

Guidelines for Intern Sermons

Rev. Daniel R. Hyde

Dear brothers,

Being granted the privilege of exhorting the people of God from the Word of God is a high and holy one. In order to help you do this in a way that best edifies the congregation, helps me evaluate you, and assists you in the craft of sermon preparation and delivery, I ask that you use the following. When you are an ordained man, you are free to develop your own method and structure.

Form

First, the licentiate shall submit a manuscript of at least six (6) pages in double-spaced, twelve (12) point font of his choosing on his text *at least* one week before delivering it in public worship so that I may check your progress and offer guidance.

Second, the manuscript shall be in the following format:

Title

Text

A sermon delivered at [church] on [date]

Formal address (e.g.): “Congregation of Jesus Christ and friends”

Introduction

Statement of theme/doctrine

Statement of points: [number of points may vary]

1. *Point 1*

2. *Point 2*

3. *Point 3*

Point 1

[Content & application]

Point 2

[Content & application]

Point 3

[Content & application]

Conclusion

Content and Style

First, choose simple and clear texts of Scripture from which to preach. Do not choose obscure texts. For example, the Consistory wants to see if you can preach John 3:16 or Romans 5.1, not Daniel 9. You have your whole ministry in the future (should the Lord call you) to preach all the rest of the Bible. Right now, show us that you can preach the clear texts.

Second, tell us up front why *this text* at *this time* for *these people*. A sermon is taking the living and active Word of the Lord (Heb. 4:12), communicating it in living and active words to living and active people. What God said is what God says, and thus is

applicable to us to teach us, rebuke us, correct us, and train us in a life of righteousness (2 Tim. 3:16).

Third, be clear in your presentation (cf. “Form” above). Give us concrete examples, illustrations, and application. Give us a ***short (!)*** introduction, several clear and pronounced points, and **one** conclusion. Do not give us a long introduction and then multiple conclusions. *Especially*, do not give an introduction about the passage that leads to the feeling that you are then going to move into your points only to say, “But before we get into our text here in Hosea 1, there is some background information you need to know first,” and then proceed into a ten minute excursus on seventh century B.C. For this you will incur my wrath!

Fourth, while the sermon must reflect that it is based on exegetical study, it must not be an exegetical treatise. A sermon is not a lecture. Use the sermon notes page for a sidebar of interesting info, but let the sermon be a time for getting into the Word so that it gets into us. As I said in #2 above, teach us and apply this teaching.

Fifth, the sermon must be written in spoken style, not formal academic style, and with that dignity consistent with proclaiming the Word of God.

Sixth, be aware of your voice pitch, pace, and tone. Vary yourself. Don’t get excited when you’re talking about a gross, public sin; don’t be somber when mentioning the resurrection of Jesus!