

LIFT

Ministry Group October Resource

Preaching Pointers

Here are a few pointers collected from several sources that can help you when you are preaching:

Be passionate: Your passion should come through in your delivery. If you are not passionate about what you are preaching, your audience certainly will not. ⁽¹⁾

Be clear: Organize your thoughts and communicate ideas clearly. Avoid words that your congregation is not accustomed to hearing. ⁽²⁾

Be relevant: Connect the Bible to the lives of your listeners. Application is key. People want to know how what you are preaching can be applied to their daily life. Be deliberate about making this connection for them. ⁽³⁾

Be engaging: Use stories, questions, or problems that relate to your audience. Don't be afraid to use illustrations, but make sure they drive home the main point of your message. ⁽⁴⁾

⁽¹⁾ <https://www.ministrymatters.com/all/entry/7991/6-keys-to-great-preaching#:~:text=You must be passionate about,will forget what you did.>

⁽²⁾ <https://biblicalspiritualitypress.org/2014/03/06/15-pointers-for-preachers/>

⁽³⁾ <https://www.luthersem.edu/story/2003/07/14/seven-marks-of-a-good-sermon/#:~:text=In brief, a good sermon,toward life in God's world.>

⁽⁴⁾ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=dizT41BKgwU&t=283>



Shop Talk:

Pulpit Ministry

Although preaching is a significant part of a minister's responsibilities, pulpit ministry encompasses far more than the delivery of a sermon. Let's take a look at five components of effective pulpit ministry: Prayer, Study, Knowing Your Audience, Delivery, and Post-Care (altar ministry).

Prayer: Effective pulpit ministry is built on a foundation of prayer. St. Augustine in his book, *On Christian Teaching*, reflects on a minister's responsibilities before undertaking the task of preaching:

*"As the hour of his address approaches, before he opens his trusting lips he should lift his thirsting soul to God so that he may utter what he has drunk in and pour out what has filled him."*¹

Discussion: How much time do you spend in prayer personally and in preparation for a sermon?

Study: Rightly dividing truth takes time. Effective pulpit ministry requires a commitment to studying God's Word. Dave Harvey writing for the Gospel Coalition writes: "Sermon preparation, expository or otherwise, defies simple calculations. The time allotted to develop sermons becomes a blending of proficiency and providence, of work and wonder; we must live in the tension between our well-ordered rhythms and variables not entirely controllable."

Discussion: What does sermon preparation look like for you? How much time do you spend in study? What methods do you use that might help someone in the group make the most of their time studying?

"Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."-2 Timothy 2:15

Preaching Pointers (Cont.)

Be faithful: Be faithful to the text you've announced. Don't take rabbit trails that take you away from the truth in the text or the main point you are trying to communicate. ⁽⁵⁾

Be prayerful: Pray before, during, and after you preach. It is important that you stay connected to your source throughout the sermon delivery process. ⁽⁶⁾

Be Christ-centered: Preach with the goal of glorifying God. We are not in the business of self-help, but rather our messages should point people to Christ. Preach in such a way that Jesus is glorified. ⁽⁷⁾

Be exemplary: Live what you preach. If your life doesn't reflect the truth that you are preaching, your message will lack credibility and power. If the message hasn't transformed your life, how can we claim that it will transform our listeners. ⁽⁸⁾

Be prepared: Be ready to preach in any season. Many of Jesus' encounters with those who were lost, sick and living in bondage happened as he was traveling from one place to another. Your pulpit ministry is not limited to Sunday morning at the church. Having a command of scripture allows us to be ready in any circumstance to share the hope that we have with others. ⁽⁹⁾

⁽⁵⁾ <https://biblicalspiritualitypress.org/2014/03/06/15-pointers-for-preachers/>

⁽⁶⁾ <https://biblicalspiritualitypress.org/2014/03/06/15-pointers-for-preachers/>

⁽⁷⁾ <https://biblicalspiritualitypress.org/2014/03/06/15-pointers-for-preachers/>

⁽⁸⁾ <https://biblicalspiritualitypress.org/2014/03/06/15-pointers-for-preachers/>

⁽⁹⁾ <https://www.newchurches.com/article/5-pointers-for-preaching-to-small-crowds/#:~:text=Scripture says to be prepared,when feeding a smaller flock.>



“A desire to preach without a burden to study is a desire to perform.”

~H.B. Charles~

Knowing your audience: As important as it is to know the context of the passage of scripture you are preaching from it is just as dutiful to know the audience to which you are ministering. How a message is crafted can be influenced by the age, ethnicity, and economic demographic of your audience. The relational equity that you have established with your parishioners lends credibility to your message.

Discussion: Take a few moments to talk about the audience you speak to each week. What is unique about them?

Delivery: Ample prayer, study and relational equity can lay the foundation for a great sermon, but ultimately, you have to deliver. Here are a few delivery guidelines for you to consider:

1. Maintain good eye contact
2. Dress in a way that doesn't distract from your message.
3. Vary your tone, pitch, volume and movement- monotony kills sermons.
4. Speak with clarity and conciseness.
5. Preach for a response.
6. Be authentic.
7. Read the audience. (You can often tell by their faces if they don't understand or the sermon is getting too long.)
8. Work the room. Don't gravitate to one side more than the other.

Discussion: Have you ever invited someone to intentionally critique your sermon delivery?

Post-Care (Altar Ministry): Pulpit ministry doesn't end with the benediction. If we are preaching for a response then we should give people an avenue by which to respond to the message. This can look different in a variety of settings.

Discussion: What does post-care (altar ministry) look like in your ministry setting? How do you follow up with your congregations after the message?