

Preparing and delivering a sermon – Part 002

Introduction

In my first session I gave you practical tips to prepare yourself to preach the Word of God. It does not help you have all the knowledge in the world about religion, if you do not have discipline your messages will be no more than good lectures or sermons.

So this session is going to be the practical, how do I prepare a sermon?

Outline

All sermons start with an outline of some sort. Generally when I start preparing my sermons, I have a very basic outline which I use and that outline is:

- Title – this is a name for your sermon, give it a descriptive name for later referencing. I usually date my sermons so I know when I preached t.
- Opening Scripture reference
- An Introduction – where I will introduce the topic I am about to preach.
- A body of topics – these will be the different sub headings I will have in my sermon to talk about various aspects of the topic
- Application – Here you apply the message to your people
- Conclusion – Here you will end or summarise you sermon

You do not need to follow this specific outline but can use a more detailed one or even your own format. The main reason for an outline is so that when you prepare your sermon you have a “template” from which to work as you create your message.

It is also handy to use an outline as you prepare because this assist you in remembering what to have in your sermon.

Some outlines would even have additional items such as:

- AIM – what are you aiming to achieve by preaching this sermon.
- Response – what response are you trusting God from the people.
- Date, time, place – some Pastors keep detailed records of when, where they preach the sermon, so that next time they go to that congregation, he does not preach the same message again to that congregation.

Tools

The tools that you have access to, will also assist you in preparing your sermon and also cross referencing and looking up scripture.

Some of the tools you will need are:

- A Bible - I suggest a good Bible which has a concordance and cross referencing, also do not be scared to mark you Bible and make notes in the Bible. If you buy yourself a set of crayons you can colour code various topics like Yellow for Heaven, Black for Hell, Blue for promises, Green for the Holy Spirit.
- Note book and pen – after your Bible a good note book where you can make notes in for later sermons or future references. I always have a note book at hand when I go to church and I make detailed notes of the sermons I hear so

that I can remember the topic later but also if I want to use some of the examples in my sermons.

- Quiet place to work – I know this is going to be difficult but if you can get to a place where it is quiet, well lit, warm and dry you will find your inspiration is heighten.

Preparing a Sermon

I am going to practically go step by step through how I prepare my sermons. I must also add that practice makes sermon writing more and easier and once you get into a routine you will find it easier.

I must also add sometimes I prepare a sermon weeks in advance and at other times about 24-48 hours before the time I will preach it.

When I started preaching I would spend a lot of time memorizing my sermon and making short notes that I would use in my sermon. But today I usually sit in front of my computer and type my sermon out because many people ask me for my notes.

Open with prayer

Once you have you have settled in the place where you will prepare you sermon, I pray a short prayer asking the Holy Spirit to give me wisdom and to help me prepare my notes.

Ask God to open the hearts of the people and to be with you as you prepare and then present the sermon to your church.

Select a Topic

Usually I will select a topic in advance, or I pray about what I believe God wants me to preach but say for instance like for this outreach I was asked to preach certain topics, I would select the first topic I feel most comfortable to start with.

Write this topic down at the top of your notes, here you can also add the time, place and when you will preach this message.

Example: Let's say our topic is giving, so I would write something descriptive like "Giving joyfully to God"

Scripture reference

Next I sit and think about what scriptures I know off hand that deal with this topic, even if I do not know the actual chapter and verse, I write a short part from memory and look it up later.

As you prepare, you will continually add more scriptures on the topic as you find them in the Bible or as the Holy Spirit gives you recall.

Example: 2 Corinthians 9:6-15, Malachi 3:8-12, Matthew 6:24-33

Next I would read each scripture in context and ensure I understand what the scriptures are saying

Introduction

Next I write an introduction to my introduction. An introduction introduces your message to the people and if you are preaching a series should include a short recap of the main points of your previous message.

Example: I would do something like this. Many people in Malawi want to be blessed by God. They want to receive financial rewards, physical healing, a special miracle or something special.

Now God is a God of love and He does give gift to everyone but is it not time that you and I start to give back to God? Would you not like it that if you gave someone an expensive present, they gave you one in return?

Would you not feel hurt if you gave something of great value and received something trivial back and even with a bad attitude?

The Bible says in 2 Corinthians 9 that God loves a cheerful giver!

Points

Points are topics that you want to deal with in your message. You might want to make points of:

- Why we must give tithes and offerings
- When we must give tithes and offerings
- Who must give tithes and offerings
- How must we give our tithes and offerings
- How much must we give

Now you take each point and write down what you will talk about in each point

Application

Here you will sum up your sermon and remind the people of the main points. You apply the messages to your church, to their situation, you personalise the message to your audience.

You ask people to respond in some physical way, stand up for prayer, come forward to receive Jesus etc.

Example: Now you have heard what God's Word says about giving, that God loves a cheerful giver, and that He promises to bless you if you give. So today I want to apply this message but asking the ushers to take up the offering **now**.

QUESTIONS