

Introduction

A. Three Questions

1. *Why is this subject so important?*
 - i) because of what the Bible says about itself
Jn. 17:17; 1 Pet. 2:2; 2 Tim. 3:16-17
 - ii) because of the example of Jesus
Mk. 1:14; 1:21; 1:38-39; 2:1-2; 2:13; 4:1-2
 - iii) because of the example of the apostles
Acts 2:42; 6:3-4; Col. 1:28-29; 3:16; Eph. 4:11-13; 2 Tim. 4:1-2
2. *Why are sermons not popular today?*
 - i) The spirit of the age is against dogmatism and for dialogue.
 - ii) We Christians expect so little from a sermon!
 - iii) No one helps the Bible teacher to teach better.
3. *Why is it good to teach consecutively through a Bible book?*
 - i) The listeners become enthusiastic about the Bible.
 - ii) The preacher cannot keep talking about his favourite subject.
 - iii) Difficult passages must be preached about (e.g. Mk. 10:1-13).
 - iv) The listener cannot say "He's only saying that because I am here."

B. Three Steps

These steps can help us to prepare a sermon but this is not just for preachers in a church service!

1. *Study the Passage*

We must let God speak to us.
The danger of being a professional!
2. *Find a concept*

Dividing the passage up.
Choosing some titles.
3. *Prepare the Sermon*

It must explain the passage.
It must be relevant to the listeners: building the bridge.

C. Objections to Bible Exposition

1. "It's boring."
2. "It's for the mind, not the heart."
3. ?

We as preachers must be open to the Spirit.

(Lk. 24:49; 1 Pet. 1:12; 1 Thess. 1:5; 1 Cor. 2:3-5...)

Which means everything we do must be done in fellowship with the Lord. We must be praying for a supernatural event!

Step One: Study the Passage

We must let God speak to us

The danger of being a professional

4 questions help me to study a passage and we'll take Hebrews 3:1-6 as our example

1. What was the original meaning?

- i) Why did the writer write this letter?
- ii) Why did he write these verses?
- iii) What do the individual words mean?
e.g. therefore, holy, brothers, apostle, high priest...
- iv) the individual trees and the whole wood

2. What is the meaning today?

- i) What principles help us understand this text today?
What stops us growing as Christians?
What will help us grow as Christians?

3. What is the application for us today?

- i) the difference between meaning and application
- ii) be practical about the principles e.g. vs.1

4. What is the main thought in the passage?

- i) the difference between the main thought and my favourite thought
- ii) the main thought should decide what the sermon is about
- iii) most people forget most of the sermon!
- iv) What is the main thought in Heb. 3:1-6?
 - Is it
 - a. Jesus is the greatest!
 - b. The task of a High Priest
 - c. Christians will not go back, if they know that Jesus is the greatest

This is the most important step in the preparing of a sermon. If we get this wrong, we will get everything wrong.

Step Two: Find a Concept

1. What is a concept?

A dividing-up of the passage with headings or titles

2. What are the advantages of a concept?

- i) it helps the listeners
 - they know where they are in the sermon (like a newspaper)
 - it helps them concentrate
 - it helps them to apply principles
 - it helps them remember
- ii) it helps the preacher
 - in his preparation
 - and while he is preaching

3. What can be the disadvantage of a concept?

It is possible that a concept mis-uses the text

But there is a simple solution:

the main thought must decide what the concept is.

4. How can I find a concept?

Usually it is possible to divide up the passage chronologically into 2,3 or 4 paragraphs or blocks of thought.

Key words can help us find the blocks of thought

(e.g. therefore, and, but)

The concept can be

- i) 3 principles
- ii) 3 descriptions of what is in the text
- iii) 3 questions
- iv) 3 answers to a question

5. How did I find a concept for Hebrews 3:1-6

The main thought

But my problem in preparation was verses 2-5

My concept for Hebrews 3:1-6 is 3 answers to a question

the question

the answers

Step Three: Prepare the Sermon

The sermon needs an introduction, a main body, and a conclusion. It is usually better to write the introduction and the conclusion last. Again, we take Hebrews 3:1-6 as our example.

A. Main Body

I must ask myself 3 questions:

- i) What must I explain?
- ii) What examples could I use?
- iii) What applications will I bring?

Heb. 3:1-6	Look! (v.1)	Compare (v.2-6a)	Hold on! (v.6b)
What must I explain?	Look Jesus apostle; high priest whom we confess	Old Testament allusions Gods house all the comparisons (see Session 2)	If courage hope which we boast hold on
What examples could I use?	Rosemary's photo	Examples of things which pull us away from God the old religion; sin; a friendship; <u>anything</u> which seems more important	the Queen of England, Prince Charles an me 2 Christians praying
What application will I bring?	Quiet Time The whole day too (learn Bible passages, pray always)	Think about what is pulling you away from God and bring it to God in prayer.	Our prayer-lives learning to enjoy the friendship practise thanking in prayer this week

Please note:

- 1) Sometimes the application must wait till the end.
- 2) You cannot use all your ideas!

B. Introduction

- i) During the introduction, the listeners make a decision.
- ii) Remember the two contexts:
 - 1. In the Bible
 - 2. in the life of the listeners

Our job in the introduction is to build a bridge between the two
- iii) In Hebrew 3:1-6
 - 1. The first readers were tempted to go back
 - 2. We face similar temptations (for example...) and there are three solutions

But the introduction is not finished yet!
- iv) If the introduction is too long, some of the listeners will switch off.
- v) If the introduction is too short, some of the listeners will never switch on

C.

Conclusion

- i) the sermon ought to reach a high-point or climax
- ii) the conclusion should be short
- iii) some preachers are like the pilot of an aeroplane...
- iv) it helps to choose your words carefully
to use a good example

D.

Write good notes

- i) Everyone's notes are different
But everyone's notes need to be clear
 - ii) My experience: I wrote every word
I wrote every word and then wrote notes
- Now: I don't write every word
I write notes which I could read out in an emergency
I write the main thoughts on the left
I have found the right preaching-paper for me
I number my pages clearly

E.

Analyse the sermon afterwards

- i) The introduction
 - Is it interesting?
 - Is it relevant to the listeners?
 - Does it lead them to the main theme?
 - Is it too short? Too long?
- ii) The Main Body
 - Is the structure clear?
 - What are the main points?
 - Are the main points true to the main theme?
 - Are they important and relevant?
 - Is the explanation of the passage clear?
 - Does the speaker show which part of the passage he is talking about?
- iii) The Conclusion
 - Does the sermon reach a high-point or climax?
 - Are the applications practical? With clear suggestions?
- iv) Generally
 - Is the choice of words interesting?
 - Are the examples interesting and relevant?

F.

Discovering and Developing the gift of Bible-teaching

- i) Discovering the gift
 - Try!
 - the importance of friends
 - the importance of church-leaders
 - the importance of prayer
- ii) Developing the gift
 - friends, church-leaders
 - love, and prayer

G.

Trusting the Spirit