

Expository Preaching 1: Developing and Preaching a Biblical Sermon

Lecture 1: Introduction and Syllabus

Structure of the Class: (Share this information with the class.)

- Opening Sermon by the teacher: Each day will begin with either a 30 minute sermon or discussion time with the teacher. This first week will always begin with a sermon.
- Lectures by the teacher: Each lecture will develop one of the steps for sermon development. The steps build consecutively upon each other.
- Labs: After most of the lectures, each student will work with another student to apply the material to an assigned sermon text. Each group will focus on a single sermon text throughout the week.
- Evaluated Sermons: Over the weekend and on Monday, each student will complete a preaching outline and next week he will preach an evaluated sermon. He will have between 15 and 20 minutes to preach, after which his fellow class members will give an oral evaluation of the sermon. Finally, the teacher will provide an oral evaluation.

Possible Sermon Texts

- 1 Peter 5:1-5
- 1 Timothy 1:12-16
- 1 Timothy 5:17-22
- 2 Timothy 2:1-4
- 2 Timothy 4:1-5
- Psalm 1:1-6
- Psalm 23:1-6
- Psalm 15:1-5
- Proverbs 3:1-6
- Proverbs 3:7-12

Class requirements

1. The student must attend the class and complete the labs.
2. The student will preach a 15-20 minute sermon that will be evaluated.
3. The student will participate in evaluating his classmates' sermons.
4. The student will be encouraged to read part 1 of the textbook if it is available.

Lecture 2: Preaching a Biblical Sermon

Defining a Biblical Sermon

- Definition: A Biblical sermon is one that carries biblical authority.
 - Direct biblical sermons are the best, for they “employ the natural and logical meaning of the text in a direct, straightforward fashion.”
 - Indirect biblical sermons tend to depart from the intended meaning of the text and stray from the central idea in the scriptural passage.
 - Casual biblical sermons . . . utilize Scripture in a rather “free and loose” way.
- A direct biblical sermon is preferable.
- Discussion Question: Why might a direct sermon be preferred?

Beginning the Sermon Process

- “To exegete means to work through the text sufficiently to “bring out” the meaning.”
- Select a Biblical text by considering the following:
 - Personal reading and study of Scripture
 - Needs of the congregation
 - Book or theme series
 - Church calendar or events
 - “Do not choose one of these options to the exclusion of the others.”
- Discussion Topic: Which of these considerations for sermon text selection is used most often in your churches?

Elements of a Biblical Sermon: This is merely an introduction. We will examine each of these elements more closely throughout the course.

- **Read the Text**
 - In most cases, the entire sermon text should be read.
 - This reading can occur before the introduction or afterward.
- **Introduction:** Introduce the Sermon
 - Show connection to the biblical text.
 - Establish relevance.
 - Generate interest.
 - *Observation:* It is often best to write the introduction and conclusion of the sermon last.
- **Sermon Thesis Statement:**
 - A preacher should write out a single sentence which explains how the audience should respond to the main idea of the sermon.
 - Normally, this is written after the main points of the outline are established.
- **Main Points of the Sermon Outline:** Make a Point
 - Each point must be tied to the Scriptures.
 - Each point must be directed at the audience.
- **Sub-points of the Sermon Outline:** Explain It
 - How is the spiritual truth derived from the text?

- How should the context of the passage influence the interpretation of the passage?
- “This section probably ranks as the most important part of the sermon and comprises the bulk of information surrounding a point. Take great care in this section to keep facts accurate and the truth clear.”
- **Application:** Tell the Audience What to do with It
 - A sermon must include a challenge to obedience and faith.
 - This may occur throughout the sermon.
 - Application must occur near the end of a sermon. The preacher ought to tell the audience what to do with the sermon proposition.
- **Conclusion:** Finish Well
 - The conclusion ends the sermon.
 - It references all the main points of the sermon. Sometimes it includes a summary or rehearsal of all the main points but this is not necessary.
 - It should include a restatement of the proposition if this has not already been done before the final application.

The Form of the Sermon: Deductive versus Inductive

- “A deductive sermon declares the theme of the sermon and then presents propositions or points relating to that theme.”
- “Inductive sermons move from specific truths, examples, or ideas (particulars) in the text to the general truth of the sermon, which is normally revealed at or near the end of each unit in the sermon or at the end of the sermon itself.”

The Ten-Step Sermon Process

- Exegesis
 - Step 1 Grasp the Meaning of the Text in Their Town
 - Read the text, notice details of text.
 - Consider genre.
 - Note literary and historical-cultural context; consult resources.
 - Translate passage from original language if possible.
 - Check commentaries.
 - Write out your “text thesis statement” and “text outline.”
- The Bridge to Your Audience
 - Step 2 Measure the Width of the Interpretive River
 - Define similarities and difference between the biblical context and today.
 - Step 3 Cross the Principlizing Bridge
 - Identify the universal, timeless theological principles.
 - Step 4 Grasp the Text in Our Town
 - Observe the key elements of application for the original audience.
 - Think of parallel situations.
 - Make initial applications for today’s audience.
 - Step 5 Exegete Your Congregation

- Determine spiritual maturity.
 - Determine biblical and theological literacy.
 - Determine social and cultural setting of audience.
 - Determine communication factors (formality level, gender issues, etc.).
 - Determine how to adapt to the level of congregation.
- Step 6 Determine How Much Background Material to Include
 - Look for culture-bound language, idioms, and issues that need translation.
 - Relate or re-create historical/theological setting.
 - Relate or re-create the literary context.
- The Writing and Delivery
 - Step 7 Determine the Sermon Thesis and Main Points
 - Write out sermon thesis statement.
 - Develop main sermon points connected to thesis statement.
 - Decide on form of sermon.
 - Explain points of sermon from exegetical material.
 - Step 8 Develop Text-Centered Applications
 - Base them on the applications discovered in step 4.
 - Make the initial applications specific to your audience.
 - Avoid trite or legalistic applications.
 - Step 9 Find Illustrations
 - Observe, read, and imagine illustrative ideas to make points clearer.
 - Let illustrations create transitions in the flow of the text.
 - Use appropriate illustrations.
 - Avoid lengthy illustrations.
 - Step 10 Write Out the Sermon and Practice Delivery
 - Write out sermon in full form as you would say it.
 - Determine style of delivery (manuscript, memorization, extemporaneous).
 - Work on use of voice (pitch, pace, volume, articulation).
 - Pay attention to body language (gestures, facial expressions, eye contact, animation).
 - Work on conversational voice most natural to you (particularly with postmodern audience).
 - Work on variety, transitions, grammar, and dialect, memorization of certain portions of sermon, length.
 - Pay attention to time. Adjust your sermon as you practice to stay within the allotted time.

Lab #1

1. Read your sermon text 5 times.

2. Read the entire chapter which contains your sermon text. (If your text is at the beginning or end of a chapter then read the adjoining chapter. If it is a Psalm, simply read the entire Psalm.)
3. Begin memorizing the Ten-Step Process. (Only the main points)
4. Memorize Appendix 2. You will be expected to reproduce it from memory during the next lab.

Lecture 3: Discovering Biblical Truth: The Interpretive Journey

Introduction: In this lecture, we will be examining the first four steps in method for sermon construction.

- Step 1—Grasp the Meaning of the Text in Their Town
- Step 2—Measure the Width of the Interpretive Bridge
- Step 3—Cross the Principizing Bridge
- Step 4—Grasp the Text in Our Town

The Interpretive Journey

- Process
 - We might think of this process as journey..
 - (1) Read the text—(2) Interpret the text—(3) Apply the text
 - Most of the journey is spent interpreting and applying.
- Wrong paths (During our journey, we often come to intersections in which the path divides. We must pick the correct path by avoiding the incorrect ones.)
 - Avoid the intuitive path: The preacher begins to develop ideas that seem good to him but have no direct or legitimate connection to the text.
 - Avoid the path of spiritualization: The preacher attempts to find a hidden or spiritual meaning that cannot be demonstrated from the passage's grammar and syntax. (C.f. 2 Peter 1:20)
 - Avoid the path of guesswork: When the meaning of the text is difficult to identify or unclear, the preacher skips the section or posits an interpretation that he cannot justify from the text.
- Four Main Steps of this Journey: The steps answer the following questions.
 - Step 1: What did the text mean to the biblical audience?
 - Step 2: What are the differences and similarities between the biblical audience and us?
 - Step 3: What is the theological principle in this text?
 - Step 4: How should individual Christians today apply the theological principle in their lives?

Step 1: Grasp the Text in Their Town

- The journey begins with a careful and thorough reading of the text. Look for the following KEY ELEMENTS:

- Repeated words or phrases
- Contrasts (ideas, characters, words, items)
- Comparisons (ideas, characters, words, items)
- Lists (Remember that the first element in many of the New Testament lists is explained further by the remainder of the list-Ex. 1 Timothy 3:2-7 expounds the term “blameless.”)
- Cause and Effect
- Figures of Speech: Language that paints a picture or image in the reader’s mind (Ex. Psalm 119:105 “Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path)
- Verbs: Was the action completed in the past, in the present, or in the future?
- General to Specific or Specific to General: Is the Biblical author moving from a specific idea to a principle or from the principle to a specific application?
- Question and Answer
- Dialogue
- Purpose/Result statements: Answers the question *why*.
- Means: Answers the question *how*.
- Conditional Clauses (if . . . then . . .)
- Actions/roles of God and actions/roles of people
- Emotional terms
- Tone of the passage (sad, prophetic, fearful, etc.)
- Connections to other paragraphs or episodes
- Shifts in the story/pivots: Is the story the climax or turning point in the overall message of the book?
- Interchange (Does the story shift back and forth between two scenes or characters?)
- The journey continues as the preacher becomes familiar with the original context (literary and historical-cultural) of his sermon text.
 - The preacher should consider the literary context of his sermon text.
 - Literary form or genre of the passage (narrative, law, epistle, etc.)
 - Surrounding context (words, sentences, paragraphs that precede and follow the sermon text.)
 - Discussion: Some of you will be preaching 2 Timothy 4:1-5. Why is it important to have read 4:6-8 before interpreting 4:1-5?
 - The preacher should consider the historical/cultural context of his sermon text. (Here are some questions you will want to ask of the text to better understand the Historical Context.)
 - Who was the author?
 - What was his background?
 - When did he write?
 - What was the nature of his ministry?
 - What kind of relationship did he have with the audience?
 - Why was he writing?
 - Who was the biblical audience?
 - What were their circumstances?

- What was their relationship to God?
 - What do you know about their relationship to the author and to each other?
 - What was happening at the time the book was written?
 - Are there any other historical-cultural factors that might shed light on the book?
 - What specific historical-cultural issues are alluded to in the passage that we need to understand in order to really understand the passage?
- The preacher should use the following method to ascertain the historical context.
 - Read the entire book that contains your passage.
 - Learn about the general background of the passage (Study Bibles often have this information at the beginning of each book)
 - Examine the specific historical, social, political, and economic elements in the passage.
 - Study Bible
 - Atlas
 - Commentaries or Bible Study books
- Discussion questions:
 - Do you own a Study Bible?
 - Do you have access to commentaries (printed or electronic)?
 - Do you own a concordance?
- The journey continues through in-depth analysis of the sermon text.
 - Translate from the original languages (if you have the training to do so). This training is not expected for this class but it can be pursued through further study.
 - Compare multiple translations of the Bible if they are available. Note those areas where the translations either differ or may appear to differ.
 - Examine all the key words in the passage.
 - Action words
 - Theologically important words
 - Words that you or your audience may need to have defined.

Step 2: Measure the Width of the River

- What are the differences and similarities between the biblical audience and us?
- Be careful not to put the Church back under the Mosaic Law.
- Consider areas of similarity with the modern audiences.
- Example of a wide river: In Leviticus 5:2-6, Moses records God's instructions regarding the atoning sacrifice of a lamb or goat as a sin offering.
- Example of a narrow river: Ephesians 4:2 "be patient, bearing with one another in love."
- Group Discussion: Is the river between the ancient recipients and modern audience narrow or broad in these passages?
 - Exodus 16:4-5 (Instruction about eating manna)
 - Romans 10:1 (Paul's desire to evangelize the Jewish people)

- 1 John 1:10 (John’s instruction about those who claim to have never sinned.)

Step 3: Cross the Principlizing Bridge

- Identify a theological principle that is timeless. (It must be true in all places, during all times, and for all people.)
- The following questions may be helpful.
 - Is the principle strongly tied to and reflected in the biblical text?
 - Is the principle timeless and universal or is it attached to a particular situation?
 - Is the principle transcultural or is it bound to only one specific culture?
 - Is the principle harmonious with teachings of the rest of Scripture?
 - Is the principle congruent with the similarities and differences between the two audiences?
 - Is the principle relevant to both the biblical and contemporary audience?
- Example:
 - Text: Jeremiah 29:11: “‘For I know the plans I have for you,’ declares the LORD, ‘plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.’”
 - Theological principle: When God’s people disobey him and encounter his loving discipline, they should know that his purpose is not to destroy them but to correct them so that they will have a future.
- Example:
 - Text: Leviticus 5:2, 5–6: “Or if a person touches anything ceremonially unclean—whether the carcasses of unclean wild animals or of unclean livestock or of unclean creatures that move along the ground—even though he is unaware of it, he has become unclean and is guilty. . . .When anyone is guilty in any of these ways, he must confess in what way he has sinned and, as a penalty for the sin he has committed, he must bring to the LORD a female lamb or goat from the flock as a sin offering; and the priest shall make atonement for him for his sin.”
 - Theological principle: God is holy, and his holiness demands that his people separate from unclean things. If they fail and become unclean, they must be purified by a blood sacrifice.

Lab 2

1. Continue memorizing the Ten-Step process (only the main points).
2. Reproduce appendix 2 from memory.
3. Identify 3 Key Elements in your passage that need to be properly understood. Write down each element. Using available resources, write why each element is important for a correct understanding of your sermon text.
4. Answer the following questions briefly but completely.
 - a. Who was the original author of your sermon text?
 - b. Who were the original recipients of your sermon text?
 - c. What is the major topic that your sermon text addresses?

- d. What other topics does the author address in book (list 5-10 other doctrinal or practical issues that author addresses in the book that are not addressed in your sermon text). If your text is a Psalm, this may not be possible.
5. Answer the following questions.
 - a. How does your church differ from the original recipients of your sermon text?
 - b. How is your church similar to the original recipients of your sermon text?
6. Write out a theological principle that is timeless. This principle should express the main idea of the sermon text.
7. The teacher may ask some (possibly all the groups if time allows) to state their theological principle. The class and teacher will then make suggestions for improving these principles.

Lecture 4: Preaching the Meaning in Their Town

Introduction: This lecture will focus on the following steps for sermon construction.

- Step 1—Grasp the Meaning of the Text in Their Town
- Step 6—Determine How Much Background Material to Include

The Preacher Grasps God's Word

- The preacher should seek to learn as much as possible about his sermon text.
 - The amount of time that a preacher dedicates to study determines the amount of knowledge that he can acquire.
 - The study tools (Study notes, Commentaries, Concordance, etc.) at the preacher's disposal determines the amount of knowledge that he can acquire.
 - The spiritual health of the preacher is vitally important at this stage. An unbeliever can study and collect data but spiritual things must be spiritually discerned. (C.f. 1 Corinthians 2:12-14)
- The preacher must attempt to fully understand the meaning of the sermon text.
 - "If there is a mist in the preacher's mind, there will be a fog in the congregation's."
 - Sometimes, a preacher will find a part of his sermon text to be confusing. He should continue to study that part until he knows what the author originally intended.
 - If a preacher does not understand a portion of Scripture, he should refrain from preaching on that portion of Scripture. It is never right to claim that God communicated an idea in a Scripture passage if the preacher is uncertain that God actually meant to communicate that idea.
 - Remember, there are times that a preacher should tell his audience his degree of confidence in a given interpretation. If he believes that there are two possible interpretations for a text but that he favors one over the other, he should communicate both possible interpretations and explain why he prefers the one over the other.
- The preacher cannot preach everything he knows about the sermon text.

- The audience listening to a sermon has a much shorter time to consider the material than preacher who is studying for the sermon.
- Some of the material that a preacher discovers is interesting but not necessarily important for the audience to hear.
- Less is sometimes more. If a preacher shares every detail he knows about a sermon text, the audience may fail to appreciate the central idea of the sermon text.

From the Study to the Sermon

- Cultural Language
 - Every language develops within a culture.
 - Each culture expresses itself using culturally specific idioms, expressions, ideas, and word meanings.
 - Illustration: Americans have a strange way of communicating that it is raining. They say that it is “raining cats and dogs.” When an American says this, he or she is not thinking about cats or dogs in any way. It is just an expression that implies a strong and steady rain. Every culture has similar expressions.
 - The preacher needs to identify confusing expressions or word meanings in the Bible. Often, these meanings would not have been confusing to the original recipients who shared a common culture with the biblical author. The preacher must study to learn the ancient meaning.
 - Biblical Illustration: In Luke 14:26, Jesus uses hyperbole when He states that we must “hate” our fathers, mothers, wives, and children. A preacher would need to explain this hyperbole.
- Historical Setting
 - Many audience members assume that the Bible was written directly to them.
 - Preachers need to remind their audience about the historical situation of the original recipients of the sermon text.
 - Example: The book of Jeremiah was written to Israelites who were taken captive because of their sin. Jeremiah was not a captive but he wrote to recipients so that they might understand that their current situation was a judgment by God and that it would not end quickly. A preacher should be cautious when applying Jeremiah’s message to suffering people in his audience. Not every difficult situation is proof of God’s judgment.
- Theological Context
 - Every portion of Scripture is set in a theological context.
 - Some passages explain theology directly. (Ex. Romans 6:23)
 - Some passages provide the foundation for theological principles. (Ex. Genesis 3:1-7)
 - Some passages illustrate how theology works out in real life. (Luke 16:19-23)
 - The preacher should always seek to explain the timeless theological principle from the passage.
- Biblical Language
 - When the Biblical language is precise, the preacher should communicate that to his audience.

- The grammatical relationships between words are important. Biblical phrases and sentences are developed as words (building blocks of meaning) are placed together in relationships with each other.
- Further study in the Biblical languages helps a pastor more accurately understand and communicate these relationships.
- Key Idea: Be careful to communicate grammatical ideas subtly. A sermon should never devolve into a lesson on grammar. It should focus on the principles of Scripture and how they relate to the audience.
- Literary Context
 - Two questions
 - How does the sermon text relate to the paragraphs that precede and follow it?
 - How does the sermon text contribute the flow of ideas in the book?
 - The preacher must never impose a meaning on the sermon text that does not make sense if it is considered in the larger flow of ideas within the book.

Summary: Basic guidelines

- Only mention those things relating to grammar, word meaning, context (historical and literary), or any other “their town” data when that information clearly helps communicate the biblical truth to your specific audience.
- Be careful not to turn the “their town” information in the sermon into a history or grammar lesson. Keep the data simple, brief, and connected to the sermon theme.
- Always keep the focus of the sermon on “our town” where your audience lives. Sermons focused two thousand years ago tend to be dry and boring. Stay in the twenty-first century for the most part, but use “their town” information as supplemental sermon material for clarity and understanding. The goal is for people in “our town” to understand and apply the text and meaning from “their town.”
- Remember that you are teaching the Bible (and illustrating Bible study methods) every time you preach. Your people need to know pertinent information about culture, context, and historical theology to be well-informed believers. Include information that fulfills that role.

Lab 3

1. Continue memorizing the Ten-Step process (only the main points).
2. Answer the following questions about your sermon text. (If you are unsure about how to answer one of the following questions, feel free to ask your teacher for advice.)
 - a. Is there any cultural language that you will need to explain to your audience?
 - b. How does the historical setting of your sermon text impacts it meaning?
 - c. What is the big theological idea that your sermon text addresses?
 - d. What words in your sermon text need further study or explanation?
 - e. How does the big theological idea of your sermon text relate to the big theological ideas that precede and follow it?
3. Answer the following questions.

- a. Select one idea that you have learned about your sermon text that you will probably not share with your audience.
- b. Write down some ideas about the sermon text that you believe are vitally important for your audience and that you intend to include in the sermon.

Lecture 5: Exegeting the Audience

Introduction: This lecture will focus on the following steps for sermon construction.

- Step 2—Measure the Width of the Interpretive River
- Step 5—Exegete Your Congregation
- Step 6—Determine How Much Background Material to Include

Knowing Your Audience

- Key Idea: Every audience is different and a preacher should take into account the differences between audiences when constructing a sermon.
- Generic Sermon
 - Some preachers are committed to preaching generic sermons which engage the people without referencing specific elements of pop culture.
 - Example: John MacArthur is a well known pastor in America. His sermons are regularly broadcast on radio. He attempts to preach in such a way that his sermons can be rebroadcasted in different areas of the world and even years later without alteration.
- Audience Specific Sermon
 - Some preachers see the value in including current illustrations from politics, pop culture, and local events.
 - These sermons also tend to focus more directly upon the immediate audience that is listening to the sermon.
- Balanced Sermon Approach
 - The preacher should always seek to engage the intended audience. If the sermon is primarily directed at the immediate audience of the sermon, the sermon ought to directly connect with that audience.
 - The preacher should avoid the temptation to over-emphasize temporary elements of culture (local news reports, fashion, pop music, etc.) because the timeless principles of the Bible should be the emphasis of any sermon.

Maturity of Your Audience

- Assess the spiritual condition of the audience.
 - Questions to consider
 - How long have most of the audience members been Christians?
 - Is there diversity among the spiritual backgrounds of the audience members?
 - Are there new believers within the audience?
 - Does the audience regularly read Christian literature?

- Are there unbelievers who are listening to the sermon?
 - Are there children present? Teen? Senior citizens?
 - Is the audience aware of past or present theological controversies?
- Observation: The preacher who is committed to being a good pastor will become a better preacher. A preacher is someone who delivers sermons and a pastor is someone who cares for the needs of the church. The better a pastor knows his congregation the better he can preach to them.
 - Spend time in their homes.
 - Pray with them.
 - Visit them when they are sick.
 - Learn about their jobs and financial needs.
 - Etc.
- Engage the spiritual welfare of the audience.
 - Don't be scared to confront the weakness within your local church.
 - Help the audience understand their need for spiritual growth before you offer solutions to their need.
 - Preach from the entire Bible and preach about every aspect of Christian doctrine and practice. Often, churches are weakest in the areas where the pastor is weak.

Knowledge of Your Audience

- Literacy
 - Does everyone in the audience read effectively? (Grade school, high school, or college level?)
 - Are some audience members more literate than others?
 - Is the preaching language a second language for some of the audience members?
- Bible literacy
 - What Bible verses might the audience have memorized? Many? Few?
 - Does the audience know most of the Bible character and stories from the Old Testament and the Gospels?
 - Is the audience familiar with the Epistles? Do they know that they were written to local churches?
 - Does the audience understand the overarching themes of Scripture (Creation-Cross-Millennium-New Heavens/New Earth)?
 - Does the audience understand that Israel and the Church are distinct?
- Pastoral Function of Preaching: A preacher must seek to develop both the literacy and Biblical literacy of his congregation.
 - Why literacy? Because God's Word is preserved in written language. (Ex. "it is written" in Matthew 4:4, 6, 7, 10)
 - Why Biblical literacy? Because God's word is profitable. (C.f. 2 Timothy 3:16-17)

Culture of Your Audience

- Ethnicity
 - Do audience members from various ethnicities view life differently?

- Do they eat the same foods, live in the same kinds of family settings, etc.?
- Are there terms that might be offensive to audience members who have a different ethnicity than the preacher?
- Will the sermon need to be bi-lingual or translated?
- Socio-economic status
 - Where do people work? How much do they make in comparison to their needs and wants?
 - How many children and family members are the people caring for?
 - Where do they shop?
 - What kinds of food, clothes, and household goods do they purchase regularly?
 - What causes them stress (economics, tribal relationships, job security, etc.)?
- Sub-cultural identity
 - Military people often have their own language.
 - Farmers often use regional terminology.
 - Various cities dwellers have cultural distinctions from people in other cities.

Other Considerations

- Size of the audience
- Age of the audience (teens or senior citizens?)
- Gender of the audience
- Marital status of the audience

Be Willing to Adjust

- A preacher must constantly desire to develop in his preaching. Most preachers are tempted to become inflexible.
 - Has your preaching developed within the last year? Two years? Decade?
 - What are you currently attempting to improve within your sermon development and delivery?
 - Have you asked your wife how you might improve?
- Generic suggestions for improving sermons
 - Use illustrations that connect to women and children.
 - When preaching to your local church, pray for each member specifically while you are constructing your sermon.
 - Think about people's work, home, and social lives.
 - Remember to preach to singles, married, widows, and divorced.

Lab 4

1. Continue memorizing the Ten-Step process (only the main points).
2. Write a paragraph describing the character of your home church in as much detail as possible. Discuss spiritual and theological maturity, socioeconomic setting, and gender ratios. Based on your analysis, what kind of sermon would you preach to them next Sunday and why?

3. Exegete the homiletics class according to all the categories discussed in this chapter. What kind of sermon would you preach to them and why? What kind of illustrations might fit?
4. Your professor will have you share some of your “exegesis of your home church” with each other. Be careful to not share personal information if you have written anything that should remain private.

Lecture 6: Communicating the Meaning in Our Town

Introduction

- Step 3—Cross the Principlizing Bridge
- Step 4—Grasp the Text in Our Town
- Step 7—Determine the Sermon Thesis and Main Points

Writing out your sermon

- Some preachers write out their entire sermon in paragraph form prior to preaching.
- Others choose to merely write out the introduction and some of the explanations but they do not write out each of the transitions.
- For this course, you will be encouraged to develop an sermon outline which includes complete sentences for each level of the outline. Explanation and illustrations will not need to be manuscripted but all important transitions will need to be written.

Moving from the TTS to the STS

- Definitions
 - TTS (Text Thesis Statement) reflects what the text meant for the original audience. (3 essential components)
 - Timeless theological principle
 - Reference to the original audience
 - Past tense action word (s)
 - STS (Sermon Thesis Statement) directs that meaning to your audience today.
 - Moral ought (You must, We should, We ought to, etc.)
 - Same timeless theological principle as the TTS.
 - Present tense action word (s)
- Suggestion: A simple STS is far easier to remember and apply.
 - Many preachers create an overly complex STS and the audience cannot remember it.
 - When this happens, the preacher normally included sub-themes in the STS instead of focusing on the main theological principle within the passage.
- General Rules for an STS
 - The shorter the better.
 - The more concise the better.
 - A single action word is best.
 - Good Example: You must teach the fear of God in your home.

- Bad Example: You need to teach your children to fear God and by loving the Bible and speaking about it often. (Loving and speaking will be sub-points in the sermon but probably should not be mentioned in the STS.)
- Evaluation questions for the STS
 - Does my statement really reflect what this passage is all about?
 - Do my sermon thesis statement and my sermon points truly capture the intent of the biblical author?
 - Do they fit the context of the passage?
 - Are they oriented to my audience?
 - Have I truly phrased the biblical truth in words that will connect to my audience?
 - Is it in line with the audience's level of understanding and needs?
- Example from Luke 15:11-32
 - TTS: Jesus told the Pharisees and teachers of the law that God loves sinners so much that even though he allows them freedom to reject him, his love and mercy toward them never ceases, and he rejoices over them whenever they return to him.
 - STS: God loves us so much that while he allows us to reject him, his love and mercy toward us will never cease, and he will rejoice over us when we return to him.
- Example from John 17:1-23
 - TTS: Jesus prayed for God's plan to be fulfilled first in himself, then in his disciples, and then in all those who would believe in him in the future.
 - STS: As we pray for the church, we should ask that God's plan will be fulfilled in all believers, including ourselves, fellow believers, and all those who will become Christians in the future.

Moving from the Textual Outline to the Sermon Outline

- Textual Outline
 - A preacher will normally compile all of his study on a textual outline.
 - Some preachers use a linear outline to compile this material.
 - Positive: It resembles the preaching outline.
 - Negative: It can be hard to determine the relationship between information during study.
 - It may be better to use a mental map (web diagram) to compile the information.
 - An empty circle is placed in the middle of the page. Eventually, the TTS will become obvious and it will be written in this circle.
 - Various other circles are connected to the TTS circle. These circles often contain the sub-themes for the sermon.
 - Various other circles will be connected to the sub-theme circles and they contain explanations, possible illustrations, ideas from word studies, etc.
- Sermon Outline (See Appendix 2)
 - STS (Sermon Thesis Statement): It will normally be stated early in the sermon.
 - Main Points: Each of the main points should support the STS in some way.

- They may be the sub-themes that combine into the larger theme of the passage.
 - They may be logical premises that combine to support the STS.
 - They may reflect the unfolding scenes of a story that illustrate the STS.
 - They may be objections to the STS that must be refuted during the sermon.
- Sub-Points: Each of the main points should be supported by at least two of the following:
 - Explanation: Tell what the text says and does not say.
 - Explanation shows that the sermon and its points are derived from Scripture.
 - The authority and power of the sermon is grounded in the Word of God, and the explanation assures the audience that what you are preaching is indeed a biblical sermon and not merely your opinion.
 - Explanation keeps you within the parameters of the text. If you cannot demonstrate that the text teaches a point, then that point does not belong in the sermon.
 - Explanation represents the real meat of the sermon, for it is part of the “thus says the Lord” portion of the message.
 - Illustration: Create mental pictures that enforce the meaning of the text.
 - Application: Show how the text demands change in the lives of audience members.
 - Analogy: Compare events in the Biblical text with legitimate counterparts in the modern world.
 - Cross References: Read a passage of Scripture that supports your explanation or application.
- Transition Sentences:
 - Beginning preachers often find it natural to move from a main point to the sub-points but moving from the last sub-point to the next main point can be difficult.
 - It can also be difficult to move from the STS to the first main point and from the last sub-point to the remainder of the sermon.
 - Writing out simple transition statements and including them on the sermon outline is often helpful in the early stages of preaching.
 - Suggestions:
 - Progression: We have just learned Point 1 now let us learn more in Point 2.
 - Review: In Point 1 we learned _____, and in Point 2 we learned _____, now in Point 3 we are about to learn _____.
- Restatement of the STS
 - At the end of the sermon, the preacher should restate the STS again.

- Everything that was said in the sermon should have related to the STS so it will be natural to restate it before moving on to concluding matters.
- More will be said about concluding matters in the future.

Keep it Connected

- Unity: The entire sermon outline should be unified. This happens when each of the main points connects logically with each other.
- The Clothesline Concept
 - The main line is the STS.
 - The main points are the clothes that hang from the STS.
 - Warning: Make sure that your sermon looks like an organized clothesline and not a clothes pile.

Lab 5

1. Create a Textual Outline for your sermon text (linear or mental map based on your teacher's instruction).
2. Write out a final TTS for your sermon text.
3. Write out an STS for your sermon text.
4. Begin moving the information to the Sermon Outline when it ready. Your teacher will need to evaluate your work before it moves from the textual outline to the sermon outline. You are just beginning this process and it will take a few days before your sermon outline is complete.
 - a. The STS can be placed on the sermon outline once it is approved by the teacher.
 - b. Once your teacher has approved your main points, they can be moved to the sermon outline.
 - c. You are not ready to move any of the sub-point material to the sermon outline. Future lectures will help you modify this information.

Lecture 7: Applying the Message

Introduction: We will be learning about the connections between two steps:

- Step 5 Exegete Your Congregation
- Step 8 Develop Text-Centered Applications

The Preacher's self-preparation

- A Reluctant Applier
 - Some preachers fail to apply sermon texts because they struggle to identify timeless theological principles that related to their audiences' daily lives.
 - Some preachers fail to apply sermon texts because they believe that application is solely the responsibility of the Holy Spirit.
 - Some preachers fail to apply sermon texts because they don't want to sound legalistic.
 - Transitional Question: Is application an essential element of a Biblical sermon?

- Importance of Application
 - Faulty Model: A preacher cannot merely give explanation, illustration, and analogy and hope that the Holy Spirit will apply the sermon to the individual audience members.
 - Biblical Model: Sermon in the Bible included application
 - Nehemiah 8:9-12—After Ezra read from the Law, the leaders who are mentioned in verse 7 helped the post-exilic listeners understand the meaning of the Biblical text. The people needed to Hebrew text translated into their language (8) but they also needed to understand how to respond to the preached word (9-12).
 - Acts 2:37-42—After Peter’s sermon, the Jewish people who were convinced by the sermon asked, “what shall we do?”
 - Acts 13:38-40—When Paul was preaching in the synagogue in Pisidian Antioch, he concluded his evangelistic sermon with a call to “believe” and “take heed.”
 - A preacher must be convinced in his own mind that application is important or his preaching will be ineffective.
 - After prayerful consideration, a preacher must choose what he believes to be the most important applications.

Application and the Interpretive Journey

- Where to Start
 - Understand that application begins with you.
 - When a preacher preaches to others a theological principle that he has not applied to himself, he becomes a hypocrite.
 - 1 Timothy 4:16 (NASB) Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching; persevere in these things, for as you do this you will ensure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you.
 - Understand that application develops out of the main points of the sermon text.
 - Application always begins in the sermon text and not merely from an idea that the preacher wants to communicate.
 - During the sermon, most of the applications should relate the major points. If application arises from a minor point (or a possible explanation of a minor point) the connection between that application and the sermon text will become increasingly hard to justify.
 - General Rules for including application
 - The preacher should seek to apply each of the major points of the sermon to his audience.
 - The preacher will rarely include more than one or two applications for each major point.
 - The preacher should always apply the STS to the audience at the end of the sermon. The central (big) idea of the sermon ought to be applied to the audience.
 - Example from Colossians 3:12-17

- We must know the Word of Christ if it is to dwell in us. We must spend time studying, meditating on, and memorizing God’s Word.
 - We must develop an attitude that allows Christ’s Word to preside in our hearts in power.
 - We must be witnesses of the truth and share the good news. Are we doing that?
 - The Word of Christ also instructs us to be people of integrity and honesty. Are we living that way, or are there times when we are less than truthful and honest?
- Getting Specific
 - Goal: A sermon ought to include “specific audience-directed applications that are faithful to the sermon point.”
 - Observe how the principles in the text address the original situation.
 - Identify how truth impacted the original recipients of the sermon text.
 - How should have the original recipients responded to the truth in the sermon text?
 - Do we know if they responded correctly? Does that matter?
 - Discover a parallel situation in your audience’s contemporary context.
 - Prayerfully consider how that truth intersects with modern audience members.
 - Ensure that every possible intersection between the text and modern audience is considered when developing an application.
 - Make applications specific to your audience’s situation, based on the same principles.
 - Many preachers fail in application development because their applications tend to generic and impractical.
 - Specific applications help the audience members understand “how to” or “when to” or “if one must” apply the timeless theological principle to their daily lives.
- Examples
 - Text: Hebrews 12:1–4
 - Title: How to Keep the Faith Sermon Point: You can keep the faith if you rid yourself of anything that hinders your walk with Christ.
 - Application: Evaluate your life (home, work, leisure life) and identify specifically any unconfessed sins, attitudes, relationships, or anything else that is hurting your Christian walk. If you find a hindrance, make a plan to rid yourself of it—such as confessing it and asking for forgiveness, changing the attitude, changing or stopping a relationship, ceasing an activity, and so on. Even consider finding some help with a few of the hindrances you uncovered. Your plan may include working with a counselor or enlisting a mentor or accountability partner. Make a plan that seriously deals with the problem with the goal of getting rid of it.
 - Text: Philippians 1:19–26

- Sermon Point: If people are going to recognize you as a Christian, you must live a life that is not controlled by earthly circumstances.
- Application: Are there some situations or circumstances that have you paralyzed with fear, anxiety, anger, or despair? Remind yourself today that God is capable of delivering you from the circumstance and carrying you through it as he did for Paul in prison. In this week's prayer time begin with, "God, here is my circumstance and today I will trust and depend on you in it." Also place on your mirror this week a reminder note stating: "I do not control the circumstances but I do control my response. I can let them get the best of me or I can trust God and react accordingly."

Watch Out!

- Avoid Oversimplification
 - Don't turn all your applications into "read your Bible more often" and "praying is important."
 - Avoid the tendency to trivialize truth. Many of the timeless theological truths of the Bible are complex and difficult to apply consistently. Preachers need to help their audiences understand the challenges of faithful application.
 - Illustration: 1 Corinthians 10:23, Paul wrote "All things are lawful, but not all things are profitable. All things are lawful, but not all things edify." He then applied that principle to eating meats that were previously offered to idols. Paul's application was nuanced and technical.
- Avoid Legalism
 - An application should never cause people to believe that conformity to manmade laws will provide salvation.
 - Applications must never become overly restrictive. This functionally happens when the preacher presents his applications as having Biblical force. (C.f. Mark 7:8)
- Avoid an unbalanced reliance upon the Holy Spirit
 - Don't ignore application claiming that the Holy Spirit will apply the sermon.
 - Don't ignore the Holy Spirit's role in applying the sermon by becoming overly restrictive or by failing to ask for the Holy Spirit's ministry during the sermon.
- Discussion
 - Is specific application regular component of your preaching tradition?
 - Which of the principles that we studied in this lecture are most important?

Lab 6

1. Continue working on your Textual Outline for your sermon text (linear or mental map based on your teacher's instruction).
2. Continue working on your TTS and STS if they have yet to gain your teacher's approval.
3. Begin moving the information to the Sermon Outline when it ready. Your teacher will need to evaluate your work before it moves from the textual outline to the sermon

outline. You are just beginning this process and it will take a few days before your sermon outline is complete.

- a. The STS can be placed on the sermon outline once it is approved by the teacher.
 - b. Once your teacher has approved your main points, they can be moved to the sermon outline.
4. Begin adding the necessary explanation, illustration, analogies, and applications to your sermon outline. (If you have any questions or concerns, speak with your fellow students and your teacher.)

Lecture 8: Illustrating Biblical Truth

Introduction: In this lecture, we will be looking at Step 9 (Find Illustrations).

What is an illustration?

- Definition: “an illustration clarifies the spiritual principle at hand.”
- Forms of illustrations (short list)
 - Stories
 - Object lessons
 - Quotes
 - Personal observations
- Reasons to illustrate
 - Recapture the audience’s attention
 - Clarify confusing concepts
 - Bring creativity to the sermon
 - Demonstrate the relativity of a principle

Finding Illustrations

- Clearly legitimate sources:
 - Biblical narratives: Using Biblical stories to illustrate Biblical truth is the best method for illustration.
 - Biblical narratives are timeless illustrations and connect with everyone.
 - When a preacher uses a Biblical narrative as an illustration, he is exposing his audience to other sections of the Bible.
 - Biblical illustrations are the only truly authoritative illustrations. Other kinds may be interesting but they are not authoritative.
 - The idea of “comparing Scripture with Scripture” to better understand it is foundational to a correct understanding of truth.
 - Personal stories
 - The inclusion of some personal stories helps the audience understand that the preacher has applied the Biblical truth to his own life before he preached it.
 - Numerous personal stories often redirect the audiences’ attention from Scriptures to the preacher. This is dangerous.
 - Good Books

- Quoting from good books often causes audience members to consider reading good books.
 - Sometimes, an author will communicate an idea succinctly so it is more memorable.
 - Your imagination
 - Don't underestimate the value of your own imagination.
 - Develop fictional stories that illustrate theological principles.
 - Imagine how God's creation illustrates a principle from the sermon text.
- Possible sources
 - Internet
 - Positive: A simple search can provide various news accounts or illustrations for a given topic.
 - Danger: When a search engine does all the "thinking" for the preacher, he often fails to mediate fully upon ideas within the sermon text.
 - Borrow from other sermons
 - Positive: Good illustrations are inherently good.
 - Danger: Borrowing illustrations from well known sermons often discourages a preacher's creativity.
 - Television or Movies
 - Positive: Referencing a current television show or movie often connects well with modern audiences.
 - Danger: Many television shows and movies depict evil situations. A preacher must be careful to not accidentally endorse something evil.
 - Your counseling ministry
 - Positive: Real life situations or case studies often help others understand how theological principles relate to daily life.
 - Danger: Church members rightfully expect that much of what they confide in a pastor is kept private. Using illustrations may break this bond of trust.

Using Illustrations

- Connections and transitions
 - Make sure that the illustration is directly connected to the sermon text. Never tell a story simply because it is interesting.
 - Some illustrations help to transition from one idea in the sermon text to the next.
- Evaluating Illustrations
 - Never use an illustration that is morally questionable. It could damage the preacher's testimony.
 - Avoid using overly long or complex illustrations. They divert the audiences' attention from the text.
 - Avoid sexually explicit illustrations. They are never profitable.
 - Avoid illustrations that are unkind or insensitive.

- Ephesians 4:29 (NASB) Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such *a word* as is good for edification according to the need *of the moment*, so that it will give grace to those who hear.
- Length
 - Shorter is better.
 - Consider using an analogy (this is similar to _____) instead of stories. They are shorter and more effective.
- Number:
 - There is not hard and fast rule.
 - Generally, it is best to use only one illustration per main point.
 - Remember, the sermon should be an exposition of the sermon text and not a compilation of interesting stories and anecdotes.
- Story Telling
 - Some preachers are natural storytellers. Others are not.
 - Reading well-told stories will help improve a preacher's ability to tell a story.
 - Teaching Old Testament narratives to children is also helpful in developing the ability to tell a story.

Saving Illustrations

- It may be helpful to file illustrations or keep a folder of illustrations on your computer.
- Caution: If you keep a file of illustrations, be careful to continually be looking for new ideas. Don't keep trusting in illustrations from the past or your audience will quickly notice.

Summary: Things to Avoid

- Never include an illustration unless it either clarifies or moves the audience toward biblical truth.
- Never allow an illustration to ramble on and on so that the audience forgets the spiritual principle.
- Never use an illustration that needs explanation since that defeats the purpose of using an illustration.
- Don't use inappropriate illustrations that carry the audience's imagination away from God.

Lab 7

1. Continue working on your Textual Outline for your sermon text if it is not already completed.
2. Continue working on your TTS and STS if they have yet to gain your teacher's approval.
3. Begin moving the information to the Sermon Outline when it ready. Your teacher will need to evaluate your work before it moves from the textual outline to the sermon outline. You are just beginning this process and it will take a few days before your sermon outline is complete.

- a. The STS can be placed on the sermon outline once it is approved by the teacher.
 - b. Once your teacher has approved your main points, they can be moved to the sermon outline.
4. Begin adding the necessary explanation, illustration, analogies, and applications to your sermon outline. (If you have any questions or concerns, speak with your fellow students and your teacher.)

Lecture 9: Delivering a Biblical Sermon

Introduction: This lecture will focus on Step 10 (Write out the Sermon and Practice Delivery)

Goals for Sermon Delivery

The Delivery Style of the Sermon (A Matter of Style)

- Manuscript Style
 - The preacher writes out the sermon word-for-word and reads the sermon in the pulpit.
 - Positives
 - These sermons are often very precise.
 - These sermons often include good word choice.
 - Negatives
 - Few pastors can read a sermon in such a way that it is engaging.
 - Many who use this method do not trust themselves in the pulpit. They are fearful of speaking something that it not true.
- Memorization Style: Some memorize their sermon manuscripts.
 - Positive: It normally is more engaging then merely reading a sermon.
 - Negative: Few pastors have the intellect or time to memorize a sermon and fulfill all of the other needed pastoral duties.
- Extemporaneous Style
 - This style begins with a sermon manuscript or an extensive outline. The introduction, TTS, main points, explanation, illustrations, and applications are brought to the lectern. The preacher uses the outline or manuscript as a guide but he does not rely upon it.
 - Positives
 - The preacher is able to remember the flow of thought that he developed in his study.
 - Key illustrations, analogies, and word selections can be easily accessed.
 - The preacher feels free to expand on points and make adjustments during the preaching event.
 - Negatives
 - Some preachers are not confident in their theology. As such, they tend to make statements that are not true. (Theology is the fence that keeps the shepherd and the sheep in the Good Shepherd's pasture.)

- Some preachers struggle with transitioning between points when they are not reading a manuscript.
- Best Option: As a rule, the extemporaneous style is preferable.

The Vocal Style of the Sermon

- Goal: The preacher should pursue a conversational style when preaching.
 - Seek to avoid a “preaching voice.” (nothing artificial)
 - Imagine that you are holding a conversation with someone in your home and speak to the audience in that way.
- Pitch: The degree of height or depth of a tone or sound that is produced by the human voice.
 - If you have a higher voice, preach in a higher voice.
 - If you have a lower voice, preach in a lower voice.
 - General Rule: Seek to speak in the lower part of your natural vocal range.
- Pace
 - Don’t speak so fast that your audience believes that you are nervous.
 - Don’t speak so slow that your audience believes that you think them unintelligent.
 - Remember: Different regions of a nation speak at different paces.
- Articulation
 - Say words correctly.
 - Say words clearly.
 - In some cases, say words like they are said in the region in which you preach.

The Body Language of the Sermon

- Use appropriate hand gestures (don’t keep your hands in your pockets.)
- Don’t pace. (walking back and forth for no reason)
- Remember that your facial expressions are important. (Don’t look sad when you say that Jesus loves you.)
- Maintain eye contact with the entire audience throughout the sermon.
- Use your entire body when preaching.

Things to Avoid

- A monotone, expressionless, drawn-out delivery style will hurt communication.
- Don’t imitate other preachers. Find your own style.
- Avoid anything in the delivery that distracts from the message. That includes voice, style, gestures, habits, and facial expressions.

Other Issues

- Change it up:
 - Variety in sermon style and delivery can be helpful.
 - Generally, it is better to develop variety after mastering a model for sermon construction and delivery.

- Computers and Projectors
 - Computers and tablets can be used effectively but the preacher must guard against them becoming a distraction.
 - Projecting Bible verses or sermon outlines can be helpful but it is not necessary.

Summary: Guidelines for Sermon Delivery

- Develop a natural, animated, conversational style that fits your personality.
- Let the content of the message control body language.
- Eye contact is critical, so find a style that heightens a connection to your audience.
- Practice in front of a mirror, get input from others, watch yourself on video, and read materials designed to improve delivery.
- Admit your delivery struggles, recognize that improvement

Lab 8

1. Continue working on your Textual Outline for your sermon text if it is not already completed.
2. Continue working on your TTS and STS if they have yet to gain your teacher's approval.
3. Continue moving the information to the Sermon Outline when it ready. Your teacher will need to evaluate your work before it moves from the textual outline to the sermon outline.
 - a. The STS can be placed on the sermon outline once it is approved by the teacher.
 - b. Once your teacher has approved your main points, they can be moved to the sermon outline.
4. Continue adding the necessary explanation, illustration, analogies, and applications to your sermon outline. (If you have any questions or concerns, speak with your fellow students and your teacher.)
5. Begin writing the manuscript for your sermon.

Preparing for Preaching

1. Each student should write a sermon outline that will be used during the delivery of the evaluated sermon. It will include complete sentences for each level of the outline. Explanation and illustrations will not need to be manuscripted but all important transitions will need to be written out.
2. If possible, each student should write out a manuscript of his sermon prior to preaching. This will help him better prepare for the delivery of his sermon. He will not be encouraged to use the manuscript during the evaluated sermon.
3. Practicing the sermon prior to evaluation is preferable.