Lighthouse Bible Institute

Week 6

BIBLICAL PREACHING & TEACHING:
Giving the Message its Shape

- **Lesson Goal:** Arrange the message so listeners can follow the passage's central truth and understand the response it calls for. The teacher/preacher does not begin with an outline and force the text into it; he studies the text and develops an outline that faithfully communicates its meaning

I. Review What Are You Saying and Why

A. The Big Idea: What central truth will you communicate?

B. The Purpose: What should these listeners understand, believe, desire, or do because of that truth?

C. The Arrangement: How will you develop the truth to accomplish that purpose?

1. Before looking for several points, make sure you understand the passage's central point.
2. Your outline should help listeners follow the passage's meaning and its implications for their lives.

II. Choose an Arrangement That Serves the Message

A. _____ - State the Big Idea Then Develop It

1. Listeners hear the central idea near the _____. The message then explains, supports, or applies it.
2. **Example:** Luke 18:9–14: Begin, "God justifies sinners who humbly depend on His mercy rather than their own righteousness." Then explain the contrasting prayers and Jesus' verdict.
3. **Strengths of the deductive model**
   a. **Clarity:** Listeners hear the central idea early and know what the message will explain or establish.
   b. **Logical progression:** Each point explains, supports, or applies the central claim, helping listeners follow the reasoning.
   c. **Unity:** The stated Big Idea helps the speaker and listeners recognize how the parts belong together.
   d. **Directness:** It works well for explaining doctrine, correcting error, and communicating a focused message within limited time.
4. **Potential weaknesses:**
   a. **Predictability:** Stating the conclusion early may cause listeners to lose a sense of interest that comes from discovery when a sermon develops the conclusion.
   b. **Early resistance:** Listeners who immediately reject the central claim may stop listening before hearing its biblical support.
5. **Useful when**:
   a. Deductive sermon outlines are especially helpful when explaining a doctrine, defending a theological position, correcting an error, or building a case from Scripture.[1]
   b. **Examples**:
      i. **Explaining a doctrine:** Ephesians 2:8–10: State, "Salvation is God's gift of grace, received through faith and resulting in good works." Then explain its source in grace, its reception through faith, and its fruit in good works.

[1] Joseph Byrd, "Methods of Preparation," in *Handbook of Contemporary Preaching*, ed. Michael Duduit (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1992), 155.

ii. **Building a case from Scripture:** 1 Corinthians 15:12–20: State, "Christ's resurrection is essential to our faith and hope." Then trace Paul's reasons: without it, preaching is empty, faith is futile, and those who died in Christ have perished. Conclude with Paul's affirmation that Christ has risen.

B. _____ - Develop the Message Toward the Big Idea

1. Listeners follow connected observations, questions, or events before hearing the complete Big Idea near the end. The speaker knows the central truth from the beginning but deliberately leads listeners toward its discovery.
2. **Example — Luke 18:9–14:** Introduce the two men, examine their contrasting prayers, and invite listeners to consider which man God accepts. Then explain Jesus' verdict and state, "God justifies sinners who humbly depend on His mercy rather than their own righteousness."
3. **Strengths of the inductive model**
   a. **Discovery:** Listeners experience how the passage leads to its central truth.
   b. **Interest:** A meaningful question or unresolved problem gives listeners a reason to keep listening.
   c. **Engagement:** Listeners actively consider the evidence and implications as the message develops.
   d. **Receptivity:** Listeners who might initially resist the central claim can consider its biblical support before hearing the complete conclusion.
4. **Potential weaknesses:**
   a. **Unclear direction:** Listeners may struggle to understand where the message is going. Clear _____ must connect each movement.
   b. **Rushed conclusion:** Too much time exploring the problem can leave insufficient time to explain the biblical answer and its application.
5. **Useful when:**
   a. A biblical narrative develops through events, tension, or a surprising resolution.
   b. Listeners face a significant question or may resist a conclusion before considering its biblical foundation.
6. **Examples:**
   a. **Developing a narrative: Mark 4:35–41:** Follow the storm, the disciples' fear, Jesus' command, and the resulting calm. Use their closing question, "Who can this be?" to lead to the central truth: *Jesus is the divine Son who possesses authority over the wind and sea and deserves His disciples' trust.*
   b. **Addressing a troubling question: Psalm 73:** Begin with the apparent prosperity of the wicked. Trace Asaph's envy of the wicked, his struggle to understand their prosperity, and the change in his perspective when he enters God's sanctuary. Lead to the central truth: *The apparent prosperity of the wicked is temporary, but God Himself is the lasting portion of those who trust in Him.*

C. Semi-Inductive: Combine the Approaches

- Deductive: State the Big Idea early, then develop it.
- Inductive: Develop the message toward the Big Idea….

1. Semi-inductive: Introduce the central question or subject early, develop the answer through the message, and state the complete Big Idea before the conclusion
   - **Example: Luke 18:9–14:** Begin, "On what basis can a sinner be accepted by God?" Examine the two prayers and Jesus' verdict. Then state the Big Idea and explain how it challenges our confidence in personal goodness and our contempt toward others.

- Deductive, inductive, and semi-inductive arrangements describe how listeners encounter the central truth. **The arrangement may change; the passage's meaning must remain the same.**

III. Build an Outline That Comes from the Passage

A. Identify the Passage's Natural Divisions

1. The structure of the sermon should serve the structure and meaning of the biblical text. While a sermon does not always have to reproduce every literary division of the passage, its major points must faithfully communicate the author's intended meaning and emphasis.
2. Look for changes in speaker, subject, action, commands, reasons, or contrasts.
3. Let the passage's natural divisions guide your points. A message does not need three points or alliteration. Use matching letters or sounds only when they preserve the meaning and help listeners follow and remember the message.
4. Example: Luke 18:9–14
   - **a.** The Problem Jesus Addressed (v.9)
   - **b.** The Contrasting Men and Their Prayers (vv. 10-13)
   - **c.** The Lord's Verdict and Concluding Principle (v. 14)
5. Example of a beneficial alliteration (reflects the passage accurately)
   - **a.** The Pride of the Pharisee (vv. 11–12).
   - **b.** The Plea of the Publican (v. 13).
   - **c.** The Pardon of the Penitent (v. 14).

B. State Each Major Point as a Complete Thought

1. A topic names something; a point says something about it.
   - **a.** Topic: "The Pharisee."
   - **b.** Point: "The Pharisee trusted in his religious accomplishments and looked down on others."
2. A possible outline of Luke 18:9–14:
   - **a.** The Pharisee trusted in his own righteousness and despised others (vv. 9–12).
   - **b.** The tax collector acknowledged his sin and pleaded for God's mercy (v. 13).
   - **c.** Jesus declared the tax collector justified rather than the Pharisee (v. 14).
3. Use similar wording where it helps listeners follow, but never sacrifice accuracy to make the points match.

C. Show Why Each Point Comes from the Text

1. Do more than attach a verse reference. Explain the words, reasons, or contrasts that support your point.
2. Example: "Verse 9 identifies the problem as trusting in personal righteousness. In verses 11–12, the Pharisee illustrates that problem by listing his accomplishments and comparing himself favorably with others."
3. Place supporting details under the point they explain. Include what listeners need to understand in the message; not everything you learned needs shared, only that which supports the message and purpose.

IV. Help Listeners Follow the Message

A. Make transitions clear

1. A transition explains how one thought leads to the next.
2. "Now, my second point" announces movement but does little to explain the connection.
   Examples:

a. "The Pharisee presents his accomplishments, but how does the tax collector view himself?";
b. "We have seen how the Pharisee and tax collector have viewed themselves, now thirdly, lets see how Jesus evaluates them…"

B. Test the Outline
1. Faithfulness: Can listeners see the basis for each point in the passage?
2. Unity: Does every point develop the Big Idea?
3. Movement: Does each point advance the thought rather than merely repeat it?
4. Balance: Does each point receive the attention its importance in the passage requires? Balance does not require equal minutes for every point.

V. Prepare Notes That Help You Communicate

A. Preparation Outline
1. Shows your Big Idea, purpose, major points, supporting verses, and connections. Complete sentences help you test whether your thoughts are clear.

B. Manuscript
1. Writes the message in full. It helps you develop precise explanations and transitions. However, dependence on the page can limit your contact with listeners.

C. Speaking Outline
1. Condenses the prepared message into notes for delivery. Include enough detail to remain accurate and organized while making your place easy to find.

D. Recommendation for This Class
1. Prepare a clear outline, write out difficult explanations or transitions, and practice aloud with a timer. Use the amount of notes that helps you communicate accurately and naturally. A manuscript is optional.

Summary

• Let the passage's meaning and your purpose guide the arrangement.
• Develop the Big Idea through clear points supported by the text.
• Use transitions and prepared notes to help listeners follow the truth and its implications.

Assignments

- Today:
  - Complete Quiz 6 — Assigned reading and Week 6 handout.
  - Turn in the Week 5 Purpose and Desired Response Worksheet.
  - Give your practice presentation.
- Due Next Class (October 31)
  - Read Robinson, Chapter 7, "Making Dry Bones Live."
  - Prepare a working outline containing your Big Idea, purpose statement, major points with supporting verses, and brief transitions.

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.

Robinson, Haddon W. Biblical Preaching: The Development and Delivery of Expository Messages. 3rd ed. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014.