***The Teacher and His Message***

A teacher demonstrates he is competent by his ability to prepare and deliver his message effectively.

1. **Preparing The Message**

Before a teacher prepares and organizes his message, he must first decide the type of sermon he wishes to prepare. There are two main types of lessons.

**Expository or Topical**

An **expository** sermon is a step-by-step analysis of a passage of Scripture. An entire book, a chapter, a paragraph, or even a verse can be the subject of an expository sermon. The effective expository sermon not only interprets elements of the passage; it attempts to identify the theme of the passage. The next session, ***The Student and His Text***, gives more help on observing, interpreting, and applying a passage within its context—all of which is vital in preparing an expository sermon. The subject and structure of an expository sermon are limited by the passage under consideration.

A **topical** sermon, on the other hand, draws upon several passages of Scripture to teach about a Bible subject. Thus, a topical sermon is chosen and prepared differently than expository sermons. However, most of the following is applicable to topical and expository teaching.

1. ***Select Your Subject Carefully***
2. Consider:
	1. ***your audience***

Good speakers always try to begin speaking “where the people are.” What does the audience need to hear? Do they get balanced teaching?

(See the following Topic Checklist)

* 1. ***the occasion***

The sermon is more effective if the topic is appropriate for the occasion.

* 1. ***what are you best suited to talk about***

Before you bite off more than you can chew, consider your experience and knowledge level before choosing a topic.

1. Narrow the Subject
	1. Every sermon should have a single focus.
		1. It is much better to say a lot about a limited topic, than to say a little about a broad topic.
		2. Avoid the “shotgun” effect
	2. ***Develop a proposition statement.***
		1. The proposition statement is a one sentence summary of your entire sermon. It is a statement of what the teacher proposes to prove or accomplish in the lesson.
		2. The proposition will help you focus your research and help guide the organization of your sermon.
2. ***Start Your Research Early***
	1. After you know what your topic is, start gathering and collecting your material as soon as possible.
	2. Material gathering recommendations:
		1. ***A Filing System***
		2. ***Envelope Method***—label envelop with sermon idea---and stuff it with ideas as they accumulate
3. ***Study Your Subject Thoroughly***
	1. No Shortcuts
		1. You should never be content to share the conclusions of others without researching and studying on your own.
		2. If you don’t understand what you are saying, don’t say it!
	2. If you are preparing a topical sermon, Scriptures must still be kept within context. Study carefully to make sure your main points and supporting material are accurately supported by Scripture.
	3. If you are preparing an expository sermon, study the entire context thoroughly. (See ***The Student and His Text***)
	4. ***Index Card Method***—Take well organized notes during your research. Use a separate card for each major note. When you are ready to outline your sermon you will be able to use your cards to physically arrange and rearrange your thoughts into a well organized sermon.
4. ***Structure Your Sermon Logically***

Sermons that are clearly organized are easier to teach, understand and remember. Creating an outline is vital to organizing material effectively—the outline is to a sermon what the skeleton is to the human body.

Every outline should have 3 parts:

* 1. **Introduction**
		+ 1. The purpose of the introduction is to gain the attention of the audience and to explain the relevancy of the subject.
			2. The introduction often sets the mood and the direction of the rest of the lesson.
			3. Material for your introduction can be found in the biblical text and its context; it can be a narrative from the Bible; it can be drawn from the proposition. It may be startling, a statement of a problem, a striking quotation, an illustration borrowed from a current event.
	2. **Body**
		+ 1. The Body of the sermon consists of the main points which support and develop your proposition.
			2. A good outline has the following characteristics:
				1. **Harmony**—each main point must support the main idea. The connection between the points must be clear.
				2. **Balance**—the main points should receive approximately equal development.
				3. **Progression**—each point should naturally flow into the next.
				4. **Brevity**—the outline should have between three and five main points. Except for certain types of sermons, more than five main points means the proposition is too broad to cover in one sermon.
	3. **Conclusion**
		1. Points that are related and move in meaningful sequence lead to a conclusion.
		2. In the conclusion the speaker should tie all the main points together and remind the audience why those points support the proposition.
		3. Don’t leave the conclusion to chance. The purpose of a sermon is to challenge and change behavior. Therefore, the conclusion is an important part of the sermon.
1. ***Speak Your Sermon Repeatedly***
	1. The fluency of your sermon will be greatly improved if you go over your outline and speak it out loud.
	2. The more confident a speaker is of his words, the more competent he will come across.
	3. Practice, Practice, Practice
		1. get familiar with your material
		2. stand in front of a mirror or video yourself and review it
2. **Delivering The Message**

The way you deliver the sermon often determines how well it is received by the congregation. When you appear before an audience, there are four things that can help you deliver your message more effectively:

* + - * 1. **The Voice**
1. ***Speak Up***—if your sermon is not heard, it will not help anyone.
2. ***Use Proper Speed***—speak fast enough to show your interest and enthusiasm, but not too fast to be clearly understood. Pause before and after important ideas to give a point time to sink in. Avoid a set rhythm.
3. ***Use Good Grammar***—everyone will slip occasionally with bad grammar. But consistently using bad grammar can distract from your message.
4. ***Use Inflection***—make the key words in a sentence stand out by stressing them. Do with your voice what capital letters, italics, bold face, and paragraph spaces do on the printed page. Listen to yourself—if you are not sure how your voice comes across, record your sermon and critique yourself.
5. **The Eyes**
	1. Look at the audience! When someone avoids us with his eyes, we question his sincerity. Nothing keeps the audience watching you any better than for you to watch them.
	2. Avoid using notes to such an extent that they keep you from looking at the audience. Even when you read, look at the audience before you start, when you finish, and occasionally during the reading if it is more than two or three verses.
6. **The Body**
	1. Movement attracts attention. A speaker who moves his hands, changes his facial expressions and occasional walks a little, will keep attention better than one who does not.
	2. Moving the hands, arms, legs, and face will not only maintain the attention of the audience but will also help to work out your nerves and your excitement.
7. **The Respect You Give The Audience**
	1. **Watch your appearance**—if you want others to respect what you say, demonstrate your respect for the pulpit by your appearance. Simple things like cleaned and ironed clothes, combed hair, and polished shoes can make a difference in how you are perceived by your listeners.
	2. **Watch your time**—while there is no set rule for the length of a sermon, it has been correctly observed: “the head cannot absorb more than the seat can endure.” Sermons often last too long because the teacher does not adequately prepare. Longer does not mean better:

**(1 Corinthians 14:19)** yet in the church I would rather speak five words with my understanding, that I may teach others also, than ten thousand words in a tongue. (NKJV)

To provide well balanced teaching, it is needful to keep track of topics the congregation is taught. Below is a checklist that can help with this.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Date | Topic | Speaker |
|  | Abortion |  |
|  | Angles |  |
|  | Bible Study |  |
|  | Bible Authority |  |
|  | Calvinism |  |
|  | Church Government |  |
|  | Church History |  |
|  | Civil Government |  |
|  | Creation/Evolution |  |
|  | Cross of Christ |  |
|  | Cults |  |
|  | Death |  |
|  | Deity of Christ |  |
|  | Denominationalism |  |
|  | Discipleship |  |
|  | Divorce/Remarriage |  |
|  | Existence of God |  |
|  | Family |  |
|  | Fellowship |  |
|  | First Day of the Week |  |
|  | Forgiveness |  |
|  | Grace of God |  |
|  | Heaven |  |
|  | Hell |  |
|  | Home |  |
|  | Homosexuality |  |
|  | Hope |  |
|  | Hospitality |  |
|  | How We God the Bible |  |
|  | Importance of Preaching |  |
|  | Importance of Worship |  |
|  | Individual Cups |  |
|  | Inspiration of Scriptures |  |
|  | Instrumental Music |  |
|  | Judgment |  |
|  | Justification |  |
|  | Kingdom of God |  |
|  | Love |  |
|  | Mercy of God |  |
| Date | Topic | Speaker |
|  | Modesty |  |
|  | Nature of God |  |
|  | Nature of Man |  |
|  | Nature of Sin |  |
|  | Patience |  |
|  | Personal Evangelism |  |
|  | Plan of Salvation: Faith |  |
|  | Plan of Salvation: Repentance |  |
|  | Plan of Salvation: Confession |  |
|  | Plan of Salvation: Baptism |  |
|  | Prayer |  |
|  | Premillenialism |  |
|  | Resurrection of Christ |  |
|  | Sabbath Day |  |
|  | Satan |  |
|  | Second Coming of Christ |  |
|  | Self-Control  |  |
|  | Service to One Another |  |
|  | Sin |  |
|  | Spiritual Gifts |  |
|  | Substance Abuse |  |
|  | Suffering |  |
|  | Sunday School |  |
|  | Survey of New Testament |  |
|  | Survey of Old Testament |  |
|  | Thanksgiving |  |
|  | The Covering |  |
|  | Two Covenants |  |
|  | Work of the Church |  |
|  | Work of the Holy Spirit |  |
|  | Worship: Collection |  |
|  | Worship: Communion |  |
|  | Worship: Prayer |  |
|  | Worship: Singing |  |
|  | Worship: Teaching |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

Notes: