

INTRODUCTION

The Purpose of Preaching

- There are three major goals we seek to achieve each time we preach:
 - It is to inform the mind about God’s truth and will.
 - It is to inflame the heart with love for the truth.
 - It is to inspire the will to do what God wants.
- The preparation in the study handles the first; the act of preaching combines all three.

Preaching is...

- An art—to be caught and not taught.
- A science—with laws to be studied. There are basic natural rules of public speaking and effective communication. Learn them!
- A discipline—that comes from years of practice. So, do not give up. Continue to add to improve little by little through practice.
- A relationship—between the preacher and God, the preacher and God’s word, the preacher and the people, the preacher and the social context in which he is preaching.

Preaching Definitions

- Expository preaching is the contemporising of the central proposition of a biblical text that is derived from proper methods of interpretation and declared through effective means of communication to inform minds, instruct hearts, and influence behaviour towards godliness (Ramesh Richard).
- Expository preaching is the communication of a biblical concept, derived from and transmitted through a historical, grammatical, and literary study of a passage in its context, which the Holy Spirit first applies to the personality of the preacher, then through him to hearers (Haddon Robinson)

Why preach in an expository manner

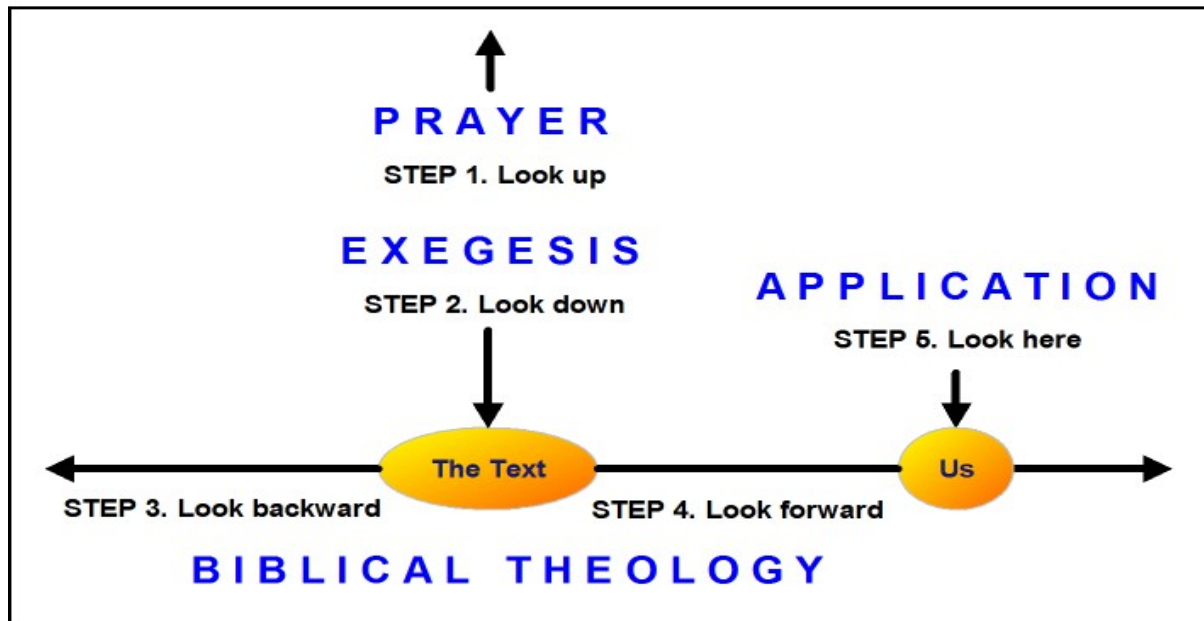
- You will be balanced
- You never lack material
- You preach “the Word”

Why expository preaching is unpopular

- Lack of faith in the Bible
- Too many goats in church
- Preachers are loiterers

This week’s training, which is based on the Langham Preaching Seminar Level 1 format, will be primarily on how to go from a text of Scripture to sermon notes that you can carry with you into the pulpit. The materials in this booklet, therefore, are copyrighted and must only be reproduced when you state that they are Langham Preaching materials.

A Model for Biblical Interpretation



Step 1: Look up!
We turn to God in prayer

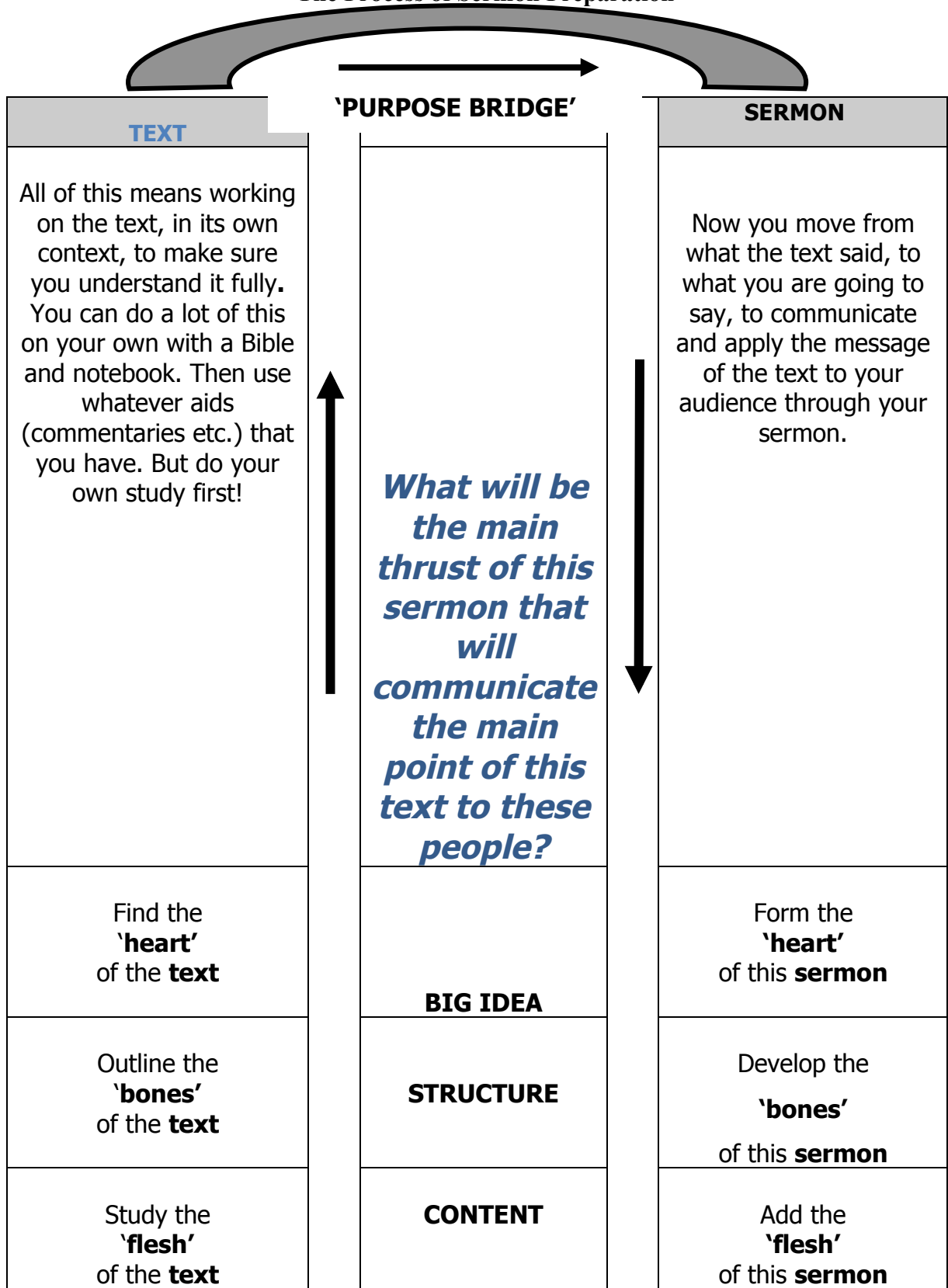
Step 2: Look down!
We do EXEGESIS, asking what the text means.

Step 3: Look backward!
The context of the work of God in the past

Step 4: Look forward!
The context of the purpose of God in the future

Step 5: Look here!
Application to our own context

An Alternative Structure to Approach the Issue of Preparation of Sermons
The Process of Sermon Preparation



START – study the text

FINISH – preach the sermon!

Step 1 – Study the Text

In studying a text there are two facets;

Seeing the details of a text

This is observation, looking to see what is in a passage

Seeking meaning from the details

This is interpretation, understanding what is meant by those details.

This involves questions and answers.

Another way to view this is to think in these terms;

- Observe: What does the passage say?
- Analyse: What does the passage mean?

There is in fact another term and question;

- Apply: How does the passage work its way into real life?

1. Step 1 in the Exegesis Process - Seeing the details.

We need to observe both words and relationships between words

Observe Words

Take note of key words

Long words

Unusual words

Repeated words

Significant words

Observe Relationships between words

There are various kinds of relationships between words

Grammatical relationships

Tenses of verbs, singular or plural, gender

Logical relationships

How is argument built, words like “for, but, because”

Chronological/Geographical relationships

The when and where of a passage

Psychological relationships

Feelings, negative, positive etc.

Contextual relationships

What is the setting of the passage?

The context of the Bible

The context of the book

The context of the text

Relationship in genre

This relates to the type of biblical literature in which a passage is found. Types of literature include; Teaching, narratives, poetry, parables, miracles, prophetic

Exercise: Ephesians 6:1-4

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. “Honour your father and mother” (this is the first commandment with a promise), “that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land”. Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

2. Step 2 in the Exegesis Process - Seeking meaning from the details

Interpretation is basically asking questions about your observations and then answering them.

You seek meaning from details by;

Asking questions

Answering Questions

Analysing Answers

Applying Answers

Ask questions about words

Ask questions about relationships

Grammatical relationships

Logical relationships

Chronological/Geographical Relationships

Psychological Relationships

Contextual Relationships

Relationships in genre

Seeking meaning from the details. ctd

Asking Questions

Answering Questions

Analysing Answers

Applying Answers

Exercise: Ephesians 6:1-4

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. “Honour your father and mother” (this is the first commandment with a promise), “that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land”. Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

Step 2 – Structuring the Text (the skeleton)

This step builds on the previous step of “Study the Text”.

The vital second step has to do with the structure of the passage. We ask “How did the biblical author put this text together?”

Really there are two steps to this process:

- Structuring the text
- Summarising the sections of the text

a. Structuring the text

This structuring of the text will help us in two other areas;

- In establishing a structure for our own sermon
- As we summarise the content of each section we are able to summarise the content of the whole passage

In step 1 we looked for certain details, details regarding words and relationships. In this step we also look for indicators, certain keys to help us unlock the structure of a passage.

- There are two types of keys we look for;
- Grammatical keys
- Content/subject keys

GRAMMATICAL KEYS

Grammatical Keys Indicating Structure (From Richard)

CONTENT/SUBJECT CHANGES

These keys indicate a “joint” in the body, a new section. However this indication is not with the use of specific words as above, but rather, the structure is discerned by;

- Content changes
- Introduction of a new subject

We also need to distinguish between large keys and small keys.

- Large keys will indicate a major structural change
- Smaller keys will indicate a structural change that is not so significant.

Practical Exercise

Psalm 1: What would be the major grammatical keys in this passage?

“How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the path of sinners, nor sit in the seat of scoffers! But his delight is in the law of the Lord and in His law he meditates day and night. And he will be like a tree firmly planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither; and in whatever he does, he prospers.”

Psalm 1

v.1 How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the path of sinners, nor sit in the seat of scoffers! v.2 But his delight is in the law of the Lord and in His law he meditates day and night. v.3 And he will be like a tree firmly planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither; and in whatever he does, he prospers.

What are the subject/content keys in this passage?

Psalm 1

v.1 How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the path of sinners, nor sit in the seat of scoffers! v.2 But his delight is in the law of the Lord and in His law he meditates day and night. v.3 And he will be like a tree firmly planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither; and in whatever he does, he prospers.

Four Steps for Structuring Text

1. Identify all grammatical and subject/content keys
2. Separate big (major) from smaller (minor) keys
3. Understand the force or meaning of major keys
4. Outline the text according to the relative importance of the keys

The final structure is:

Psalm 1:1-3

The Blessed man of verses vv. 1-3

- I. What he does not do v. 1
 - a. He does not walk in a certain way v. 1a
 - b. He does not stand in a certain place v. 1b
 - c. He does not sit in a certain company v. 1c
- II. What he does do on the contrary v. 2
 - a. He delights in the law of the Lord v. 2a
 - b. He meditates in God's law v. 2b
 - 1. He meditates in the day
 - 2. He meditates in the night
- III. What he shall be v. 3
 - a. He shall be like a tree v. 3a
 - 1. That is planted by streams v. 3b
 - 2. Which yields fruit in season v. 3b
 - 3. Whose leaf never withers v. 3c
 - a. He shall prosper in all things v. 3d

b. Summarizing the text

What does this involve? This involves restating in your own words and in a shorter form the content of each section of the passage.

How might we summarise vv. 1-3?

The first major section is v.1

The main subject is the blessed man and what he does not do

Each part of the verse tells us something different that he does not do:

- v.1a He does not follow the wicked crowd
- v.1b He does not settle in sinners' ways
- v.1c He is not comfortable with ungodly convictions

The second major section is v.2

The main subject is the blessed man and what he does

Each part of the verse tells us something different that he does do:

- v.2a He loves God's Law

v.2b He thinks deeply about God's Law

The third major section is v.3

The main subject is the blessed man and what he shall be

Each part of the verse tells us something different about what he will be like:

- v.3a He will be like a tree, well nourished, constantly alive and consistently fruitful
- v.3b He will enjoy godly success in everything

The summary of the entire 3 verses

The blessed man does not follow the wicked crowd, or settle in sinners' ways and is not comfortable with ungodly convictions, in contrast he loves God's Law and thinks deeply about it. As a result he will be like a well nourished, fruitful tree and will enjoy godly success in everything.

Step 3 - The Big Idea (The Heart)

In our preaching we have essentially two areas of concern

1. Our exegesis or opening up of the text
The Passage
2. Our preaching or proclamation of the text
The Message

In both of them, we want to be clear on the vital issue of THE BIG IDEA
The BIG IDEA of a sermon is based upon the BIG IDEA of a passage

In light of this...

Our task is twofold. It is:

- To think clearly about a passage
(find the BIG IDEA of the passage)
- To preach clearly in a message
(preach the BIG IDEA of the message)

What is the most important distinction between the BIG IDEA of the PASSAGE and the BIG IDEA of the MESSAGE?

The BIG IDEA of the PASSAGE is related to the **world of the Bible (Biblical context)**

The BIG IDEA of the MESSAGE is related to the **world of the hearers (Congregational context)**

The Search for THE BIG IDEA!!!

Ideas are formed when a subject and complement join together.

The best way to think of them is through two questions;

Subject – What is the passage talking about?

Complement – What is the passage saying about what it is talking about?

How are ideas formed?

A **subject** is best presented as a **question**, because it is looking for completion, it is looking for an answer, it is looking for a **complement!**

A **complement** is best presented as a **statement**, because it is looking to answer a question, it wants to complete a question!

Where do we search for big ideas?

- Paragraphs
- Also sections and subsections of books as well.

Exercise: Ephesians 6:1-4

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. “Honour your father and mother” (this is the first commandment with a promise), “that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land”. Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

Step 4 – The Purpose Bridge

Thus far, the whole deliberate focus of our preparation has been on the text;

- **Studying the flesh** - asking and answering questions, about key words and relationships
- **Outlining the bones** - structure, looking for markers, word and relationship markers, establishing main points, sub-points etc.
- **Finding the heart** - what is the passage saying in a single pithy statement

Now the focus shifts somewhat. Now we come to the bridge that will move us across from text to the congregation.

In this step we move from **hermeneutics** (studying the Scripture) to **homiletics** (preaching the Scripture). We stop looking **down**, we now look **here** having **discovered** the truth **in** the word of God, we are now focussing on **delivering** the truth **to** the people of God.

A valid and clear purpose of the sermon:

- a. Focuses the introduction
- b. Determines the content
- c. Influences the conclusion and application
- d. Guides the choice of illustrations
- e. Evaluates the success of the sermon

Ramesh calls on all expositors to be very clear about the purpose of their sermon, and insists that a preacher must form a purpose bridge for his sermon.

How does one establish this purpose bridge?

There are two principles to balance in this;

1. Faithfulness to the intent and meaning of the passage itself
2. Faithfulness to the intention of God in communicating from the truth of the passage, to the present context of the hearers

In a sense, the purpose bridge connects two worlds, the world of the Bible in its original sense and the world of our hearers in their present situation.

The constant challenge is to remain true and faithful to God's communication in both contexts.

Two questions will test the authenticity of our purpose bridge;

1. Is the message of my sermon faithful to the original purpose of the text?
2. Is the message of my sermon faithful to the present context of my people?

Remember

- There is only one big idea of a passage.
- There may be many big ideas for several sermons.
- Interpretation is singular,
- Application is plural.

Psalm 1:1-3;

Big idea - The blessed man does not follow the ways of ungodly people, rather he fills his mind with the Word of God and he will enjoy fruitfulness and prosperity in life.

Purpose bridge;

- To explain to believers that the world seeks to influence their thinking and conduct.
- To inform people what their relationship to the Word of God ought to be
- To challenge people to avoid the subtle temptations of the world and to fill their minds with the Word of God so that they can have a life of fruitfulness and Godly success.

Ezra 7:10

Big idea – Ezra had set his heart to study the law of the Lord, and to practice it, and to teach His statutes and ordinances in Israel.

Purpose bridge;

- To encourage people to give due attention to the Word of God in their lives.
- To show people that the Word of God has its way in our lives only when we study and apply and then pass on its truth.

Psalms 117

Big idea – Everyone should praise the Lord, because His love is strong and His faithfulness is eternal.

Purpose bridge;

- To show my congregation why they should join all nations in praise for the Lord.

Notice that one might have various purposes in mind, as illustrated by these stated purpose bridges:

- To inform people, i.e. aiming at understanding, largely cognitive
- To impassion people, i.e. aiming at commitment, and desires and goals
- To warn people
- To aim at behavioural change
- To challenge i.e. aiming at world values
- To motivate on the basis sometimes of warning or exhortation or even information

Step 5 – The Big Idea of the Sermon (The Heart)

The sermon, as the living Word of God to His people, should make its impact on them then and there. They will not remember the details. We should not expect them to do so. But they should remember the dominant thought, because all the sermon's details have been marshalled to help them grasp its message and feel its power.

John R. W. Stott, *I Believe in Preaching*, 225

The first thing in making a sermon, the sine qua non, is the idea. There can be no sermon that was not first preceded by an idea or a theme. The novelist Henry James called the idea in story writing the "germ". It is the bacterial beginning, the point of conception, he said, for every work of art or creation. The same is true for the idea of the sermon; it is the germ, the insight, from which eventually the entire sermon is grown.

John Killinger, *Fundamentals of Preaching*, 44

FORMING the big idea of the Sermon

- If we complete steps 1-3 in this process, then we will be able to state the meaning of the Biblical text.
- If we complete step 4 in this process, then we will be able to state how we intend to apply the meaning of the Biblical text.
- But it is only as we apply steps 5-7 that we can take the meaning and application and present it in a relevant and persuasive manner.

Again we look for two components

- Subject – What am I talking about in my message?
- Complement – What am I saying in my message about what I am talking about?

Ramesh Richard suggests two different words, but conveying the same basic message, he speaks of

- Theme: What am I talking about?
- Thrust: What am I saying about what I'm talking about?

The delight and simplicity...

- The Big Idea of the message is based upon the Big Idea of the passage.
- And the importance of every step and the cohesion between each step is revealed by this simple formula;
- The Big Idea of the message is formed when the Big Idea of the passage interacts with the Purpose Bridge.

Psalm 1:1-3;

Big idea - The blessed man does not follow the ways of ungodly people, rather he fills his mind with the word of God and he will enjoy fruitfulness and prosperity in life

Several purpose bridges we had suggested;

- To explain to believers that the world seeks to influence their thinking and conduct
- To inform people what their relationship to the Word of God ought to be

- To challenge people to avoid the subtle temptations of the world and to fill their minds with the Word of God so that they can have a life of fruitfulness and Godly success.

Working with these purpose bridges...

First Purpose Bridge: To explain to believers that the world seeks to influence their thinking and conduct

- Subject :
 - How does the world seek to influence the thinking and conduct of a believer?
- Complement :
 - by tempting the believer to follow the crowd, to settle into sinners' ways and to be comfortable with ungodly convictions.
- Big idea :
 - the world seek to influence the thinking and conduct of a believer by tempting the believer to follow the crowd, to settle into sinners' ways and to be comfortable with ungodly convictions.

Second Purpose Bridge: To inform people what their relationship to the Word of God ought to be

- Subject: ?
- Complement: ?
- Big idea: ?

Third Purpose Bridge: To challenge people to avoid the subtle temptations of the world and to fill their minds with the Word of God so that they can have a life of fruitfulness and Godly success.

- Subject: ?
- Complement: ?
- Big idea: ?

Ezra 7:10

Second Purpose Bridge: To show people that the Word of God has its way in our lives only when we study and apply and then pass on its truth.

- Subject:
 - What should I do so that the Word of God will have its full way in my life?
- Complement:
 - I should study, apply and also pass on the truth of the Word of God.
- Big idea:
 - In order for the Word of God to have its full way in my life, I should study, apply and pass on its truth to others.

Step 6 – The Structure of the Message (The Skeleton)

Sermon Forms

a. **Deductive** sermons

Here the whole idea is stated in the introduction and then the body of the sermon goes about proving, explaining and applying it.

b. **Inductive** sermons

Here only the first point of an idea is stated at the beginning, and then each section develops from there, one point building on another, until finally at the end, the whole idea comes together and is stated.

c. **Inductive/deductive** sermons

There may be a combination of these approaches. It may be that there is use of induction in the introduction and the first point. At the end of this inductive approach, the truth is stated explicitly. And from then on, the next set of sections is deductive, in explanation, proof or application.

1. An idea to be explained

This is ordinarily the form when a doctrine needs to be understood by the congregation. Here we are not so much trying to **prove** a point as much as to **explain** a point, to make it clear.

In such a sermon, application may not feature strongly, in a sense, the application will be in the **understanding of the passage**, the grasp of the teaching.

Introduction – the idea to be explained is stated

Body – the explanation will be elaborated

Conclusion – the explanation will be summarised

2. A proposition (or statement) to be proved

Here the goal is not so much to **explain** an idea, as to **prove** a proposition or a statement.

Introduction - the proposition is stated

Body - the proposition will be proved

Conclusion - the implications of the proposition worked out and applied

5. A principle to be applied

Here, the focus is strongly on **application**. In essence, the sermon simply answer the question “**So What?**” with regard to a Biblical principle

Introduction - the principle is stated

Body - the principle will be applied

Conclusion - summarises applications or gives strong reasons to give attention to applications

4. A subject to be completed

This is the most common form of sermon and, in light of the sermon preparation process outlined above, probably the simplest form to adopt.

Introduction - states the subject
Body - works out the complement
Conclusion - states the application

5. A story to be **told**

A biblical story told with insight and imagination, making relevant observations and applications along the way. Jesus taught often in stories, and indeed, the Bible itself is a story.

Introduction - raises interest, so listeners want to enter into story
Body - brings people into the life of the story
Conclusion - applies the predominant lesson from the story

6. A problem to be **addressed**

This may be especially useful with sceptics or in dealing with a difficult issue or with people who are even a bit antagonistic

Introduction - states the problem and its relevance to listeners
Body - addresses the problem
Conclusion - applies and works out the implications

From Form of Sermon to Structure of Sermon

The method is exactly the opposite of studying the passage.

- There, we started **large** and moved to **small**
Study text, structure text, big idea
- Here we move from **small** to **large**
Big idea, structure sermon, flesh out sermon

Why have an outline or a structure to a sermon?

- It helps the preacher to conceive the message as a **whole unit** and so maintains a sense of **unity**
- It helps **clarify** the **relationship** between all the parts of a sermon
- It keeps the **preacher** on track!
- It enables the **audience** to see, and understand the passage as a whole, it provides “hooks for memory”.

Using the process of establishing the **subject** and then the **complement** of our sermon...

Psalm 1: 1-3

Now having got the basic outline, we can then make it a bit more appealing and memorable in terms of the section headings, for example;

- a. The **World's Pressures** upon a believer
- b. The **Word's Power** within a believer
- c. The **Wonderful Promises** to a believer.

Ezra 7:10

In order to most benefit from the Word of God at work in my life, I must:

- a. Study God's Word

- b. Apply God's Word
- c. Pass on God's Word

It is important that the outline and the whole of the sermon should display 3 qualities:

1. **Unity** – all the points must connect with the one single theme of the sermon, the big idea of the sermon.
2. **Progress** – the points must have a sense of progressive connection.
3. **Clarity** – Any confusion along the way, will result in confusion at the end.

Step 7 – The Content of the Message (the Flesh)

This is the body of the sermon. Remember the three sections of a sermon;

1. Introduction
2. Body
3. Conclusion

What we have after we outline or structure, is the **skeleton** of a sermon. Our responsibility now, is to cover that skeleton with **flesh**.

- S.A.V.E.(a) Point!
- State the point clearly
- Anchor the point in the text.
- Validate the point explain why you have drawn this point from the text
- Explain the point; probe the meaning of a point.
- (a)pply the point

“Making Dry Bones Live”

- “**clarify**” – make our point clearer, explain it in a way that people can grasp and understand
- “**amplify**” – expand our idea, extend its relevance, broaden the understanding of it
- “**prove**” – persuade our listeners of the truthfulness of our points or ideas
- “**apply**” – show our hearers how these words and ideas are relevant in their own lives, connect this idea from the Bible with the real existence of their lives

What are those supporting materials?

1. Restatement

This involves stating an idea “in other words”. It is not mere **repetition** of the same words, it is the use of new words and phrases, which carry the same meaning, but in a **different** way.

2 basic purposes:

- a) It gains **clarity** for the listener
 - b) It **impresses** the **truth** on the listener
- What are those supporting materials?

2. Explanation and Definition

Definition establishes **limits**, telling us what must be included and excluded in our understanding of a term or statement. Explanation gives more **insight** into the meaning of a term or idea. Sometimes this explanation will use **comparison**, sometimes **contrast**, we may use a **simile**. Sometimes an **example** is used to help explain something.

- What are those supporting materials?

3. Factual Information

There may be various forms of factual information that we share in our sermons. When we speak of matters as being factual, we must be sure that in fact, they are. Grand but untrue or inaccurate statements diminish a preacher’s **authority** and damage a preacher’s **integrity**.

When using figures, don’t **bore** people and don’t be too **detailed**, generally approximate numbers are fine.

- What are those supporting materials?

4. Quotations

Quotations lend **authority** to a point, when we can quote a higher authority, or a more qualified person, the weight of what is said comes strongly to bear.

5. Narration

“Narration within a sermon describes the individuals and events embraced in biblical accounts”.

- **5. Narration (continued)**
- The importance of narrative cannot be too strongly stated! The **Bible** is narrative!
- Anticipate the **objector** as Paul did in Romans, jumping up and asking questions.
- Anticipate the **genuine enquirer**, answer questions that might well be asked.
- Use **dialogue** in a sermon
- Use our keen **imagination** to help our clear **presentation** of our **faithful** interpretation.
- What are those supporting materials?

6. Illustrations

A **recipe** book is a useful guide for preachers. The meal is broken down, ingredient by ingredient. And each step of the process follows in careful order.

- **Connections between our Main Points**
- When we talk of moving from one point to another, we are speaking of “**transitions**”.
- We spoke earlier of **unity, progress and clarity**. Transitions make sure that these three qualities are maintained in the sermon.

Transitions ensure that the path of our sermon resembles the tracks left by a millipede (chongololo) and not the tracks left by a grasshopper.

- **Phrases** for transition–
 - ”not only this but ...”,
 - “in the next place ...”,
 - “whereas ...”,
 - “besides this ...”,
 - “on the contrary ...”.
- **Point** transitions.
 - **Chronological** point transitions “So the first point then is ... We turn now to the second point ...”
 - **Logical** point transitions – here you are step by step building a logical argument.
 - **Metaphorical** point transitions – use a metaphor to show transition, for example a building metaphor (“foundation...”, “then on that is built”)
 - **Psychological** point transitions – here you use something already in the mind of the hearer, for example “We have seen already that Now will you notice that”.
- **Physical** transitions – here your bodily actions helps to show movement from point to point.

Principles of Application

In some cases application is left until the **end** of the sermon, in other cases, application is woven into the **flesh** of the sermon.

But whichever option we choose, there are a couple of tests regarding the application of each passage;

- Tests of Application
 1. It must be **true** to the **meaning** of the passage
 2. It must be **relevant** to the **lives** of the audience
 3. It must be **concrete**, tie it in to the real daily lives that they live
 4. It must tie in with the **purpose bridge** that you came up with for the passage
- “**Application Arenas of Life**”

What kind of a person does God want us to become in:

- Personal Life
- Home life
- Work or study life
- Church life
- Community life
- “Application Avenues in Life”

How should this truth affect our

- Attitudes – towards God, others, circumstances
- Knowledge of God
- Behaviour – 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

Introductions and Conclusions

- The introduction sets the stage and to a large extent determines if the audience wants to **continue** on with the preacher or not.
- The conclusion closes the curtains and to a large extent determines how much the audience is **affected** by the sermon.
- Most preaching teachers recommend that the introduction is the **last** part of the sermon that is prepared. This makes sense, first we fill out the body, then we see the most appropriate way to **hook** people into what we are going to say in the body of the sermon.

The Introduction

Ramesh Richard suggests the following as goals of an effective introduction;

- To get the **attention** of the audience
- To raise a pertinent **need**
- To **orient** the audience to the theme/subject
- To state the **purpose** of the sermon
- Haddon Robinson - Introduction

1. Commands Attention

Realistically the congregation may well be a bit tired and bored. Attention must be gained in the first thirty seconds.

2. Surfaces Needs

People must have a sense not only that they should listen, but they actually want to listen.

Curiosity will keep people for a short time...

Haddon Robinson - introduction

3. Introduces the Body of the Sermon

This may seem obvious, an introduction must introduce. We must not raise a need in the introduction that will not be addressed in the sermon, we must not raise a question in the introduction that will not be answered in the sermon.

There is a sense of tension created in an introduction.

4. Exhibits Other Characteristics

- ❖ Don't begin with an apology

- ❖ Keep the introduction short and to the point.
- ❖ Don't promise more than you will provide
- ❖ Include the Scripture reading
- ❖ Use humour carefully
- ❖ Physical mannerisms and physical manner make a difference.
- ❖ Know your introduction well enough to be able to look at the audience as you give it. You are establishing lines of communication.
- ❖ Your opening words are important, beware the effect of nervousness on your voice.

The Conclusion

- Conclusions require **careful, thoughtful** preparation. Make sure you know where you are going to come in to land with your sermon.
- A conclusion is meant to **conclude** a sermon, not just to stop us talking! It **ties** things up, **winds** things up, sets everything in place.
- In the conclusion we are asking for a **verdict**.

Some of the common forms of conclusion include;

- A Summary
- An illustration
- A quotation
- A question
- A prayer
- Visualisation

Some general rules about conclusions;

- Don't introduce new material
- Don't promise to conclude and then keep going
- Conclusions need not be long

W. E. Sangster

“Having come to the end, stop. Do not cruise about looking for a spot to land, like some weary swimmer coming in from the sea and splashing about until he can find a shelving beach up which to walk. Come right in, and land at once. Finish what you have to say and end at the same time. If the last phrase can have some quality of crisp memorableness, all the better, but do not grope even for that. Let your sermon have the quality that Charles Wesley coveted for his whole life; let the work and the course end together.”