Lighthouse Bible Institute

Week 5

BIBLICAL PREACHING & TEACHING: Establishing the Purpose

Lesson Goal:

- State the passage's truth in clear language for a particular audience and establish a purpose that identifies what listeners should know, believe, feel, or do because that truth is true.
- **Review:**
  - **What is the difference between a subject and a complement?**
  - **How do the exegetical and theological ideas differ?**
  - **What three questions help develop the idea?**

Review

- **Topic:** The broad area being discussed, rather than a complete thought.
- **Subject:** What is the author talking about? State it as a focused question.
- **Complement:** What the author says about the subject—the answer to the subject question.
- **Big Idea:** The subject and complement combined into one complete statement.
- **Exegetical Idea:** The passage's Big Idea expressed in terms of what the author communicated to the original audience.
- **Theological Idea:** The enduring truth of that message, expressed beyond its original setting.

New Concepts and Terms for Today

- **Preaching or Teaching Idea (Homiletical Idea):** The passage's central truth communicated clearly and directly to today's listeners.
- **Purpose Statement:** What you intend listeners to understand, believe, desire, or do because of the passage's truth.

- Today's lesson is designed to prepare you to answer the following question: **If someone were to come to you next week and say**, "I've been thinking about what you preached last Sunday, but I don't know how what you said applies to my life," would you have an answer?

I. State the Preaching or Teaching Idea

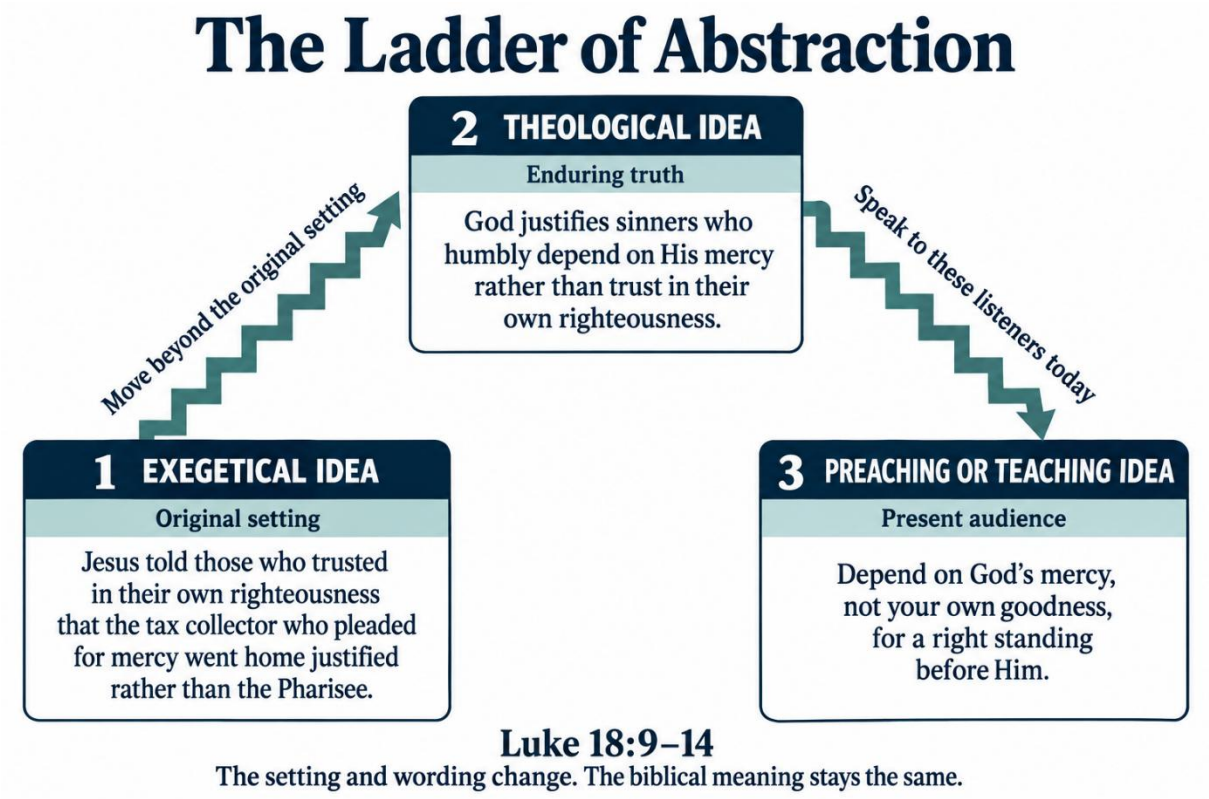
A. The **homiletical** or **preaching idea** communicates the same biblical truth in clear language for today's listeners. It must accurately reflect the exegetical and theological ideas. Teaching messages follow this same principle.

B. The Ladder of Abstraction

1. The ladder illustrates how we move from the original situation to the enduring truth and then to today's listeners. Higher means more general or abstract; lower means more specific or concrete. This illustration shows how we move from **the original situation**, to **the enduring truth**, and then to **our listeners today**.
2. Begin with the exegetical idea which is what the author communicated to particular people in their setting. Then identify the theological idea, which is the enduring truth that applies

beyond that setting (more general terms). Then move back down to express that same truth as a preaching or teaching idea that speaks clearly and directly to today's listeners.

C. Keep the Meaning as the Wording Changes



1. Use familiar words and a complete thought that listeners can grasp when heard.
   a. **Example of Luke 18:9–14:** Instead of saying "Justification excludes reliance upon personal merit," it's better to say something they can grasp more easily, such as, *"Depend on God's mercy, not your own goodness, for a right standing before Him."*
2. Remember that any memorable sentence you use must remain faithful to the text.
3. Some passages already state enduring truth directly, so the wording may change very little.
   a. **Example: 1 John 4:19:** "We love Him because He first loved us." The preaching or teaching idea can simply be: *Our love for God is a response to His love for us.*
4. **When considering Luke 18:9-14, what is wrong with *"Become humble enough and God will accept you"*?** _____
   _____
5. **What is the distinction between "Depend on God's mercy" and a purpose statement?** ___
   _____
   _____

II. Discover the Purpose of the Passage

A. Identify the response the biblical author intended his message to produce in the original audience.

1. When you come to a passage, first ask, 'What did the original author seek to accomplish?"
2. Why did the author communicate this truth?
3. What response did he seek?

4. Look for stated purposes, commands, warnings, encouragements, contrasts, and problems addressed. In narrative, consider why the writer included the event in this context.
   a. Consider the story of the prodigal son (Luke 15:11-32); why did Jesus give that parable?
   b. Answer: _____

5. The purpose of our message must grow from the passage's intended effect.
   a. This means that a concern that may be in the church should not replace that purpose.
   b. For example, consider a pastor or teacher sees the need for a greater prayer life in the church body. When preaching through Luke, he entitles Luke 18:9-14, *"Develop a better prayer life,"* making that the message's main purpose because both men pray. Why would that not be the most accurate purpose he should pursue from the passage?

B. Biblical Authors Wrote with Purpose

1. **What was the purpose Jude wrote his epistle? What did he seek to accomplish in his recipients?**
   a. **Jude 3 —** [3] *Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.*
   b. Jude intended to write about their common salvation but found it necessary to urge believers to contend earnestly for the faith. The need he addressed shaped the appeal he wrote.
2. **What was the purpose that John wrote the Gospel that bears his name? What did he seek to accomplish in his recipients?**
   a. **John 20:30–31 —** [30] *And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book;* [31] *but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.*
   b. **Why is "give information about Jesus" an incomplete description of John's purpose?**
      _____
      _____
3. What was the purpose Jesus gives the parable in Luke 18:9-14? What are 2 key problems Jesus was seeking to address according to Luke 18:9?
   a. _____
   b. _____

   Luke 18:9 — [9] *Also He spoke this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others:*
4. When studying a passage you will teach or preach, you need to know why they wrote the letter; what was the purpose of the letter? Identify the purpose of the biblical book, then determine how your particular passage contributes to that purpose. A commentary or study Bible can help, but confirm its conclusions from Scripture.

C. Scripture Equips People to _____

1. **2 Timothy 3:16–17 —** [16] *All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,* [17] *that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.*

2. **According to this passage, what is Scripture intended to accomplish?** *To make the man of God mature and thoroughly equipped for every good work. This directly concerns Timothy's ministry and also shows how Scripture equips God's people.*
3. **Paul identifies four ways Scripture accomplishes this work:**
   a. Doctrine teaches what is true.
   b. Reproof exposes error or sin.
   c. Correction shows what needs to be put right.
   d. Instruction in righteousness trains people to live according to God's will.
4. Therefore, when preparing to preach or teach, ask: **What should my listeners learn, reject, put right, or practice because of this passage?**
5. Not every message must emphasize all four equally. Let the passage determine the emphasis, remembering that Scripture was given to shape and equip people, not merely increase their knowledge.

III. Connect the Response to Its Biblical Foundation

A. Remember that biblical imperatives are connected to biblical indicatives.

1. **Indicative:** States what is _____: such as who God is, what He has done, or who believers are in Christ.
2. **Imperative:** Gives a _____ or instruction of how people should respond based on that truth.
   a. New Testament exhortations flow from theological proclamation; commands emerge from truths about who God is, what He has done, and what He promises.[1] Indicative verbs can express past, present, or future realities, while imperative verbs call for a response grounded in those truths.
   b. These terms help us recognize the relationship between **truth and response.** The supporting truth may appear earlier in a paragraph or book. Every passage does not need to follow the same sentence order.

B. Examples:

1. **Colossians 3:13 —** [13] *bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do.*
   a. **What is the indicative (what truth about what God has done, what He promises, or who believers are in Christ)?** _____
   b. **What is the imperative (command to the believer)?** _____
   c. In this passage, Christ's forgiveness supplies the foundation and pattern for their forgiveness. They forgive because they have been forgiven.
2. **1 Corinthians 6:19–20 —** [19] *Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?* [20] *For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.*
   a. **What is the indicative (what truth about what God has done, what He promises, or who believers are in Christ)?**

   b. **What is the imperative (command to the believer)?**

[1] Ernest D. Martin, *Colossians, Philemon*, Believers Church Bible Commentary (Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1993), 138–39.

c. This passage teaches that the believer is to honor God with their body because Christ purchased them and they belong to Him. The believer's obedience **responds** to His redemption; it does not earn it.

C. Explain both the foundation (indicatives) and the response (Imperatives)

1. Teaching commands without their biblical foundation can reduce obedience to self-improvement or an attempt to earn God's acceptance.
2. For example, teaching God's grace without the response it calls for can leave listeners thinking obedience is unnecessary.
3. Faithful preaching holds both together: Our obedience does not earn God's saving grace, rather God's grace is the foundation and motivation for our obedience.
   a. Good works do not earn salvation, but they are the fruit of God's saving work (Eph. 2:8–10).
   b. Preserve the emphasis of the passage while remaining consistent with the rest of Scripture.

D. Practice connecting truth and response

1. **Read the following passage: what response does John seek, and what provision does he explain?**
   a. **1 John 2:1–2 —** [1] *My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.* [2] *And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.*
   b. **What response is John seeking?** _____
   c. **What provision and truth about God does John explain?** _____
      _____
      _____
   d. **Why would teaching only "try harder not to sin" or only "remember that Jesus forgives you" give an incomplete explanation of 1 John 2:1–2?**
      i. Try harder not to sin" calls for obedience but what does it leave out? _____
      _____
      ii. "Remember that Jesus forgives you" offers reassurance, what what does it leave out? _____
   e. **Teach both:** John calls believers to resist sin and points them to Jesus Christ as their Advocate when they sin.
2. **Before writing your purpose, ask: What response does this passage call for? What truth supports that response? Have I explained their connection?**

IV. Writing a Specific Purpose Statement

A. Describe the Intended Result in the Hearers

1. When you prepare, here is a tool you can use to aid you in identifying your purpose statement: ***Because this passage teaches _____, my intended listeners should _____.***

2. Example: **Luke 18:9–14:** *Because this passage teaches that God justifies sinners who depend on His mercy rather than their own righteousness, my intended listeners should abandon confidence in their own goodness and turn to God for saving mercy.*
3. For the passage you will teach in this class, identify:
   a. **Your audience:** Whom will you teach?
   b. **The central truth:** What does the passage teach?
   c. **The intended response:** What should these listeners understand, believe, desire, or do because of that truth?
   d. The intended response should reflect the biblical author's purpose while addressing your listeners' situation. **Each major point should develop the passage's central truth and help accomplish that purpose.**

B. Remember the goal

1. **The goal in teaching & preaching is not simply to inform your audience, but to see them _____ by God's truth. Nor is it to invoke outward actions without first engaging their mind.**
2. **J.I. Packer –** *"The purpose of preaching is not to stir people to action while bypassing their minds, so that they never see what reason God gives them for doing what the preacher requires of them (that is manipulation); nor is the purpose to stock people's minds with truth, no matter how vital and clear, which then lies fallow and does not become the seedbed and source of changed lives (that is academicism).… The purpose of preaching is to inform, persuade, and call forth an appropriate response to the God whose message and instruction are being delivered."*[2]
3. Daniel Akin – "Faithful expositors are not only responsible to explain and expound the meaning of the text; they are also responsible to apply the text, preaching for a life-changing verdict from the audience."[3]
4. "Life change happens only after you change somebody's thinking."[4]

C. Aristotle's Rhetorical Triad – 3 aspects of effective and persuasive communication

1. Aristotle identified three mechanisms through which rhetoric achieves persuasion: logos, pathos, and ethos. These remain foundational to understanding how communication moves audiences.
   a. **Logos –** This speaks of knowing and explain the text clearly and show why the listeners should believe it. It is related to the English word "_____," uses rational dimensions of persuasion.
   b. **Ethos –** This refers to speaking with integrity and relates to the speakers credibility, and character . it relates to the English word _____. Aristotle said, "Character [*ethos*] is almost, so to speak, the controlling factor in persuasion."[5]
   c. **Pathos –** This speaks of understanding and engaging the listener; it relates to the emotions and feelings of the listeners who feel the significance of the truth. The result is

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[2] J. I. Packer, "Why Preach?" *The Preacher and Preaching*, ed. by Samuel T. Logan (Phillipsburg, N.J.: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1986), 9.[2]

[3] Daniel L. Akin, "Applying a Text-Driven Sermon," in *Text-Driven Preaching: God's Word at the Heart of Every Sermon* (Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2010), 281.

[4] Ibid., 280.

[5] Aristotle, *Rhetoric* 1.2.4, cited in C. Richard Wells and A. Boyd Luter, *Inspired Preaching: A Survey of Preaching Found in the New Testament* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2002), 178.

that the listener responds in ways such as gratitude for grace, sorrow over sin, or hope in suffering.

2. **Example — Teaching Luke 18:9–14:**
    a. **Logos:** Explain the contrasting prayers and Jesus' verdict: the tax collector went home justified rather than the Pharisee.
    b. **Ethos:** Teach with humility, acknowledging your own need for God's mercy rather than speaking as though self-righteousness is everyone else's problem.
    c. **Pathos:** Help listeners recognize the weight of their sin and the hope of receiving God's mercy. Let that response arise from the passage rather than emotional pressure.

D. Match the purpose to the audience

- Considering Luke 18:9-14, what would your purpose in preaching this text be different for the following people?

1. The unbeliever who came to Church the first time in 10 years, and is surprised the roof hasn't fallen in when he came in?
2. The believer who has been extremely faithful and struggles to understand why others are not as consistent as he is?
3. For the unbeliever who feels good about his condition before God because he has been a moral person throughout his life and lived better than many "Christians" he knows.

E. Practice revising the following purpose statements.

1. **Luke 18:9–14:** "My purpose is to explain the importance of humility."
    - **Revised:** Listeners will recognize that their own goodness cannot justify them and humbly depend on God's mercy for a right standing before Him.
2. **1 Corinthians 6:19–20:** "My purpose is to encourage believers to make better choices."
    - **Revised**: _____

F. Make the intended response specific

1. State what should change or be strengthened in your listeners' understanding, beliefs, attitudes, or conduct. Where possible, describe what that response would look like.
2. **Example: 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18:**
    a. **General:** "Listeners will have more hope."
    b. **Specific:** "Listeners will explain the hope believers have concerning Christians who have died and use that truth to comfort someone who is grieving."
    c. A specific purpose gives your preparation direction. However, outward actions do not by themselves prove inward change, and spiritual growth may unfold over time.
3. Explain the truth, show the passage's reasons, and exhort people to respond in obedience. Yet remember only the Holy Spirit changes a person and you are not Him. Remember that you can plant and water the seed of truth, but God alone gives the increase both in salvation and sanctification (1 Cor. 3:5-7). Your job is faithfulness; God produces fruitfulness.

V. Let the Purpose Guide Preparation

A. Draft a brief appeal

1. Before completing the message, write two or three sentences expressing how listeners should respond. Robinson recommends drafting a provisional conclusion to clarify where the message is going. Revise it as your preparation develops.

2. **Example — Luke 18:9–14:** What are you depending on for acceptance with God? Your religious activities and moral accomplishments cannot justify you. Acknowledge your sin and turn to God for mercy.

B. Choose material that serves the purpose

- Your explanations, illustrations, and applications should develop the passage's central truth and help listeners respond. Include necessary context even when it challenges your initial plan.

C. Remember the opening challenge

- **Why are you preaching or teaching this message?** State the truth you will communicate and the response you seek from your listeners.

VI. Prepare for Next Week's (week 6) Presentation

A. October 24: Present your biblical text, Big Idea, and one major point in 3-5 minutes.

B. Prepare one main point supported by a specific verse or section of your passage. This is practice for your developing message. Bring your Bible and brief notes, and practice aloud with a timer. **In Week 6, we will learn in class how to organize the complete message into a text-driven outline.**

- Suggested timing: Text and context 1 minute; Big Idea 30 seconds; explain and apply one point 3 minutes; close with the intended response 30 seconds. This is a preparation aid, not an additional syllabus rule.

Summary

- The idea states the truth; the purpose identifies what that truth should accomplish. Discover the author's intended effect, connect the response to its biblical foundation, and state a specific purpose for your audience.
- Look for meaningful evidence of response while recognizing that growth may take time. Call for faith and obedience in dependence on God.

Assignments

- Today: Complete Quiz 5 and the Chapter 5 reading acknowledgment. Turn in the Week 4 Biblical Message Project worksheet.
- Due Saturday, October 24, at 9:30 a.m.: Read Robinson, Chapter 6, "The Shapes Sermons Take." Complete the Week 5 Purpose and Desired Response worksheet (30 points). Prepare the 3-5 minute practice presentation.

Bibliography

Akin, Daniel L., David L. Allen, and Ned L. Mathews, eds. *Text-Driven Preaching: God's Word at the Heart of Every Sermon*. Nashville: B&H Academic, 2010.

Duduit, Michael, ed. *Handbook of Contemporary Preaching*. Nashville: Broadman Press, 1992.

Logan, Samuel T., Jr., ed. *The Preacher and Preaching: Reviving the Art in the Twentieth Century*. Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1986.

Martin, Ernest D. *Colossians, Philemon*. Believers Church Bible Commentary. Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1993.

Robinson, Haddon W. *Biblical Preaching: The Development and Delivery of Expository Messages*. 4th ed. Revised by Scott Wenig. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2025.

Wells, C. Richard, and A. Boyd Luter. *Inspired Preaching: A Survey of Preaching Found in the New Testament*. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2002.

Purpose and Desired Response Worksheet

Due Week 6, Saturday, October 24, 2026, at 9:30 a.m.

Name: _____ Your Passage: _____

Continue working with your approved passage. Use your previous study and teacher feedback. Write brief, complete answers. This assignment establishes your message's purpose and prepares you for the 3–5 minute practice presentation.

Connect the Passage to Its Intended Response 10 Points

What response did the biblical author seek from the original audience?

_____

_____

Identify two details that support your conclusion that it was the original authors intended response.

_____

_____

_____

Establish Your Message Purpose

Whom will you teach? Identify your audience and a relevant need or circumstance. (2 points): _____

_____

_____

_____

State the passage's central truth clearly and directly for these listeners.

_____

_____

Write one specific purpose statement. You may use: "Because this passage teaches _____, my intended listeners should _____." Identify the result in the listeners, rather than only what you will explain. _____

_____

_____

_____

Biblical Foundation

What truth supports and motivates that response? Include a verse reference and briefly explain the connection. _____

_____

_____

_____

Presentation preparation: Be ready on October 24 to present your biblical text, Big Idea, and one main point in 3–5 minutes. Bring your Bible and brief notes. Practice aloud with a timer. The presentation is a separate Week 6 assignment; this worksheet is worth 30 points.

Before submitting: Does your purpose reflect the author's message? Is it specific and suited to your audience? Does the response rest on biblical truth? Read Robinson, Chapter 6, before next class.

Week 6 Presentation Grading Sheet

Biblical Preaching and Teaching

Name: _____

Passage: _____; Time: _____

Present your biblical text, Big Idea, and one major point in 3–5 minutes. Explain the point from the passage and show an appropriate response for your intended audience.

Area	What the evaluator is looking for	Score
Faithfulness to the Text	Explains the passage accurately, with attention to context. Claims and applications are supported by the text.	____ /20
Clear Big Idea	States one complete, understandable thought that expresses the passage's central message.	____ /10
Development of One Major Point	Presents a clear point that supports the Big Idea and explains it using a specific verse or section.	____ /10
Purpose and Desired Response	Shows why the truth matters and identifies a response appropriate to the passage and intended listeners.	____ /10
Clarity and Time	Speaks audibly and understandably, uses notes effectively, and stays within 3–5 minutes.	____ /10
Total		____ /60

One strength to continue:

_____

_____

One improvement to prioritize:

_____

_____

Evaluator's question or suggestion:

_____

_____