

MINISTERIAL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM
SEMINAR V

**Theme: “The Pentecostal Minister and the Work
of the Church”**

Life-Related Expository Preaching

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INTRODUCTION

Biblical preaching takes on many different methods of presentation, just as the Biblical authors used stories, parables, psalms, and letters. There are many acceptable forms of sermon delivery, just as there are many different ways to communicate God’s truth.

In the past, preachers were considered as credible authorities with the right to tell people what to think and how to live. That level of authority has been lost in most of the world. Preaching today must be life related and authenticated by the power of the Word of God.

I. PENTECOSTAL EXPOSITORY PREACHING

Pentecostal preaching is powerful, anointed, passionate, divinely driven communication based on the truths of God’s Holy Word. Pentecostal preaching comes from the heart of the preacher and goes straight to the heart of the listener. It is preaching that

provides wholesome spiritual nourishment for God's people from His Word.

Pentecostal preaching both evangelizes the non-believers and equips the believers to do the work of the ministry. This is an awesome responsibility. Preachers are the purveyors of God's truth, the physicians of the soul. We shall be held accountable to God for any perversion of truth and for our negligence and lack of skill.

The Pentecostal preacher's knowledge of the power of the Holy Spirit and of the healing/delivering power of God, reminds us that we will be judged by God on the truthfulness, accuracy, and integrity of our preaching. Any failure as a spokesman of God brings not only shame (2 Timothy 2:15) but also judgment (James 3:1).

A small amount of skill, ability, and anointing will never enable a preacher to teach the deep things of God, convince stubborn minds, capture affections and will, or spread light on darkness. But above all, if a preacher is to be used of God to free men from their strongholds of ignorance, convince their consciences, stop their mouths, and fulfill the responsibility to proclaim all the counsel of God, the preacher must not only be skilled in the Word of God but also anointed of the Holy Spirit.

A. Definition and Mandate

In the expository preaching, the message is derived from a text of Scripture. The sermon confronts people with Biblical truth, which has present meaning for their lives.

Paul gave this mandate to Timothy: “I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: preach the word, be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction” (2 Timothy 4:1-2 NAS).

We must be faithful to the Word by presenting the meaning of the Bible passage(s) entirely and exactly as it was intended by God. People are spiritually hungry for the Word of God presented in truth and in power!

B. Responsibility

A Pentecostal preacher realizes his/her responsibility to the Word of God. The Word must be our source for preaching (Colossians 1:25; 1 Thessalonians 2:13). Thus, our preaching is God’s Word, not the preacher’s word. But rather the preacher is:

- **a messenger, not an originator**
- **a sower, not the source**
- **a herald, not the authority**
- **a steward, not the owner**

- **a guide, not the author**
- **a server of spiritual food, not the chef**

Preaching is a most exacting discipline and an awesome responsibility. We who are called must follow the example of the apostles and say,

“It is not right that we should give up preaching the Word of God to serve tables...we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the Word” (Acts 6:2,4).

II. FIRST-PERSON EXPOSITORY PREACHING

A first-person sermon is preached from the viewpoint of an eyewitness to a Biblical event. It recounts a story from the perspective of one of the characters in the story.

First-person expository preaching helps to apply Scripture to the meaning of everyday life. This method communicates its message through the power of story and the power of drama. A first-person sermon tells a story from the perspective of an insider to the story.

People tend to remember good stories. Television is full of stories, even the news and sports. In sermons, stories promote life-related learning, enabling people to experience the truth of God in their lives. Stories create word pictures that influence the way people look at life, reflect life, and communicate ideas.

A good expository first-person sermon is built upon solid exegesis. Preparation involves researching the character so that we get into the mind and personality of the him/her. Next we research the setting, the culture, and the geographical details.

Presentation requires a healthy imagination guided by extreme care for the integrity of the Scriptural text. Presentation transports the contemporary audience back into ancient time and transports the character into the modern world.

Stages of Constructing the First-Person Sermon

Stage 1 – Identify the Substance and Direction of the Sermon

The first stage of sermon construction identifies the substance or main idea and the direction of purpose. This sermon should focus on communicating timeless Biblical truth to modern listeners in a way that relates to our contemporary audience. Some suggestions are as follows:

- Simply and memorably state the main idea of the sermon.
- Use specific and familiar words to state the main ideas.
- Focus on the kind of response we want to get in response to the sermon.

- Decide if we are bringing the character into the twenty-first century or if we will take the audience back in time.

Stage 2 – Clarify the Purpose of the Sermon

We must determine not only the preaching idea but also clarify the purpose. The homiletical idea is the substance of what we want the sermon to say. The purpose describes what we want the sermon to do. The purpose answers why we are preaching this message and how we want people to respond.

Stage 3 – Determine the Structure and Flow of the Sermon

In this stage, we build a structure for the story that will be told by our character. In order to prepare for this, we should outline the events of the story and decide how we will tell these events to clearly develop the central idea.

Organizing the narrative of the passage/story is like dividing the scenes of a movie or a play. When we tell the Biblical story we must use imagination in order to avoid redundancy and to add creativity. However, the chronology of our story must parallel the actual events in Scripture.

Stage 4 – Complete the Exegetical and Historical Details of the Sermon as We Write the Sermon Manuscript

Our sermon will need enough historical and cultural information so that the sermon is appealing and interesting.

The manuscript should be written in conversational language with short sentences. Use active verbs and concrete nouns.

Since stories are inductive, the idea of our sermon should usually emerge toward the end rather than at the beginning of our message. The introduction should raise a question or create some sort of tension that will have to be answered in the sermon. This tension gives energy to a first-person sermon.

In conclusion, we step out of the character or we allow the character to conclude. When we step out of the character at the end, we can make a direct application of the sermon with a quick closing.

III. Examples of First-Person Sermons

A. “An Ordinary Hero” – The book of Ruth

- Structural Stance: During the days of the judges, one of the elders from the town of Bethlehem steps forward in time to speak to the congregation
- Purpose: To enable ordinary people, especially mothers, to see how God can make a difference in them and through them.
- Idea: God makes a difference in mothers who are faithful.

B. “The Profile of a Leader” – 1 Samuel 16-17

- Structural Stance: Eliab travels forward in time to speak to the audience.
- Purpose: To help potential leaders to recognize how courageous they can be when they entrust themselves to God
- Idea: It takes faith and courage to be a leader of God’s people.

C. “Setting the Record Straight” – Matthew 2: 1-18

- Structural Stance: King Herod the Great is released from his torment in hell to tell his story to the pastor and congregation.
- Purpose: To help people understand the crucial issues surrounding the Christmas Holiday.
- Idea: Worship Jesus as Lord or reject Him, but do not ignore God reaching out to our life through Christ.

D. “Simon Said” – Luke 12: 15-21

- Structural Stance: The contemporary audience is transported back to the first century to hear the testimony of Joanna, the rich fool’s wife.
- Purpose: To help listeners understand how important it is to build our lives and our plans around God while at

the same time, showing how dangerous it is to leave God out of our lives.

- Idea: Only fools leave God out of their lives.

E. “No Reason to Cry” – John 20: 1-8

- Structural Stance: The contemporary audience is transported back to the first century, a few weeks after the Resurrection. They become the ancient audience – followers of Jesus with whom Mary Magdalene share her testimony concerning Christ’s Resurrection.
- Purpose: To present the Gospel to non-believers to share their story and the Gospel.
- Idea: Jesus is alive, so go spread the Good News of the Gospel to a lost world.

These and other first-person expository messages with complete manuscripts are found in the book, *It’s All in How You Tell It* by Haddon W. Robinson and Torrey W. Robinson, Baker Books, 2003.

IV. Expository Preaching in General

God speaks through the Bible and expository preaching may be the best way to communicate the truths and divine authority of Scripture.

Haddon W. Robinson defines expository preaching as “the communication of a Biblical concept, derived from and transmitted through a historical, grammatical, and literary study of a passage in its context, which the Holy Spirit first applies to the personality and experience of the preacher, then through him/her to the hearers.”

Some key facts about expository preaching:

- The passage governs the sermon.
- The expositor communicates a concept.
- The concept comes from the text.
- The concept is applied first to the preacher as God deals with him/her concerning the message.
- The concept is applied to the hearers.
- The sermon should have a central, unifying idea at the heart of the message.
- The idea should be defined and formed so that the idea answers the question, “What exactly am I saying about the subject?”

**V. THE STAGES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF EXPOSITORY
MESSAGES**

There are many approaches to sermon construction, however, two facts emerge in the way expositions go about

preparing sermons. First, mental preparation is a dynamic process. Secondly, detailed instructions about how to think in preparation might actually hinder the process.

Dynamic and effective preaching must flow out of our imagination, our insight, and our spiritual passion. These do not come simply out of following a set of how-to instructions. As we look at the following stages, keep in mind that sometimes they follow other orders of sequence.

Stage 1 – Choose the passage to be preached

- The sermon will be based on some unit of Biblical thought.
- Consider the amount of material that can be covered in the time allotted for the sermon.
- Make sure the topic fits the passage.
- In selecting the best passage for the sermon, take advantage of resources such as lexicons, concordances, Bible dictionaries, word-study books, commentaries, etc.

Stage 2 – Study the passage and gather notes

- The message must also relate to the immediate context of the passage.

Stage 3 – Determine the exegetical idea from the passage

- Narrow the subject.
- Expand the subject into the main idea (called the complement).

- From the passage identify the characters, episodes, and main ideas behind the story.

Stage 4 – Analyze the main exegetical idea

- Remember that expository sermons consist of ideas drawn from Scripture and related to life.
- Ask, “What does this mean?”
- Ask, “What is the deepest truth of this passage?”
- Ask, “What difference does it make?” This focuses on the author’s theological purpose.

Stage 5 – State the main idea in the most exact and memorable sentence possible

- The central idea should be stated in a way that connects the Bible and the audience.
- Restate the idea in different words to clarify or impress it upon the audience.

Stage 6 – Determining the purpose of the sermon

- The purpose defines what the truth of the message should accomplish.
- The purpose behind the passage of Scripture should correspond with the purpose of the sermon.
- An expository sermon finds its purpose in line with the Biblical purposes.

- Purpose is what one expects to happen in the lives of those who hear the sermon.

Stage 7 – Decide how to accomplish this purpose

- Think about the ideas of the sermon and determine how one should seek to accomplish the purpose.
- Sometimes the idea needs to be explained, proved, or applied.

Stage 8 – Outline the sermon

- An outline clarifies the relationship between the parts of a sermon.
- An outline crystallizes the order of ideas into an appropriate sequence.
- Outlining the sermon helps to recognize the areas requiring additional support material to fully develop the points.
- Outlines consist of an introduction, body, and conclusion.
- With the expansion of the outline, the substance of the sermon becomes more obvious.
- A complicated outline with many subdivisions looks good but can overwhelm or lose the audience.
- Use transitional statements to move from one point in the outline to the next.

Stage 9 – Filling in the sermon outline in order to explain, expand, or amplify the major points

- Restate points for clarity and emphasis.

- Explain and define.
- Compare and contrast.
- Expository preaching uses the facts of Scripture and not just opinions.
- Quotations can be used to support or expand a point or idea.
- Use narration to fill in history, the setting, personalities involved, etc.
- Use illustrations; they make points clearer, more believable, and more interesting.
- Personal illustrations add warmth and vitality to a sermon
- Illustrations restate, explain, prove, or apply ideas by relating them to tangible experiences.

Stage 10 – Writing the introduction and the conclusion

- Introductions command attention.
- People tend to sit up and listen to hear a story.
- The opening must grab people's attention.
- Introductions orient people to what is coming in the sermon.
- Keep the introduction short.
- Do not promise more than you will deliver.
- During the introduction, people make a mental decision about the speaking ability of the preacher before you get to the body of the message.
- The purpose of a conclusion is to conclude.

- Conclusions might restate or review the major points presented.
- A conclusions summarizes and ties loose ends together.
- Conclusion might contain illustrations, quotations, a question, a prayer, or might give directions.

CONCLUSION

The effectiveness of a life-related expository sermon depends on what we say and how we say it. Sermons are made up of thoughts, language, voice, gestures, and content. Effective delivery begins with passion and anointing as we are directed by God to make His word both life-related and life-changing.

We want to preach so that people will listen. This requires that we develop our skills of communication and our ability to prepare and present life-related sermons, which can be used by God to accomplish His divine purposes.

Matthew Simpson in his *Lectures on Preaching* put the preacher in his place: “His throne is the pulpit; he stands in Christ’s stead; his message is the word of God; around him are immortal souls; the Savior, unseen, is beside him; the Holy Spirit broods over the congregation; angels gaze upon the scene, and heaven and hell await the issue. What associations, and what a vast responsibility!”