



Starting Points *for* Teachers *and* Preachers

How to develop and deliver a Bible message

Steven Harness

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Bible teaching and preaching. It is something I have been doing since 1998. That year as a recent High School graduate, Chester Smith and Walter Ruark asked me to teach their Sunday School class for the summer. These long-term Bible educators had taught me when I was in 7th and 8th grade. One was a Math professor in a local college. The seventh and eighth-grade boys received instruction from an 18-year-old each Sunday for about 14 weeks that year. During the workweek, I worked as a land surveyor, plotting maps, and putting down property markers for highways and subdevelopments. In the evenings, after work, at the apartment supplied by my employer, I would prepare for the Sunday School lessons. If nothing else, I'm sure the students picked up some excitement for Jesus, His Word, and His church. I'm not sure if the lessons were effective, biblically accurate, or even illustrated effectively. But it worked. I was blessed to be mentored and to have the opportunity.

The goal of all Bible teaching and preaching is to make disciples. In the last words Jesus spoke (before ascending up to Heaven) He talked about teaching and making disciples in Matthew 28:18-20, “And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen.”¹ These words form a terrific model for ministry and this model must be important to the Lord.

Disciple making can be conducted in personal evangelism, in a small group, a classroom, or a large church setting. Teachers and preachers are part of God’s disciple-making plan. “Jesus had no plan B. the disciples were the

¹ *The Holy Bible: King James Version*. (2009). (Electronic Edition of the 1900 Authorized Version., Mt 28:18–20). Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

plan. He left the message in their hands.”² We hold the message of God in our hands today! We are called to make modern-day disciples.

Teachers and preachers have much in common. Both are vital in church life and Christian spiritual formation. The development and delivery of lessons and messages are remarkably similar, and one can definitely learn from the other in method, development, and delivery. While teaching is generally known as the transfer of information, preaching goes further and seeks to affect the heart. Both teachers and preachers declare the Bible. 2 Timothy 3:16–17 proposes, “All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” One explanation I heard of this passage years ago from Dr. Jim Schettler suggests that

² Rainer, Tom. Geiger, Eric. *Simple Church*, Page 160.

“doctrine is what is right, reproof reveals what is wrong, correction says how to make it right, and instruction in righteousness tells how to keep it right.” Christian growth and spiritual maturation and formation are possible with preachers and teachers being an important part of this developmental process. All this of course revolves around the Scriptures and relies upon the Holy Spirit of God.³

What is preaching in contrast to teaching? Author Tony Merida explains: “Some think that one has gone from teaching to preaching when the speaker starts yelling! But I think the difference has more to do with the content than with volume. The act of preaching involves three characteristics that are not always present in the act of teaching: exhortation, evangelism, and exultation.”⁴ All good preaching must include some teaching for without understanding the context of the

³ John 14:26, But the Comforter, *which is* the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

⁴ Merida, Tony. *The Christ Centered Expositor*, Page 10.

passage and the background of the text, the preaching will be shallow and superficial, and may even contain errors in its explanation.

The practices, skills, and goals covered in this book are given to equip a teacher and preacher (or aspiring teacher/preacher) with a few basic starting points to get begin a Bible teaching and preaching ministry. These are “starting points” for lectern or pulpit ministry.

Two basic pulpit ministry terms must be defined and understood by the Bible student and Bible communicator:

- Hermeneutics is “the study of principles and methods of interpretation.”⁵ Every person has some method of interpretation, by default. There are many helpful books and resources available that instruct in proper Biblical interpretation and this paper will cover some of that out of necessity. One cannot truly and accurately

⁵ Kaiser, Walter. Silva, Moises. An Introduction to Biblical Hermeneutics. Page 285

teach or preach what he does not know or properly understand.

- Homiletics “may be defined as the science of preparation and delivering a discourse based on Scripture.”⁶ Many books have been written concerning how to deliver Bible messages. Please see the reference page at the end of this paper for a list of recommended books. Much of this paper will concern the how-to’s of Bible lesson preparation and delivery.

Change is a big part of the Christian life; Death to life. Sin to Righteousness. Condemnation to justification. Jesus changes us. The Word of God Changes us. We are to be conformed into the image of Jesus. This is change. The Bible teacher and preacher deliver Bible messages seeking to assist the student in change. “The best teachers weave together competing elements-content and communication, justice and

⁶ Braudis, John. On the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons, page 11.

grace, control and nurture, challenge and support-in order to help learners grow.”⁷ The instruction of Bible teachers and preachers has the potential to shape the mind of the student and listener. The Bible term for “shaping the mind” is “Noutheteo” or “Admonish.”⁸ Colossians 3:16 directs us, “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.” Notice the shaping of the mind is possible because of the Word of Christ.

Teachers and preachers have such an important job. It is a high calling from God! Edward Rowell in “Reaching with Spiritual Passion” emphatically declares the imperative of our Bible lessons and messages. Consider:

1. In one sentence, what is this sermon about?

⁷ Yount, William. *Created to Learn*, Page 1.

⁸ Clark, Robert. Johnson, Lin. Sloat, Allyn. *Christian Education Foundations for the Future*, Page 39.

2. What theological category would this fit under? (Is it man-centric or God-centric?)
3. What do I want My listeners to know?
4. What do I want them to do?
5. What do I want them to become?
6. How does this sermon fit with the larger vision?⁹
(What are the long-term goals?)

These are great questions to ask and when coupled with Merida’s statement on faithfulness in the pulpit, we begin our journey to Bible teaching and preaching. “Faithfulness in the pulpit is all about the main things, the plain things, and the same things.¹⁰” This statement is a great summary goal for all Bible communicators. The following pages will cover five starting points for a Bible teacher and preacher. They are: Know the Big Story, Know Your Audience, Build a Bridge,

⁹ Rowell, Edward. *Preaching with Spiritual Passion*, Pages 84-86.

¹⁰ Merida, Tony. *The Christ Centered Expositor*, Page 237.

Develop Your Message, and Deliver Your Message. Here we go...

Know the Big Story.

Read the Scriptures. Christians should be readers of the Holy Bible. “When a preacher confesses that he has nothing to preach, he is really confessing that he has stopped reading the Bible.”¹¹ There is always something to preach. Every Christian, preacher, or teacher should be actively and consistently reading the Holy Scriptures. “To change people’s lives deeply through the Word, the preacher’s life has to be transformed by the Word.”¹² Become a student of the Bible, letting it change you to become more like Jesus. It has been accurately said, “the best teachers are the best students.” Read the Bible. Be a good student of the Bible.

¹¹ Braudis, John. *On the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*, Page 316.

¹² Scazzero, Peter. *Sermon Preparation*, Page 33.

Choose Your Text. The whole Bible cannot be preached in one session. Pick 1-10 verses if teaching a New Testament passage. Choose 1-20 verses if preaching in the Old Testament. More verses than this may provide too much information to process. Think of a drinking fountain versus a fire hydrant. We drink water from the drinking fountain. The fire hydrant would blow a person away! The human mind can only handle a limited amount of information at a time to be productive and to affect life change. Narrative passages may be longer as they are in story form and must be considered in their whole form.

Study the Scriptures. Paul told young preacher Timothy to “study” in 2 Timothy 2:15.¹³ Study (σπουδάζω) is a wonderful educational term meaning, “to *use speed*, i.e. to *make effort, be prompt or earnest*.”¹⁴ The study requires diligence and much effort. While we do not study to “get it

¹³ Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. 2 Timothy 2:15.

¹⁴ Strong, J. (2020). *Strong's Talking Greek and Hebrew Dictionary*. WORDsearch.

over with” we do study with promptness. It implies that we study with “imperative.” A Bible teacher or preacher must study the Scripture.

The archaic and lesser-known terms of Scripture must be defined with modern, understandable terms. Sometimes those with a religious background may even have different definitions than what the Bible term really means, so definitions should always be shared. The background of the text must be explored. The events and circumstances should be understood in their context with a historically accurate, grammatically proper understanding. “All the while, it must be remembered that the Bible was not given to reveal the lives of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, but to reveal the hand of God in the lives of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; not as a revelation of Mary and Martha, and Lazarus, but as a revelation of the

Savoir of Mary and Martha and Lazarus.”¹⁵ All the Bible points to Jesus, the Savoir of the World!

There are several considerations in the study of Scripture, starting with the “Big Story.” The Big Story is how this chosen text fits in the overall plot of the entire Bible. What is the “Big Picture?” is another way to ask this question. From which book of the Bible is your text? Who was the human writer? What is his background? What is the primary theme of the book? What are the key verses in the passage? What are the dates and events in the historical timeline of this passage? Is the passage itself or events in the passage referenced in other passages of Scripture? What cultural contexts need to be explained? What form of literature is the text written in?

Exegesis is the academic and scholarly survey and study of the chosen text. A conscientious Bible student will

¹⁵ Koller, Charles. *How to Preach Without Notes*, Page 32.

study with Exegetics in mind. “Scholars call the process of excavating the original meaning of a passage *exegesis*. Each of us is a product of the time and culture in which we live, and as such, we bring certain biases to our reading of Scripture.... Exegesis says, ‘Before you can hear it with your ears, hear it with theirs. ‘Before you can understand it today, understand it back then.’”¹⁶ Put yourself in the sandals of those who experienced or heard the original message of the passage.

The concept of Hermeneutics comes into play here. Hermeneutics is impacted by a person’s background, education, experience, and upbringing. Preconceived ideas can get in the way of proper Biblical hermeneutics. For example: “Corn” in the Bible is not the American yellow or white kernels or “Corn on the Cob” we generally think of. Corn in Bible times is referring to “grain” and for the most part, that was wheat. “Corn” is used in the KJV to denote grain,

¹⁶ Wilken, Jen. *Women of the Word*, Page 67.

especially wheat. Maize, the plant is known in America as corn, was unknown in the Middle East in biblical times.¹⁷ This misunderstanding would greatly change how a passage is understood and interpreted.

Effective Bible study must be guided by Bible Principles. These hermeneutically derived ideas are theologically helpful to properly study the Scriptures.

1. Read the Bible with an attitude of prayer.
2. Remember that context is king.
3. Look for the historical meaning first.
4. Identify the type of literature in which the verse is found.
5. Remember that the whole Bible focuses on God's redemptive work in Jesus.
6. Interpret Scripture with Scripture.

¹⁷ Elwell, W. A., & Beitzel, B. J. (1988). "Corn". In *Baker encyclopedia of the Bible* (Vol. 1, p. 525). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House.

7. Because the Bible is a unified testimony, always look for theological themes in the selected passage.¹⁸

As part of this pre-message development and thorough study, the Holy Spirit will reveal to you the “Main Point of the Text (MPT).” The MPT is “a past tense statement about what the text meant in its historical context.”¹⁹ For example, what did Jonah’s preaching mean to the Ninevites? We need to know. How did the Hebrews understand the Law of Moses? How did the Pharisees add to the Law of Moses? These are examples that can be summarized into one main point following a specific and thorough study of the text.

Share the backstory. History and ancient culture studies are imperative information to correctly understanding the text of Scripture. This information helps the modern learner better comprehend the language and setting of the Bible to make correct application to today.

¹⁸ Merida, Tony. *The Christ Centered Expositor*, Pages 134-136.

¹⁹ Merida, Tony. *The Christ Centered Expositor*, Pages 152.

Even the art of preaching has a back story. “Christian preaching began in a Jewish context. Its first preachers and audiences, its background and spiritual affinities, were Jewish.”²⁰ Teaching itself has been around for years! “The ancient orators asked and answered three questions: ‘What is it?’ ‘Why would I want it?’ and ‘How do I get it?’ Later these questions were flattened to the formula “tell them what you’re going to tell them, tell them, then tell them what you told them.”²¹

Three hundred years after the resurrection, Augustine wrote about teaching in his “On Christian Rhetoric.” In it, “he taught that the speaker should seek to teach, please, and persuade. According to Augustine, the manner of delivery should be related to the content that is being delivered.”²²

²⁰ Braudis, John. *On the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*, Page 9.

²¹ Robinson, Haddon. Robinson, Torrey. *It's All in How You Tell It*, Page 11.

²² Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, trans. DW Robertson. Cited by Merrida, Tony. *The Christ Centered Expositor*, Pages 212-213.

Remain committed to studying and delivering what the text is actually saying. Avoid “rabbit trails” and controversial preferences. Pastor Timothy was instructed by Paul in 2 Timothy 2:16 to, “Shun profane *and* vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness.” Like Merida’s statement: “Faithfulness in the pulpit is all about the main things, the plain things, and the same things.”²³ The Bible is the main thing! Proper study will show the Bible student the plain thing. Good preaching will review and reinforce the same things over and over again.

Know Your Audience.

Knowing to whom you are speaking, and teaching will also increase your effectiveness and will also affect how you prepare for the lesson. What is the age or life stage of your

²³ Merida, Tony. *The Christ Centered Expositor*, Page 237.

audience? What do they want to know? What do they need to know? Warren Wiersbe suggests:

“‘So what?’ imagine your congregation before you – the executive who just lost his job, the teenager struggling against peer pressure, the young mother worried about her child’s illness, the single parent trying to balance the budget, and just about everybody fighting temptation and some besetting sin- and see if what you’re planning to share with them will mean anything to them. Imagine yourself in their particular situation, responding to what you are saying. Anticipate their objections, their misunderstandings of your words, their hidden defenses, and then prepare for them.”²⁴

²⁴ Wiersbe, Warren. *Teaching and Preaching with imagination*, Page 30.

Put yourself in the shoes of your congregation or class. In your mind, travel a few miles with them when preparing and delivering your message. Anticipate their concerns or questions.

How do people learn? “Bloom's Taxonomy” is a helpful assessment for understanding how people learn. “Bloom developed a taxonomy of learning that had three classifications. He called these classifications ‘domains’ of learning. Each domain is a category that describes a type of learning that human beings can achieve. The first domain he identified was the cognitive, or thinking, domain. The second was the affective or emotive domain. And the third he called the psycho-motor, or behavioral, domain.”²⁵ In Acts 2 we have Peter’s recorded message he delivered on the Day of Pentecost. It was a memorable day with a powerful spirit-filled message. God shows up. Lives were changed. After the message, the

²⁵ Richards, Lawrence. Bredfeldt, Gary. *Creative Bible Teaching*, Page 136.

people respond in Acts 2:37, “Now when they heard *this*, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men, *and* brethren, what shall we do?” Their mind, heart, and actions were changed.

The cognitive, affective, and behavioral aspects of the people were each impacted by the message Peter delivered. From Acts 2:37 we gain insight as to how preaching and teaching can be used by the Holy Spirit to convict, challenge, and change a person’s thinking, heart/love, and actions. “Not only did Peter’s teaching affect learning on the cognitive and affective domains, but it also motivated a behavioral response. So, we have in this verse all three kinds of potential learning – cognitive, affective, and behavioral.”²⁶

²⁶ Richards, Lawrence. Bredfeldt, Gary. *Creative Bible Teaching*, Page 136.

Dr. Howards Hendricks says that “Good teaching – and true education – consists simply of a series of teachable moments.”²⁷ He also offers the following goals for teaching:

1. “Teach people how to think.” Not what to think so much as how to think. Thinking.
2. “Teach people how to learn.” Learning is intended to be perpetual throughout our lifetime. Loving.
3. “Teach people how to work.”²⁸ This is the idea of not only knowing something but letting that knowledge affect what one does. Doing.

Suggestions for Teaching Teenagers from Dr. Johnny Derouen may be a help. Youth learn best:

- “From mature adults who provide them “living videos” for modeling. Effective adult models have a positive attitude toward youth, are willing to develop

²⁷ Hendricks, Howard. *Teaching to Change Lives*, Page 44.

²⁸ Hendricks, Howard. *Teaching to Change Lives*, Page 43-47.

relationships with them, listen well, and reflect a vibrant walk with God.

- When truth meets their needs.
- When specific objectives are met.
- When they are properly prepared through learning readiness activities.
- In an atmosphere of love, trust, and acceptance.
- When they are actively involved with questions, discussion, and analysis.
- When a variety of learning activities are employed.
- When their minds are engaged in higher-level thinking.”²⁹

Adults learn best in the following ways adapted from educator Malcolm Knowles:

- **The Need to Know.** Adults need to know why they need to learn something before undertaking to learn it.

²⁹ Yount, William. *Created to Learn*, Page 107.

- **Learner Self-Concept.** Adults need to be responsible for their own decisions and treated as capable of self-direction.
- **Role of Learners. Experience.** Adult learners have a variety of experiences of life, which represent the richest resource for learning.
- **Readiness to Learn.** Adult learners are ready to learn those things they need to know in order to cope effectively with life situations.
- **Orientation to Learn.** Adults are motivated to learn to the extent that they perceive that it will help them perform tasks they confront in their life situations.³⁰

Answer Common Questions. The Bible is full of life-transforming information that can affect the heart and hands of each person. There are shared questions humanity searches for answers to. Some of these questions are suggested by Dr. John

³⁰ Yount, William. *Created to Learn*, Page 107.

Stott: “What is the purpose of our existence? Has life any significance? Where did I come from and where am I going to be? What does it mean to be a human being and how do humans differ from animals? What is freedom and how can I experience personal liberation? Why the painful tension between what I am and what I long to be?”³¹

What is the audience feeling? When it comes to helping learners feel, respond, and value your teaching, educator William Yount instructs with several aspects to focus on. They are:

- Focus on personal experiences more than wooden stories.
- Focus on acceptance more than judgment (We do not want to nurture a carping, censorious spirit, like the Pharisees).

³¹ Stott, John. *Between Two Worlds*, Page 151.

- Focus on appropriate humor more than feigned solemnity.
- Focus on trust more than guilt.³²

Knowing your audience will greatly impact how the Bible preacher develops and delivers his message. The best communicators know who they are talking with and how to talk with them in a way they will understand. Talking “with” instead of talking “to” is more well-received by the audience or class.

Build a Bridge.

John Stott in his book, “Between Two Worlds” declares, “Biblical and theological studies do not by themselves make for good preaching. They are indispensable. But unless they are supplemented by contemporary studies,

³² Yount, William. *Created to Learn*, Pages 355-358.

they can keep us disastrously isolated on one side of the cultural chasm.”³³ This is such an important truth to grasp in the development and direction of the sermon.

Imagine the Biblical era being located on one side of a wide and deep river, and now envision our modern era on the opposite side of the same river. Bible characters are on one side of the river and you and I are on the other side. How do we know what is going on over there? How can we understand the experiences those on the other side have experienced? We need a bridge. The Bible teacher is a bridge-builder spanning both time, culture, and language. The effective teacher will help us see the ancient world through the eyes of Moses, Sampson, and David. We will smell the salty air and feel the seasickness of traveling in a ship with Paul and feel the relational stress and pressure of Peter and James meeting to discuss monumental doctrinal issues in Jerusalem. Then we

³³ Stott, John. *Between Two Worlds*, Page 191.

will discover and relate to what these characters' stories, examples, and teachings mean for us today.

Build a bridge connecting ancient man to modern man. Cross the river of time, space, and a distant location to the present day and time. The Bible is meaningful and relevant, and the preacher must convey this reality with great enthusiasm. Much of the bridge-building is erected in the outlining of the message.

Develop Your Message.

Start with the Main Point. The (MPT) Main Point of the Text is what you discovered in your study as previously discussed. Taking the main point of the text, the teacher or preacher must then develop the “main point of the sermon,” (MPS).³⁴ For years, I have used the term “proposition.” I still

³⁴ Merida, Tony. *The Christ Centered Expositor*, Page 152.

type this term on my notes. Some may call it the “contention.” The main point of the sermon is the main theme the preacher will use to develop all other points in his message. The MPS or Proposition is defined as “a simple declaration of the subject which the preacher proposes to discuss, develop, prove, or explain in the discourse. In other words, it is a statement of the main spiritual lesson or timeless truth in the sermon reduced to one declarative sentence.”³⁵

The main point of the sermon should be a simple, yet profound and memorable statement upon which the rest of the message is built. In “Communicating for Change,” Andy Stanley suggests having one main point and then several supporting statements all about that one main point. It appears to me that this is another way to say, have a proposition and then build your message around the proposition. Stanley still uses an outline and calls it a “map.” To develop one main

³⁵ Braga, James. *How to Prepare Bible Messages*, Page 113.

point for the message he says, “Dig until you find it. Build everything around it. Make it stick.”³⁶ This is good preaching advice.

Sometimes the MPS serves well as the title of your sermon. While some start with the title, it is perhaps best to wait to give your message a title after your study, after the main point of the text and the main point of the body of the sermon has been developed.

Sometimes the most effective proposition or main point is a simple statement in sentence form. “People are impacted by statements that stick. You need a sticky statement. Take time to reduce your one point to one sticky statement. It doesn’t need to be cute. It doesn’t have to rhyme. But it should be short and memorable. Your statement is your anchor. It is

³⁶ Stanley, Andy. *Communicating for Change*, Page 106.

what holds the message together and keeps it from drifting off course. This will be what people remember.”³⁷

Sketch an Outline. The outline is the basic overview of the passage that supports the Main Point of the Sermon. This is part of the art and science of Homiletics. A message outline may include the historical and textual information from your earlier study to “set the stage” for the rest of the message. The body of your outline then offers clear support for the main point of the sermon (MPS).

After saying that: “a good outline will also make the message memorable.”³⁸ Dr. Tom Ferrell goes on to offer the following points for creating points in a message:

1. The outlines must be scriptural.
2. It must be simple.
3. It must be symmetrical.

³⁷ Stanley, Andy. *Communicating for Change*, Page 111.

³⁸ Ferrell, Tom. *Preaching That Pleases God*, Page 116.

4. It must be sequential.³⁹

While an important tool for the preacher, the outline should not get in the way of communicating the Bible and truly teaching the student. Ferrell continues, “Never allow the outline to distract from the message by being too noticeable.” The outline should support the main point in every possible way.

**SAMPLE MESSAGE TITLE, PROPOSITION (MAIN POINT),
AND OUTLINE (SUPPORTING POINTS):**

Text: James 5:13-18

Title: “Clean Praying”

Proposition: *You Got to Be Clean For God
to Answer Your Prayers.*

Become Clean in Relationships.

Become Clean in Body.

Become Clean in Conscience/Mind.

Conclusion:

³⁹ Ferrell, Tom. *Preaching That Pleases God*, Pages 116-117.

Include Stories. Use stories when possible as illustrations to convey truth into the hearer's heart. Stories are powerful and effective as Hadden Robinson and Torrey Robinson write:

- People remember good stories.
- We live in a story culture.
- Stories enable listeners to experience the truth of God in their lives.
- Stories paint mental pictures that influence that way people think.
- Stories reflect the way people experience life.⁴⁰

Craft an Introduction and Conclusion. Introductions and conclusions are most effective when they complement each other and appear connected. Think of the introduction as the start of an airplane ride. The conclusion is the landing. In between – the flight – is the body of your message. The

⁴⁰ Robinson, Haddon. Robinson, Torrey. *It's All in How You Tell It*, Page 21.

introduction is where the audience's attention is gained. The conclusion is where the heart of each listener is touched to move into action following the message that was delivered. Introductions and conclusions are one of the last steps in message preparation.

Possible introductions include the following as described by MacArthur:

1. Current statistics which highlight a contemporary problem to be addressed in the message.
2. Historical illustrations that serve to acquaint listeners with the message theme.
3. Humor.
4. Current events that relate to the message.
5. Careful reading of the biblical text from which the message comes.
6. Real-life stories.
7. Biographical illustrations.

8. Striking questions.
9. Rhetorical questions directed to the audience.
10. Personal experiences of the preacher.
11. References to current, well-known books.
12. Life-related problems for which biblical solutions will be forthcoming.
13. Contemporary confusion over biblical teaching to which the preacher will bring correction and clarity.
14. Highly interesting personal correspondence.
15. Appropriate prayer.
16. Fictional stories.
17. Modern-day parables.
18. Personal testimony.
19. Hymns related to the message.
20. Asking an audience for their response to a hypothetical situation.⁴¹

⁴¹ MacArthur, John. *Rediscovering Expository Preaching*, Pages 244-245.

Come in for a Landing. Reach your destination at the end of the message and assure the audience that you have landed. Make sure the people are still with you. Again, it will help the listener if the conclusion is connected in some way to the introduction. These seven basic appeals from Charles Koller will help with message application and conclusion.

1. The appeal to altruism, a benevolent regard for the interest of others.
2. The appeal aspiration, the universal hunger for spiritual happiness – the sense of completeness.
3. The appeal to curiosity, susceptibility to that which appear novel, unfamiliar, or mysterious.
4. The appeal to duty, the driving urge to do a thing because it is right or to refrain from a thing because it is wrong.
5. The appeal to fear.
6. The appeal to love.

7. The appeal to reason.⁴²

Articulate a Message Title. Give your message an interesting, honest, and exciting title. It should garner attention. It should be honest. For example, a message about personal evangelism would probably not be titled “How to Buy a New Car.” The title should have something to do with the message itself. The title should also be exciting or appealing. People should want to listen to a message after the title is given. MacArthur relates, “The title is what provides a sermon with its ‘atmosphere.’ One that measures up to the content of the message in thought and form is definitely beneficial.”⁴³

Deliver the Message.

The Apostle Paul instructs young preacher Timothy in 2 Timothy 4:2, “Preach the word; be instant in season, out of

⁴² Koller, Charles, *How to Preach Without Notes*, Pages 109-112.

⁴³ MacArthur, John. *Rediscovering Expository Preaching*, Page 241.

season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.” Be ready to preach and teach the Word of God. Ferrell says, “The biblical preacher argues for both faith in God and faithfulness to God.”⁴⁴ The preacher’s delivery style and deportment is very important.

During the message preparation process, the Bible preacher relies on the Holy Spirit’s guidance. He also needs the Holy Spirit’s help when delivering the message. Dr. John Goetsch writes, “We need knowledge to know ‘what’ to preach, and wisdom to know ‘how,’ but oh, how we need utterance that will ‘enable’ us to do so with power and freedom.”⁴⁵

When speaking of the Armor of God, the Apostle Paul asks the members of the Ephesus church to pray for him and the delivery of his message. Ephesians 6:18–20 says, “Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and

⁴⁴ Ferrell, Tom. *Preaching That Pleases God*, Page 125.

⁴⁵ Goetsch, John. *Homiletics From the Heart*, Page 132.

watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.” Pray. Ask the Lord to help you “speak as you ought to speak” when teaching or preaching.

Dr. Howard Hendricks summarizes and personalizes Bloom's Taxonomy and the Domains of Learning as found in Acts 2:37 by saying, “All communication has three essential components: intellect, emotion, and volition – in other words, thoughts, feeling and action.”⁴⁶ When the preacher and teacher know something, he can feel it more deeply and then do it more readily. He can then share this more convincingly and honestly with his audience. Part of the task of the preachers is to convey this passion for the Bible and the main point in the

⁴⁶ Hendricks, Howard. *Teaching to Change Lives*, Page 70.

delivery of his message. Know, show, and do. Then repeat for each lesson or message.

Demonstrate Passion. Convey to your students or audience authenticity and faith. For example, “Aristotle provided a useful way for analyzing persuasive messages. He listed three essentials: logos, pathos, and ethos. Logos refers to the logic and the content of the sermon, which is the gospel contained in the Scriptures. Pathos refers to the emotion or passion of the sermon that the speaker relates to the hearers. Effective preachers display intensity and communicate importance. Ethos means the character and credibility of the speaker. A preacher should persuade with his life and his message.”⁴⁷ Be real. Relate truth. Be authentic.

Check Your Attitude. How do you come across in your teaching disposition? What emotion or feeling do the students or the congregation sense from the teacher/preacher? “While it

⁴⁷ Merida, Tony. *The Christ Centered Expositor*, Pages 223.

is true that we should ‘earnestly contend for the faith,’ it is not necessary for us to be contentious.”⁴⁸

Check Your Body Language. Does it appear that you are engaged and excited to be in class or are you tired, appear sleepy, or are sloppy with your hand motions? It is hard for one to teach with his eyes closed!

Check Your Volume. Learners and those in the audience should be able to hear but should still be able to hear after you are finished! Do not be too soft or too loud. Do sound checks before the service or class if using a microphone.

Check Your Pace. Change up the rate of words per minute. Use pauses for dramatic effect. Avoid a monotonous, boring pace. Be engaging. Avoid rushing or feeling like you are in a hurry. People pick up on that. “When a communicator rushes through the material it sends a very specific message: I am more concerned about covering my material than I am

⁴⁸ Braga, James. *How to Prepare Bible Messages*, Page 177.

about communicating with my audience. The emotional message it sends is, I am more concerned about ME than YOU.”⁴⁹

Be Practical. Remember to unpack 2 Timothy 3:16–17 in each message. Notice the parentheticals in this verse: “All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine (What’s Right), for reproof (What’s Wrong), for correction (How to Make it Right), for instruction in righteousness (How to Keep it Right): That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”

Conclusion.

Spiritual growth and spiritual formation are possible and Bible teachers and preachers are an important part of this process! The study of the Scriptures and the preaching of Bible

⁴⁹ Stanley, Andy. *Communicating for Change*, Page 123.

messages will never be exhausted. There are so many areas in which God wants us to grow. These starting points will give a Bible communicator a great footing to start his journey into preaching and teaching. Knowing the Big Story, Knowing Your Audience, Building a Bridge, Developing Your Message, and Delivering Your Message is a firm foundation on which to begin preaching. One may have a weekly class or congregation to whom he is preaching and teaching. One may have the opportunity on special occasions. No matter the case, the ideas of this book may help as you prepare. In an adaption of Merida's statement we conclude:

- Keep the main things the main things.
- Keep the plain things the plain things.
- Keep sharing the same things.

Repeat. Each. Time.

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Notes / Ideas



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