

## **SECTION 28**

### **Purpose-Driven Preaching**

# **PURPOSE-DRIVEN PREACHING**

Communicating to Change Lives  
(An Overview of the Method of Rick Warren)

Adapted from Rick Warren's conference study notes by Danny Akin

## **I. God's purpose for man is to be like Jesus. (Romans 8:29)**

To be Christlike means to:

Think like Jesus (Phil. 2:5)

Feel like Jesus (Col. 3:15)

Act like Jesus (Col. 3:17)

The objective of Purpose-Driven Preaching is to develop:

Christlike Convictions (What you believe)

Christlike Character (What you are becoming)

Christlike Conduct (What you do.)

\*The Biblical problem stated:

*"Anyone who listens to the Word but does not DO what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it - he will be blessed in what he does." James 1:24-25 (NIV)*

When we get people to look at, to remember, and to do God's Word, they are inevitably changed!

\*The Contemporary problem stated:

Most preaching only gets people to look at the Word, but they don't remember it and they don't do it.

"Never before in the history of the United States has the gospel of Jesus Christ made such inroads while at the same time making so little difference in how people actually live." - George Gallup

## **II. God's purpose for the Bible.**

"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." 2 Timothy 3:16-17 (KJV)*

The purpose of the Bible is life change. Specifically,  
to change our character (perfect, mature, complete)  
to change our conduct (good works)  
to change our convictions

“The Word of God is not to teach us to prattle or be eloquent and subtle... It is to reform our lives, so that we desire to serve God, to give ourselves entirely to him, and to conform ourselves to his good will.”  
- John Calvin

“The Bible was not given to increase our knowledge but to change our lives.” - D.L. Moody

Implication: If I intend to be a biblical preacher, my messages must always be life oriented not just knowledge oriented, application oriented not just information oriented.

### **III. God’s purpose for preaching. [Eph. 4:11-13 (NIV)]**

\*The purpose of preaching is the same as the purpose of the Bible (to change character and to change conduct.)

\*There is both a personal and a corporate purpose in preaching and teaching. (Col. 1:28, 1 Tim. 1:5-6)

*How does this life change happen? Answer: Application*

“If people are not sharing their faith in your church, if they’re not having a quiet time, if they’re not living godly lives, then you need to change your style of preaching. You are obviously not seeing lives changed through the Word of God. So what is the problem? The problem isn’t the Word. The problem is your preaching style!” - Bruce Wilkinson

**IV. God's purpose for the preacher is that we are to be bridge builders (metaphor for application)**

**TIMELESS PRINCIPLES**

<b><u>Then</u></b>	<b><u>Bridge</u></b>	<b><u>Now</u></b>
Timeless Bible Text THE WORD	Application	People's needs today THE WORLD
Past Revelation THEN	where lives change	Current Situation NOW
What was INTERPRETATION	IMPLICATION (Timeless Truth)	What is PERSONALIZATION / APPLICATION
Commentators like to live here		Communicators like to live here
More familiar with the streets of Jerusalem		More familiar with the streets of his community

The challenge of preaching:

To declare eternal truths that never change and apply them in a world that is always changing.

*"The men of Issachar understood the times and knew what Israel should do." 1 Chron. 12:32 (NIV)*

"If you preach the Gospel in all aspects with the exception of the issues which deal specifically with your times - you are not preaching all the Gospel." - Martin Luther

Four stages of bridge-building

1. Study the text. (Exegesis: Investigation, Observation and Interpretation) What does it mean?
2. Find the timeless truth. (Implication: Universal Principle) \*Ask: What response is called for by this text?
3. Think of your audience, (Contextualization) their needs, their hurts, sins, pains, etc.

6 things I know about every audience:

1. Everybody wants to be loved.
  2. Everybody wants their life to count (meaning, purpose, significance.)
  3. No matter how wealthy or successful life is empty without Christ.
  4. Many of these people are carrying a load of guilt.
  5. Many are consumed with bitterness (from past offenses.)
  6. There is a universal fear of death.
4. Apply the truth to their need. (Personalization)

### Why aren't more sermons built around application?

1. We assume people will make the necessary connection.
2. We "leave it to the Holy Spirit."
3. Personal application is convicting and makes people feel uncomfortable.
4. Because we haven't applied it in our own lives.
5. Because it takes more time and effort in preparation.
6. We are afraid of being simplistic and practical.
7. Because we've never been taught how to do it.
8. We haven't realized the importance of it.

"I always make this my rule: That those- who hear me may profit from the teaching I put forward... If I have not that affection, and do not procure the edification of those who hear me, I am a sacrilege, profaning God's Word." - John Calvin

### The Danger of Teaching Information Without Application

1. Knowledge without application produces pride/arrogance.  
*"Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up." 1 Cor. 8:1 (NIV)*
2. Knowledge without application brings judgment.  
*"Anyone who knows the good he ought to do and doesn't do it, sins." James 4:17*

### How Much of a Sermon Should Be Application

Some New Testament Examples:

Paul:	Romans:	50% Application (most doctrinal book in the Bible)
	Ephesians:	50% Application
	Galatians:	100% Application [?]
James:		100% Application [?]
I Peter:		60% Application
Jesus' Sermon on the Mount:		90% Application

\*Doctrine should never be divorced from application!

## **V. Becoming a Purpose-Driven preacher**

Our marching orders: The Great Commission (Matt. 28:19-20)

The goal of purpose-driven preaching is obedience!

The result of purpose-driven preaching is a disciple of Jesus Christ.

Jesus always expected people to do something as a result of His preaching.

*“Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.” John 13:17 (NIV) Luke 10:37*

*“But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand.” Matt. 7:26 (NIV)*

*“For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother.” Matt. 12:50 (NIV)*

*Matt. 7:21, John 14:23-24*

*“Blessed rather are those who hear the Word of God and obey it.” Luke 11:28 (NIV)*

All the New Testament preachers emphasized conduct.

John the Baptist (Matt. 3:8), James (James 1:22, 2:14), John (1 John 3:19-You only really believe the parts of the Bible you do/obey! - 1 John 2:17, 1 John 3:18, 1 John 2:3), Paul (Eph. 5:8)

What I've Learned About Preaching For Life-Change

1. All behavior is based on a belief - belief precedes behavior.
2. Behind every sin is a lie that I am believing. (Titus 3:3)
3. Change always starts in/with the mind. (Romans 12:2) Think...Feel...Act.
4. To help people change, we must change their beliefs first. (John 8:32)
5. Trying to change people's behavior without changing their beliefs is a waste of time.
6. The Bible term for “changing your mind” is repentance. (This is a good word, though culturally abused.) [?]
7. You don't change people's minds, the applied Word does. (1 Cor. 2:13b, 2 Sam. 23:2, Zech. 4:6)
8. Changing the way I act is the result or fruit of repentance. (Matt. 3:8, Acts 26:20b)
9. The deepest kind of preaching is preaching for repentance. John the Baptist (Mt. 3:2), Jesus (Mt. 4:17, Mk. 1:15), The 70 (Mk. 6:12), Peter (Acts 2:38), Paul (Acts 26:20b), John (Rev. 2-3)
10. To produce lasting life-change you must enlighten the mind, engage the emotions, and challenge the will.)

Every message comes down to 2 words: Will you?

## PLANNING YOUR PREACHING

*“Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage - with great patience and careful instruction.” 2 Tim. 4:2 (NIV)*

You can't grow a healthy church on “fast food preaching.”

### Planning is Biblical

*“The plans of the diligent lead surely to advantage.” Pr. 21:5 (NASB)*

### The Benefits of Planning

1. Planning helps me offer a balanced diet.
2. Planning allows me to collect material in advance.
3. Planning allows me to be more creative.
4. Planning allows me to build momentum.
5. Planning allows me to take advantage of special days for evangelism.
6. Planning allows me to promote the messages I will preach.
7. Planning is a great stress reliever.

### 3 Cautions About Planning

1. It must be done prayerfully.  
*“Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and your plans will succeed.” Pr. 16:3 (NIV)*
2. It must be done with humility.  
*“We may make our plans, but God has the last word.” Pr. 16:1 (GN)*
3. It helps to involve other people who you can trust. .  
*“Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed.” Pr. 15:22 (NIV)*

### Where Do You Start In Planning Your Preaching?

1. How did Jesus choose what to speak about?  
About 90% of Jesus' preaching was a response to a question or a need from/of some person.

*“I find it unconscionable that there are expositors out there who take God's Word and deliver it as if there is no hurting world out there. They are totally oblivious to the needs of the people.” - Erwin Lutzer, pastor, Moody Bible Church*

A sermon that does not meet any human need is not a sermon!

*“But everyone who prophesies speaks to men for their strengthening, encouragement and comfort.” 1 Cor. 14:3 (NIV)*

Strengthening builds up, Encouragement fires up, Comfort holds up.

God chooses to reveal Himself to man according to our needs! [?]

Example: The “names” of God. To those who need...

- a miracle - Jehovah-Jireh (I am your provider)
- comfort - Jehovah-Shalom (I am your peace)
- salvation - Jehovah-tsidkenu (I am your righteousness)

2. Where does the Bible say we should start?

*“When you talk, do not say harmful things, but say what people need- words that will help others become stronger. Then what you say will do good to those who listen to you.”*  
*Eph. 4:29 (NCV)*

In communication, you always start with the receptor/hearer. Establish in your mind: where the congregation is, where it needs to go, what I need to say to help them get there.

How to discover the needs of your congregation

1. Listen to them.

2. Take surveys of your people.

What question would you like to ask God?

What are the greatest stresses in your life?

What are the biggest issues in your marriage/family?

3. Imagine, think and pray

Think through a profile of your congregation

What are their responsibilities, problems, fears and worries, sins and temptations, wrong values, conflicts, burdens and hurts, opportunities, dreams?

Think through the 5 levels of learning

What knowledge of the Bible is needed?

*“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.” Hosea 4:6*

What perspectives do our people need to develop?

*“The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them because they are spiritually discerned.” 1 Cor. 2:14 (NIV)*

What convictions do our people need to develop?

*“The faith which you have, have as your own conviction before God.” Rom. 14:22a (NASB)*

What skills do our people need to develop?

*“If the ax is dull and its edge unsharpened, more strength is needed but skill will bring success.” Eccl. 10:10 (NIV)*

What character qualities need to be formed in their lives?

*Eccl. 10:10*

4. Look at what’s happening in culture. Pay attention to magazine covers, radio, TV talk shows, newspapers.



### How Do I Do It (Rick Warren)

1. During the previous year, I've been collecting ideas (my "bucket File" with file folders, etc. to collect.)
2. Get away for a weekend to plan.
3. I take my Bible, notes (survey results, letters, etc.), my "bucket file," the church calendar.
4. I ask God, "What do you want to say to these people this next year? Where do you want to take them? What do we need to emphasize for health and balance and growth? Where do we need to grow as a church body (corporate aspect)?" I think about the purposes of the church and how I will emphasize them.
5. I try to identify from 8-12 series for the year.

#### What I am looking for most is:

- 1) Balance in content
- 2) Balance in styles
- 3) Balance in tone (1 Cor. 14:3 - Build up, Fire up, Holdup)  
All comfort and no challenge produces a soft church.  
All challenge and no comfort produces a worn out church.  
Identify the emotional stance of each message.  
Ask, "What is the dominant emotion I want them to feel?"
- 4) Balance in covering all 5 purposes.

Examples: "You Are Shaped For Significance" - to mobilize people for ministry.

"The Six Stages of Faith" - a series on how God matures us.

"Learning to Hear God's Voice" - series on worship.

"Answering Life's Toughest Questions" - preparation to do evangelism.

### Major Seeker Service Series in 1998

"Good News About Grace"	(Doctrinal - 10 wks)
"Growing a Healthy Family"	(Relational - 4 wks)
"Making a Difference In Our World"	(Ethical - 4 wks)
"Managing Stress"	(Encouraging - 4 wks)
"God's Gift of Sex"	(Ethical - 5 wks)
"Hard Questions"	(Spiritual Maturity - 4 wks)

### Major Midweek Series in 1998

"The Difficult Sayings of Jesus"	
"The Book of Philippians"	(10 wks)
"The Book of Romans"	(25 wks)

There are some themes you MUST come back to every single year.

Examples: Forgiveness, Purpose in Life, Family Life, Stewardship of Finances.

## HOW I CRAFT A MESSAGE TOPICAL EXPOSITION

Rick Warren believes there is futility in preaching labels.

Quoting from a former liberal preacher:

“It is impossible to define the terms textual, topical, and expository. Those terms would be great except that rarely do sermons fit neatly into a category when you actually start studying sermons throughout history. There is no modifier that can explain all that God does through preaching, or the ways that He uses. The only question that matters is, “Does the sermon involve itself with the truth of God’s Word?” When it does you have genuine preaching, and all modifiers of the term become superfluous. If you use God’s Word to bring light and change in people’s lives, then preaching has occurred, regardless of the method used.” - Dr. Clyde Fant, Professor of Preaching and Editor, *20 Centuries of Great Preaching* (13 Vol.)

Warren believes Bible exposition takes place when the message is centered around explaining and applying the Bible for life change. He would argue for what he calls “verse with verse” exposition” [Is this not simply a different name for topical preaching?]

Affirming Phillip Brooks’ classic statement, Warren notes, “Preaching is truth through a personality.”

### Textual Exposition: (The basic elements)

1. Select a paragraph or more of text (preferably in a series through a book.)
2. Study the historical-grammatical-theological background of that text.
3. Outline the text into natural divisions.
4. Add illustrations and make applications.

The best books on this are *Biblical Preaching* by Haddon Robinson, *Anointed Biblical Preaching* by Stephen Olford and *Christ-Centered Preaching* by Brian Chappell.

### A Biblical Method of Wise Preachers (Eccl.12:9-11)

*“In addition to being a wise man, the Preacher also taught the people knowledge; and he pondered, searched out and arranged many proverbs. The Preacher sought to find delightful words and to write words of truth correctly. The words of wise men are like goads, and masters of these collections are like well-driven nails; they are given by one Shepherd.” Eccl. 12:9-11 (NASB)*

*“Because the Teacher was wise, he taught the people everything he knew. He collected proverbs and classified them. Indeed, the Teacher taught the plain truth, and he did so in an interesting way. A wise teacher’s words spur students to action and emphasize important truths. The collected sayings of the wise are like guidance from a shepherd.” Eccl. 12:9-11 (NLT)*

Two results from this kind of preaching:

1. They do it.  
“goad” = It spurs people to action. It motivates you to do something.
2. They remember it.  
“well-driven nail” = People will remember it! Firmly embedded! Driven deep!

### **HOW I CRAFT MESSAGES**

Warning: This takes far more time to prepare than textual exposition. [This is certainly debatable].

### **C. R. A. F. T.**

#### **C - COLLECT AND CATEGORIZE**

*“Because the Teacher was wise...He collected proverbs and classified them...” Eccl. 12:9a (NLT)*

#### **COLLECT**

The first thing I collect is Bible verses (all the Bible says about the subject.)

\*Always check the context. You don't have to explain the context of each passage you use, but you better know it.

How do you find relevant Bible verses?

1. Memorize the Bible.
2. Make a list of all the words related to your subject. (Use a synonym finder or thesaurus. Find the root Greek or Hebrew word and search it with all English.)
3. Use concordances to discover all that God has said about the subject. (Computer software comes in handy for this; also Treasury of Scripture Knowledge.)
4. Save your concordance studies to create your own topical concordance of the Bible arranged topically.

What else do I collect?

Quotes: What have wise people said about this topic?

Articles: What are the human problems, hurts and resistance to this topic?

Books: What has been written on this topic or text?

Sermon Tapes: What have other men of God said about this?

Illustrations: What current events relate to this?

Comments on cards from visitors and members weekly: What do people in my congregation think about this topic?

Letters: Testimony letters I get from members are filed topically. [note: You must get permission if you intend to name them.]

How do you collect these?

1. Set up a volunteer research team of people to help you look for the above things (current thoughts and trends.)
2. Skim everything.
3. Get some software programs.
4. Start using the Internet (put in a search for a topic, name, etc.)

## CATEGORIZE

Look for similarities between verses.

Look for recurring themes.

Ask the 6 journalistic questions: who, what, when, where, why and how.

This step can be done years in advance!

Set up a system for collecting, filing, preserving, and retrieving your study notes. Develop the habit of collecting and categorizing everyday of your life.

## **R - RESEARCHING AND REFLECTING**

*“The Preacher ... pondered (reflected) and searched out (researched)...” Eccl. 12:9a (NASB) “I will study your commandments and reflect on your ways.” Psalm 119:15 (NLT)*

Research is studying with my mind. Reflection is listening with my heart.

RESEARCH (the technical part of the sermon prep) “Exegesis”

1. What does it say?
2. What does it mean?

The serious study of any text begins with understanding 4 things:

- the historical background of the text
- the literary style of the text
- the grammatical structure of the text
- the theological framework of the text

\*My favorite tool: *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary* (12 Vol - 78 scholars) [on CD Rom]

\*Recommended:

- Exegetical Fallacies* by D.A. Carson (deals with common mistakes in research of text)
- Exegetical Commentaries by Moody, Baker, and others
- Word Biblical Commentary* series

Quickly get to this point, so I can spend time to:

REFLECT (the devotional part of sermon prep)

When to reflect? - all the time, with all I do.

Reflection is just another word for meditation. Psalms 119:99

What is meditation? - focused thinking; contemplation.

IMPORTANT: You cannot rush reflection.

Your most creative thoughts will come after a period of rest. After a good time of sleep is a good time to meditate. Let it simmer!

What I do during reflection.

1. I listen to what God is saying to me personally. Psalm 119:27
2. I record any insights I have.

Favorite tools: Dictation recorder, variable speed recorder (can listen to a 30 minute sermon in 15 minutes) and a note pad.

(Listen to sermons with a dictation device and record your reactions to it. This teaches you to think orally.)

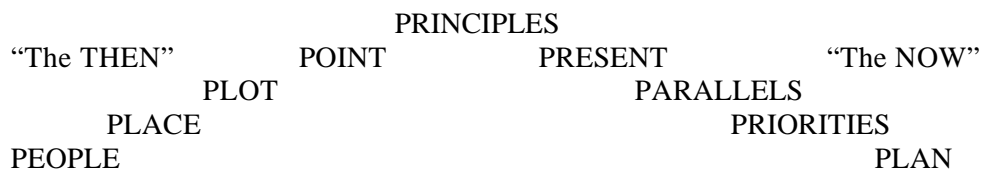
### **A - APPLY AND ARRANGE**

*"A wise teacher's words spur students to action and emphasize important truths." Eccl. 12:11a (NLT)*

#### **APPLY**

Application answers 2 important questions: "So what?" and "Now what?"

1. The Application Pyramid (adapted from Dave Veerman (Senior Editor of Life App. Bible)



People: Who are the people in this passage and how are they like us?

Place: What is the setting and what are the similarities to our world?

Plot: What is happening? Is there any conflict or tension? How would I have acted or felt in that situation?

Point: What was the intended message for that audience? What is the purpose of this passage? Why is it in the Bible from God? What did God want them to learn, feel or do?

Principles: What are the timeless truths?

Present: How is this relevant to our world today?

Parallels: Where does this truth apply to my life and to the lives of my people (at home, work, school, church, neighborhood?)

Personal: What needs to change in me and in them (a belief, value, attitude or action?)

Plan: What will be my first steps of action?

2. The Application Window (from Bruce Wilkinson, Founder of Walk Thru The Bible)

2 Timothy 3:16,17

<b>DOCTRINE</b> What should I believe?	<b>INSTRUCTIONS IN RIGHTEOUSNESS</b> How should I behave?
<b>CORRECTION</b> What should I do?	<b>REPROOF</b> How should I behave?

3. My Application Acrostic

12 Questions to ask about the text. Is there...

- A** An attitude to adjust?
- P** Promise to claim?
- P** Priority to change?
- L** Lesson to learn?
- I** Issue to resolve?
- C** Command to obey?
- A** Activity to avoid or stop?
- T** Truth to believe?
- I** Idol to tear down?
- O** Offense to forgive?
- N** New direction to take?
- S** Sin to confess?

How to put more applications into your message.

1. Always aim for a specific action (a single purpose.)

The most important question after you've studied the text: What specific response am I going to ask for?

What do I want them to think? What do I want them to feel? What do I want them to do?

2. Model it from your own life. (1 Cor. 4:6)  
Be real and share your own success, failures and struggles. To be a model, you just need to be one step ahead.
3. Ask penetrating questions.  
Jesus modeled this: Matt. 17:25, 18:12, 21:28, 22:42, Luke 10:36, 13:2,4
4. Give specific action steps.
5. Give practical examples and life testimonies. (1 Cor. 10:11)
6. Offer people hope. (Rom. 15:4)  
\*Use life testimonies from people's lives.
7. Make your applications your points in the sermon outline.
8. Put a verb in every point in the sermon outline!
9. Put "Jesus" or "God" in the point.  
Example: 1 Cor. 10:13 – "Overcoming Temptation"

WEAK

*You can overcome temptation.*

1. Because it is common.
2. Because it is limited.
3. Because it is escapable.

STRONGER

*What to do when you're tempted*

1. Believe God has seen it before.
2. Believe God will limit its intensity.
3. Believe God will make a way out of it.

10. Personalize the points by using personal pronouns ("You," "Me," "I")

ACADEMIC OUTLINE [!]

*"The Corinthians and Spiritual Gifts" (1 Cor. 12)*

Point #1 - The Source of the Corinthians Gifts.

Point #2 - The Function of the Corinthians Gifts.

Point #3 - The Purpose of the Corinthians Gifts.

What's wrong with this outline?

It is abstract.

It is in the 3rd person.

It is not either about God or people.

A LIFE-CHANGING OUTLINE

*"Using Your Gifts" (1 Cor. 12)*

Point #1 - God Gave You Gifts.

Point #2 - God Gave You Gifts to Use.

Point #3 - God Gave You Gifts for the Benefit of the Body.

What's right about this outline? It is personal.  
It is practical.  
It is God-centered. \*Be sure to be all three!

### ACADEMIC OUTLINE

*"A More Excellent Way" (1 Cor. 13)*

by J.T. Crabtree (1983 Preacher's Annual)

Point #1 - Its Ministry of Healing

Point #2 - Its Simplicity of Language

Point #3 - Its Competency for Problem Solving

Point #4 - Its Superiority of Value

What's wrong with this outline? It uses complex language.  
It uses incomplete sentences.  
It uses passive voice.

### A LIFE-CHANGING OUTLINE

*"How Your Love Can Change Others"* (same points rephrased)

1. Your Love Heals!
2. Your Love Speaks!
3. Your Love Can Solve Problems!
4. Your Love Is of Great Value!

"The way I approach a sermon has changed. I used to concentrate on what the text says... how I could make it mean something to somebody else. Now I ask, 'What does God want these people to hear?' My preaching was academic; now it's more personal... Everybody I talk to carries some pain. Woe to the church that doesn't recognize people's needs." -Warren Wiersbe (after 40 years of preaching)

11. Suggest a practical assignment.  
*"Go and do likewise." Luke 10:37*

SMART Assignments are:

**S** Specific  
**M** Motivational  
**A** Attainable  
**R** Relevant  
**T** Trackable

### ARRANGE

Organize the outline.

The text should determine the substance of your message but the way people hear and learn should determine the structure of your message.

### Typical Sermon Structures

#### A

- I. Point describing the text.
- II. Point describing the text.
- III. Point describing the text.
- IV. Point describing the text.

#### B

- I. Point describing the text.  
Application
- II. Point describing the text.  
Application
- III. Point describing the text  
Application



### Purpose-Driven Outline

- I. Present tense application statement.  
Content of the text
- II. Present tense application statement.  
Content of the text
- III. Present tense application statement.  
Content of the text.

**\*IF THE POINT OF THE MESSAGE IS APPLICATION, THEN MY APPLICATION SHOULD BE MY POINTS.**

### How to arrange your outline for maximum impact

1. Keep it simple.  
Beware of alliterations!  
It is more important to be clear than to be cute.
2. Get to the point quickly.
3. State your points in complete sentences.
4. Make sure your points have unity and balance (symmetry.)
5. Make sure your points follow a clear, logical progression.  
Your message must have movement if you want to move people.
  1. Tell them why
  1. Establish a need.
  1. What?
  2. Show them how
  2. Give personal examples.
  2. So what?
  3. Present a plan.
  3. Now what?
  4. Offer hope.
  5. Call for commitment.
  6. Expect results.
6. Arrange your points to climax with a commitment.  
Often put the strongest point last and put the 2nd strongest point first in the outline.
7. Arrange your points to use “tension and release.”  
\*You need a peak and valley emotionally approximately every 10 minutes in preaching sermons. Give release through humor and illustrations.
8. Consider how your points sound when arranging them.

9. Provide an outline with the Bible verses written out.

- Benefits -       The unchurched don't bring Bibles.  
It relieves embarrassment in finding a text.  
You can cover more material in less time.  
You can have everyone read aloud together.  
They can review it later.  
It can be the basis for small group discussion.  
It allows you to use multiple translations.  
It increases participation.  
Without it people forget 90% of what they hear in less than 72 hours.  
\*Make sure the blanks make sense and are substantive to the points. [Are blanks wise?]  
[PROBLEM: It doesn't foster a Bible-carrying congregation.]

## **F - FASHION AND FLAVOR**

*"The Preacher sought to find delightful words..." Eccl. 12:10 (NASB)*

### **FASHION**

Shape the style of how you intend to say it. You must become a "wordsmith."

#### Choosing the right words.

*"When wise people speak, they make knowledge attractive..." Pr. 15:2 (GN)*

*"A wise, mature person is known for his understanding. The more pleasant his words, the more persuasive he is." Pr. 16:21 (GN)*

#### PDC Lecture: "Eight Questions That Changed My Preaching."

This is the point in my prep where I ask 6 of those questions:

1. What is the most practical way to say it?  
Tell them why and Show them how.
2. What is the most positive way to say it?
3. What is the most encouraging way to say it?
4. What is the simplest way to say it?  
Avoid using religious terms.
5. What is the most personal way to say it?  
The most personal is the most powerful way.
6. What is the most interesting way to say it?

### **FLAVOR**

*"Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt..." Col. 4:6 (RSV)*

\*Flavoring is not the meat, but it sure makes the meat taste better.

“If you think the gathering of Biblical facts and standing up with a Bible in your hand will automatically equip you to communicate well, you are deeply mistaken. It will not. You must work at being interesting. Boredom is a gross violation, being dull is a grave offence, and irrelevance is a disgrace to the Gospel. Too often these three crimes go unpunished and we preachers are the criminals.” -Chuck Swindoll

1. Flavor with illustrations and quotes.

Never make a point without a picture image. (Tell stories.) Suggestions

Throw away old illustration books.

Best sources: TV, magazines, news, internet, life itself.

Check your motive when using a personal illustration.

Get permission to use illustrations that involve your family or church members.

Tell the truth.

Think through your transitions into and out of the illustration.

Eliminate non-essential details from the story.

Use overly dramatic stories sparingly. You can't cry every week!

2. Flavor with humor appropriate to your personality.

“A cheerful heart is good medicine.” Pr. 17:22 (NIV)

3. Flavor with special features within the message.

Testimonies (stories of real people,) Drama, Interviews, Film clips, Interspersed songs, Tag Team Preaching, Object Lessons.

## **TRIM, TIE TOGETHER, and TITLE**

### **TRIM**

1. Trim the number of verses to be used.

2. Trim background material. (Do as much in exegesis, but share as little as possible in the sermon.)

WARNING: Describing too much detail of a text can actually hide or dilute the power of the text. More does not mean better! Slower does not mean deeper!

“A lot of preaching has too much brains put into it and not enough guts.” -Howard Hendricks

3. Trim points.

4. Trim quotes and illustrations.

## TIE TOGETHER

1. Your Introduction - Tie your introduction to your message purpose.

- 4 Purposes
1. To connect with the audience (identify, establish rapport)  
\*You must establish a relationship before you can get a response.
  2. To gain attention.
  3. To introduce the purpose of the message.
  4. To answer the question “Why should I listen to you?”

Brevity and variety are good elements.

2. Your Transitions - Tie your transitions to your purpose. Avoid the words “point” and “thing.”

3. Your Conclusion: The Call For Commitment - Tie them to the purpose.

- Mistakes to avoid:
1. Don't just summarize the message.
  2. Don't say “In conclusion” unless you mean it.
  3. Don't blame the clock for needing to conclude.
  4. Don't introduce anything new in the conclusion.
  5. Don't add a 4th (another point) that should have been in the body.

- What to do:
1. Always point back to Christ in some way.
  2. End with intensity and emotion.
  3. Have the courage to ask for a specific response – “Will you...?”

- Ways to Conclude:
1. Restate the major points forcefully and personally.
  2. Use a compelling illustration.
  3. Use a piercing question and wait for a response.

### The Best Conclusions:

1. Write out your closing prayer of commitment based on the message.
2. Rewrite your conclusion after the first service, before the next one.
3. Always offer an opportunity to receive Christ and expect people to respond.  
\*If you go fishing, please draw the net.

### How To Give An Invitation To Commitment:

1. Clearly explain how they should respond.
2. Plan out your invitation and plan for the time it will take.
3. Lead unbelievers in a model prayer.
4. Don't overextend the invitation.
5. Don't create artificial barriers.
6. Offer a new believers table with follow up packets.
7. Expect people to respond.
8. Use a decision card. (You don't have to use the “come forward” invitation invented by Charles Finney in 1817.)

## TITLE

Usually the last think I do is think up the title.

Does the title imply good news?

Does the title make sense on its own?

## REVIEW

**C** - Collect and Categorize

**R** - Research and Reflect

**A** - Apply and Arrange

**F** - Fashion and Flavor

**T** - Trim, Tie Together and Title

## **MY FAVORITE RESEARCH SOFTWARE**

### **BIBLES WITH SEARCH FEATURES**

Parson's Quick Verse 4.0 (5.0 is available but I like the older version.)  
NavPress Word Search 5  
Logos Library System 2.I - Nelson Electronic Bible Reference Library  
Zondervan NIV Bible Study Edition

### **TOPICAL STUDY REFERENCE TOOLS**

The Handbook of Bible Application  
Where To Find It In The Bible - by Ken Anderson  
Topical Analysis of the Bible - General Editor, Walter A. Elwell  
Nelson's Topical Bible Index  
Thompson Chain Reference Study Bible  
The New Treasury of Scripture Knowledge  
New Nave's Topical Bible  
Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary with Topical Index  
Life Application Study Bible Notes

### **QUOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS**

Parson's Bible Illustrator 3.0  
Autollustrator  
INFOsearch  
Josh McDowell Research Almanac and Statistical Digest - (All the depressing stats you could ever want.)  
The Columbia Dictionary of Quotations  
Correct Quotes and Just Joking  
QuoteMaster  
Ultimate Quotations

### **INTERNET SITES**

<http://www.excite.com> (set up your own personal news retrieval service through this search engine.)  
<http://www.amazon.com> (not only convenient for books - a great source for jogging creative ideas.)

### **OTHER HELPFUL SOFTWARE**

Microsoft Word 97  
Internet Explorer 4 (Microsoft) - gateway to the internet - and free!  
Copernic MetaSearch Engine - searches all the popular engines at once - and it's free!  
[www.copernic.com/free98.html](http://www.copernic.com/free98.html) Quick View Plus  
Alta Vista Discovery  
A Zillion Rhymes and Cliches by Eccentric Software  
\*Fun to goof around, but please don't make a habit of rhyming sermons!  
[http://www.unboxed.com/MoreInfo/Eccentric/ZK\\_Rhymes.html](http://www.unboxed.com/MoreInfo/Eccentric/ZK_Rhymes.html)  
Christian History Magazine on CD

## **MY FAVORITE HIGH-TECH TOOLS**

Variable Speed Tape Player (Radio Shack) - Allows you to listen to a tape in half the time!

Dragon's Naturally Speaking Mobile - Preferred Ed. 3.0

The Audible Mobile Player - Allows you to download Real Audio sermons off the internet and listen to them in your car or anywhere else. [www.audible.com/audible/tour/the\\_player.html](http://www.audible.com/audible/tour/the_player.html)

\*We are now putting all my messages in real audio format on [www.pastors.com](http://www.pastors.com)