

THE PREACHER'S WORKING TOOL

MADE BY
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AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

To preach means to talk about a religious subject to a group of people, especially in a Church. The art of preaching the word of God is among the greatest privileges entrusted to man. It is one of his greatest responsibilities. But the preacher is someone whose job is to give religious speeches or lead religious ceremonies in some Christian Churches. Thus, those are the simplest definitions for both the Preacher and to preach.

On the other hand, preaching is largely the product of two factors: one divine and the other is human. Both are necessary – because “without man, God will not reveal Himself and without God, man cannot”. There are some personality guidelines, before I consider them, let me say this: Preaching involves communicating divine truth through human personality. So the development and

proper use of personality is important. Let me distinguish public speaking from preaching in this manner.

An effective speech is composed of 50% subject matter, 20% psychology of approach and conclusion, 20% effective delivery and 10% personality. Now personal guidelines are:

1. **By yourself.**

Be relaxed, natural and un-affected. One of the most important aids to effective speaking is to be relaxed. So the best way to relax is to commit your message to God.

2. **Try not to copy others.**

God chose you because He wants to use you. It is a great mistake to try to copy any other preacher. If you are endeavoring to copy or imitate someone, your listeners will quickly become aware of this.

3. **Be true to yourself.**

Integrity and honesty are essential for a preacher. You are a channel for God a mouth piece that He might speak to mankind through you. Thus, He wants a vessel which is honest, free from hypocrisy and guilt.

4. **Be a clean vessel.**

It is un-likely that your learners will rise higher than you. If your life is polluted, you will pollute your hearers. If there is bitterness in your spirit, you will communicate it to your listeners. If you are critical, this will come through your preaching, and your congregation will become critical too.

5. **Be sincere.**

Sincerity means to be free from pretense or deceit. It means to be the same person in reality as you are in appearance. Do not appear to be in public what you are not in private. Be genuine, honest and sincere. Many preachers develop a public image. They have a religious façade (away of behaving that hides your real feeling or character). Please avoid this.

6. **Have a clear purpose and objective.**

The personality is properly shaped and developed when one has a real objective in life. If your life is truly dedicated to becoming an effective minister of God's word, your personality will be developed to the end. Do not allow preaching to be a hobby for you.

7. **Be whole hearted.**

Nothing worthwhile is ever achieved by half – hearted people. Nothing of value is ever obtained without cost. Give yourself whole heartedly to the great task of preaching. Study everything you can on the subject. Let it absorb and motivate

you. Make it most important thing in your life, determine to be in every way, worthy of the high calling God has put upon you.

After discussing personality guidelines, now let us consider personality as God has given you, and allow Him to express His mind through your life in the special and unique way He has desired.

Simplicity.

In simplicity, do not try to be overly complicated or profound (very great or very severe). You don't have to impress people. You are there to minister to them, not to impress them.

Attractiveness.

The most attractive personality this world has ever seen was Jesus Christ. The Prophet Isaiah said... "When we see him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him" (Isa. 53:2). The attractiveness of Christ was not primarily in His Physical appearance. It was His character and personality which were so appealing. So the average people of His day responded to Him with enthusiasm (very interested). The book of Mark says that: "The common people heard him gladly" (**Mark 12:37**). It is my pleasure to note that, there are many servants of the Lord who do not know sermon preparation and delivery (**Homiletics**). Some of the servants of the Lord are good preachers and good orators, but they lack the knowledge of sermon preparation and delivery. That is why I want to produce a book that can aid them

INTRODUCTION.

The art of preaching is called "HOMILETICS" derived from the Greek word "homileo and homilia", which means "to be in company with i.e. to converse, and communicate" (**Acts 20:11**) is based in homileo. e.g. They all went back upstairs and ate the Lord's supper together, then Paul preached (homileo) another long sermon – so it was dawn when he finally left them! Homiletics involves the study of everything related to the art of preaching sermons. Good sermons (communication) are birthed out of good communication (companionship) and fellowship. There are two distinct (different) aspects involved in preaching: First – the divine, Secondly – the human. So homiletics is the study of the human aspect.

HOW TO BE EFFECTIVE.

The preaching is the art of communicating divine truth through human personality. A preacher is essentially a communicator. He receives truth from God and communicates it effectively to men. God gives revelation, man provides the presentation. In order to do this effectively, he must learn to do several things well.

1. Wait on God.

First he must learn how to wait on God. The preacher must learn how to be still in the presence of God, and discern the voice of the Lord speaking within his own spirit. Rushing into His presence with any urgency which “needs a sermon for tomorrow” is certainly not an attitude of heart.

2. Study the Bible.

The preacher should come before God with his bible in hand. He should do these: Ask for illumination and inspiration on His word. Prayerfully seek out the counsel, wisdom and instructions of the Lord in his word. Spread out the Bible before you and read it in His presence.

3. Keep a Note Book.

A preacher should have a note book in which to record the thoughts and ideas that come to his mind. The preacher should read through the note book every once in a while. The preacher should get into his habit of talking to the Lord about His word. Again he should ask for the spirit of revelation as stated in (*Epl: 1:17*).

4. Be Cleansed By The Word.

The preacher should try to avoid the attitude that seeks a word from God so that he can preach about it on Sunday morning. He should not always be looking for spiritual bullets that he can fire at someone. The following verse teaches us this “the hard working farmer must be first partake of the crops” (*2 Tim: 2:6*). What you plant and harvest (in a spiritual sense) as a preacher you must partake of (experience) before feeding it to others what you have not first eaten.

TWO FALSE IDEAS ABOUT HOMILETICS.

There are at least two common mistakes which people tend to make in regard to homiletics.

1. Preparation Unnecessary.

The first mistaken idea is that preparation is unnecessary and indicates a lack of faith. The people who take this view feel that preparation is a waste of time.

2. Human ability is enough.

The second mistake goes almost to the other extreme. In this instance, a complete confidence is placed in preparation and human ability. There is little or no dependence on the Holy Spirit. But the truth is that an effective ministry needs both the divine and human aspects.

FOUR AREAS OF HOMILETICS.

After the consideration of the two important informations, that is how to be effective and two false ideas about Homiletics, now let us talk about four areas of Homiletics this way:

1. CONCEPT.

This is the way of obtaining the original theme from the message. It is the art of knowing how to receive a message from God. It deals with how to get the initial idea and theme for the sermon. Seldom, a seed thought is sown in the mind and may remain there for months before it develops to the size and proportion suitable to be shared with others. As you meditate (to make your mind empty) on the word, there comes an inner quickening of a particular aspect. Something lights up from you.

2. COMPOSITION.

Since you received inspiration on a particular truth, you must now begin to analyze it to discover all which that truth contains. As a preacher your note book is important right here! As you prayerfully meditate, write down carefully every thought that comes to mind.

3. CONSTRUCTION.

Having exhaustively analyzed your subject material and listed every aspect of truth you can find within it. You must now begin to assemble those thoughts in an orderly fashion. This is essential so that you can give further prayerful consideration to the subject. So, sermon construction aims to make it as simple as possible for your listeners to grasp.

4. COMMUNICATION.

Finally let us come to the presentation of the message:

- The clear and effective communication of the truth.
- How to present your subject in a manner which will captivate (to attract or interest) the minds of your learners.
- How to develop your thoughts in such an orderly manner that your audience can easily follow the line of truth you are seeking to convey.
- How to motivate your listeners to appropriate actions, for we are to be “doers of the word and not learners only” (*Jas 1:22*).

PART ONE.

SERMON PREPARATION AND DELIVERY (HOMILETICS).

INTRODUCTION.

I start by asking a question, have you ever listened to a preacher who would not let you think about anything else but his sermon? When you try to think something else, he grabs your mind and brings it right back to the sermon. Would you like to hold attention of the people in that way? Such ability is a contribution of many factors. Some factors are based on the preacher's personality while others are on the basis of his preparation. In this preparation, we shall be aiming at the basic or foundational requirements in sermon preparation and sermon delivery for maximum impact. The preacher should make preparation for the message that he proclaims. He should be prepared through general study for his task as apostle Paul urged Timothy a young preacher to do his utmost to prepare himself saying "study to show thy self-approved unto God, a workman that needs not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (*2 Tim 2:15*).

It is on this basis that I bring this talk to us and hoping that somehow we are going to be reminded of the basic things that we sometimes ignore and internally destroy our efficiency in ministry.

ORGANIZATION OF A SERMON OUTLINE (STRUCTURE OF SERMON).

The effective sermon has a well arranged outline which provides a logical organization of the preacher's thought around the text or subject. The outline provides unity to the message. It helps the preacher to remember his message and deliver it with freedom. It helps the people to follow his reasoning or argument and remember the message. A sermon outline consists of three main parts: The introduction.

The body and the conclusion.

THE INTRODUCTION.

- A good introduction acquaints the audience with text, uncovering need and raising interests.
- It should start with a sentence that has been thought out carefully, provoking or interest catching.
- It should include the reading of the text.
- It should include the background information about the text.

- It points to the historical background of the text in the “then and there” in relation to “here and now”
- Start out right and you have much chances of ending where you want to be.
- Start by providing a brief title of your sermon and this should point at the one thing you want to talk about. In other words summarize what you are talking about in a brief sentence that is not ambiguous / confusing / vague / unclear.
- In the introduction you are expected to tell the people what you are going to tell them in the main sermon. “Tell them what you want to tell them”.

THE BODY.

- The body comprises of two or more points, but each part should flow into the next and equally related to the title of the sermon.
- It is the main part of the message and it answers the question what is the message? Or what is the point?
- It provides the main framework or plan of the sermon.
- It points out the main message of the sermon “Tell them”.

CONCLUSION.

- The conclusion reinforces the purpose of the sermon.
- It draws the rest of the sermon logically and structurally to itself.
- It keeps the sermon from wondering off course.
- It hints the last nail to the sermon and calls people to respond to the message.
- Every sermon should aim at a response from the audience.
- In the conclusion you “tell them what you have told them”.

Basic requirements of the sermon.

There are four basic requirements of every sermon. You must be **accurate, relative, clear and interesting.**

1. ACCURACY.

- You cannot say “thus says the Lord” if the Lord has not said.
- Remember that a text cannot mean what it never could have meant to its author or his audience and therefore ministering under such a frame work helps to set limits to what the text cannot mean.
- Accuracy depends on disciplined practice of study, prayer and careful attention to accuracy also helps make sure the applications you select are valid, arising from the text and in its context.

WHERE TO BEGIN.

Begin by a good exegesis which means (“to bring out the true meaning”) or first of all know that the Bible is unity of all kinds of literature because we have.

Historical Old Testament narratives, laws, wisdom books, poetry, prophecy, gospels, epistles, Acts and Apocalyptic etc. The principals from interpreting all kinds of literature differ from one another. In other words the way you interpret poetry is different from narratives and even the gospels etc.

- In order to achieve good exegesis, being by reading a passage through several times in the context of its chapter. And as time allows read through the entire book to get an idea of how the passage fits into the overall design.
 - The more fully you understand the whole book the more you will understand your passage and as you read take notes on significant details which include:
 - Who?... Who wrote the book? To whom was it addressed.
 - What?... What is the situation? What is being encouraged or discouraged?
 - When?... When was the book penned?
 - Where?... Where do the recipients of this book live?
 - Why?... Why the commands given?
 - How?... How are Christians expected to respond to this truth? The scripture has timeless truth to the original readers and now.
 - On the other hand accuracy in exegesis is a goal we aim for because it reveals God’s message to his people.
 - It all begins with two questions, the questions are:
 - a. Have I prayed that the Lord would help me understand his word?
 - b. Have I mentally isolated the text under consideration from my audience?
- Therefore four things / principals should guide you as a preacher when handling a text.
- i. Beware of preconceptions: Observe what Biblical text actually says.
 - ii. Observe the text first then explain it. As explanation proceeds, be sure it fits your observation.
 - iii. Resist reshaping your observations so that they support your preferred theology.
- Determine the context of the message and this refers to the verses before and after the text but also in relation to the rest of the Bible.
- iv. Make note of any details that are for any reason especially striking
- Taking notes of details that are significant and insignificant or essential and accidental. This helps one to avoid majoring on the minor details and yet leaving the major details of a text.

2. **RELEVANCY.**

- Once you understand a text you have to understand the audience.
- The text should point to the people's need so truth can be applied to the issues that afflict human hearts.
- Find out what the text means and then explore how what the text says, applies to your audience in particular.
- This step will help define the purpose for your sermon and the motivation for your congregation to apply the message.
- The purpose keeps you on target, focused on life change or transformation.

3. **CLARITY.**

If a sermon is not clear then it's worthy nothing. The preacher should aim at communication of his message with clarity. This leads us to the Ten Commandments of preaching:

- Show confidence.
- Remember that people are looking at your face.
- Be neat.
- Have good posture.
- Observe pulpit manners.
- Use your voice wisely.
- Pronounce your words clearly.
- Use appropriate gestures with a measure of transparency.
- Avoid negative communication with your hands.
- Make eye contact with people.

Obey the Ten Commandments of preaching a message to the best of your ability. Then the message you preach from God will reach your listeners in a clear, powerful way. Above all, be full of your subject, excited and passionate in spirit.

4. **INSPIRE INTEREST.**

- As a good preacher, breathe life into the sermon by making it enjoyable. Just like journey, if you do not become a pleasant driver, then people will find another vehicle for the journey.
- Be humorous (funny and entertaining) and able to make people to come with you again and therefore flavor your sermons with good and relevant illustrations, testimonies and or stories that will inspire the audience to relate to the sermon.
- Have a measure of transparency yet using your family sparingly / cautiously. In other words do not expose your family to intimidate and humiliation in your illustrations.

CHECKLIST BEFORE DELIVERY OF A SERMON.

- 1) Do I have to go the same way every time?
- 2) Can I remember the way or must I keep glancing at the map?
- 3) How do I place myself so that I arrive on time?
- 4) How can I make sure the style is right as I take them through the sermon?
- 5) How do I keep the sermon interesting and enjoyable?
- 6) What do I do when I arrive at my destination?
- 7) How do I keep from missing a turn? (Meandering into the bush).
- 8) How do I get started?
- 9) Where is the sermon going?
- 10) What does the rest of the Bible say about my subject?
- 11) What is the sermon about?

If the preaching is grounded in true biblical teaching then deliver it with relevancy, clarity and interesting style.

TYPES OF SERMON PREPARATION.

There are three types of sermon preparation. The written sermon, skeleton type, the extemporary sermon.

1) THE WRITTEN SERMON.

This is a method which demands a great deal of time in preparation. It involves very copious notes. This method has advantages and disadvantages. An advantage is that the whole sermon has been the subject of very careful attention to detail. The disadvantage in the presentation of this type of sermon is that it often comes across as uninteresting and does not capture the listeners attention. This style of presentation can easily become extremely boring.

2) SKELETON TYPE NOTES.

This is the most commonly used method, and the one which I feel is the most effective. Notes are kept to a minimum, affording sufficient outline of the message to prompt the memory. The brief notes form the skeleton” of the message. This method allows the preacher more flexibility. He is not tied to his notes so much.

3) THE EXTEMPORARY SERMON.

This style of preaching is spontaneous, (happening in a natural way) and usually presented without notes at the time of delivery. This style is often used to deliver the more inspirational type of sermon. Evangelistic messages can be presented very effectively in this way. It is a kind of preaching that can be exciting and stimulating when presented by capable and experienced preacher.



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