

Homiletics Workshop

Part 1: PREPARING TEACHINGS FROM A BIBLICAL TEXT

Introduction

“Homiletics” means “preaching”—explaining and applying God’s Word to our world generally and to our listeners specifically. New Testament prophecy includes (and perhaps focuses on) preaching (see Acts 15:32; 1 Cor. 14:3,31).

The two goals of this class are:

- To help you *make progress* in your home group teachings

- To help you become more effective in *creating a culture of constructive feedback* among your fellow teachers

Using the “Homiletic Work Sheet”

This is a practical framework that supplies you with the important ingredients and order for creating passage-based teachings. Practice this consciously, and over time it may become more intuitive. This worksheet works best with epistles, but it is also effective with other biblical genre. The upper third of page one is primarily analysis and interpretation that draws upon your inductive study of the passage. The lower two-thirds of page one is four questions that help you assemble the main parts of your teaching. Page two is a shell for creating your actual teaching outline.

STEP #1: "GENERAL CONTEXT" - This refers to the immediate and book context in mind to ensure proper interpretation. Draw upon your inductive study overview for this.

STEP #2: "PASSAGE STRUCTURE" - This refers to a bare bones outline of the thought-development of your passage. This keeps us in the text and under the text’s authority. Draw upon your inductive paragraph study overview for this.

- Identify and record in your own words the *main thought* in your passage (often answers “What?”).

- Identify and record in your own words the *supporting points* of your passage (often answers “Why?” &/or “How?”).

STEP #3: Answer these 4 key questions. Your answers will form the heart of your teaching.

1. What is the *main truth* on which you are focusing?

2. Why is the main truth so *important*?

3. How can we put the main truth into *practice*?

4. How does the main truth relate to *God's grace*?

STEP #4: Concisely state the goal(s) of your teaching in the form of a prayer request.

- For your Christian hearers
- For your non-Christian hearers

STEP #5: Begin to develop the main body of your teaching outline. You will need to address the following issues as you work on this:

1. Decide in what *order* you will answer the above 4 questions.

2. Decide how much *time* you need to spend on each of the above 4 questions.

3. Work hard on clear *thought-development*.

Readers can “re-read,” but listeners can’t “re-listen.” Therefore, you have to provide verbal “road maps” to keep them tracking with you. These “road maps” are called *connectives*—words or phrases that join one thought to another and indicate the relationship between them. There are three general kinds of connectives:

- *Previews*

- *Transitions*

- *Signposts*

Two ways to get good thought-development:

- Write it out . . .
- Rehearse it . . .

4. Develop good *discussion questions*.

Good discussion questions keep listeners engaged, thinking critically and personally interacting with God’s Word. The best home group teachings are not a long teaching ending with “Who has something to share?”—but an ongoing rhythm of teaching, question, and discussion. Ask questions that have more than one “right answer.”

- *Text observation questions*
- *Content processing questions*
- *Application*

STEP #6: Create a *brief introduction* that concisely states the main truth and/or arouses interest in the importance of it.

STEP #7: Create a *conclusion* to avoid trailing off.

STEP #8: Ask yourself *again*: “What good points do I need to *leave out* for maximum focus on and impact of the main truth?” One of the best indicators of an effective teaching is how much good material we choose not to include.