

Principles of Teaching and Preaching the Bible

One of the *most* important and honorable ways to serve God is to teach and preach the Bible!

Teaching and Preaching are *similar*, because the best teaching has *some* preaching and the best preaching has a *lot* of teaching!

THE GOAL OF ALL TEACHING AND PREACHING IS A TRANSFORMED LIFE:

An unbeliever becomes a Christian. A sinning Christian repents. An immature Christian matures in his faith. A growing Christian develops knowledge or skills to serve God better.

Teaching and Preaching are different in several ways:

TEACHING

The *goal* of Teaching is to *transform lives* by helping students *learn* information or *develop* skills. Teaching is usually done through a lesson in a classroom in large or small groups.

There are many different *kinds* of lessons you can teach: A lesson about the Bible: A book of the Bible, a Bible character, a Biblical command or principle or a Bible doctrine, or a life skill: How to witness, how to have a better marriage or be a better parent, how to teach or preach.

There are many different *styles* of teaching: The teacher lectures and the students listen. The teacher asks questions and the students answer. The teacher models and the students imitate. The students work on assignments *alone* or in *groups*. The students work *in* the classroom or *outside* of class. Good teaching is *not* one-way, but 2-way communication between teacher and students. Where it is appropriate, students should interact with each other in class and outside class. They should also interact with non-students (family, friends, acquaintances, strangers) in the world.

PREACHING

The *goal* of Preaching is to *change lives* by challenging people to make a decision for the Gospel or the Christian Life, to change their attitudes or behavior or habits. Preaching is normally done in a church service through a sermon in a large group.

There are only 2 basic kinds of sermons you can preach:

Evangelistic sermons try to get unbelievers to become a Christian.

Discipleship sermons try to get believers to grow spiritually.

Your sermons should include *both*, if you have believers *and* unbelievers in your audience

There are different styles of preaching:

The preacher explains the Bible verse by verse, chapter by chapter, book by book.

The preacher explains a doctrine, subject or topic using different verses in the Bible.

Good preaching is *more* than one-way communication—good preaching *involves* people in *active* listening and learning in a church service.

THE 7 HEARTS OF BIBLICAL TEACHING AND PREACHING

1. The Heart of God
2. The Heart of the Bible
3. The Heart of Culture (Language, Knowledge) and the World (Society): *Much* good and bad!
- 4. Your Heart as the Teacher or Preacher!**
5. The Heart of the Lesson or Sermon
6. The Heart of Believers
7. The Heart of Unbelievers

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THE TEACHER AND PREACHER OF THE BIBLE MUST BRIDGE OR CONNECT:

God ←The Bible ←Culture ←**The Teacher**→ The Lesson→ Believers→ Unbelievers
←World ←**The Preacher**→ The Sermon→

Soren Kierkegaard's illustration of 3 jobs in a play in the theater: Actor, Prompter, The Audience

Traditional preaching: Preacher = Actor God = Prompter People = The Audience
Biblical preaching: Preacher = Prompter People = Actor God = The Audience!

SERMON PREPARATION

Pray, seek and trust the Holy Spirit's leading!

Study hard and work hard!

Generally, the *shorter* the sermon, the *harder* it is. The *longer* a sermon, the *easier* it is.

4 Basic Steps in Bible Study:

1. **Observation:** **What does it say?**
2. **Interpretation:** **What does it mean?**
3. **Application:** **What difference does it make?**
4. **Correlation:** **How does it all fit together?**

8 Question Words

Who, What, When, Where, Which, How?
Why?
So what?

The Big Idea of your sermon: What is the main thing you are trying to communicate?

Supporting materials: help you explain or illustrate the text of the Bible: Bible commentaries, dictionaries, encyclopedias, biographies, newspapers, magazines, other sermons or lessons

2 ways to build a sermon or put a sermon together:

- a. A Deductive Sermon:** *starts* with a *solution* to a need or an *answer* to a question. The sermon then shows people the steps, ideas or truths that caused you to arrive at that solution or answer.
- b. An Inductive Sermon:** *starts* with a *need* or a *question*. The sermon then gives a series of steps, ideas or truths that lead to the *solution* or *answer* to that need or question.

Examples of how to structure your sermon: Problem to solution; Symptom to disease to remedy or cure; Cause to effect; Theology to practice; Question to answer; Story told and applied; Story developed with application along the way at each point of the story

Write an outline or manuscript of your sermon; Edit and Practice your sermon

PARTS OF A SERMON

1. **The Introduction** gets people's attention and convinces them to listen to your sermon.
2. **The Body of the Sermon** contains the main points you want people to learn.
3. **Transitions** connect one point in the sermon to the next
4. **Application** tells your audience what to do with your sermon—know, believe, obey
5. **The Conclusion** ends the sermon by calling for people to make a decision.

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How to make your sermon *better*: Make it clear and easy to understand; Be direct; Use repetition, illustrations and humor; Call or invite people to make a decision; Tell people *how* to *do* things—give examples, make suggestions, be specific

Things you may include in a sermon to make it different: PowerPoint slides, a video clip, a dramatic skit, music or a song

How to be a *better* preacher: Listen to, watch and steal from *good* preachers; Learn to *read* the Bible well aloud; Work on your *Delivery*: clarity and quality of your voice, speed (how fast or slow), volume (how loud or soft), pronunciation, pauses

Things to be careful about in preaching: How you dress and groom; Distracting mannerisms; Questionable humor; How to deal with nervousness; Get enough sleep the night before!

Here is a different paradigm that fits teaching and preaching into a *holistic* model of *how* to see God transform your leaders, disciples and people at church:

OUR GOAL IS TO SEE PEOPLE TRANSFORMED IN 5 AREAS OF THEIR LIVES:

1. **Christ:** Holy Spirit, Prayer, Devotions, Worship, Fasting, Obedience
2. **Community:** Family (spouse, children, parents), Ministry team, Church, Unbelievers
3. **Character:** Attitudes, Habits, Fruit of the Spirit, Filling of the Spirit
4. **Calling:** Vision, Spiritual Gifts, Knowing God's Will
5. **Competencies:** Personal Bible study, Preaching, Teaching, Evangelism, Counseling

Christian *Maturity* focuses on the 1st 3: Christ, Community and Character
Christian *Ministry* focuses on the 2nd 2: Calling and Competencies

The problem with *most* churches, Bible schools, Christian colleges and seminaries is that they *focus* on # 5 **Competencies** *without* #'s 1, 2, 3 and 4!

TRANSFORMATION IS ACCOMPLISHED THROUGH THE PROCESS OF 4 DYNAMICS:

- a. **Spiritual Dynamic:** Connecting with *God* through the transforming power of the *Holy Spirit*
- b. **Relational Dynamic:** Connecting with *People* through the transforming power of *relationships*
- c. **Experiential Dynamic:** Connecting with *Life* through the transforming power of *life's experiences*
- d. **Instructional Dynamic:** Connecting with *Truth* through the transforming power of *God's Word*

The problem with *most* traditional teaching and preaching is that they *focus* on letter **d**. **Instructional** of the Process *without* a, b, and c.

In order to see God transform our church members, students, disciples and leaders, we need to *re-design* our lessons and sermons for our church services, Sunday School classes and Bible studies as well as for our curricula and classes in our Bible schools, colleges, and seminaries to *integrate* these **5 Goals** and these **4 Dynamics** *together*!