

Sermon Preparation

Pastor E. Keith Hassell

Guidelines

1. Understand the purpose of preaching
 - a. Preaching began by people telling their testimonies and then explaining events and purposes
 - b. The style of preaching varies from person to person
 - c. Good preaching begins with something from the Word of God that burns within you to be said
 - d. Skillful preaching takes preparation
 - e. Good preparation begins with you and your experience with Christ
 - f. Preaching establishes the church and motivates and activates the faithful
 - g. Types of sermons
 - 1) Inspirational sermons: Encouragement
 - 2) Motivational sermons: Exhortation
 - 3) Expository sermons: Illumination
 - 4) Consolational sermons: Comfort
 - 5) Informational sermons: Edification
 - 6) Dramatization sermons: Unfolding a Biblical event or story
 - h. Listeners need to have the following questions answered
 - 1) Why is it needed and why does it meet my need?
 - 2) How do I get it?
 - 3) What are the benefits and consequences with my decision to accept or reject the message?
 - i. Good preaching is done in a way that people respond
 - 1) Get their attention. If you can't get their attention and interest, there is no reason to go any further.
 - 2) Present the need or the problem: People must see that their need or else it is of no relation to them. It must be an urgent need.
 - 3) Preach the Word: People need to see that the Word of God has the answer to the need.
 - 4) Help people visualize: People need to see themselves in the situation being addressed through the use of specific testimony, illustrations, events, etc.
 - 5) Call them to action: People need to see that God will not bless the hearing but the doing of the Word. They must be called to respond to the Word. The response of the heart depends upon the work of the Holy Spirit.
 - j. Preaching should be done so as to persuade men (2 Corinthians 5:11)

- k. Preaching implies a method of follow up after people respond
2. Prepare yourself: Maintain a lifestyle of bible study and prayer
3. Ask God early in the week (or before) to reveal to you
 - a. What His people are going through
 - b. What His people need
 - c. What He wants to say to His people
4. Listen to the Lord
 - a. Through prayer
 - b. Through His Word
 - c. Through life circumstances
 - d. Write down thoughts that come to you through the week
5. Study passages that deal with what God is showing you
 - a. Allow God to impress upon your heart a Bible passage or passages
 - b. Read the passages through several times to be familiar with them
 - c. Follow proper steps of interpretation. Remember: You are sharing from God's Word. Don't make the Bible say what it does not say!
 - d. Write down thoughts about what you are reading
6. Prepare the message
 - a. Write down important thoughts
 - b. Write down in one sentence what you are trying to convey
 - c. Write down the doctrine you are trying to present (limit to one)
 - d. Write down the response that the text is calling for
 - e. Organize your thoughts in a logical order, i.e. an outline (God can't get through to the heart what He can't get through their mind)
 - 1) Introduction
 - 2) Body
 - 3) Conclusion
 - f. Use personal testimony, illustrations, etc.
 - g. How should the people respond if there is an altar call?
 - h. Review the message at least five times to get the message inside of you
 - i. If you memorize the key thought in each paragraph of the message, then you are prepared to preach without notes. (You can take material into the pulpit for the purpose of being precise—names, Scriptures, statistics, quotations, etc. This is not using notes but is for the purpose of being specific.)
 - j. Communicate beforehand with the leadership about who will do the altar call, how it will be done, and what music, if any, is desired.

7. Present the message
 - a. Put your confidence in the Lord to be with you
 - b. Have faith in the proclamation of the Word rather than in your own ability or anointing. Preach and act as if the Word will produce its desired result whether you feel anointed or not.
 - c. Be sensitive to the maturity and needs of the audience
 - d. Connect with the people
 - e. Maintain eye contact
 - f. Avoid distracting habits
 - g. Avoid distracting phrases
 - h. Avoid rabbit trails (Thorough preparation helps)
 - i. Don't linger too long on
 - j. Give a clear and strong invitation
 - k. Keep track of time and allow sufficient time for ministry time or altar call

8. Get honest feedback afterward for the sake of improvement