

THE SERMON/LESSON PLAN AND ITS STRUCTURE

THE TEXT

I. Definition of the text:

The word text is derived from the Latin, texture, which means something woven. The text should be derived from the inspired Word of God and may consist of a single verse or a passage consisting of many verses. The text is our authority of the foundation on which the lesson is built. Without a solid foundation in God's Word, the lesson will crumble.

II. The necessity of the text:

- A. It gives authority to the lesson.
 - a. Scripture is inspired of God
 - b. Literally: "God-breathed"
- B. It confines the teacher to his subject. Happy is he who sticks to his text, then the text may stick to his students.
- C. It gives unity to the lesson and presents a complete thought to be retained by the students.
- D. It prepares the hearer for the lesson that is to follow.
- E. It promotes variety in preaching/teaching.

III. The selection of the text:

The question may arise, "How do I choose my text?" Use these helpful tools when searching for the right text for a sermon/lesson.

- A. Your chosen text should be personal. Did God speak to YOU through the text? Did it prick YOUR heart? The text should preach to you as you study it.
 - a. Never base a sermon/lesson on a text for sole purpose of getting a positive or even negative reaction from the audience.
 - b. Never base the sermon/lesson on a text that deals with a subject for the sole reason that you are angry over the topic
- B. Your chosen text should express a complete thought.
- C. Understand the meaning your text. Make sure it fits your topic. In short, the head (text) should fit the body.
- D. Do not be afraid to choose familiar texts. If the Holy Ghost is in it, don't try to dodge it.
- E. Do not choose a text if you are not sure of the interpretation.

IV. The interpretation of the text:

- A. Scripture only has ONE interpretation but many applications
 - a. Interpretation: what does this mean?
 - b. Application: how can this be used in everyday life?
- B. Understand the context of the scripture.
 - a. What is context?
 - b. Previous chapter, chapter of text, following chapter
- C. Understand its language and grammar.
- D. Understand Biblical history, manners, and customs.
- E. Understand typical significance only if it a true type. You can apply something as a picture, but do not preach/teach the application as a biblical type. Again understand application doesn't necessarily mean interpretation.
- F. If you are still unsure about the interpretation after prayer and study, don't be afraid to ask a trusted source such as your pastor.
- G. Don't Ask Jeeves or Google for the answer.

THE SERMON/LESSON PLAN AND ITS STRUCTURE

The Introduction

I. The definition of the Introduction:

The part of the lesson which introduces and leads up to the main body of the lesson. It prepares the students for the main part of the sermon/lesson. It should flow into the main part of the sermon/lesson and give a small taste of things to come. The Introduction is the body in a nutshell.

II. The purpose of the Introduction:

- A. To awaken the hearer's interest in the subject chosen.
- B. To prepare the students for an understanding of the theme.
- C. To secure the good will of the students. Acts 2:14-21 Acts 3:12 & Acts 7:2

III. The importance of the Introduction:

The introduction has been called the crucial five minutes. In this time, the teacher will either gain or lose the students.

IV. Some suggestions regarding the Introduction:

- A. It should lead directly into the sermon/lesson.
- B. It should be simple and short.
- C. It should be an introduction to the sermon/lesson.
 - a. The introduction should line up with the body.
 - b. The introduction should not be as long as the body.
 - i. If this happens make a sermon/lesson out of the introduction.
 - ii. A 30 minute introduction will lose the focus of the audience.
- D. Think of the introduction as a step or a set of steps helping you get from ground level to the body of the sermon/lesson.
- E. The theme **MUST** be stated in the introduction!

THE THEME

- F. The definition of the theme: The part of the lesson which defines the main truth from the text. The theme must be contained with the "Introduction" paragraph.
 - a. The theme is what the sermon/lesson is all about.
 - b. This is the main point.
 - c. The purpose of stating it so quickly is to allow the audience to understand the direction of the sermon/lesson.
 - d. Stating the theme also gives the preacher/teacher accountability with the audience.
 - i. This will help the preacher/teacher to stay on topic.
 - ii. Kill Lions don't Run Rabbits.
- G. The choice of the theme depends entirely on the viewpoint of the teacher.
 - a. Application is in the eye of the reader.
 - b. The Bible is living and many applications may be found.
 - i. Never preach application as interpretation.
 - ii. Always let your audience know if what you are preaching/teaching is not the interpretation.
 - iii. This will prevent confusion in the heart and mind of the listener.
- H. Methods of stating the theme:
 - a. Logical (complete thought)

THE SERMON/LESSON PLAN AND ITS STRUCTURE

- b. Rhetorical (form of a phrase)

The Body

I. Definition of the body:

The meat of the sermon/lesson. The part of the sermon/lesson in which the most time and study has been spent. This should contain the majority of the preaching/teaching.

II. Structure of the body:

- a. The body should contain at least two main points derived from the text.
- b. These points should expound upon the theme stated in the introduction.
- c. Sub points are useful tools when writing the body.
 - i. They help expound on the previous topic.
 - ii. They are short bulleted points.
 - iii. Help to keep the outline clean by preventing the preacher/teacher from writing lengthy paragraphs.
 - iv. Help to keep the outline legible.
- d. In preaching/teaching, understand that you do NOT have to have a second point or sub point.
 - i. If God has placed the topic on your heart and you have one strong point with 12 sub points, don't scrap the message if you cannot find another strong point
 - ii. Also, do not scrap an entire point if you cannot find a second sub point

III. Helpful tools that can be used:

a. Alliteration

- i. Alliteration is simply making every point start with the same letter or sound.
 - 1. Sinners, Satan, Self, Saints, etc.
 - 2. Illumination, Salvation, Sanctification, Reputation, etc.
- ii. This can be a helpful tool in remembering points both for the preacher/teacher and the listener.
- iii. HOWEVER, do NOT get hung up on alliteration, it can be more of a stumbling block than a help at times.
 - 1. God made the Sabbath for the Jew and alliteration for the preacher/teacher.
 - 2. Don't let alliteration be lord of you.

b. Illustrations

- i. Illustrations can be stories, pictures, objects, etc. that help to drive home the theme of the sermon/lesson.
- ii. Some people will say that you shouldn't plan story illustrations in your outline.
 - 1. If God gives it to you while you study, feel free to make a bullet and put it there.
 - 2. But if you forget to use it in the sermon/lesson don't fret and don't go back. It may be meant for the next time.

c. Grammar and Language

- i. Don't worry so much over where a comma should go and if a period should be used.
- ii. As long as the outline is neat and legible.
- iii. Other than the outlines that you write for this class, no one will see your outlines.
- iv. If you understand it, that's really all that matters. But do remember, a neat outline is a happy outline.

IV. Helpful advice for delivery:

a. Avoid vain repetition.

- i. Think about what you are saying.
- ii. Pet words or phrases can get in the way.
 - 1. Amen, Hallelujah, Glory to God
 - 2. Um
 - 3. Tonight
 - 4. Alright

THE SERMON/LESSON PLAN AND ITS STRUCTURE

5. Let me tell ya
 6. Hey
 7. Look here
 8. I could keep going but a clean outline is a happy outline.
- iii. The repetition of certain words may lengthen the sermon/lesson, but they can detract from the value.
 - iv. They can also be a distraction to the listener and a crutch to the preacher/teacher.
- b. Don't be someone you're not.
- i. God gave you your style. Embrace it.
 - ii. God doesn't want you to be someone else.
- c. Make eye contact.
- d. Be BOLD!
- i. You only have God backing you.
 - ii. The Holy Ghost dealt with you, The Word (Jesus Christ John 1:1) is your authority, and God the Father has said "This is my beloved son, hear ye him."
- e. Don't be angry.
- f. Be loving.
- g. Have anguish in your study and delivery.
- i. Anguish: excruciating or acute distress, suffering, or pain.
 - ii. You must have a burden for those who are hearing your sermon/lesson as well as those who are not.
 - iii. Anguish only comes through prayer.
- h. Stop when God says stop.

The Conclusion

- I. It should be short.
 - a. As the introduction is a short morsel of what is to come, the conclusion should polish what has already been said.
 - b. Do not attempt to re preach/teach what has already been said.
 - c. This can be used as a time to go back over the main points.
 - d. You may present a story as an illustration that wraps up the sermon/lesson.
- II. It should wrap up the body in a presentable way.
- III. It absolutely should contain the Gospel.
 - a. If you are preaching/teaching on tithing, more than likely, not much of Jesus on the Cross has been preached.
 - b. But God can deal with sinners no matter the message, so present the Gospel of Jesus.
 - i. Death
 - ii. Burial
 - iii. Resurrection
- IV. It should be the conclusion.

THE SERMON/LESSON PLAN AND ITS STRUCTURE

Sample outline form

Title in the header if you have one

Text: John 3:16 *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

Introduction: Write introduction here in a short paragraph or bulleted form.

I. Lesson Point One

A. Sub point one

- 1.
- 2.

B. Sub point two

- 1.
- 2.

C. Sub point three

- 1.
- 2.

II. Lesson Point Two

A. Sub point one

- 1.
- 2.

B. Sub point two

- 1.
- 2.

C. Sub point three

- 1.
- 2.

III. Lesson Point Three

A. Sub point one

- 1.
- 2.

B. Sub point two

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

C. Sub point three

- 1.
- 2.

Conclusion: Write conclusion here in short paragraph or bulleted form.