

The Sermon/Lesson/Devotional

I. Introduction

- A. Why have a sermon or lesson in worship?
 - 1. Technically, this is not "worship" as singing and praying are
 - 2. The worshippers are passive rather than active
 - 3. Is it really necessary?
- B. Who can teach and preach?
 - 1. Is this a function of trained "professionals" and "clergy"?
 - 2. Must one have a commission or some formal qualification?
- C. Is preaching for believers or for unbelievers?
 - 1. Should the sermon be directed at the lost?
 - 2. Should the sermon be for believers?
- D. How must it be determined what to preach?
 - 1. Should it be according to a set plan?
 - 2. If so, how do you plan what to preach over time?

II. Biblical principles concerning preaching

- A. The act of preaching reaches back as far back as Noah, perhaps father
 - 1. 2 Pet 2:5 - Evidently, Noah preached
 - 2. Dt 1:1-5 - Moses preached to Israel
 - 3. Jud 2:16-17 - Judges performed a teaching function
 - 4. Hos 12:10 - The prophets were to speak a message from God
 - 5. Mal 2:7 - Priests were to perform a teaching function
 - 6. Neh 8:1-8 - First exposition on the "written word" we know of
 - a. Given by Ezra the scribe
 - b. Men and women, all who could understand were gathered
 - c. There were Levites and other people who helped "explain" the word
 - 1) v.7 - Word is *bin* in Hebrew, same word used in wisdom literature for wisdom, discernment, or understanding
 - 2) v.8
 - a) Gave them "sense" - word is *sekel* in Hebrew, meaning prudence, good sense, insight, understanding
 - b) So that they "understood" - word again is *bin* in Hebrew
 - 3) Didn't use *targem* as in Ezra 4:7, which means "translate"
 - 4) Choice of words seems to indicate this was more than just a bare "translation" but more of an interpretation to

help people understand the sense of the message in a practical way

- B. The word preached is part of God's plan to guide people
 - 1. As the very brief survey showed above, God used human agents to proclaim his message
 - 2. Rom 10:14 - How will they hear without a preacher?
 - a. Like those in Nehemiah 8, people need someone to proclaim the word, giving sense to it
 - b. Acts 8:26-35 - New Testament example of preaching
 - 1) Using scripture, Phillip "preached" Jesus to the Eunuch
 - 2) Phillip helped the Eunuch to understand
 - 3) Phillip's preaching was Christ centered
 - 3. God's plan was for people to preach
 - a. Mt 3:1 - John the Baptist preached
 - b. Mt 4:17; Lk 4:18 - Jesus preached
 - c. Acts 4:2; 10:36-43 - The apostles preached
 - d. Acts 4:31; 8:4 - Persecuted Christians preached
 - 4. Preaching and teaching is a function of church leadership
 - a. Eph 4:11-12 - Those who build up the body perform teaching functions
 - b. 1 Tim 3:2 - It is a qualification for church overseers
 - c. 1 Tim 5:17 - Elders who lead well, especially working hard at preaching and teaching are to be worthy of double honor
 - 5. 2 Tim 4:2 - Preaching goes hand in hand with these functions:
 - a. Reprove
 - b. Rebuke
 - c. Exhort
- C. It is a serious undertaking
 - 1. James 3:1 - Those who teach will have a stricter judgment
 - a. They will be accountable not just for self
 - b. They will be accountable for what they teach
 - 2. 1 Tim 4:16 - It concerns the salvation of those who hear
 - 3. 1 Cor 3:11-15 - Each must be careful how he "builds"
 - a. The "day" will come which will test his work
 - b. If his students are burned up in whatever kind of test it is, it will be a devastating loss
 - c. Quality building materials should include leading hearers to deeper spirituality and godly wisdom (see context)
- D. It is a tool of edification
 - 1. Eph 4:11-16 - Teaching functions build up the body
 - a. Leads to unity
 - b. Leads to ministry
 - c. Leads to maturity

2. 1 Cor 14:26 - Teaching ministry is for edification in the assembly
3. It will even convict guests in the assembly
 - a. 1 Cor 14:24-25 - He will fall down prostrate, declaring God is among us
 - 1) The worship is not aimed at unbelievers in the regular assembly but edification of believers
 - 2) 1 Cor 14:22 - Avoid the "signs" for unbelievers in the assembly, but stick to edification of believers
 - b. James 2:2f - Guests in the assembly are expected

F. Tools of preaching

1. Personal example
 - a. Jn 13:15 - Jesus taught be example
 - b. 1 Tim 4:11-12 - Timothy was to be an example
 - c. A poor example can negate the power of the word preached
2. The word of God
 - a. 2 Tim 3:14-17
 - 1) It is inspired or "God-breathed," Heb 4:12
 - 2) It is profitable for teaching
 - 3) It is profitable for reproof
 - 4) It is profitable for correction
 - 5) It is profitable for training in righteousness
 - b. Other teaching about the word
 - 1) Heb 4:12 - It is living and active, discerns the heart
 - 2) James 1:22-24 - It is a mirror, tool for self examination
 - 3) Eph 6:17 - It is the sword of the Spirit
 - a) Spirit's role is transformation, or renewal
 - 1] Tit 3:5 - Renewal by the Spirit
 - 2] 2 Thess 2:13 - Sanctified by the Spirit
 - 3] Gal 5:22-23 - Fruit of the Spirit
 - 4] 2 Cor 3:18 - Transformed to his glory
 - b) Word is the Sword of the Spirit, which means the word is a tool of the Spirit for us
 - 4) 1 Cor 14:24-25 - Word is what convicts unbelievers
 - c. Preaching must be grounded in the word

III. Considerations in giving a lesson

- A. Remember the purposes of preaching and teaching
 1. Remember what it is not
 - a. Not time to fill in the hour
 - b. Not to entertain or amuse
 - c. Not to wow the audience with your ability
 2. Remember what it is
 - a. To teach, correct, and guide

- b. To exhort and encourage
 - c. To build up to maturity and Christian character
 - d. To grow in service and ministry
 - e. To bring the hearers closer to God
- B. Be clear about the purpose of your lesson
 1. Is it to inform, encourage, motivate, etc.?
 2. What specific response(s) should the lesson evoke?
- C. Be sure to apply the lesson to yourself first
 1. God's word applies to you too
 2. The message will come from God's word through your heart
 3. You will be able to be an example
- D. Be humble and prayerful
 1. You are the messenger
 2. You are a servant of God
 3. The exhortations in the message come from the word, not from your perfect life or perfect example
 4. It is appropriate to preach "confessionally," from your shortcomings and weaknesses
- E. Study not only the text, but also "study" the hearers as well
 1. Reflect on what the hearers need
 - a. What are they dealing with?
 - b. What do they need to know?
 - c. What do they need to feel?
 - d. What passages of scripture speak to this?
 2. Do they need to be encouraged? Motivated? Instructed?
 3. You will be able to make the applications more personal
 4. You will be able to fashion sermons that tend to people's needs

IV. Technical considerations

- A. Some various types of lessons
 1. Narrative - Telling a Biblical Story
 - a. Advantages
 - 1) Holds interest of the people
 - 2) Memory
 - b. Disadvantages:
 - 1) Reading contemporary culture into the ancient culture
 - 2) Reading your own opinions or details into the story
 2. Biographical - Based on a Biblical Character

- a. Where Expository and Textual sermons revolve around a passage, and the topical sermon around a topic, a biographical sermon revolves around a Biblical person.
- b. Grows out of the facts concerning a biblical character, which help to give insight to the hearers in their own lives
- c. Advantages:
 - 1) Usually interesting, and therefore more memorable
 - 2) Abstract can be taught against realistic backgrounds
 - 3) Based on the oldest way of conveying truth - the story
 - 4) There are over 100 Bible characters to choose from
- d. Disadvantages:
 - 1) Can read things into a character that are not there
 - 2) Can easily place an ancient character into contemporary times without regard to original setting
 - 3) Out of control imagination
 - 4) May forget that description does not necessarily mean prescription
 - 5) Danger of shifting from theocentric focus to an anthropocentric focus

3. Topical - Exposition of Bible teaching on a subject

- a. Does not begin with a passage, but with a subject or theme
- b. The main points do not come from analyzing a verse or passage, but from analysis of a particular subject.
- c. Advantages:
 - 1) Easy because it requires least amount of research
 - 2) Grants preacher freedom without restriction of a text
 - 3) Can be prepared specifically for a particular audience and setting
- d. Disadvantages:
 - 1) Danger of the preacher spending too much time on a pet topic
 - 2) Greater tendency toward unbiblical sermons (lacks safeguard of extended portions of text)

4. Textual - An exposition of a brief section of scripture

- a. Usually involves one verse, maybe two
- b. Uses words of the text as the points and headings
- c. Advantages:
 - 1) Keeps a preacher in the scriptures
 - 2) Is easy to develop and remember
- d. Disadvantages
 - Increases the chance pulling a scripture out of context

5. Expository - An exposition of an extended block of scripture

- a. "Expository" - to expose or to lay open to light

- b. Typically involves at least a paragraph of scripture
- c. Bulk of preaching material drawn directly from the passage
- d. Outline consists of ideas surrounding the main idea of the text
- e. Advantages:
 - 1) Study of a portion of God's word in depth
 - 2) Less likely to mis-interpret scripture
 - 3) The message is determined by the text itself
 - 4) It eventually produces a Bible taught congregation
- f. Disadvantages:
 - Certain Biblical topics do not lend themselves to this type of sermon

B. How many points?

- 1. A lesson should have one point, which we will call the "proposition"
- 2. If there are multiple points, they should support the main point

C. Structure and organization

- 1. Outlining the sermon
 - a. Purposes
 - 1) Helps to organize your thoughts in brief form
 - 2) Helps show relationship of thoughts
 - 3) Helps remember thoughts
 - 4) Helps to develop thoughts
 - 5) Assures there is logical progression in the lesson
 - 6) Helps the listener to follow along and remember
 - b. Begin with proposition, then main points that support it
 - 1) Some considerations for writing the proposition:
 - a) Should be present tense
 - b) Should be relevant for the hearers
 - c) Should be psychologically appealing:
 - 1] Weak: "All authority rests in the hand of God"
 - 2] Better: "Man should submit to the authority of God"
 - 3] Best: "We fare best when we submit to the authority of God."
 - 2) 2 Types of propositions
 - a) Teaching - Seeks to teach or inform
"Elders are qualified men"
 - b) Sermonic - Calls for a response, aims at persuasion
"You ought to become a Christian"
 - c. Outlining should go from major to minor thoughts
 - 2. Deductive vs. Inductive sermon
 - a. Deductive - Stating your proposition up front and supporting it
 - b. Inductive - Examining the data first, and summing it up into

your proposition at the end

D. Some methods of developing your point(s)

1. Restatement or repetition
 - a. This is the weakest way of developing your point
 - b. Can simply repeat, or restate in different words
2. Quotation
 - a. From a known person or figure
 - b. Aphorisms can be powerful and memorable
 - c. A proverb
 - d. Quotation from another scripture
3. Define
 - a. Authority, using a dictionary
 - b. Classification
 - c. Negation, what it is not
 - d. Etymology
 - e. Other scripture
4. Facts, figures, statistics
 - a. Statistics, studies, surveys give weight to your point
 - b. Cite your source
5. Description or narration
 - Describe and explain the point
6. Compare and contrast
7. Illustration
 - a. Use of analogy
 - b. Personal stories
 - c. Parables
 - d. Biblical narrative that supports the point

E. The *"Basic Pattern"* for Expository lessons (see attached example)

1. Read, pray over, and study the text
 - a. Determine the main point of a particular biblical text
 - b. Determine what the point calls Christians to do
 - c. Restate the point in a way that is directly applicable to yourself
 - d. Reflect and pray in response to the lesson
2. Restate the point into a sermon proposition that would be applicable to the hearers (*example: "We must read the scriptures often"*)
3. Apply an interrogative question to the proposition
 - a. Who?
 - b. Which?
 - c. Where?
 - d. When?
 - e. What?
 - f. How? (*example: Humbly, obediently, prayerfully, etc.*)
 - g. Why? (*example: It is God's instruction, it is trustworthy, etc.*)

4. Draw answers from the interrogative questions from the text with a key word
 - a. Examples of key words: ways, approaches, reasons, responses,
 - b. These will be the main point(s) of your lesson
5. Develop each point with the following
 - a. Clarification - Ensures the point is clear and understood
 - b. Explanation - It is the proving and supporting of the point
 - c. Illustration - Can use parables, allegories, proverbs, stories, songs, quotations, analogies, etc.
 - d. Application - Shows what the hearers should do or how the information will affect them
6. Write a conclusion
 - a. Should state the proposition and purpose of the sermon
 - b. Should not introduce new material or a new point
 - c. Should have an appeal for a response or action
7. Write an introduction
 - a. Should get attention
 - 1) There are many ways to get attention
 - 2) Can use a story, a question, a situation, etc.
 - b. Should create interest

Should answer the question - Why do we need to hear this?
 - c. Should introduce your proposition
 - 1) This will help the hearers to follow your sub points and connect them to the proposition
 - 2) If you are preaching inductively, your proposition will not come till the end after exploring the information

In an inductive sermon, you may begin with a question and end with an answer in the conclusion

V. Delivering the lesson

- A. Volume
 1. For preaching, speak a little above your conversational volume
 2. Don't make them strain to hear you
- B. Emphasis
 1. Speak with passion
 2. Put the emphasis on what needs to be emphasized
- C. Eye Contact
 1. Look at the hearers
 2. Much of what you communicate is through eye contact

3. If you are well prepared, you can concentrate on getting the message into the heart of the hearers rather than getting the message off of your notes
- D. Be active
 1. Use gestures, movement, etc.
 2. Will aid in emphasis
 3. Helps to hold attention
- E. Appear natural
 1. May not feel natural to stand up straight with arms at side, but it will look natural
 2. Practice in front of a mirror to “appear” natural
- F. Be sincere and humble, yet passionate

Exercise: Develop a short lesson or devotional using the following format

Title:

Text:

Proposition:

Interrogative question:

Key word:

:

Main point(s) and/or developing/supporting material

Purpose of the lesson:

(Example of a 30 minute Sermon Organized using the "Basic Pattern")

SERMON OUTLINE: CHRISTIAN RACISM

Introduction:

1. (Attention getter) John drove a school bus, fighting between whites & blacks, John knew new race was needed with no color distinctions, then all could live together harmoniously
2. (Introduce the text) Paul talks about the creation of a new race - Eph 2:11-12
Context: Textual, Problem of Jew and Gentile (Paul was striving for unity)
3. (Proposition) We should overcome any kind of "Racism"
 - a. (Interrogative question): How?
 - b. (Key Word): Remembrances: Remember our past, our position, and our purpose

I. (First point) By remembering our past

- A. (Clarification) We gentiles are reminded of our previous condition before Christ came
- B. (Explanation) Lets take a closer look at the past:
 1. Historical differences between Jew and Gentile - Animosity, unclean
 - a. Rabbi said God made Gentiles to fuel the fires of Gehenna
 - b. Jew could not give help to a Gentile woman giving birth
 - c. Jew married a Gentile, family would hold a funeral
 2. Text says you were separate from Christ, strangers, no hope, without God
 3. Before Jesus came, we had literally nothing!
- C. (Illustration) Russians had something to smile about (real faith) They knew how to appreciate God's grace. Before they had nothing, now they have it all
- D. (Application) This life can be described in one word - alienation
 1. World is not a one-for-all and all-for-one place - all kinds of strife
 2. Even our churches sometimes have unhealthy boundaries, are you ready to tear them down?
 3. Transition: That's the way things were, that was then, this is now . . .(v.13 - 18)

II. (Second point) By remembering our position

- A. (Clarification) We were alienated, BUT now have been brought near IN CHRIST
- B. (Explanation) How have we been brought near in Christ?
 1. In Christ - "He himself" is our peace (v.14)
 - a. We didn't make the peace, Jesus brought peace between us and God
 - b. Notice, that Jesus didn't make peace, but he IS the peace
 - c. Jesus was the "payment" to make amends, we didn't initiate it.
 2. Broke down the dividing wall
 - a. There were signs around the temple to Gentiles that if any of them entered, they would be killed
 - b. Again, this wasn't something we did, Jesus did it.
 3. Real peace (v.15) is to abolish the emnity, which came from the law
- C. (Illustration) Lived in Korea, there was supposed "peace"
 1. But there was the wall DMZ, anyone that got too close could get shot by a guard
 2. In reality, that was not peace, when the walls come down, then there will be peace
- D. (Application) The problem is that God has broken down walls, we start building new ones
 1. God united the two into one new MAN, that is our new POSITION
 2. Walls must come down. What walls do we have here in our church?
 3. If you remember your position but forget your purpose, there still can be problems. Therefore, we also need to:

III. (Third point) By remembering our purpose

- A. (Clarification) v.19-22 - We are reminded that we are God's household, a holy temple
- B. (Explanation) Aspects of us as a building
 - 1. Built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets
 - a. They prophesied of a King, who would build his Kingdom
 - b. Apostles spoke of Jesus, the foundation
 - c. Paul taught that Jesus was the foundation in I Cor 3:11
 - 2. Christ as the cornerstone - Begins with Christ, can only exist in Christ

This is not our church, but the church of CHRIST
 - 3. We are being built and FITTED TOGETHER in Him
 - a. Fitting together can only take place in Him
 - b. How are we going to be fitted together?
 - c. Stones have to be cut
 - d. May have to cut away some of our petty differences
- C. (Illustration) Buildings reflect aspirations of the designers
 - 1. Take for example the buildings in Washington D.C.
 - a. These buildings had a lot of thought in their design
 - b. They were not thrown together
 - c. They were designed to evoke respect and honor
 - 2. The Temple in Jerusalem evoked respect and honor
 - a. God gave very specific instructions on it
 - b. They were meticulously followed
- D. (Application) What do we reflect in us?
 - 1. God does not throw together stones (he doesn't make junk)
 - 2. People used to go to Jerusalem to see the temple, and like the disciples of Jesus would stand in awe when they saw it
 - 3. We are God's temple today, what do they see in us?
 - 4. Is it clear, by looking at the "building" what its purpose is?
 - 5. Do we see God living in his temple? Or a man made building?

Conclusion:

- 1. (Contextualize) May not have a Jew-Gentile problem, but - Is the wall still up to the "outsiders"
 - a. I Cor 12:22-25 - Who are the unseemly? Who is he talking about?
 - b. It's not the intellectual, theologians, those with nice clothes, looks, popularity,
 - c. It's the simple minded, poor, of ill-repute, sickly, etc.
 - d. Show more honor to those who lack, all have the SAME care for each other without distinctions
- 2. (Summary) We need to remember:
 - a. Our 1) Past 2) Position 3) Purpose
 - b. Why? Because you are here not because you are better, but because Jesus brought you here!
- 3. (Application and call to action) Whatever the walls of differences, they come down today!
 - a. If it is a wall from differing social status, it comes down!
 - b. A wall from North South, it comes down
 - c. A wall from being brought up in church or not, it comes down!
 - d. A wall from growing up in this town, or not, it comes down!
 - e. A wall from who knows more Bible or not, it comes down!
 - f. A wall from more popular or not, it comes down!
- 4. A church with walls that Christ has not built cannot be the church of Christ