

Research & Resources

Course Outline

- Personal Discipline
- Building A Library
- Bible Study Procedures
- Computer & Internet Research
- Creating A Filing System
- Planning Your Preaching
- How To **C.R.A.F.T.** A Message
- Discussion

Personal Discipline

- A sermon can come through study alone, but a message comes from God through you. We will be talking about techniques for preparing sermons, but we all understand the importance of preaching a “message”!
- **The best source of sermon thoughts is extensive Bible reading.**
- It takes a lot of TIME to be an effective preacher or teacher. We will never “find time” for the important things in life, we must “make time.”
- Some people say, “I spend QUALITY time with God, not just QUANTITY time.” But quality time doesn’t always happen when you want it, simply because you are not always ready for it. **It is in the QUANTITY of time that the most QUALITY moments will accumulate.** Quality time comes when you least expect it!
- God has two words for time: **CHRONOS**, which means “time governed by the clock” (QUANTITY time) and **KAIROS**, which means “time measured by special moments” (QUALITY TIME).
- **You have to take advantage of KAIROS time at the moment it happens, or you lose it forever.**
 - **Luke 19:41-44 (NKJV)** ⁴¹Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it, ⁴²saying, “If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. ⁴³For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, ⁴⁴and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not know the **time** of your visitation.”
 - **Acts 24:25 (NKJV)** Now as he reasoned about righteousness, self-control, and the judgment to come, Felix was afraid and answered, “Go away for now; when I have a convenient **time** I will call for you.”
 - **Galatians 6:9 (NKJV)** And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due **season** we shall reap if we do not lose heart.
 - **Ephesians 5:15-16 (NKJV)** ¹⁵See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, ¹⁶redeeming the **time**, because the days are evil.
- You will never be an effective preacher, no matter how much skill or how many resources you have, unless you are willing to spend a considerable QUANTITY of time with God preparing your message!
- Like INVESTING, the most valuable “deposits” made in your sermon are the ones made far in advance! And like investing, it is hard to get young people to see the value of a regular contribution NOW to insure the FUTURE. But you either “pay now and play later” or you “play now and pay later.”
- **ROCKS ILLUSTRATION (Stephen Covey):** The container represents a week of your time. The small rocks represent all the things you normally do in a week. The big rocks represent family time and other things that are really important to you, things you should do but have a hard time fitting into your schedule. Your task is to fit as many of the big rocks into the container as you possibly can. But you can never get them all in! You need a paradigm shift – PUT THE BIG ROCKS IN FIRST! **If you don’t put the big rocks in first, they hardly ever fit in.**
- **THERE IS ONLY ONE WAY TO FIT THE BIG ROCKS IN YOUR LIFE - PERSONAL DISCIPLINE!**

	URGENT	NOT URGENT
IMPORTANT	1 Crises Pressing Problems Deadline-Driven Projects Emergencies	2 Prevention, Planning Production Capability Relationship Building New Opportunities
NOT IMPORTANT	3 Interruptions Some calls, mail, meetings Pressing Matters Popular Activities	4 Trivia, Busy Work Some calls, mail, meetings Time Wasters Pleasant Activities

- In Stephen Covey's bestseller, *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, habit #3 is very similar to the thought of the first commandment: PUT FIRST THINGS FIRST. In that chapter, Covey introduces the "Four Quadrants of Time Management" ...
- **QUADRANT ONE – URGENT AND IMPORTANT**
(Crises, pressing problems, deadlines)
- **QUADRANT TWO – NOT URGENT AND IMPORTANT**
(Planning, relationship building, preparation)
- **QUADRANT THREE – URGENT AND NOT IMPORTANT**
(Interruptions, popular activities, telephone)
- **QUADRANT FOUR – NOT URGENT AND NOT IMPORTANT**
(Trivia & busy work, time wasters, pleasant activities)
- **Quadrant Two contains all the things we know we need to do, but somehow seldom get around to doing because they aren't urgent!**
- **Quadrant 1 – Problems, Quadrant 2 – Preparation, Quadrant 3 – Popular, Quadrant 4 - Pleasant**
- Highly Effective People spend as much time as possible in Quadrant Two! (80/20 Pareto Principle)
- **OUR SPIRITUAL LIFE GROWS OUT OF QUADRANT TWO – IT IS IMPORTANT, BUT NOT URGENT.**
We have to take the initiative!
- **Ephesians 5:16-17 (PH)** Make the best use of your time, despite all the evils of these days. Don't be vague but grasp firmly what you know to be the will of the Lord.
- How do I put God first in my schedule? I ask Him to help me use my time wisely! I make a TO DO list of things I have to do and say, "God, which of these things do You want me to do?"
- You do not have time to do everything – **selection is the name of the game.** God has a plan for your life, so if you find yourself having more things to do than you have time to do, it means you're doing some things that aren't God's will! They may be good things, but God never puts more on you than He puts in you!
- **ENVISION YEARLY, PREPARE MONTHLY, PLAN WEEKLY, ADJUST DAILY**
- If you really want God to be first in your life, then you need to make a daily appointment with Him to read your Bible and pray, and REVIEW YOUR SCHEDULE AND PRIORITIES with Him! Even Jesus felt the need for daily prayer!
- **Mark 1:35 (CEV)** Very early the next morning, Jesus got up and went to a place where he could be alone and pray.
- **Jeremiah 2:32** Can a maid forget her ornaments, or a bride her attire? yet my people have forgotten me days without number.

The Week of an Ineffective Church Leader		The Week of an Effective Church Leader	
Sleep	55 hours	Sleep	43 hours
Staff Meetings	2 hours	Staff Meetings	4 hours
Committee/Board Meetings	8 hours	Committee/Board Meetings	2 hours
Worship Activities	5 hours	Worship Activities	5 hours
Prayer	5 hours	Prayer	5 hours
Personal Bible Study	4 hours	Personal Bible Study	5 hours
Administrative	5 hours	Administrative	15 hours
Mentoring	2 hours	Mentoring	5 hours
Meals	10 hours	Meals	10 hours
Family Time	18 hours	Family Time	22 hours
Other	19 hours	Other	13 hours
Personal Evangelism	0 hours	Personal Evangelism	5 hours
Accountability	0 hours	Accountability	2 hours
Custodial Duties	8 hours	Custodial Duties	0 hours
Pastoral Care	23 hours	Pastoral Care	10 hours
Sermon Preparation	4 hours	Sermon Preparation	22 hours

Building A Library

- Charles Spurgeon: "It seems odd, that certain men who talk so much of what the Holy Spirit reveals to themselves, should think so little of what he had revealed to others."
- Benefits of a personal library:
 - Efficient study - reduces time
 - Light on difficult passages - increases clarity
 - Personal application - brings insight from others
- A library is NOT:
 - A collection of inferior books donated to the preacher by well-meaning friends
 - A collection of books that happened to be on sale
 - A collection of books that are popular to the buying public
 - A collection of books used in Bible College
 - A collection of books on current issues
- Basic books to start your library:
 - A good READING Bible (understandable translation, room to write, no distracting study helps)
 - A good STUDY Bible (study helps, footnotes, maps, etc.)
 - A Bible dictionary (Unger's)
 - A good commentary (very much a personal preference!)
 - A concordance (Strong's)
 - Alternate Bible translations (parallel Bibles are good)
 - Add "specialty books" as funds permit
- Sources for your library:
 - Secondhand bookstores, library sales
 - Christian Book Distributors (stay aware of what is new!)
 - Share your wish list with family and friends!
- A library should be a collection of a few books you NEED more than a lot of books you can AFFORD.
- Guiding principles for buying books:
 - Seek the BEST books on a particular subject (talk to a trusted friend)
 - Learn to look for TRUSTED authors
 - Practice the principal of COURTSHIP before marriage (borrow and browse first!)
 - Be careful how you allow a book to shape your THINKING (think the issue through first!)
 - Prioritize your purchases! (remember that commentaries can be bought individually)
 - USE YOUR BOOKS! (buy only what you will use, then use what you buy!)
- A good library will also contain seminar notebooks, binders of personal material, tapes, software, etc.
- A library must be WELL ORGANIZED, especially as it grows larger.

Bible Study Procedures

- The main purpose of interpreting a text is not UNIQUENESS but CLARITY!
- **The first task of the preacher is EXEGESIS** – careful, systematic study of the Scripture to discover the original, intended meaning; to find out the original intent of the words of the Bible; to hear the Word as the original recipients heard it
- But we don't just do exegesis when there is an obvious difference between THEN and NOW – it is the first step in studying EVERY text
- Go back to the original and the best sources for yourself first – don't just begin by consulting somebody's book! (i.e. Mark 10:23 – one "expert" said there was a gate in Jerusalem called the "Needle's Eye" which camels could only go through on their knees, but that gate never existed!)
- We must always guard against EISEGESIS – reading our desired interpretation into the text instead of letting the text speak to us!
- To provoke your thinking, one of the best things to do is use several Bible translations that you know in advance will differ in their interpretation.
- There are three basic theories of translation:
 - **Literal:** advantage – as close as possible to the original; disadvantage – doesn't account for cultural differences in customs and expressions (i.e. King James Version)
 - **Free:** advantage – eliminates historical and cultural "barriers" by expressing Scripture in modern terms; disadvantage – since it is more concerned with translating "ideas" it is not always accurate in exact wording (i.e. Phillips, Living Bible, The Message)
 - **Dynamic Equivalence:** advantage – translates words, idioms and grammatical construction of the original language into "precise equivalents" in modern language; disadvantage – not as "loose" as a free paraphrase, but still not as exact in its wording as a literal translation (i.e. New International Version, New Living Translation)
- **WHY DOES THIS MATTER? BECAUSE OUR BIBLE DOCTRINE MUST BE EXACT!** That's why I use the King James Version as my primary text to teach Bible doctrine, while I normally use other modern translations to teach issues of practical Christian living. Sometimes, modern translations can shed more light on a passage than the KJV, but you have to be CAREFUL!
- **Bible Translations – PROS & CONS**
 - The King James Version is the most ACCURATE translation, but there are other valid translations. For example, look at 1 Corinthians 7:36 ...
 - **KJV is accurate, but unclear** - But if any man think that he behaveth himself uncomely toward his virgin, if she pass the flower of her age, and need so require, let him do what he will, he sinneth not: let them marry.
 - **NASB is inaccurate!** - But if any man thinks that he is acting unbecomingly toward his virgin daughter, if she should be of full age, and if it must be so, let him do what he wishes, he does not sin; let her marry.
 - **LB is not specific enough!** - But if anyone feels he ought to marry because he has trouble controlling his passions, it is all right; it is not a sin; let him marry.
 - **NIV is accurate and clear** - If anyone thinks he is acting improperly toward the virgin he is engaged to, and if she is getting along in years and he feels he ought to marry, he should do as he wants. He is not sinning. They should get married.
 - **TM helps to clarify** - If a man has a woman friend to whom he is loyal but never intended to marry, having decided to serve God as a "single," and then changes his mind, deciding he should marry her, he should go ahead and marry. It's no sin; it's not even a "step down" from celibacy, as some say.
- **The Amplified Version** (which gives various "shades of meaning") can be helpful at times, with this caution: It is often better to use several translations, note where they differ, and then check out those differences in another source, than to be led to believe that a word can mean one of several things in any given sentence, with the reader left to choose whatever best strikes his or her fancy.
- How do I know which translation is best? Do some basic word studies and see which one comes closest to the original languages. Do some additional reading that pertains to the specific passage you are studying; in almost every case the majority opinion will be right. Why do Bible versions differ? DOCTRINAL BIAS!
- Basic word studies using Strong's Exhaustive Concordance – EXERCISE
- Extended word studies using Vine's Expository Dictionary – EXAMPLE
- **The second task of the preacher is APPLICATION** – bridging the gap between the writer and the hearer, so that we can be DOERS of the Word and not just HEARERS (to be discussed later)

Computer & Internet Research

- Logos, PC Study Bible, David Bernard Library, WordSearch, ZIPscript, Godspeed, Search Engines, Links

Creating A Filing System

- What should I file?
 - Church materials
 - Ideas
 - Bible study materials
 - Every sermon you preach
 - Correspondence
 - Personal records
 - Church records
 - Articles
 - Statistics
 - Illustrations
 - Anything valuable!
- Three Requirements for an Effective Filing System
 - Simple
 - Consistent
 - Flexible (ability to expand, ability to contract, ability to detailed or general)
- **The goal of any filing system should be to minimize time spent filing and finding materials so as to maximize time for ministry.**
- Structure of a Filing System
 - Level one – file drawer (i.e. Bible)
 - Level two – left tab (i.e. Matthew)
 - Level three – middle tab (i.e. Sermon on the Mount)
 - Level four – right tab (i.e. Beatitudes)
- In your Bible file (above), create an extra folder for OT word studies and NT word studies
- Correspondence is best filed by TOPIC, then by ADDRESSEE if the volume warrants.
- Filing sermons:
 - Sermons based on a biblical text should be filed under a book of the Bible
 - Topical sermons should be filed under “Sermons” (left tab) then by topic (eventually, an entire drawer could be used for topical sermons, allowing the left tab to reflect the broad topic)
 - Sermon series should always be filed together
 - GOOD IDEA: To eliminate “cross-reference confusion” use a wide-margin Bible as an index to your filing system, noting where material can be found beside each Scripture passage
- Illustrations should be filed by topic, using subheadings and cross-referencing as needed
- Have a “to be filed” folder/box and do your filing at a specific time every week

Planning Your Preaching

- **2 Timothy 4:2 (NIV)** Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage - with great patience and careful instruction.
- Planning helps me to ...
 - Offer a balanced diet
 - Collect material far in advance
 - Be more creative
 - Build momentum
 - Take advantage of special days
 - Promote messages
 - Avoid stress!
- Your goal should always be “PLANNING WITH SPONTANEITY.” If God moves in, the plan moves out!
- **Proverbs 21:5 (TM)** Careful planning puts you ahead in the long run; hurry and scurry puts you further behind.

How To **C.R.A.F.T.** A Message

- **Deuteronomy 4:1** Now therefore hearken, O Israel, unto the statutes and unto the judgments, which I **TEACH** you, for to do them, that ye may live, and go in and possess the land which the LORD God of your fathers giveth you.
- **Deuteronomy 5:1** And Moses called all Israel, and said unto them, Hear, O Israel, the statutes and judgments which I speak in your ears this day, that ye may **LEARN** them, and keep, and do them.

- When you take the prefix and suffix off the Hebrew word for “learn” all that remains is the word “teach.” When you take the prefix and suffix off the Hebrew word for “teach” all that remains is the word “learn.” THEY ARE THE SAME WORD! You cannot separate teaching from learning! If no one is learning, you are not teaching!
- **James 3:1 (NLT)** Dear brothers and sisters, not many of you should become teachers in the church, for we who teach will be judged by God with greater strictness.
- **James 1:24-25 (NIV)** Anyone who listens to the Word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. But the man who **looks intently** into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, **not forgetting** what he has heard, but **doing it** – he will be blessed in what he does.
- Only when we get people to **look at, remember** and **do** God’s Word, are we preaching to them! Most preaching and teaching gets people to look at, but not remember or do the Word.
- People must not merely be **informed**, but **transformed**.
- **2 Timothy 3:16-17 (KJV)** All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.
- Doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness are merely a means to an end! (for...for...for...for...so that!)
- The purpose of the Bible is LIFE CHANGE! To change our character (perfect, mature, complete) and to change our conduct (good works).
- D.L. Moody: “The Bible was not given to increase our knowledge but to change our lives.”
 - **John 6:63** The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are **life**
 - **Philippians 2:16** Holding forth the word of **life**
 - **John 10:10** I am come that they might have **life**
- If I intend to be a Biblical preacher, my sermons must always be life-oriented, not just information-oriented.
- God’s purpose for the preacher is to be a bridge-builder, to declare eternal truths that never change and apply them in a world that is always changing.
- THE APPLICATION BRIDGE
 - THEN – Bible text
 - NOW – practical application
 - BRIDGE – timeless principle
- Four stages of bridge building:
 - Observation – study the text
 - Implication – find the timeless truth
 - Contextualization – think of your audience
 - Personalization – apply the truth to their need
- Building an application (2 Timothy 3:16-17) – four questions:
 - Doctrine – what should I believe?
 - Correction – what should I not believe?
 - Instruction in righteousness – how should I behave?
 - Reproof – how should I not behave?
- Jesus said profound things in simple ways – we often do the opposite!

Ecclesiastes 12:9-11 (NASB) In addition to being a wise man, the Preacher also taught the people knowledge; and he pondered, searched out and arranged many proverbs. The Preacher sought to find delightful words and to write words of truth correctly. The words of wise men are like goads, and masters of these collections are like well-driven nails; they are given by one Shepherd.

Ecclesiastes 12:9-11 (NLT) Because the Teacher was wise, he taught the people everything he knew. He collected proverbs and classified them. Indeed, the Teacher taught the plain truth, and he did so in an interesting way. A wise teacher's words spur students to action and emphasize important truths. The collected sayings of the wise are like guidance from a shepherd.

- Two results of this kind of teaching:
 - "goad" – It spurs people to action, motivating them to do something
 - "well-driven nail" – People will remember it! Firmly embedded! Driven deep!

C – collect & categorize

- Eccl. 12:9 (NLT) Because the Teacher was wise ... He collected proverbs and classified them ...
- Collect Bible verses, quotes, articles, books, sermon tapes, illustrations, etc. – even years in advance!
- Categorize them in a filing system – put something away each day

R – research & reflect

- Eccl. 12: 9 (NASB) The Preacher ... pondered and searched out ...
- Research is studying with my mind; reflection is listening with my heart (meditation).

A – apply & arrange

- Eccl. 12:11 (NLT) A wise teacher's words spur students to action and emphasize important truths.
- Each sermon should answer three important questions:
 - What?
 - So what?
 - Now what?
- Arrange your sermon in an outline:
 1. Keep it SIMPLE.
Haddon Robinson: "Television has destroyed linear thinking"
 2. Get to the point QUICKLY.
 3. Make sure your points follow a logical PROGRESSION.
 4. Arrange your points to end with IMPACT.
"Your lesson must have movement to move people"
 5. Arrange your points to use TENSION and RELEASE.
"Use humor, use emotion, use up and down"
 6. Use a variety of teaching METHODS.
"People forget 90% of what they hear within 72 hours"

F – fashion & flavor

- Eccl. 12:10 (NASB) The Preacher sought to find delightful words ...
- What is the most practical way to say it?
- What is the most positive way to say it?
- What is the most personal way to say it?
- What is the most interesting way to say it?
- Illustrations are windows that let the light in!
- Matthew 13:34 (NLT) Jesus always used stories and illustrations like these when speaking to the crowds. In fact, he never spoke to them without using such parables.

- Chuck Swindoll: “If you think the gathering of biblical facts and standing up with a Bible in your hand will automatically equip you to communicate well, you are deeply mistaken. It will not. YOU MUST WORK AT BEING INTERESTING. Boredom is a gross violation, being dull is a grave offense, and irrelevance is a disgrace to the Gospel. Too often these three crimes go unpunished and we preachers are the criminals.”
- Flavor your lesson with illustrations and quotes, humor, and special features.

T – trim & tie together

- More does not mean better! Slower does not mean deeper!
- Confinement produces power!
- Tie the parts of your lesson together to ...
 - Connect with your students (relationship before response)
 - Gain attention (brevity! variety!)
 - Achieve excellence
 - Answer their question: “Why should I listen?”
- Ways to conclude a lesson:
 - Restate your main points forcefully and personally
 - Use a compelling illustration
 - Use a piercing question
 - Introduce the next lesson using suspense

2 Timothy 2:15 (NIV) Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.

INTRODUCTIONS:

- Capture and redirect the audience’s attention to focus on the preacher and his message
- Create audience interest in and anticipation of the body of a message
- Answer the question, “Why should I listen to this message?”
- Current statistics which highlight a contemporary problem to be addressed in the message
- Historical illustrations
- Humor
- Current events
- Reading of a Bible text
- Real-life stories
- Biographical illustrations
- Striking quotations
- Rhetorical questions
- Personal experiences
- References to current well-known books
- Life-related problems to be addressed in the message
- Contemporary confusion over Biblical teaching to which the preacher will bring clarity
- Highly interesting personal correspondence
- Appropriate prayer
- Fictional stories
- Modern-day parables
- Personal testimony
- A hypothetical situation
- Songs related to the message

Discussion