

# FROM TEXT TO SERMON

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## A. Defining our purpose (Nehemiah 8)

1. **The Word: the heart of preaching (8:5)**
2. **The Teacher: the task of preaching (8:8)**
3. **The Congregation: the purpose of preaching**
4. **The Christ: the goal of preaching (cf Luke 24)**

### Defining preaching

David Jackman: *'This is what preaching is all about; it is not just simply laying out the truth of the message, but it is the invasion of the living God through his word into the mind, heart and will of the hearer.'*

Jim Packer: *Christian preaching is the event of God bringing to an audience a Bible-based, Christ-related, life-impacting message of instruction and direction from himself through the words of a spokesperson.*

John Stott: *To preach is to open up the inspired text with such faithfulness and sensitivity that God's voice is heard and God's people obey him.*

### 3-fold Preacher's Task

- Faithfulness - Can We See Where the Talk Comes from? (cf 2 Tim 2:15)
- Relevance - Can We See Who The Talk is For? (cf Col 4:3-4)
- Clarity - Can We See Where the Talk Is Going? (cf Eph 6:19)



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## B. Understanding the text

### The journey from the Bible passage to the sermon

See **PAPER 1 'From text to sermon'**

#### **TEXT**

The **meat** of the text

The **bones** of the text

The **heart** of the text

The **bridge** to the

#### **SERMON**

**Heartbeat**

**Skeleton**

**Flesh**

**Understanding the text**

### **GOD SPOKE ... TO THEM ... FOR US**

#### **1. Where the text fits**

- **The Bible is a library**
  
- **The Bible is history**
  
- **The Bible is a unity**

#### **2. What the text says**

See **PAPER 2 'Studying a Bible passage'**

- **Exegesis**
- **NOT Eisegesis**

#### **a) Understanding the passage in context**

What type of literature is it?

What is the context?

**b) Understanding the passage in detail (exegesis)**

Significant words or ideas to check?

Images and metaphors?

Using our senses!

Units of thought?

Structure or flow of thought?

Main theme or point?

Original meaning of this passage?

**c) Understanding the passage in relation to the whole Bible**

**A worked example: Colossians 1:15-20**

- Type of literature
- Context
- Words, images...
- Flow of thought
- Main theme
- Other parts of the Bible?

**Passage Summary:**

**From Text to Sermon PART 2**  
**CROSSING THE BRIDGE**  
Mark Meynell

**C. Building a bridge from the text to sermon**

**Crafting the message**

**1. The heart – purpose, theme, intention**

**2. The bones – the structure or framework**

**i) Helping the listeners**

- significance of the text
- concentration
- memory

**ii) Helping the preacher**

- careful preparation
- Preaching guide

**Worked example: Colossians 1:15-20**

**3. Putting flesh on the bones**

*See PAPER 3 Working on a sermon outline*

**The importance of application**

- Direct
- Personal
- Sustained

### **The purpose of the introduction**

- Gaining a hearing
- Bridges the Bible and the world of the listeners
- Bridges to the main theme

### **The discipline of the conclusion**

- Summarise the theme
- Bring it home
- Keep it short!

### **A final check-list!**

**Introduction:** interesting, relevant, leading to the theme?

**Main body:** clear structure, main points true to the theme, explanation and application?

**Conclusion:** forceful summary and application?

**Generally:** length OK? Notes clear? Words, examples, application interesting and relevant?

**Remembering our purpose:** *Christian preaching is the event of God bringing to an audience a Bible-based, Christ-related, life-impacting message of instruction and direction from himself through the words of a spokesperson. (Jim Packer)*

# Checklist for Biblical Sermon Evaluation

## FAITHFULNESS

- 🕒 Did the sermon express the main point(s) of the passage of the Bible that was preached from? If so, how?
- 🕒 Did the sermon stay close to the text that was being preached from and explain what the original author meant? If so, how?
- 🕒 If other Bible texts were referred to, did they throw helpful light on the main text of the sermon, or did they distract from it and confuse people? If so, how?
- 🕒 Was the sermon faithful to the overall message of the biblical faith? That is, was it balanced and true to the whole of Scripture, or did the preacher misuse the text to push a narrow or unbalanced message that would not be supported by the rest of the Bible?

## CLARITY

- 🕒 Was the message clear?
- 🕒 **If so**, what methods did the speaker use to make the structure of the sermon clear?
- 🕒 **If not**, how could the speaker have made it more clear?
- 🕒 How did the speaker help you to follow and remember what was said?

## RELEVANCE

- 🕒 How did the preacher build bridges from the world of the biblical text preached from, to the world of today?
- 🕒 Were any illustrations that were used appropriate to your own context and helpful in explaining the relevance of the text? (or inappropriate and irrelevant!?)
- 🕒 In what other ways would you have applied this text if you had been preaching it?