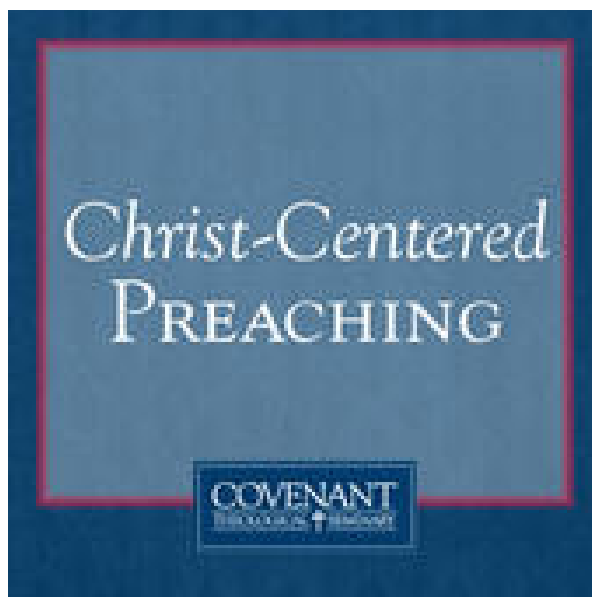


Christ Centered Preaching: Preperation and Delivery of Sermons

Lecture 1 - 28 Class Notes



Word & Witness

[This lecture corresponds to assigned Reading # 1: *Christ-centered Preaching*, pp. 18-41]

Goal of this lesson: To understand how important preaching is, and what is really important in preaching

Intro: The Nobility of Preaching

I. Power is in the Word

A. The Power of God is Inherent in the Word:

The Word of God creates- "God said, 'Let there be light,' and there was light" (Gen. 1: 3). "For he spoke and it came to be; he commanded and it stood firm" (Psalm 33: 9).

The Word of God controls- "He sends his command to the earth; his word runs swiftly. He spreads the snow like wool and scatters the frost like ashes. He hurls down his hail like pebbles He sends his word and melts them . . ." (Psalm 147: 15-18).

The Word of God convicts- "Let the one who has my word speak it faithfully. . . .' declares the Lord. 'Is not my word like fire . . . and like a hammer that breaks a rock in pieces?'" (Jer. 23: 28, 29).

The Word of God performs his purposes- "As the rain and snow come down from heaven and do not return to it without watering the earth . . . so is my word that goes out from my mouth: it will not return to me empty but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it" (Isaiah 55: 10,11).

The effectiveness of the Word of God is not bound by the actions of men-Paul rejoices in Phil 1:15-19 that whether for "pure motives" or pretense he rejoiced because whenever the Word was spoken the work of God went forward.

B. The Power of the Word is manifested in the divine *Logos*, Christ.

(John 1:3; Heb. 1:3)

(James 1: 18; I Pet. 1: 23).

(II Tim. 2:15)

(Heb. 4:12) "The word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart."

Therefore:

I am not ashamed of the Gospel for it is the power (dunamis=dynamite) of God for salvation (Romans 1:16)

The foolishness of preaching is effective (see I Cor 1:21).

C. The Power of the Word is Applied in Expository Preaching.

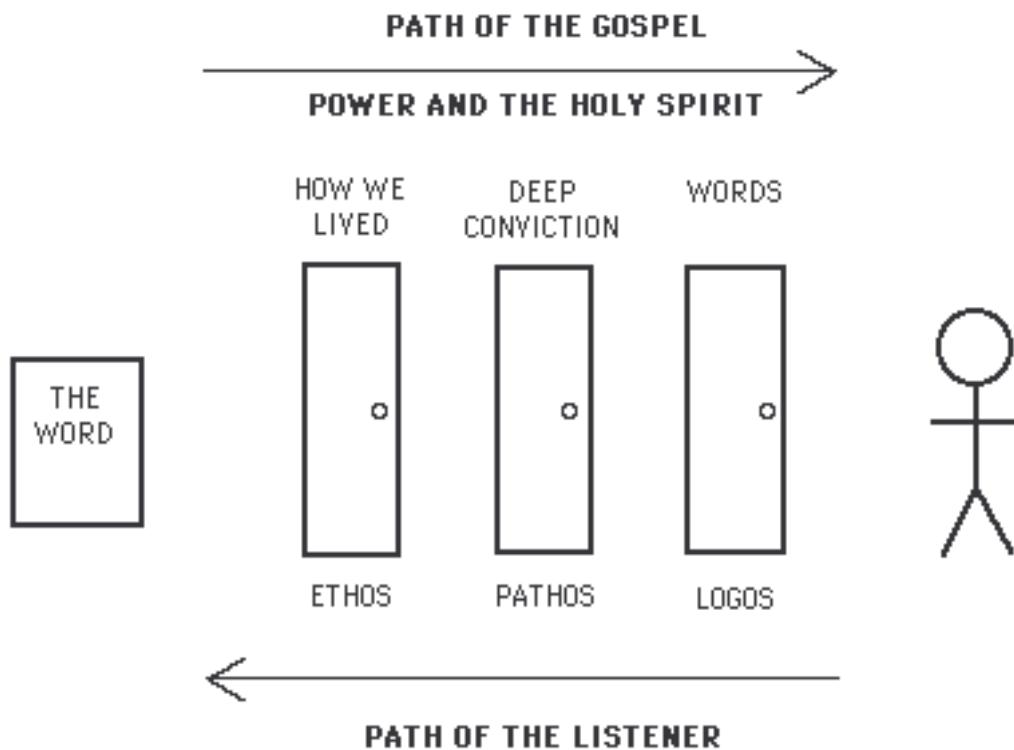
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II. Effectiveness of the Word is promoted by testimony:

A. Aristotle's distinctions:

Every persuasive message is made of three components:

1. Logos-
2. Pathos-
3. Ethos-



Our gospel came to you not simply with words [logos], but also with power and with deep conviction [pathos]. You know how we lived [ethos] among you for your sake. (1 Thess. 1:5)

B. Scriptural Corroboration

(1Thess. 2:3-8 and 11-12) For the appeal we make does not spring from error or impure motives, nor are we trying to trick you. On the contrary, we speak as men approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel. We are not trying to please men but God, who tests our hearts.

You know we never used flattery, nor did we put on a mask to cover up greed -- God is our witness.

We were not looking for praise from men, not from you or anyone else. apostles of Christ we could have been a burden to you, but we were gentle among you, like a mother caring for her little children.

We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well, because you had become so dear to us.

For you know that we dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children, encouraging, comforting and urging you to live lives worthy of God, who calls you into his kingdom and glory.

(II Tim. 2:15 ff.) Study to show yourself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. Avoid godless chatter...flee the evil desires of youth and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace.... Don't have anything to do with foolish and stupid arguments.

(Titus 2:7, 8) In everything set them an example by doing what is good. In your teaching show integrity, seriousness and soundness of speech that cannot be condemned.

(2 Cor. 6:3, 4) We put no stumbling block in anyone's path, so that our ministry will not be discredited. Rather, as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way....

(Phil. 1:27) Whatever happens conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the Gospel

(James 3:13) Who is wise among you? Let him show it by his good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom.

James 1:26, 27 If any man among you seems religious and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart this man's religion is vain. Pure religion as undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.

C. Ethos Implications:

Conclusion: I Tim. 4:12-16

Assignment for Next Class:

Reading Assignment #2: *Christ-centered Preaching*, pp. 43-57.

Written Assignment: #1: Write a one-page comparison of two sermons in chapel.

Divided the page into thirds, and devote a third to comparing how the speakers establish and use logos, pathos and ethos. Due the day of Lecture 4.

What's the Big Idea

[This lecture corresponds to assigned Reading # 2: *Christ-centered Preaching*, pp. 43-57.]

For mid-term review:

Who or what alone has power to change hearts?

What aspect of preaching is most persuasive (ethos, pathos, or logos)? Define each.

Goal of this lesson: To understand the essential components of a well constructed sermon.

Introduction: Every sermon must have:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

I. Unity

Key Concept: How many things is a sermon about?

A. The Need for Sermonic Unity.

B. The Nature of Sermonic Unity: The Big Idea!

1. In Expository Preaching the meaning of the _____ is the _____ of the _____.
2. The meaning of the passage that becomes the message of the sermon is the _____ (or, the unifying concept) for the sermon.

Definition: In expository preaching, Unity occurs when the elements of a passage (or "expository unit") are legitimately shown to support a single major idea that is the theme of a sermon.

Robinson says the "Big Idea" of a sermon is a subject and its _____.

C. What is the Process by Which Unity is Obtained?

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1. Read and digest the passage to determine:

a.

b.

2. Melt down the supporting ideas into . . .

D. The Mark of Success: "The _____ a.m. Test"

E. Unity Strives for . . .

◊ TMT/ITK/TMT/TMT

II. Purpose: the "Fallen Condition Focus"

A. Introducing the F. C. F.

I Tim. 3:16, 17 "All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for doctrine reproof correction and instruction in righteousness that the man of God may be perfect (artios=complete) thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

Our fallen nature requires Scripture's completion, and all Scripture has this purpose of completing us; thus, every passage has a Fallen Condition Focus.

Rm. 15:4 "Everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures, we might have hope."

◊ Everything written in Scripture has the purpose of giving us hope in our fallen condition.

B. Implications of the F.C.F.

C. How to Determine the F.C.F.

3-Step Process: (Ask these things ...)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

D. Examples of the F. C. F.

E. The Import of the F.C.F.

III. Application: The "So What" of all preaching

A. The Need of Application

1. Biblical Instruction

- a. II Tim. 3:16f.
- b. Titus 2:1ff.
- c. The pattern of the Epistles:

2. Preaching Implications

B. Consequences of Non-application

1. A message is _____ until its ideas and components are applied to an F.C.F.

<u>Pre-sermon</u>	—>	Applied to an F.C.F. = SERMON
God is good		fear
loving		anger
kind		doubt
patient		wrong idea re. God

2. Pre-sermons Only _____ the Text; Sermons _____ the Text to an F.C.F.

Assignment for next class:

Reading #3: *Christ-centered Preaching*, pp. 58-81, scan pp. 363-371; and read J. I. Packer article (at end of notes for Lecture #3).

Text Selection and Interpretation

[This lecture corresponds to assigned Reading # 3: *Christ-centered Preaching* pp. 58-81 and scan pp. 363-371; and Packer article (see end of Lecture # 3 notes)]

For mid-term review:

How many things is a sermon about?

What is the one thing a sermon is about?

What is the "Big Idea" of a sermon?

How does one develop a F.C.F.?

What are indications a message is pre-sermon?

Goal for this lesson: To learn some basic tools and rules for selecting and interpreting texts.

Introduction:

What are some tools for Bible Study?

I. Value of Having a Text

II. Rules for Selecting a Text

A. Do Nots:

B. Be Carefuls:

C. Beware of . . .

III. Conditions for Selecting a Text

A. Philosophies

B. Possibilities

IV. Standards for Interpreting a Text

A. Be True to the _____.

B. Use Historical-Grammatical Method vs. "Spiritualizing" or Allegorical Method

1. Look for "_____." (i.e. the discourse meaning)

2. Determine author's _____.

C. Examine language, genre, text features, and context — historical and literary

Special Cautions

Language:

(1) Depending on _____ only

(2) Depending on _____ translations

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Genre:

- (1) Prophecies
- (2) Parables
- (3) Proverbs
- (4) Narratives vs. didactic passages

Text Features

Context (In interpretation context is always part of the _____.)

D. Possible Approaches

E. Do Not Deny Yourself or Your People Your _____ .

Conclusion: Take Great Care in not ...

Assignments for Next Class:

Reading Assignment #4: *Christ-centered*, pp. 102-119

Remember written assignment from Lecture 1 is due at Lecture 4.

Road from Text to Sermon

[This lecture corresponds to assigned Reading # 4: *Christ-centered Preaching*, pp. 102-119.]

For mid-term review:

Why does one need to be cautious about spurious texts?

How does an allegorical method of interpretation differ from an expository one?

What are web and flow, and how do they affect text selection?

Why should a preacher be careful not to run to a commentary as a first step in his sermon preparation?

Goal for this lesson: To See How We Progress from Words on a Page in a Passage of Scripture to a Sermon that is Designed to Change Hearts?

Introduction:

Six Critical Questions for Sermon Preparation:

I. What Does this Text Mean?

To answer employ these steps:

- A.
- B.
- C.
- D.
- E.

◇ Tentatively conclude what the text is basically about.

II. How Do I Know What It Means?

To answer re-create on paper the mental process by which the earlier conclusion was reached and examine its accuracy:

- A. Create a "Thought-flow Outline" (one or more of 3 basic alternatives):

- 1. Grammatical Outline:

2. Mechanical Layout:

3. Conceptual Outline:

Notes: <>Comments and observations may also be listed to the side of each of these outlines as your study proceeds.

<>The larger the "expository unit" the more appropriate the latter alternatives for outlining listed above.

<> In creating such "outlines for study of a passage" which are known as "Exegetical Outlines" it is advisable to identify which verses correspond to which outline components by incorporating verse numbers into the outline.

B. Use the development of the "Thought-flow Outline" to lead you into and through an in-depth study of:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

III. What Concerns Caused This Text to Be Written?

A. To answer requires study of:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

B. To answer also requires remembering:

^

L
E
C
T
U
R
E

To this point you have only a lecture: -----

From this point a lecture becomes a sermon:

IV. What Do We Share in Common with:

A. Those ____ Whom the Text Was Written?

--or--

B. Those (the one) ____ Whom the Text Was Written?

◇ To answer identify the _____.

S
E
R
M
O
N

Biblical teaching does not primarily point to others—it points to ...

(cf. I Cor. 10: 13)

Good preaching does not merely _____ the information in a text (or the truths about a doctrine), it _____ how a F.C.F. of the passage touches and characterizes our lives.

**V. How Should We Respond to the Truths of Scripture?
(What Difference Does it Make for Me?)**

To answer you must look:

This is the "turn key" and makes the following sermons, sermons!

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<http://servantofmessiah.org/>

	<u>Truth Principle</u>	<u>What it Means to You</u>
<i>II Sam 12:7</i>	Nathan's account of rich man stealing lamb.	
<i>Matt. 6:28 - 30</i>	Behold the lilies of the field. They toil not neither do they spin. Yet even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. If God so clothes the grass of the field which today is and tomorrow is cast into the fire, will he not much more clothe you?	
<i>Joshua 24:15</i>	Recounting of Israel's redemptive history.	

◊ **Good Sermons Always Answer these Questions:**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Caution: The Exegetical Outline is not the Homiletical Outline

VI. What is the Most Effective Way I Can Communicate the Content and Application of the Text?

To answer we must:

A. Use Organizational Tools:

1. Collection:
2. Subordination:
3. Simplification:

◊ The seminarian error

◊ The over-reaction error: k-i-s-s

◊ A balanced view:

◇◇◇How to K-I-S-S (properly)

Remember there are only four things that can be done to explain any text or idea:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

B. Use Communication Tools:

Conclusion:

Assignments for Next Class:

Reading Assignment #5: Christ-centered Preaching, pp. 128-142

Written Assignment #2: On one page identify and write down the main points of a sermon in chapel and, if possible, the subpoints. Indicate which verses of the passage are being used to support each of the points of the message. Due at Lecture #6.

Outlining and Arrangement

[This lecture corresponds to assigned Reading # 5:
Christ-centered Preaching, pp. 128-142.]

For mid-term review:

What are the six critical questions for sermon preparation?

What are the three critical questions that turn a lecture into a sermon?

Complete the following: You owe no more to exposition than what is necessary to make the point, but . . . ?

Goal for this lesson: To understand the basic features of good outlining?

Introduction:

Outlining provides structure for the truth to be related.

Example of:

Luke 18:1-8

Backwards	^	F. C. F. <u>We Do Not Pray Enough</u>
Approach to		Pray because Prayer is indication of believer's faith
Passage		Pray because Prayer reaches God's heart
		Pray because God commands it

Straight		F. C. F. <u>We Doubt God Hears Us When He Does Not Answer Immediately</u>
Forward		Do not doubt because God desires our example of persistent prayer
Approach		Do not doubt because God tells us some requests will not be met but by persistent prayer
		Do not doubt because God will answer persistent prayer

—

I. Outline Purposes: *"An outline is a logical path for mind"*

II. Qualities of Good Homiletical Outlines:

III. Types of Homiletical Outlines that Aid a Purposed Approach:

A. _____

Trust God:

We should trust God because his nature is loving

We should trust God because his nature is all-knowing (not misguided love)

We should trust God because his nature is all-powerful (not incapable love)

B. _____

Obligations of Salvation

Because of the offer of salvation we must come to Christ

Because of the offer of salvation we must abide in Christ

Because of the offer of salvation we must testify of Christ

C. _____ or _____

If we are to be effective fishers of men we must use proper tackle

If we are to be effective fishers of men we must go where the fish are

If we are to be effective fishers of men we must react when we get nibble

or, for example, spiritual wreckage and process of crash investigation team.

D. _____

We will discuss later

IV. Contents of Good Homiletical Outlines:

V. Developmental Principles for Good Homiletical Outlines:

A. Let your purpose dictate the number of main points you use:

1. Three points =
2. Two points =
3. Four, or more, points =
4. One point =

B. Know the principles of subordination:

C. Keep the text evident in the outline:

D. Create consistent visual markers in your *pulpit* outline:

E. Number rather than alphabetize pulpit outline main points and subpoints

F. Keep main points in the pulpit outline clearly segregated

G. Keep the pulpit outline "seeable".

- use large print
- use page space

Hint: Highlight or underscore key word changes while keeping most of the wording of the main points parallel. This makes the main points' main ideas jump off the page and makes them more memorable for the listener and the speaker--important if you will ever be working from a memory outline.

V. Cautions for Good Homiletical Outlines:

VI. Bottom-Line Needs for Good Homiletical Outlines:

F.
O.
R.
M.

Assignment for Next Class:

Reading Assignment #6: *Christ-centered Preaching*, pp. 142-162.

Remember that Written Assignment #2 from Lecture 4 is due at Lecture 6.

Alert for Future Classes: Some lectures will now be followed by classes devoted to presentations, therefore, plan your schedules accordingly for Outlines, Introductions, and Conclusions. Devotionals will come later.

Intro: Laundromat

**Prop: Because Jesus is the only hope of salvation,
we must preach Christ at every opportunity.**

I. Because Jesus is the only hope of salvation,
we must preach Christ in difficult situations.
(vss. 12-14)

1. When there is risk. (vs. 12)
2. When there is opposition. (vss. 13, 14)

Luther who said "Here I Stand"

- ◇ Speak when there is risk of family rejection
- ◇ Speak when there is certainty of penalty

II. Because Jesus is the only hope of salvation,
we must preach Christ to difficult people.

III. Because Jesus is the only hope of salvation,
we must preach Christ despite our difficulties.

Conclusion: Witness thru Sacrifice

Propositions and Main Points

[This lecture corresponds to assigned Reading # 6:
Christ-centered Preaching, pp. 142-162.]

For mid-term review:

Is there only one proper way to outline a passage for a sermon?

What governs how a sermon should be outlined?

What are three basic types of outlines?

What are the qualities of good homiletical outlines?

Goal for this lesson: To understand the basic features and construction of good propositions and main points.

Introduction: Now that we have seen an overview of what is included in an outline, we need to zero in on the detailed development of specific components.

I. What is a Proposition?

A. Traditional Definition: "A statement of the subject as the preacher proposes to develop it." (the "classic" Broadus definition)

B. Developed Definition:

To the traditional definition need to be added additional distinctions for solid expository messages. A Proposition is . . .

1. A theme statement indicating how a text will be addressed in the message.
2. A statement of the "main thing" the message is about which is broad enough to cover the content of all the main points and which is proven (or developed) by each of the points.
3. A summary of the introduction and an indication of what the rest of the message will be about (the proposition points both forward and backward).

**Key idea to which we will return in future lectures: The introduction should prepare for the proposition: (1) in _____; and , (2) in _____.

C. Refined Definition:

II. Marks of a Good Proposition (Most "Formal" Structure):

"A wedding of a _____ and _____ (i.e., application).

NOT- Principle alone: Jesus is the only hope of salvation
or
Application alone: We must preach Christ at every opportunity

BUT- Principle wed to application: Because Jesus is the only hope of salvation, we must preach Christ at every opportunity.

Two Basic Forms of Presenting Universal Truths in Hortatory Modes:

*THESE
NOT THE ONLY
FORMS (E.G., IVA
CLAUSES), BUT THESE
ARE FOUNDATIONAL
FORMS*

Consequential form:
Because Jesus is the only hope of salvation, we must preach Christ at every opportunity.

Conditional form:
If (or, *since*) disciples are to preach Christ at every opportunity, then we must prepare to proclaim him.

◊ These forms reflect our preaching commitment to preach in accord with Biblical priorities. The Bible is about truth which is to be applied to our lives (cf. II Tim. 3:16).

III. Marks of Good Main Points:

IV. Harmonizing Propositions and Main Points:

(i.e., Making sure they work together)

- A. Keep the wording of the proposition and the main points _____.
- B. Keep one side of the proposition (principle or application) _____ in main point development

-The side of the proposition that stays consistent in the outline is the
"_____."

-If the principle of the proposition becomes the anchor clause this is a
"_____ consistent" outline
or,

If the application of the proposition becomes the anchor clause this is an
"_____ consistent" outline.

- C. Keep the non-consistent clauses of the main points as parallel in wording as possible except for "key word" changes.

-This non-consistent side of the main points is each main point's
developmental component or "_____."

-The magnet clause is what the exposition of the main point supports or develops. The magnet clause draws (i.e., attracts) the exposition to itself, which is why it is so named.

-Thus, the subpoints of each main point are developing or supporting that main point's magnet clause.

- D. Establish the truth of the anchor clause early

The proof or truth of the anchor clause is established just _____ or _____ the proposition—usually in the introduction, but occasionally toward the beginning of the first main point.

The early establishment of this premise is necessary since the whole sermon rests on the adequacy of the anchor clause.

V. Cautions for Propositions and Main Points:

- A. Make sure main points are not _____ with other main points or the proposition.

<>Co-existence may be _____ as well as _____

- B. Make sure proposition does not inadvertently indicate a _____
or _____ the main points do not reflect:

VI. Helpful Hints for Propositions and Main Points:

- A. The "imperative" test:

- B. The "stand alone" test:

Not this: Because Jesus promises it, we should love him.

This: Because Jesus promises his love, we should love him.

- C. The "non-sequitor" test:

Not this: Because God comforts the grieving, we must tithe.

This: Because God comforts the grieving, we must seek him in times of sorrow.

Assignment for Next Class:

For next class prepare an outline on the passage below corresponding to the first letter in your last name (The letter divisions below are only examples and change annually. If you missed this year's assigned divisions, call a classmate to get what was given in class.)

A - G --- Heb. 12:1-3

H - Q --- II Cor. 6: 14 - 7:1

R - Z --- I Thess. 4: 13 - 18

Include only a proposition and main points (not subpoints) in your outlines.

Put the outline in large print on one page.

Remember to key main points to the text (i.e., put appropriate verse references in parentheses after main point statements).

Make sure your outline covers the entire text (in accord with expository principles).

After the Next Class, in which we will analyze your outlines, proceed to Reading Assignment #7: *Christ-centered Preaching*, pp. 236-253.

APPLICATION-CONSISTENT **OUTLINE**

(Conditional Form)

**Prop: Since Jesus alone provides salvation,
we must proclaim Christ to the world.**

I. Since Jesus alone purchased salvation,
we must proclaim Christ to the world.

II. Since Jesus alone possesses salvation,
we must proclaim Christ to the world.

III. Since Jesus alone bestows salvation,
we must proclaim Christ to the world.

[Note "Anchor Clauses" and "Magnet Clauses"]

PRINCIPLE-CONSISTENT OUTLINE

(Consequential Form)

**Prop: Because Jesus commands believers to proclaim him boldly,
we must preach Christ at every opportunity.**

- I. Because Jesus commands believers to proclaim him boldly,
we should proclaim Christ in difficult situations.

- II. Because Jesus commands believers to proclaim him boldly,
we should proclaim Christ to difficult people.

- III. Because Jesus commands believers to proclaim him boldly,
we should proclaim Christ despite our difficulties.

[Note "Anchor Clauses" and "Magnet Clauses"]

CO-EXISTENT ERROR OUTLINE

**Prop: Because Jesus is the only hope of salvation,
we must preach Christ at every opportunity.**

I. Because Jesus is the only hope of salvation,
we must preach Christ whenever there is an
opportunity.

II. Because Jesus is the only hope of salvation,
we must preach Christ when it is convenient.

III. Because Jesus is the only hope of salvation,
we must preach Christ when it is difficult.

Introductions

[This lecture corresponds to assigned Reading # 7:
Christ-centered Preaching, pp. 236-253.]

For mid-term review:

What is a proposition?

What components are wed in main points and propositions?

What are two basic forms for main point wording?

How do anchor clauses and magnet clauses differ in main points?

What is a "co-existent" point, and why should it be avoided?

Goal for this lesson: To understand the basic purposes, marks and construction elements of good sermon introductions.

Introduction:

I. The Basic Purposes of Sermon Introductions:

II. The Importance of Opening Words and Opening Moments:

A. What Opening Words Determine

B. What Opening Words Require

Emotional graph:

III. Types of Sermon Introductions

IV. Marks of Poor Sermon Introductions:

V. How Do You Make Others Have to Listen to Your Introductions?

VI. Marks of a Good Sermon Introduction:

◊ The proposition is actually a _____ of key ideas in the introduction that springboard us into the sermon.

◊ The introduction prepares for the proposition in _____ and _____. There should be no key terms in either clause of the proposition that have not been mentioned in precisely the same terms in the Introduction.

Compare Intro Principles in Acts 17: Ye men of Athens I perceive you religious.
I noticed Altar to Unknown God.
Today I proclaim him to you.

Arouses Attention——F.C.F.——Intro. to Subject——Personal
(Creates longing for sermon)

VII. Scripture Introductions and their Separate Purposes:

A. History of Scripture Introductions:

Pattern of Thomas Chabham of Salisbury in Summa de arte praedicandi:

Pro- or ante-theme (introducing theme)
Prayer for divine aid
Scriptural Quotation
Statement of the theme and divisions
Development and subdivision
Conclusion

B. Purpose of Scripture Introductions:

1. _____ the text (or, explain key word or concepts) so the text can be understood.
2. Create a _____ the content of the passage so that the text can be heard.
3. Allow _____ so that the announced passage can be found by the congregation before the text is read.
4. (May) _____ the portions of the text that will (or will not) be dealt with to remove congregation concerns over preaching omissions or concentrations.
5. (May) provide _____ for very long texts so that the entire passage need not be read.

<> Scripture introductions must be given careful thought since speaker credibility established in these early moments. Our tendency is to extemporize this portion.

Do Not separate the "sermon" introduction from the sermon by a Scripture reading. This indicates confusion over the difference between a "Scripture" introduction and a "sermon" introduction. The "sermon" introduction must lead into the proposition.

Normal pattern: Scripture Announcement
Scripture Introduction
Scripture Re-announcement
Scripture Reading
Sermon Introduction \ Only components due for
Proposition / next class assignment

First Main Point
etc.

VIII. Introduction Chain:

•**AROUSES** _____

•**INTRODUCES** _____

Preparing for Proposition in _____

Preparing for Proposition in _____

•**MAKES IT** _____

•**BONDS TO** _____

•**ATTACH** _____

IX. 6-Point Criteria for Evaluating Introductions:

The Introduction:

1. Arouses Interest.
2. Introduces Subject through an identifiable F.C.F.
3. Prepares for the proposition in concept and terminology.
4. The opening sentence will stand alone.
5. Becomes Personal (indicates the reason the message is vital for the listener).
6. Bonds to Scripture.

For next class proceed with Reading #8: *Christ-centered Preaching*, pp. 81-94.

Written Assignment #4 for Class after Next:

Write a "Sermon" Introduction (not a "Scripture" Introduction) and Proposition on the text that you previously outlined.

- a. This Sermon Introduction must be a Human Interest Account and must directly lead into your Proposition.
- b. Underline the key terms of both clauses of the proposition as they appear in your Introduction.
- c. Underline the Fallen Condition Focus statement in your Introduction.

- d. Note in the margin each of the other key components of a Sermon Introduction using the model on *Christ-centered Preaching*, pp. 245-6 as a guide.
- e. Come to class prepared to deliver your Introduction and Proposition.
- f. All written Introductions and Propositions will be collected for grading during class.

Exposition: Components and Proportions

[This lecture corresponds to assigned Reading # 8:
Christ-centered Preaching, pp. 81-94]

For mid-term review:

What are the two major purposes of introductions?

What are some major types of introductions?

What is most often the most effective type of introduction?

What are two commonly used but ineffective types of introductions?

How should the introduction prepare for the proposition?

Goal for this lesson: To understand the basic nature and characteristics of sound biblical exposition.

Introduction:

Exposition is shedding some ordinary light on the path that leads to truth in God's Word.

I. Technical Definitions of Exposition:

A. Formal Definition: Exposition = _____ the meaning of a Scriptural text so that it may be understood and acted upon.

[Noun-exposition; adj.-expository; verb-to expound (not exposit)]

B. Biblical Foundation:

Lk. 24:27 "And beginning at Moses and all the prophets He expounded (dierneneuo=to unfold the meaning of what is said; interpret) unto them in all the Scriptures then things concerning himself."

cf. verse 32 "They asked each other, 'Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened (dianoigo = to open thoroughly; expound) the Scriptures to us?'"

II. Biblical Examples of Exposition:

A. O.T. Example: Nehemiah 8: 5-8

⁵Ezra opened the book. All the people could see him because he was standing above them; and as he opened it, the people all stood up.

⁶Ezra praised the LORD, the great God; and all the people lifted their hands and responded, "Amen! Amen!" Then they bowed down and worshipped the LORD with their faces to the ground.

⁷The Levites --Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan and Pelaiah --instructed the people in the Law while the people were standing there.

⁸They read from the Book of the Law of God, making it clear and giving the meaning so that the people could understand what was being read.

(vs. 7 "instructed" What did it involve?)

1. What it says (**Word Presentation**) "reading" and "making it clear" = parash, to distinguish or specify clearly—perhaps translate
2. What it means (**Explanation**) "giving the meaning" = sekel, to give the sense of meaning requiring perception or insight
3. How it can be understood (**Exhortation**) "causing" to understand = bin, to separate mentally (for use) or assist in understanding (for personal use)

B. N.T. Echoes:

Jesus—Luke 4: 16-32 ... "synagogue practice"

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------|
| | <u>Word</u> |
| 1) Jesus Read the Scripture (stood) | Presentation (vs. 11-19) |
| 2) Jesus Gave the Import of the Scripture (sat) | Explanation (vs. 21) |
| 3) Jesus Applied the Scripture (They were moved at "You should accept me but will not.") | Exhortation (vs. 23-27) |

Paul

—I Tim 4: 13 "Devote yourself to the

- 1) Public reading of Scripture (**Word Presentation**)
- 2) Preaching, (actually noun parakleseis = paraclete, encouragement or **Exhortation**)

and,

- 3) Teaching (didaskalia, teaching or **Explaining**)"

—II Tim 4: 2 "Preach (kerusso = proclaim)

- 1) the word in season and out, — **Word Presentation**
- 2) correct, rebuke and encourage — **Exhortation**
- 3) with great patience and careful instruction (didaske)" — **Explanation**

<>Note: Meshing of Authority and Encouragement.

—Acts 17:2, 3 @ Thessolonica: Paul . . .

- 1) "Lectured from the Scriptures" — **Word Presentation**
- 2) "Opening up" the Word (dianoigon = to open up completely as though a door) — **Explanation**
- 3) "Setting [it] before them" (paratithemenos = set before as a plate, i.e., confront — **Exhortation**)

Great Commission

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.;

Teaching¹ them to observe² all I have commanded³ you;

And Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

¹"teach" (**Explanation**)

²"to observe" (**Exhortation**)

³"all . . . commanded" (**Word Presentation**)

<> **Exposition unites the _____ of the Word with _____** (information about the Word) **and** _____ (application of the Word).

III. Three Essential Elements of Exposition:

A. Explanation = What Does This Text Mean? [We will cover this more later]

1. Standard Tools of Explanation: (traditionally called the "general processes")

2. Standard Questions of Explanation:
(the five W's and an H)

[The Biblical Pattern: cf. Luke 24: 37; Luke 4: 16-32; Acts 17:2]

Note: What we are calling Explanation is what traditionally is considered to be "all" Exposition includes. Exposition was considered to be concluded when explanation was given. Can you determine why explanation alone does not cover all the territory "Exposition" must?

What are the essential elements of exposition? They are:

1. Explanation

2. Illustration

3. Application

<>All three must be included for Scripture to be fully unfolded.

B. Illustrative Material = Show me what the text means.

1. Types of Illustrative Material

2. Sources for Illustration:

3. Dangers of Illustration

<>The purpose of illustration is to make the abstract, familiar and the principal, particular. Real meaning is not known if truth is not related to concrete life so that it can be applied. (Thus, motivation > clarification).

<>The Scripture's confirm the importance of concrete particulars along with propositions of truth?

- Mark 4:34 "Without a parable He did not say anything to them."
- Paul's images: sports arena, garden, battlefield
- Prophets' symbols and examples: ripe fruit basket, lying on side for months, dry bones
- 75% narrative component of the entire Bible.

C. Application = What Does This Text Mean to Me?

Components Include:

1. _____ Specificity = What should I do?
What does this text require me to do, believe, accept, change, etc.?
2. _____ Specificity = Where should I do it?
Good application=situational specificity + instructional specificity.
3. _____ Means = How do I do it?
4. Proper _____ = Why should I do it?

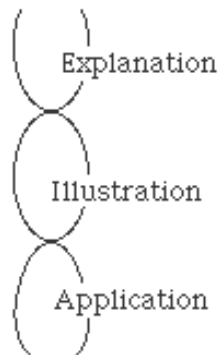
IV. The Shape of Exposition (for a single main point):

A. The Generic Shape:

1/3 _____
1/3 _____
1/3 _____

B. The Seminary Error:

C. The Popular Error:



D. A Model Approach:

<>Therefore, for our purposes, exposition of any main point contains three essential elements: Explanation, illustration and application.

Conclusion:

Written Assignment Reminder and Next Reading Assignment:

Written Assignment #4 for next class: Introductions written with components marked, and

prepared for delivery.

For Class after next: Reading Assignment # 9: *Christ-centered Preaching*, pp. 120-121; 156-162; and Appendix 5.

Sermon Divisions and Development

[This lecture corresponds to assigned Reading # 9:
Christ-centered Preaching, pp. 120-121; 156-162; and, Appendix 5.]

For mid-term review:

What are three major components of exposition evident in Old Testament models that were systematized in synagogue worship patterns reflected in the New Testament?

What are the three essential elements of exposition that are to be included in every main point?

What is the proportion of these expositional elements for a general audience?

How may a double helix represent the expositional structure of a sermon's main points and how may this structure vary depending on target audience?

Goal for this lesson: To understand the basic subdivisions of a sermon in standard expository development.

Introduction: We are zooming in from the larger perspective of seeing what Exposition is in general to seeing what the specific members of the sermon's body look like in standard development.

I. Divisions of a Sermon Reviewed:

Thus far, we have discussed these divisions:

A. The Divisions of Biblical Exposition:

1. Word Presentation
2. Explanation
3. Exhortation

B. The Divisions of Sermons:

1. Scripture Introduction
2. Scripture Reading
3. Prayer for Illumination (typically there is also a prayer for application in closing)
4. Sermon Introduction
5. Proposition (*statement of sermon's subject as preacher proposes to develop it, in light of a F.C.F.*):
Divided into:
 - principle
 - application
6. Main Point Statements (*statements of supporting arguments or proofs of the proposition*)
Divided into:
 - principle
 - application

7. Main Point Exposition (*unfolding the meaning of the text*)

Divided into:

- explanation
- illustration
- application

<>We are ready now to begin analyzing the divisions of explanation within Main Points.

II. Guidelines for Main Point Divisions:

(The Number and Nature of Main Points)

III. Guidelines for Subpoint Divisions: "Key Characteristics"

[REFER TO OVERHEADS]

A. Subpoints _____ (support or prove) their specific Main Point.

B. Subpoints relate to their Main Point _____;
i.e., can answer a similar diagnostic question or support the main point in the same way.

C. Subpoints are about the one thing the Main Point is about (not _____ subjects).

D. Subpoints "ordinarily" support or develop the _____ clause
(i.e., the Magnet Clause) of the Main Point.

E. Subpoints are "_____" statements of principle or application (NOT BOTH)

— subpoints are generally not weddings of principle and application, because only the "_____" of the Main Point is being proven

which is either principle or application

— subpoints are usually _____ sentences or sentence _____.

•••Hammer strokes statements make the best subpoints because subpoints act as concise thought pegs upon which much additional thought can be hung by listeners. (Note: This means subpoints are to be stated by the preacher not merely kept in mind by him to organize his thought.)

- F. Subpoints exhibit _____ (about one thing), _____ (not co-existent), _____ (reflect one another in wording), and _____ (consistently lead to the larger concept).
- G. Subpoints are not required, but, if they are given, they must be _____ (remember to number rather than alphabetize subpoints).
- H. Subpoints usually point to a _____ portion of the text. (show the verse after the subpoint in your outline)
- I. Subpoints usually are _____ and _____.
- J. Subpoints develop the _____ rather than outline (i.e., merely describe) the text.

<>Subpoints generally are road signs through the explanation component of exposition (i.e., illustration and application are not subpoints of explanation). Without clear road signs people get lost even if they are on good highway; without clear subpoints listeners get lost even if you are presenting true and scholarly explanations.

IV. Three Basic Types of Subpoints:

[REFER TO OVERHEADS]

- A. Analytical _____ Answers
For all subpoints in a main point ask an overarching question (e.g. How do we know this is true? or When should this apply in our lives?), then answer the question with short statements that introduce further explanations.
- B. _____*
For each subpoint ask a new question (e.g., who, what ,when, where, why, how, etc.), answer it immediately with a concise statement, then show where the statement was derived, and give the explanation that supports the that statement. [Do not delay the answer until after the explanation -- the ear does not have the patience of the eye.]
- C. _____ Statements**
Short, parallel statements that encapsulate divisions in the explanation of the main point (i.e., thought pegs on which much information can be hung).
e.g., 1. Man's Failure
 2. Sin's Consequences
 3. God's Response

*Easiest to learn from

**Most used by professionals

V. The Standard Order of the Major Divisions of a Message:

Announce Text
 Scripture Introduction
 Scripture Reading
 Prayer for Illumination
 Introduction
 Proposition

I. Main Point Statement (followed by standard order of subpoints with the illustration developing the concept of the overall Main Point)

—subpoint
 —subpoint
 —subpoint
 [Illustration]
 <> Application

II. Main Point #2 (followed by a mixed order due to illustration developing a single subpoint rather than the concept of the overall Main Point)

—subpoint
 [Illustration]
 —subpoint
 —subpoint
 <> Application

VI. The Standard Lengths of the Major Divisions:

A. Average Time & Page Lengths for Matter Surrounding the Body of 30-minute Message:

<u>Sermon Component</u>	<u>Average Time</u>	<u>Typed Pages</u>
Text Announcement & Scripture Introduction....	1 minute	1/3
Scripture Reading.....	1-2 minutes	1/2
Prayer for Illumination	1 minute	1/3
Sermon Introduction.....	2-3 minutes	1/2-2/3
Sermon Conclusion	2 minutes	1/2-2/3
Closing Prayer.....	<u>1 minutes</u>	<u>1/3</u>
Approximate Totals:	8-10 minutes	2 1/2-3

B. Average Time and Page Lengths for the Body of a 30-Minute Message:

(Note: 20 minutes remain for the sermon body)

Each Main Point in a 3-point Message..... (assuming equal proportions)	6 minutes	2
Each Main Point Component: (assuming 1/3, 1/3, 1/3 proportion)		
explanation	2 minutes	2/3 (2-3paragraphs)
illustration.....	2 minutes	2/3 (" ")
application	2 minutes	2/3 (" ")
Each Subpoint .(see note below).....	2/3-1 minute	1/3 (1 paragraph)
(assuming 2-3 subpoints per main point)		
All Extemporized Comments	2 minutes	2/3

Conclusion: The written content of a 30-minute sermon that includes only the Scripture introduction, sermon introduction, sermon body, and sermon conclusion will run 7.5 - 8 pages (this standard may lengthen somewhat with healthy spacing between components).

Subpoint Note: In order to accomplish the 1/3, 1/3, 1/3 exposition symmetry of a main point the subpoints of explanation are usually _____ paragraph apiece. As a **rule of thumb**, explanations longer than one paragraph need subpoint divisions.

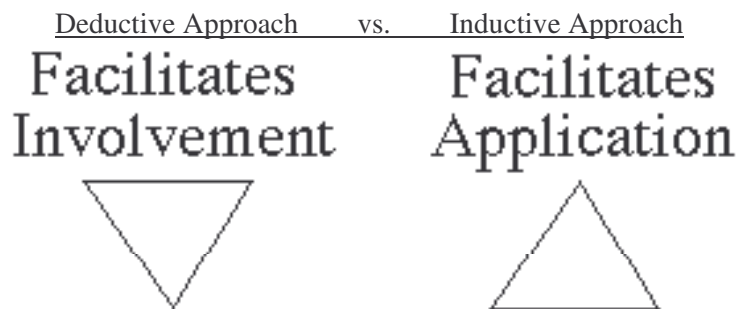
VII. Standard Conceptual Progression of a Point:

Melting all these rules down to the basics ...

1. _____ the Truth (make the main point or subpoint statement)
2. _____ the Truth (point to the text where the statement is proven)
3. _____ the Truth (prove the statement with the text)
4. **Illustrate** the Truth
5. **Apply** the Truth (main thing to be done)

VIII. Variables for Main Point Progression:

The components can come in varying orders.



Deductive: Principle----->Particular (*Pauline*)

Inductive: Particular----->Principle (*Jesus in Parables*)

Therefore, concentrate on what best serves concept and attention goals.

Hint: Inductive often works better in third Main Point in that it separates Main Point illustration from conclusion.

Caution: You can start a Main Point with principle statement, illustration, or a particular application—but never with "_____ explanation. Explanatory thought without cause, reason, or particulars to anchor it, floats off into abstraction. Listeners ask, "Why am I getting this information?"

For Now: Work on basic deductive statement of Main Points with variation in subpoints.

IX. Variables for Sermon Division Progression:

A. The Variables

1. Scripture reading
2. Scripture introduction
 - Slices out the territory (if you are narrowing your focus)
 - Contextualizes for understanding
 - Creates interest in and longing for the Word
3. Prayer for Illumination
4. Historical or logical recap (Scripture Introduction, just before or after the proposition, first Main Point, explanation of other Main Points).
5. Establishment of the truth of the anchor clause

B. Possible Insertion Points for the Variables

(1) Sometimes earlier in service

(2)

(1) & (4) & (5)

(3)

Intro

(4) & (5)

Proposition

(4) & (5)

Main point #1

(4) & (5, rarely)

Main point #2

(4)

Main point #3

Conclusion

Key Caution: Do *not* separate the sermon introduction from the sermon with the scripture reading

Assignment for Next Class:

Reading Assignment #10: *Christ-centered Preaching*, pp. 253-260.

3 Basic Types of Subpoints

1. Analytical-question Answers:

- III. Because Jesus is the only hope of salvation,
we must present Christ despite our difficulties.

In what types of difficulties must Christ be presented?

1. In Circumstantial difficulties
2. In Relational difficulties
3. In Spiritual difficulties

2. Interrogatives:

- III. Because Jesus is the only hope of salvation,
we must present Christ despite our difficulties.

1. What types of difficulty may we face? Christ's enemies
2. What helps us face these difficulties? Christ's armies

3. Bullet Statements:

- III. Because Jesus is the only hope of salvation,
we must present Christ despite our difficulties.

1. In the midst of busy-ness
2. In the face of fear
3. In the storm of anger

PROPER SUBPOINTING

**Prop: Because Jesus is the only hope of salvation,
we must preach Christ at every opportunity.**

- I. Because Jesus is the only hope of salvation,
we must preach Christ in difficult situations.
1. Facing circumstantial obstacles. (vs. 12)
 2. Facing spiritual obstacles. (vss. 13-14)

(Note: "Bullet" Subpoints will answer similar diagnostic question; i.e., *when* or *what are...*)

- II. Because Jesus is the only hope of salvation,
we must preach Christ to difficult people.
1. Who are these people?
 - Those without mercy. (vs. 16)
 2. How must we deal with them?
 - As those with mercy. (vs. 17 & 20)

(Note : "Interrogative" Subpoints ask similar diagnostic questions; e.g., *who* or *how*. The speaker then immediately answers his own question with a "bullet" statement, text citation and proof.)

- III. Because Jesus is the only hope of salvation,
we must preach Christ despite our difficulties.
What sorts of difficulties?
1. In the face of present frustration. (vs. 15)
 2. In the face of past failure. (vs. 18-19)

(Note: An "Analytical Question" prepares for subpoint answers.)

IMPROPER SUBPOINTING

**Prop: Because Jesus is the only hope of salvation,
we must preach Christ at every opportunity.**

I. Because Jesus is the only hope of salvation,
we must preach Christ in difficult situations.

1. Peter ignored the authorities. (vs. 12)
2. Peter spoke from jail. (vss. 13)

(Note: Outlining the text rather than outlining the message.

Describing the text rather than conveying its truths. An outline should say what a text "means" not merely what "says.")

II. Because Jesus is the only hope of salvation,
we must preach Christ to difficult people.

1. Jesus died to save the ungodly. (vs. 16 & 20)
2. Jesus alone can save. (vss. 17 & 21)

(Note : Subpoints are developing the "Anchor Clause" rather than the "Magnet Clause."

III. Because Jesus is the only hope of salvation,
we must preach Christ despite our difficulties.

1. Our preaching will bring hate. (vs. 15)
2. Prayer overcomes opposition. (vs. 18)

(Note: Subpoints are not parallel and do not develop the main point "in the same way.")

(Note also: Entire outline ignores vss. 14 & 19

Conclusions

[This lecture corresponds to assigned Reading # 10:
Christ-centered Preaching, pp. 253-260.]

For mid-term review:

At what length does explanation generally indicate that subpoints are required?

What are three basic types of subpoints?

What clause of their main point do subpoints generally prove or develop?

What is the only standard sermonic component with which you cannot begin a main point?

Goal for this lesson: To understand the characteristics and construction principles for sermonic conclusions.

Introduction: This is the high point of the message and requires careful craftsmanship.

I. Guiding Principles for Conclusions:

II. Components of Conclusions:

—*G. Campbell Morgan*

"Every conclusion must:

- _____ (*i.e., it must end*)
- _____ (*i.e., it must include what has been said*)
- _____ (*i.e., it must preclude the possibility the listeners will escape the message*)"

- A. _____ (Concise Summary) not extended explanations, but hammer-stroke statements which quickly reiterate the central concepts of the message in order to make the final appeal for action. The fast marshaling of the sermon's forces using its key terms.
- B. _____ (Final Application):
- Do not summarize simply to summarize but to marshal your forces for the appeal you will make or the action you will call for.
 - What concrete, personal duties are you asking for?
 - What do you want me to do? (behavioral or attitudinal)
Includes Direction — show me what you expect and how it's done
 - Spell it out
 - Illustrate it (usually with a human interest account)
- C. _____ (Climax)
Here thought and emotion must arrive at their greatest height . If you are not moved no one else will be.
- D. _____ (End):
Purposed, pointed, and definite. What one thing would you have them walk away with?

III. Marks of Effective Conclusions:

IV. Cautions for Conclusions:

- A. Consistent " _____ "
- B. Do not _____ —"Start with a bang and end all over"
- <>common error: Do not put lengthy summary after a poignant illustration or a telling statement. This creates anti-climax. After the climax moment end in a hammer stroke or two.
- C. Ordinarily, No Final " _____;" or " _____ "
- You are serving God not men. This does not mean you shouldn't say thank you for invitations to speak. Just don't give the impression that your words have man's permission.
- Personal "amens" may seem to be personal praise or self-elevation.
- D. Let the conclusion _____
- A message can be driven home with a final hymn or closing prayer (though no absolute requirement of final hymn or final prayer if message is more powerful without them.)
- However, try not to conclude in the closing prayer (usually happens when the pastor forgets key components within message so he tries to include them in the prayer)
- E. Avoid _____ questions as concluding sentences
- Speakers intend to use such questions as launching pads for personal thought or reflection. But this too often leads to abstraction and loss of power.
- Maueitic questions make point; rhetorical only add more questions. We will _____ use rhetorical questions in training.
- F. Use poems and quotations with great _____ .
(Three points and a poem is not usually effective anymore.)
- Use only if they say "exactly" what you mean
- Recognize change of voice, meter and language disrupts thought, especially if archaic language for modern audience
- Prepare audience for what you are intending to do with the quote
- Do not break eye-contact
- Do not give the last word to someone else without excellent reason
- G. Do not introduce _____ exposition in conclusion.
You are to be concluding not starting new thought.
- H. Finally, _____ "finally"
- Do not announce you are concluding; e.g., "In Conclusion . . ."; "Let me Conclude by saying . . ."; or, "Finally. . ."
- Finally, if you say finally, mean it.

V. Hints for Effective Conclusions:

VI. Conclusion on Conclusions:

What we will look for in Conclusions?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

<> When you have said what you intended, stop.

Assignment for Next Classes:

For next class progress to Reading Assignment #11: *Christ-centered Preaching*, pp. 94-99
& review pp. 129-133.

For class after next:

- Prepare an outline with subpoints followed by a conclusion (HIA only) to the passage for which you were assigned to do an outline and introduction.
- Come to the class after next prepared to present your conclusion.
- The written conclusion should be no longer than one page and should last no longer than 2 1/2 minutes.
- Underline the key terms of the magnet clauses of the main points that are used (i.e., threaded or grouped) in your conclusion.

Classifications of Messages

[This lecture corresponds to assigned Reading # 11:
Christ-centered Preaching, pp. 94-99 & review pp. 129-133]

For mid-term review:

What are some key characteristics of conclusions?

What should not be included in conclusions?

What are two basic types of conclusions?

Goal for this lesson: To understand the characteristics and distinguishing features of the three basic classifications of sermons.

Introduction:

We should see how diversified is the biblical perception of preaching and then see how sermons vary so that we can be well equipped for every preaching task.

I. Types of Preaching

NOTE: See the biblical terminology for preaching summary to see the variety of styles and purposes in preaching [handout at end of these notes].

II. Types of Sermons

A. Topical

1. **Key Feature:** a topical sermon only gets its _____ (idea or subject) from the text
2. Other Characteristics:
 - a. Subject divided and treated according to its nature rather than text's nature
 - b. Types of subjects that lend themselves to this treatment
 - c. Often essay approach; orators device par excellence
3. Dangers:

B. Textual

1. **Key Features:** a textual sermon gets its _____ and _____ from the text
2. Other Characteristics:
 - a. Advantage over topical approach in that it can be very topical but appears anchored in Scripture
 - b. Types of subjects that lend themselves to this treatment:
3. Danger:

C. Expositional

1. **Key Features:** an expository sermon gets its _____, _____, and _____ from the text.
2. Other Characteristics:
 - a. Chiefly keeps answering: What does _____ text mean?
Does not allow man's ideas or isogesis to creep in. Shows this text in its own development as is plain for all to see.
 - b. For Advantages (see handouts)
 - c. _____ the text
+the text (or, indicated expository unit) is covered in its entirety
+main points and subpoints "cover the territory"
3. Dangers:
 - a. To preach running commentaries or dull lectures and think you have a sermon because you've said what the text means.

"An expository sermon is one that expounds a passage of Scripture, organizes it around a central theme and main points, and then decisively applies its message to the listeners." (Vines, p.7)
 - b. Not getting sub-points from THIS text but parallels

(Avoid danger by showing how idea is developed in this text before going elsewhere for support. Be careful not to impose meanings on a text which this text cannot support.)

III. Presentations of Expository Sermons

IV. Conclusion:

Assignment for Next Class (after Conclusion Presentations):

Reading Assignment #12: *Christ-centered Preaching*, review pp. 116-121, and read pp. 121-127.

Key Old Testament Terms

<u>Term</u>	<u>Meaning</u>	<u>Reference (example)</u>
<i>parash</i>	to distinguish or specify clearly (possibly to translate)	Neh. 8:7-8
<i>sekel</i>	to give the sense or meaning	Neh. 8:7-8
<i>bin</i>	to cause to understand (to separate mentally for use)	Neh. 8:7-8
<i>nabi</i>	conveys the idea of one who pours forth or announces under the divine impulse (a prophet)	Deut. 13:1; 18:20; Jer. 23:21; cf. Num. 11:25, 29
<i>hozeh</i>	one who glows or grows warm (a seer or prophet)	Amos 7:12
<i>roeh</i>	one who sees (a prophet)	1 Chr. 29:29; Isa. 30:10
<i>qohelet</i>	a caller or preacher	Eccl. 1:1
<i>qara</i>	to call out	Isa. 61:1
<i>basar</i>	to announce glad tidings	Isa. 61:1; Ps. 40:9 (40:10 Heb)
<i>natap</i>	to drip, or pour out words	Ezek 20:46 (21:2 Heb); Amos 7:16; Mic. 2:6, 11

Key New Testament Terms

<u>Term</u>	<u>Meaning</u>	<u>Reference (example)</u>
	Note: these first two very common terms are used primarily, but not exclusively, of evangelistic activity directed to non-Christians	
<i>kerusso</i>	to proclaim as a herald concerning a king or his decrees	Rom. 10:14-15; 1 Cor. 1:21-23; 2 Tim. 4:2 (more than 70 times in all)
<i>euangelizo</i>	to announce joyful news	Luke 4:18; cf. Acts 8:4 (more than 40 times)
<i>diermeneuo</i>	to unfold the meaning of, to expound	Luke 24:27-32
<i>dianoigo</i>	to open up or thoroughly disclose	Luke 24:27-32
<i>dialegomai</i>	to reason, discuss, or converse	Acts 17:2-3
<i>paratithemi</i>	alleging, to place alongside (used to describe Jesus' use of parables)	Matt. 13:31

<i>logos</i>	a word or saying	Matt. 13:19-23
<i>rhema</i>	a word or message	Rom. 10:17; 1 Pet. 1:25
<i>diangelo</i>	to declare	Luke 9:60
<i>katangelo</i>	to proclaim	Acts 4:2; 13:5
<i>parresiazomai</i>	to preach or speak boldly	Acts 9:27-29
<i>elencho</i>	to expose, correct, convict or reprove	2 Tim. 4:2; Titus 1:9; 2:15
<i>epitimao</i>	to rebuke or warn seriously	2 Tim. 4:2
<i>parakaleo</i>	to encourage, comfort or defend; lit., to call to one's side as an advocate	2 Tim. 4:2; cf. Acts 14:22
<i>paramuthia</i>	comfort, cheer, consolation	1 Cor. 14:3
<i>martureo</i>	to give a witness	Acts 20:21; cf. 1 Jn. 4:14
<i>homologeo</i>	lit., to say the same thing, to agree with; i.e., profess or confess the truth of	1 Tim. 6:12
<i>homileo</i>	to converse or talk with (to engage in conversation); This is the Greek word from which we derive the term "homiletics" for the study of preaching.	Acts 20:11
<i>laleo</i>	to speak	Mark 2:2; cf. 1 Cor. 2:67
<i>didasko</i>	to teach	Acts 5:42
<i>epilusis</i>	unloosing or untying; i.e., an explanation of what is obscure or hard to understand	2 Pet. 1:20
<i>suzeteo</i>	to examine together, discuss, or even dispute	Acts 9:29
<i>apologia</i>	a verbal defense	Acts 22:1; 1 Pet. 3:15; Phil 1:7, 16; 2 Tim. 4:16
<i>metadidomi</i>	to share the gospel as a gift	1 Thess. 2:8; cf. Rom. 1:11; Eph 4:28

Explanation

[This lecture corresponds to assigned Reading # 12:
Christ-centered Preaching, review of pp. 116-121; and,
read pp. 121-127.]

For mid-term review:

What are the distinguishing features of topical, textual and expository sermons?

How do you know there is more than one right style or attitude with which to preach?

What are some basic advantages of expository preaching?

Goal for this lesson: To understand the basic nature and process of the explanation component of sermonic exposition. (Understand that in homiletical discussion the terms "exposition" and "explanation" are often used interchangeably even though the latter is actually a subset of the former, as discussed in previous lessons.)

Introduction:

Remember explanation is answering the basic question, "What does this text mean?"

"To expound scripture is to bring out of the text what is there and expose it to view. . . . The opposite of exposition is 'imposition' which is to impose on the text what is not there."

—Stott

I. Explanation's Purpose

A.

B.

II. Explanation Defined

Generally

Particularly

Therefore, explanation is not merely the transmission of information, it is the conscious establishment of the biblical basis for the action or belief the sermon requires of God's people.

III. Explanation Described

NOT THIS:



BUT THIS:



IMPORTANT NOTES:

1. Explanation causes exposition (i.e., the unfolding of a text's meaning—cf. diermeneuo=unfold meaning, Lk. 24:27). Thus, the terms are often used synonymously.
2. Explanation forms the outline point-structure of Expository Sermons; i.e., main points and subpoints of an expository sermon are direct references to some aspect of the text. (This is why most of the time a verse reference can be attached to a main point or subpoint.)

IV. Explanation Preparation Process

A. The Three-Stage Process of Preparing Explanation:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

B. The Three Stages of Preparing Explanation Detailed:

1. Observation — Identify what's here.

2. Interrogation — Ask, "What does it mean?"
Involves subsidiary questions: How do I know? How do I find out? How can others know? How can I prove to you that what I am saying is what this text says and/or requires?

<>Realize you can't do all forms of exposition in any one main point.

3. Re-statement — How can I best communicate it (i.e., the meaning)?

V. Explanation's Progress and Presentation (Simplified)

A. Two steps explanation progress:

- 1) State what it means ----> 2) Show how you know:
 - a. State what you observed
 - b. Show how your observations back your statements.

B. Three stages of explanation presentation in a "typical" Main Point:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Steps four and five to come in future lectures:

4. Illustrate the truth
5. Apply the truth

VI. Explanation Related to the Outline: some small reiterations

1. The "_____ " is established (expounded) just before or after the proposition— or, possibly early in first main point.
2. The "_____ " becomes the "magnet clause" for the remaining exposition; i.e., the exposition within the main points focuses on the developmental phrases' distinctives. The developmental phrase acts as a magnet attracting the exposition.
3. Lengthy explanation is developed with subpoints that support or prove the _____ statement.

Assignment for Next Classes:

Reading Assignments #13: *Christ-centered Preaching*, pp. 174-190.

Written Assignment #6: Within two pages evaluate two upcoming sermons in chapel: 1) Identify the type of introduction in each message, evaluate effectiveness, identify FCF (or if it was not present); 2) Identify the type of conclusion in each message and evaluate effectiveness; 3) Specify if the sermon was topical, textual or expository and give evidence that supports your evaluation. Due at Lecture # 16.

Why and How to Illustrate

[These lectures correspond to assigned
Reading #13: *Christ-centered Preaching*, pp. 174-190;
and, Reading #14: *Christ-centered Preaching*, pp. 190-207.]

For mid-term review of Lecture 12:

What are the three stages of preparing explanation?

What are the three stages of presenting explanation in a "typical" main point?

Complete the following: "You owe no more to explanation"

Goal for these lessons: To understand why preachers use illustrations in expository preaching, and to learn how to create and use illustrations in expository preaching.

Lecture 13: Why to Illustrate

Introduction:

I. Why Illustrate?

A. Why Not?

B. Why?

1. The Way We Live
2. The Way of "Giants"
3. The Way We Learn
4. The Way We Motivate
5. The Way Scripture Teaches
6. The Way Jesus Speaks
7. The Way We Know God

[Assignment for Next Class: Reading # 14: *Christ-centered Preaching*, pp. 190-207.]

For mid-term review of Lecture 13:

What are reasons for which preachers should not illustrate?

What are reasons for which preachers should illustrate?

Lecture 14: How to Illustrate

II. Isolate and Associate

- A. Isolate an event in experience
and
- B. Associate it with the principle being related

◁> H.I.A. usually the best:

- Why old preacher's tales are problems
- Use your own mind, heart, reading, and experiences
- Use other's illustrations as catalysts for your own

III. Narrate (Use Narrative [i.e., storytelling] Principles)

- A. Recognize "story" nature of illustrations

- B. Recognize illustration hierarchy

metaphor
simile
example
analogy
allusion
illustration (distinguished by lived-body detail presented in narrative)
allegory
nouvelle
novel

◁>allusion reports on the speaker's memory of an experience, illustration re-creates the experience.

IV. How to use narrative components

- A. Introduce the Illustration-just as narratives have introductions, illustrations have introductions.

1. The conceptual introduction: "the last thing you said"
 2. The homiletical introduction: how to begin
 - a. shift gears: pause, put in the clutch
 - b. slice out the experiential context: separate by time, place or situation
 - i) separation by time
 - ii) separation in space
 - iii) separation of situation
 - c. avoid the uninvolving
- B. Use Concreteness and Detail (lived-body detail)
1. Why?
 2. How?
 3. What?
- C. Create Crisis
- D. Come to a Conclusion

V. Relate and Apply

- A. The Necessity
- B. The Technique (i.e., Using "Grouping Statements")

A "grouping statement" (or, "interpreting statement") is a sentence or two following the illustration in which the preacher reaches into the illustration for details pertinent to his truth concept, extracts them and, then, ties them together with the central idea he wishes to communicate.

1. interpreting statements
or
2. parallel phrases

Exposition **Statement of Main Point**

Illustration **Summary of Main Point**

Application **Summary of Illustration**

VI. Illustration Sources:

- A.
- B.
- C.

VII. Illustration Cautions:

- A. Do not think of illustrations more highly than you ought to think
- B. Do not think less of illustrations than you ought to think
 1. Only the Word changes people but you can get in the way by being needlessly dull, uninteresting or unconcerned about communication.
 2. Illustrations are a form of exposition (unfolding meaning for mind, heart and daily living).
 3. Illustrations require crafting with care and integrity, therefore:

Illustration Cautions (10 Be's of Illustrating)

- A. Be Accurate
- B. Be Careful What You Reveal
- C. Be Careful What You Endorse
- D. Be Careful What You Describe
- E. Be Not The Hero
- F. Be Honest
- G. Be Real
- H. Be Complete
- I. Be Balanced
- J. Be Precise

Illustration Lectures 5-Key Reminders

1. Illustration are told using the key terms (changed terms in parallel statements) of subpoint_____.
2. The process in which the key terms of the explanation's subpoint statements "drop down" into the illustrations and applications is called "_____."
3. Since an illustration is about "the last thing said prior to it," the key terms of a subpoint statement (or multiple sub-point statements, if they are being illustrated together) should be placed in a _____ statement immediately prior to the illustration.
4. The key terms of bullet-and answers-to analytical-question subpoints are found in the parallel subpoint _____; however, the key terms of interrogative subpoints are found in the parallel _____ to the interrogatives.
5. If there are no subpoints in a main point, then the key terms for "expositional rain" are found in the _____ clause of the main

point statement.

Assignment for Next Class:

Reading Assignments #15: *Christ-centered Preaching*, pp. 208-235.

Application

[This lecture corresponds to assigned Reading #15:
Christ-centered Preaching, pp. 208-235.]

For mid-term review:

What distinguishes illustration from mere allusion?

What do listeners automatically assume a preacher is illustrating?

What is an "interpreting statement" or "grouping statement" and how is it used?

What are some important cautions of which to be aware when illustrating?

Goal for this lesson: To understand the basic reasons and means for applying scriptural truth in an expository message.

Introduction:

Without application meaning is hidden. Application is essential to full exposition.

I. What is Application?

The consequence of the truth the Scripture presents. It answers the question "So what?" Application converts lectures to sermons, information to exhortation, intellectual acquisition to life transformation. Application is the most difficult feature of preaching. Application requires the preacher to take a stand and therefore demands courage. Far easier to dispense information than to seek transformation;

+General Application Principles:

Application concentrates on what _____ is required of man.

Application answers " _____?"

Application may be _____ or _____.

+Specific Application Possibilities

<>Because Application seeks heart and life transformation rather than mere mind expansion, Broadus calls it " the _____ "
in expository preaching.

II. Why Must Application be Included?

- A. Application explains the reason for the exposition (i.e., preceding or surrounding explanation and illustration).

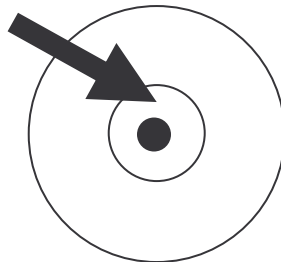


- B. Application focuses the exposition

(Exegesis and exposition are bottomless pits of infinite commentary possibilities without a purpose clearly in mind)

— Application is _____ of sermon research; _____ of sermon writing stage

— Left field rule



- C. Application clarifies (even gives meaning to) the exposition

Explanation = Tell \
Illustration = Show | All are essential for full exposition
Application = Do /

- D. Application of truth is required in Scripture

III. What are the Components of Application?

Determined by Four Developmental Questions:

A.

B.

C.

D.

IV. What Enables People to Apply Scriptural Truths?

A. —————> **THINK**

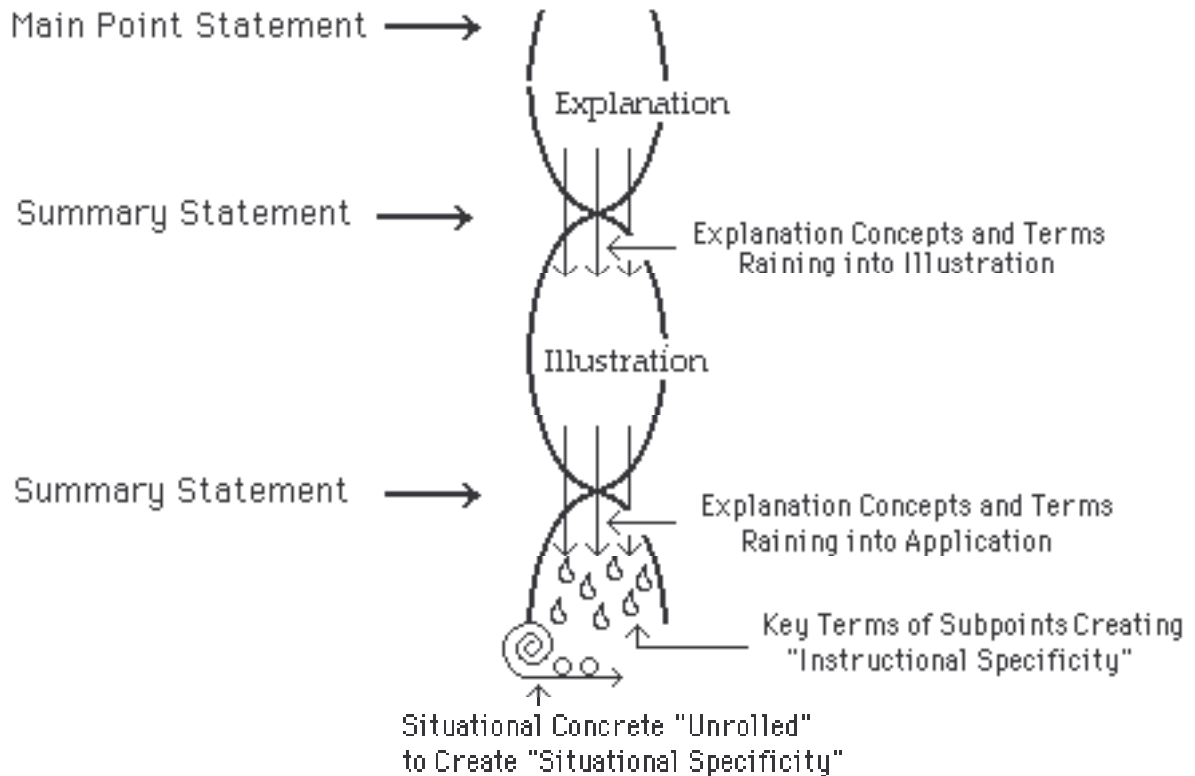
B. —————> **FEEL**

C. —————> **DO (Praxis)**



V. How is Application Structured?

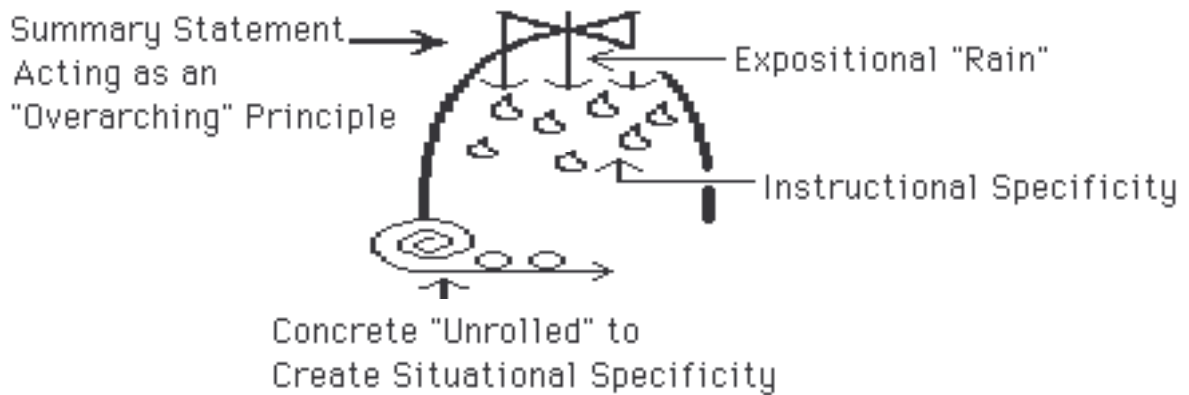
A. Charting Application in the Context of a Complete Main Point:



<> Instructional specificity comes from the text's exposition (concepts and terminology)

<> Situational specificity comes from the speaker's experience (personal and congregational) -- look at the subpoints and consider "who" deeply needs to know these truths in order to develop mature application.

B. Charting Application within the Applicational Component of a Main Point



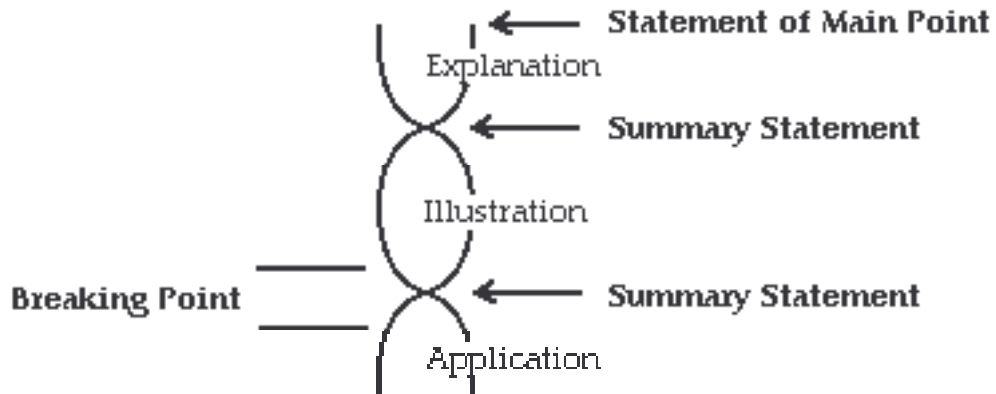
C. Charting Application in the "Situational Specificity" Stage:

Develop your application light fully in one concrete area then shine it briefly into other situational possibilities.



(Hint: a "double-edged sword" illustration may serve as the concrete)

VI. What Makes Application Difficult?



VII. How Do Preachers Overcome the Application Breaking Point?

A.

B.

C.

D.

<u>Gentleness</u>	vs.	<u>Forcefulness</u>
II Tim. 2: 24-26		Titus 1: 10-13
II Tim. 4: 2		Titus 2: 15
I Thess. 2: 7-12		

E.

If only preacher decides, Christians do not grow.
 e.g., Philemon 8, 9, 14, 21
 II Cor 1: 23-24 & 2:9
 II Tim. 2: 24-26

F. Other ...

VIII. What are Cautions for Application in Expository Sermons?

IX. What are Proper Attitudes with which to Present Applications?

X. What are Some Key Hints for Preparing Application?

FINAL WORDS ON APPLICATION:

Assignment for Next Class: Reading #16: *Christ-centered Preaching*, pp. 260-265
Written Assignment #6 from Lecture 12 is due for Lecture 16.

Transitions and Dialogical Method

[This lecture to Reading # 16: *Christ-centered Preaching*, pp. 260-265.]

For mid-term review:

What is "the main thing to be done" in an expository sermon according to Broadus?

What distinguishes instructional specificity and situational specificity?

What are key characteristics of effective "common sensical" applications?

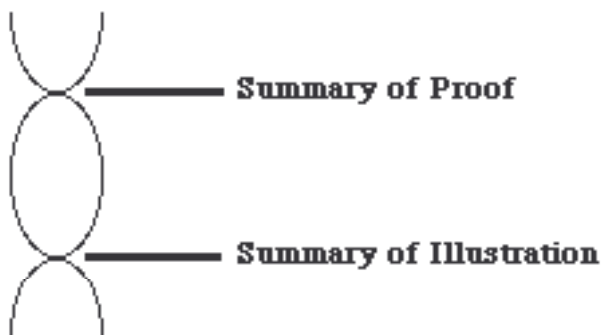
What key distinction should be kept in mind when making concrete applications?

Goal for this lesson: To understand how sermon components and listener involvement are knit together through the use of effective transitions and "pulpit dialogue."

I. The Function of Transitions:

Don't forget double-helix:

- Each node in whichever order the components appear is a summary statement of what preceded and the thematic statement of what follows.
- Transition is made easier by remembering what you illustrate or apply is always the "last thing you said" in the preceding material section.
- Components are tied therefore by the parallel concepts (and often terminology) that connect them.



II. The Nature of Transitions:

This process by which Main Point components are tied together conveys the more general nature of transitions both within and between Main Points.

- A. **Basic definition:** Transitions demonstrate or develop the relationships of the parts to the _____, or parts to _____.

Transitions may relate the . . .

- B. **Why Use Transitions?** Careful transitions help the listener to follow the speaker's thought throughout the progress of the message.

C. How Are Transitions Used?

Transitions may:

1. Review where _____
2. Preview where _____
3. Relate an immediate matter to the _____
4. Interest the listener in a new thought or the relationship between _____
5. Any _____ of the above

Therefore, as a result: don't rush into subpoints after statement of Main Point. Tell what you mean by Main Point and explain how you will support it with subpoints. Why are they ordered so? What causes us to consider the matter this way? The audience can't see your outline. So, transitions keep tying components back to the central idea. A typical mark of sermon excellence is consistent use of "_____"; i.e., transitions at the end of each major component of thought that tie that thought back to the sermon's main idea (particularly the _____).

III. Types of Transitions:

- A. _____ — asking (out loud) the questions listeners would ask if they felt they could.

1. Examples (Who, what, when, where, why, and how)
 - _ How do we apply this?
 - _ How do we know this is true?
 - _ If this won't work, what will?
 - _ What plan does God offer for this?
 - _ What comes next?

<> *This is the _____ to assume in creating all transitions whether you voice the question or not. You learn to hear the question in the mind of the listener and answer it.*

2. Reasons

3. Hints for Using Dialogical Transitions:

The best _____ answers "How do we know this means what I said?"
—more than simple "what does this mean?"

The best _____ answers "How do we apply this truth?" — most
commonly used for application. Audiences
never tire of this question.

The best _____ answers "How can we see this better — in our own
experience?" (this is typically a silent question).

<>An important place to learn to use an analytical question is immediately
after the _____. A good question here sets up the
reasoning for the main points.

B. _____ (a result of the dialogical process)

"Not only but also..." can take many forms:

+ "If this is true, then these are the implications . . ."

+ "Our understanding is not complete until we consider . . ."

+ *"God is loving but that is not enough to warrant our trust. Good intentions don't make everything work out all right. That is why Paul continues his argument by saying God is sovereign. God does not just desire what is good for us. He accomplishes it. Because God is sovereign, we must trust Him."*

C. _____ (most elementary and least artistic — but not wrong)

"The next thing we see in this passage is . . ."

"My second point is . . ." (never say "subpoint A, B, or C" as though the audience is reading your outline)

"Finally, . . ."; "In conclusion . . ."

D. _____

*It may sound insensitive to emphasize that,
God is the Object of our Faith
Until you remember this Scripture also teaches,
We are the Object of God's Affection.*

E. _____

+ "The Flip side of the coin is"

is + "The next thing crash investigators do after determining the point of impact,
trace back the causes of the malfunction."

+ "You know why personal gratification can never be the goal of
righteousness. What happens when you pat a dog's head. He rolls over
for you to pat his belly. The more he seeks gratification the more
vulnerable he makes himself."

Hint: Sometimes illustrations can be great transitions, making us see the
relationship between points. These types of transition are saying "In the
same way . . ."

F. _____ — relating a matter just covered to the central idea first introduced.

e.g. "We have talked about Christ being our high priest because it relates
directly to our understanding of why we are not rejected simply because
we sin."

<>It is particularly important to keep relating each main point to the F.C.F., since
this keeps us developing a message rather than simply describing a text.

IV. Billboards

An important but often neglected area of transition is between introduction and body of message.

1. What are Billboards?

e.g. "In order to have this assurance of your relationship with God you must believe that the love of Jesus is greater than your sin, your circumstances, and Satan himself."

2. Why use Billboards?

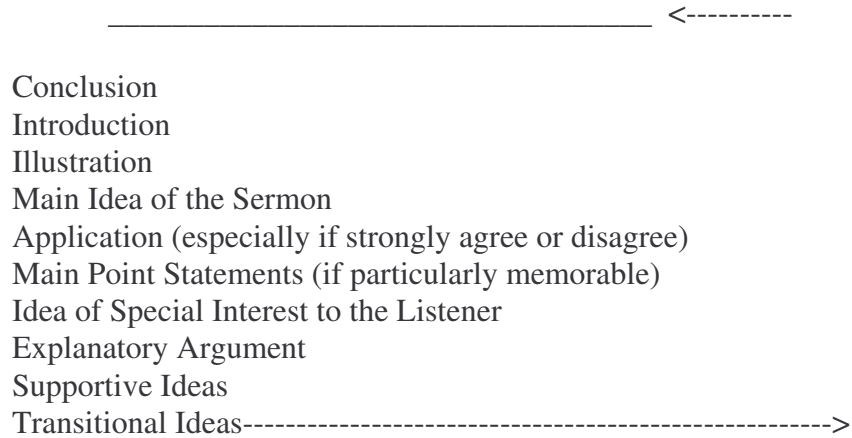
3. Hints for using Billboards?

V. Using Verse References

- Verse references are usually _____ immediately after the principal statement of the Main point or subpoint that needs to be proven (i.e., "Look with me at verse 15." —Try not to say, "Look with me at verses 8 through 13," since no one can scan so much material in the scant second it takes you to say it.). You are in essence saying, "Now this is where I get this idea." You are in essence answering, "Now where did he get that?" Explanation then follows the reference, as well.
- Expository points "usually" have a text reference immediately following them but when expounding a narrative, or developing an idea based upon context or genre, you may simply have to identify the event, textual feature, or aspect of context that proves your point.

VI. Understanding the Memory Retention Hierarchy:

A. The Retention Hierarchy:



B. Each component vital if first component to be favorably received.

Conclusion:

Assignment for Next Class:

Reading Assignment #17: *Christ-centered Preaching*, 346-349.

Methods of Sermon Presentation

[This lecture corresponds to assigned Reading #17:
Christ-centered Preaching, 346-349.]

For mid-term review:

What are some basic functions of transitions?

What is a dialogical transition?

What is the key wording beaoning behind "logical connection" transitions?

What is a "billboard" in a sermon; and, how is it used?

Goal for this lesson: To understand the options a preacher has in preparing the materials` (notes, outlines, manuscripts, or ideas) necessary to present a sermon effectively.

Introduction: With so much to consider, what should you actually take with you into the pulpit when you preach?

I. Types of Presentation Described:

— Broadus lists three basic types of presentations, but sub-divides these:

A.

B.

C.

— Louis Paul Lehman's more comprehensive list:

A.

B.

C.

D.

II. Strengths and Weaknesses of the Types of Presentations Discussed:

A. Preaching with the impromptu method:

B. Preaching extemporaneously from outlines:

1. Advantages

2. Disadvantages

C. Preaching from written manuscripts:

1. Advantages

2. Disadvantages

CAUTION: If you write, do so in "speaking style." This does not make sermons ready for publication, but it does ready them for pulpit presentation--which should be your primary goal.

III. What Method Will We Follow?

IV. Possible Approaches to Writing Manuscripts and Converting to a "Pulpit" Outline:

After writing out a manuscript . . .

- A. Put outline in key-word form in margin
 - B. Put outline in the manuscript
 - using highlighting, underlining, margin variation, and visual symbols to show main points and key words or passages within the manuscript.
 - C. Put outline on another piece of paper, after extracting it from the manuscript
 - Extensive
 - try to use consistent eye-catchers
 - keep main points from starting at the bottoms of pages (keeping main points on separate pages is a good idea)
 - keep lots of white space
 - write as large as you need to see, and to see distinctions
 - use margins well to indicate subordinate ideas in the outline
 - Bare-bones (most easily placed in Bible, on note cards, or on middle-fold sheet)
 - D. Put outline in your mind (for most this requires memorizing concepts, not words)
- Hints on How To Preach from Memory (WHEN USING OUTLINE):**

Conclusion:

Assignment for Next Class:

Reading Assignment #18: *Christ-centered Preaching*, pp. 329-337.

Voice and Gesture

[This lecture corresponds to assigned Reading #18:
Christ-centered Preaching, pp. 329-337.]

For review:

What are some advantages of preaching from manuscripts?

What are some advantages of preaching from outlines?

What is an extended outline? A barebones outline?

What is a "pulpit" outline?

Goal for this lesson: To understand what makes sermon delivery effective in terms of voice and gesture.

Introduction:

Consider this key: **energy and enthusiasm with sincerity = power**

When our manner naturally conforms to our content it becomes obvious that our message has impact on us and that is what makes its power infectious in terms of delivery. How do we speak with the naturalness that is so powerful?

I. The Basic Nature of Powerful Delivery:

A. An Example of Natural Public Address

B. Implications of Natural Public Address

II. The Basic Features of Delivery:

A.

B.

1.

2.

3.

4.

III. Key terms for each Delivery Feature:

IV. Relative Importance of Delivery Features:

(Albert Mehrabian)

55% of message is communicated by _____ cues

38% " " _____

7% " " _____

<> 93% " " _____

<> Though the percentages have often been challenged since, no one denies the huge import of manner of delivery upon perceived content of the message.

V. The Basic Features of Delivery Detailed:

A. Voice

1. Volume:

2. Variety

3. Intensity

4. Physical Preparation

B. Gesture

1. The Primary Tool of Gesture: _____
2. Other Natural Tools of Gesture:

Standard Rules for all Gestures:

Common faults for all Gestures:

VI. General Rules for Delivery:

CONCLUSION FOR VOICE AND GESTURE:

Assignment for Next Class:

Reading Assignment #19: *Christ-centered Preaching*, pp. 338-343 and, Ryle reading.

Dress and Style

[This lecture corresponds to assigned Reading #19:
Christ-centered Preaching, pp. 338-343; and,
Ryle reading on "Simplicity in Preaching."]

For mid-term review:

What are three essential components of voice to consider when evaluating effectiveness of delivery?

What are three types of monotone?

What are the horns of the pulpit?

Where should hand gestures be made relative to the body?

Goal for this lesson: To understand how messages can be delivered with greater effectiveness by considering how the preacher can identify with his congregation in dress and delivery styles.

Introduction:

I Cor. 9:19-25

¹⁹ Though I am free and belong to no man, I make myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible.

²⁰ To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. ²¹ To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law.

²² To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some.

²³ I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings.

I. Styles of Dressing

Watchword is "appropriate":

A. Present Self Appropriately for the Situation

B. Present Yourself as a Testimony

1. Avoid

2. Display

C. Consider the Drama of the communication event

<>Concluding verses on Dress and other Aspects of Pulpit Presence:

Make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in your brother's way. Rm. 14:13

Be careful that the exercise of your freedom does not become a stumbling block to the weak. I Cor. 8:9

*I have become all things to all men that I might by all means save some.
I Cor. 9:22*

II. Styles of Delivery:

A. Cultivate a Personal Style (I Thess 2:3-8)

1. Do not be afraid to be _____, but ...
2. Speak as though explaining _____
3. Speak to _____
4. Use the We of _____ address vs. royal (or "editorial") we.
5. Use _____ speech

B. Cultivate a Plain Style (see handout on what "puts off" listeners):

1. Speak in _____

a. Scriptures for Plain Speaking

I Cor. 2:4,5 "My message and my words were not with wise and persuasive words but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, so that your faith might not rest on man's wisdom but on God's power."

II Cor. 3:12 "Seeing that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech."

II Cor. 4:2 ". . . by setting forth the truth plainly we commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God."

I Cor. 14:19 five intelligible words preferred over 10 thousand not understandable.

b. Principles for Plain Speaking Today:

Cautions: [Read WLC # 159]

2. Speak _____

Conclusion:

Be the best you rather than trying to be a better Billy Graham or Spurgeon.

Assignment for Next Class:

Reading Assignment # 20: *Christ-centered Preaching*, 344-345; and, Kroll reading on "Preparation Procedures," pp. 127-141.

More Outline Forms
"Old Friends in New Clothes"

I. Converting Traditional/Formal Structures to Short Forms

A. Review of "Formally" Worded Outline Components

1. Formal Proposition and/or Main Point
 - Universal truth in hortatory mode
 - Universal truth based on the text, and an application based on the universal truth
 - Principle + application
2. Formal Outline Structure
 - Principle Consistent Outline=principle clause stays consistent throughout the outline and the application clauses change.
 - Application Consistent Outline=application clause stays consistent throughout the outline and principle clauses change.

B. Fundamentally Reduced Outline

1. The consistent clause (anchor clause) alone becomes the Proposition
2. The changing clauses (magnet clauses) alone become the Main Points

C. Step-by-step Conversion Process:

1. Note which element (principle or application) remains consistent in the outline; i.e., identify the "anchor clause."
2. Develop the concept of the consistent element in the Introduction and Proposition.
3. Create an analytical question or implicational question(s) based on this consistent element (i.e., the anchor clause):
e.g., who, what, when, where, why, how
4. Answer the question(s) with the developmental clauses (i.e., magnet clauses) which become the Main Points.

[Hint: To enhance unity and flow the anchor clause reappears in the transition between Main Points as the analytical question (e.g., "What is *another reason* that we

should proclaim Christ in all situations?” or “What is *another implication* of knowing Christ is Lord over all relationships?”)

D. Results of Using the Reduced Forms

1. A Principle-Consistent Outline in Reduced Form will have:
 - A *principle* for the Proposition and *applications* for the Main Points.
 - The Proposition will say “what is true” and the Main Points will say “what to do”
2. An Application-Consistent Outline will have:
 - An *application* for the Proposition and *principles* for the Main Points.
 - The Proposition will say “what to do” and the Main Points will say “what is true” (i.e., the reasons “why to do it”)

E. Goals for Using the Short Forms:

1. Main points should be concise and memorable
2. Subpoints should support or prove their specific Main Point
3. “Rain” key word changes from the Subpoints to tell the Illustration and form the Application

II. Sermon Requirements for This Semester

- A. Prior to presentation of each sermon you preach, give the instructor a typed manuscript of the entire message (see “Sermon Manuscript and Outline Requirements” handout **and** Example Sermon in Prep and Del Syllabus ; i.e. main points and subpoints indicated, key words boldfaced in illustration and application, etc.).
- B. Prior to presentation of each sermon you should give your instructor *two* outlines of your message:
 - i. A **bare-bones** outline that *only* includes the “formal” proposition and main points (i.e., fully write out both the anchor and magnet clauses as examples in *Prep and Del* Lecture #6).
 - ii. A **pulpit outline** prepared for the actual preaching of the sermon showing the proposition and main points in “fundamentally reduced” structure (i.e., proposition=anchor clause only; main points=magnet clauses only). Pulpit outlines should also show whatever you need to prompt your memory in order to preach (introduction cues, subpoint statements, illustration reminders, application specifics, etc.)

Goal: We prefer that, having carefully prepared the full manuscript to plan what to say, you will preach freely from the “pulpit outline” as empowered by the Holy Spirit. Even if you use your manuscript in the pulpit *this* semester, you must prepare the two outlines described above.

PRINCIPLE CONSISTENT OUTLINE

(Consequential Form)

**Prop: Because Jesus is the only hope of salvation,
we must present Christ at every opportunity.**

- I. Because Jesus is the only hope of salvation,
we must present Christ in difficult situations.
- II. Because Jesus is the only hope of salvation,
we must present Christ to difficult people.
- III. Because Jesus is the only hope of salvation,
we must present Christ despite our difficulties.

(Fundamental Reduction)

Intro: Develop idea that Christ is our only hope.

Prop: Jesus is the only hope of salvation.

Analytical Question: What are the consequences?

- I. We must present Christ in difficult situations.
- II. We must present Christ to difficult people.
- III. We must present Christ despite our difficulties.

APPLICATION CONSISTENT **OUTLINE**

(Conditional Form)

**Prop: Since Jesus alone provides salvation,
we must present Christ at every opportunity.**

- I. Since Jesus alone purchased salvation,
we must present Christ at every opportunity.
- II. Since Jesus alone possesses salvation,
we must present Christ at every opportunity.
- III. Since Jesus alone bestows salvation,
we must present Christ at every opportunity.

(Fundamental Reduction)

Intro: Develop idea of consistently presenting Christ

Prop: We must present Christ at every opportunity.

Analytical Question: Why?

- I. Jesus alone purchased salvation.
- II. Jesus alone possesses salvation.
- III. Jesus alone bestows salvation.

Sermon Manuscript and Outline Requirements Elementary Practicum Preaching Class

All sermon manuscripts must be typed (see Example Sermon in *Prep and Del* Syllabus for basic format) and should indicate by heading, boldface, or underline the major sermon components they contain, including:

- **Scripture introduction;**
 - **Sermon introduction (with key words preparing for proposition boldfaced);**
 - **FCF underlined in the introduction;**
 - **Proposition *fundamentally reduced*;**
 - **Main points *fundamentally reduced*;**
 - **Subpoint statements;**
 - **Illustrations (with key words from preceding subpoint statements boldfaced);**
 - **Applications (with key words from preceding subpoint statements boldfaced);**
 - **Conclusion**
-

We are preparing manuscripts with great care in order to be well prepared, but we should not read in the pulpit. Our goal is to convert the manuscript to a “Pulpit Outline” and then preach from this outline to provide the most natural, powerful and Spirit-led delivery.

This “Pulpit Outline” is not simply a listing of proposition, main points and subpoints, but rather is an organized presentation of all your material that allows you to see at a glance (usually in one to three pages) what you intend to say in the entire message. A good “rule of thumb” is to keep main points segregated on different pages of the pulpit outline so that your eye always knows where the next main point starts. (For further hints on preparing these types of extended outlines, see *Christ-centered Preaching*, pp. 334-336.)

Before you preach you should give your instructor a copy of:

- 1) a complete **sermon manuscript** (with all portions entirely written out);
- 2) a **pulpit outline** that includes “fundamentally reduced” proposition and main points along with your other sermon notes regarding introduction, illustrations, applications, etc.; and,
- 3) a **bare-bones outline** with “formal” proposition and main points (see examples in *Prep and Del* Syllabus Lecture #6) should be given to your instructor before you preach. [Note: The reason for the preparation of a “formal” proposition and main point outline is to aid the unity and precision of your thought as you get ready to write the manuscript. However, the manuscript and the pulpit outline should be written with “fundamentally reduced” propositions and main points that reflect how you will actually speak as you preach.]
- 4) A **VHS format video tape** cued for recording your sermon.

Word and Spirit

Goal for this lesson: To consider approaches to preparing messages that keep preachers true to the priorities of the Word and Spirit.

I. How to Demonstrate Priorities of the Word in the Pulpit:

A. Preach from an Open Bible

B. Refer to the Text Often in the Sermon

1. Cite the portion of the text from which your point (or subpoint) is taken
2. Take persons to “helpful” parallel passages (pre-mark them in your Bible)
3. Give people time to find the passage before you read from it (occasionally encourage them repeat it with you)

C. Read the Word meaningfully

1. How?

- a. Not sentimentally nor theatrically nor with "stained glass/preacher tones"
- b. Read at a conversational pace
- c. Let voice and intonation reflect content and meaning
- d. Emphasize verbs and modifier
- e. Practice out loud for sentence breaks, punctuation surprises, pronunciation problems

2. Hints

- a. Use the Scripture Introduction to prepare listeners for surprises and difficulties
 - Hard terms/names, new ideas, story background, context, or twists
 - Skipped verses (curiosity makes listeners read what you skip)
 - Combined passages
- b. Read "indelicate" matters (see Broadus p. 360) in more appropriate translation or with "unconcerned" matter-of-factness.
- c. Practice; read meaningfully to children.
- d. Give respect before/after you read the Word (“This is the Word of the Lord...;” “Thus far God’s Word...”; “Let’s read together, God’s holy and inerrant Word ...”)
- e. Pray before/after you read the Word

3. Why?

- a. Reading is itself a type of exposition and interpretation (even for yourself)
- b. More and more people are dependent on the public reading (as in the early church, so occasionally look up as you read)
- c. Reflects your own theology of the Word; you believe the Word is able to change people eternally and is the source of authoritative truth

Rev. 1:3 "Blessed is he that reads, and they that hear, the words of this (book)"
Heb. 4:12 "The Word of God is quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit ... and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

II. Why to Engage the Priorities of the Spirit in the Pulpit:

A. Preaching is a Redemptive Event (John 17:17)

17 Sanctify {Greek hagiazo (set apart for sacred use or make holy) them by the truth; your word is truth.... (see also vs. 190

19 For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified.

(Not simply thoughts for mind or memory, but words of life by the Word of Life)

And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the word of God, *which is at work in you who believe.* (I Thess. 2:13)

1. Christ as Speaker, God as Audience (II Pet. 1:21; John 16:13-14; II Tim. 4:1-2)

For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit (II Pet. 1:21)

But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. 14 He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you.(John 16:13-14)

In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge: 2 Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage--with great patience and careful instruction. (II Tim. 4:1-2)

2. The Word Made Flesh (I Cor. 1: 17-18, 21; Titus 1:3)

17 For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel--not with words of human wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power. 18 For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.... 21 For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe (I Cor. 1:17-18, 21)

[A]t his appointed season he brought his word to light through the preaching entrusted to me by the command of God our Savior (Titus 1:3)

3. Co-creators of a New Creation (John 1:1-3; 17:18, 21-23; I Pet. 1:23-25)

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was with God in the beginning. 3 Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. (John 1:1-3)

18 As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world.... 21 that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. 22 I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: 23 I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. (John 17:18, 23-23)

23 For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God. 24 For, "All men are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field; the grass withers and the flowers fall, 25 but the word of the Lord stands forever." And this is the word that was preached to you. (I Pet. 1:23-25)

B. Preaching is Supernatural Event (Fire and Wax = Speaker and Listener)

We tend to be more concerned to perform our part creditably than we are about God's mighty involvement in our efforts. We tend to be more hungry for success than we are for God's empowering" (Duewel, 81). God made it clear to Zerubbabel that the task of rebuilding the temple would be accomplished "not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit" (Zech. 4:6). As Phillips Brooks said, "Never allow yourself to feel equal to your work. If you ever find that spirit growing on you, be afraid" (Piper, 38).

1. The Need of Unction (Luke 4:18-19; I John 2:20, *KJV*)

(1 Thess. 1:5) Our gospel came to you not simply with words, but also with power; with the Holy Spirit and with deep conviction."

(Luke 4:18-19) "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, 19 to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

(I John 2:20, *KJV*) But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things.

Unction means the anointing of the Holy Spirit upon a sermon so that something holy and powerful is added to the message that no preacher can naturally generate, no matter how great his skills.

2. The Requirements of Unction (Illumination, Conviction, Assimilation)

a. Illumination

- John 14:26

But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will *teach* you all things and will *remind* you of everything I have said to you.

Teach = understanding (give insight into what the Scriptures mean in themselves and for our circumstances)

Remind= bring teaching to mind (we remember what we would not without the intervention of the Spirit; my thoughts are ordered and stimulated by the Spirit so that I remember – have appear in my thoughts – things I would not consider without him. I put my circumstances and my people's in appropriate juxtaposition with appropriate scriptural truth by the working of the Spirit)

- I Corinthians 2:14

The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.

Does the Bible support an emphasis on the Spirit's power in our preaching? I believe it does. In 1 Corinthians two, Paul states: " My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, so that your faith might not rest on men's wisdom, but on God's power" (vss. 4-5). and then he says that " God has revealed [the riches of God's wisdom] to us by his Spirit," for " the Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God" (vss. 10-11). " We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us. This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words" (vss. 12, 13). God's truth is " spiritually discerned" (v. 14), and because " we have the mind of Christ" (v. 16) we may proclaim these truths with spiritual insight and power. In 1 Thessalonians 1:5 Paul writes that " our gospel came to you not simply with words, but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and with deep conviction." There are many other scriptures that support - either directly or indirectly - this foundational truth (Acts 1: 8; 4:29-31; 1 Cor. 15: 10-11; 2 Cor. 3:3-6; 12:9; Col. 1:28-29; Mt. 28:18-20).

b. Conviction (John 16:8)

7 But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.

8 When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment:

Sin=what is wrong

Righteousness=what is right

Judgment=what is ahead (Christ's victory and Satan's demise)

c. Assimilation (John 3:3, 11-13; II Timothy 2:15)

(John 3:3, 11-13) In reply Jesus declared, "I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again.".... 11 I tell you the truth, we speak of what we know, and we testify to what we have seen, but still you people do not accept our testimony. 12 I have spoken to you of earthly things and you do not believe; how then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things? 13 No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven--the Son of Man.

i. Study (II Tim. 2:15,16; 3:14-17)

(II Tim. 2:15,16) Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth. 16 Avoid godless chatter, because those who indulge in it will become more and more ungodly.

(II Tim. 3:14-17) But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, 15 and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. 16 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, 17 so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

"All Scripture is God-breathed...Preach the Word!" The unction is already upon the Scriptures. The Bible is already drenched in sacred oil. When I preach, I love those inexplicable moments when I find myself soaring, when the Word is like honey to me, and fire. But what I have learned from Paul's last admonitions to Timothy (i.e., be prepared in season and out) is to trust the unction that is always upon Scripture even when my words seem clumsy or common.

Sometimes unction is simply received by faith, without feeling the wind or the heat. We go home to our Sunday afternoon nap deflated and disappointed that nothing seemed to happen. But when with a pure heart, a Christian preacher declares the Scriptures, or proclaims Christ, or calls for repentance and holiness, his words are surely anointed.

Martin Lloyd-Jones: *The right way to look upon the unction of the Spirit is to think of it as that which comes upon the preparation.*

The preparation that ML-J has in mind includes "all I have been saying." This involves the preparation of the message (including exegesis, exposition, homiletics, etc.) and the preparation of the preacher (through prayer, personal holiness, devotional exercise, study, general reading, etc.). To my mind, this is the sanest and most holistic treatment of the way to true spiritual unction to be found in any 20th-century treatment of this subject.

ii. Piety (Psm. 66:18; John 8:31-2; I Thess. 2:3-12; Philemon 1:6)

(Psm. 66:18) If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened;

(John 8:31-2) To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. 32 Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

(I Thess. 2:8-9) We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well, because you had become so dear to us. 9 Surely you remember, brothers, our toil and hardship; we worked night and day in order not to be a burden to anyone while we preached the gospel of God to you.

(Philemon 1:6) I pray that you may be active in sharing your faith, so that you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ.

Must know light to see light-- Hodge

Alexander Maclaren said, " Power for service is second. Power for holiness and character is first. . . . The first, second, and third requisite for our work is personal godliness." J. D. Jones said, " The one indispensable condition of our usefulness and success in the work of the ministry is that we should be good men - men of pure and holy life - men of God. . . . The effect of our words on the Sabbath will really depend on our lives during the week, for it is always the man behind the speech which wields the power" (Wiersbe, p. 144).

Another hindrance is our desiring the power out of wrong motives. James writes: " When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives" (4:3). Unbelief is another major reason for the lack of power in our preaching, and in our lives. Many preachers - perhaps the majority who are not preaching in the power of the Spirit of God - don't really believe it's possible. They say, " Well, I'm this kind of person, you know. I have this kind of temperament or personality."

iii. Prayer (Acts 6:4)

(Acts 6:3-4) Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word."

IV. An Alternative Approach to Sound Expository Messages:

1. Read
2. Research
3. Focus on a Single Idea
4. Bathe all in Prayer

Conclusion:

Question 72: What is justifying faith?

Answer: Justifying faith is a saving grace, wrought in the heart of a sinner by the Spirit and Word of God, whereby he, being convinced of his sin and misery, and of the disability in himself and all other creatures to recover him out of his lost condition, not only assents to the truth of the promise of the gospel, but receives and rests upon Christ and his righteousness, therein held forth, for pardon of sin, and for the accepting and accounting of his person righteous in the sight of God for salvation.

A Redemptive Approach to Preaching

Primary Goal of this Lesson:

To see the overarching plan that is the reason we have constructed sermons according to the design we have followed thus far.

I. Review of Key Perspectives

A. The Principle of Fallen Condition Focus

Thus far we have made II Tim. 3:16-17 a key to understanding any text's purpose:

"All Scripture is inspired by God ... in order that the man of God might be perfect [artios=complete]"

All Scripture is intended to complete us in some way – by leading to salvation or advancing sanctification. The necessary implication is that we are _____ . We are fallen creatures in a fallen condition and God's redemptive work in Scripture is making us whole in ways we cannot by ourselves.

B. The Swiss Cheese Effect

Thus, all Scripture and all expository preaching designed to reflect the meaning of a scriptural passage, addresses aspects of humanity's "Fallen Condition." Our goal in expounding a text is to determine not only *what it says* but why it was written and *what we spiritually share in* _____ with:

- those for (or about) whom it was written?
- or
- the one by whom it was written?

Transition: Now recognize that thus far we have only discussed the _____. If all Scripture focuses on some aspect of our fallen condition, why does it do so? The answer is clear, to supply the warrant and need for the redemptive elements it contains to be applied. Thus, just as every Scripture echoes our incompleteness, it is in some manner signaling the Savior's work which makes us whole. Our goal in redemptive preaching is to decipher the signals, for until we do so we do not truly understand our text.

It is possible to say all the right words and yet send all the wrong _____.

[Consider a Radio Ministry.]

What went wrong here? How can he seem so right and yet be so far off base?

II. The Nature of Redemptive Preaching

A. The Nature of Redemptive Interpretation

Magnifying Glass ---- compared to ---- Fish-eye Lens
(Systematic Theology) (Biblical Theology)

That discipline of Bible interpretation that emphasizes the overarching themes that unite all of Scripture's particulars is called _____. Biblical theology is not simply asking what truth does this particular passage reveal but _____ is it related to the _____ message of Scripture.

B. The Principles of Redemptive Interpretation (cr. G. Vos, *Biblical Theology*)

1. The _____ Principle
Biblical theology is that branch of exegetical theology which deals with the process of the self-revelation of God deposited in the Bible. Revelation is a noun of action relating to divine activity. Revelation is an historically *progressive* process—a long series of successive acts.
2. The _____ Principle
The progressive process is *organic*: revelation may be in seed form which yields later full growth accounting for diversity but not true difference because the earlier aspects of truth are indispensable for understanding the true meanings of the later forms and vice-versa.
3. The _____ Principle
Revelation is inseparably linked to the activity of *redemption*. Revelation is the interpretation of redemption. To see revelation properly we must see it in its *redemptive* context. The context and content of some revelation may be in seed form as it relates to redemption but it is integrally related to the mature message and is not properly understood or communicated until this relationship is made clear.

THE ACORN ANALOGY

In the same sense (as trying to explain an acorn without mentioning the oak tree, we cannot properly explain any aspect of revelation, even if we say many true things about it, until we have in some way related it to _____).

C. The Implications of a Redemptive Perspective

1. Divine Provision is Necessary for Holy Living:

Since all Scripture is redemptive revelation addressing our fallen condition (incompleteness or inadequacy), then we must recognize in some way every passage points not only to our _____ of redemption, but also to God's _____ of our redemption. The Bible is not a self-help book. "Apart from me you can do nothing," Jesus said (John 15:5).

2. Biblical Theology is Necessary for Proper Interpretation:

We must gather that to profit much in the holy Scripture we must always resort to our Lord Jesus Christ and cast our eyes upon him, without turning from him at any time. You will see a number of people who labor very hard indeed at reading the holy Scriptures – they do nothing else but turn over the leaves of it. . . . And why? Because they do not have any particular aim in view, they only wander about . . . [A]lthough they have gathered together a number of sentences of all sorts, yet nothing of value results from them. Even so it is with them that labor in reading the Holy Scriptures and do not know which is the point they ought to rest on, namely, the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. (**John Calvin, Sermon on Ephesians 2:19-22, 1559**) (See distributed Articles also.)

3. Redemptive Interpretation is Necessitated by Biblical Instruction:

I Cor. 2: 2 I resolved to make nothing known among you but Jesus Christ and him crucified. . . . (cf. 1: 23 We preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to the Jews and foolishness to the Gentiles.) "atonement," not example, is key (cf. II Cor. 4:3-5; Gal. 6:14).

Luke 24: 27 Beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he explained what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.

(Note: Since Jesus says all Scripture is about him, when we try to explain a text without mentioning his redeeming work we neglect to expound the very thing Jesus says the text reveals.)

Matt. 17 The Transfiguration. Moses and Elijah, representing the Law and the prophets, appear to testify of Christ. (cf. John 5:39f.; I Pet. 1:10-11)

Key Note: These verses demonstrate that the term "Christ-centered" is synecdoche for all of God's redeeming work that makes us know and depend upon his grace *ultimately* provided in Christ. A Christ-centered sermon does not attempt to make Jesus appear where the text does not speak of him, but rather demonstrates the _____ of the text to his person and/or work. Thus, these are also referred to as "Redemptive messages" or "Grace-focused messages".

Our goal in Christ-centered Preaching is not to make Jesus magically or allegorically appear in every text, but rather to demonstrate the _____ principles evident in the text that are most fully revealed in Christ's person and/or work, and are necessary for our growth in Christ-likeness.

IV. The Nature and Design of Non-Redemptive Preaching

A. The Nature of Non-redemptive messages: "sola bootstrapsa"

1. Various Forms:
 - Pick yourself up by your own bootstraps
 - 10 steps to a better ...
 - Do this thing (or behavior) to get yourself right with God
2. Basic Problem:

These are not merely _____-Christian messages, they are _____-Christian messages, since no Scripture *in context* says, "Just be good and God will be happy."

B. The Design of Non-redemptive messages: "the Deadly Be's"

1. Be _____ (follow this example)

Be like Daniel, Moses, David, Jesus, etc. (question: If David were asked who we should be like, would he say, "David?"). Care actually seems to be taken in Scripture to tarnish all (but one) so that we won't turn to anyone but God for ultimate aid.

God is the _____ of every text!
2. Be _____ (save yourself)

Don't drink or smoke or chew, or ...
Hunker down and try harder.
3. Be _____ (sanctify yourself) ...

Pray more, read your Bible more, go to church more, etc.

Of course, "Be" messages are in Scripture, but identify their context (e.g. I Cor. 4:16; 11:1; Phil. 3:17; I Thess. 1: 4-6; II Thess. 3:7-9).

Recognize "Be" messages are not wrong _____ themselves; they are wrong messages _____ themselves.

"Be" messages *by themselves* imply that _____ are able to change our fallen condition by our own efforts. Such messages, stated or implied, make us no different than Unitarians, Muslims or Hindus.

C. The De-merits of Non-redemptive Messages (why they don't help)

1. There is no _____ in keeping God's commands – blessing, but no merit.

Jay Adams-"How could there be merit for us if He is the enabler?"

Abraham Kuyper-"This holy disposition [viz., sanctification] cannot spring from man, not even from regeneration.... The indwelling Spirit is the actual worker" (pgs. 456-7).

Westminster Confession of Faith XVI. 2, 3, 5, 6

[G]ood works, done in obedience to God's commandments, are the fruits and evidences of a true and lively faith: ... Their ability to do good works is not at all of themselves but wholly from the Spirit of Christ."

"We cannot by our best works merit pardon for sin ... by reason of the great disproportion that is between them and the glory to come; and the infinite distance that is between us and God...; by them [i.e., our best works] we can neither profit nor satisfy for the debt of our former sins, but when we have done all we can, we have but done our duty, and are unprofitable servants; and because, as they are good, they proceed from his spirit; and as they are wrought by us, they are defiled, and mixed with so much weakness and imperfection, that they cannot endure the severity of God's judgment.... [B]elievers being accepted through Christ, their good works are also accepted in him; not as though they were in this life wholly unblameable and unreprieveable in God's sight."

(Cf. Is. 64:6 - "filthy rags"; Luke 17:10 - "unworthy servants").

John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans), pp. 790-791.

"To man we may assign only this: that he pollutes and contaminates by his impurity those very things which are good. For nothing proceeds from a man however perfect he be, that is not defiled by some spot. Let the Lord, then call to judgment the best of human works: he will indeed recognize in them his own righteousness by man's dishonor and shame."

2. Challenges to holiness without mention of grace force a _____-centered religion. People cannot do what they are told to do apart from Christ's grace (John 15:5; Rom. 8:36). Requirements of holiness by themselves wound people because without provision of divine aid they either will despair of hope or trust in their own righteousness. Thus, if you wound — even unintentionally — you are obligated to heal. We heal by wedding all requirements of holiness to a proper relationship with Him who alone can provide holiness (and showing where and how the Scripture we are interpreting does the same).

E.g. Eph. 6:10 Be strong in the power of _____ might. (cf. Col. 1:29; II Pet. 1:3)

The Bottom line: With whom will they walk out the door? Me, myself and I, or their Savior? To whom will you lead them, and with whom will you leave them?

How to Determine the F.C. F.

3-Step Process: (Ask these things ...)

1. What does the text say (What's the Big Idea)?

2. What Concern(s) Did the Text Address

3. What Do We Share in Common with:

-those to (or about) whom it was written

or

-the one by whom it was written

A Redemptive Approach to Preaching

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All Scripture is intended to complete us in some way – by leading to salvation or advancing sanctification. The necessary implication is that we are _____. We are fallen creatures in a fallen condition and God's redemptive work in Scripture is making us whole in ways we cannot by ourselves.

B. The Swiss Cheese Effect

Thus, all Scripture and all expository preaching designed to reflect the meaning of a scriptural passage, addresses aspects of humanity's "Fallen Condition." Our goal in expounding a text is to determine not only *what it says* but why it was written and *what we spiritually share* in _____ with:

- those for (or about) whom it was written?
- or
- the one by whom it was written?

Transition: Now recognize that thus far we have only discussed the _____. If all Scripture focuses on some aspect of our fallen condition, why does it do so? The answer is clear, to supply the warrant and need for the redemptive elements it contains to be applied. Thus, just as every Scripture echoes our incompleteness, it is in some manner signaling the Savior's work which makes us whole. Our goal in redemptive preaching is to decipher the signals, for until we do so we do not truly understand our text.

It is possible to say all the right words and yet send all the wrong _____.

[Consider a Radio Ministry.]

What went wrong here? How can he seem so right and yet be so far off base?

II. The Nature of Redemptive Preaching

A. The Nature of Redemptive Interpretation

Magnifying Glass ---- compared to ---- Fish-eye Lens
(Systematic Theology) (Biblical Theology)

That discipline of Bible interpretation that emphasizes the overarching themes that unite all of Scripture's particulars is called _____. Biblical theology is not simply asking what truth does this particular passage reveal but _____ is it related to the _____ message of Scripture.

B. The Principles of Redemptive Interpretation (cr. G. Vos, *Biblical Theology*)

1. The _____ Principle
Biblical theology is that branch of exegetical theology which deals with the process of the self-revelation of God deposited in the Bible. Revelation is a noun of action relating to divine activity. Revelation is an historically *progressive* process—a long series of successive acts.
2. The _____ Principle
The progressive process is *organic*: revelation may be in seed form which yields later full growth accounting for diversity but not true difference because the earlier aspects of truth are indispensable for understanding the true meanings of the later forms and vice-versa.
3. The _____ Principle
Revelation is inseparably linked to the activity of *redemption*. Revelation is the interpretation of redemption. To see revelation properly we must see it in its *redemptive* context. The context and content of some revelation may be in seed form as it relates to redemption but it is integrally related to the mature message and is not properly understood or communicated until this relationship is made clear.

THE ACORN ANALOGY

In the same sense (as trying to explain an acorn without mentioning the oak tree, we cannot properly explain any aspect of revelation, even if we say many true things about it, until we have in some way related it to _____).

C. The Implications of a Redemptive Perspective

1. Divine Provision is Necessary for Holy Living:

Since all Scripture is redemptive revelation addressing our fallen condition (incompleteness or inadequacy), then we must recognize in some way every passage points not only to our _____ of redemption, but also to God's _____ of our redemption. The Bible is not a self-help book. "Apart from me you can do nothing," Jesus said (John 15:5).

2. Biblical Theology is Necessary for Proper Interpretation:

We must gather that to profit much in the holy Scripture we must always resort to our Lord Jesus Christ and cast our eyes upon him, without turning from him at any time. You will see a number of people who labor very hard indeed at reading the holy Scriptures – they do nothing else but turn over the leaves of it. . . . And why? Because they do not have any particular aim in view, they only wander about . . . [A]lthough they have gathered together a number of sentences of all sorts, yet nothing of value results from them. Even so it is with them that labor in reading the Holy Scriptures and do not know which is the point they ought to rest on, namely, the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. (**John Calvin, Sermon on Ephesians 2:19-22, 1559**) (See distributed Articles also.)

3. Redemptive Interpretation is Necessitated by Biblical Instruction:

I Cor. 2: 2 I resolved to make nothing known among you but Jesus Christ and him crucified. . . . (cf. 1: 23 We preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to the Jews and foolishness to the Gentiles.) "atonement," not example, is key (cf. II Cor. 4:3-5; Gal. 6:14).

Luke 24: 27 Beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he explained what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.

(Note: Since Jesus says all Scripture is about him, when we try to explain a text without mentioning his redeeming work we neglect to expound the very thing Jesus says the text reveals.)

Matt. 17 The Transfiguration. Moses and Elijah, representing the Law and the prophets, appear to testify of Christ. (cf. John 5:39f.; I Pet. 1:10-11)

Key Note: These verses demonstrate that the term "Christ-centered" is synecdoche for all of God's redeeming work that makes us know and depend upon his grace *ultimately* provided in Christ. A Christ-centered sermon does not attempt to make Jesus appear where the text does not speak of him, but rather demonstrates the _____ of the text to his person and/or work. Thus, these are also referred to as "Redemptive messages" or "Grace-focused messages".

Our goal in Christ-centered Preaching is not to make Jesus magically or allegorically appear in every text, but rather to demonstrate the _____ principles evident in the text that are most fully revealed in Christ's person and/or work, and are necessary for our growth in Christ-likeness.

IV. The Nature and Design of Non-Redemptive Preaching

A. The Nature of Non-redemptive messages: "sola bootstrapsa"

1. Various Forms:
 - Pick yourself up by your own bootstraps
 - 10 steps to a better ...
 - Do this thing (or behavior) to get yourself right with God
2. Basic Problem:

These are not merely _____-Christian messages, they are _____-Christian messages, since no Scripture *in context* says, "Just be good and God will be happy."

B. The Design of Non-redemptive messages: "the Deadly Be's"

1. Be _____ (follow this example)

Be like Daniel, Moses, David, Jesus, etc. (question: If David were asked who we should be like, would he say, "David?"). Care actually seems to be taken in Scripture to tarnish all (but one) so that we won't turn to anyone but God for ultimate aid.

God is the _____ of every text!
2. Be _____ (save yourself)

Don't drink or smoke or chew, or ...
Hunker down and try harder.
3. Be _____ (sanctify yourself) ...

Pray more, read your Bible more, go to church more, etc.

Of course, "Be" messages are in Scripture, but identify their context (e.g. I Cor. 4:16; 11:1; Phil. 3:17; I Thess. 1: 4-6; II Thess. 3:7-9).

Recognize "Be" messages are not wrong _____ themselves; they are wrong messages _____ themselves.

"Be" messages *by themselves* imply that _____ are able to change our fallen condition by our own efforts. Such messages, stated or implied, make us no different than Unitarians, Muslims or Hindus.

C. The De-merits of Non-redemptive Messages (why they don't help)

1. There is no _____ in keeping God's commands – blessing, but no merit.

Jay Adams-"How could there be merit for us if He is the enabler?"

Abraham Kuyper-"This holy disposition [viz., sanctification] cannot spring from man, not even from regeneration.... The indwelling Spirit is the actual worker" (pgs. 456-7).

Westminster Confession of Faith XVI. 2, 3, 5, 6

[G]ood works, done in obedience to God's commandments, are the fruits and evidences of a true and lively faith: ... Their ability to do good works is not at all of themselves but wholly from the Spirit of Christ."

"We cannot by our best works merit pardon for sin ... by reason of the great disproportion that is between them and the glory to come; and the infinite distance that is between us and God...; by them [i.e., our best works] we can neither profit nor satisfy for the debt of our former sins, but when we have done all we can, we have but done our duty, and are unprofitable servants; and because, as they are good, they proceed from his spirit; and as they are wrought by us, they are defiled, and mixed with so much weakness and imperfection, that they cannot endure the severity of God's judgment.... [B]elievers being accepted through Christ, their good works are also accepted in him; not as though they were in this life wholly unblameable and unreprieveable in God's sight."

(Cf. Is. 64:6 - "filthy rags"; Luke 17:10 - "unworthy servants").

John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans), pp. 790-791.

"To man we may assign only this: that he pollutes and contaminates by his impurity those very things which are good. For nothing proceeds from a man however perfect he be, that is not defiled by some spot. Let the Lord, then call to judgment the best of human works: he will indeed recognize in them his own righteousness by man's dishonor and shame."

2. Challenges to holiness without mention of grace force a _____-centered religion. People cannot do what they are told to do apart from Christ's grace (John 15:5; Rom. 8:36). Requirements of holiness by themselves wound people because without provision of divine aid they either will despair of hope or trust in their own righteousness. Thus, if you wound — even unintentionally — you are obligated to heal. We heal by wedding all requirements of holiness to a proper relationship with Him who alone can provide holiness (and showing where and how the Scripture we are interpreting does the same).

E.g. Eph. 6:10 Be strong in the power of _____ might. (cf. Col. 1:29; II Pet. 1:3)

The Bottom line: With whom will they walk out the door? Me, myself and I, or their Savior? To whom will you lead them, and with whom will you leave them?

How to Determine the F.C. F.

3-Step Process: (Ask these things ...)

1. What does the text say (What's the Big Idea)?

2. What Concern(s) Did the Text Address

3. What Do We Share in Common with:

-those to (or about) whom it was written

or

-the one by whom it was written

A Redemptive Approach to Preaching

Let me give a quick rehearsal of where we are in the homiletics curriculum. Long ago, we had the class Preparation and Delivery of Sermons, in which I would lecture on the basics of sermon construction. We said that it was like the anatomy class in medical school, getting all the names for the bones and other body parts. We acknowledged there was some artificiality to that, even as we were learning the basic tools. Then we moved into the class Elementary Practicum, in which we would practice using those tools. We acknowledged that it was still using the basics, but we tried to make it more natural by using the reduced forms. We went from long, boxy statements such as “Because something is true, do something about it.” They always had a principle and application. In the Elementary Practicum class we said to chop those statements in half. The proposition became the anchor clause. The main points were the magnet clauses or developing clauses. We tried to make things much shorter, and we preached from the epistles of the New Testament only, because they often have linear paragraphs that structure their thought. You could break them off into paragraph subsets. It was a good way to start learning how biblical thought develops.

Now we are in Christ-Centered Preaching. Whereas back in Preparation and Delivery of Sermons I said we were going to focus on structure, but we were not going to focus much on the theology of preaching, now that we have the structures in place, we are ready to do the theology. We will have four lessons that deal with the theology that is behind preaching. Ultimately we are heading toward the Advanced Practicum class, in which there will be some more lecturing, but the focus will be on creativity. Once you know where all the paintbrushes are and what the color wheel looks like, you will be ready to discern what is best for your job and your personality or even for the style of passage you are preaching from. There will be focus on creativity and there will be lessons on missional preaching as well. That is preaching cross-culturally, preaching to the postmodern culture, and preaching to the unchurched. We will gain a missional understanding as well. Once we have lectured on those things, we will practice creativity and mission.

We now have some structure in place fairly well. We are ready to introduce some theology and consider how that integrates with what we do in the practice of preaching. Let us pray, and then we will move forward.

Father, how I praise you for these men who come to give their lives to You. What You have shared with them, the wonderful glories of the grace of Christ, they want to share with others, and they have dedicated their lives, resources, and much time and energy to preparation for such a grand task. Would You bless them in that? Would You enable and equip them by the mercies of Your Spirit, by the wonders of Your grace, and by the power that You alone can provide to fulfill the task to which You have called them? Teach them much of Your grace that they will need in this class and beyond to do this work, for apart from You, they can do nothing. Help them, we pray. May they lean on You and know the fulfillment of doing so. In Jesus' name. Amen.

An old story, as old as Anselm, tells of a king who stood on his balcony one day and looked out and saw his youngest child out gathering flowers. The king knew the child was preparing a bouquet for the king himself. As the king watched the child go through the fields, however, he noticed that sometimes the child picked the wrong things. A brier was added to the flowers, or something with thorns in it, or a patch of ivy. The king went to his elder son, the younger child's older brother, and said, “Go to my garden. Pick my flowers. And when your youngest sibling comes, take the flowers that he has gathered

and put your flowers in their place.” The elder brother did that. The child came and presented the new bouquet to the king. The king received the flowers with joy and with deep pleasure.

The king, of course, is God. We are the child. The elder brother is Christ. The weeds and briars and thorns are our best works. The flowers from the king’s garden are Christ’s righteousness. It is what He does that makes what we do acceptable and pleasing to God.

That is a very simple notion that can be very difficult to preach. How is it that you tell people to pick flowers for the King, to do what they are supposed to do to please Him? At the same time, how do you tell them to depend on the work of the older brother? How do you compel and motivate? How do you tell and at the same time instruct to lean on another? That is so much of what we are trying to do in Christ-centered preaching. It is reminding people where the best flowers, the only ones that are really acceptable to the King, come from.

The primary goal of this lesson is to see the overarching plan that is the reason we have constructed sermons according to the design we have followed thus far. Let me remind you of some of those design features. We talked early on in *Preparation and Delivery of Sermons* about the principle of a fallen condition focus (FCF). Thus far, we have made 2 Timothy 3:16-17 a key to understanding any text’s purpose. If we ask, “What is a text about?” we do not have to guess. The Bible itself tells us in those verses, “All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness, that the man of God might be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” That is from the King James. That word “perfect” is from the Greek word *artios*, and it carries the notion of completeness. All Scripture is given to complete us. We said that if the Bible is saying that it was given to complete us, then there is a necessary implication about us. We are incomplete.

All Scripture is intended to complete us in some way, by leading to salvation or advancing sanctification. The necessary implication is that we are incomplete. We are fallen creatures in a fallen condition, and God’s redemptive work in Scripture is making us whole in ways we cannot by ourselves. For preaching, it means that we begin to look at people and see Swiss cheese. They have holes in them. They are incomplete. What we have to discern in preaching is what we are going to say fills the holes. As I look at somebody who is incomplete, who is not all that God yet intends, what will I say will make him or her complete? I could say, “You work very hard. You do the best you can. Practice these disciplines. Be more holy than the next person.” Ultimately, it will not work if we say that what you do will fill the holes. Something else has to fill the holes.

That kind of understanding pushes us toward a different kind of preaching than what many preachers do. Many preachers approach a text with only two thoughts in mind. I can tell you right doctrine to believe, or I can tell you right acts to do. If that is all I am saying, if the way I am saying to fill the holes is either to accept and know this doctrine or do this right behavior, you must recognize that both of those are merely forms of human legalism. It is saying that either what you know or what you do makes you right with God. Even though what you do may be right, and what you know may be right, you must know that it is not you who make things right with God. You cannot fill the holes.

When we begin looking at the text in this next portion of *Christ-Centered Preaching*, we must consider what that theology means for preaching. If all that is in my brain is “I am supposed to be feeding these people in right doctrine or instructing them in right behavior,” then something will still be missing. There will be hole in our own preaching. We want to discern what that is. Thus all Scripture dealing with this incompleteness, and all expository preaching, which is designed to reflect the meaning of a scriptural passage, addresses aspects of humanity’s fallen condition. Our goal in expounding a text is to

determine not only what it says but also why it was written. We also want to determine what we spiritually share in common with those for or about whom it was written or the one by whom it was written. I am looking at the text and saying, “These people [either the ones by whom or for whom a text was written] have holes in them. How are they like us?”

Thus far we have only discussed the negative. We have only discussed the absence, the wrong, the hole, the fallen condition. Yet if all Scripture focuses on some aspect of our fallen condition, why does it do so? The answer is clear. It does so to supply the warrant and the need for the redemptive elements that Scripture contains to be applied. Just as every Scripture echoes our incompleteness, it is also in some manner signaling the Savior’s work that makes us whole. Our goal in redemptive preaching is to decipher these signals. Until we do so, we do not truly understand our text. It is possible to say all the right words and send all the wrong signals.

If you got up very early and listened to the major radio station in our town and you heard the transition from the late-night programming to the early morning programming, you would hear that every weekday there is something called “the thought for the day.” The thought for the day is given every weekday morning by a man named Richard Evans. Richard Evans says things like, “Fathers, do not exasperate your children. The Bible tells you that you should not exasperate your children. The word “exasperate” is a word that God reserves for His own anger toward His people when they do not do the things they ought to do. You should not give your children cause for exasperation with you, such as being hypocritical by requiring things and then not obeying them yourself. Fathers, do not exasperate your children.” He might say something like, “Employees, when you work today, you should not just work because your boss is good and kind. Even if he or she is not, the Bible says you should work as unto the Lord. It is really Him that you are trying to serve.”

In my mind’s eye, I can envision many Christians, as well as other people, commuting through the streets of our city. The Christians are all doing the same thing as Richard Evans talks. They are all nodding their heads. They are saying, “That is right, Richard. You tell them. Straighten them up. Maybe they will listen today.” Yet there are a couple of problems with Richard Evans. The first problem is he is dead. He died years ago. His words are all recorded. The recording is turned up very high in its reverberation so that it sounds like his voice is coming directly from Sinai. Richard Evans’ other problem is that he is not and never was a Christian. Richard Evans was a leader of the Mormon Church. He was the head of a large cult.

You might say, “But wait. He is saying so many right things. He is giving such wonderful biblical instruction.” The problem is almost never with what Richard Evans says. The problem is with what he does not say. There are certain things he will never get around to saying. If the topic is human performance or good things that good people ought to do, then he is on the money every time. Yet there are certain aspects of grace, the atonement, and the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on our behalf that will never be mentioned. That is the problem. My concern is that so often in evangelical preaching, when the topic is the behaviors and even some of the doctrines, we are right on the money. Yet when it comes to our dependence on Someone else’s works, not gathering our flowers but depending on the flowers gathered for us by the Elder Brother, that is absent from our messages. The trouble is that we are trying to be true to the text. The text said, “Fathers, do not exasperate your children.” I said, “Fathers, do not exasperate your children.” How could that be wrong? I just said what the text said. To discern why that is wrong, we must move forward.

We need to talk about the nature of redemptive preaching. We are still going to look at the text, yet perhaps in ways some of you may not have considered. If you think about the nature of redemptive

interpretation of Scripture, you might compare it to looking at the Scriptures through two different kinds of lenses. What I am about to say is caricature, and I am going to acknowledge it as caricature. Try to understand my meaning without pushing the image too far. One way of looking at a text is looking at it with a magnifying glass. We get down very close to the text and ask, “What is the tense of that verb? What case is that noun? Is that an objective or subjective genitive? Where was that place? Who was Artaxerxes? We get very close to the text and look at the details. That is a good and necessary thing to do. Historically, that is what we often think that a systematic, exegetical approach to Scripture is. I look very closely at the details. Let me say again, that is a good and necessary thing to do. Yet there is another way of looking at the text. The other way of looking at the text is if you look at it through a fisheye lens. If you look at something through a fisheye lens, you see the horizon. Biblical theology is the process of looking at the text with the fisheye lens so that you are always forced to look out at the horizons. I hope that does not sound too intimidating. What that is saying is that you should always look at the text in its context. Why does every heretic have his verse? It is because he takes it out of context. What biblical theology is doing is asking, “What is the context of this passage?” I need to know that “exasperation” is a term that God reserves for His own anger toward Israel. That is a good thing for me to know. Yet what is the context of that verse? Where does it fit in the larger message?

That discipline of Bible interpretation that emphasizes the overarching themes that unite all of Scripture’s particulars is called biblical theology. Biblical theology is not simply asking what truth this particular passage reveals but rather how it is related to the whole message of Scripture. The primary writer on biblical theology in the last century was Geerhardus Vos. His book, *Biblical Theology*, addresses the forms of interpretation. He identified standard principles of interpretation that are necessary for biblical theology to be done.

The first principle he called the progressive principle. He said, “Biblical theology is that branch of exegetical theology.” Let me pause and point out that his opening statement there was an example of savvy politics. Vos was the first professor of biblical theology at Princeton Seminary. There were New Testament exegetes and Old Testament exegetes already there, and now there was a guy coming for biblical theology. They may have suspected him. “What are you going to do that is different from what we have done for all these years?” So Vos used some savvy by beginning his inaugural lecture, which became the preface to *Biblical Theology*, by reassuring his colleagues that he was only doing exegesis. It was just another form of exegesis. He was still looking at what the text says. He was still examining the meaning of the text. He said, “Biblical theology is that branch of exegetical theology which deals with the process of the self-revelation of God deposited in the Bible.” God is revealing Himself. That is what He is doing in the Bible. Vos continued, “Revelation is a noun of action, relating to divine activity. Revelation is an historically progressive process, a long series of successive acts.”

There are many big words in that statement, but what he was saying was simple. He was saying that things get clearer over time. God is revealing Himself, and it gets clearer over time. If you were to put it in its simplest terms, you would say that when it comes to understanding God’s revelation, Paul knew more than Samson. It does not mean that what Samson knew was wrong, but Paul knew more. There has been a progression. God has progressively revealed more of Himself through the course of the scriptural revelation.

Vos said that the second principle is the organic principle. He said, “The progressive process is organic. Revelation may be in seed form, which yields later full growth, accounting for diversity.” That means that the seed may seem different than the full fruit. It may seem different, but there is not true difference. He continued, “The earlier aspects of truth are indispensable for understanding the true meanings of the later forms and vice versa.” Another way of saying that is “It is all tied together.” The organic principle

means it is all tied together. In order to understand what comes later, you have to understand what came before. By the way, however, you understand what came before because of what happens later. They explain each other.

Jesus said, “Even as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up.” How do you know what that means? You remember what He was talking about. You remember Moses was leading the people. They were in the desert. They were tired of wandering and tired of manna. Emblematic of the poison that was coming from their lips, vipers came and struck them, and they were dying. Then God told Moses to lift up a serpent, something that was emblematic of their sin, and tell the people to look at it and they will live. If you depend on what God provides, then you will live, even despite the venom that is coming from you. Then Jesus said, “Even as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up.” What did that mean? Jesus was saying, “You must look to Me to live. I am the answer to your poison.” I know what Jesus meant because of what happened in Moses’ time. The brazen serpent explains what Jesus meant. Yet by the way, I understand more of what the brazen serpent was about by the way Jesus used it. The background of Moses explains what Jesus was talking about. Jesus is also explaining what Moses’ background was about. They are explaining each other at the same time.

The final principle for Vos was the redemptive principle. He said, “Revelation is inseparably linked to the activity of redemption.” God is not just showing Himself to be showing Himself. He does not say, “Here is another attribute of my nature. Go memorize it.” The revelation is inseparably related to redemption. What God is revealing about Himself is related to redemptive processes. Vos went on to say, “Revelation is the interpretation of redemption. To see revelation properly, we must see it in its redemptive context. The context and the content of some revelation may be in seed form as it relates to redemption, but it is integrally related to the mature message. It is not properly understood or communicated until this relationship is made clear.” That is an absolutely crucial idea. The revelation is integrally related to redemption. Anything God is saying is related to a redemptive message. The difficult part is figuring out the way it is related to a redemptive message. We must understand, however, that it is not simply there for some future test. It is not to be received merely for information. The revelation says something about what God is doing redemptively.

Vos conceded that the revelation as it relates to redemption may be in seed form. It may not appear to be much about redemption. It may be a small seed message. Yet it is still connected. He was saying that you do not understand the seed until you connect it to its mature form. If I were to explain to you what an acorn is, I could say, “I found it on the ground. It has a pointed end. It has a cap on the other end. The cap is corrugated and rough. The pointed end is smooth. The cap is darker, and the smooth part is lighter in color. Squirrels gather this in the fall, and they eat it in the winter.” That is what an acorn is. I just told you many true things about an acorn, but I neglected to tell you something that you need to know in order to really know what an acorn is about. What did I neglect to mention? I did not mention the oak tree. If you do not know how the acorn is connected to its mature form, I can say many true things about it, and you will still not understand what it is really about.

Imagine another seed in your mind’s eye. This acorn is the commandment, “You shall not steal.” This commandment occurs in the Decalogue. Moses gave it. The commandment, “You shall not steal,” appears again in the New Testament in Colossians and 1 Thessalonians. Stealing is always wrong in the Bible. It is a bad thing. The Bible says not only that you shall not take other peoples’ possessions, but also that you shall not take anything that is not your own. You shall not even take another person’s reputation. If it is not yours, then you have no right to take it. Stealing is bad. Do not do it. Was there anything untrue in what I just said? No, it was all true. Yet somehow Paul said in Galatians that the Law

was our schoolmaster to lead us to Christ. It was our pedagogue, the thing that came along to lead us to Christ.

How does “Do not steal” get us to Jesus? Let us ask a couple of basic questions. If God says, “Do not steal,” then what does that tell me about God? What does it tell me about the nature of God? It tells me that He does not steal. It is beyond God’s ethical character to steal. If it is beyond God’s character to steal, then what else do we know about Him? He protects His people. He protects their possessions, because He loves them. It is beyond His character to hurt His people or to allow His people to steal. Ultimately, therefore, I also learn something else about God’s character. He is holy. I understand that God is holy from the commandment.

What do I understand about me from the commandment? You shall not steal. You shall not take little things. You shall not take big things. You are never to take anything that is not your own, not even somebody else’s reputation. You are not to demean other people. Stealing is bad. Do not do it? So what do I learn about me? I am a thief. We are all thieves. God is holy. I am a thief. There is a problem here. I cannot fix it. The Law is telling me that. You have a problem that you cannot fix, because the God who gave the Law is not going to find your behavior acceptable. You cannot make your behavior acceptable. Somehow, the God who gave the requirement is going to have to meet the requirement for you. The Law was our pedagogue to lead us to Christ.

I did not look at the commandment, asking what the tense of the verb was or how it was written in Hebrew. I still have to do all of that. Yet I have to look at the text in its redemptive context. Why could Paul do that? He said that the message was not done. As God was revealing Himself back there through the Law, He was also leading us to understand something else, namely, what He would have to do through Christ. Therefore if I am interpreting the same passage, those same laws, same character referents, then I have to do the same thing. I have to ask how that is revealing redemptive truth as part of the revelation in its context. Asking basic questions such as “What does this tell me about God?” and “What does this tell me about me?” are ways that can happen.

In the same sense as trying to explain an acorn without mentioning the oak tree, we cannot properly explain any aspect of revelation, even if we say many true things about it, until we have in some way related it to redemption. That was Vos’ point. It is not enough to identify a piece of revelation. It also has to be related to redemption. That is ultimately the revelation’s context. In the biblical record, it has a redemptive context.

What are the implications of such a redemptive perspective? The first is that divine provision is necessary for holy living. Since all Scripture is redemptive revelation addressing our fallen condition, our inadequacy, our incompleteness, then we must recognize that in some way every passage points not only to our need of redemption but also to God’s provision of our redemption. The Bible is not a self-help book. How do I know that? Jesus said in John 15, “Apart from me you can do nothing.” That has tremendous implications for our preaching. If all I have said to people is “You go out and do it. God says, ‘Do not steal,’ so do not steal,” then even if I did not intend to, I have preached a self-help message. I provided no other means of help. I isolated the message to the text without mentioning its redemptive context. Context is what we will continually push for.

The second implication is that biblical theology is necessary for proper interpretation. If I recognize that holiness requires God’s help, then biblical theology must come into play. It is that which keeps pointing me toward God’s provision for what God requires me to do. Calvin said it this way in his sermon on Ephesians 2, “We must gather that to profit much in the holy Scripture we must always resort to our

Lord Jesus Christ and cast our eyes upon Him, without turning from Him at any time. You will see a number of people who labor very hard indeed at reading the Holy Scriptures. They do nothing else but turn over the leaves of it. [Do you see the image? They are turning the leaves, but they do not really know why they are doing it.] They do not have any particular aim. They only wander about. Although they have gathered together a number of sentences of all sorts, yet nothing of value results from them. Even so, it is with them that labor in reading His Holy Scriptures and do not know which is the point they ought to rest on, namely, the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

You believe that all Scripture is inspired by the Holy Spirit. You believe that holy men of God wrote as they were carried along by the Spirit. Jesus tells us in John 14 and 16 what the Holy Spirit’s job is. He said, “The Spirit is to testify of me.” That is the Spirit’s task. As the Spirit is inspiring the Scriptures, what is His task? He is to be revealing the work of God in Christ. That is why revelation is inseparably related to the activity of redemption. These things are working together in that work of the Holy Spirit.

Calvin is typically not thought of as being in the biblical theological movement. He was a precursor to it. Yet Calvin could say the kind of thing that he did in the quote I read. What a wonderful insight he had. He was somehow able to see that the elements in themselves could not function unless they were related to the redemptive message. Later in this course I will assign you to read from Calvin’s *Institutes* Calvin’s understanding of the Law. Remember that Calvin is the one who gives us three uses of the Law. Between Lutherans, Roman Catholics, and Calvinists, we always talk about the different uses of the Law. What is sometimes missed, however, and what I will emphasize, is that Calvin does not simply talk about the three uses of the Law, but He ties all the uses of the Law to the revelation of Christ. We rarely talk about that teaching of Calvin. Yet he was doing it even as he talked about the uses of the Law.

Someone else who speaks about this point in a pithy way is Jay Adams. He said, “It is easy to become moralistic when preaching.” He was dealing with that notion of a need for a redemptive understanding of the text. He continued, saying, “While there is nothing wrong with preaching morality, in contrast, moralism is legalistic, ignores the grace of God, and replaces the work of Christ with self-help.” It is that phrase, “ignores the grace of God,” that I want you to have ringing in your ear. If you just tell people what to do and you ignore the grace of God, that is when it becomes moralistic rather than moral. Adams said the problem with this kind of preaching is “the lack of recognition that there is no merit in keeping God’s commands.” Did you know that? There is no merit in keeping God’s commands. When you have done all that you should do, what does Jesus say you are? He says you are an unprofitable servant. Isaiah tells us that our best works are only filthy rags. There is no merit in keeping God’s commands, or else Christ’s death would not have been necessary. Is there blessing in keeping God’s commands? Surely there is blessing. If I am faithful to my spouse, then there is blessing in keeping God’s commands. Yet God does not love me more because I do better than the next person. God loves me because of the work of Christ.

Therefore, Adams said, “If you preach a sermon that would be acceptable to the members of a Jewish synagogue or a Unitarian congregation, there is something radically wrong with it.” Would any Jew be upset if you said, “Do not steal. Be faithful to your spouse.”? Would any Unitarian be upset? Adams says there is something wrong with that message. That something is wrong is revealed by the fact that the Jew and the Unitarian are not upset. He goes on to say, “There is something distinctive in a Christian message. What makes it distinctive is the all-pervading presence of a saving and sanctifying Christ. Jesus Christ must be at the heart of every sermon you preach. This is just as true of edificational preaching as it is of evangelistic preaching.” We know we have to mention Jesus in the evangelistic sermons we preach once per quarter. Yet Adams is saying that in the edificational sermons, in which

you are saying how to pray better or how to be good to your wife or your neighbor, even in those, if Jesus is out of the message, apart from Him you can do nothing. There has to be an understanding of the provision of God as part of the message or it is not even Christian.

The problem with messages that are only instructive is not that they have not quite reached the threshold of a Christian message but that they are some kind of sub-Christian message. They are not merely sub-Christian. They are anti-Christian. Every other faith in the world says that it is what you do that fixes you spiritually with God. Christianity is the one that says you cannot fix it spiritually. That is the uniqueness of Christianity. So if you say to people, “Do better. Do more. Straighten up. Be more disciplined,” all of those messages are not simply sub-Christian, but they are actually pushing people away from the Savior to their own self-effort. That is why they are actually contrary to the message of the Gospel and not just failing to reach their full potential.

This could all be just good theory, but redemptive interpretation is necessitated by biblical instruction. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 2:2, “I resolved to make nothing known among you but Jesus Christ and what a good guy He was and how you can be really good if you try really hard.” No, Paul did not say that. He actually said, “I resolved to make nothing known among you but Jesus Christ and Him crucified.” That is an amazing statement. We almost want to argue with Paul. We say, “No, that is not true, Paul. You talked about worship practices. You talked about stewardship. You talked about marriage relationships. You talked about many things other than Jesus Christ and Him crucified.” Apparently in Paul’s mind, however, there was always a cord, a heart, a thread that was moving through all of his messages. You begin to see it in the way the epistles were formed. Before Paul gets to the marriage instructions, he says, “A man should love his wife as Christ loved the church.” There is this thread. You will get the doctrinal instruction, which is that God has loved you with an everlasting love through His Son before he will tell you to love one another. There is always this redemptive context, this cord, this heart, which is why Paul could say to the Corinthians that he was not going to preach anything else except Jesus Christ and Him crucified. There is an atonement message, this provision of God that is always in view as Paul is preaching. He said in the previous chapter, “We preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to the Jews and foolishness to the Gentiles.” No Jew is upset by saying, “Do not steal.” No Jew is upset by saying, “Do not take the Lord’s name in vain.” The stumbling block is saying, “You are thieves. You are adulterers. And Christ had to die for you.” That was the disturbing message that made the Gospel message so much a stumbling block.

Jesus Himself said such things, as it is described in Luke 24:27. The scene is after the resurrection. Jesus was walking with the two disciples on the road to Emmaus. There we read, “Beginning with Moses and all the prophets he said what was in all the Scriptures concerning himself.” For a biblical theologian, those “all’s” are all important. “Beginning with Moses and all the prophets he said what was in all the Scriptures concerning himself.” Since Jesus says that all Scripture is about Him, when we try to explain a text without explaining His redeeming work, then we neglect to expound the very thing Jesus said the text reveals. That is a rather amazing hermeneutical principle. He says it is about Him. So if we are explaining the text and fail to relate it to Him, then we have failed to say the very thing He said it is about. Not to relate the text to Jesus is to fail to say what the text is about.

This is where the title of my book can get you into trouble. When people consider the title of *Christ-Centered Preaching*, what they almost always think initially is that what I am saying and what other people like me are saying who are biblical and theologically oriented is that you have to somehow show how every text mentions Jesus. Is He in that camel track or behind that bush? Where are you getting Jesus? Yet that is not the point at all. The point is not to force the text to mention Jesus. It is to identify where the text stands in relation to Jesus. Where does the text stand in relation to what God will be

accomplishing in His Son? The visual representation of this is Matthew 17, the transfiguration. Remember that Moses and Elijah appeared with Jesus in the cloud. Moses represented the Law. Elijah represented the prophets. They appear with Jesus to say, “This is the culmination. This is the climax. This is what everything has been about.” They came to give testimony of what they represent to Him. It has all been leading up to what He now represents. Jesus told the Pharisees John 5:39-40, “You diligently study the Scriptures, but you do not know on what they concur. They speak of me.” Paul later wrote in Acts 20, as he gave the summation of his own ministry, “The Lord Jesus has given me the task of testifying to the gospel of grace.” That was his task, to testify to the Gospel of grace.

These verses, and others like them, demonstrate that the term “Christ centered” is synecdoche, which means “part for the whole.” The term “Christ centered” is synecdoche for all of God’s redeeming work that makes us know and depend on His grace, ultimately provided in Christ. A Christ-centered sermon does not attempt to make Jesus appear where the text does not speak of Him. It rather demonstrates the relation of the text to either His person or His work or both. Thus these are also referred to as redemptive messages or grace-focused messages. Our goal in Christ-centered preaching is not to make Jesus magically or allegorically appear in every text. It is rather to demonstrate the redemptive principles evident in the text that are most fully revealed in Christ’s person or work and are necessary for our growth in Christ-likeness.

People will get concerned and say, “You cannot mention Jesus in this sermon, because the text does not mention Him.” I will say in response, “You live on this side of the cross. You have been given the biblical theology, the biblical record of everything that has led to this point. If you understand that all of those things were leading to Him, then why can you not mention Him when you preach from one of those passages that you know was intended to lead to Him?” Somehow God is revealing redemptive principles here. We do not say, “Elijah met his enemy at the crossroads. Jesus met our enemy at the crossroads.” That is not what we are talking about. We are talking about God saying, “I provide for a faithless people through my faithfulness.” Ultimately, we will see how that is done in Christ, but right here I am saying that Elijah was ministering in a time when the people had turned away from God. Still God provides His strength in their weakness, His faith in their faithlessness. There are grace principles on display here so that when Christ ultimately completes His mission, we will understand what it is about.

In using the grace principles, I am not looking for wordplay, such as the crossroads relates to the cross. Moses met the daughters of Jethro at a well, and Jesus met a woman at a well. Rahab’s cloth was red, and therefore it symbolizes Jesus’ blood. That is not what we are doing. God delivered His people when they could not deliver themselves. One of those people whom He made His own was a prostitute. When the entire town fell, He rescued her, despite all of her sin. It was grace toward one totally undeserving. I am not making the blood appear in the red cloth. I am saying that here are grace principles on display that will reach their culmination in the ministry of Christ. I understand what He has done by what God has been revealing all along.

We will talk much more in the next lesson about how we discern these things. In this lesson I simply want to say to you that it is necessary to see the redemptive development of Scripture in order to properly interpret it. In the next lesson we will talk about how you do that.

Before we go down the path of forming redemptive messages, we may consider the nature and design of non-redemptive messages. We can learn to recognize what is not going to be faithful to the revelation in all of Scriptures. The nature of non-redemptive messages is that they are inevitably “sola bootstrapsa.” You pick yourself up by your own bootstraps. It is your job, so get going. It can come in various forms.

One form is to pick yourself up by your own bootstraps. Another form is 10 steps to a better something—financial future, relationship with your neighbor, or marriage. Here are 10 things that you can do to fix something. God’s work is just off on the side somewhere. It is all about you. That is the problem. The scriptural message is that it is not all about you.

All these forms of “sola bootstraps” say, “Do this thing or this behavior to get yourself right with God.” The basic problem is that these are not merely sub-Christian messages. They are anti-Christian messages. No Scripture in context—that is the key word, context—says, “Just be good and God will be happy.” We can create a false dichotomy. We can have in our minds the idea that what separates Christianity is that there is legalism on one side of something that is wrong, and there is liberalism on one side that is wrong. Somehow we think that true Christianity is a balance between those two things. I want you to consider, however, what a legalist says will make you right with God. He or she says it is your works. In this society, those works include not going to bad movies or not cursing. What does a liberal say will make you right with God? He or she says it is care for the poor and oppressed and your fellow man. While these sets of behaviors are very different, what I want you to realize is that they are the same things. One says that what you do makes you right with God, and the other says that what you do makes you right with God. They are different sets of rules, but the same theology is in play. I want you to recognize that Christianity cannot be found on that scale. It is something else entirely. It is not what you do that fixes things. It is entirely dependent on what Christ has done. If you believe that, then it will profoundly affect your preaching and what you are willing to say as you preach.

To think about it in basic terms, we can say that the design of non-redemptive messages has the “deadly be’s.” They are messages that can automatically be recognized as non-redemptive. I will tell you that I have preached these messages. I teach this material, and sometimes I walk away from the pulpit and ask, “What did I just do?” It is very easy to give these profoundly simple behavior-oriented messages.

The first form of a “deadly be” is a “be like” message. It is saying, “Follow this example.” Be like Daniel. Dare to be like Daniel. Be like David. Be like Moses. If you really want to make people feel bad, then tell them to just be like Jesus. Think of how these messages go. We look at a portion of David’s life. He fought the lion and the bear. He walked with God. He wrote tremendous poems praising God. He led God’s people. He was a man after God’s own heart. He showed mercy to Mephibosheth. David was a wonderful guy. You should just be like David. Well, ignore that Bathsheba thing. And ignore that Absalom thing. And forget about him numbering the troops at the end of his life. Do you recognize the Bible takes care to tarnish almost every character? I recognize there are a couple of people we do not have much dirt on. Yet virtually everybody is tarnished. The patriarchs were scoundrels. The apostles were cowards. Why do we see such terrible sin in the heroes of the Bible? It is so that we will say, “Is not God great? Is not God’s grace marvelous?” Were it not for God, David’s sin would have toppled a nation. Yet it was God who said, “I will make an eternal kingdom through your life, despite your great undeserving.” Would David have said, “Just be like me?” If David would not say it, then we should not say it.

I wish you could put neon lights around the statement that God is the hero of every text. Gideon is not the hero. Gideon was an idolater. Abraham was not the hero. He gave away his wife repeatedly to other men. His children did the same thing. Yet God preserved and used him, and we are here because God was faithful when Abraham was not. God is the hero of the text. We continually point to God’s work on men’s behalf.

The second form of a non-redemptive message is a “be good” message. These are various forms of “save yourself” messages. Do not drink or smoke or chew or go with the girls who do. That would be

the mark of a legalist of the past generation. Sadly, in our current context, you get certain churches that come from evangelical circles that push nothing but social agendas. It is a message that says discipleship is not about faith in Jesus Christ but rather it is doing what Christ said. It used to be the social gospel of the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s that is now being adopted by some evangelicals. What really proves you are a Christian is that you care for the poor more than the next church or welcome unlovely people more than the next church. The mark of discipleship is not faith in Christ but the outperformance of other churches with regard to good discipleship. They are typically things that we respect and like, so we may admire the message. Yet it can be another form of legalism. The message is “If you are really good, even sacrificially good, then you can be okay with God.” We may not recognize that it has been around before. We have heard the message before, and it is not the one of grace. The call to “try harder” in any form is not what God is proclaiming in His Gospel.

The third form of a non-redemptive message, which is maybe the most easy to our lips, is a “be disciplined” message. These are about sanctifying yourself. Pray more. Read your Bible more. Go to church more. Do more and more, and then God will be happy. By the way, how much more will be enough to make God happy? Do you know people like this? They sin and so they read their Bible more to make it up to God. They go to church more. They sing songs louder in church this week. They are making it up to God by doing more than they did before.

Repentance truly shows itself in good works. Yet the good works do not earn God’s favor. They are the fruit of those who have been favored. It is totally counter-intuitive to the way humans normally function to say that we live out of grace, not to gain it. That is sometimes why it is so difficult to preach redemptive messages. It is so counter-intuitive. I want to say, “You straighten up, or God is going to hate you.” Instead I need to say, “God loved you before you ever knew Him. While you were His enemy, He died for you. Therefore live for Him.” It is counter-intuitive.

I need to be careful here. I just said some fairly stark things, and you did not even challenge me. Did Paul ever say, “Follow my example? Or be like me?” He did at least five times. Finish the verse, “Follow my example as I follow Christ.” There is always a redemptive context. There will always be a redemptive context that we have to remember. Yes there are “be like” messages in Scripture, but we always have to identify their context.

Again I have another statement that I wish you could put neon lights around. Recognize that “be messages” are not wrong in themselves. They are wrong messages by themselves. Do you understand? Is it wrong to tell people “Do not steal?” In itself that is not wrong. To tell people, “Be holy as God is holy,” is not wrong in itself. What makes it wrong is when it is by itself. If that is all you say, and if you do not throw them on Christ, on His grace, on His provision, then it is wrong.

Why do people fear grace-oriented messages? The greatest fear among orthodox Christians is antinomianism. They worry that if you focus too much on grace then people will do whatever they want. Jesus said, “If you love me, you will keep my commands.” He was not an antinomian. At the same time he said, “Apart from me you can do nothing.” The reason to preach grace is not to avoid the commandments, but rather to enable obedience to them. We are saying that it is by Him, through Him, and for Him that you would do these things. It is a compulsion of grace that is the power of the Christian message. It is not antinomianism. It is not that you cannot tell people to live a certain way, but you cannot tell them that alone. You must tell them that. It would be terrible for a preacher not to tell people to obey God. What wounding we would do to people if we did not take them on a path of holiness. It is to their safekeeping, their good, their glory, blessing, and joy to walk with God. Yet we have to make

sure that they do not think they are earning God's favor by doing that. He was walking with them before they ever chose to be His children and do what He said.

"Be messages" by themselves imply that we are able to change our fallen condition by our own efforts. Such messages, stated or implied, make us no different than Unitarians, Muslims, or Hindus. If all we are saying is to be a good person, then there is no distinctive Christianity in that at all. The demerits of non-redemptive messages include first that there is no merit in keeping God's commands. There is blessing, but no merit. The Westminster Confession, chapter 16, says, "Good works done in obedience to God's commandments are the fruits and evidences of a true and lively faith, but a Christian's ability to do good works is not at all of themselves but wholly of the Spirit of Christ." That is why we cannot tell people, "Be good and be done." There has to be dependence on the work of God.

Challenges to holiness, without mentions of grace, force a human-centered religion. People cannot do what they are told to do apart from Christ's grace. Requirements of holiness by themselves wound people, because without provision of divine aid they will either despair of hope or trust in their own righteousness. Which is worse? That is a trick question. If you tell someone, "be holy," there are only two alternatives. The person might say, "I will never be holy. I will never measure up." The other alternative is that the person will say, "Okay, I will be holy." Either one is spiritually deadly. Both desperation and arrogance are spiritually deadly. It is wounding to people if we have not mentioned grace.

Thus, if you wound, even unintentionally, you are obligated to heal. We heal by wedding all requirements of holiness to a proper relationship with Him who alone can provide holiness. We show where and how the Scripture we are interpreting does the same. Think about how Paul does it. In Ephesians 6, Paul was at his most strident. He said to put on the full armor of God. Take out the sword of the Spirit. Put on the helmet of salvation. Resist the fiery darts of the devil. He was speaking with all the strength he could muster. Yet before he got to any of that, he said, "Be strong in the power of His might." If all he had said was "try harder," it would have been foreign to the Christian message. So Paul said to fight, but to fight with His might. We want to say to God's people, "Fight. Live for Him. Do it by Him, by His wondrous grace, which is revealed in the context of this text as well."

When you have preached, counseled, or talked to your own child, at some point that person whom God has given you to minister to is going to walk out the door and away from you. I hope that in your mind you think, "I sent him out to do what God requires. With whom does he go? Am I just sending him out by himself? Or am I sending him out with the Savior?" If people do not go with the Savior, then they go with despair. If we send them out with the Savior, however, then they go to joy. The joy of the Lord is our strength.

We will talk more in the next lesson about how to do that. As you consider this, ask yourself, "If it is not this way, this redemptive way, then what is the alternative?" If you think of it that way, you will know that there cannot be any alternative. Apart from Him we can do nothing. We have to learn how to have the grace of God within the message. When we do it, there is such joy in your preaching that will be your own power to keep doing it.

Developing Redemptive Messages

I. Review of Redemptive Principles for Christ-centered Preaching:

A. The necessity of a redemptive focus in all “Christian” preaching:

Expository preaching is committed to revealing what the Word says, and Jesus says the whole Word presents his person *and* work (by disclosing aspects of God’s grace that becomes fully revealed in him).

B. Identification marks of non-redemptive preaching:

1. “Sola Bootstrapsa” Messages
2. The Deadly Be’s (“by themselves”)

Martin Luther, “The Sum of the Christian Life”

It is exceedingly difficult to get into another habit of thinking in which we clearly separate faith and [works of] love.... Even though we are in faith ... the heart is always ready to boast of itself before God and say: "After all, I have preached so long and lived so well and done so much, surely he will take this into account." But it cannot be done. With men you may boast ... But when you come before God, leave all that boasting at home and remember to appeal from justice to grace. [But] let anyone try this and he will see and experience how exceedingly hard and bitter it is for a man, who all his life has been mired in his work righteousness, to pull himself out of it and with all his heart rise up through faith in the one Mediator.

I myself have been preaching and cultivating it (grace) for almost twenty years and still I feel the old clinging dirt of wanting to deal so with God that I may contribute something, so that he will have to give me his grace in exchange for my holiness. Still I cannot get it into my head that I should surrender myself completely to sheer grace; yet [I know that] this is what I should and must do.

C. Distinctives of Christ-centered Preaching (cf., Greidanus, Sola Scriptura)

1. What Christ-centered Preaching is not:

- a. Not _____ Preaching.

Christ-centered preaching does not attempt to make the person of Christ appear in every Old Testament mud puddle and camel track by allegory or analogy – through *paralleling* OT accounts with NT experiences of Jesus (e.g. Rahab’s cloth) or “leapfrogging to Golgotha.”

- b. Not _____ Preaching.

Christ-centered preaching does not negate the necessity of law in believers’ lives, but teaches that our obedience has no power to redeem or grant merit before God. Christ-centered preaching reveals the grace in all Scripture to *motivate* people according to Christ’s precept: “If you love me, you will obey what I command” (John 12:14; cf. Titus 2:11-12).

C.S. Lewis. *English Literature in the 16th Century*, p. 33.

All the initiative has been on God’s side; all has been free, unbounded grace. And all will continue to be free, unbounded grace Bliss is not for sale, cannot be earned. ‘Works’ have no ‘merit,’ though of course faith, inevitably, even unconsciously, flows

out into works of love at once. He [the Christian] is not saved because he does works of love: he does works of love because he is saved. It is faith alone that has saved him: faith bestowed by sheer gift. From this buoyant humility, this farewell to the self with all its good resolutions, anxiety, scruples, and motive scratchings, all the Protestant doctrines originally sprang.

2. What Redemptive Preaching Is:

Recognition of all Scripture as a _____ revelation of God's redeeming work (i.e., the revelation of grace)

In opposing the fragmentary interpretation which reads the Bible as a collection of biographies, the redemptive-historical side stresses the hermeneutical significance of the unity of redemptive history.... The unity of redemptive history implies the Christocentric nature of every historical text. Redemptive history is the history of Christ: He stands at its center but no less at its beginning and end.... Scripture discloses its historiography right at the beginning. "Gen. 3:15 ... places all subsequent events in the light of the tremendous battle between the Seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent, between Christ coming into the world and Satan the ruler of this world, and it places all events in the light of the complete victory which the Seed of woman shall attain. In view of this, it is imperative that not one single person be isolated from this history and set apart from this great battle. The place of both opponents and 'co-workers' can only be determined Christologically." (Greidanus, p.135)

[Our goal is *not* to make every passage mention Christ, but to show where every passage stands in relation to the grace ultimately revealed in Christ.]

Genesis 3:15 Interpretive Perspective

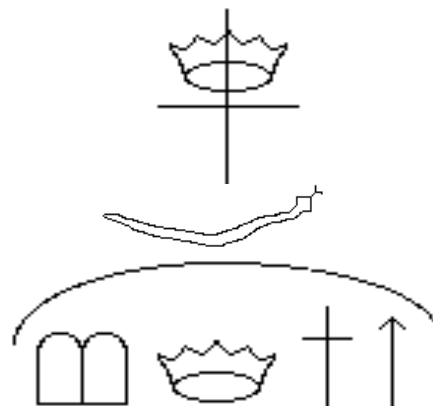
Not This:

reminds me of:



Leapfrogging to the Cross

But This:



Where does this specific passage fit in redemptive history/teaching?

<> "Christian preaching is simply the proclamation of the Divine crusade of redemption, of God's way out of our human predicament [sic F.C.F]." -Simon Blocker, The Secret of Pulpit Power, 1955.

II. A Basic Process for Christ-centered Preaching

3-Step Process for Preaching “Christ” (God’s redeeming work) from every text

1. What is the _____ (the “burden of the text”) that requires God’s intervention and rescue? A true FCF requires a divine solution, and thus exposes the inadequacies of legalistic/moralistic messages.
2. What _____ principles are evident in the text? Examine historical context, genre, narrative features, doctrinal statements, divine actions, surrounding passages, etc. that underscore the necessity and presence of God’s redemptive work (i.e., grace) on behalf of his people.
3. In the light of how these principles fit into the overall plan of redemption, how should we _____ to these principles in our lives?

[Take truth to struggle.]

III. Finding “Redemptive Principles” in the Text

A. Traditional Approaches Useful for Some Texts:

1. _____ Approaches: (i.e., expounding the text’s direct mention of Christ or his messianic work. E.g., Gospel account, messianic Psalm, epistolary reference, etc.)
2. _____ Approaches: (i.e., Christ’s redemptive work is represented in an Old Testament type. E.g., Exodus, the Temple, David, etc.)

B. Redemptive/Historical Approaches Useful for All Texts: (i.e., identifying where this passage’s events/persons/instruction fit in the overall context of God’s redemptive plan *in order to* proclaim the redemptive/grace principles that provide motivation and enabling for the passage’s imperatives.)

In its context every passage either is (see last page for examples):

- a. _____ of the Work of Christ
- b. _____ for the Work of Christ
- c. _____ of the Work of Christ
- d. _____ of the Work of Christ

C. Macro and Micro Redemptive Interpretative Options:

1. Redemptive-historical: Identifying the place or function of the text in redemptive history [Macro].

Bridges – Events, patterns or persons that advance understanding of God’s redemptive message or means (Adam, Melchizedek, Exodus, sacrifices)

Dead ends – Events, patterns or persons that demonstrate a false hope for redemption (e.g. Law, judges, kings – as an Eastern mode of reasoning)
2. Doctrinal-instruction: Expounding a redemptive doctrine (understanding of grace) that is exemplified, stated or taught in the immediate text [Micro].
3. Literary motif: Explaining how the author uses a literary motif (title, image, pattern, etc.) to prefigure or echo an aspect of Christ’s redeeming work [Micro and Macro] (e.g. Abraham offering his only son and God offering his only Son = Gen. 22 and John 3:16; Moses striking the rock to rescue his people = Num. 14 and I Cor. 10; Zipporah rescuing Moses and God’s “son,” Israel, with blood of her son = Exodus 4 and Heb. 9; Joshua’s conquest and David’s throne from Dan to Beersheba with Christ’s final Journey from Caesarea-Philippi “Gates of Hell” to Cross = Joshua 18-19 and Matt. 16). This is not allegorically turning incidental details into *our* meanings, but showing literary parallels intended by a biblical/canonical Author.
4. Relational-interaction: Identifying redemptive truths (grace principles) expressed in God’s interaction with people or in his representatives’ interactions with people [Micro] (e.g., strength in weakness, faithfulness despite unfaithfulness, provision for need, forgiveness of sin, discipline for correction). **This option is the most frequent/important interpretive tool.**

D. Redemptive “Lenses” to Use in Approaching all Texts:

(Two key questions that are always applicable *and* fair):

What does this text reveal about ...

1. God's nature or attributes which _____ the work of Christ
2. Our nature or attributes which _____ the work of Christ

Note: Revealing aspects of the *necessity and provision* of grace, rather than _____ of Jesus (or some account from his incarnation) is what makes a sermon redemptive. The term “Christ-centered” is synecdoche for all of God’s redeeming work that makes us know and depend upon his grace ultimately provided in Christ. A Christ-centered sermon does not attempt to make Jesus appear where the text does not speak of him, but

rather demonstrates the _____ of the text to his person and/or work. Often biblical texts are not directly revealing the person of Jesus, but are revealing a dimension of God's gracious nature that will be most fully revealed in Christ, and must be grasped by us to know him and to reflect him.

IV. Using Redemptive Lenses to Preach the Whole Bible as Christian Literature

A. Histories (and Biographies)

1. Explain the place of events/persons in the redemptive plan (predictive, preparatory, reflective, resultant); and/or,
2. Expose the grace principles evident in doctrinal statements, literary motifs, or relational interaction (of God or his representatives with his people).
3. Make sure "God is the hero" even when exemplars teach character.
 - ◁ Note how "God as hero" may change wording of main points
 - Not: "Be strong and courageous, so God will help you."
 - But: "Because God is your help, be strong and courageous."

B. Law

1. Show how the law leads to dependence on grace (in Christ - Gal. 3:24)
2. Show how the imperatives are based on the indicatives (e.g. Deut. 5:6)
 - ◁ Note how "imperatives based on indicatives" may change wording
 - Not: "Obey God, so God will treasure you."
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C. Poetry and Wisdom Literature

1. Expose the grace principles evident in doctrinal statements, literary motifs, or relational interaction.
2. Use "Redemptive Lenses" (i.e., What does this reveal about God and ... me?) to expose grace principles.

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1. Explain statements about the person and work of the coming Messiah
2. Explain the statements of God's disciplining and restorative grace

E. Gospels

1. Explain the person, work and demands of the Incarnate Lord
2. Show why: "If you love me, you will obey what I command" (Jn. 14:15); and, "Apart from me you can do nothing" (Jn. 15:5).

F. Epistles

1. Expose the grace principles evident in doctrinal statements, literary motifs, or relational interaction.
2. Show how the imperatives are based on the indicatives (in context)

◁> For more detail see G. Goldsworthy, *Preaching the Whole Bible as Christian Literature* and S. DeGraaf, *Promise and Deliverance*.

V. Using Redemptive Lenses to Preach Biblical Narratives

A. Use Exegetical/Systematic Skills to Explain Text and Obedience Required

B. Use Redemptive “Lenses” to Identify Grace Principles

- Ask, “What does this text reveal about God’s provision ... and human need?”
- Identify the Grace Principles (or Patterns) Evident in *this* Text

(God is the _____ of the text. Unfold the story of his rescue.)

1. Deliverance before obedience (indicative before imperative)
2. Love before and beyond performance
3. Mercy for the Guilty
4. Strength for the Weak
5. Covenant Love for the Unlovely and Undeserving
6. Provision for the Needy
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9. Discipline (Redeeming) for the Wayward
10. Other?

- Motivate Obedience Required by this Text with its _____ Principles
Remember: Application’s Four Questions: What, Where, *Why* and How

C. Use Homiletical Principles to Organize the Narrative’s Features

1. “Principle-ize” main points and subpoints (i.e. identify the truth principles that are supported by the text’s features and facts. Do not state text facts as main points or subpoints that will leave you with no truth to illustrate or apply.)

Not this (restatement of text facts = merely describing the text):

1. Israel Confronted Jericho
2. Israel Marched Around Jericho
3. The Walls of Jericho Tumbled Down

But this (formulation of biblical principles = actually developing the truth):

1. Faithfulness Requires Facing God’s Enemies
2. Faithfulness Requires Obeying God’s Word
3. Faithfulness Results in Witnessing God’s Faithfulness

2. Use text facts to support (i.e., prove) the main- and sub-point “principles.”

DIDACTIC PASSAGES:

The raw material available to support truth claims or applications:

- a. Stated Truths
- b. Propositional Development
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The raw material available to support truth claims or applications:

- a. Stated and Exhibited Truths
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3. Remember Legitimate Expository Options:

- a. Exploding a verse or _____ a passage are both legitimate homiletical movements that may affect how an outline is formed. In the Lord's Prayer, Jesus explodes the implications of Prov. 30:8-9; but, in Matt. 12:38-41, he summarizes four chapters of Jonah in four verses.
- b. There is _____ as high an obligation to cite verses, as to cite passage content, when preaching from a narrative passage.

4. Don't Fear "Miracle" Passages, but Remember their Redemptive Purposes

- a. Show how the miracle demonstrates divine _____, or a divine representative's _____, rather than promising a "repeat."
- b. Remember long periods of no miracles even in Scripture. Thus, if God is not always promising a miracle, should we?

◇ By proclaiming the "principles" of the narrative, the preacher takes "truth to struggle" and, thus, fulfills the purpose of a biblical message. From the beginning we learned that preaching was both about "what is true" and "what to do." Now we are seeing that "what is true" is not simply a doctrinal truth to know or a duty to do, but also the redemptive motive and means for God's people to glorify and enjoy him. Most preachers believe that the main goal of a sermon is to tell people what to believe (doctrine) or what to do (obedience), but the greater goal is hope (in him). Only by discerning the grace evident in the text do we provide the hope that makes truth meaningful and obedience possible.

Examples:**-Predictive of the Work of Christ**

(Prophecies, Messianic Psalms, O.T. sacraments)

-Preparatory for the Work of Christ

Gal. 3:24 - The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. (Also, Gal. 2:6-9)

Rom. 4:23-25 - Now it was not written for his (Abraham's) sake alone that it (i.e., righteousness) was imputed to him. But for us also, if we believe in him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offences and was raised again for our justification.

-Reflective of : (the most common tool of "redemptive" messages)**1. God's nature, or attributes, which provide the work of Christ ***

Rom. 15:4 - Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that through patience and comfort of the Scriptures we might have hope.

Old Testament Narratives reveal God's justice, deliverance, sure promise, mercy, etc. Genealogies show faithfulness and grace.

2. Our nature or attributes which require the work of Christ *

Mark 7:6 (Jesus said) Well has Isaiah prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, this people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.

1 Cor. 10:5,6 (speaking of wilderness wanderings of Israel) Now these things were our examples to the intent we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted . . . (leading to vs. 13).

◁ Note the poverty of truly good O.T. Patriarches. Almost every O.T. saint is terribly flawed to show us everyone's need of a Redeemer.

* May be historical conclusion or logical assumption, stated or implied.

-Resultant of the Work of Christ

Rom. 8:1,2 - There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.

Phi. 1:12, 13 - Work out your salvation with fear and trembling for it is God who is at work (completed action) in you to will and to do his good purpose.

Heb. 4:14-16 - Seeing that we have such a great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession . . . Let us therefore come boldly before the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Developing Redemptive Messages

I. Review of Redemptive Principles for Christ-centered Preaching:

A. The necessity of a redemptive focus in all “Christian” preaching:

Expository preaching is committed to revealing what the Word says, and Jesus says the whole Word presents his person *and* work (by disclosing aspects of God’s grace that becomes fully revealed in him).

B. Identification marks of non-redemptive preaching:

1. “Sola Bootstrapsa” Messages
2. The Deadly Be’s (“by themselves”)

Martin Luther, “The Sum of the Christian Life”

It is exceedingly difficult to get into another habit of thinking in which we clearly separate faith and [works of] love.... Even though we are in faith ... the heart is always ready to boast of itself before God and say: "After all, I have preached so long and lived so well and done so much, surely he will take this into account." But it cannot be done. With men you may boast ... But when you come before God, leave all that boasting at home and remember to appeal from justice to grace. [But] let anyone try this and he will see and experience how exceedingly hard and bitter it is for a man, who all his life has been mired in his work righteousness, to pull himself out of it and with all his heart rise up through faith in the one Mediator.

I myself have been preaching and cultivating it (grace) for almost twenty years and still I feel the old clinging dirt of wanting to deal so with God that I may contribute something, so that he will have to give me his grace in exchange for my holiness. Still I cannot get it into my head that I should surrender myself completely to sheer grace; yet [I know that] this is what I should and must do.

C. Distinctives of Christ-centered Preaching (cf., Greidanus, Sola Scriptura)

1. What Christ-centered Preaching is not:

- a. Not _____ Preaching.

Christ-centered preaching does not attempt to make the person of Christ appear in every Old Testament mud puddle and camel track by allegory or analogy – through *paralleling* OT accounts with NT experiences of Jesus (e.g. Rahab’s cloth) or “leapfrogging to Golgotha.”

- b. Not _____ Preaching.

Christ-centered preaching does not negate the necessity of law in believers’ lives, but teaches that our obedience has no power to redeem or grant merit before God. Christ-centered preaching reveals the grace in all Scripture to *motivate* people according to Christ’s precept: “If you love me, you will obey what I command” (John 12:14; cf. Titus 2:11-12).

C.S. Lewis. *English Literature in the 16th Century*, p. 33.

All the initiative has been on God’s side; all has been free, unbounded grace. And all will continue to be free, unbounded grace Bliss is not for sale, cannot be earned. ‘Works’ have no ‘merit,’ though of course faith, inevitably, even unconsciously, flows

out into works of love at once. He [the Christian] is not saved because he does works of love: he does works of love because he is saved. It is faith alone that has saved him: faith bestowed by sheer gift. From this buoyant humility, this farewell to the self with all its good resolutions, anxiety, scruples, and motive scratchings, all the Protestant doctrines originally sprang.

2. What Redemptive Preaching Is:

Recognition of all Scripture as a _____ revelation of God's redeeming work (i.e., the revelation of grace)

In opposing the fragmentary interpretation which reads the Bible as a collection of biographies, the redemptive-historical side stresses the hermeneutical significance of the unity of redemptive history.... The unity of redemptive history implies the Christocentric nature of every historical text. Redemptive history is the history of Christ: He stands at its center but no less at its beginning and end.... Scripture discloses its historiography right at the beginning. "Gen. 3:15 ... places all subsequent events in the light of the tremendous battle between the Seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent, between Christ coming into the world and Satan the ruler of this world, and it places all events in the light of the complete victory which the Seed of woman shall attain. In view of this, it is imperative that not one single person be isolated from this history and set apart from this great battle. The place of both opponents and 'co-workers' can only be determined Christologically." (Greidanus, p.135)

[Our goal is *not* to make every passage mention Christ, but to show where every passage stands in relation to the grace ultimately revealed in Christ.]

Genesis 3:15 Interpretive Perspective

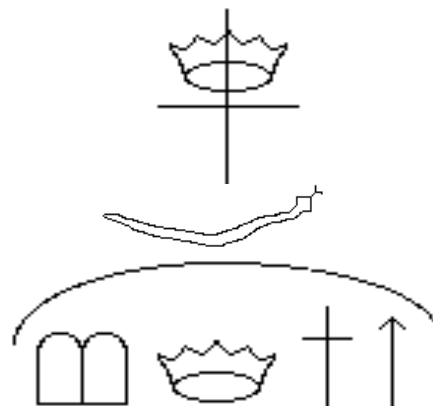
Not This:

reminds me of:



Leapfrogging to the Cross

But This:



Where does this specific passage fit in redemptive history/teaching?

<> "Christian preaching is simply the proclamation of the Divine crusade of redemption, of God's way out of our human predicament [sic F.C.F]." -Simon Blocker, The Secret of Pulpit Power, 1955.

II. A Basic Process for Christ-centered Preaching

3-Step Process for Preaching “Christ” (God’s redeeming work) from every text

1. What is the _____ (the “burden of the text”) that requires God’s intervention and rescue? A true FCF requires a divine solution, and thus exposes the inadequacies of legalistic/moralistic messages.
2. What _____ principles are evident in the text? Examine historical context, genre, narrative features, doctrinal statements, divine actions, surrounding passages, etc. that underscore the necessity and presence of God’s redemptive work (i.e., grace) on behalf of his people.
3. In the light of how these principles fit into the overall plan of redemption, how should we _____ to these principles in our lives?

[Take truth to struggle.]

III. Finding “Redemptive Principles” in the Text

A. Traditional Approaches Useful for Some Texts:

1. _____ Approaches: (i.e., expounding the text’s direct mention of Christ or his messianic work. E.g., Gospel account, messianic Psalm, epistolary reference, etc.)
2. _____ Approaches: (i.e., Christ’s redemptive work is represented in an Old Testament type. E.g., Exodus, the Temple, David, etc.)

B. Redemptive/Historical Approaches Useful for All Texts: (i.e., identifying where this passage’s events/persons/instruction fit in the overall context of God’s redemptive plan *in order to* proclaim the redemptive/grace principles that provide motivation and enabling for the passage’s imperatives.)

In its context every passage either is (see last page for examples):

- a. _____ of the Work of Christ
- b. _____ for the Work of Christ
- c. _____ of the Work of Christ
- d. _____ of the Work of Christ

C. Macro and Micro Redemptive Interpretative Options:

1. Redemptive-historical: Identifying the place or function of the text in redemptive history [Macro].

Bridges – Events, patterns or persons that advance understanding of God’s redemptive message or means (Adam, Melchizedek, Exodus, sacrifices)

Dead ends – Events, patterns or persons that demonstrate a false hope for redemption (e.g. Law, judges, kings – as an Eastern mode of reasoning)
2. Doctrinal-instruction: Expounding a redemptive doctrine (understanding of grace) that is exemplified, stated or taught in the immediate text [Micro].
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Remember: Application’s Four Questions: What, Where, *Why* and How

C. Use Homiletical Principles to Organize the Narrative’s Features

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Developing Redemptive Messages

Last time we talked about the importance of redemptive or Christo-centric preaching, and we said that the goal is not just to have some new science of hermeneutics—how we interpret better than the next guy—but rather, to understand that the essence of Christian preaching is not just to have standards whereby we do better than the next guy, or some basic moral message, but rather to understand the distinction of the Christo-centric nature of all Scripture as the power, as the motivation for the true Christian message. Jesus said, “Apart from me you can do nothing.” Just a quick review of those importance principles, why is it important to have a Christo-centric prospective. We’ll do a quick review of that and then we’ll move into: “All right, if it’s important, how do we do these messages that are redemptive and true to our expository ethic?” So, a quick review.

First, we talked last time about the necessity of a redemptive focus in all Christian preaching. Expository preaching is committed to revealing what the Word says, and Jesus says the whole Word presents his person and work; that is, by disclosing God’s grace that becomes fully revealed in him. We’re not trying to make Jesus magically appear from every text, every tract and mud puddle, but rather we’re saying, Christ says all the text is in some way disclosing him. It’s not by magical appearance, but rather by disclosing how the whole story is unfolding for the purpose of revealing the redemptive work of God himself, ultimately fully disclosed in Christ.

But of course it’s not just the fact that the story is about Christ, but our ability to do what the Scriptures require is also from Christ’s provision. Jesus said in John 15:5, “Apart from me you can do nothing.” So if our messages are simply moral instructions but we have not found a way of incorporating God’s redeeming activity, his power to do what he requires, then we ultimately fail God’s people by telling them to do what they cannot do apart from Christ. If Christ is necessary, his redeeming work, the grace that is exemplified in him, is necessary for Christian preaching, then we also need to have the identification marks of non-redemptive preaching, so we don’t go there.

And we talked about some of those identification marks in the last lecture as well. Messages that are simply “sola bootstrapsa,” that is, you pick yourself up by your own bootstraps and do better. There is a rather famous appendix in a book that I won’t name particularly, but the appendix is entitled “The Menace of Sunday School,” and the menace that’s being described is this: where the teacher with all good heartedness and apparent good teaching says, “Now Sally, if you’re just a good little girl, Jesus will love you.” It sounds so sweet; but it’s actually deadly to our faith. “If you’re just a good person God will love you.” It’s not on the basis of our goodness that God’s love comes to us but on the basis of his goodness and his provision. And that Sunday school message of “God’s love follows our goodness” is actually deadly to our faith; in fact it’s not a Christian faith at all.

“Sola bootstrapsa” messages are also identified by “the deadly be’s.” We talked about the messages that are simply “be like,” or “be good,” or “be more disciplined.” Again, with the caveat that we’re not saying that these are wrong messages in themselves; but they are wrong messages *by themselves*, if all we have said to people is “be better” or “be more disciplined.”

Now, having another message, not simply giving moralisms, not simply giving the imperatives of Scripture, but reminding people of the necessity of God's grace in their lives, to be and do what he requires, ultimately can become very difficult to preach; not just it's hard to see in the Scriptures, but because it's a notion that wars against the human reflex that says, "I will fix my own situation, I'll do what God requires and then God will reward me for it."

In a famous sermon by Martin Luther, he gives his own summary of why this is so difficult, in a message entitled "The Son: A Conclusion of the Christian Life." Here's what he said: "It is exceedingly difficult to get into another habit of thinking in which we clearly separate faith and works of love. Even though we are in faith, the heart is always ready to boast of itself before God and say, 'After all, I've preached so long and so well and done so much, surely he will take this into account.' But it cannot be done; with men you may boast, but when you come before God, leave all that boasting at home, and remember to appeal from justice to grace. Don't ask God to be just, don't ask him to be fair, you don't want God to be fair. What do you want? You want God to be merciful, you want his grace."

"But let anyone try this," says Luther, "and he will see and experience how exceedingly hard and bitter it is for a man who all his life has been mired in his works-righteousness to pull himself out of it and with all his heart rise up through faith in the one mediator. I myself have been preaching and cultivating grace for almost 20 years and still I feel [this is how you know it's Luther; listen to these words], I feel the old clinging dirt of wanting to deal so with God that I may contribute something so that he will have to give me his grace in exchange for my holiness. Still I cannot get it into my head that I should surrender myself completely to sheer grace. Yet I know that this is what I should and must do."

It is so hard, I mean it really is, particularly when you've been out of backgrounds of performance or whether you're just trying to say, "But surely God will be pleased if I do X." And the answer is he will be pleased, but it's not the reason he loves you, it's not the reason he forgives you, and it's not why his mercy comes. And just to kind of put all that together is so difficult: to separate pleasing God from acceptance before him. And think of how those things function.

So we go down correct paths today, I want to talk about some distinctives of Christ-centered preaching. We talked about non-redemptive preaching last time. What are some distinctives of Christ-centered preaching? First, again, what it's not. Christ-centered preaching is not allegorical preaching. We are not talking about that; it is not allegorical preaching. Christ-centered preaching does not attempt to make the person of Christ appear in every Old Testament mud puddle and camel track by allegory or analogy through paralleling Old Testament accounts with New Testament experiences of Jesus: what Sidney Greidanus calls "Leapfrogging to Golgotha." It's so easy to do this, right? Rahab warned the spies and told them where she was and the cloth she put outside of her home which was to be her rescue, what was the color of the cloth? It was scarlet, which of course indicates what? The blood of Christ. And you kind of, well, maybe it means she was a scarlet woman. Maybe it doesn't indicate shed blood, maybe it indicates present sin. Could it mean either? The idea is we're not trying to impose our imagination on what the text says. We're trying to say what the text says and that's part of Christ-Centered preaching, not allegorical preaching.

B. It's also not antinomian preaching, OK? It's also not antinomian preaching. Tell me, you all know this, standard objection: If you begin to say that there's grace in all the Scriptures, and grace should be the motivation of our preaching, and grace should work its way into our sermons. Now what are people concerned about? Too much grace, which is going to lead to what? It'll lead to license. And you have to say, "Is that true?" It certainly can be. I almost feel like there is a time in everybody's life if they come to an understanding they are made right before God and kept right before God by his grace alone that the pendulum swings. You know, you kind of go, "Oh, you mean he'll still love me if I do X?" that people kind of slide over into X. And then they say, "Oh, oh, he warned me about X because he loved me." And the pendulum starts swinging back, but it seems like that almost everybody kind of makes that shift. And we say, "Is it a danger?" Of course. But you have to say, those in whom the Spirit dwells—and that's a caveat—those in whom the Spirit dwells, grace is the vitamin of holiness. It is the grace of God that teaches us to say no to ungodliness and worldly passions. Remember how Paul writes Titus—grace rightly perceived is the motivation and the enablement of Christian obedience. Without grace you cannot do anything. And so rightly perceived grace is not antinomianism; it actually is the power of holiness.

Christ-centered preaching does not negate the necessity of law in believers' lives but teaches that our obedience has no power to redeem or grant merit before God. That's usually a shock to people. "My obedience does not give me merit?" Your best work is only what before God? Filthy rags. Our obedience does not gain us merit before God. Christ-centered preaching reveals the grace in all of Scripture to motivate people according to Christ's precept, "If you love me you will obey what I command." It's a very different concept of how grace is used. If what we're doing is instilling greater and greater love for Christ, then we will love what he loves. That's why Jesus said, "If you love me." It's why love is the greater compulsion and ultimately the greater power of the Christian life. By the way, for those of you very sharp, that reference there is totally wrong. It's not John 12:14, it's John 14:15.

C.S. Lewis phrased it this way, just kind of a wonderful summary of these thoughts: "All the initiative has been on God's side, all has been free unbounded grace, and all will continue to be free unbounded grace. Bliss is not for sale, cannot be earned. Works have no merit, though of course faith inevitably, even unconsciously, flows out into works of love at once. The Christian is not saved because he does works of love; he does works of love because he is saved. It is faith alone that has saved him, faith bestowed by sheer gift. From this buoyant humility, this farewell to the self with all its good resolutions, anxiety, scruples, and motive-scratchings, all the protestant doctrines originally sprang." That's a wonderful statement: that ultimately it's the putting aside of self in justification but also in sanctification that he says was the driving force of the protestant ethic and doctrine.

That means it's very important and we have to think about what redemptive preaching is. It is this: it is recognition of all Scripture as a unified revelation of God's redeeming work. Hear that? All of Scripture is a unified revelation of God's redeeming work. Sidney Greidanus, in his book *Sola Scriptura*, puts it this way: "In opposing the fragmentary interpretation which reads the Bible as a collection of biographies, the redemptive-historical side [and that's really what we're talking about, redemptive-historical preaching] stresses the hermeneutical significance of the

unity of redemptive history. The unity of redemptive history implies the Christo-centric nature of every historical text. Redemptive history is the history of Christ. He stands at its center, but no less at its beginning and end. Scripture discloses its historiography, that is, the theme of its history, right at the beginning. Genesis 3:15 places all subsequent events in the tremendous battle between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent, between Christ coming into the world and Satan, the ruler of this world. And it places all events in the light of the complete victory which the seed of the woman shall attain. In view of this, it is imperative that not one single person be isolated from this history and set apart from this great battle. The place of both opponents and coworkers can only be determined Christologically.”

Now, they are just wonderful words but there is a lot there, so let me just say: what it’s saying? It’s saying everything is connected to the great battle whose theme was announced right at the beginning of the Bible. What’s the Bible’s theme? It’s not John 3:16. Go to Genesis 3:15. Remember God’s speaking to Satan after the fall: “I’ll put enmity (hatred) between you and the woman, between your seed and her seed.” What’s going to happen? “You will strike his heel, he will crush your head.” And now the battle is engaged. Everything from that point forward is about the great battle—every person, every event, every chapter is another part of that unfolding battle as God is redeeming, reclaiming the world and Satan is trying to stop him. It’s all part of the battle.

Our goal—let’s just look at the brackets beneath that paragraph—our goal is not to make every passage mention Christ, but to show where every passage stands in relation to the grace ultimately revealed in Christ. If Genesis 3:15 is your interpretive high hill over which to look at the rest of history, it’s almost as though—some of you have done this—that you’re standing on a hill overlooking a Napoleonic battlefield. Can you kind of picture it? You’re on this high hill and you’re trying to explain everything that’s in front of you, this grand battle that’s going on. And you say, all right, here’s the infantry up close, and there is the cavalry back behind that hill, the artillery on the hill, there’s a supply train further back, there are spies on both sides, and your trying to explain any person, any feature without relating it to the battle is not to understand what it’s really about. So in this great battle whose commencement has already been announced—and by the way whose end is known—in this great battle everything has a place and the goal in Christo-centric preaching is to say, “Where does it fit? What’s happening here? What’s the role of this spy? Or that horseshoe? Or that warrior? Where does it fit in what’s going on here?” Which is not to impose something on the text that isn’t there, but rather to find the place of the text in the great battle.

Now there are wrong ways to do it, and I just put here what’s on your sheets. It’s not this: what Greidanus called this “Leapfrogging to Golgotha,” where the preacher in essence says, “This passage reminds me of something in Jesus’ life.” All right? Rahab’s cloth was red and that reminds me Jesus’ blood was red. Moses met the daughters of Jethro at a well and Jesus met a woman at a well. You know. And so somehow, this leapfrog that reminds me of something in Jesus life, is not what we’re talking about. Rather, what we’re talking about is this: Christ-centered exposition where we are saying everything from Adam and Eve to the consummation is part of this great battle of the King ultimately crushing the serpent. And there have been chapters along that history. And our goal is to say where are we in the redemptive battle? Where are we? Where does it fit? So I’m not imposing something that is not there; I’m finding the place of the

story in the overarching plan of God's purposes. The preacher explains the role that says of any epoch, event, person, and passage within the divine crusade of redemption that is the sovereign victory of the seed of the woman over Satan. You think of that, what's really happening, there's a divine crusade that's going on through Scripture. God is ultimately conquering. He's bringing all things to bear. Now sometimes there are defeats, sometimes there are false hopes, there are false messiahs, there are idols, there are lots of things that will be put aside, destroyed as God is making progress in the battle. And our goal again is to find out where we are in that great battle.

The quote at the bottom of the page I think is a really neat one. "Christian preaching is simply the proclamation of the divine crusade of redemption of God's way out of the human predicament." That's Simon Blocker and that was done in the '50s, but you think, "Wow, that's really perceptive." Here's the fallen condition, right, in which we live; the human dilemma. And all truly Christian preaching is saying, "What's God's way out of there?" That's really why we started with the FCF, because it is real fallenness, right? You require a divine solution. What's the problem in this text? What's it addressing? How is God bringing his answer to bear rather than just what do we just do to fix it?

1. If you thought on page 3 of a basic process for Christ-centered preaching, the three-step process, in some ways you already know this; this is kind of old hat to you because you are kind of ready instinctively for these steps, from what we've done in the past. The first step in this three-step process for Christ-centered preaching—that is preaching Christ, or again, think semantically, that is par for the course—of God's redeeming work, from each text; the first step: What is the FCF? What does the text say? What's the Fallen Condition Focus? That is the burden of the text that requires God's intervention and rescue. You're going to read an article a little bit later by Tim Keller in which he talks about one of the nice things about redemptive or Christ-centered preaching in a post-modern era where everybody loves narratives so much. He says there's always an implicit story and the implicit story is always that Christ is coming to the rescue. All preaching that is truly Christian has that implicit narrative that somehow God's got to get you out of this. A true FCF requires a divine solution and thus exposes the inadequacies of legalistic, moralistic messages—that is "the deadly be's" by themselves.

2. Having identified the FCF we ask, "What redemptive or grace principles are evident in the text? OK, there is the dilemma—what are the redemptive or grace principles that are also here? We examine historical context, genre, narrative features, doctrinal statements, divine actions, surrounding passages, whatever it is that underscores the necessity and the presence of God's redemptive work on behalf of his people. We're looking for how grace is getting on the scene to get out of the fallen condition and then . . .

3. In light of how these principles fit into the overall plan of redemption, how should we respond to these principles in our lives? Long ago, you heard me say that what we're trying to do in preaching is take truth to struggle and that becomes a little bit more evident now; that if we're starting with FCF, with the Fallen Condition Focus, we're ultimately saying what truth is dealing with that, but inevitably there would have to be grace principles involved. The truth is never going to be, "You fix it." Somehow there has to be grace on the table to deal with the Fallen Condition Focus. Now often questions start to come: now does grace go with the first point, the second point, or the third point? And the answer has to be, there are all kinds of *Christ-*

different strategies, right? The real point is that by the end of the sermon we have to know that it's God's supply, right? And sometimes we'll say, now recognize that's because God has delivered his people that they were to obey him, and because God has delivered, maybe I'll lay the foundation early.

We're going to listen to Clowney two meetings from now in which he will kind of take people through an entire message of performance doing, and then get way down here and say, "By the way, you can't do that." And he'll kind of turn the tables by the end and talk about the necessity of Christ. I don't think there is a perfect place. I think you just have to have the understanding that if you left people with themselves, there isn't much hope there. So there are different strategies for where it will fit. I think that most of the time you'll find that you'll start integrating and then it builds as you go. But you'll see different strategies evolve as you start preaching this way.

Now I've said that what you want to do is find the redemptive or the grace principles in the text, but that kind of delays the question, which is: "All right, how do I find those principles?" So let's start to go there with Roman numeral III on page 3.

III. How do you find the redemptive principles in the text? Well, there are some traditional approaches that are useful for some texts.

1. And the first is simply a direct approach; that is, you expound the text's direct mention of Christ or his Messianic work. All right, let's just presume that you're in Matthew 26, the crucifixion scene. Is there any redemptive truth there? Just say what's there. Just tell us what's there. There's direct reference where there has been direct explanation, where there has been direct reference to some aspect of God's redeeming work. So a Gospel account, a Messianic psalm, an epistolary reference to the work of Christ on our behalf: he himself died in his body on the tree that we might die to sins and live for righteousness. I mean, just expound that and you'll get redemptive truth where there is direct mention.

2. A second approach, which you'll read a little bit of Clowney on, and which will scare you to death, so we're not going to do a lot of it this year, is the typological approach, OK, where you look for types. And that certainly is a legitimate way. And we recognize the New Testament identifies types. Kind of the standard Reformed understanding of types is that we do not say something is a type unless the Bible says that's a type. All right? Otherwise, many things can be modified different ways.

Now you don't recognize, I just stepped around all kinds of landmines. We don't identify as a type unless the Bible says it's a type. What's the question, "How does the Bible say that?" Right? And there are the clear ones at times. You get David and you get the water from the rock; those are clearly identified as types. The big question for a lot of theologians these days is, "What about those types that are not said to be types but are literary parallels?" I can remember once hearing a pastor in my youth. I may have been early in seminary at that time, I don't know. But I can remember almost just laughing out loud as he talked about Isaac being a type of Christ. He said, you know, wood goes on his back, and he goes up a hill, and his father is going to kill him. He was very serious. I'm kind of "Ha, ha," you know. How silly. Well, I don't think it's so

silly any more. I mean the parallels are so striking, and I think, all right, now the Bible does not say that this is a type. But if we were reading *Moby Dick* and we saw Queequeg pick up a spear of a certain shape in chapter 2 and in chapter 42 that same spear reappeared and Queequeg held it the same way, we'd say, same author? Oh, there is a connection here. And then we say, what if it's different authors? That's Moses and this is Paul. Well, it's God. It's the Holy Spirit. Was there something intended? And I'm not going to solve that before you today. I will just tell you that study of typology, if you want to do your PhD, is a real hot place to go these days, OK, and I think very fruitful. As a lot of Old Testament narrative studies are unfolding and we're seeing how Hebrew narratives work, there's something there. But right now, I'm saying you don't have to go there, OK? Obviously some texts will work typologically, some texts work by direct mention of Christ because he's mentioned right there. I'm more concerned in these lectures to talk about, if you will, the more common occurrences of how you interpret texts that are the usual texts in Scripture. So I want to talk about item B.

B. If not direct or typological approaches, what's the most common redemptive-historical approach useful for all texts? That is, identifying where this passage's events, persons, or instructions fit in the overall context of God's redemptive plan, in order to proclaim the redemptive or grace principles that will provide motivation and enabling for the passage's imperatives. Now that last little phrase, "motivation and enabling for God's imperatives," that's all of the next lecture; that's what we're doing next time. For right now we're just saying, "All right, where do you get Christo-centricity in other texts?" In context, every passage either is: a) predictive of the work of Christ; b) preparatory for the work of Christ; c) reflective of the work of Christ; or d) resultant of the work of Christ. Now I'll go back through them.

Certain passages are going to be predictive of the work of Christ. Give me examples: What are passages or types of literature in the Bible that are predictive of the work of Christ? The prophecies, messianic psalms, OK. Obviously, if you're going to preach from Isaiah 40, "Comfort my people," and you are going to give no mention of Christ, you didn't get it. You didn't understand what was going on there. So there are passages that are predictive of the work of Christ.

Other passages are preparatory for the work of Christ; in other words they are preparing us for the person and/or work. Now that's an important slash—they are preparing us to understand Christ's person and/or work. The sacrificial system, why is it there in the Old Testament? Because God's people will be made right with God through sacrifices, right? No, not entirely. Something else is going on. We are being prepared to understand what God would do through the perfect lamb, through his son—the sacrificial system. What about the Law? The Law was preparing us in a different way. How was it our schoolmaster to lead us to Christ, our pedagogue, our come-along counselor; how was it preparing us to do that? By teaching us what we could not do. It's why we have in the Sermon on the Mount not only the past iteration of the law, but the highest iteration of the law. As Jesus—you know we say it so sweetly at times—he just said, you know, "Consider the birds and the lilies." Isn't that a wonderful, comforting message? Wait a second. He just said anybody who calls his brother a fool is in danger of hell fire. If you look at a woman to lust after her you've already committed adultery in your heart. If you are a Pharisee, what are you doing now? "Whoa—I thought I was OK. He can't be right." No, it's the thing that's to humble you is the law, and when you understand it fully and state it accurately it drives

everyone to their knees. It's supposed to. There are passages that are preparing us for the work of Christ.

Item C, which we'll talk about the most in a little bit, I think is the most critical category. There are passages that are reflective of the work of Christ; that is, they are reflecting grace principles. There are passages that are reflecting grace principles in words, actions, or relationships. Grace principles are being reflected in words, in actions, or relationships. So there is something that I am going to understand more fully about the life and ministry of Christ and it's because of this ancient example that I'm beginning to understand more about what Christ would do. God delivered his people though they have rebelled against him. He forgave them though they have done it over and over again. He rescued the weak, he fed the hungry. In each case God is taking care of people who can't take care of themselves. There's some sort of relationship by which God is explaining his character that's going to come to full understanding in the ministry of Christ. There are things that are being reflected of grace in words, in actions, or relationships. Doesn't have to mention Jesus—it's preparing God's people to understand what he would do by the reflection of those grace principles.

Finally, certain matters are resultant of the work of Christ. If you can pray now before God, the High Judge of the universe, you can nonetheless approach boldly the throne of grace. How can that happen? It's a result of the fact that someone has already preceded you. Christ has already done a work and as a result of that work that is why you can pray. In each case what's being said is that Christ has done something which we're either being prepared to understand or which we now understand more fully and are responding to.

The next page tries to, if you will, drill down even further into how passages may be Christocentric, redemptive revealing, by saying that there may be macro as well as micro interpretive options. The macro option is the first one: redemptive-historical. That is identifying the place or the function of the text in redemptive history. Now the little graphic I put on the overhead just a little bit ago, that's redemptive history. It's everything from Adam to the consummation and saying, "All right, where do we fit in that redemptive scheme?" So: looking at the big redemptive history and saying, "Where does this passage fit?" And most people are pretty intimidated by trying to do that. I am, aren't you? Oh, oh, have I got it right? Have I figured out is this the right interpretation to that particular event? So here are some hints.

Recognize that some aspects of redemptive history are bridges, that they are bridging our understanding of what Christ would accomplish. There may be events or patterns or persons that advance our understanding of God's redemptive message or means. Take Melchizedek, just there. What do you remember about Melchizedek? King of Salem, which is what? King of peace. Where did he come from? We don't know. When did he die? We don't know. But what was his purpose? Why did he come? OK, he's the high priest to whom? To the father of nations. He's somehow bringing peace to the one by whom all nations will be blessed. God is helping us to understand something. It's a bridge to understanding that Christ will ultimately accomplish and what his ultimate rule will be and his purposes for whom? So there's a bridge to our understanding. Obviously if I said something about the temple ceremonial system, right? It's bridging our understanding.

But even as there can be bridges in redemptive history there can be dead ends too. At times recognize there are events, patterns, and persons that demonstrate a false hope of redemption. It could be the law, or the judges, or the kings. We're so Western in our thinking of how the Bible ought to function, you know, it will be just this to this to this—it will be a linear function of things. But it's not always that way. There can be false hopes and dead ends. Think of it. All right, we'll give the law and everyone will perfectly obey the law and everything will be OK, right? No, that doesn't work. OK, ya'll just go do it and everyone just do what they think is right in their own eyes. Period of the judges. Well, that doesn't work very well. Listen, here's what we'll do. We'll get the biggest, brightest, smartest, best-looking guy we can get and we'll make him the king and he'll make all the right judges and that'll fix it. Right? Well, look here. You know what, we may need another judge, we may need a better lawgiver and keeper, maybe a better king, not this, not this, not this, but this. Sometime if you just remember it's Hebrew, it's oriental thought, it's not just linear this to this to this. Sometimes there's this circle navigation where the point being made is circled by all the events that surround it. And God through the course of history is saying, "That doesn't work and that doesn't work and that doesn't work. You'll need another priest, you'll need another prophet, you'll need another king. And there he is." There are dead ends as well as bridges and we begin to see how they function in the course of biblical history.

Now, my trying to comfort you a little bit may have done none at all. 'Cause I recognize, OK, oh boy, I hope I can do that. So what are maybe narrower ways to look at a text and still think redemptively? One way is to look at the text and consider it in terms of doctrinal instruction. Is there some doctrinal instruction there that is telling me redemptive truth? That is, we're trying to expound redemptive doctrine, some understanding of grace that is exemplified, stated, or taught in the immediate text. This is a micro approach, OK, not trying to go out this way, but right there. Abraham believed God and it was counted to him, credited to him as righteousness. Any grace principles in there that you can think of? Just say what it says, you know? There may be doctrinal instruction that's right there, and so if you say, "He was the worst of all the kings and God forgave him when he repented." Is there a grace principle there? I want to keep us from thinking that Christo-centric preaching is always macro-level preaching. Sometimes you can come in close just by looking at the doctrinal instruction that may be right here.

Another form of that is looking for literary motifs. Now this is why you pay the big money to come to this class. I've never said this in this section of Christ-centered preaching before. This is new stuff. It's not even in the book! I just sometimes look back at my own preaching and say, "Now wait a second, that's what I'm saying, but what am I doing? What am I doing at times that doesn't fit?" And I recognize at times when I'm preaching about a Christo-centric theme, there may be some sort of literary motif that I'm working off of. OK? Now, you know what a motif is? It's a repeated theme, image, or phrase. So sometimes I think the way in which redemptive truth is coming is explaining how the author uses a literary motif to prefigure or echo an aspect of Christ's redeeming work. Now this can be macro as well as micro.

Paul looks at Moses striking the rock and the water coming out of it and he says that rock was Christ. He says that rock was Christ. God bringing water out of a rock, God blessing people in a desert, God providing for his people where they cannot provide for themselves. He said that's what Christ is. All right, if you were to go throughout the Old Testament, you'll find one of the

most common repeated motifs of wording, not of image, but of wording is, “slow to anger and abounding in love.” Over and over again. When God is wanting to capture his character, how he deals with people despite their failings, he will say, “I’m slow to anger and abounding in love.” It’s a repeated theme that goes over and over again as God is making his point.

Let me just do one or two more. I was in Israel this summer. It just struck me so much again. When Joshua goes into the Promised Land, he ultimately has a conquest, he conquers the territory. Do you remember? From Dan to Beersheba. He goes from Dan to Judah. When David takes over as king, his first conquest is as he ultimately establishes the kingdom from Dan to Judah. Jesus through most of his ministry stays in a little 17-mile radius circle around Jerusalem, goes up to Capernaum, but he’s staying in a fairly small area. Then right before the crucifixion he goes up to Dan and comes down to Judah. What’s happening? He’s taking the land again. Where does he perform his first miracle? Shechem. Why a healing, raising somebody from the dead? Who did that before? Elijah. Who came to Shechem when he first entered the Promised Land and set up camp at Shechem? Who’s the first one who did that? Abraham. Every time God comes to take the territory he goes to Shechem. What’s the territory ultimately? Dan to Judah. Now, I’m not saying you have to buy this. The people of Israel did. When Jesus did the raising, what did the people say? He must be Elijah. They recognized the connection. And it sometimes helps us with passages we struggle with.

Remember Matthew says after Jesus had been taken to Egypt because of the persecution with his mother and father, what passage of Scripture was quoted? Do you remember? “Out of Egypt have I called my sons.” Well, that wasn’t talking about Jesus, if you go back to the passage; it’s talking about the nation of Israel. But what they recognized was that whenever God is redeeming his people, the great stories of the Exodus in the Bible, that great redemptive motif has people coming out of Israel. And what did God call Israel in Exodus 5? “My son.” You hear the motifs?

Now, I think you’ll get comfortable in those over time. I’m not asking you to do that yet. It’s really the next one that I think is the most helpful to you and the most common, as you have to get gunned up full. What are the different cartridges you can use for these different passages? Here’s the one that I think is the most helpful most of the time: what I call relational interaction, that is, identifying redemptive truths, grace principles, expressed in God’s interaction with people or his representatives’ interactions with people; that is, you’re looking real micro and you’re saying, “In this passage, I don’t have to go way out to the horizons. I don’t even have to look into motifs as it were. How am I seeing grace exemplified right here? How is God providing strength in weakness? Faithfulness despite unfaithfulness? Provision for need, forgiveness of sin, discipline or correction?” I think this is kind of the most frequently used and often the most powerful interpretive tool. Because what we’re really saying is, “How is God displaying himself as the hero?” Does that help a little bit? You’re just looking and you’re saying, “All right, forget all that stuff about motifs and macro redemptive stuff; how is God displaying himself as hero here?”

Remember what ultimately Christo-centric preaching is? The divine solution to the human dilemma. How is God demonstrating himself to be the hero? It may be through whom he supplies—some representative of his. As David cared for Mephibosheth. Mephibosheth? Remember him? Whose son is he? Jonathan’s. Therefore he’s the grandson of whom? Aaah, the

grandson of Saul. Who's on the throne now? David. Who's his greatest threat? Any heir of Saul. But Mephibosheth can't take care of himself. Why can't he take care of himself? Because he's lame in what? Both feet, remember? He can't take care of himself and he's David's greatest threat. But what does David do with him? He sits him at his table. Honors him. What do we learn? We learn something about the nature of God even toward his enemies, like you and me. The ones who damaged him and then alas are blessed by him. God is the hero, how is he showing us that?

If you will, I always recognize at this point that if you kind of lay out all of the redemptive options, that people are kind of appreciative in the moment but later on you'll be at your desk somewhere, you know, it's going to be about midnight, and you're going to be going, "Oh no, which of those do I pick? Which is the right one on this text?" And I'd like to make it more simple. The simplest for me and what I honestly do most of the time when I get stuck, I take out a different pair of glasses. And this set of glasses has two lenses that I can identify by two questions. You ready? Here they are.

The first question is this: What does this text reveal about God's nature or attributes which provide the work of Christ? And/or two: What does this text reveal about our nature or attributes which require the work of Christ?

All right. It's just this simple. What does this text tell me about God and what does this text tell me about me? Now, those are not unfair questions, OK? You can ask those questions of any text and it's not what everybody fears; I'm going to be required to import the New Testament on the Old, I'm going to do eisegesis, I'm being forced in Christ-centered preaching to do this kind of non-biblical preaching. I'm saying, no, no. Just ask two questions. What does this text tell you about God and what does this text tell you about you? Because if you're doing that you're forced to think redemptively. You are not the answer to whatever is the burden of the text. God is the answer and somehow God is revealing your need as well as his provision. It may not be full-formed, remember; it may just be a seed, it may just be hints of what's going to happen. But ultimately God is revealing something about you and something about himself, and asking those questions, which are very fair questions—what did I learn about God and what did I learn about me here?—is going to force us to think redemptively.

Now at times I fear that guys will be thinking, you know, "I just don't want to impose the New Testament on the Old. The Old Testament should be able to be interpreted with itself." I do agree with that, but at the same time I want to remind you, you live this side of the cross, and it was never God's intention to say, "Now when you interpret the Old Testament you turn a blind eye to what you know about Jesus. Don't you dare think about anything on the cross. Don't you think about that at all. You've got to interpret the Old Testament on it's own basis." That was never his intention. It is not what the Gospel writers would do. They all knew where they were in history and they recognized that to understand their place and what had led them to that place they had to understand that prior history in terms of where they stood in today's history. So, yes, if I say, "What do I learn about me?" I recognize I'm a New Testament Christian. But that was written for me. Everything that was written before my time was written so that through the instruction of Scripture we by patience and the encouragement of the Scriptures might have hope. It was written for me, and I knowing my place in time say, "All right, I know what Jesus had to do and

I'm understanding more of that because of what led to it, and I will look at redemptive history, yes, in terms of what it was intended to reveal. But that means I can ask the question: what does that tell me about God and what does it tell me about me?" And that's fair, that's OK to ask about any text.

The bottom of page 4 says this: "Revealing aspects of the necessity and provision of grace rather than mention of Jesus (or some account from his incarnation) is what makes a sermon redemptive. The term Christ-centered is synecdoche for all of God's redeeming work that makes us know and depend upon his grace ultimately provided in Christ. A Christ-centered sermon does not attempt to make Jesus appear where the text does not speak of him, but rather demonstrates the relation of the text to his person and/or work. Often biblical texts are not directly revealing the person of Jesus but are revealing a dimension of God's gracious nature that will be most fully revealed in Christ and must be grasped by us to know him and to reflect him." OK, so we're not taking out our magic wand to make Jesus appear. We're saying, "What grace principles are evident here that become most fully revealed in Christ's person and/or work?"

Let's talk about some specifics because we'll be using different forms of literature even this semester. How do we use these redemptive lenses to preach the whole Bible as Christian literature? Which by the way is the name of the Goldsworthy book, right, which you're going to be reading, which intends to look at different genres of Scripture and saying, how are they Christo-centric? But here are just some hints as you go along.

If we're in histories or biographies, put those in the same category, how do we speak Christo-centrally? Well first, explain the place of events or persons in the redemptive plan. They may be predictive, preparatory, reflective, resultant, and/or you might expose the grace principles evident in doctrinal statements, literary motifs, or relational interactions, that is, of God or his representatives with his people. But here is the essence: make sure God is the hero. Even when exemplars teach character. That is, David, or Abraham. There are aspects of right character that the exemplars are meant to show us, but even they are blessed because of God's goodness ultimately, not theirs. God is still the hero. Note how God as hero may change the wording of main points. Not, for instance, "Be strong and courageous so that God will help you." Who's the hero here? It all depends on you being strong enough and courageous enough. Rather, it might be something like this: "Because God is your help, be strong and courageous." Because God is, you can live as a result of that. God is the hero.

How do law passages function? Show how the law leads to dependence on grace. Two, show how the imperatives are always based on the indicatives. Again, that may change wording. Not, for instance, "Obey God so that God will treasure you." Rather, "Because God treasures you, obey him." We do it over and over again, but let's just remind ourselves, what's the introduction to the Decalogue say? "I am the God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage; therefore keep my commands." What he did not say was: "Keep my commands and then I'll bring you out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage." There are imperatives. But they are based on the indicatives. There is an order in the law by the lawgiver.

And this is just kind of fun because I've used this example in the past years and now the man is in the room. Jimmy Agan years ago had this course and he spoke to our faculty a couple of years

ago and he said candidly, “Well I kind of questioned it when Dr. Chappell said this.” And he said, “Then, as I was getting my PhD in the New Testament I recognize it was always the case. There was no exception that I could find in the Bible where an imperative did not have an indicative in the context, where the imperative was always based on the indicative. And it wasn’t looking far, it was always in context. Once I learned to look for it, it was always there.” Am I lying, Jimmy? He’s shaking his head. What are you going to say? It’s the president asking you.

But I mean, it was just this wonderful thing for me to say it’s not just created theory. I can think of when I taught my daughter to find geodes when we were living over in Illinois once upon a time, and you know, all over the ground were geoded rocks, but she wasn’t accustomed to seeing them, but I just found a few for her and I said, “Look, it looks like that.” And once her eyes got accustomed to seeing them, she could see them all. But she had to train her eyes a little bit, of course. But once her eyes got tuned she could see them. And I think once you begin to say, “You know what? There are never imperatives in the Bible without indicatives of God saying the reason you’re doing this is because of who you are by my gracious action.” The imperatives just don’t exist apart from that. And once you begin to see that, then you see it everywhere. And it really kind of opens the Scriptures for you. It’s not this imposition, it’s not some kind of fabricated method. It just becomes what is there, and what I’m doing in Scripture is not saying the same thing over and over again—Jesus loves you, so obey him. You begin to see the structure of the passage itself as another dimension of God’s grace is turned another facet to you, and saying as a result of that grace, live this way. And God constantly unfolding more of those indicatives through history so that the imperatives naturally rise out of them instead of saying, we’re doing something that’s not really there. You get your eyes tuned, and you just start seeing it and it’s a great blessing.

Some of the hard places to really see this are the poetry and wisdom literature passages—because there is no mention of Jesus. In fact at times it seems there’s only, you know, more imperatives, right? What are we trying to do? We expose the grace principles evident in doctrinal statements, literary motifs, or relational interaction. I will confess to you, you will need to use redemptive lenses. What does this text reveal about God and me to expose grace principles?

All right, let’s do what I think are some of the hardest things. You’re in Proverbs and the language is simply, “My son, do not be seduced by the beauty of the woman.” What does that passage tell me about God? What does God value? What am I learning about God in that verse? He’s pure, he values it, he requires it, it reflects his own character. What else do I learn? “My son.” He loves; he loves his children. What do we learn about ourselves? We’re vulnerable; despite being children, we fail. If you look at the structure of the book of Proverbs, we learn something else. It is wisdom. Where does the wisdom come from that keeps us safe in these circumstances? It comes from God, so that when we pick up James in the New Testament, he says that “if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God who gives generously and upbraideth not.” He’ll give you much and he won’t get after you for asking for his help. I learned more about the book of James by studying the book of Proverbs and understanding, you know, this wisdom that keeps you safe is from a Father who loves you, and he’s the one who provides the wisdom that you can’t provide for yourself. Now, I will confess it’s not the very first reflex of everybody who approaches the book of Proverbs, I acknowledge that. But once you get your eyes tuned, you can say, “Oh, that’s why he told me in the early chapter that the wisdom was

from him, not from me; that's why the safekeeping is from God. It's not ultimately my wisdom, and he gives me wisdom that keeps me safe and then tells me when I'm vulnerable. He loves me still."

I'm going to move really quickly through the rest. The prophecies and apocalyptic literature—obviously these may be revealing the coming Christ. The Gospels explaining the person, work, and demands of the incarnate Lord; ultimately the Gospels are going to show why Jesus said, "If you love me you will obey what I command," as well as "apart from me you can do nothing." I mean, ultimately the Gospels are saying, "Here's the God who sent his Son because he loved you, knowing that when you perceived he was God incarnate, he was God's gospel visual before us, that we would love him, and when we loved him we would want to do what he wanted." That would be our joy, that would be our privilege to do so. And so the Gospels come to demonstrate that love of God for us, knowing that we would love him and also to remind us that if we didn't have him all the imperatives in the world won't mean a thing. "Apart from me you can do nothing."

The Epistles, obviously, are exposing—we preach by exposing the grace principles evident in doctrinal statements, literary motifs, or relational interactions, and we always show how the imperatives are based on the indicatives. In this particular class you have this semester to deal with biblical narratives particularly, right? So you're supposed to be preaching from narratives, and let me tell you why, guys. I can remember, I've been out of Seminary about 10 years and I visited a pastor friend of mine. And, you know we've both been preaching a while, and I preached in his church kind of a series and at the end of that he said, "How do you do that? You did Bible narratives. I always either do the Psalms or the Epistles because I know how to do them. But I don't know how to preach a story." And my contention will be if you learn how to preach grace from the narratives, you will be able to do it everywhere else. Everywhere else it's going to be kind of given to you. Because the Epistles and Psalms are always going to be establishing the imperatives with the indicatives. But it's so easy to become moralistic when preaching narratives. David was a good boy and you be a good boy, too. So if we can begin to preach the narratives redemptively everything else will kind of take care of itself.

So I want to talk about how we approach these narratives that you have preached from this semester most particularly. Tell us and talk about what we do when we approach the narratives. A, under Roman numeral V. We will use our exegetical systematic skills to explain the text and the obedience required; that's nothing new. OK, we'll still look at the text and say, "All right, what does it say? What's it requiring?" But B: we will begin to use redemptive lenses to identify grace principles in the narrative. We'll ask again, "What does this text reveal about God's provision and human need?" OK, there's the Exodus, that's pretty easy to see, God's provision and human need; but there is a prophet in the desert running from a queen and needing to be fed by ravens because he's scared. What is this telling me about God's provision? What is this telling me about human need? I'm asking the provision and need questions because they'll get me to grace principles. And what I'll do when I do that, when I begin to ask about God's provision and human need, I will identify the grace principles or patterns evident in the text.

Now, all of these are varieties of "God is the hero of the text." As we begin to unfold the story of his rescue we may see deliverance before obedience, which again is the indicative before the

imperative. We may see love before and beyond performance like Gideon, who was a coward and then later an idolater and still was used by God greatly. We may see mercy for the guilty, strength for the weak, covenant love for the unlovely and undeserving, provision for the needy, warning for those who are in error, punishment for enemies as God rescues his people from enemies they cannot rescue themselves from. We may see discipline that is redeeming discipline for the wayward-turning people of unsafe paths and turning people back into God's arms. What we're seeking to do is to motivate obedience required by this text with its grace principles. Now we'll do a whole lot more talking about what it says there next time. We're trying to remember applications for questions.

Thus far, up to the elementary practicum we dealt with what to do, where to do it, instructional situational specificity, and we kind of tipped our hats to why to do it and how to do it, but this semester we're not tipping our hats, we're saying this is the absolute core of the message. Why should you do that and how are you going to be able to do that, and what in the text is providing the grace principles that are there? Now we'll talk a whole lot more about that next time, but if I'm saying God is taking care of what you cannot take care of, ultimately that's going to be both motivation and enablement. Here's what we're doing: we're still going to be using homiletical principles to organize the narrative's features. It's going to be a little bit different for you this time because we'll talk about principlizing main points and sub-points. That is, we will identify truth principles that are supported by the text's features and facts.

Do not state text facts as main points or sub-points that will leave you with no truth to illustrate or apply. Now this isn't so much about being redemptive; it's just knowing how to preach narratives. If you do this: Israel confronted Jericho, Israel marched around Jericho, the walls of Jericho tumbled down. Now as a consequence of that you should march around. . . . What I did is I gave a captioned survey of the facts. All right? Way back in Prep and Del we called this describing the text rather than developing the message. Our goal is not merely to summarize the facts a different way. Our goal is to say, "What truth principle are the facts revealing?" Like, take the same order, the same facts, but we would state it this way: Faithfulness requires facing God's enemies, therefore you should. . . . Well, now I've got something to apply, I've got a principle, a truth principle. Now what's going to support that truth principle? The facts of the text. But main points are stated as principles, not simply as text facts. And that's just kind of a general principle for preaching narratives: word main points as truth principles, not text facts. "Faithfulness requires obeying God's Word." That would be the same as Israel marched around Jericho because God said to. But it's putting in a truth principle. "Faithfulness results in witnessing God's faithfulness"—the walls came tumbling down. So in narratives, to preach them, we put the facts in truth principle statements rather than just as caption surveys of the facts.

We (item number 2), we of course use the text's facts to support the main point and sub-point principles. So it's a little different in didactic passages, the raw material we had available when we were doing the Epistles. What did we have available to us? We had stated truths and propositions, we had a thought flow, we exegeted the thought of that paragraph. What are we doing in narratives? In narratives the raw material available to support the truth claims may be stated truths but they may be exhibited truths—the walls fell down, David was punished. It may be something that's exhibited that supports the truth. It may be a truth that's in the dialogue or that's in the narrator commentary. "The time came when kings went to war and David stayed

home.” That’s just what the narrator says, he wasn’t supposed to; time came for kings to go to war and David didn’t do it. Led to great sin in his life. We may see something in character development or descriptions. There may be something in context, something we know about the culture. What’s the significance of the Passover cup that Jesus used for the Lord’s Supper? There may be something in plot flow. I remember this so much in the conquest as Joshua went in, he was supposed to destroy everything. He didn’t. There may be a pattern. When David was young and was rising as a star in Israel, whenever there was a victory, it says he devoted everything he had to the Lord, he devoted everything to the Lord. He becomes king, he has conquests, but you know it doesn’t say that any more. He stopped devoting things to the Lord. There’s this gap in the pattern of the telling of the story. Some principles being revealed. So there may be story patterns. In narrative passages you exegete actions and events and dialogue. But what you’re looking for is, what truth principle is here? What principle can I establish by the facts of the passage?

Some things to remember as you’re doing these narratives: remember there are legitimate expository options. You can explode a verse or distill a passage. When you’re preaching from the Epistles, what kind of direction are you mostly going? You’re exploding small passages, right? Here are the implications of that verse. But a biblical narrative might run how many verses? Thirty, forty, fifty, seventy, eighty verses, you know; you can’t read all that. So you have to distill. You can’t explain all of it. You say, what are the broad strokes and distill it down.

Just a real quick thing here, it’s not even in the notes I don’t think. It’s where your Scripture intros will help you so much. Remember the Scripture intro? If you’ve got 70 verses please do not read them all. We only have, you know, 25 minutes for you. So what are you going to do? You may summarize a little bit, read a few verses, summarize a little bit more, read another couple of verses, be done, OK? You’re going to read the verses most critical to your sermon. And you’re going to summarize long sections that may not be as critical to the points. So your Scripture intro allows you to deal with large passages in a more efficient way that you can do in your Scripture intro.

Item B, under 3, may be a little bit of a surprise to you. There is not as high an obligation to cite verses as to cite passage content when preaching from a narrative. Now listen, when you’re in Epistles, you want to say, “Look with me at verse 5.” Right? But if you say, “Now, because of this Goliath hit the ground. Look with me at verse 14, it says, ‘Goliath hit the ground.’” You know, chuckle. If everybody knows the story, if it’s plain, there’s not quite as high an obligation to cite the verse. But when you do cite the verse, what are you looking for? Look what it says, “The time came when kings went to war and David stayed home.” You know, there may be very specific things you want people to look to; please don’t get into the habit of not referring to the text at all. Please don’t do that. But recognize if they know the story well you may not have the same degree of obligation to cite the verse as when you were dealing in the Epistles.

Last little hints here. Number 4: Don’t fear miracle passages but remember their redemptive purpose. Lots of you preaching narratives are going to come across miracles and the great temptation is to say, “Well God gave them a great catch of fish, we’re on a fishing trip, so you know. . . .” Chuckle. Is that what it’s about? Look, show how the miracle demonstrates divine status or a divine representative’s authority rather than promising a repeat. OK? So often what

the miracles are about are saying, this is the King of the universe, this is who he is. It's not meant to say, and this will happen to you too. This is who he is. Or this is the spokesman from God who can speak with authority and I'll show you he's got authority. So often, I mean, recognize while there are miracles very present in our awareness, there are long stretches of biblical history, the majority of biblical history has no miracles. They come in cycles, typically when there's some breaking in of some new thing that God is doing, and he's either saying, "Here's my representative" or "Here's my Son." So remember the purpose of the miracles and establish what they were establishing rather than promising a repeat. That will help. Remember, it says there, long periods of no miracles in the Bible. If God is not always promising a miracle, should we?

Last paragraph. By proclaiming the principles of the narrative the preacher is still taking truth to struggle and thus fulfills the purpose of a biblical message. From the beginning we learned that preaching was both about what is true and what to do. Now we're seeing what is true is not simply a doctrinal truth to know or a duty to do, but it's also the redemptive motive and means for God's people to glorify and enjoy him. Most preachers believe that the main goal of the sermon is to tell people what to believe, that is, doctrine; or what to do, more obedience. But the greater goal is hope in him. Only by discerning the grace evident in the text do we provide the hope that makes truth meaningful and obedience possible.

Guess what we're going to do next time? We're going to say, as we now excavate these grace principles out of the text, not importing what's not there, seeing what's actually there in the biblical record for the divine purpose, as we excavate those grace principles: how does it make obedience possible and our hearts willing? That's next time as we'll talk about the import of this in sanctification. See you next time.

Preaching Christ-Centered Application (Sanctification)

Before we get into this material of Lecture 3, let's do a quick review. What I tried to say so far in the previous lecture is this: God is always revealing his gracious character in Scripture in some way, shape, or form. He is showing his people his gracious character so that when Christ appears we understand who he is and what he's done. God is always the hero, he provides, and this becomes most fully manifest in Christ, and we recognize and understand him because of previously revealed grace principles. And we've talked about ways to discern those grace principles in various aspects of Scripture. We've said that the path to see those grace principles can either be a macro understanding or a micro understanding. In the macro understanding, what we're doing is we're saying, "How does this text either prepare us for the person and work of Christ or predict the person and work of Christ?"; or maybe we're looking and saying, "How does this passage reflect the person and work of Christ?" And there are various ways we talked about that. Remember? It can either be by answering the question, "What does this text reveal about God, who provides redemption?" or "What does this text reveal about man, who requires redemption?" So whether or not you're dealing with the macro or you're dealing with the micro—in macro revelation we're not looking at broad sweeps from Genesis to Revelation, but in micro revelation we're saying, "All right, how are grace principles being revealed right here? How is God providing strength for the weak, food for the hungry? What right here is revealing God's gracious character either in relational interaction or doctrinal statement?"

Now, as we're saying that there are these grace principles being revealed in all of Scripture, we have to say why are we even bothering to do all this? And that relates with what we're talking about today: preaching Christ-centered application. How does all this understanding of the nature of grace and all of Scripture affect sanctification, particularly as we're preaching it? Here's the key question: what difference does it make to reveal the redemptive nature of all Scripture? And what I am going to contend is that seeing this grace in all Scripture changes the goal, the themes, and ultimately the application of the sermon. Now, the thing I want to tell you is, at least I think, is the highest goal of preaching and why we are trying to excavate the grace from all of Scripture. And before I get into some of the specifics here I just want to say candidly to you I will understand if what I now say is a struggle for you. I think it has taken me half a lifetime to sense the implications of what it means for the grace of God to be being revealed in all Scripture and how that changes the nature of Scripture. And it's not the way I was trained, not the way I was taught to think, and I'll understand if you feel some tension with what I'm saying. I must tell you even as I teach it to you, even as I try to preach these things, I sense that I am just touching the edge of the reality of what I want to say. But here we go.

If you say, "What is the highest goal of preaching?" I think most preachers examine the text with the sole aim of teaching people either what to do or what to know. That is they look at the text and they think of either the duty or the doctrine. That's what I'm trying to show you—either duty or doctrine that's here in the text. But I'm going to contend that there is a higher goal. It's not teaching people only what to *do* or what to *know*, but rather

teaching people *who they are in Christ*. The ultimate goal of the sermon is not simply proclaiming more duty or doctrine, but promoting a more dear relationship with God. That is really talking about God's love. If the chief end of the sermon is not so much about performance and competence but glorifying and enjoying God—what we say in the Catechism—then we recognize the chief end is not so much about duty and doctrine but it's rather about a relationship. Now how does that change what you look for in the text and what you proclaim from God's Word? What you'll do is you'll begin to look for how the text tells of God's grace to promote love for him. Maybe we'll say even more specifically, the goal of the sermon is to convince people, to have them believe profoundly, that God loves them despite their weakness and sin and frailty, and knowing that, what happens then is they love him. Is that really the goal of the text? To teach people that despite their sin and frailty and weakness the God of heaven loves them.

Think of how Paul says it in Romans 15:4. He says this, "Everything that was written in the past was written to teach us so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope." That's a different goal than just duty and doctrine. If you say everything that's written, everything that's there is written to encourage us, to give us endurance so that we might have hope; if that's the goal, to teach the people profoundly of the love of God for them so that they have hope in their fallen condition. Roman numeral II relates to the dominant themes of redemptive, that is, Christ-centered, messages, if they have behind them this understanding that we're speaking about the love of God for his people and having people profoundly understand that. Obviously a dominant theme of redemptive messages then is not "sola bootstraps" or "deadly be's" messages—you know, messages about just straighten up and fly right, and God will love you for that. Instead, a consistent message of Christ-centered preaching is one like this: Item A: Grace despite your sin. These are messages of assurance—God loves us because of his grace not our performance; messages of adoption—that our relationship with God is based upon his love for us, adopting us, not our somehow making him our God. It's his work in our behalf. And if you think about how messages of assurance and adoption begin to affect all the topics of preaching, then you can think of things like this: What typical topics come out of assurance and adoption? God's grace despite our sin. It can be something like, "Our comfort in God's love." Now how does that change things? How does that affect things?

When you take a subject like the Sabbath. Now I must tell you whether I was growing up in the church or whether I was a preacher, my greatest concern about the Sabbath was what people either should or should not do on the Sabbath. Now that's still a concern. But I think I often missed what was the point of the Sabbath. You remember that when the Earth was Eden, when man did not live by the sweat of his brow, by his work, that everything was Sabbath. It was a Sabbath day, it was a Sabbath time. And then when he fell, what his sin meant is that he would have to by his own labors, by his own striving, he would have to make his way in the world. But ultimately God would say to his people, "I will give you, along with the commands for your serving and your working, a day of rest. If you will rest in me I can do more in six days for you than you can do in seven days for you. Rest in me."

Now, we have to recognize that command for rest came out of the worst of their labors. They were out of slavery, that they were out of having to make more bricks with less straw, it was out of their labor that they had to make them, and God said, "I will give you rest." Now we know of course that they did not altogether honor that, ultimately when they were released from the Exodus, you remember they were going through the land of Canaan and as they are going from their slave labor to Canaan, God says to you, "You are entering the land of my rest. From your labor to my rest. You are entering the Promised Land." It's the land of Sabbath. And when they failed to honor God in that land of Sabbath and they went to the exile, God said, "I will bring you back to my Sabbath. Again from your slavery back into my rest." So when we get to Hebrews 4, after the people of God still do not understand, they are still thriving and wrestling by their work to make things right with God, the writer of Hebrews says, "Because of the work of Jesus Christ there remains a Sabbath. Not by your work but by the work of Jesus Christ you can again enter my rest." And the book of Isaiah reminds us that at the culmination of all things, when we have been through this veil of tears, when we have labored all of our lives to accomplish, when God finally comes to redeem the world, he says we will enter our final Sabbath.

Our obedience to the Sabbath is ultimately a recognition of God's provision of rest. It's not just trying to get people to do enough so that God will honor them. It's actually getting people to rest in the goodness that's of God. And that's the goal. It may still be about obedience to God but it has a different aim, it has a different way in which it's approaching people and saying what is God wanting to communicate to you of his assurance and of your position in him? Of course you will talk about the comfort of God, all the message of sonship, of our adoption, that God will not love you more because you're better; and the flipside of that, he won't love you less because you're worse. I will tell you that people just can't believe that that's true. God won't love me less when I mess up? He doesn't. You're his child. My child may disappoint me, he may displease me, he may receive disciple from me, but he is still my child and nothing changes that. I will have his best interest always in my heart. And God says, "There is grace despite your sin because of my assurance given through many means and because you're my child."

Messages that will be typical of these redemptive messages are also "Grace destroying the guilt of sin." Messages of justification and forgiveness, typical topics: Our repentance, God's cleansing, our need of pardon and how we get it. Christ's atonement, the necessity of imputed righteousness that God has given us, the wonderful glory of recognizing that everything that's true of Christ by our union with him is applied to us. I'm as holy as Jesus before God. Remember Bunyan's wonderful illustration? It's as though every Christian possesses a magic mirror and on one side I see the reflection which is my own scars and warts and blemishes—I see me for who I am. But on the back side of the mirror is the image of Jesus and God chooses to look at me through that side of the mirror. I have his righteousness; it's mine by the work of my great God.

I will preach messages of grace defeating the power of sin. It's not just that I am pardoned, I am freed. I am freed from the guilt and power of sin. Messages of sanctification and enablement. Typical topics will be the victory that we have over the world, the flesh, and the devil. I'm not hopeless, I am not helpless. Satan says you cannot stop it and I say that's a lie. Greater is he that's in you than he that's in the world. God has worked to give me power and knowing that power is part of my strength. The provision of the Holy Spirit and his Word that enable victory give me hope, and that's part of my strength.

Another constant theme will be grace compelling holiness, that our worship and obedience are ultimately a response to his grace and enabled ultimately by his grace. Typical topics will be those of thanksgiving and praise and gratitude, an ultimately loving service. The reason that I serve God is the reason Jesus said. He said, "If you love me you will keep my commands." He didn't say, "Keep my commands so that I will love you." He said if you really love me, this is going to be kind of the turtle falling off the log, it will just happen; if you love me you will keep my commands because you will delight to please me and you will delight to walk with me, and I've given you the path that I walk on.

It's that last topic, loving service, that we're preaching—service to God out of love for him—that's often the tell-tale sign of Christ-centered preaching, because people worry that emphasizing grace undermines obedience. Consistently preaching the necessity and the proper motivation for holiness may be—I think it is—the most difficult task that evangelical preachers face because we culturally define grace as license, rather than as the biblical power—we can even say the biblical compulsion—of holiness. I mean, the world says grace means I get to do what I want. The Bible says you would love to do what God wants. You will respond in a way that the love of God will now constrain you and grace is building that dynamic into our hearts. We talk...how do we preach grace and still apply the standards of Scripture, particularly if the world and many Christians view those as antithetical? Grace is antithetical to obedience. How do we preach it so that grace is actually the power of obedience? First, I think we just have to have this recognition: recognize that it is not gracious to neglect the Law that reflects God's character and is the path of safety and blessing he provides for his people in a fallen world. I think we just have to start by saying the Law rightly applied is not antithetical to grace. Don't let the world do that to us. The Law is the safe path, the good path, what God intended to be a blessing to his people. Now, going on that path and staying on that path is motivated by grace. Grace is not antithetical to it. In essence what I'm saying by that little phrase there, we still have to do application, we still have to do it. Sometimes people say you can't have any "shoulds" in Christ-centered preaching. No, you must! It's actually ungracious to not tell people what God has given for their good and for their safe-keeping.

So let's talk about the nature of application in redemptive, that is, Christ-centered preaching. We previously understood application (I'm going to go to the board here) to be answering four questions, right? What to do? Where to do it? So this was instructional

specificity out of the text, situational specificity out of our circumstances, but then we've also said there were two more questions: Why and how? Motivation and enablement. If you will, here's where we're focusing now, all right? We are saying if application is still on the page, if we still have to do it for faithful preaching, then we've got to make sure we know what the motivation is and how people can do what we have told them to do. And in essence, it's not throwing away the Law, it's not throwing away application that is making Christ-centered preaching; it's actually giving the right motivation and enablement for it. Just to finish that paragraph on your notes: Traditional preaching takes seriously questions 1 and 2. Christ-centered preaching takes as seriously and hopefully equips us to handle questions 3 and 4, the ones of motivation and enablement.

As you think about the question of motivation, Item A for Application in Christ-centered Preaching, just start with the question: How does the Bible motivate us to be holy? Another way of asking is this: What's your theology of change? How is the Bible changing people, how is it motivating us? My question has to be even more specific. What makes redeemed people more holy? Threat of condemnation or promise of grace? And that's not a new question, as a quick review of Romans 6 will say, right? Should we continue in sin that grace may abound? Hey, hey, it's all grace, sin city here I come! Should we just continue in sin that grace may abound? People are concerned if you talk too much grace you will promote unholiness. So if that's the question always debated how do we answer it?

Well let me just begin with an old illustration. This is again of Bunyan, the writer of *Pilgrim's Progress*. You may remember that Bunyan got a lot of the writing and the ideas while he was in prison. Remember? He was one of the non-establishment preachers. He did not want the authority of the king to be ruling over his choice of what he said and the position he had so he was put in prison. Now he wasn't the only one put in prison. The Anabaptists also rejected the rule of the royal authority and so they were also put in prison. So here you have Bunyan, this Calvinistic Baptist, and you have Anabaptists in prison together facing death as far as they knew every day, so of course what did they do? They debated theology. And the Anabaptists would say to Bunyan, "You cannot keep assuring people of God's love, you cannot do that. If you keep assuring people of God's love they'll do whatever they want." Bunyan's famous answer: "No. If you keep assuring God's people of God's love, they will do whatever he wants." Listen, let's just acknowledge it. Can grace be abused? Of course. But for those in whom the Spirit dwells, for the heart that is not in rebellion, grace is the fuel of obedience. I love him so I want now to honor him. They will do whatever he wants if they really love him and are assured of his love for them.

We need to think of the relationship between compulsion and conduct. Reason, good reason asks, "Why should people be holy if all you keep on doing is assuring them of grace?" Scripture answers that question at a very heart human level. Jesus said, "If you love me you will obey what I command." That's why they'll do it, because it will create love. Or even take the ministry that we have. Paul in 2 Corinthians 5, "The love of God constrains us to preach the gospel." It's understanding what he is for us that ultimately is

the compulsion. Most people, even preachers, think it's getting people to do what they don't want to do. Yet preaching's highest aim and greatest power lies in convincing others of the love of God in Christ that makes the heart willing and able. Hear that? Willing and able. What can I do that will make you willing and able to do what God desires? When we know that God delights in us we desire to please him. Conviction of sin is most necessary, we still have to do that, convict of sin, but its aim is not simply to make people feel guilty, but to enable them to comprehend the greatness of God's grace. You feel so bad but look at how great is the grace that rescues you! Grace liberates from sin's guilt and power by filling God's people with love for him that makes them willing and able to please him. That is providing both motivation and enablement.

Look at how the Westminster Confession states it in the chapter on Christian liberty. It's down at the bottom of the page there. "The liberty which Christ hath purchased for believers under the Gospel consists: [this is interesting, we're all free from this] the guilt of sin, the condemning wrath of God, the curse of the moral law, and in there being delivered from the dominion of sin." See that? Free from the guilt and power of sin. "So also in their free access to God and in their yielding obedience to him not out of slavish fear but a childlike love and willing mind."

And you say, "All right I want people to obey God. Is what I'm bringing into the message that's ultimately compelling them creating a childlike love for God and a willing mind, or am I actually utilizing the tools that they are free of—the condemning wrath of God, further guilt, convincing them they are under a power they really aren't under? Are my tools, the mechanisms I am using for application, for the motivation of it, those which create a childlike love and willing mind?" Look at the last paragraph. "Neither are the aforementioned uses of the Law contrary to the grace of the Gospel." OK, the Law has been explained and its implications and requirement, it's not contrary to the grace of the gospel. "But those do sweetly comply with it the Spirit of Christ subduing and enabling." Hear that again? The Spirit of Christ subduing and enabling the will of man to do that. Now listen to these terms: "freely and cheerfully." Is what I'm doing enabling people to cheerfully obey God, which the will of God, revealed in the Law, requires to be done?

Now these are high requirements for preaching that are now coming out of the Confession, right? We have to have encouragement to obedience that is free of slavish fear. It's motivated by childlike love. Is my application in the message? Yes, it's there. Are people wanting to do it because of childlike love for God? Have I got that into the message? Have I so told them that they are enabled by the Spirit that they will now cheerfully obey him? Did I do that? Did I get that part of the message in? It's really scary when you think about it. I'm supposed to be creating these dynamics as part of the preaching so that I'm not shackling people with what they are free of. How do I do that? How will our preaching accomplish these things? Next page says this: We need to ask again, what better leads to true holiness? Threats of punishment or condemnation or promise of grace? Particularly since we know the Bible says, Romans 8:1, "There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ." Well, I can't condemn them, what power do I have over them?

We need to think about the relationship between our conduct and God's acceptance. Ultimately the question is boiling down to this: Are we holy for God's acceptance, or are we holy from God's acceptance? The first of course is conditional love based upon fear of rejection or punishment—I'm holy for God's acceptance. The second, holy from God's acceptance, is unconditional love based on his perseverance not our performance. I'm holy from his persevering love. That's what I'm responding to, not my performance that's gaining his love.

Now, I always fear a little bit when I'm at this point that I can't say with the earnestness that I want to say things the way I want to say without some way scaring you. I just recognize my own experience. I went from this place and when I graduated from this place with my graduating class our motto as it was at that time was that we would live for the glory of God. It sounds pretty good. But what it really meant was I'll do better than the next guy. And I watched so many of my peers crash and burn within just a few years of ministry because it wasn't just that they were trying to do better than the next guy, they were telling their congregations to do better than the next guy, and I was too. You know people were telling me, "You're such a good preacher," and I thought to myself, "If I'm such a good preacher why are my people doing so bad?"

I went to minister about an hour and fifteen minutes from here at a rural church, and it was the largest church in our presbytery, great stuff. We were eaten up with immorality, with all sorts of substance abuse, with family abuse, with depression, and I thought, "If I'm such a good preacher, why is this going on?" I tell you because people would commend me for my preaching. I don't think I heard my errors ever in my preaching. It was more in my counseling I began to actually hear what I was saying to people. I would deal with a couple who was fractious, maybe coming apart, and I would say to them words like this: "Now listen, if you expect God to love you, you got to straighten up." You hear what I just said? If you expect God to love you, you've got to fix this. And I think despite myself, oh, I could have gotten the right answers on any exams that anyone would give me, but if you kind of examined what was in my heart, in my preaching, I thought I had to force people by fear, by intimidation, by banging on them with the Bible week after week. I had to make them obey God, and in my own heart I thought the reason why they are suffering so much is because they are disobedient. Now there's an element of truth in all of that but I ultimately recognized it wasn't just they who were living conditionally, I was. I believed God would bless or care for me based on how well I did, and that's why I preached that way, it was coming out of my own heart. I mean there was that time I went to my wife and said, "I can't do this any more. You know, I just can't do this any more. I did not go in to the ministry to hurt people. And yet that's all I can see that I'm doing." Why are they in depression? Because I'm teaching them God won't love them till they get better. Why are they in addictions? Because of me, because of preachers like me! Of course they are running from me, of course they want to dull the ache of this world, of course they do! I haven't given them a God who'll help them; I've given them a God who's waiting for them to get better. And it was killing me.

The thing that rescued me, you'll feel strange about this I know, because you read the work. It was Sidney Greidanus, it was reading that awful thing that I had you read of *Sola Scriptura* where he talked about the biblical exemplars and you know, you think how in the world did that help? Because I began to see what I'm telling people is to be like Moses, just do better, just be better, and I didn't know why those biblical characters were there, that God was the hero, they weren't the hero. And it began to just open a world for me I did not know. I would have gotten a good grade on the test. It wasn't what I lived this early in my heart; I was living conditionally, I was teaching them to do the same.

Ultimately what God began to do for me was change me with some of these truths I want you to know. One of these is so simple—it's number 3 on page 3: the relationships between the imperative and the indicative. You know these words from Ridderbos, the imperative rests on the indicative and the order is not reversible. Everybody puts the cart before the horse, right? I'll obey God, then he'll love me. I'll do enough and then he'll accept me. And yet of course we go even to the Decalogue where God says, "Listen, I'm the God who rescued you, that's why you obey me. I didn't say obey me and then I'll rescue you." The imperatives were founded on the indicatives and the order was not reversible. I put the quote of Ridderbos, the famous one, a little bit lower on the page there in the small print. He's talking about Colossians 3 and he says this: "No less striking in this respect [of the imperative resting on the indicative] is Colossians 3:3 where in response to, 'For you have died and your life is hid in God' the command at once resounds. . . ." Now listen, the first is the indicative, right? You're dead! But you're hid with Christ in God. Now there are imperatives that follow. "Put to death, therefore, your members which are upon the earth: fornication, uncleanness, etc.' Having once died to Christ does not render superfluous putting to death the members that are upon the earth, but is precisely the great urgent reason for it. The imperative is thus founded on the indicative . . . it is immediately clear that the imperative rests on the indicative and that this order is not reversible." If you capture just that it will change absolutely everything, not just in the way you preach, it will change everything in the way you relate to people. The imperative rests on the indicative and the order is not reversible.

When my wife and I kind of just got a glimpse of these grace truths in ministry, we put ourselves under a discipline of change even the way we talked to our children. I mean I may strike you as silly but we had to do it for our own hearts' sake. I would say to my oldest son for instance, "Collin, you are a bad boy because you did that." You hear what I just did? I based who he was on what he did. You are bad because you did bad. In that case I was saying the indicative is based on the imperative. You did not obey, therefore you are a bad person. It may sound silly but I would say to Collin later as I understood more of these things, "Collin don't do that! You're my son! I want you to know who you are, I want you to recognize you are my son. That's the relationship that's motivating you and I want you to know that relationship as the motivation for what you are doing or being called to do." It will change the way you talk to your wife. I mean I think I'm a typical American male—if I've got tension with my wife, what do I do? I either get mad or I get real quiet. I begin to treat her according to her actions. I'll treat you the way you treated me or the way I think you treated me. I should be treating her according to our

covenant relationship. It doesn't mean we don't have things to work through. We've got things to work through but I treat you according to our relationship. I'm concerned for our good, for our faithful lives together. I'm going to treat you according to our relationship not according to your actions. Do we have things to work through? Yes. But it's foundational upon the indicative of who we are. I'm not going to say who we are based upon what we do to one another. I'm going to try to act toward you based upon who we are in the covenant that God has sealed for us. It will change everything. It will change the way you talk to fellow believers who have made you mad. It will change the way you think about the church. Is the imperative based on the indicative? If it is it will change absolutely everything about the way you think about others, the way you talk about them, the way you talk to them and the way you preach.

In Christ-centered preaching what it means, just to fill in your notes here, in Christ-centered preaching what this means is the rules do not change. The rules do not change. It is now not OK to steal. The rules do not change but the reasons do. As one preaches with a redemptive approach, as we say over and over again, I'm not saying that you should be holy for God's acceptance. I'm still saying you should be holy. Rules don't change. But the reasons change—this is FROM God's acceptance that I urge you, it's in view of God's mercy that I urge you to offer your bodies as living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God. It's in view not to gain that mercy. Just to reiterate the Confession here as it speaks of it: "Neither are the aforementioned uses of the law contrary to the grace of the gospel, but do sweetly comply with it, the Spirit of God subduing and enabling the will of men to do that freely and cheerfully which the will of God revealed in the law requires to be done." Our goal in excavating the grace in every passage is not to minimize biblical imperatives but to empower their application with proper motivation and enablement. I mean, when you read *Holiness by Grace* later this semester, that's all I'm asking you to look for—motivation, enablement, how is God doing that for all of our lives.

The priorities, as it were, of Christ-centered motivations, we think about them, what motivations actually are right to use and how do I use them. The first one has to be love for God. The first and primary motivation for Christ-centered preaching is love for God; that is, revealing the grace in all of Scripture is more than an interpretive scheme. It's the chief expository means by which the preacher may provide consistent adulation—adulation of the mercy of God in Christ in order to prompt our love for God that is the most powerful motivation for Christian obedience. On the next page it says this, "Biblical theology should be more about fostering a relationship than promoting or arguing a science." Now let me tell you why that's there. When John Sanderson was here, when Ed Clowney was at Westminster Seminary, they were professors who a generation ago were trying to teach biblical theology, and they will tell you that they were voices in the wilderness—they felt nobody heard them. And one of the reasons that it was hard for them to be heard was what biblical theology had gone through in the preceding generation and some generations before. This notion of the grace in all the Scriptures is not new. This notion of the exemplars having the purpose of revealing the redemptive work of God is not new. If you say where was it most discussed, it was in the Dutch church a hundred years ago. But it became an argument, it became a science of

hermeneutics where we began to argue: all right, who's got the best master metaphor of how grace is being revealed? Is it kingdom? Is it land? Is it adoption? What is the master metaphor? And so you get all these debates about who has the better science for interpreting the master metaphor of grace in the Scriptures. And what got lost in the process? Relationship. It was about discerning God's love for his people despite their weakness.

I sometimes recognize that as people go out from here—even people who go out from here—it just becomes, you know, this person against that person, this science against that one. I really don't care if you think this method of finding grace is better than that method. I really don't care. My zeal is that you discover what God is trying to do is stimulate in his people love for him through Christ. Because I just foundationally believe, if people love him, if they love him, they will walk with him. And all I'm trying to do is find ways that you can look at the Scriptures and see how God is building that love for himself to revealing his ministry through Christ.

It's what he said, right? Romans 12:1 as Paul summarizes all that he had said doctrinally of all the Scriptures have led to at that point: "I urge you in view of God's mercy to offer your bodies as living sacrifices holy and pleasing to God. This is your spiritual act of worship." Hear the holiness required? I'll still tell you I read this verse wrong most of my life. Here's the way I read it: I urge you brothers in view of God's mercy to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, and then you will be holy and pleasing to God. Is that what it says? You be a good living sacrifice and then you'll be holy and pleasing to God. The word holy should have been a clue, shouldn't it? Are you ever going to be holy before God? This is not a statement of what you *will be*; it's a declaration of what you *are*. You offer your bodies as living sacrifices which are by the mercy of God holy and pleasing to God. When you recognize that, that's the transformed mind—that you are not made right by what you do, you are made right because God in his mercy has provided for you. You are holy and pleasing to God—live that way! That's your spiritual act of worship: living out the reality of what he has already done for you. Consistent focus on Christ's mercy, rather than building up a dread of God, most powerfully motivates and enables Christians in their fight against sin and their desire to glorify God. If you don't believe that the next verse won't make sense at all. Remember, Titus 2:11: "For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men." It teaches us to say no to ungodliness and worldly passions. Oh, I thought grace meant yes to everything I want. No, grace rightly understood says if God wasn't there I don't want to be there. Grace teaches us to say no to ungodliness and worldly passions, and ultimately it's understanding all that he's done for us that fills us with that hope and that joy that is our strength. The first and primary motivation is simply love for God.

The second is love for others loved by God. This is what leads to mission and acts of mercy and service to the undeserving. I sometimes hear us, even in our circles, people will be kind of moved more toward justice and mercy concerns. People say, "All right, I'll be merciful toward the deserving poor." What about the undeserving poor? What about the ones that will take advantage of you if you try to help them? You see, grace is

for the undeserving and grace is not known if you are waiting to dispense it only to those who are deserving. But why would we do it? Why would we help people who take advantage of us, abuse our mercy, are undeserving? Well, because Jesus loves them. I love Jesus and that means I will love the ones he loves and I will love the mercy that he wants to show. Ultimately the reason you would read a verse like this, “I tell you the truth, whatever you did for these brothers of mine you did for me,” is because you understand what Jesus is saying: “As you care for them, you are actually caring for me. It’s not because you love them. Do you love me? I want you to take care of me then and my priorities for even the least of these.” There’s certain power in the moment, I recognize it, and I recognize it will pass. If you do some of the readings that a lot of the evangelicals now who are celebrating the mercy and justice themes, they will remind us very truthfully that the postmodern ear needs to hear you celebrate justice and mercy. I mean people coming into our church need to hear us as pastors celebrate justice and mercy. They won’t always want to hear that. That movement will change and ultimately what will keep us faithful to God’s purposes is saying, “But I will love those that no one else will because it shows the mercy of God. It’s because of the love of Christ that I do this, not because it’s popular in the moment.”

Another motivation is love for self as one loved by God. These are more difficult themes because love of self sounds wrong. But if I say to you, “Wait a second, I’m a child of the king.” So if I think about hurting myself, if I think the great mark of holiness is that I will feel badder longer about some sin that I have done, I’m not recognizing what God has made me. He has made me precious to him. Granted, I may feel subjective guilt for sin that I’ve done, but I have an obligation before God to love the ones he loves—that means I protect the temple of the Holy Spirit. That means I am concerned if what I see are patterns of thought, or work, or relationship that are damaging to me. Part of my obligation to love Jesus is actually to love *me*. And I think you know believers who think that the mark of their holiness is they feel bad about themselves and to recognize actually that is not recognizing the work that Christ has done for them adequately. Is there right conviction of sin? Of course. But there is a healthy love of what God has done for us in Christ. We want to claim the rights and privileges of our inheritance in Christ.

Some of you know this language of Murray. He begins to say how can we talk about grace and still talk about conditions of God’s affection at the same time? He says it this way: “Grace is bestowed and the relationship established by sovereign divine administration. Grace comes by God’s choice. How then are we to construe the conditions in which we are spoken like the curses and the blessings in the Old Testament? They are simply the reciprocal responses of faith, love, and obedience apart from which the enjoyment of the covenant blessings and the covenant relationship is inconceivable.” It’s saying this: your obedience does not make God love you. But what’s the only way you can experience the blessings of the covenant? It’s through obedience. It’s that kind of conditionality. You will not know the blessings of faithfulness to a spouse if you’re not faithful to your spouse. Doesn’t mean God is conditionally saying I will love you more or less. But the blessings of the covenant still hinge upon obedience,

even though the covenant is sovereignly administered. We are acting upon what God has already accomplished in our behalf.

Love of self also means that we will be concerned about avoidance of the consequences of sin revealed by a loving God. If God did not love us, he would not warn us. Did you ever think of that? I mean, there are real warnings in Scripture. There are real warnings of discipline, there are real warnings of wrath, but God warns us because he wants to protect us. Saving discipline even, if you think of it that way, is always in the context of Fatherly love. Saving discipline expressed toward us regularly in the Scriptures is never, however, retributive punishment. How much of the penalty of your sin did Christ take upon the cross? All of it. How much of your past penalty did Christ take on the cross? How much of your present penalty? What's the hard question? How much of the future penalty of your sin did Christ take on the cross? *All of it. Absolutely all of it.* So what is happening now as we experience discipline is never punitive in the sense that God is desiring to hurt us, in the sense that God is saying, "I'll get my pound of flesh, you crossed me like that." It is never that. There is only loving discipline now whose goal is to build up, to restore, to turn back into his purpose, to protect from danger. So if we begin to preach discipline as though it is punishment we actually abandon our theology. We may experience discipline as a result of our sin but fatherly discipline, even when harsh, is still an expression of love for a child's welfare. It is of course Hebrews 12: "God disciplines those he loves."

Thus there are many motivations for obedience, there are many motivations for obedience—fear of consequences, desire for blessing, love of self that is concerned for others, which is love for others, and of course love for God. But because love of God must be the primary, I almost want you to put it in neon lights. The PRIMARY motivation for holiness—stimulating such love must be the PRIMARY and most consistent concern of our preaching in order for our people to have holy power for their obedience. The message of grace is simply meant to stimulate love for God, and it's compelling power. Biblical theology is just a tool. It's just a tool that enables us to expound and experience this grace that is found in all Scripture and thus rightly apply the whole counsel of God to their lives.

Now I have to put it against improper motivation so let me do that kind of quickly. What are some improper motivations that are contrary to the whole counsel of God? Number one: Making self-promotion or self-protection the primary motivation of obedience. Now let me be very square with you. It's not just you. Most people in our churches are being motivated out of one of two primary motivations. They will obey God so the ogre in the sky will not get them. Listen to me: If the primary reason that you are obeying God is so the ogre in the sky will not get you, who are you really serving? Yourself. It's just self-protection. There is another reason, primary reason, lots of people obey God. They obey God so they will get more good stuff, either in this life or in the life to come. Bigger mentions up there you know? Listen, if the primary reason that you serve God is so that you'll get more good stuff, who are you really serving? Yourself. It's just sanctified selfishness. You cannot serve God until you come to the profound conviction that your

best works merit you nothing. That the reason that a missionary can go on a mission field out of love for Christ and expect to die, to pack his goods in his coffin, is not because God is going to give him more good stuff but because he loves his Savior more than his own life. And the only thing that will create that kind of love is profound understanding, not of personal merit but of divine mercy. God has been so good, I must tell, I must tell. There is of course self-promotion as some people's motivation which is God is the vending machine in the sky who's plugged by our good works, put another nickel of good works in there; or God is the ogre in the sky who's placated by our good works. People will obey this God; they just won't like him very much.

Packer says it this way in *Rediscovering Holiness*: "The secular world never understands Christian motivation. Faced with the question, 'What makes Christians tick?' unbelievers maintain that Christianity is practiced only out of self-serving purposes. That's what they think—the unbeliever—you're just doing this to serve yourself. They see Christians as fearing the consequences of not being Christians (that is, religion is fire insurance), or feeling the need of help and support to achieve their goals (religion as crutch) or wishing to sustain a social identity (that is, religion as a badge of respectability). Now, that's what non-Christians think that we're doing. Candidly that's what lots of Christians are doing, those very things. No doubt all of these motivations can be found among the membership of churches. It would be futile to dispute that. But just as a horse brought into a house is not thereby made human, so a self-seeking motivation brought into the church is not thereby made Christian, nor will holiness ever be the right name for religious routines thus motivated." Isn't that interesting? You can still pray and do all that, it's not holiness. From the plan of salvation I learn that the true driving force for authentic Christian living is and ever must be not the hope of gain but the heart of gratitude.

The Heidelberg Catechism says what I think is one of the most honest questions of all the confessional catechisms you'll find, just kind of straightforward. This question: "Since we are redeemed from our sin and its wretched consequences by grace through Christ without any merit of our own, why should we do good works?" Isn't that a great question? Hey, if it's all grace, why be good? Why even bother? You know, he's just being gracious. So if it's not based on our good works, why should we be good? See the answer? Why should we be good, do good works? "So that with our whole life we may show ourselves grateful to God for his goodness and that he may be glorified through us." It's a wonderful statement. I'm living out of thanksgiving to my God. Please don't get hung up on the word "gratitude." I know Piper in *Future Grace* is very concerned about that word and if you define it as he does, a debtor ethic, remember that? I'll make it up to God, I'll be good, I'll make it up to God—if that's what your gratitude is it's worthless. But that's not the biblical definition. If you go to Colossians 3:16, which says specifically, "Let the love of God dwell in you richly, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts." What kind of attitude is that? It's not debtor response, it's thanksgiving, it's love overflowing. I want to show my love, I want to give thanks to God. It's not payback. If you're trying to give payback you haven't understood grace, you haven't understood its magnitude. You won't pay it back. But if it's true thanksgiving then that's a wonderful motivation and the way the Reformers typically used that language.

Another wrong motivation beyond self-promotion or self-protection is using what the Reformers call slavish fear rather than Godly fear as motivation. Now what's the difference? It's not personal protection from the ogre in the sky, not that kind of fear. Remember the Bible says, "Perfect love drives out fear." That kind of trembling before the ogre, as it were. Even in the nativity account, in Luke 1:74, we're told this, that Jesus came to enable us to serve him without fear. Amazing thought—we're going to serve now without fear. But now you're going to say, "Wait! The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Isn't there a right fear?" And the answer is, of course. Proper fear in the Bible—the problem is we don't have a good English word. We need Brian Aucker to be in the classroom; no, I'm just teasing! What's the equivalent English word for Hebrew "fear"? And I don't think we have a good equivalent English word. I mean almost always people say something about awe. I don't even think that captures it entirely. I think fear is proper regard for all of the attributes of God. It includes of course his wrath but at the very same moment it includes proper regard for his love.

You know one of the helpful passages for me has been Isaiah 11 that reminds us that when the Messiah will come he will live in the fear of the Lord. Now whatever you think Jesus' relationship to the Father is, it is not "that ogre in the sky is gonna get me." It's not that kind of fear, it is not slavish fear. It is recognition of the awesome greatness, power, and love of God all at the same moment. It's proper regard for who he is. If it's that kind of fear, than it's recognizing even as I dread his discipline I am drawn to his heart. It's that kind of fear. A little example, maybe you've used it other times too. I think of the mom who took her son to the doctor and he was going to have to get a shot cause he was sick, and so the doctor said to the boy, "Son, I'm going to have to give you a shot." And the mom said, "It's not going to hurt, don't worry, it's not going to hurt." Well the doctor knew it was going to hurt and so he said to the boy, "I may hurt you but I will not harm you." I think God in discipline at times expects us to have fear of hurt. No discipline seems pleasant at the moment, but God says, "I will not harm you. You are my child." I don't fear the harm of God. No more, no more. He is my Father and that kind of fear I am freed from and will never feel it again. I am free from the slavish fear before a God who would hurt me out of harm's intent.

Some of our failure in proper motivation is failing to distinguish objective guilt from subjective guilt as motivation. Subjective guilt certainly we will do in preaching. We will have people feel guilty in grieving the Holy Spirit—what is rightly understood as conviction. People are rightly convicted of sin. I grieved the God who gave himself for me. There is right conviction for sin. But that is different than trying to convince people of objective guilt: Now you are guilty before God and he will hate you because of what you did. No, that is gone. There is therefore now no condemnation. Conviction? Yes. Subjective feeling of guilt? Of course. But not condemnation. I do not stand condemned before God because of my sin because of the grace of God.

Now all of this so far has been about motivation, and I want you to kind of feel—I hope you do—to feel the power of that, that what we're trying to do in our preaching is

excavate grace so that we are stimulating love for Christ, knowing that ultimately that is the power of obedience. And that may sound strange because you say, wait, power? I thought it was the motivation. Ultimately I'll contend it's the power too.

Let's talk about enablement—that's Roman numeral V. What is proper enablement in Christ-centered preaching? That is ultimately answering the "how" question. All right, you told me to do something, but how? How do I do that? At the bottom of page 5 it says, "Remember that the 'what' is the 'how.'" As we began in our preaching to say what to do, what to know, that's part of "how." I mean how we obey God comes from knowing the truth; how we obey God comes from knowing what we're supposed to do. So if we said at least part of enablement is knowledge of imperatives, part of being able to please God we have to tell people the imperatives, they have to have knowledge of the imperatives and so instructions made known through the explanation of the text enable us to obey its imperatives. That's part of obedience. But also the "what" of this: the knowledge of our nature is power. Remember in that theology lesson long ago you learned that you were a new creature. In what way are you a new creature? I don't feel new. Because once you were *non posse non peccare*. Remember that old nature, not able not to sin. What are you now? *Posse non peccare*—you are able because greater is he that is in you than he that's in the world. When the Holy Spirit has revealed to you the nature of your shortcomings he does not say, "and it's hopeless." He says, "I am your helper." I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. We are not hopeless now, tomorrow doesn't have to be like yesterday. When I know my real nature I have hope. If I think that I am in an old nature, I just can't help it, it's just the way I'm made, it's probably God's fault. If that's what I really think, I've already failed. I don't have any power now. But if I believe that what the Bible says it's true about my nature that's part of my power. And one of the reasons I'm reading Scripture is God is giving the indicatives: Who are you? Who are you really? If I am more and more drinking in the knowledge of who I am, knowing that's actually part of my strength, what the Bible says about my new nature is part of my strength. It's also ultimately confidence in the Word and Spirit. The Bible is telling me I am not left alone, that I can do all things through Christ, that the Word is informing because I can do and it will give me information so that I can. So knowledge of the Word and Spirit is also why I read the Scriptures, why I am learning the imperatives, why I am seeing what the text says. What I am learning is actually part of the enabling—it's telling me what God requires and who I am. But that's not the end.

As important for me is item B on page 6 at the top—"Remembering the 'why' is the 'how.'" Most of this lecture I've been talking about why we go through the Scriptures and seek to excavate the grace principles that are there, because we are trying to say I want you to love God more, I want you to see how great is his mercy, I want that to be your motivation. But do you recognize that ultimately the "why" is the "how"? When I understand, the great mercy and love fills me up; that's actually my power. Real simple question: What is the only reason that sin has any power in your life? Because you love it; because we love sin more than God. If you didn't love it, it would have absolutely no power. The only reason it attracts you at all is because you love it. Now you may say, "No, no, no. I love Jesus more." I know, but in the moment you loved the sin more than

you loved your Savior. If you loved the Savior more, how much power would sin have over you? It would not.

Look at some of this. Love is—I know it sounds hokey, it’s just so right—love is power. We answer the “why” question because when people truly grasp the love of God they have his strength. The reason that sin has power over us is that we love it. If sin has no attraction to us it has no power over us. How do we undermine the power of sin? We undermine it by filling the heart with love for Christ. That is revealing the grace, that is why we love him. “The way,” —this is John Owen now—“the way that you remove the power of anything is by taking away its life source. The life source of sin is our love for it. Take that away and sin has no power.” How do we take away the love for sin? We displace it. We displace it with love for Christ. This is Thomas Chalmers’ famous sermon, do you remember? “The expulsive power of a new affection.” Hear that? The expulsive power—he said new affections are pushing out something else; the expulsive power of a new affection. The way that we diminish love for sin is by displacing it with love for God stimulated by greater understanding of his grace through Christ.

I’ll go back. It’s not just a hermeneutical method, it’s not just biblical theology, so we’ve got another tool in our tool bag. Ultimately, the reason that we are trying to find God’s redemptive plan, his grace through all the Scriptures, is we’re saying, “Don’t you understand how great is his love for you, how secure you are in him?” So that your reason for obeying God is great love for him. Your primary reason for serving God is love for him, and when love for him is your primary motivation sin has no power.

Now I’m not talking about dispensing with Christian disciplines, I’m not talking about just the practical thing about having accountability partners, all the things that we do to have power over sin. But I’m ultimately driving us to recognize even those disciplines, those accountability partners, what are their duties? Their duties are to be building up a love for Christ. How do most people use Christian disciplines? To barter with God for his blessing. I’ll give you some more of this stuff I hate doing, then you’ll love me; instead of saying, no, the whole goal of the discipline was to drink in, to feast upon the goodness that is God. That’s why you’re doing it. He’s not going to love you more because you read more or longer; that’s not going to do it. All you’re really doing is drinking in more of this that is him.

If you think, there on page 6, of the power of the disciplines, their power is to help us grow love not earn it. Why are we reading, why are we praying? To gain knowledge of God’s expectations. Now that’s why we of course read the Bible, go to church; we learn more about the law, we learn more about God’s provision, his Spirit, but ultimately we’re learning more about his nature. That’s the redeeming work of God that the disciplines are filling me up to know. The other thing I’m doing through the Christian disciplines is learning to walk in the faith of our new affections, which is love for God; our new position of sonship; and our new nature, that is, that we’re creatures. In contrast to what many people are doing with the Christian disciplines, which is bargaining (that’s the earning theory of Christian disciplines); or balancing (the leverage theory—all right, I’m

not perfect, but I've got enough good stuff that I'm gonna balance out the bad, and part of the balancing out the bad is I will go to church this week); or the topping-off theory (listen, I'm not perfect, but God's gonna be gracious to me because he's gonna fill up my imperfections with his grace). By the way, what theory of the atonement is that? That I'm not perfect but I'm better than other people and the way I'm going to get to heaven is God's going to add the grace that I need to "fill her up." Well, you'd be a good Muslim if you believe that. Do Muslims believe in the grace of God? Of course they do! As long as you've been good enough that he can top it off with his grace, instead of recognizing nothing you do is going to make you right before God, only his work. And what the Christian disciplines are about is not filling us up, not doing something; they are only enabling us to understand the feast of mercy that is already there, because when I understand more of why God has loved me and why I now serve him out of love, that ultimately becomes the power.

Charles Spurgeon, in a wonderful discussion of Christian disciplines, said it this way: "The Holy Spirit turns our eyes entirely away from self. He tells us we are nothing but that Christ is all and in all. Remember, therefore, it is not thy hold of Christ that saves thee, it is Christ! It is not thy joy in Christ that saves thee, it is Christ! It is not even faith in Christ, though that be the instrument; it is Christ's blood and merits. Therefore look not so much to thy hand with which thou are grasping Christ as to Christ. We shall never find happiness by looking to our prayers, our doings, or our feelings; it is what Jesus is not what we are that gives rest to the soul." [I wish he had said "not what we do that gives rest to the soul."] "If we would at once overcome Satan and have peace with God it must be by looking unto Jesus. Keep thine eyes solely on him. Let his death, his sufferings, his merits, his glories, his intercession be fresh upon thine mind. When thou wakest in the morning look to him. When thou liest down at night look to him."

Think about that. Wouldn't that be wonderful? If what we were doing in those morning devotionals was not bargaining with God to be good to us today because we'll read a little more; but we're simply saying, "Wow, I see Jesus afresh today." And when we go down to bed at night and we pray with our wives for our children and those that we love, that what we're really doing is saying, "Lord let her, let my family, let me see more of Jesus now." Because that will be our strength, that will be our joy. Sometimes I have to have images to make it make sense to me. I recognize I pour the milk for my daughter's cereal every morning. And sometimes I just think, "Lord let me fill up her heart with love for you. Let me find a way to fill up her heart because I know if she's filled up with love for you, she's safe. That's my job today, to fill her up with more love for you."

What I'm trying to have us do in the conclusion is simply this: to learn to preach God's provision of grace as the motivation and enablement behind every instruction; not fail to have instruction, but proper motivation and enablement. The bottom line of Christ-centered preaching is to take people away from themselves as the instrument of healing and teach them from all the Scriptures of the hope they have through God's grace in Christ that will engender the love that is their power. Jesus said it, right? "Apart from me you can do nothing." And so to have people filled up with that wonderful plan of

redemption, with that wonderful story of how God is always loving and moving toward his people for their sake. If that's what we are telling them, we are filling them up with love for Christ, and that is what makes their obedience honoring to God.

Schaeffer said it this way: "We must learn to bow twice: first we must bow to the divine provision (what God provides) before we bow in obedience. Because if we bow in obedience before bowing to the divine provision our obedience is irrelevant and wrong." Hear that? "And wrong." If I haven't first said, "God how great is your love for me!" then anything I do to satisfy him is only selfishness. But if I say, "God, how great is your love for me! I see it. It's on every page of Scripture. I see it" then love for him fills us and the joy of the Lord fills us and the joy of the Lord is our strength.

Next time we'll listen to Clowney, a wonderful preacher, as he does some of this for us and helps us excavate grace from a very unlikely place and then shows us how it deals with application. See you next time.

Preaching Christ-centered Application (Sanctification)

Key Question: What difference does it make to reveal the redemptive nature of all Scripture? It changes the goal, themes and *application* of the sermon.

I. The Highest Goal of Preaching

Most preachers examine the text with the sole aim of teaching people *what to do* (duty) or *what to know* (doctrine). But there is a higher goal: teaching people *who they are* in Christ. The ultimate goal of a sermon is not simply proclaiming more duty or doctrine but promoting a more dear relationship with God – love. If the chief end is not so much about performance and competence but glorifying and enjoying God (a relationship), then how does that change what you look for in the text, and what you proclaim from God’s Word? You will look for how the text tells of God’s grace to promote love for him.

II. The Dominant Themes of Redemptive (i.e., Christ-Centered) Messages

Not *sola bootstrapsa* or the "deadly B's," but ...

- A. **Grace** _____ **our Sin** (Assurance and Adoption)
 Typical topics: Our comfort in God's Love (Sabbath)
 Our confidence of God's Love (Sonship: never loved more or less)
- B. **Grace Destroying the** _____ **of Sin** (Justification and Forgiveness)
 Typical topics: Our Repentance, God's Cleansing and Pardon,
 Christ’s Atonement and Imputed Righteousness
- C. **Grace Defeating the** _____ **of Sin** (Sanctification and Enablement)
 Typical topics: Victory over the world, flesh and devil
 Provision of the H.S. and the Word enabling victory
- D. **Grace Compelling** _____ (Worship and Obedience)
 Typical Topics: Thanksgiving, praise, gratitude
 Loving Service

<>It is this last topic (i.e., loving service) that is often the telltale sign of Christ-centered Preaching. People worry that emphasizing grace undermines obedience. Consistently preaching the necessity and proper _____ for holiness may be the most difficult task evangelical preachers face because we culturally define grace as license rather than as the biblical _____ of holiness. How do we preach grace and still apply the standards of Scripture?

<> Recognize that it is not gracious to neglect the law that reflects God’s character and is the path of safety and blessing he provides for his people in a fallen world.

III. The Nature of Application in Redemptive (i.e., Christ-Centered) Messages

We have previously understood application to require the answering of four questions: 1) What to do? 2) Where to do it? 3) Why to do it (motivation)? 4) How to do it (enablement)? Traditional preaching takes seriously questions one and two; Christ-centered preaching takes as seriously – and equips us to handle – questions three and four (motivation and enablement).

A. Motivation for Application in Christ-centered Preaching

How Does the Bible Motivate Us to be Holy? (i.e., Your theology of change?)

What makes redeemed people more holy, threat of condemnation or promise of grace? It is not a new question as a review of Rom. 6:1 will assure you. Yet the question is debated in every generation of believers.

[Example of Bunyan in prison]

1. The relationship between Compulsion and Conduct

Reason asks, “Why should people be holy if all you do is keep assuring them of grace?” Scripture answers:

John 14:15 “If you love me, you will obey what I command.”

II Cor. 5: 14 “The love of God constrains us . . .”

Most people (and preachers) think the goal of preaching is to get people to do what they don’t want to do. Yet, preaching’s highest aim and greatest power lies in convincing others of the love of God in Christ that makes the heart _____ and _____ to do what God desires. When we know that he delights in us, we desire to please him. Conviction of sin is most necessary, but its aim is not simply to make people feel guilty but to enable them to comprehend the greatness of God’s grace. Grace liberates from sin’s guilt and power by filling God’s people with love for him that makes them willing and able to please him (motivation & enablement).

Westminster Confession (XX. 1; XIX. 6, 7)

The liberty which Christ hath purchased for believers under the Gospel consists in their freedom from the guilt of sin, the condemning wrath of God, the curse of the moral law; and in their being delivered from . . . the dominion of sin . . .; as also, in their free access to God and their yielding obedience to him, not out of a slavish fear, but a child-like love and willing mind.

...(A) man's doing good, and refraining from evil, because the law encourageth to the one and deterreth from the other, is no evidence of his being under the law; and not under grace.

Neither are the forementioned uses of the law contrary to the grace of the Gospel, but do sweetly comply with it; the Spirit of Christ subduing and enabling the will of man to do that freely, and cheerfully, which the will of God, revealed in the law, requireth to be done.

So we need to ask again, “What better leads to true holiness threats of punishment/condemnation or promise of grace?” (Note well Rom 8:1 “There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.”)

2. The relationship between our conduct and God's acceptance

Are we holy _____ God's acceptance?

or

Are we holy _____ God's acceptance?

[My Experience: Preaching obedience but not seeing spiritual health.]

3. The relationship between the imperative and the indicative

The _____ rests on the _____ and the order is not reversible. Who we are in Christ is the basis and power for what we do that pleases God (cf. Deut. 5:5). The indicatives: justified, adopted, sanctified (positional-Rom. 12:1; Heb. 10:14), united to Christ, loved – never more and never less.

No less striking in this respect is Colossians 3:3 ff., where in response to 'For you have died and your life is hid in God,' the command at once resounds: "Put to death therefore your members that are upon the earth: fornication, uncleanness, ' etc. Having once died to Christ does not render superfluous putting to death the members that are upon the earth, but is precisely the great urgent reason for it The imperative is thus founded on the indicative ... it is immediately clear that the imperative rests on the indicative and that this order is not reversible. (H. Ridderbos, *Paul, An Outline of his Theology*, 1975, p 253)

<> In Christ-centered preaching the _____ do not change, but the _____ do as one preaches with a redemptive approach.

Reiterate: “Neither are the forementioned uses of the law contrary to the grace of the Gospel, but do sweetly comply with it; the Spirit of Christ subduing and enabling the will of man to do that freely, and cheerfully, which the will of God, revealed in the law, requireth to be done” (*WCF*, XIX. 7).

<> Our goal in excavating the grace in every passage is not to minimize biblical imperatives but to empower their application with proper motivation and enablement (we are reading *Holiness by Grace* to explore these further).

B. Priorities of Christ-centered Motivation for Application (note order)

1. Love for God

Revealing grace in all the Scriptures is more than an interpretative scheme; it is the chief expository means by which the preacher may provide consistent _____ of the mercy of God in Christ in order to prompt our love for God that is the most powerful motivation for

Christian obedience. Biblical theology should be more about fostering a _____ than promoting/arguing a “science.”

Rom. 12: 1 “I urge you brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God – this is your spiritual act of worship.”

Consistent focus on Christ’s mercy, rather than building up a dread of God, most powerfully motivates and enables Christians in their fight against sin and desire to glorify God.

Titus 2: 11 ff. For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope --the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good. These, then, are the things you should teach.

The joy of the Lord is our strength (Neh. 8:10; *WCF* XX.1).

2. Love for others _____ by God (leads to mission, mercy and service)

“I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me” (Matt. 25:40).

3. Love for self as one _____ by God

- a. Claiming the rights and _____ of our inheritance in Christ
 Grace is bestowed and the relation established by sovereign divine administration. How then are we to construe the conditions of which we have spoken? ...They are simply the reciprocal responses of faith, love and obedience, apart from which the enjoyment of the covenant blessing and of the covenant relation is inconceivable. (John Murray, *The Covenant of Grace*, 1953, rpt. 1988, p. 19).
 - b. Avoidance of the _____ of sin revealed by a _____ God. (If God did not love us, he would not warn us of sin’s consequences. Warnings to believers must be framed in the context of fatherly love.)
 cf. saving discipline (expressed toward us regularly) vs. retributive punishment (inflicted on Christ one for all): We may experience discipline as a result of our sin but, fatherly discipline even when harsh is still an expression of love for a child's welfare (Heb. 12:6).
- ◆ Thus, there are _____ motivations for obedience – e.g., fear of consequences, desire for blessing (i.e., love of self), concern for others (i.e., love of others), and love for God – but since love of God must be the primary motivation in holiness, stimulating such love must be the *primary* and most consistent concern of our preaching in order for our people to have holy power for their obedience. The message of grace is meant to stimulate love for God *and* its compelling power. Biblical Theology enables us to see and expound this grace in all Scripture and, thus, rightly apply the whole counsel of God to our lives.

C. Improper Motivations contrary to the Whole Counsel of God

1. Making _____-promotion or _____-protection the primary motivations of obedience (cf. Rom. 15:1-3; Col. 3:16).

Self-promotion = God as “vending machine in the sky” plugged by our good works (contra. Is. 54:6).

Self protection = God as “ogre in the sky” placated by our good works (contra. Luke 17:10).

J.I. Packer, *Rediscovering Holiness*, p. 75.

The secular world never understands Christian motivation. Faced with the question of what makes Christians tick, unbelievers maintain that Christianity is practiced only out of self-serving purposes. They see Christians as fearing the consequences of not being Christians (religion as fire insurance), or feeling the need of help and support to achieve their goals (religion as crutch), or wishing to sustain a social identity (religions as a badge of respectability). No doubt all of these motivations can be found among the membership of churches: it would be futile to dispute that. But just as a horse brought into a house is not thereby made human, so a self-seeking motivation brought into the church is not thereby made Christian, nor will holiness ever be the right name for religious routines thus motivated. From the plan of salvation I learn that the true driving force for authentic Christian living is, and ever must be, not the hope of gain, but the heart of gratitude.

Heidelberg Catechism Question #86

Question: Since we are redeemed from our sin and its wretched consequences by grace through Christ without any merit of our own, why must we do good works?

Answer: ... [S]o that with our whole life we may show ourselves grateful to God for his goodness and that he may be glorified through us (cf. Rom. 12:1-2; Col. 3:16).

2. Using “slavish” (selfish) fear rather than godly fear as motivation

Not: personal protection from the “ogre in the sky” (contra., “Perfect love drives out fear” - 1 Jn. 4:18; and, he came “to enable us to serve him without fear”- Luke 1:74).

But: proper regard for all God’s attributes = awe and love (cf. Is. 11:2)
{Doctor to child: “I may hurt you, but I’ll not harm you.”}

3. Failing to distinguish objective guilt from subjective guilt as motivation

+subjective guilt = what we feel in grieving the Holy Spirit (conviction)

vs.

+objective guilt = the penalty for past, present and future sin placed on Christ and fully reconciled on the Cross (condemnation)

V. Proper Enablement in Christ-centered Preaching: Answering the How Question

A. The what is the how (we are enabled by knowledge of what is true)

- Knowledge of imperatives. Instructions made known through the explanation of the text, enable us to obey its imperatives.
- Knowledge of our nature (Posse non peccare).
- Confidence in Word and Spirit (The walk of faith-1Jn. 4:4 "Greater is he...")

B. The why is the how (we are enabled by love of God)

1. Love is power

We answer the why question because, when people truly grasp the love of God, they have his strength. The reason that sin has power over us is that we love it. If sin has no attraction to us, then it has no power over us. *How* we undermine the power of sin is by filling the heart with love for Christ; i.e., revealing the grace that is *why* we love him. “The way that you remove the power of anything is by taking away its life source; the life source of sin is our love for it. Take that away and sin has no power” (John Owen, *The Mortification of Sin*, paraphrase).

The way that we diminish love for sin is by displacing it with love for God stimulated by greater understanding of his grace through Christ (e.g., Thomas Chalmer’s, “The Expulsive Power of a New Affection.”)

2. The Power of the Disciplines (to grow in love, not earn it)

- a. To gain knowledge of God’s expectations, provision and nature.

Law Spirit Redeeming

- b. To walk in the faith of our new affections, position and nature.

Love Sonship New Creature

In contrast to bargaining (the earning theory), balancing (the leverage theory) or topping off (the “fill ‘er up” theory) by which disciplines are used to placate or satisfy God through works of sacrificial devotion.

Charles Spurgeon, *Morning*, June, 28 reading

[T]he Holy Spirit turns our eyes entirely away from self: He tells us that we are nothing, but that "Christ is all in all." Remember, therefore, it is not thy hold of Christ that saves thee--it is Christ; it is not thy joy in Christ that saves thee--it is Christ; it is not even faith in Christ, though that be the instrument--it is Christ's blood and merits; therefore, look not so much to thy hand with which thou art grasping Christ, as to Christ...

We shall never find happiness by looking at our prayers, our doings, or our feelings; it is what Jesus is, not what we are, that gives rest to the soul. If we would at once overcome Satan and have peace with God, it must be by "looking unto Jesus."

Keep thine eye simply on Him; let His death, His sufferings, His merits, His glories, His intercession, be fresh upon thy mind; when thou wakest in the morning look to Him; when thou liest down at night look to Him.

Conclusion:

Preach God's provision of grace as the _____ and _____ behind every instruction.

Bottom line of Christ-centered Preaching: Take people away from themselves as the instrument of healing, and teach them from all the Scriptures of the hope they have through God’s grace in Christ that will engender the love that is their power.

Hearing the Application of Redemptive Principles

Goal: To learn how to apply redemptive principles to a sermon by listening to a master preacher do such, and evaluating his message.

During this class we will listen to Dr. Edmund Clowney preach on “David’s Mighty Men.” Then we will discuss his message and what we learn from it.

I. Clowney Message Structures and Lessons

II. Expounding Various Biblical Genres with Christ-centered Lenses

A. Redemptive Truths Evident in Historical Narrative

1. God’s Plan Evident in:
 - Symbol and Sacrament
 - Promise and Deliverance
 - Covenant (unconditional)
 - Engrafting Undeserving
 - Persevering Plan
 - Judgment on Enemies
 - Discipline (not punishment or rejection) of children
 - Faithfulness
 - Preservation of Remnant
 - Typology
 - Order of Events – Exodus before Law, Covenant Love before Obedience, Faithfulness after Disobedience

2. God's Character Evident in:
 - Interaction of God with person or people
 - Behavior of an Individual Representing God
 - Mercy/Power
 - Discipline
 - Promise and Deliverance
 - Salvation by Grace through Faith
3. God's Grace Stated in:
 - Narrator Voice
 - Character Voice
 - Plot Unfolding
 - Other Scripture Use of Event

B. Redemptive Truths Evident in Gospels

1. Provision of Messiah in character and activity
2. Proof of Jesus' Messiah status in:
 - a) prophetic fulfillment
 - b) character
 - c) wisdom
 - d) authority
 - e) divinity
 - f) power (over physical realm, human realm, spiritual realm)
3. Fulfillment and Futility of Law
4. Provision for Covenant People (Undeserving)
 - a) present
 - b) future
5. Grafting of new Covenant People (Undeserving)

C. Redemptive Truth Evident in Epistles

Statement

1. Plain Statement of Grace (e.g., Eph. 2:8-9)
 - Loved before our Love
 - Saved by Grace
 - Justified by Blood
 - Enabled by Spirit
 - Motivated by Gratitude and Joy

Context

2. Obedience/Devotion flowing from (not into) Relationship (e.g., Rom.12:1)

Key Terms

3. Identification by Activity of Grace
 - a) “In Christ”
 - b) “Called out ones” – ecclesia
 - c) Reflection of historical redemptive themes (see narrative section above)
 - d) Propitiation, Expiation, Adoption (sons, children, household)
 - e) Sanctified, justified (“saints” = ‘agion)

D. Redemptive Truth Evident in Poetry and Wisdom Lit (Esp. Psalms)

Key: Is to read the whole, not just phrase on phrase

1. Response to, or Journey to, Understanding of:
 - Mighty Acts of God
 - Faithfulness of God
 - Love of God
 - No Hope/Answer but God
 - Forgiveness of God
 - Deliverance of God
 - Covenant of God
 - Rock and Redeemer
2. Plain Statement of Divine Deliverance
3. Provision of Saving/Sanctifying Wisdom
4. Promise of Future for People/Destruction of Enemies
5. Messianic Indications

E. Redemptive Truths Evident in Prophecy

1. Provision of Messiah/Kingdom
2. Destruction of Enemies
3. Sanctification of Covenant People
4. Union of Covenant People with God (Re-union with each other)
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Exploring New Forms

"Everything you've had before plus more"

I. The Tug-of-War in Homiletics

Should we ...?

A. Establish a Biblical Principle and Apply It to Particular Situations

Traditional Homiletics = *Deductive* Movement: Universal Principle → Particular

Advantages:

1. Begins with the Bible
2. Leads through logical proof and exegetical development
3. Anchors application in biblical authority

Potential Disadvantages:

1. Abstraction (dry, academic, boring – especially if illustration and application shortchanged)
2. Disconnection from culture unaccustomed to Biblical authority or logical proofs
3. Inattention to communication and application

B. Identify a Particular Situation and Apply a Biblical Principle

The “New Homiletic” = *Inductive* Movement: Particular → Universal Principle

Advantages:

1. Begins with the Identifiable (narrative, visual, involving)
2. Leads through common experience (congregational exegesis)
3. Connects biblical principles to application

Potential Disadvantages:

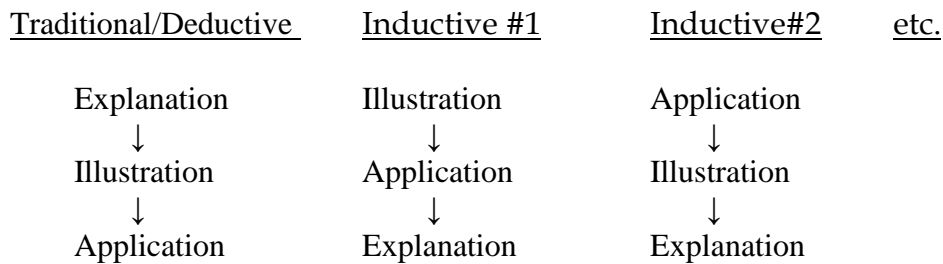
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2. Bases truth on human experience (Narrative theory roots)
3. Inattention to exegesis (furthering biblical illiteracy and the inability to think about one's world in biblical ways)

II. Healthy Homiletic Alternatives (you already have the tools ...)

A. Ask Questions (leading listeners to principles which are delayed in statement to allow involvement and disarm resistance)

1. Implied propositions: created by Introduction (e.g., Woman coming into office wanting to marry a non-believer. What would you say? What does the Bible say?)
2. Implied main points: created in transitions to allow the development of a main point principle (e.g., If you were God, how would you treat Gideon who made an idol of divine blessings? Delayed answer/principle: God’s grace is great enough to provide peace to traitors.

B. Shuffle the Order



C. Vary the Proportions

	<u>#1</u>	<u>#2</u>	<u>#3</u>	<u>#4</u>
Illustration	1/3	1/4	none	1/4
Application	1/3	1/2	3/4	sentence
Explanation	1/3	1/4	1/4	3/4

D. Tell a Story

1. Commented Re-telling
 - a. Tell a little bit
 - b. Explain details (history, culture, event significance, etc.)
 - c. Extract a biblical principle
 - d. Apply the biblical principle
 - e. Tell a little bit more ... (repeat b-d)

2. Contemporary Re-telling (with moral = parable approach)
 - a. Tell the story in modern terms and/or contexts (e.g. Prodigal son as a drug addict)
 - b. Tell the story dramatically
 - Vivid description and emotion
 - First person narrative (tell the story from the perspective of one of the characters, assuming the personae of the character; e.g. one of the shepherds who heard the angels announce Christ's birth)

Beware of the danger of mere “moralizing”

3. Create a “Homiletical Plot” (E. Lowry)

A story (or an entire sermon) that reflects this development creates an identifiable experience, then upsets the equilibrium (oops!), analyzes the discrepancy (ugh!), discloses the clue to resolution (aha!), experiences the gospel (whee!), and anticipates the consequences (yeah!).

- E. Move Sideways (possible for the sermon as a whole, or a single main point)

1. Human Situation → complication → resolution → implic./application
2. Biblical narrative → difficulty → Gospel resolution → implic./applic.
3. Proposition/Concept → challenge → Gospel resolution → implic./applic.

◇ The basic plot always: Christ comes to the rescue

- F. Remember Your Purpose

1. Challenge the informed
2. Reach the uninformed and resistant
3. Provide Gospel hope to all

IV. Categories of Additional Outlines

- A. Sequential or Chronological
- B. Biographical (time or event oriented)
- C. Picturesque or Allegorical
- D. Thematic/Topical (e.g., looking at a single theme in a number of passages)
- E. Problem/Solution Variations

	<u>Problem/Solution</u>	<u>Need/Plan</u>	<u>Plan/Motivation</u> (Comp. Adv.s)
	Intro Introduces Problem	Intro Creates Need	Intro Establishes Problem, Need & Plan
M.P. 1	Problem Proof	Plan Plank # 1	Motivation or Adv. # 1
M.P. 2	Solution	Plan Plank # 2	Motivation or Adv. # 2
M.P. 3	Evidence/Results	Plan Plank # 3	Motivation or Adv. # 3
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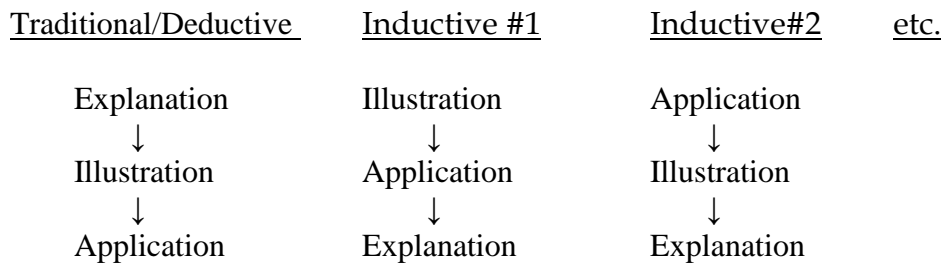
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Hearing the Application of Redemptive Principles

In this lesson we will listen to Edmund Clowney. You are preaching on narratives. When you are in narrative passages, you exegete truth from stated and also exhibited truths. You are looking at a narrative and determining the principles that are there. Remember that you should principalize the text rather than just chronicalize it. You are asking what principles are there. Those principles may be from something stated, but they also may be from something exhibited. You will begin to see as we progress through Clowney's message that much of what we have talked about in terms of illustrations being effective is also what happens in narratives. You will have descriptions of time, place, people, situations, or plot developments. All of those things are communicating in some way. We will hear how Clowney uses the aspects of the narrative to build what he is saying. We will also hear that on occasion in dialogue, in the way that one character speaks to another or even the way the narrator speaks to the reader is significant. There are ways we use illustrations to make points that you will now see in biblical narratives. They are doing very similar things. Clowney is great at retelling the story in contemporary terms so that we see the truth. I will point out some of these things as we listen to Clowney.

I am not asking you to follow Clowney's method. We will still have main points and subpoints from the text. We will still have explanation, illustration, and application, or some version of that. For much of his ministry, Clowney was the voice crying in the desert. He was the first major theologian in Reformed American circles to talk about the redemptive-historical method. He thought that for much of his career no one heard him. Later in his life, particularly when he hooked with Tim Keller and John Sanderson, who was a student of his, things began to multiply. One of the reasons it struggled was that even though Clowney could exhibit the redemptive-historical method in amazing and wonderful ways, there was not a homiletical method that was easy to follow. You will discover that when you listen to his message. Regardless of what method you follow, you must still have organization and unity. We are going to follow the broad strokes of Clowney, but I am not asking you to follow his method. Listen for the principles in his message.

Let us start listening to Clowney's message. I will stop it frequently and make observations as we go.

I would like to talk with you tonight about a very important word from the Old Testament, the word devotion. It is a word that is often used in the context of the love of God for His people in the Old Testament. It is a word that is translated "lovingkindness." It is the Hebrew word *chesed*. Of course, on academic occasions you have permission to use the Hebrew word to make that clear, but on no other occasion. On an academic occasion like this, however, we can bring in a Hebrew word. The word is *chesed*. It is a good idea to get used to that word because there is not an English word that is an exact equivalent. "Lovingkindness" does not quite give the precise meaning. I want you to think about that word, and maybe we will get a little better understanding of it as we reflect on it together in the Scriptures.

That was an introduction. What is this message going to be about? It is going to be about *chesed*, with the English word being “lovingkindness” or the word he used the most, which was “devotion.” He told us what he was going to be talking about. We get the theme announced, the unifying concept of the message, as it begins to unfold.

In order to understand the word a little better, I would like to read a passage from the Word of God. It is a passage in which the word does not occur. Nevertheless, it is a passage that will help us understand the word. It is found in the twenty-third chapter of 2 Samuel, beginning with verse 13. This is 2 Samuel 23:13-17: “And three of the 30 chief men went down and came to David in the harvest time unto the cave of Adullam. And the troop of the Philistines was encamped in the valley of Rephaim. And David was then in the stronghold and the garrison of the Philistines was then in Bethlehem. And David longed and said, ‘O that one would give me water to drink of the well of Bethlehem which is by the gate!’ And the three mighty men broke through the host of the Philistines and drew water out of the well of Bethlehem that was by the gate and took it and brought it to David. But he would not drink thereof, but poured it out unto the Lord. And he said, ‘Be it far from me, O Lord, that I should do this. Shall I drink the blood of the men that went in jeopardy of their lives?’ Therefore he would not drink it. These things did the three mighty men.”

I think it is clear to you that here is a passage that describes for us the devotion that David’s men had for him. It is a passage that also shows us the devotion that David had for the Lord.

Now we have his organizational scheme. He said this passage is about two things. First it is about the devotion of David’s men to David. So first of all it is about the devotion of men to man. He said the other thing it is about is the devotion of David to the Lord, the devotion of man to God. Even though it went by quickly, that is his organizational scheme for what is going to happen. We are going to follow that organizational scheme as we go.

In this passage, there is a gift of devotion that is brought to the king. There is also a gift of devotion that the king offers in his devotion to the Lord. I want to think with you about this matter of devotion, for the term *chesed* means, to begin with, something like “loyalty.” It is the kind of term that could describe tribal loyalty.

Whenever you start something by saying, “The meaning of the term is,” what form of argument are you doing? What are you doing with your terms? You are simply defining them. To define what *chesed* is, we now have an argument that is proceeding by the form of definition.

Let me give you the big picture for this lesson. First we are going to hear Clowney preach a very traditional message. Then he is going to tell us why it is not redemptive. Then he will move back across it. It is a great message to hear what redemptive versus non-redemptive messages will be like. We are going to try to get his scheme in front of us. Here is what he is going to try to do. He is going to retell this story, and he is going to say, “Here is what *chesed* was like back then. Here

is what it would be like in contemporary terms.” He will give positive and negative points for both. He is not just going to speak in terms of then and now, but he is also going to give negative and positive examples. He is going to give a long explanation that is definition by retelling the story. The definition is what *chesed* is, what biblical devotion is. He already gave you one example. He already said that *chesed* is like tribal loyalty. That is an understanding that is removed from us culturally. He will have to bring that closer. Listen for how he does it, because he is really a master.

It is the sort of thing that we encounter in our civilization mostly in the sports world. Here [in Saint Louis, MO] you have the team known as the Cardinals. In Philadelphia we have the team known as the Phillies. Obviously, if the Phillies become the champions, they will earn it by seniority. They are called the “Wheeze Kids.” The Philadelphia Phillies demand loyalty of their fans. It is not enough to be mildly loyal. You are supposed to be a fanatic. You see this in the sports world. We have much of that in the United States, but in England it is worse. They tear down the stands at soccer matches in Liverpool. There has to be this intense loyalty for a team. We have some understanding of it there in a strange kind of caricature in modern life. It could also be said, however, that there is more patriotism around these days than in earlier times. So maybe there is a little loyalty also to our country. There is loyalty to America. Around the world, nationalism certainly expresses the loyalty of men for which they are willing to live and die. You see there is a loyalty that can be carried to the pitch of devotion.

That is what you find in these men that were with David. We are not sure just what period this was in the life of David. Perhaps it was in the time after the death of Saul.

All he has done so far is say that loyalty you might know, but it is *chesed* that we are talking about. Devotion might be something that is tribal, but we can compare it to sports and compare it to patriotism. Yet actually we are talking about David’s men. Now we are going to ask what devotion looks like among David’s men. To make us understand that, he will use many of the same patterns. He will begin to tell us the narrative. What is the time of this? David is out in the desert. Saul’s troops are out after him. He begins to describe time, place, people, and situations. Listen to him for a while, because it is all going to be “back there” somewhere. Then listen to how he comes into our reality. He helps us understand how that would be understood in today’s terms.

It was during the period the period before David had begun his wars against the Philistines. In any event, David is out in the wilderness, in his old haunts where he had been when he was hiding from King Saul. He is beginning to rally men to him there in the desert. He is at a strong point in the desert. Men are coming to volunteer for his cause. Among them there are these three men.

The passage that I read is not given to us in Scripture at the time that it happened. It is given where we have a kind of recap of David’s mighty men. We are given the account of

the knights of David's "round table," those who had done great exploits in the service of David. We are told that these men came to David as volunteers out in the desert, and when they came these three men heard David say on one hot afternoon, "O, that somebody would get me a drink of water from the well in Bethlehem." David was only expressing a wish here. Even the form of the language makes that clear. The three men, however, hear him, and they are loyal. They have *chesed* with respect to the Lord's anointed, with respect to the king, David. They hear him say, "I would like a drink of water from the well in Bethlehem." So one of them said to the other, "You heard what the chief said?" "Yes, I heard him." "He wants water from the well of Bethlehem." The other fellow said, "Let us get it." He puts on his sword. They get a clay pot. They go to get the water.

The problem is that Bethlehem is in a town that is now occupied by the Philistines. When David said he wished he had water from the well of Bethlehem, he was wishing for something that seems completely unattainable. It is a garrison city of the Philistines. He cannot get water from Bethlehem. I do not know what David was thinking about when he wanted to have that water. I do not know if it was nostalgia. You know that Bethlehem was his hometown. He knew the well, and he had often had a drink there.

All he is talking about is David wanting a drink from Bethlehem. It is all David's experience. He has already done something to help us better understand the situation. He said that David's men are like the Knights of the Round Table. We get something tied to our experience more. Listen to how he is going to push everything, including taste, smell, feeling, and sentiment, in order to make us understand what this ancient account is about.

Maybe he liked the water. Some of you are nostalgic about a spring from the land of your youth. Since I was raised in Philadelphia, I get nostalgia only when I go to swimming pools because only there do you get the chlorine density that filled Philadelphia water. Nevertheless, there are some people who are quite nostalgic. Maybe they had great water in that well in Bethlehem. Then, maybe he really wanted to taste some of it.

I do not think, however, that it was only nostalgia, if it was that. I think it is an expression of David's longing. He is the Lord's anointed. He knows that God has made him to be king over all the land. Here he is, God's king, but he cannot even control his own hometown. He cannot even go to the well of his own hometown to get a drink of water. It did not mean that they did not have any water where David was. They could not have had a strong point without some source of water. On that hot afternoon, however, when David was thirsty, he was saying in his heart, "O Lord, when will I prevail? When will your promises be sealed to me? When will I be able to go again to Bethlehem and drink the water from that familiar well by the gate of Bethlehem?"

By now, however, the three men are on their errand. They are heading out across the desert. They have to go to Bethlehem. I do not know how the Philistine army was

organized. I do not know where they had the first line of defense or where there were people on guard or on watch duty. We know, however, that they had to break through the host of the Philistines. At some point their approach was noted. At some point they had to begin fighting. By battle they had to make their way. Perhaps they broke through one line and then went running up the road that led to Bethlehem. They had to go right to the gate of Bethlehem. The gate was always the command post of an ancient city. That is where the generals would be. That is where the captains of the host would be assembled, near the well in Bethlehem. It is roughly analogous to saying, "Go get me a drink of water from the cooler in the Kremlin." It is not out on the periphery somewhere. It is all the way in. They had to go fight their way in to get to the well of Bethlehem. I do not know whether they pulled up the water or whether some woman drew the water for them as they fought off Philistines. Yet they got the water. Then with the water in their possession, they had to get out again. I expect they had to fight their way out as well as fight their way in. At last they were clear of the Philistines and going back across the desert. Perhaps that was the most difficult part of all, the last miles carrying that water without drinking it after all that fighting. Yet they had the water, and they brought it back, and they came to David.

They said, "Chief, you said you would like a little water from the well in Bethlehem. Well, here it is. We got it for you. Here it is." Then David did something that distresses some of the commentators. David took the water, and he poured it out on the ground—all of it. There was a little wet space in the sand. Then the sun came out, and it was a little dry space.

That is so simple, but it is so effective. Can you not see it in your mind's eye? First there is a little wet spot. Then after the desert sun there is a little dry spot. All he had in the text was that David poured out the water. Yet he wanted you to feel what that was like. What are other things he did to engage your present understanding of this Old Testament account? What are some other things he did to bring it in close? He does much rephrasing. In his retelling, he also rephrases things outside the biblical language so you can understand. He also fills in the action. They fought in and they fought out. He really is a master. I listen to him sometimes and think, "The Bible does not say that." Yet he usually says, "I imagine," or "I do not know, but." He fills in necessary details. In other words, in order for the account to have happened, something like that would have had to happen. If he merely filled in the gaps, by saying something like, "They met a woman there, and she said this," then we would say, "It does not say that." Yet it is creative storytelling within limits. It may be near the boundaries sometimes, but it is probably within limits.

What are other things he does to engage you? When he is retelling the story, what are thing he does to say what it means in our time? By the way, this was from the 1982 graduation ceremony here at Covenant Theological Seminary. I suppose the Phillies and Cardinals were in some kind of pennant race at the time. There was also the dialogue: "The chief wants some water; he does. Let us get him some." Those words are not in Scripture, but they had to say something to one another that reflected that. So Clowney retells the story in a way that engages us. All we are

doing right now is asking what devotion looks like. What is the definition of devotion, and how do we see it exemplified or exhibited in this passage? That is all we have done so far.

Those men, at the risk of their lives, had got David that water he wanted to drink so much. Yet when they brought it to him, he would not drink it. How thoughtless David was! Well, you know better than that. It was not thoughtless at all. David did exactly the right thing. Why? It was because David said, “Men, I do not deserve this. This is not just water. This is, as it were, your blood. You put your lives on the line to get this water for me. I cannot take it from you and drink it just like that. David said, “There is only one thing that I can do with this water. I can only give it to God. It is too holy for any other use.”

What wonderful tact David had. What wonderful understanding he had. What a wonderful leader among men he was. What a wonderful king among God’s covenant he was. You see what he did. He saw that this was not his right. He saw that this was not something he could take for granted, the kind of loyalty that these men had shown. He saw that this was God’s work in their hearts and in their lives. Therefore he wanted to give it back to God, from whom it had come. It is a wonderful lesson in leadership.

Is not David a great guy? Is not David a wonderful leader and example? Do you not just wish that you could only be like David? Be careful. You are being led down the primrose path, and he knows exactly what he is doing. As he does it, he begins to give us application. He said, “Here is what such devotion would look like in leadership.” He begins to apply it to various forms of leadership. So far everyone is nodding their head. You see devotion. That is what you should be. That is what David was. Therefore we should be leaders just like this. Now he is going to apply the various places in which such leadership should be.

Think of the strength of this. It is instructional. We have a principle of the devotion of sacrificial leadership. We have a devotion to work from. Now we are going to get situational specificity as well. He is going to tell us where you should apply this. In terms of the four questions of application, he is doing great on the first two. Listen to how it unfolds. Regarding what to do and where to do it, he will be very clear.

You young men are preparing to be ministers of the Gospel. All of you, whether that is your purpose or some other form of leadership in the church of Jesus Christ, others will honor you for the work in which you are engaged. Particularly those of you who may be called to the ministry of the Gospel, the members of your congregation will show to you often great devotion. You must, like David, receive that for what it is—devotion given to you in the name of the Lord. Therefore it is devotion to God. You must receive that gift of their devotion, and you must offer it to God in devotion to Him. Remember that is what the apostle Paul did in the letter to the Philippians. The Philippians had sent him a gift. You remember that the apostle Paul said that the gift they had sent was like “an odor of a sweet smell, a sacrifice well pleasing to God.”

So when people serve you, you should recognize that it is ultimately service to God. Devotion to God means accepting human service as ultimately what is being offered to God's honor. These are good universal truths. These principles are fine.

Beware of the Jim Jones mentality. If you are thinking, "Of course people will be devoted to me," beware of thinking that you deserve to be treated with great respect and great sacrifice on the part of other people. For what is it that binds the church of Jesus Christ together? It is this kind of *chesed*. It is this kind of loyalty that its members have to one another and to their leaders. Their leaders must also have it to them. There are some people around who are so ready to serve, so ready to show real devotion, that you have to be careful what you say in front of them. Do you know some friends like that? You say you want something, and they will just go get it. They are like David's mighty men.

If it were not for people like that, the ministry of the church would never go forward. Do not think the ministry of the church really goes forward because so many ministers have learned the art of arm-twisting. Do not think that the church goes forward because people can be cajoled or brow-beaten into doing the things that they have to do if the work is to get done. No, what brings the work of the church forward is devotion. It is *chesed*. It is people who show that kind of dedication. It is the kind of people around who are always ready to go and get water from that well.

Some of you may know that movement that is spoken of as the Washington Fellowship movement. It is a movement that has majored in that very quality. They are men who meet together for breakfast once a week and pray together and share with one another and become accountable to one another in their Christian lives. Men in those groups are ready to do anything for their brothers, to drop anything, to go anywhere, to make any sacrifice for one of their brothers for whom they pray every week. That is a good example to all of us. We must show the attitude of David's mighty men.

Now it is not just be like David, it is also be like his mighty men. Again, these are not wrong messages in themselves. They are wrong messages by themselves. We have nothing to criticize here. You certainly do not want to be a selfish leader or a selfish person.

When that attitude is shown, then it has to be received in this same spirit. For how sad it is when you do find the attitude among Christian leaders who think that they have everything coming to them. When you bring some Christian leaders water from Bethlehem, they say, "Where is the ice?" You never can do enough. No matter how well you try to serve them, there is always a criticism. There is always something you did not do right. Christian parents, beware of that attitude. Sometimes we are so critical of our children that even when they do something for us we only can criticize the way they did it instead of realizing what they were trying to do to serve us. What tact, what wisdom David shows, for he takes their devotion, and he offers it to God.

Is not David a great guy? Look again at 2 Samuel 23. He is going to take you somewhere that is

important if you were only going to say, “Be like David.”

Of course in doing that, David is also claiming God’s own promise. He wanted the water from Bethlehem because he wanted the sign of the victory that God had promised to give him. If by God’s power three men can go through the whole Philistine army, then he knows that God is going to give him the victory. That water from Bethlehem becomes a pledge of the victory that David knows will be granted to him by God.

When we look at the devotion of David’s men to him, and when we look at the devotion of David to the Lord, we are tremendously impressed by that bond of *chesed* that ties together the people of God’s covenant.

He has said it again. “My subject is devotion. We have been tremendously impressed by the devotion of men to man. And we have been tremendously impressed by the devotion of men to God.” That is what the account says, and it certainly has moved us.

Yet we are also drawn to something else. We are drawn to the fact that it is God who redeems His promise to David. We are drawn to an amazing truth that the word *chesed*, although it does mean loyalty, and it does mean devotion, is used in the Old Testament scarcely at all about the devotion of men to men, nor even of the devotion of men to God. The Hasidic group of the Jews uses this term today to describe themselves as the devoted ones. In the Old Testament, however, this term is used almost exclusively for the devotion of God to men.

Think about that. God had promised David victory. It was the Lord who gave David water from Bethlehem. It was God’s faithfulness to David that gave him men like that and gave the men the ability to break through the host of the Philistines and give to David the water from Bethlehem. David, the Lord’s anointed, knew the *chesed*, the lovingkindness, of God.

I would like to read to you a few verses from the end of this chapter. Be patient with me. It may seem a little strange, but listen to these verses. “Hezro the Carmelite, Paarai the Arbite, Igal the son of Nathan of Zobah, Bani the Gadite, Zelek the Ammonite, Naharai the Beerothite, armor bearers to Joab the son of Zeruiah, Ira the Ithrite, Gareb the Ithrite, Uriah the Hittite; thirty and seven in all.” This chapter about David’s mighty men, this chapter about the men that were devoted to David and were ready to lay down their lives for him, this chapter closes with this list of 37 mighty men, 37 devoted ones, 37 heroes of David’s army. The last one to be named is Uriah the Hittite.

You know who that was, for later, when David was well established in his kingdom and had the luxury of remaining back in Jerusalem while his army was in the field, you remember that David saw Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah the Hittite, and he lusted after her and had her brought to him. Then when he learned that Bathsheba had conceived of that

union, David did that despicable thing. Do you remember what he did? He had Uriah brought back from the army, assuming that Uriah would go home and sleep with his beautiful wife. Yet Uriah did not do it. He stayed in the palace. Why? It was because of his *chesed*, because of his devotion to David. He was a soldier on service. David had brought him back from the army. He did not know what the chief had in mind, but he was loyal. He would not go home because he was on duty. When David saw that that was his determined purpose, he sent him back to the army with a message to Joab to put him in the front of the battle and to retire from him so that he died. Joab did what David requested. So that his own generalship would not be criticized later when he described the maneuver, he added the sentence, “Your servant Uriah is dead also.” David murdered Uriah.

So David is not such a good guy. Would David say, “Be like David?” There are certain aspects of his life that are exemplary. Yet there are certain aspects of his life where God surely must rescue him. The story is not complete until the rescue is fully known.

Friends, why do we have this account from the Old Testament? This account shows us God’s faithfulness to David. This account tells us so frankly, so starkly, of David’s unfaithfulness to God, David’s breach of *chesed*. For David, who could show such sympathy and understanding when he poured out that water rather than drink it, that same David could have another man just like that—maybe Uriah was one of the three—he was ready to have one of his mighty men murdered so that he could have his quiet life. Why does the Word of God give us this? You know why.

This is absolutely critical. He is asking the key question. Why is this really here? It is not just to say, “Be like David.” Why is it here?

It is because the Old Testament narratives of God’s dealings with Israel are leading us forward to the great work of salvation that God would do when He sent His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, into the world. We are given that image of the kingship under David in order that we might be prepared to know Him who is God’s true Anointed, Jesus Christ. We may praise God tonight, my friends, if we have that picture, that incident from the life of David, to remind us of Jesus Christ, of the King that we have. For we are not called to make our earthly loyalties ultimate. We see the danger of a nationalism that is utter devotion. We see the danger that comes when men are totally devoted to another man. There is only One who deserves our ultimate devotion. That One is the God-man, Jesus Christ.

It is sweet that at the end of that account of David’s mighty man you have the name of Uriah. You marvel at that. It is a skilled biblical writer who has written that material in that way. It is the cherry on top to tell you what to look for. Let me ask you, however, if Uriah had not been mentioned at the end of the message like that, could you still have preached this message redemptively? There is not always going to be the cherry on top. If you had the narrative but not the listing of names with Uriah at the bottom, could you have preached this passage

redemptively? What would have been ways to do that?

You still know how the story of David is going to go. You still know that David is going to fail. His children are going to fail. At the end of his life, he is going to number his troops in a step of arrogance. Nothing in interpreting this passage says that you have to suddenly go blind to the rest of David's life. To interpret this passage apart from David's life is not truly to interpret it. It has a context within the life of David. That is near context. If we were doing micro redemptive-historical method, we would say that we understand that David is not the ultimate leader.

Even though David is not the ultimate leader, what promises have come to David? He is going to have an eternal kingdom. He is going to sit on the throne forever, and his progeny will. We know all the awful things about David, and still we know, despite his unfaithfulness, even to the people who have been so good to him, his own people, God is still going to be faithful to David. That is expanding things a little further. That is taking the redemptive-historical method further out. The redemptive-historical method lets us offer another way that God is showing his grace to David.

What else could I do? Could I extend further? I could go backward as well as forward. David is a chapter in the life of the covenant people that is much more extensive. That covenant-keeping God is again the hero of the text, despite David's failures here. Clowney used the language that "this account is leading us forward to a greater King." That is very familiar language. God provided His king in this covenant succession. Yet this account is leading us forward to the need of a greater king.

Quite often when I am preaching on Old Testament narratives, I will say something like, "Here is grace in Old Testament clothes." There is some way that God is acting that is showing us His nature in this account. We know that about David. Does David lose his kingship because of his affair with Bathsheba and his murder of Uriah? No. God still maintains his promise.

Are there other ways we could go? There are cues throughout the passage. What if you had not told the whole account? David is outside his own home city, which is Bethlehem. Without leapfrogging to Golgotha, is it significant that the Lord's anointed is not able to get into his own hometown? How is he ultimately going to get into his own hometown and rule over it? God is going to have to provide it for him. The king of Israel is outside, and he cannot do it. God has to act on David's behalf.

I want to say there are different ways of doing this. You could use the macro interpretation. You could also come in much closer. You could say there may be things here that show me the grace principles and patterns most fully represented in the grace of Christ. Yet what grace principles can be seen here as well?

You may be asking how to identify grace principles and patterns in different types of biblical genre. We have looked at narrative and recognized the problem of saying, "Be like David." How do you begin to see grace in other forms of biblical material? You can expound various

biblical genres with Christ-centered lenses.

How are redemptive truths evident in historical narratives? God's plan may be evident in historical narratives in various ways—symbol and sacrament, promise leading to deliverance, an unconditional covenant being established, and engrafting of the undeserving, such as Ruth or Rahab. There are various ways in which God's plan is exposed in biblical narrative. God's character may be evident in some way in the biblical passage. It may be through His interaction with His people or through the behavior of some individual representing God. God's grace may be stated in some way in a biblical narrative. Maybe the narrative will say it or a character within the story, or it may just be the way the plot unfolds that shows that God will be gracious to the undeserving.

How are redemptive truths evident in the Gospels? It is identifying how Christ is being presented to His people and the role of that particular narrative in the Gospel passages. As a reminder, sometimes the miracles serve as proofs of Christ's authority or identity rather than a promise of repetition for all people for all time.

How are redemptive truths evident in the epistles? It may be by statements, by context, or even by key terms that are used. Sometimes the epistles will have key terms, the most key of which is "in Christ." That is the union with Christ terminology. There are also all the doctrinal terms that you are familiar with.

How are redemptive truths evident in poetry and wisdom literature? Candidly, that is the most difficult. Where it is simple instruction, such as "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is older he will not depart from it," you may ask, "Where is redemptive truth there?" The way you begin to see it is to recognize that you have to read the redemptive truth from the whole of a wisdom genre, not just from individual verses. Redemptive truth is often a response to or a journey to an understanding of God's mighty acts, His faithfulness, His love, or His wisdom. Redemptive truth in prophecy is more obvious in terms of the prophecy when it deals with God's provision through Christ.

I am going through that quickly, because I recognize that if I went through it in detail it would not stick. You are going to have to work through and preach those passages. You may have to work through it with some reference material in order to see it.

In this course, we are still going to do main points and subpoints from the text. We are still going to ask what in that account is proving that principle you just said. That is not going to change. Main points have to be from that text, and the subpoints that you are establishing have to be exhibited or stated in that passage. We will still have an illustration for every main point. The narrative itself may serve as the illustration. If you retell that portion of the narrative, then it is possible that the narrative itself can serve as the illustration. There still has to be an illustration for every main point. We are still going to rain down key terms from these principles in the main points and subpoints to the illustrations. We do that because we have to apply these things. These truths ultimately have to be applied.

We are concerned in this course that you answer all four questions of application. The questions what to do and where to do it are still necessary. Ultimately, however, are you motivating through these grace principles that you are discerning in the text? Are you creating love for God that is the motivation for following these instructions? The more difficult question, which you will probably wrestle with for the rest of your life, is how do people do what they are told to do? You want to create the love that is the power. Do you remember “The Expulsive Power of a New Affection”? To build love for Christ that undermines the attraction of sin is the goal. If it does not attract you, it has no power over you. There are other things as well. There are practical suggestions of accountability and Christian disciplines. Even those, however, are about building love for Christ, or they actually destroy true godliness. If they are just about earning merit with God, then they actually destroy faithfulness. What I am doing with these practical means of following God is learning to love Him more.

There are things that I hope you leave with from these lessons. If you get the first one alone, I will be happy. God is the hero of every text. Gideon is not the hero. Joshua is not the hero. David is not the hero. Ultimately God is the hero. The text points to the rescue that God provides. Somehow that is occurring. The reason we started with fallen condition focus (FCF) at the beginning of Preparation and Delivery of Sermons is because if you really identify the burden of the text, the fallenness that requires the truth, then divine solutions must be given. By dealing with an FCF, you will always force yourself to bring God to the rescue. Redemptive truth has to follow from what you are doing.

As you begin to look for redemptive truth, use the two lenses. What does this tell me about God, and what does it tell me about me? What does the life of David tell you about God? He is amazingly patient, faithful, covenant keeping, and true to His promises. All of those things you know about God He ultimately provides for those who deserve none of it. What do we learn about ourselves? Even the best of us can be guilty of horrible betrayal of God. I learn about myself, and I learn about God.

I learn about the “deadly be’s.” I preach these things and still sometimes I walk away from a sermon and say, “What did I just do? All I did was tell them to straighten up and fly right.” At least we have a tool to determine when we do that. At least when I walk away I can recognize it for its error. If it was only moral instruction, then I recognize that is insufficient for a minister of the Gospel. People are Swiss cheese. They have holes in them. Are you going to tell them that simply doing better things will fill the hole? Ultimately it has to be the work of God. That work of God will be revealed as you begin to look in passages for these grace principles. How is God’s grace displayed here? It is ultimately revealed in Christ, but even here, how am I seeing it displayed? What changes you, and changes your preaching, is when you begin to recognize that if you have begun with that FCF, the burden of the text, what the people are struggling with, then your goal in preaching is to take truth to struggle. That is where you begin to become a physician of souls that is so beautiful to your own heart. You are taking truth to struggle, not just heaping more information or more behavior responsibility on people. I am actually bringing the grace of God into their lives by dealing with that hope that they need. The common denominator of all great preaching is that it is about hope. It is giving people hope. If

that is what we are doing, even though we struggle with particular passages, if our aim is to give people hope in their fallenness, then the struggle is well worth it. Your preaching will become a beautiful thing.

What you often find in those who are extreme followers of Vos is such an emphasis on the “why” and the “how” that the “what” and the “where” fall away. There is no instruction. To give instruction is looked down on. The other side of that is straight legalism in which the “why” and the “how” fall away and all we get is “what” and “where.” What I think is the true Calvinist tradition is to say that the Law does not fall away. The Law is the safe path. It is the path not only of God’s glory but also of good for us. What makes us not only walk down the path but also not stray from it is love for Christ. If you ask how to live out love for Christ, we can answer that if you love Him then you will keep His commands. It is glorious to Him and good for us, just as loving my wife faithfully is good for me. I want us to keep both sides together. We do not want to say “law or Gospel,” but rather there is Gospel motivation for what glorifies God and brings us good. It is not ignoring “why” and “how” that would indicate if I do good then God will love me more or make my life better. That is making the Law conditional or God’s love conditional upon your obeying the Law. That is how most people live. I am weighing in against that while weighing in against antinomianism at the same time.

To what extent does the FCF have to come from the text? The wording of the FCF does not have to come from the text at all. Yet the meaning of the FCF has to be derived from the text. There must be something in the text or context that says why it was written. What was going wrong? What was amiss? What was the burden of the writer? That must at least be determined by the text or its context. You must be able to prove that the ultimate meaning of the FCF is there in the text or context. Yet you can word it 1000 different ways. It is just as we talk about with a proposition. You can word a proposition 1000 different ways, but you have to be able to prove that the proposition is in the text. You have to be able to prove the FCF is actually what the biblical writer had in mind. That in itself is an exegetical task. In any given narrative, there are multiple possibilities for the FCF. The hermeneutics professors talk about a difference between meaning and significance. Meaning does not change, but its significance could have many categories. As I consider the FCF of a passage, I may say, “This passage is meant to deal with peoples’ distrust of the love of God.” That is one possibility. Then I have to consider how I will approach that pastorally. There could be multiple wordings of the FCF that deal with the significance of the truth that is there. I still have to be able to prove that it was the concern of the biblical writer. That basic meaning question cannot vary and still be true to the text.

I stopped playing the brief remainder of Clowney’s message because he simply goes back over his applications and reapplies them redemptively. How do you keep from tacking on the redemptive message? Or worse, how do you keep from doing what Clowney did every week? If you did it every week, then people would just wait for the ironic twist. It is the recognition that there are different legitimate strategies. Sometimes we will say that if Christ has provided His grace for you then what are the implications? So we may lay the grace foundations at the beginning. Other times we will build a case all the way through. What else did God do? What else did God do? What else did God do? Other times we may try Clowney’s method. Here are all

these things you must do, but let me tell you something. If your heart is not right with the Lord, you have absolutely no chance. Therefore I have to tell you what makes your heart right with God, and that gives hope. I will say that a “tack on” is better than none at all. Yet Clowney’s “tack-on” was strategic. He wanted to lead us to where the impact would be the greatest. If your “tack-on” is the method of preaching the Law and then giving the altar call at the end, then there is nothing in the text that gives you the basis for doing that. It is certainly a danger to do the “tack-on” unless you are showing something in the text or context that allows you to point to the culmination of the grace principles. That is the more difficult thing. Yet it is the glory of Gospel eyes. You will hear it soon. If you hear a sermon this week that is nothing but the “deadly be’s,” you will automatically know it. You will not walk away from a purely moralistic sermon and not recognize it for what it is. The hard part is correcting it. How do you see the grace that is there?

How often do you answer the questions “why” and “how?” If I have spent all of this time developing these truths, then I will want to develop “what” and “where” in virtually every main point. The “why” and “how” must be done somewhere before the sermon ends. They are less specific in terms of where they occur. Before the people walk away, you want to make sure you have done the four questions. They may be early, late, or woven through the message. The FCF often gives you insight to how you will be doing the “why” and the “how.” You can say it 10,000 ways, but the “why” is almost always responsive love to the grace of God. How many ways can you describe love? Poets have done it for thousands of years. So the “why” is always the love of God. The “how” is more difficult. You are saying to people, “Here are practical means. Here is information. Here are practices that will help you do it.” Ultimately, even the how is out of a greater love for Christ. That is why the “why” cannot be forgotten. Most of this course is about the “why.” You already have the “what” and “where” in mind, so much of this course is making sure the “why” comes into view.

Questions about time management are common. If you are going to preach Genesis to Revelation every Sunday, then it is going to get long. An old preacher’s rule is that a long main point should be the first one. You want to accelerate for attention and impact. If you are going to do the redemptive truth at the end, then it must carry the whole freight of that main point. So if the redemptive truth is the third main point, then that will be all you will say in the third main point. If it is foundational and interwoven through the message, then your time management is not different than for any other factor. If it is not in view until the third main point, however, then you know it must be the main thing said, because you do not have time in the acceleration process to say much more.

Another time management tip has to do with the wording of main points. You may have three main points: we must obey God, we must honor God, and we must trust God. All the emphasis is on what we must do. That makes it more difficult to interweave redemptive truths. If the truth principles are what God has done—God redeems His people, or God forgives the unforgivable—if some grace principle is the wording of the main point, then even your wording is carrying much of the exegetical weight. You are proving that truth. Then your application is an implication of that truth. It is a natural unfolding of the truth that you have done. Stating your main points as grace principles or redemptive truths carries much time help for you.

Exploring New Listeners

I. Presuppositions of Apologetic/Evangelistic Preaching in a Postmodern Era:

A. Churched

1. Increasingly biblically and doctrinally naïve (characterized by lack of basic knowledge of Scripture and doctrine among most, but also by overly simplistic and zealous categorization of doctrine and practice in some).
2. Divided generationally between those wanting the church to speak to moral, political agendas and those wanting the church to address mercy, justice issues.
3. Evangelicals attend church based mostly on whether they think the Bible is preached and the pastor is perceived as warm, cordial in the pulpit (little denominational loyalty unless previous experience in a denomination with high membership obligations).
4. Strong opinions/preferences regarding worship style (mainly determined by music) not based on discernable Scriptural principles.
5. Strong desire for community relationships but little interest in committing significant energies or time to community building or leading.
6. Likeliest to stop regular church involvement in college years; and most likely to re-engage when children come, but fewer will re-engage than were engaged prior to college.
7. Overall lifestyle, career, financial, marriage, family and entertainment choices will vary little from surrounding culture (PCA pastors will most address issues of morality, materialism and family).
8. Little understanding of the redemptive nature of Scripture or the power of the Gospel to transform individuals and culture.

B. Unchurched

1. Increasingly biblically ignorant, but believe in God (who is generally in charge of things, can be called upon when trouble comes, and will judge really bad people while being gracious to those who are “basically good”).
2. Religion in general perceived as the cause of intolerance and tension, although appreciation for individuals who are sincerely religious, merciful and not judgmental.
3. Pluralistic in religious understanding; no consistent worldview.
4. Pop culture immersed; experiential, visual, narrative learners.
5. Suspicious of authority, science, logic and power; desiring life anchors but lacking confidence of absolute truth.
6. Little or no worship style preference.
7. Residual moral compass regarding integrity in business interactions and fidelity “within” marriage, but it can easily shift for personal advantage.
8. Longing for deep relationships but often scarred and distrusting.

II. Preaching that Connects to the Postmodern Churched and Unchurched

- A. Biblical (The authority and power of the Spirit reside in the Word; rightly handled it is the power of God beyond any human means or wisdom. Enablers: accurate exegesis, clear structure, frequent Bible reference)
- B. Personal (Enablers: an identifiable FCF, personal HIA's, redemptive vulnerability, appropriate cultural referents, and inductive structures)
- C. Addresses Pain ("The preacher shouldn't be the only one who fails to see the waves are 12' high"; provide Gospel hope. Enablers: identifiable FCF, personal illustrations, sensitive applications, topical sermons – see example)
- D. Gives Clear Direction Regarding Life Issues (Enablers: clear application, interrogatives for points, inductive methods, topical-expository messages)
- E. Strong Narrative Component (Enablers: FCF, redemptive method, illustrations, illustrating the applications, narrative structures)
- F. Redemptive (providing the hope of the Gospel with the humility that comes from knowing that all is of Him. Enablers: redemptive/historical method, exposing grace principles in all Scriptures, avoiding the Deadly Be's alone, making God the hero of every text, showing where every text stands in relation to Christ's person/work, making love for Christ the motivation and enablement of application.)
- G. Anticipates and Addresses Objections without Animosity or Ridicule (Enablers: humility of a grace message, using interrogatives and questions for propositions and main points, commending the integrity of honest questions, asking questions listeners would ask in dialogue with the message – and answering with gentleness and respect.)
- H. Lifts to a Higher Goal than Self (Enablers: calls to selfless service, expression of compassion toward opponents, unambiguous stand for truth and righteousness -- with humility)
- I. Designed for Oral Context (Enablers: use of repetition, key terms, motifs, controlling images, colloquial expression, conversational speech, cultural referents, tonal cues, pause, boldness – see following pages on "Orality")
- J. Without jargon or pretence (Prepare for the unchurched *before* they are present by being willing to say profound things simply rather than making complexity the mark of orthodoxy. Enablers: Radical excision of all church jargon, locating Bible references by page #, and careful definition of terms needed for expression of faith, e.g. salvation, sin, justification, etc.)

III. General Principles of Evangelistic Preaching

- A. We are calling for a verdict/response; not merely informing
- B. We must make sure the following are clearly articulated:
 - Christ's Work
 - Human Need
 - Personal Response Required (faith and repentance)
- C. We need the following to be truly effective:
 - Fervor w/ biblical authority and love
 - Prayer for the Work of the Holy Spirit

IV. Distinctives of Evangelistic Preaching

A. Differences for Informed and Uninformed

1. Challenge the uninformed with "Felt Needs" for point of contact; then, lead to biblical needs and biblical promises that require a faith response.
2. Challenge the informed with inconsistencies or "non-dependables" (i.e., idols they are trusting that are sure to fail such as baptism, success, relationships, etc.), or untrustworthiness of other hopes (e.g. "I'm basically a good person").

◇ Uninformed must be informed as well as called to repentance (e.g. Men of Athens). Informed must be touched with inconsistencies or "non-dependables" and called to repentance (e.g. Woman at the Well).

B. Commonalities for Informed and Uninformed

1. Tell all exactly what they must do — make sure the truths and requirements of the Cross are plain.
2. Try to anticipate what people do not understand (e.g. Make clear what repentance requires. "Trust in Jesus as your Savior," may mean something quite different than you intend if "trust" and "Savior" have not been explained. Say precisely what prayer should be prayed. Tell exactly what is expected and what will happen during an invitation, or later private commitment.)

◇ For all times and places: Beginning with a clear FCF gives every sermon opportunity to be evangelistic because it requires a Christ-dependent response.

V. Keys to Preaching Effectiveness in a “Conversational” Culture (Orality Principles)

A. Provide a Path for the Ear

1. Signal Importance with Repetition

- Echo key words, phrases or motifs (especially helpful if kept brief)
 - Repeat *words* for emphasis (Holy, Holy...)
 - Repeat *phrases* for idea development (God’s word is ... see below)
 - Repeat *motifs* for theme development (Christ and Ceasar met ...)
- Alliteration {most abused tool} can warp and cliché, but still powerful
 - 1. *Those God calls he claims.*
 - 2. *Those God claims he corrects.*
 - 3. *Those God corrects he cleanses.*
- Parallel Phrasing with vocal cues to signal new ideas {most used tool}
 - 1. *God's Word is "powerful."*
 - 2. *God's Word is "law."*
 - 3. *God's Word is "love."*
- “Term Consistency” (expositional rain) to knit idea/organization together
 - Illustrate what you explain using the same key terms
 - Apply what you explain using the same key terms

2. Provide Directions with Recognizable Symbols

- a. Use Cultural Referents (using what is familiar in culture to capture the ear)
 - i. Bible (most common shared literary referent 50 years ago)
 - ii. Commercials (most common shared literary referent today)
 - iii. Pop Songs (second most common shared literary referent today)
- b. Create New Referents
 - i. Coined Words, Rhyme or Word Play to create "mental hooks"
 - ii. Neologisms "Be-attitudes" or "Therefore"="there for"
 - iii. Puns- I Pet. 1: 23 "You have been born again not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and enduring Word of God."

3. Lead with Questions (create a “dialogue” by asking questions, esp. transitions)

B. Turn the Ear into the Eye

- Use Imagistic Language
 1. *Satan's ways are a web.*
 2. *Satan's pleasures are a trap.*
 3. *Satan's promises are a cliff.*
- Provide Controlling Images

A Brief Guide for a Topical Message

Advanced Homiletics

What is a Topical Message?

A topical message gets its main idea from a text, but that subject is developed and divided according to its nature rather than according to the nature of a single passage. The divisions and development of the subject may be drawn from other texts or even from other sources than Scripture. For example, a sermon on how our country should respond to abortion might have an entire main point dealing with how our country has dealt with abortion in the past. This main point would not be derived from Scripture, but would be used in the development of the subject that would ultimately be addressed by a text (or texts) dealing with the sanctity of life.

In contrast to an expository message, a topical message uses the primary text only to obtain the proposition (i.e., main subject or theme). The content of the message could be derived from many different passages of Scripture or sources outside of Scripture (e.g., surveys, historical trends, contemporary observations). Still the sermon intends to bring the truth of Scripture to bear upon a particular subject but not necessarily through the direct development of the starting text or a single text. The sermon has biblical authority as the various texts are expounded and accurately related to the topic.

A Sample Outline for a Topical Message

Text: Lamentations 3:23, " His compassions never fail. . . they are new every morning, great is your faithfulness."

Introduction

- Introduces concept and terminology by human interest account (From the Bible or life, told with "lived-body detail")
- Introduces a Fallen Condition Focus from the Text
- Introduces the Proposition

Example: Offer a story of faithfulness amid trial or of turning for help to something that can't help us. Then note that the people in our illustrative story are like the people in the text. We too face these difficulties or temptations. We doubt that we can turn to God. Believers doubt because . . . Those outside of the church doubt because . . . Both need to know why we should turn to God amid trial?

Proposition: God remains faithful even through our trials.

Analytical Question: Why should we trust God's faithfulness in our trials?

{Note: In an Inductive Sermon such a question could serve as the Proposition}

First Main Point: God never leaves us alone

(state, place, prove)

- *Text:* 2 Timothy 4:16-17, "At my first defense no one stood with me . . .but the Lord stood by my side and gave me strength . . ."
- *Explanation:* Paul's situation, what it means that the Lord stood with him and strengthened him. Cross reference: Psalm 23, "He prepares a table in the presence of my enemies."
- *Illustration:*
- *Application:* God standing with Paul teaches us that we can trust God in our times of trial? How are we like Paul? Instruction? Correction? Rebuke? Encourage?

Transition: God shows his faithfulness by standing with his people when they are left alone.

Analytical Question: But why should I trust God's faithfulness if I depart from him?

Second main point: God never lets us go

(state, place, prove)

- *Text:* Luke 22:31-32, "Satan has asked to sift you like wheat, but I have prayed for you, Simon, that your strength may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers."
- *Explanation:* Peter's situation. How Christ holds on to Peter despite denial.
- *Illustration:* Lived body detail.
- *Application:* God never lets go. What instruction does God's relating to Peter give us? How are we like Peter? How does Christ's relation to Peter here correct us, rebuke us? What encouragement does Christ's relation to Peter here offer us? (categories of hearers, hard-hearted/soft-hearted; believer/unbeliever)

Transition Question: Why should we trust God's faithfulness when life makes no sense?

Third Main point: God's grace never fails

Text: I Corinthians 12:8-9

OR

God's Faithfulness Demonstrates His Sovereign Care

- *Text:* Job 1
- *Illustration:*
- *Application:*

Conclusion: Summarize and end, with a human interest story from the Bible or life, and pointing us to God's faithfulness.

Exploring New Applications

Introduction: “What do the Scriptures principally teach?” The personal consequence of expounded truth (behavior or attitude).

I. How Important is Application

A. Broadus - “The main thing to be done”

Thus, we start early. Put reason (burden) with theme in Introduction.

B. Calvin - “If we leave it to men’s choice to follow what is taught them, they will never move one foot. Therefore, the doctrine itself can profit nothing at all.” (Sermon on II Timothy 4:1-2).

◁>Just as we expound what the Spirit must ultimately interpret, we must articulate what the Spirit will ultimately apply (contra solus Spiritus argument).

C. Personal Ethos

Ethos = Credibility (knowledge, realism) + Compassion (altruistic care, courage)

II. What Troubles Us About Application?

A. The Courage required to be specific

B. The Hermeneutics required to be specific (the movement from descriptive to imperative is always difficult but necessary).

C. The Grace denied (?) by requiring specific duties

Is it ungracious to talk about duty?

1. To redeem from an empty way of life is gracious.
2. To teach to say, No, to ungodliness is gracious.
3. To lead to the blessings of obedience is gracious.
4. To teach that there is discipline for disobedience is gracious.

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1. To teach that there is merit in obedience is ungracious.
 2. To teach that God rejects for disobedience is ungracious.
 3. To teach that God does not require godliness is ungracious.
 4. To teach the law apart from grace is ungracious (Deadly Be’s).

III. How Do We Properly Apply?

A. Regular use of ALL four standard Questions of Application? What, Where, Why, How

1. What: Instructional specificity:

The specific instructions derived from and proved by the explanation.

2. Where: Situational specificity

Identify where in real life the expounded principles apply

a. Be concrete by going in through the who door

b. Spotlight one situation, then more quickly “unroll”
(i.e. identify other situations your people face where the
expounded principles also apply - “Don’t fence me in”)

Particular Problem/Need Possibilities

1. Building Proper Relationships (w/God, family, friends, co-workers, church people, etc.)
2. Reconciling Conflicts (in marriage, family, work, church, etc.)
3. Handling Pain and Difficult Situations (stress, debt, unemployment, grief, fatigue, etc.)
4. Overcoming Weakness and Sin (dishonesty, anger, addiction, lust, doubt, discipline, etc.)
5. Lack, or improper use, of Resources (time, treasures, talents, etc.)
6. Meeting challenges/using opportunities (education, work in or out of church, witnessing, missions, etc.)
7. Taking Responsibility (home, church, work, finances, future, etc.)
8. Honoring God (worship, confession, prayer, devotions, compartmentalizing life, etc.)
9. Other?

3. Why: Biblical motivation

a. Love over fear (contra self-protection as primary motivation)

b. Gratitude over gain (contra self-promotion as primary motivation)

∴ The motivation hierarchy (Why should I do what God requires?):

Love for God

Love for others

Love for self

∴ The relationship levers (maintaining proper motives for repentance)

What **can** change

Fellowship
Blessing
Our assurance
His delight in our actions
Discipline
Conviction

What **cannot** change

Sonship
Welfare
His affection
His desire for our good
Destiny
Justification

∠ In Christ-centered (grace-oriented) preaching the rules don't change;
the reasons do; we obey Him because we love Him.

4. Provide Biblical enablement (answering the How question)

a. By means (Instructions and Disciplines)

Instructions for:

- i. Confessing Sin
- ii. Adjusting Attitudes
- iii. Correcting or Rejecting Past Practices
- iv. Establishing new patterns of thought or behavior
- v. Utilizing means of grace (serious consideration of the nine categories of problem/need above will help keep you from overutilizing this set of instructions)

Disciplines (means of Grace ≠ Means to Grace)

- i. Informing of God's instructions
- ii. Stimulating greater love for God (primary purpose as we seek to build an ever greater expulsive power of new affections)

b. By faith

- i. Confidence in the New Creation
- identity - ability
- ii. Confidence in the Holy Spirit

B. Prudent use of Applicational Options

1. Open the Horizon

- a. Answer what but not where
- b. Answer where but not what
- c. Why and how still need to be answered

2. Reverse the Train

Application → Illustration → Explanation

3. Love a Puritan; and, a Parable

2-phase messages



4. Turn the Radio On

Information Models vs. Communication Models

Traditional "Information Model"
("Detail" or "Exegetical" Model)

"Communication Model"
("Applicational Model")

Statement of the Main Point

- a. subpoint # 1
- b. subpoint # 2 } 2-min. warning
- c. subpoint # 3

Statement of the Main Point
[Immediate proof, explanation,
or definition; 1-2 sentences]

Illustration

Illustration

Applications

Application

- Developed
- Particularized

Strengths

- 1. Dealing didactic passages
- 2. Exploding small Scripture portions
- 3. Explaining complex ideas

- 1. Simplifying large/complex themes
- 2. Distilling large Scripture portions
- 3. Applying developed truth

Weaknesses

- 1. Often dull or belabored
- 2. May lose people in detail
- 3. Little time for application

- 1. May become topical
- 2. May inadequately expound

Assumptions

- 1. Complexity = Seriousness
- 2. Higher Order Abstraction = Orthodoxy
- 3. Universal → particular

- 1. Sincerity = Seriousness
- 2. Applicability = Orthodoxy
- 3. Particular is universal

Conclusion: 1) Stay true to the text; concentrate on its authority not yours. 2) Sermons must be redemptive as well as instructive. 3) Let earnestness be your eloquence. 4) The character of the messenger is more important than the quality of the message.