

SECTION 23

Application

APPLICATION SHOWING YOUR AUDIENCE HOW CHRISTIANITY WORKS

“A teacher is a stimulator/motivator: a coach. A student is an investigator/discoverer: a player.”
(Danny Akin)

“Without practical application, exposition is mere description. If exposition is explanation, expository preaching is explanation applied.” (Liefeld, p.6)

“We must constantly be asking ourselves not only what we are preaching, but why.” (Ibid, p.7)

“It is the personal concern that distinguishes the good pastor from the mere minister.” (Ibid, p.109)

“Solid biblical content can impart important new concepts and even plans of action, but yet fail to ‘speak to the heart,’ stir the hearers to appropriate the new concepts and take the proposed action.” (Ibid)

“...for expositional preaching to be fully effective in teaching the text, touching the heart, and transforming listeners, practical application must be considered a vital element in preparing expository sermons.” (Scott Blue, “The Necessity of Application in the Expository Sermon,” Unpublished paper, April 1999, SBTS, p.5)

“Biblical exposition without application leads to spiritual constipation.” (Ramesh Richard)

AS WE APPLY SCRIPTURE:

1. The mind must be educated (discernment)
 2. The heart must be motivated (desire)
 3. The will must be activated (decision)
- (Steven and David Olford)

“... a gap of crisis proportions exists between the steps generally outlined in most seminary or Biblical training classes in exegesis and the hard realities most pastors face... as they prepare their sermons. Nowhere in the total curriculum of theological studies has the student been more deserted and left to his own devices than in bridging the yawning chasm between understanding the content of Scripture as it was given in the past and proclaiming it with... relevance in the present.” (Kaiser, *Toward an Exegetical Theology*, p.18)

“[Application is] that process by which preachers make scriptural truths so pertinent to members of their congregations that they not only understand how those truths should effect changes in their lives but also feel obligated and perhaps even eager to implement those changes.” (Jay Adams, *Truth Applied*, 17)

“[Application answers] two questions: So what? and Now what? The first question asks, ‘Why is this passage important to me?’ The second asks, ‘What should I do about it today?’” (Daniel Veerman, “Sermons: Apply Within,” *Leadership*, Sept. 1990, 122)

“Application is more than just taking the sermon truth and attacking the congregation with it. Application presents the implications of biblical truth for the contemporary audience. It is a call for action, for putting the principles of Scripture to work in our lives. It deals with attitudes, behavior, speech, lifestyle, and personal identity. It appeals to conscience, to values, to conviction, to commitment to Christ.” (Wayne McDill, *The 12 Essential Skills for Great Preaching* [Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishing, 1994], 187)

“What advantage would there be if we were to stay here half a day and I were to expound half a book without considering you or your profit and edification? ... We must take into consideration those persons to whom the teaching is addressed... For this reason let us note well that they who have this charge to teach, when they speak to a people, are to decide which teaching will be good and profitable so that they will be able to disseminate it faithfully and with discretion to the usefulness of everyone individually.” (John Calvin, quoted in Peter Adam, *Speaking God's Word*, 132-133)

“Contextualization can be defined as the attempt to communicate the message of the person, works, Word and will of God in a way that is faithful to God's revelation, especially as it is put forth in the teachings of the Holy Scripture, and that it is meaningful to respondents in their respective cultural and existential contexts. Contextualization is both verbal and nonverbal and has to do with the theologizing, Bible translation, interpretation and application, incarnational lifestyle, evangelism, Christian instruction, church planting and growth, church organization, worship style - indeed with all those activities involved in carrying out the Great Commission.” (David J. Hesselgrave, “Contextualization that is Authentic and Relevant,” *International Journal of Frontier Missions*, 12, July-August 1995, 115)

“They may not care what became of the Hittites and the Jebusites; they want to know, “what will become of us?” (Charles Koller, p.77)

“[Preaching] is not completed until God's people think and act differently for having heard the Word expounded” (Timothy Warren, “A Paradigm for Preaching,” *BibSac*, Oct-Dec 1991, p.143)

I. DEFINING APPLICATION

“Application’ stems from two Latin words: *Ap*, meaning ‘to,’ and *plico*, meaning ‘to knit.’ Application developed into the idea of joining something in such a way as to change or effect that to which it was joined. Historically, two other terms were used to describe the act of applying Scripture:

Improvements - enabling a congregation to utilize God’s Word in their daily lives.

Uses - the practical implications of a biblical text, following the “Doctrines,” showing how the latter might impact everyday living.” -(Adams, *Truth Applied*, 15-16)

<u>RESOURCE</u> WORD OF GOD	<u>METHOD</u>	<u>RESULT</u> MAN OF GOD
Belief Given by God	Doctrine / Correction	Character: Who he is.
Behavior Inspired by God	Instruction / Reproof	Conduct: What he does.

SCOTT BLUE BELIEVES APPLICATION IN THE EXPOSITORY SERMON MUST INCLUDE AT LEAST 5 ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS:

1. Sermon application must be based on biblical truths gained by a historical grammatical-literary examination of the biblical text chosen for the expository sermon.

2. Sermon application should be related to the author's intended purpose for the text or a portion of the text.
3. Sermon application must relate why the biblical truths are relevant for the listeners in their contemporary lives.
4. Sermon application must include practical examples and suggestions of how listeners can adapt their lives to the biblical truths presented.
5. Sermon application must persuade listeners that they should adapt their lives to the biblical truths presented and encourage them to do so.

From this Blue provides an excellent definition: "Application is the process whereby the expositor takes a biblical truth from his sermon and applies it to the contemporary context of his audience, prophetically relating why it is relevant for their lives, practically showing how it should affect their lives, and passionately encouraging them to make necessary changes in their lives." (p.9)

RAMESH RICHARD SAYS BY THE END OF THE SERMON THE AUDIENCE MUST HAVE THE ANSWERS TO THREE IMPORTANT QUESTIONS:

1. What did the preacher speak about?
2. So what difference does or should it make?
3. Now what do I do with God's claims in this sermon?

II. THE STEPS TO APPLICATION

(“Clothing Truth with Overalls”)
(How can Biblical truth change my life?)

Application is always built on interpretation. If the interpretation is wrong, the application will be wrong. Caution! Never attempt to apply before observing and interpreting.

1. Be aware of the problems to application.

- A. Some stop the hermeneutical process before it is complete! Howard Hendricks says, "Observation and Interpretation without Application is Abortion!"
"Let the baby go full term."
Remember: The Bible was not written to make us smarter sinners, but holy saints.
- B. We substitute knowledge for experience.
Key question to ask: "Do I know a lot more, or do I live a lot better?" (cf. 1 Cor. 8:1)
- C. We like to apply to areas we already are working on and neglect new avenues of need.
- D. We rationalize the process to fit our present lifestyle.
- E. We allow an emotional experience to be substituted for a volitional decision.
- F. Pressures from society cause us to compromise what we know to be true.
- G. Our prejudice and spiritual truth come into conflict.
"Most of us don't think; we just rearrange our prejudice."
- H. Ignorance.

WE SHOULD LOOK TO THE ORIGINAL AUDIENCE OF THE TEXT, THEN TO OURSELVES, THEN ASK 4 KEY QUESTIONS:

1. How are we like them?
2. How are we unlike them?
3. How should we be like them?
4. How should we be unlike them?

2. Know the interpretation of the text bridging the hermeneutical horizons (gap).

Beware of the error of the fork. To take the wrong path is to diverge more and more from the truth.

3. Know you applicational situation. Remember: the interpretation is one but the application is many.

- A. Know yourself. (1 Tim. 4:16)
 1. Your strengths/assets. It will build confidence.
 2. Your weaknesses/inabilities. (Rom. 12:3) It will encourage humility and build faith.
- B. Know your people - age, background, individual needs, etc.

4. State your application in the form of a universal principle.

Ultimate principle to remember: the solution to your problem is a person (Jesus Christ).

- A. Be in line with the needs, interests, questions, and problems of today.
This is the key to relevance.

THERE ARE TWO HISTORIES AND YOU MUST BRIDGE THE HORIZONS:

ORIGINAL HISTORY

OUR HISTORY

Colossae A.D.60-63

Truth revealed out of
“the then”

COLOSSIANS

between two worlds
Principle Bridges

Raleigh/Durham 2004

Truth reborn into
“the now”

- B. Be in harmony with the general tenor of Scripture. The analogy of faith:
Scripture will not contradict Scripture.
- C. Be specific enough to indicate a course of action. 13 Questions to ask:
1. Is there an example for me to follow?
 2. Is there a sin to avoid/confess?
 3. Is there a promise to claim?
 4. Is there a prayer to repeat?
 5. Is there a command to obey?
 6. Is there a condition to meet?
 7. Is there a verse to memorize?
 8. Is there an error to avoid?
 9. Is there a challenge to face?
 10. Is there a principle to apply?
 11. Is there a habit to change - i.e. start or stop?
 12. Is there an attitude to correct?
 13. Is there a truth to believe?

5. Saturate your mind in terms of relationships.

Proposition: Christianity is best understood as a series of new relationships.

APPLICATION

*A dynamic process of change
changes*

IN CHRIST

Education

Social

Business

Church

Values

Thought

Home Life

Sex

cf. 2 Cor. 5:17

Jesus invades and

every area of our life.

- A. Probe your passage with questions regarding the relationships of life.
- B. Take the leash off your mind and let it run freely. (See how many relationships can be affected by this truth.)
- C. Forget the critical. Examine every possible area even if it seems trivial.
- D. Plug into real life.
 - Be realistic - concentrate on the concrete vs. abstract thinking.
 - Think vicariously - see through the eyes of others.
 - Expose yourself to people and life.

6. Consciously Practice.

- A. Remember - you have not applied until you have practiced.
- B. There is great danger of trafficking in unlived truth. Vance Havner said, "What we live is what we believe. Everything else is just so much religious talk."
- C. The practice itself will be a commentary on your understanding of the truth.
- D. You cannot adequately apply to others what you have not applied to yourself.
- E. You cannot be diligently applying everything but you should be consciously applying something.

TWO QUESTIONS:

1. What am I trusting God for right now?
2. What is my plan of action?

Fenelon said, "The essence of Christianity resides in the will."

Maturity is not a mechanical process of addition but a dynamic process of growing. One reason why people do not change is they have no plan of action.

THINK IN TERMS OF:

1. Interpretation
2. Practicality
3. Need - your objective and your audience

IN SUMMATION - How should my character, conduct, or conversation be effected by the Word of God?

How should this truth affect my:

- Attitudes - toward God, others, circumstances
- Knowledge of God
- Behavior - habits to develop, habits to change, habits to confirm
- Relationships - Where do I need to forgive, seek forgiveness, encourage, rebuke, submit, lead?
- Motives - Am I doing right for the wrong reasons?
- Values and Priorities - Who or what comes first? Who or what should?
- Character

Application requires a decision and a specific plan of action in order to allow the Holy Spirit to make scriptural principles part of us.

A word about habits: Here is where the "rubber meets the road." It takes about three months to change a habit and the enemy knows this very well. Be ready for conflict and failure mixed with success. The Lord has, however, predestined us to be conformed to the image of His Son, so ... keep plugging! (Rom. 8:28-30)

IN BRINGING THE SCRIPTURES TO LIFE, VIEW YOUR LIFE AS A SERIES OF NEW RELATIONSHIPS:

A. WITH GOD

1. A truth to understand
2. A command to obey
3. A prayer to express
4. A challenge to heed
5. A promise to claim
6. A fellowship to enjoy

B. WITH YOURSELF

1. A thought or word to examine
2. An action to take
3. An example to follow
4. An error to avoid
5. An attitude to change or guard against
6. A priority to change
7. A goal to strive for
8. A personal value or standard to hold up
9. A sin to forsake

C. WITH OTHERS

1. A witness to share
2. An encouragement to extend
3. A service to do
4. A forgiveness to ask
5. A fellowship to nurture
6. An exhortation to give
7. A burden to bear
8. A kindness to express
9. A hospitality to extend
10. An attitude to change or guard against
11. A sin to forsake

D. WITH SATAN

1. A person to resist
2. A device to recognize
3. A temptation to resist
4. A sin to avoid and confess
5. A piece of spiritual armor to wear

-adapted from *Unlocking the Scriptures* by Hans Finzel

“THE PEOPLE I PREACH TO”

1. Work life: how will this apply to:
 - Unemployed
 - steadily employed
 - retired
 - retiring
 - disabled
 - laid off or fired
 - own their own business
 - work for another person good or bad

2. Home life
 - a. How does this apply to marriage?
 1. the husband
 2. the wife
 3. newlyweds
 4. elderly in their golden years
 - b. How does this apply to the divorced?
 1. divorced recently
 2. divorced several times
 3. divorced because of adultery
 4. divorced and didn't want a divorce
 5. divorced with children
 - c. How does this apply to children and young people?
 1. abusive parents
 2. parents who aren't supportive
 3. fine Christian parents
 4. children in single parent homes
 5. kids whose parents are divorced or divorcing (How does this apply to parents raising children?)
 - (a) a wayward child
 - (b) compliant and obedient children
 - (c) a disrespectful young person
 - (d) a sick or terminally ill child
 - d. How does this apply to children with aging parents?
 1. parent with Alzheimer's disease
 2. parent grieving over the loss of their spouse
 3. parent living on a life support machine
 4. parent confined to a nursing home
 5. parent whom demands inordinate amount of attention from their children
 - e. How does this apply to the personal life?
 1. struggle against a besetting sin
 2. finances

3. career decisions
 4. moral choices
 5. setbacks
 6. victory in an area of their life
- f. How does this apply to church life?
1. pastor
 2. Sunday school teachers
 3. leadership
 4. inactive members
 5. disgruntled members
 6. relationships broken because of an offense
- g. How does this apply to friendships and relationships?
1. neighbors
 2. recreational friends
 - (a) friends you fish with
 - (b) friends you shop with
 - (c) friends you share confidentially with
 3. casual acquaintances
 - (a) a workout partner
 - (b) waiter or server you see regularly

IV. HADDON ROBINSON AND THE HERESY OF APPLICATION

In the Fall of 1997, Haddon Robinson in *Leadership Magazine* (pgs. 21-27) spoke of the heresy that is often found in the application section of preaching. What follows is an outline synopsis of that interview:

- I. “MOST HERESY IS PREACHED IN APPLICATION THAN IN BIBLE EXEGESIS.”
 - A. Preachers want to be faithful to the text. While in seminary they learned exegesis but not how to make the journey from the biblical text to the modern world.
 - B. In order to make the jump from text to the world we have to deal with the preacher's question which is application. If we have used the wrong application then the heresy is a good truth applied in the wrong way.

II. WHAT DOES HERESY LOOK LIKE?

Ex. To preach a sermon from Ruth about how to treat your in-laws. “that’s a rape of the Bible. Your saying what God doesn't say.” (p.22)

III. What is the effect of this kind of preaching on one's congregation?

- A. You undermine what the Scripture is actually saying and you give people the idea anything with a biblical flavor is what God says.
- B. “The long term effect is that we preach mythology.” (p.22)

IV. What makes Bible application so prone to error?

- A. Because we are taking the eternal truth of God given in a particular time, place and situation and trying to apply it to a modern world living in different context.

V. What is the best way to avoid error?

- A. One way is to bring the text straight over to the modern situation. Ex. "Jesus says love your enemies, if you have enemies, love them."
- B. Some texts are not able to come directly over to the modern situation. In order to avoid this the preacher must understand both the circumstance of the text and the modern situation. For example, when Paul speaks about 1st century slavery he is referring to a much different institution than we know from the 19th century America.
- C. We must determine if the questions being answered are the ones we are asking.

VI. How to know if we are confusing the questions?

- A. “A text cannot mean what it has not meant.” (p.23)
- B. “The Ladder of Abstraction” - Picture a ladder which comes up from the biblical world, and crosses over to the modern setting. Robinson says, “I want to make sure the biblical situation and the current situation are analogous at the points I am making them connect. The center of the analogy must connect not the extremes.” (p.23)
- C. Example - boiling a goat in its mother's milk is actually a prohibition about being involved in pagan practices. Climb the ladder until you reach the principle.

VII. How do you climb the ladder if the text cannot come straight over?

A. Abstract up to God. Find the vision of God in the passage.

B. Depravity Factor. What in humanity rebels against that vision of God? (p.24)

(Bryan Chapell calls this the Fallen Condition Focus [FCF].)

VIII. Does the Bible address every situation?

Not directly and we should acknowledge this.

IX. How do you apply Scripture to people with such varied backgrounds?

Make a grid of the people in your congregation. Find the principle of the passage and ask how it relates to each of the people on your grid.

X. What do you say when something is not a matter of obedience?

A. We can't always have a thus saith the Lord about everything so you have to distinguish between various types of implications.

1. Necessary implication - you shall not commit adultery.

2. Probable implication - Be careful about strong bonding friendships with the opposite sex.

3. Possible implication - Don't travel regularly [at all!] to conventions or other places with the opposite sex.

4. Impossible implication – Don't have dinner with another couple because you are at the same table with a person who is not your spouse. (pgs. 25-26)

B. "One way to phrase these distinctions in the pulpit is to say, "This is the principle and the principle is clear. How it applies in our lives may differ with different people in various situations."" (p. 26)

XI. How do different genres affect our application?

A. The most extensive Bible genre is story. But it's dangerous to go into a narrative and say, here are three things to learn about the providence of God.

To interpret the Word accurately you must consider the methods used to proclaim it.

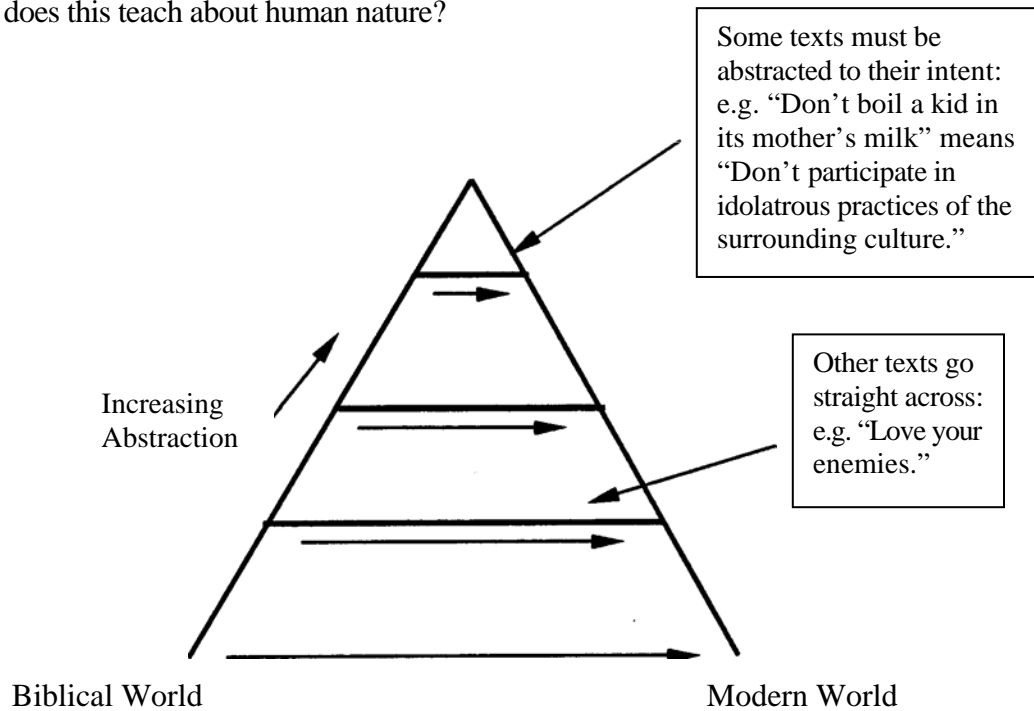
B. The best way to handle the situation is to take the principle and apply it to the universal experience not the specific individual situation. (pgs. 26-27)

- XII. What is the best use of increased time in sermon preparation? Spend time on what you usually don't focus on.
- XIII. How does the Spirit apply the text to the listener's life?
- A. The Spirit answers to the Word. If I am faithful to the Scriptures the Spirit will honor that.
- B. Formula: Pain+Time+Insight=Change. Pain and time are not enough to change people but if you combine these with insight then you will create change. That insight comes from the Word of God.

ABSTRACTION LADDER

Climb by asking:

1. What does this teach about God?
2. What does this teach about human nature?



V. BENEFITS OF APPLICATION

1. Application fulfills the obligation of “purpose” in the sermon. Listeners are urged to move as a result of hearing the demands made upon them by the biblical truth presented to them in the sermon.
2. Application helps reach the whole person. It touches the will and moves toward intention.
3. Application develops Christ-likeness in the listeners.
4. Application develops moral discernment in an amoral environment.
5. Application allows hearers to grasp the biblical message as relevant to their contemporary needs.

“Good preaching begins in the Bible, but it doesn’t stay there. It visits the hospital and the college dorm, the factory and the farm, the kitchen and the office, the bedroom and the classroom. Good preaching invades the world in which people live, the real world of tragedy and triumph, loveliness and loneliness, broken hearts, broken homes, and amber waves of strain. Good preaching invades the real world, and it talks to real people - the high-school senior who’s there because he’s dragged there; the housewife who wants a divorce; the grandfather who mourns the irreversibility of time and lives with a frantic sense that almost all the sand in the hourglass has dropped; the farmer who is about to lose his farm, the banker who must take it from him; the teacher who has kept her lesbianism a secret all these years; the businessman for whom money has become a god; the single girl who hates herself because she’s fat. Good preaching helps them do business with God; it helps them interpret their own human experience, telling them what in their heart of hearts they already know, and are yearning to hear confirmed.” (Louis Lotz, “Good Preaching,” *Reformed Review* 40, Autumn 1986, 38)

“PREACHING WITH RELEVANCE”

by Tim Schroeder, Senior Pastor of Trinity Baptist Church in Kelowna, BC and an auxiliary member of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

I. THE REALITY GAP

A. Self test for measuring your reality gap:

- Name 2 of the top 10 songs popular among youth. What are the messages of each?
- Name 2 of the top 10 videos being rented. What are the themes?
- What are the various buzz words being used by various age groups in your audience?
- What are the 5 hottest television programs and what are their main topics?
- What one social problem impacts your city most?
- How long has it been since you've heard someone swear in your office without apologizing?
- Do you know what is being discussed in your city?

B. There's a gap between what the preacher perceives as reality and what the hearers experience.

C. The people in the pews have the most at stake when the preacher enters the pulpit.

D. 60% of Americans feel the church is irrelevant.

E. We don't know what's going on in people's lives.

II. ACTION STEPS

A. Stay current with information common to your audience.

B. Identify and use the resources that you already have.

C. Recruit your congregation to help you preach.

D. Use your natural interests and abilities.

E. Cultivate relationships with non-Christians.

CONCLUSION: Having stepped into the real world, a new level of consciousness is present when we step into the pulpit.

AN ILLUSTRATION OF PERSONAL APPLICATION THROUGH FIVE HYPOTHETICAL OUTLINES

(by Walter Liefeld)

The subject matter: God as light, Savior, and refuge.

Type One: Description

1. The Lord, our Light
2. The Lord, our Salvation
3. The Lord, our Refuge

Type Two: Declaration

1. The Lord is our Light
2. The Lord is our Salvation
3. The Lord is our Refuge.

Type Three: Explanation

1. What does it mean that the Lord is our Light?
2. What does it mean that the Lord is our Salvation?
3. What does it mean that the Lord is our Refuge?

Type Four: Exhortation

1. Let the Lord be your Light
2. Let the Lord be your Salvation
3. Let the Lord be your Refuge

Type Five: Application

1. How the Lord can be our daily Light in darkness.
2. How the Lord can be our Savior when we sense our guilt.
3. How the Lord can be our strong Refuge when we feel besieged.

Appendices 1-5 from *The 7 Laws of the Learner*
Appendix 1

THE LAW OF APPLICATION: PART 1

(from chapter 5)

1. Application is the central reason for God's revelation (126).
2. Application is the responsibility of the preacher/teacher (126).
3. Application and information should be balanced (127).
4. Application focuses Scripture on the students' (congregation) needs (131).
5. Application that has impacted the teacher/preacher tends to impact the student (133).
6. Prepare your message during the whole week (minimally) before you preach (135).
7. Ask the Lord to apply the specific truth you will teach to you (135).
8. Communicate with all of your mind, will and emotion the applications the Lord has taught you from the Bible (135).
9. Application must ultimately lead the student (congregation) from studying the Bible to obeying the Lord (136).

“Apply for Life Change”

THE LAW OF APPLICATION: PART 2

(from chapter 6)

1. Ask God to develop in your heart an applier's heart (156).
2. Prepare applications in relation to your people's needs (157).
3. Plan all parts of the message to contribute to the application (158).
4. Lead your people beyond general applications to specific steps of obedience (159).
5. Illustrate the application of Scripture, history, personal experience, and imagination (159).
6. Employ an appropriate style when calling for commitment (161).
7. Strengthen applications with accountability (To self, peers, significant persons, pastor/mentor, God) (163).

Appendix 2

TEN STEPS TO APPLYING THE TRUTH OF SCRIPTURE

1. Find the meat of the passage.
2. Hold fast to the belief that every passage contains at least one key principle.
3. Finding the essence of the content takes time and effort.
4. Pray for illumination from the Holy Spirit to see more of what has already been written.
5. Think! Think a lot! Meditate over and over on the passage.
6. Don't hunt for the principle in the commentaries.
7. Relax. Enjoy developing the principle through your personality.
8. State the principle in a simple and motivating sentence.
9. Make sure your principle is thoroughly biblical.
10. Lead your people to leap past your principle and "prediscover" their own applications.

Appendix 3

THE LAW OF RETENTION: PART 1

(from chapter 7)

1. Retention of facts by your people is your responsibility (180)
2. Retention of facts is effective only after they are understood (181)
3. Retention increases as your people recognize the contents relevance (182)
4. Retention requires you to focus on the facts that are most important (184)
5. Retention arranges the facts so they are easy to memorize (186)
6. Retention strengthens long-term memory through regular review (187)
7. Retention minimizes time for memorization to maximize time for application (188)

“Master the Minimum”

THE LAW OF RETENTION: PART 2

(from chapter 8)

1. Represent the facts in a picture (210)
2. Express the facts with a story (213)
3. Transfer the facts by the alphabet (214) [?]
4. Associate the facts with objects and actions (216)
5. Impress the facts with drama (216)
6. Note the facts through music (217)
7. Summarize the facts with graphs and charts (217)

Appendix 4

SEVEN KEYS TO BIBLICAL RETENTION

1. Review is the primary method by which everyone memorizes everything.
2. Review is effective only when your people adequately understand the material.
3. Review should be practiced in the same order and with the same words until the Irreducible Minimum is fully memorized.
4. Review should be most frequent and intense when the facts are first taught.
5. Review should be regularly practiced but spaced less and less frequently as time passes.
6. Review should continue until your people demonstrate mastery of the Irreducible Minimum.
7. Review should be done using a variety of methods.

Appendix 5

THE LAW OF EQUIPPING

(from chapter 12)

Instruct	➔	Prepare	➔	“I understand”(315)
Illustrate	➔	Preview	➔	“I see”(315)
Involve	➔	Practicum	➔	“I’m doing it”(316)
Improve	➔	Perform	➔	“I’m getting better” (317)
Inspire	➔	Passing it on	➔	“I’ll keep it going”(320)

BILL GOTHARD ON LIFE-CHANGING SERMONS

PREPARE YOUR MESSAGE AROUND FOUR UNSPOKEN QUESTIONS:

Why is it important for me to listen to your message?

* Be Convincing

1. You will solve a problem you have been having in your personal life, marriage, family, business (illustrations)
2. You will avoid problems in the future by making this commitment and taking this action (illustrations)
3. You will learn more about Christ and experience more of God's power and the fruit of God's Spirit
4. You will finally understand the answer to a question which you have had

Exactly how do I apply your message to my life?

* Be Clear

1. What are the steps of action which I must take?
2. How can I be sure that this is sound doctrine?
3. What about my unique circumstances?

Who are your illustrations of this?

* Be Correct

1. Illustrations from the Bible of those who followed this action in their lives and succeeded
2. Illustrations from the Bible of those who did not follow this action and the consequences.
3. Illustrations from history of famous Christians who did or did not follow this, and the results

What do you want me to do right now?

* Be Convicting

1. What decision should I make to do this?
2. When should I put this into action?
3. Who is going to check up on me?
4. What if I encounter unforeseen problems?