...is like a net

_Get it?

Illustrations are to a sermon what windows are to a building. – they must shed light and fresh air onto a subject!

Illustrations should be,

Simple

Uncomplicated

Accessible to the audience

Not distracting

It's no good if 10 minutes later they are still wondering what the illustration meant.

Illustrations from own experiences work best and let people into your “heart” – they feel honoured that they know you a little more.

When using illustrations of others be very careful. Make sure you have that person's consent to tell a story. If you hurt someone, or betray a confidence from the pulpit – they will not trust you in private and you have just shot your ministry in the foot!

Jokes also need to be handled with care – know which to tell and which not to. NB As Christians we should not have different levels of humour – e.g. I'll keep this one for the guys! If its not Godly – you should not even think it – never mind say it!

Illustrations be they fictional or real life; make the sermon less heavy, they serve as 'pit stops' in a sermon. They are easily remembered and bring their point closer to home – eliciting a “that could be me response”.

11

OBJECTIVE SERMON PREPARATION

When we prepare a sermon which will be both Pertinent and Prophetic, we must ask ourselves a whole bunch of questions. Remember the five W's and an H?
Ken Davis uses the following:

Choosing a subject: Pick a card – any card.

1. - What are the needs of my audience?

Who are they? – now not last week, year or any pre-conceived idea.

- What do they expect? – strive to raise their level of expectation.
- What do they need? – never give in to pressure to give them only what they want to hear. E.g. Pharisees.

2. Have I been given a specific mandate? – it is dishonouring to speak outside of the time frame and area of request with out at least checking out if you may or not.

3. Do I know enough about my chosen subject to speak intelligently?

If not – accept the offer and hit the book!

Decline the offer and recommend another who is better equipped.

Suggest another topic.

Clarifying your objective: what are you trying to say

This is possibly the most difficult, but most important aspect of preparation for a talk. If your subject is too broad, or has no specific purpose, your talk will be aimless and boring. Try to sum up what to achieve in one sentence.

1. Write a prepositional statement.

What are you proposing? – written expressing a single idea in one sentence without the word “AND”. E.g. Every Christian can/should love his enemies – now we know what you are on about!

2. Question the proposition.

Ask why or how?

Asking these questions will lead logically to the body of your sermon.

3. Answer the why or how using a key word and a few main points.

We should be able to reduce our outlines to this:

My key word is: _____

My main points are:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Sermon preparation can be summarized using SCORRE method.

Subject general topic. I want to talk about.

Central theme particular topic. The aspect I want to focus on.

Objective My purpose written in a single sentence.

Rational	The logical argument. I present the object with.
Resources	The sparkle and excitement added by illustrations, actions, transparencies, etc.
Evaluation	Did I hit my target or not?

12 HOW YOU PREACH IS CRUCIAL

1) PREACH ACCURATELY

“Scratch People Where They Itch”

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

How do you preach accurately?

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

2) PREACH POSITIVELY

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

3) PREACH PASSIONATELY

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

4) PREACH CREATIVELY

The greater your predictability, the lower your impact.

The lower your predictability, the higher your impact. - Howard Hendricks

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

5) PREACH AUTHORITATIVELY

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

6) PREACH FOR A VERDICT

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

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

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