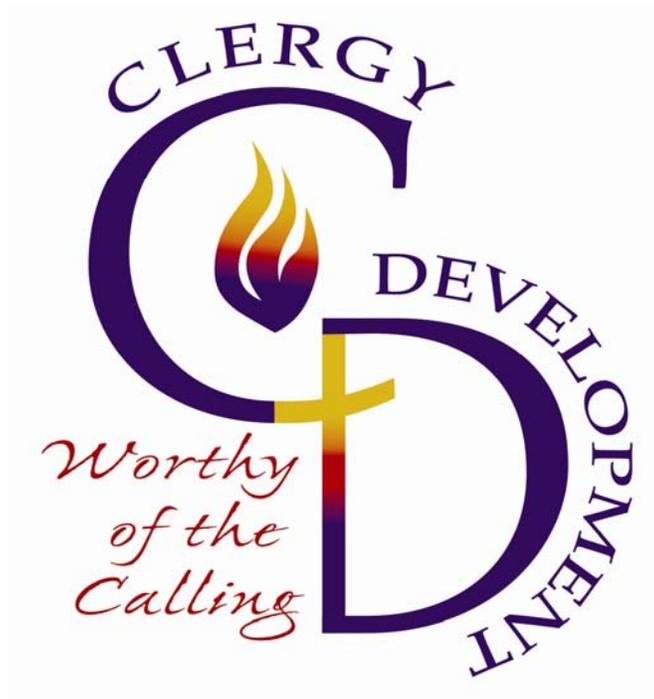


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Faculty Guide

# Preaching the Story of God



Clergy Development  
Church of the Nazarene  
Kansas City, Missouri  
816-333-7000 ext. 2468; 800-306-7651 (USA)  
2002

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The **Modular Course of Study** is an outcome-based curriculum designed to implement the educational paradigm defined by the Breckenridge Consultations. Clergy Development is responsible for maintaining and distributing the Modular Course of Study for the Church of the Nazarene.

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## Series Foreword

### **A Vision for Christian Ministry: Clergy Education in the Church of the Nazarene**

The chief purpose of all persons—indeed, all of the creation—is to worship, love, and serve God. God has made himself known in His deeds of creation and redemption. As the Redeemer, God has called into existence a people: the Church, who embody, celebrate, and declare His name and His ways. The life of God with His people and the world constitutes the Story of God. That story is recorded principally in the Old and New Testaments, and continues to be told by the resurrected Christ who lives and reigns as Head of His Church. The Church lives to declare the whole Story of God. This it does in many ways—in the lives of its members who are even now being transformed by Christ through preaching, the sacraments, in oral testimony, community life, and in mission. All members of the Body of Christ are called to exercise a ministry of witness and service. No one is excluded.

In God's own wisdom He calls some persons to fulfill the ministry of proclaiming the gospel and caring for God's people, in a form referred to as the ordained ministry. God is the initial actor in this call, not humans. In the Church of the Nazarene we believe God calls and persons respond. They do not elect the Christian ministry. All persons whom God calls to the ordained ministry should continue to be amazed that He would call them. They should continue to be humbled by God's call. The *Manual* of the Church of the Nazarene states, "we recognize and hold that the Head of the Church calls some men and women to the more official and public work of the ministry." It adds, "The church, illuminated by the Holy Spirit, will recognize the Lord's call" (*Manual*, Church of the Nazarene, paragraph 400).

An ordained Christian minister has as his or her chief responsibility to declare in many ways the whole Story of God as fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth. His or her charge is to "tend the flock of God . . . not under compulsion, but willingly, not for sordid gain but eagerly. Do not lord it over those in your charge, but be examples to the flock" (1 Pet 5:2-3, NRSV). The minister fulfills this charge under the supervision of Christ, the chief Shepherd (1 Pet 5:4). Such ministry can be fulfilled only after a period of careful

preparation. Indeed, given the ever-changing demands placed upon the minister, "preparation" never ceases.

A person who enters the Christian ministry becomes in a distinct sense a steward of the gospel of God (Titus 1: 7). A steward is one who is entrusted to care for what belongs to another. A steward may be one who takes care of another person or who manages the property of someone else. All Christians are stewards of the grace of God. But in addition, in a peculiar sense a Christian minister is a steward of the "mystery of God," which is Christ, the Redeemer, the Messiah of God. In all faithfulness, the minister is called to "make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel" (Eph 6: 19, NRSV). Like Paul, he or she must faithfully preach "the boundless riches of Christ, and to make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things; so that through the church the wisdom of God in its rich variety might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places" (Eph 3: 8-10, NRSV).

In fulfilling this commission, there is plenty of room for diligence and alertness, but no room for laziness or privilege (Titus 1: 5-9). Good stewards recognize that they are stewards only, not the owners, and that they will give an account of their stewardship to the master. Faithfulness to one's charge and to the Lord who issued it is the steward's principal passion. When properly understood, the Christian ministry should never be thought of as a "job." It is ministry—uniquely Christian ministry. No higher responsibility or joy can be known than to become a steward of the Story of God in Christ's Church. The person who embraces God's call to the ordained ministry will stand in the company of the apostles, the Early Fathers of the Church, the Reformers of the Middle Ages, the Protestant Reformers, and many persons around the world today who joyfully serve as stewards of the gospel of God.

Obviously, one who does not recognize, or who understands but rejects, just how complete and inclusive a minister's stewardship must be, should not start down the path that leads to ordination. In a peculiar sense, a Christian minister must in all respects model the gospel of God. He or she is to "shun" the love of money. Instead, the minister must "pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, gentleness." He or she must "fight the good fight of the faith" and "take hold of the eternal life, to which you were called" (1 Tim 6: 11-12, NRSV).

Hence, the Church of the Nazarene believes “the minister of Christ is to be in all things a pattern to the flock—in punctuality, discretion, diligence, earnestness; ‘in purity, understanding, patience and kindness; in the Holy Spirit and in sincere love; in truthful speech and in the power of God; with weapons of righteousness in the right hand and in the left’ (2 Cor 6:6-7)” (*Manual*, Church of the Nazarene, paragraph 401.1). The minister of Christ “must be above reproach as God’s steward, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain, <sup>8</sup>but hospitable, loving what is good, sensible, just, devout, self-controlled, <sup>9</sup>holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching . . . able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict.” (Titus 1:7-9, NASB).

In order to be a good steward of God’s Story one must, among other things, give oneself to careful and systematic study, both before and after ordination. This will occur not because he or she is forced to do so, but out of a love for God and His people, the world He is working to redeem, and out of an inescapable sense of responsibility. It cannot be too strongly emphasized that the attitude one brings to preparation for the ministry reveals much about what he or she thinks of God, the gospel, and Christ’s Church. The God who became incarnate in Jesus and who made a way of salvation for all gave His very best in the life, death, and resurrection of His Son. In order to be a good steward, a Christian minister must respond in kind. Jesus told numerous parables about stewards who did not recognize the importance of what had been entrusted to them (Mt 21:33-44; 25:14-30; Mk 13:34-37; Lk 12:35-40; 19:11-27; 20:9-18).

Preparation for ministry in Christ’s Church—one’s education in all its dimensions— should be pursued in full light of the responsibility before God and His people that the ministry involves. This requires that one take advantage of the best educational resources at his or her disposal.

The Church of the Nazarene recognizes how large is the responsibility associated with the ordained Christian ministry and accepts it fully. Part of the way we recognize our responsibility before God is seen in the requirements we make for ordination and the practice of ministry. We believe the call to and practice of Christian ministry is a gift, not a right or privilege. We believe God holds a minister to the highest of religious, moral, personal, and professional standards. We are not reluctant to expect those standards to be

observed from the time of one's call until his or her death. We believe Christian ministry should first be a form of worship. The practice of ministry is both an offering to God and a service to His Church. By the miracle of grace, the work of the ministry can become a means of grace for God's people (Rom 12: 1-3). One's education for ministry is also a form of worship.

The modules comprising the Course of Study that may lead a person to candidacy for ordination have been carefully designed to prepare one for the kind of ministry we have described. Their common purpose is to provide a holistic preparation for entrance into the ordained Christian ministry. They reflect the Church's wisdom, experience, and responsibility before God. The modules show how highly the Church of the Nazarene regards the gospel, the people of God, the world for which Christ gave His life, and Christian ministry. Completing the modules will normally take three or four years. But no one should feel pressured to meet this schedule.

The careful study for which the modules call should show that before God and His Church one accepts the stewardly responsibility associated with ordained ministry.

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## Introduction

### **Intended Use of This Faculty Guide**

This faculty guide serves as an instructor's guide for teaching principles of Preaching the Story of God to adult learners who are preparing for ordination in the Church of the Nazarene. The content is based on intended outcomes defined through the collaborative process conducted at Breckenridge, CO, USA, between 1990 and 1997. The materials prepare the pastor-teacher to present the topic by providing background reading, lesson plans, lectures, instructions to the teacher, and teaching resources for each class session. In most lessons complete lectures, questions for guided discussions, and defined learning activities are provided.

The pastor-teacher who will lead this module should hold a master's degree. Ideally, the pastor-teacher should have participated as a student in a module using this material prior to teaching the material to others. This faculty guide assumes that the pastor-teacher has some basic understanding of the Bible, hermeneutics, and preaching.

It is further assumed that learners participating in a module using this material will be high school graduates and be adult learners beyond the traditional college age. Learners are assumed to be motivated to learn, and to have adult life-experiences. No prior college classroom experience is assumed on the part of the learners.

### **Acknowledgments**

Every module is the accumulation of effort by many people. Someone writes the original manuscript, others offer suggestions to strengthen the content and make the material more easily understood, and finally an editor formats the module for publication. This module is no different. Many people have contributed to this module. Every effort has been made to represent accurately the original intent of the principal contributors.

### **Principal Contributor**

The principal contributor for this module is Dan Boone, the current pastor of College Church of the Nazarene, Bourbonnais, IL USA. Dr. Boone also serves as adjunct professor at Olivet Nazarene University and Nazarene

Theological Seminary. He holds a D.Min. from McCormick Theological Seminary, an M.Div. from Nazarene Theological Seminary, and a B.A. from Trevecca Nazarene University. The following acknowledgments are his.

Many people have contributed to this manual. I wish to express my appreciation to the following:

- Algie and Ruth Boone, my parents, who shaped me by the stories of grace around a family altar.
- Rev. Fred Sartin, who mentored me as a young preacher. He took me with him as he supplied pulpits across the state of Mississippi. At the age of 14, he had me in front of small congregations preaching the good news of Jesus. The discussions in his car on the way home from those services may have been the best seminary education I received.
- I am the product of many teachers. I owe deep indebtedness to H. Ray Dunning, Mildred Wynkoop, William Greathouse, Willard Taylor, Charles Isbel, Dee Freeborn, and Don Wardlaw. In addition to these I am thankful for the teaching faculties of Trevecca Nazarene University, Nazarene Theological Seminary, and McCormick Theological Seminary.
- And the writers . . . aaah, the writers. Fred Craddock, Thomas Long, Barbara Brown Taylor, Fredrick Buechner, Paul Scott Wilson, Henri Nouwen, Bob Benson, Reuben Welch, Kathleen Norris, Garrison Keillor, Henry Mitchell, Eugene Lowery. These have been my friends.
- But preaching ultimately resides in the congregation. I am indebted to the good people of Nazarene churches in McComb, MS; New Salem, MS; Nashville, TN; Overland Park, KS; Raleigh, NC; and Bourbonnais, IL. In retrospect, they shaped me more than I them.
- My most honest critics of preaching have been my family. Denise, my wife of 28 years, has lived on a steady diet of my sermons. God bless her! She has improved many of them by her life. She is my best friend. Our three daughters had one pastor for most of their life. They are my deepest delight. They are one big reason I have worked so hard to preach well. Hopefully, the imprint of the gospel is indelible.
- These acknowledgments run deeper than personal gratitude. They are a way of saying the author of this teaching manual is a person formed by the community of Jesus. It is my hope this curriculum will empower future preachers of the great holiness message of the Church of the Nazarene and the people of God around the world.

### **Responder**

Each module was reviewed by at least one content specialist to ensure that the content did not represent a single, narrow view or opinion. The responder provided suggestions the principal contributor could integrate into this module.

David Basic was the responder for this module. Rev. Basic currently serves as senior pastor at Central Church of the Nazarene in Lenexa, KS. Rev. Basic serves as part-time professor of Preaching at Nazarene Theological Seminary. He is also a co-editor and frequent contributor to *The Preacher's Magazine* ([www.preachersmagazine.org](http://www.preachersmagazine.org)), a publication of Clergy Development provided by Nazarene Publishing House.

### **Revision History**

- Third Quarter 2005*, Revision 5, the current version,
- Module guides edited for gender inclusiveness
- First Quarter 2004*, Revision 4,
- module title changed from *Preaching to Preaching the Story of God*
- Fourth Quarter 2003*. Revision 3,
- copyright transferred to Nazarene Publishing House
- Fourth Quarter 2002*. Revision 2,
- copyright was transferred to Clergy Development
- Summer 2002*. In Revision 1,
- the Lesson Overview, Introduction, Body, Close format was established and a student guide was created containing all teaching resources.

### **About This Module**

This module serves to train the student in one of the most important tasks of pastoral ministry, the preaching of the Word of God. This task is considered foundational to fulfilling the calling of God to the ordained ministry. The Apostle Paul illustrated the importance of proclamation in his charge to Timothy: "Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage, with great patience and careful instruction" (2 Tim 4:2).

This module addresses the need for preparation of the preacher as a necessary prerequisite to the preparation and delivery of the sermon, so both the preacher and the spoken message will have authority. This module will equip the student to go through the process of sermon construction from a hermeneutical study of the biblical text, through the stages of development, until the sermon is ready to be delivered. Attention will be given to the preaching event as the oral culmination of

the sermon process, including the call for a decision. In addition, the module will aid the student in understanding the need for planning a preaching program that addresses the needs of the congregation and aids in the overall worship experience of the people of God. The skills developed from this module will also help the minister to be an effective teacher of the Bible to the church.

For maximum benefit, this module should be taken after the student has completed modules in Introduction to Christian Ministry, Oral and Written Communication, Old Testament, New Testament, and Biblical Hermeneutics, since a working knowledge in these areas will be assumed in the instruction.

Much of this module makes the assumption that the student will understand basic exegetical and interpretive issues regarding a text. This is as it should be. If the student has not had that foundation, much of what he or she is taught will be more difficult to grasp. It is crucial that the student has taken Biblical Hermeneutics before taking this class.

### **Module Materials**

We have tried to design this module to be flexible and easy to adapt to your situation. For each lesson, there are several support pieces, which we have called simply "resources." These can be used in many different ways. Resources have been reproduced in the student guide for this module. The instructor will want a copy of the student guide for his or her own use.

1. The instructor may photocopy these to use for his or her own lecture outlines. There is space to add notes from the faculty guide, from the textbook, or from the additional suggested readings. Add in your own illustrations too!
2. The pages may be photocopied onto overhead transparencies for use in class.
3. These pages appear in the Student Guide for the students' use and participation.

One reason for developing this module is for the benefit of extension education. We understand that teachers all over the world are called upon to teach courses not in their area of specialty, but they teach them because they want to see pastors trained and leaders developed for the church. Extension education is basic to rapid church growth. We want to provide this as a resource for extension educators. If it helps others along the way, that's fine too.

Another reason for developing this module is to equip indigenous faculty. We believe a class like this is best taught and contextualized by someone from within the culture of the students. Many fine teachers, who are leaders in our churches around the world, do not have higher degrees in theology but have the skills to teach a module like this effectively. We want to set them free to do so, and in so doing, to actually improve the module and make it more dynamic and meaningful for their context than it would have been had we held onto it and insisted on teaching it ourselves.

## Intended Outcomes for the Module

The *Manual*, Church of the Nazarene, and the *International Sourcebook on Developmental Standards for Ordination* define educational preparation for ordination. Additionally, each region of the International Church of the Nazarene has developed educational guidelines to qualify educational programs for ordination offered within their region.

The USA Region *Sourcebook for Ministerial Development* defines outcomes for the overall ministerial development program. The module assists candidates in developing these skills. Other modules in the program may also address the same outcomes. The specific outcomes that relate to this module are:

- CN16 Ability to identify the steps of historical literary, and theological analysis used in exegesis
- CN17 Ability to exegete a passage of Scripture using the steps listed above
- CP1 Ability to communicate publicly through multiple methods (oral, written, media, etc.) with clarity and creativity for the sake of fostering meaning
- CP2 Ability to write clearly and in grammatically correct manner in the modes of discourse used in the ministry
- CP3 Ability to speak coherently and cogently in the modes of discourse appropriate for the various ministry contexts
- CP22 (Elder) Ability to prepare, organize, and deliver biblically sound sermons using appropriate techniques and skills in culturally appropriate ways
- CP24 (Elder) Ability to assess the strengths and weaknesses of current homiletical models in light of enduring theological (Bible, doctrine, philosophy) and contextual (history, psychology,

- sociological) perspectives
- CP21 Ability to envision, order, participate, and lead in contextualized theologically grounded worship
- CP15 Ability to think globally and engage cross-culturally for the purpose of mission
- CP16 Ability to communicate evangelistically and to be engaged with and equip others in personal and congregational evangelism
- CX1 Ability to discover sociological dynamics and trends and to apply that information to specific ministry settings
- CX2 Ability to analyze and describe congregations and communities
- CX4 Ability to explain the operational culture
- CX9 Ability to apply historical analysis to the life of a local congregation in order to describe its historical and cultural context

Additional intended learning outcomes are:

- The ability to organize, prepare, and deliver biblically valid sermons using skills and techniques in culturally appropriate ways
- The ability to identify and select the most appropriate approach to developing a preaching text, such as narrative, inductive, deductive, or other sermon forms
- The ability to preach with cultural and spiritual sensitivity in order to address the needs of the audience
- The ability to prepare and consistently preach sermons which effectively call listeners to new life in Christ and to entire sanctification
- The ability to appropriately express pastoral care and a call to discipleship through a balanced and thoughtful preaching plan
- The ability to incorporate the sermon into the planning of the entire worship program
- The ability to be sensitive to the verbal and non-verbal responses that are part of the two-way process of effective communication
- The ability to process and integrate the behavioral and character implications of the truth of the sermon into the life of the preacher

## Suggested Meeting Schedule

The module lessons are designed to last 90 minutes each. Each lesson is complete in itself with an opening, a middle, and a closing. They are sequential. Each lesson assumes the learners have mastered material

presented in previous lessons. The lessons can be grouped in a variety of ways to accommodate the schedules of your learners.

When lessons are taught in the same meeting, instructors will need to adjust homework assignments because participants will not have time between lessons to prepare homework. It is very important for the instructor always to be looking ahead and planning for upcoming lessons.

The in-class time for the course is 18 to 22 hours plus the time required for each student to preach and be evaluated (28 to 33 minutes per student). Here are three suggestions (out of many) for ways the meetings can be organized.

1. Resident campus. The class can meet one day a week for 90 minutes. Present one lesson per meeting time. This model is most effective for teaching preaching. It allows the assignments to have time to settle into patterns of relating to Scripture. In this model additional homework assignments may be considered. Total time: 14 to 15 weeks.
2. Extension education. The class can meet one day (or evening) each week for 3 to 3½ hours. Present two lessons per meeting with a break period between lessons. Participants will need to travel to a centralized location for meetings, so make it worth their time. Total time: 7 to 8 weeks.
3. Intensive module. The class can meet five consecutive days for 6 to 7 hours per day. Present two lessons in the morning with a break period between lessons, and two lessons in the afternoon with another break period between the lessons. Participants must complete reading assignments before arriving at the module site, and written assignments can be submitted 30 to 60 days following the class meeting. Total meeting time: 4 to 5 days depending on the number who will preach and be evaluated. (Elapsed time including reading and written assignments: 1 to 2 months.)

The module is divided into 13 instructional lessons. Additional lessons must be scheduled to allow each student to give a 15- to 20-minute sermon and to be evaluated on the sermon. Space is given in the following chart for you to fill in the dates when your class sessions will meet.

| Date | Lesson   |
|------|--|
|      | 1. Introduction to Preaching                   |
|      | 2. Listening to Scripture                      |
|      | 3. Asking Questions of the Scripture Text      |
|      | 4. Looking for Trouble                         |
|      | 5. Working with Images, Incidents, and Issues  |
|      | 6. Pausing to Let the Text Speak to Me         |
|      | 7. Consulting the Scholars                     |
|      | 8. Exegeting the Congregation                  |
|      | 9. Selecting the Form of the Sermon            |
|      | 10. Analyzing Sermon Form                      |
|      | 11. Writing the Sermon and Preparing to Preach |
|      | 12. The Place of the Sermon in Worship         |
|      | 13. Preaching                                  |
|      | 14. Preaching (Optional)                       |
|      | 15. Preaching (Optional)                       |

## About This Faculty Guide

*Note: It is critical to remember that active participation by the learners will enhance their learning. That means you will not be an information giver. This module is not about you. The focus of the module is helping students learn. Your role is to design an environment in which your students will learn. Sometimes you will give lectures. At other times you will guide discussions or assign your students to work in groups. These kinds of activities keep the participants actively involved in the learning process. Learning is a team activity.*

The faculty guide has been written to guide an instructor as he or she prepares to teach this module. It contains complete lesson plans and resources to provide a solid educational design for the topic. You will need to prepare for each lesson well in advance of the meeting time. Often there are background reading suggestions for the instructor, or you may know additional reference materials you want to interject into the lesson. Questions intended to be answered or discussed by the students are in italic type.

**A two-column format was chosen for the faculty guide.** The right-hand column contains the content of lectures, descriptions of activities, and questions to keep students involved. The left-hand column is to give

suggested instructions to you, the teacher. It also contains examples you can use to illustrate concepts in the lectures. Whenever possible you should use examples from your own experience and from your students' real-life context.

Large white space has been left in the left column to allow you to write notes and personalize the faculty guide.

**The faculty guide has three major components:** the Faculty Guide Introduction, the Lesson Plans, and the Teaching Resources. The Introduction and Lesson Plans are in this document and the Resources are contained in the companion student guide. You are reading the Faculty Guide Introduction now. It provides a teaching philosophy for adult learners, background information for organizing the module, and ideas about conducting the lessons.

**Each section of the faculty guide is numbered** with a two-part page number. Page 5 of Lesson 3 would be numbered "3-5." The first number is the lesson number and the second is the page number within the lesson. Each resource sheet is numbered for the lesson in which the resource is first used. The first resource page for Lesson 2 is numbered "2-1."

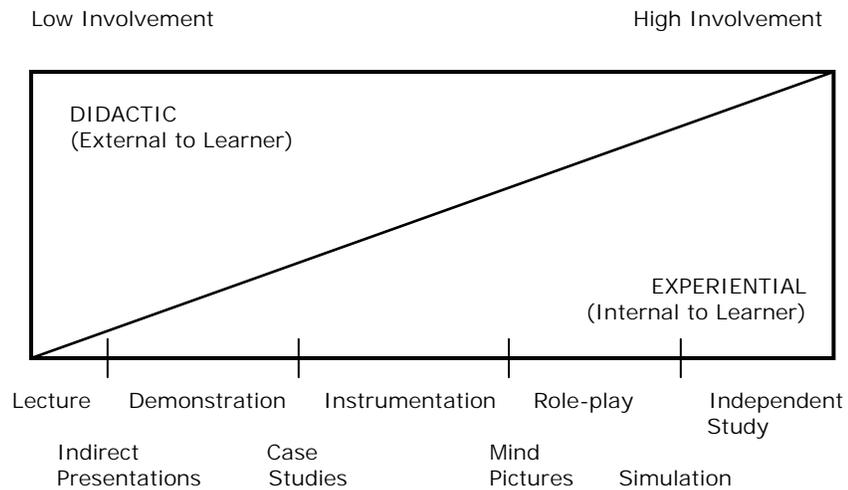
**The Lesson Plans are complete in themselves.** They contain an Overview, Introduction, Body, and Close. The Lesson Overview provides you with a planning tool for preparing and conducting each lesson.

*The Lesson Introduction* should get participants' attention, orient them to the place this lesson holds in the overall module, define the intended objectives, and prepare them for the learning activities.

*The Lesson Body* is the core message of the lesson. The key is to keep the learners actively involved. Even in lectures, ask questions that prompt learners to think about the content, not just hear the lecture.

The following chart shows a continuum of learner involvement in different teaching methods. Lecture requires the least learner involvement, and independent study requires the most learner involvement.

## METHODS CONTINUUM



A variety of learning activities are used to present information and allow learners to experiment with their new knowledge. Each learner has a set of preferred methods of learning and has different life experiences that can color or filter what one actually learns. A variety of learning activities help adults adapt to the learning task—by hearing, by doing, by reading, by discussing, or by combinations of these. The learners should have opportunities to test and clarify their new learning by talking with the instructor and other participants, and applying new knowledge in real or contrived situations as soon as possible.

*The Lesson Close* provides a time for answering questions, reviewing the information, connecting this lesson to future lessons, making assignments, and punctuating the finish. The close does not provide any new information but gives a sense of closure to the lesson.

**Homework assignments** are important learning activities. They provide the student with an opportunity to synthesize classroom learning. Working on these assignments also extends the learning experience beyond the time constraints of class time.

The student—especially the adult student—needs frequent and timely feedback about his or her learning. While interaction with other students helps the learner refine what he or she is learning, feedback from the instructor is also critical to the quality of learning and ultimately to his or her persistence in the Course of Study.

It is your responsibility as the instructor for this module to provide students with timely responses to homework assignments in order to enhance the learning process. Reviewing and responding to homework will also provide you with critical information about what your students are learning and whether or not the teaching-learning process is succeeding.

Since these modules are preparing the learner for ordination rather than leading to a university degree, a letter grade may not be appropriate. Your response to the learners' assignments should be thoughtful and in most cases it should be written. Its purpose will always be to refine and enhance the learning of the student.

**Teaching Resources** are reproduced in the student guide. Each resource sheet is numbered for the lesson in which the resource is first used. The first resource page for Lesson 2 is numbered "2-1."

You must determine how each resource will be used in your context. If an overhead projector is available, transparencies can be made by replacing the paper in your photocopy machine with special transparency material.

The student guide for this module contains the series foreword, acknowledgments, syllabus, copies of all resources, lesson objectives, and assignments. A copy of the student guide should be made available to each student.

**Recommendations for printing.** You may print this faculty guide if desired. The introduction and lesson plan segments are formatted for printing on both sides of the paper. The resource pages of the student guide should be printed on one side for use as transparency or handout masters.

The student guide should be printed on one side.

## A Hidden Agenda

### **Hidden curriculum issues . . . because the way we teach teaches**

In each session, there are certain methodological and environmental things to consider.

**First**, consider the classroom arrangement. Whenever possible, the room should be arranged to encourage a sense of community. Either the group should sit in a circle or around a table. If the group is very large, chairs can be arranged for easily moving into clusters for discussion.

**Second**, consider how you present yourself as teacher. Standing behind a lectern with your students facing you in rows says you are above the students and have something to give them (although in a very large group this standing to teach may be unavoidable). Sitting as part of the circle makes the teacher a co-learner at the same level as the students. Speak naturally. Pay close attention to your students, and value the things they share. Learn their names. Encourage participation. Remember that you are modeling for them, and the way you teach will teach them far more than the words you say.

**Third**, invite the Holy Spirit's presence in the classroom. Do this each time the class meets.

**Fourth**, the sharing-of-stories activity does more than help the students begin to reflect on their own Christian experiences. It is a way to build community between the students. This is more than an exercise to be checked off. It is vital to set the tone of your intentional community.

When meeting times exceed 90 minutes, consider adding break times. The break between segments is an important time for community building. Remain available to the students during this time. Consider offering coffee or tea during this time as a way to encourage fellowship.

## Journaling: The Key to Spiritual Formation

Journaling is a major assignment of each module in the Course of Study. It is the integrating element that helps draw spiritual meaning and ministerial application from the content of each module whether the module concentrates on content, competency, character, or context. It ensures that the "Be" component of "Be, Know, and Do" is present in every module in which one participates. What is journaling and how can it be meaningfully accomplished?

*The Syllabus contains this explanation of journaling. Journaling provides the spiritual formation component for the*

### **Journaling: A Tool for Personal Reflection and Integration**

*module and is an integral part of the learning experience.*

*Have students read the journaling section during the Syllabus review in Lesson 1 and emphasize that journaling is an assignment for each lesson in the module.*

*When giving assignments in each lesson, assign journal writing each time the group meets.*

Participating in the Course of Study is the heart of your preparation for ministry. To complete each module you will be required to listen to lectures, read books and articles, participate in discussions, and write papers. Content mastery is the goal.

An equally important part of ministerial preparation is spiritual formation. Some might choose to call spiritual formation devotions, while others might refer to it as growth in grace. Whichever title you place on the process, it is the intentional cultivation of your relationship with God. The module work will be helpful in adding to your knowledge, your skills, and your ability to do ministry. The spiritual formation work will weave all you learn into the fabric of your being, allowing your education to flow freely from your head through your heart to those you serve.

Although there are many spiritual disciplines to help you cultivate your relationship with God, journaling is the critical skill that ties them all together. Journaling simply means keeping a record of your experiences and the insights you have gained along the way. It is a discipline because it does require a good deal of work faithfully to spend daily time in your journal. Many people confess this is a practice they tend to push aside when pressed by their many other responsibilities. Even five minutes a day spent journaling can make a major difference in your education and your spiritual development. Let me explain.

Consider journaling time spent with your best friend. Onto the pages of a journal you will pour out your candid responses to the events of the day, the insights you gained from class, a quote gleaned from a book, and an 'ah-ha' that came to you as two ideas connected. This is not the same as keeping a diary, since a diary seems to be a chronicle of events without the personal dialogue. The journal is the repository for all of your thoughts, reactions, prayers, insights, visions, and plans. Though some people like to keep complex journals with sections for each type of reflection, others find a simple running commentary more helpful. In either case, record the date and the location at the beginning of every journal entry. It will help you when it comes time to review your thoughts.

It is important to chat briefly about the logistics of journaling. All you will need is a pen and paper to begin. Some folks prefer loose-leaf paper that can be placed in a three-ring binder, others like spiral-bound notebooks, while others enjoy using composition

books. Whichever style you choose, it is important to develop a pattern that works for you.

Establishing a time and a place for writing in your journal is essential. If there is no space etched out for journaling, it will not happen with the regularity needed to make it valuable. It seems natural to spend time journaling after the day is over and you can sift through all that has transpired. Yet family commitments, evening activities, and fatigue militate against this time slot. Morning offers another possibility. Sleep filters much of the previous day's experiences, and processes deep insights, that can be recorded first thing in the morning. In conjunction with devotions, journaling enables you to begin to weave your experiences with the Word, and also with module material that has been steeping on the back burner of your mind. You will probably find that carrying your journal will allow you to jot down ideas that come to you at odd times throughout the day.

It seems we have been suggesting that journaling is a handwritten exercise. Some may be wondering about doing their work on a computer. Traditionally, there is a special bond between hand, pen, and paper. It is more personal, direct, and aesthetic. And it is flexible, portable, and available.

With regular use, your journal is the repository of your journey. As important as it is to make daily entries, it is equally important to review your work. Read over each week's record at the end of the week. Make a summary statement and note movements of the Holy Spirit or your own growth. Do a monthly review of your journal every 30 days. This might best be done on a half-day retreat where you can prayerfully focus on your thoughts in solitude and silence. As you do this, you will begin to see the accumulated value of the Word, your module work, and your experience in ministry all coming together in ways you had not considered possible. This is integration—weaving together faith development and learning. Integration moves information from your head to your heart so that ministry is a matter of being rather than doing. Journaling will help you answer the central question of education: "Why do I do what I do when I do it?"

Journaling really is the linchpin in ministerial preparation. Your journal is the chronicle of your journey into spiritual maturity as well as content mastery. These volumes will hold the rich insights that will pull your education together. A journal is the tool

for integration. May you treasure the journaling process!

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## *Lesson 1*

# Introduction to Preaching

## *Lesson Overview*

### **Schedule**

| Start Time | Task or Topic                                 | Learning Activity | Materials Needed              |
|------------|---|-------------------|-------------------------------|
| 0:00       | Introduction                                  | Orient            | Student Guide<br>Resource 1-1 |
| 1:00       | Theology of Preaching                         | Lecture           |                               |
| 1:05       | Bible Study                                   | Group Exercise    | Resource 1-2                  |
| 1:15       | Fundamental<br>Convictions about<br>Preaching | Lecture           | Resource 1-3                  |
| 1:20       | Lesson Close                                  | Review, Assign    | Student Guide                 |

### **Suggested Reading for Instructor**

Craddock, Fred B. *Preaching*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1985, chs. 1 and 3.

# Lesson Introduction

(60 minutes)

## Orientation

*Refer students to Resource 1-1.*

*Open the class with these questions.*

*Give each person time to share their "balcony" preachers. List the names of these people, their preaching style, and their characteristics on a continuing list. Review similarities and differences.*

*Repeat the exercise with the opposite questions.*

*Ask the class not to **name** these preachers, only describe them. Be careful not to allow this to become personal in any way.*

*Depending on class size, this opening exercise can take up to one hour. It is important to create a climate of sharing, conversation, and peer learning. The instructor should take careful notes on the background of each person. This will allow you to teach from within their experiences during the sessions that follow.*

## Learner Objectives

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

*Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.*

This class has come together from a variety of experiences. Each of you already has a theology of preaching imbedded in your thinking.

*Who are the preachers in your mental balcony?  
Who has preached in a way you aspire to preach?  
Whose preaching became formative in your call to ministry?  
How would you describe their preaching?  
What personal characteristic made each one a great preacher to you?*

*Who are the preachers in your mental basement?  
How did their preaching wound you?  
In what ways do you want to avoid their pattern?  
What characteristics made them ineffective?*

Our inherent theology of preaching is derived from good and bad models. Compare the two lists of preaching styles and characteristics.

Take the next five minutes to write out an answer to this question.

*What do we already know about preaching before beginning this class?*

In groups of three, share and discuss your response with each other.

At the end of this lesson, participants should be able to

- remember the preachers who have shaped them.
- evaluate the preachers' influence on them
- define the role of preacher, listeners, the Scriptures, and the Holy Spirit in preaching

# Lesson Body

## Lecture: Theology of Preaching

(5 minutes)

*This lecture summarizes the work of Fred B. Craddock in his book Preaching (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1985), chs. 1 and 3.*

### It Proceeds from Silence

Preaching is the revelation of God, who does not always speak, but does address His people when they gather. It requires that the minister listen in the silence until he or she hears the word God speaks.

### It Is Heard in a Whisper

God speaks in ways that not everyone hears. You must be listening carefully. God speaks in creation, Scripture, Jesus, and the Spirit. God does not shout people into submission, nor overwhelm them with evidence. Preachers lean forward to hear the whisperings of God. We must be patient with those who do not readily hear the whispering of God. Not even the disciples got it at first. We are often slow to respond. Yelling louder does not make it easier to hear. An elderly grandmother is often not hard of hearing, but hard of listening. She doesn't want to hear what is being said. Leave room in preaching for those who do not have ears yet.

### It Is Shouted from the Husetop

Matthew 10:27 says, "What I tell you in the dark, speak in the daylight; what is whispered in your ear, proclaim from the husetops."

This does mean preach loud. At the ear of the preacher, it is a whisper. At the lips it is a shout. Look at the sower of the seed parable. Preaching is public proclamation with confidence in the seed. Jesus sends us out to preach. Preaching is urgent, for all to hear whether they hear or not. It is passionate because it is about God's love for us. Preaching confronts a kingdom of darkness and threatens its grip on God's creatures and creation.

Proceeds from silence—heard as a whisper—shouted from the husetop.

The seed makes its own way into the soil. Our confidence is not in our own ability, but in the power of the seed we hold in our hands. We cannot make people

hear. We are not responsible for their response. But we are responsible to raise their concerns and questions, to voice their wonderings, to build a bridge from Bible times to ours, and to remove the obstacles to hearing.

## Small-Group Exercise

(10 minutes)

*Refer students to Resource 1-2.*

Divide into groups of three. Your group should consist of members not in the first small-group activity today. You will have 10 minutes to discuss Resource 1-2.

Read Mark 4:1-20.

*What does this teach us about preaching?*

Note how verses 3-8 focus on the sower/preacher.

Note how verses 13-20 focus on the soil.

## Lecture: Fundamental Convictions about Preaching

(5 minutes)

### The Preacher

The preacher is in a relationship of trust and intimacy, making it impossible to separate character and performance. Preaching is to some extent self-disclosure. It should enhance your journey with God. There are expectations that the preacher be a person of faith, passion, authority, and grace.

*Refer students to Resource 1-3.*

- If you have faith, you are believable.
- If you have passion, you are persuasive.
- If you have authority, you understand your calling, gift, and ordination.
- If you have grace, you are one who attends to God.

### The Listeners

They are active participants. Preaching is located not on your lips but in their ears. It is more about getting the good news heard than getting it said. Too many preachers are satisfied to “say it well.” But we are called to “get it heard.”

The message must be appropriate to the listeners. A sermon fits a group of people at a specific time. The listener should be given something to do, think, feel, and decide. Sermons should speak for the congregation as well as to the congregation. We are stating the historic convictions of the congregation. While each sermon will challenge hearers to new obedience, it will also affirm past and present obedience.

## **The Scriptures**

The Scriptures are the living voice of the congregation. Preaching is rooted in this voice. It is in the Scriptures that we have been told who we are and what our lives are about. We know this voice that speaks to us from the Word of God. It is a familiar voice. Preaching is not speeches about things, but the word of God. The Scriptures themselves critique preaching. They tell us not only what but also how to preach. It is a primary obligation of the preacher to interpret Scripture. The primary question about a sermon is, "Does it say and do what the biblical text says and does?"

## **The Holy Spirit**

The partnership between God and the preacher is an important one! The Holy Spirit helps us in the study, in the pulpit, and in the response. Romans 1:16 tells us that we are "not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for salvation." The preached word is the place of God's activity. But the help of the Holy Spirit does not reduce our responsibility.

# Lesson Close

(10 minutes)

## Overview

*Give an overview of the entire course.*

*Note that depending on the size of the class and the time required for each one to preach, this module may require 12-14 lessons.*

Open your Student Guides to the opening pages.

During the next 10 lessons we will develop 10 specific skills that will help us preach well. The goal of the class is that each person will stand before the class during the last class sessions and preach, using the skills developed in class. We will evaluate each person and offer helpful feedback. The goal of the class is not to know about preaching, but to preach.

## Review

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

Look at the learner objectives for this lesson. Can you

- remember the preachers who have shaped you?
- evaluate their influence on you?
- define the role of preacher, listeners, the Scriptures, and the Holy Spirit in preaching?

## Assign Homework

*Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.*

*You will evaluate these between class sessions, being careful to discern the strength of calling and their understanding of the role of the church. You will discover common issues to address in the next class.*

Write a three-page paper answering the following questions:

1. How do you know you are called to preach?
2. What is the basis for your authority to preach?  
Read: Jer 1:7-9; Mt 28:18-20; 2 Tim 3:16; 2 Pet 1:16-21; 2 Tim 1:3-14; Acts 1:8
3. How do you understand the role of the church in your call to preach and ordination?

Read Resource 1-4, "Good Preaching Comes from Good People." List the two most important qualities you would look for in a pastoral candidate. Write a one- to two-page paper that defines the evidence you think would show a candidate possesses these two qualities. Why do you feel these qualities deserve the board's consideration? At the beginning of the next lesson you will share your paper with a small group and then hand the paper into the instructor.

Journal Prompts

Why has God chosen me to do the work of a preacher?

Reflect on your most recent sermon. How does it measure up to what was discussed in this lesson?

Reflect on the Bible passage that was most meaningful to you.

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## Lesson 2

# Listening to Scripture

## Lesson Overview

### Schedule

| Start Time | Task or Topic      | Learning Activity | Materials Needed             |
|------------|--------------------|-------------------|------------------------------|
| 0:00       | Introduction       | Orient            | Student Guide                |
| 0:10       | Living Words       | Lecture           | Resource 2-1<br>Resource 2-2 |
| 0:15       | Bible Study        | Group Activity    |                              |
| 0:35       | Engaging Scripture | Lecture           | Resource 2-3                 |
| 0:40       | Storytelling       | Group Activity    |                              |
| 1:15       | Closing Thoughts   | Sharing           | Resource 2-4                 |
| 1:20       | Lesson Close       | Review, Assign    | Student Guide                |

### Suggested Reading for Instructor

Craddock, Fred B. *Preaching*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1985.

Meyers, Robin R. *With Ears to Hear: Preaching as Self-Persuasion*. Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 1993.

Troeger, Thomas. *Imaging a Sermon*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1990.

# Lesson Introduction

(10 minutes)

## Accountability

*Divide students into groups of three.*

*Call for reports from each small group. Tabulate the qualities selected by the class.*

*Collect both homework papers from each student.*

One of your assignments was to choose the two most important qualities to look for in a new pastor. Your group has five minutes to agree on the two qualities. After five minutes, one of the members of your team will share your findings with the class.

## Orientation

*If the movie Dead Poets Society is available, watch the scene where Mr. Keating (Robin Williams) enters the class whistling and takes his class into the hallway. There he lectures them on the meaning of Walt Whitman's poem "gather your rosebuds while ye may. . ." He tells them to listen to the whisper of the pictures. The idea is that the boys in these ancient pictures still have something to say.*

*If this video is not available, gather some old photos of long-dead people who are recognizable to the class. Ask them to study the pictures quietly, to listen carefully to the past.*

*What do these pictures say?*

## Learner Objectives

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

*Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.*

To help students

- practice the art of listening to a text through the senses and articulate the experience

# Lesson Body

## Lecture: Living Words

(5 minutes)

The Bible is often viewed as an ancient book of ancient words. The people who wrote those words are long dead and buried. If the Bible is thought to be a collection of dead words, it has little to say to living humans. But, what if the Holy Spirit still whispers to us through these words? What if these words still have the breath of God in them?

Our understanding of life and spirit are rooted in the same Hebrew word, *ruach*. God breathed *ruach* into us and we became living beings. The Holy *Ruach* of God is the third person of the Trinity. The Spirit that speaks to us in the old words of Scripture is the same Spirit breathed into our clay bodies making us alive. To be a living soul is to be made capable of receiving *ruach*.

*Refer students to Resource 2-1.*

*The quotes that are part of the resources in this lesson should be displayed as overhead visuals.*

Indeed, the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing until it divides soul from spirit, joints from marrow; it is able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And before him no creature is hidden, but all are naked and laid bare to the eyes of the one to whom we must render an account. (Heb 4:12-13, NRSV)

The Scriptures were first experienced as spoken words, not written words. The Bible was “speaking” before it was “writings.” The one necessary fundamental for speaking is breath. You cannot make human vocal sound without breathing. Note the different spoken forms of Scripture:

*Refer students to Resource 2-2.*

- The stories of the patriarchs and matriarchs
- The wise “sayings” of Proverbs
- The sermons of the prophets
- The poetry and songs of the Psalms
- The cries and laments of the Psalms
- The Gospels as oral stories
- The letters to the churches written to be read

The Bible was meant to be heard before it was meant to be read.

Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of the prophecy, and blessed are those who hear and who keep what is written in it. (Rev 1:3, NRSV)

## Group Activity

(20 minutes)

Read Matthew 8:28-9:1 silently to yourself.

Close your Bible and write down what you remember.

Share your list with the person next to you.

*After the class is divided, read the passage again, slowly.*

We are going to divide into five groups representing the five senses. One group will experience the text through their eyes, another their ears, another their touch, another their nose, another their taste.

*Allow students to respond.*

*Describe what you saw. What did you hear? How about smell? Touch? Taste?*

## Lecture: Engaging Scripture

(5 minutes)

To experience Scripture as it was originally experienced, we must engage all our senses. Our training in ministry often keeps us from experiencing Scripture with all the senses. We collect information through our ears and organize it into information on paper. There are no colors, textures, smells, shapes, or sizes—only information.

*Refer students to Resource 2-3.*

Much of the educational process today is silent. From grade school through college, students listen to instructors, read, write, take notes, write term papers, sit for exams and graduate. Many students with excellent records enter seminary with 16 years of silent education, now preparing for a vocation that will demand oral presentations every week for the remainder of their lives.

*From Craddock, Preaching, 21.*

Perhaps the single biggest failure in the teaching of preaching is that young ministers are not fully impressed with the difference between textuality and orality. Shaped by mountains of books, called upon to write scores of papers, aspiring preachers train the eye but neglect the ear. It is into the world of sound that they will go, plying their wares 'acoustically.'

*From Robin Meyers, With Ears to Hear: Preaching as Self-Persuasion (Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 1993), 21.*

Preaching is an oral art. The skills of preaching are not so different from the skills of giving someone directions to the store, telling a good joke, recounting an event, or putting a child to bed at night with a well-known story. We begin the work of preaching by learning to sense the text in a receptive, listening, and attending mind-set.

## Group Activity

(35 minutes)

*You can assign the four participants or call for volunteers.*

Return to Matthew 8:28-9:1.

Four of you are going to help tell this story, from four perspectives:

1. As if giving directions to the place where the pigs died
2. As if telling a funny story about how Papa lost his pigs
3. As if you were there and were retelling the story of a neighbor
4. As a child's bedtime story

## Closing Thoughts

(5 minutes)

The goal of a sermon is to tell people what we see, hear, and experience in the text, not to read them what we wrote down about the text. For this reason, the first step in sermon preparation is to experience the text in the same way our people will experience our sermon, as oral sounds and sights.

*Refer students to Resource 2-4.*

*From Thomas Troeger, *Imagining a Sermon* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1990), 68.*

In writing about preachers, Thomas Troeger says, "I ask them to tell me what they want to preach, and they immediately cast their eyes to a sheet of paper. Their vocal quality and gestures become constricted, and the music of their speech flattens to a drone."

*Ibid., 71.*

To speak convincingly of a God who calls us to a life of faith and love requires a voice whose tonality is congruent with the personal character of the gospel we proclaim, and this is not possible if the sermon is delivered as a printed document that is being read to the congregation.

*From Troeger, p. 75.*

Getting sound and words to be congruent is a complex issue. It requires a spiritual, theological process of finding that place in the heart where the gospel has touched the preacher's own life. Nothing can replace speaking out of that spiritual center. It is the place from which the melody of redemption arises and permeates our voice.

# Lesson Close

(10 minutes)

## Review

The first move of preparing to preach is to get the text into our body through our senses, to experience it as if we were the people hearing Paul's letter being read to the church at Corinth. To run to commentaries and other sermons is to shortcut this creative move that opens us to the scripture.

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

Look at the learner objectives for this lesson. Did you

- practice the art of listening to a text through the senses and articulate the experience?

Extra:

*Is someone in the class a good storyteller? Would you treat the class to a story?*

*How is the telling of this story superior to reading it in print?*

## Assign Homework

*Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.*

Read the stories in Matthew 8-9.

- Describe what you see.
- Read the same stories and list things that can be smelled.
- What place does touch play? Who touches whom?
- Select one of these stories and make a listing of occurrences under each sense.

Tape-record yourself reading Matthew 9: 18-26. Bring it to the next class.

Journal Prompts

Of the 5 human senses, which one or two are most dominant when you experience Scripture? Why?  
How can you increase the attentiveness of the minor senses?

What was your favorite story as a child? What was its appeal?

Think back over sermons that really have "stayed" with you. What is it that you remember?

## *Lesson 3*

# Asking Questions of the Scripture Text

## *Lesson Overview*

### **Schedule**

| Start Time | Task or Topic  | Learning Activity | Materials Needed              |
|------------|----------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|
| 0:00       | Introduction   | Orient            | Student Guide                 |
| 0:25       | Five Questions | Guided Study      | Resource 3-1                  |
| 1:25       | Lesson Close   | Review, Assign    | Student Guide<br>Resource 3-2 |

# Lesson Introduction

(25 minutes)

## Accountability

*Divide into groups of three to share their homework responses to Matthew 8-9.*

*Play three of their recordings of Matthew 9: 18-26.*

*How does each person read the text in a different way?*

*Return and collect homework.*

## Learner Objectives

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

*Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.*

To help students

- practice the art of asking the right questions of the text

## Motivator

We are going to play a short game of "20 Questions." You will think of a person, place, or thing. Others may ask questions which can only be answered "yes" or "no." We must arrive at the correct answer before using up 20 questions.

# Lesson Body

## Guided Study

(60 minutes)

The biggest mistake one can make in the early stages of sermon preparation is to go directly to the experts in the commentaries. This quickly removes the suspense, intrigue, and mystery of the text. The power of stories is in their ability to make us wonder and question.

*Allow students to respond.*

*List the questions on a marker board or overhead.*

(Call on a student), will you read aloud Luke 24: 13-35?

*If you had been there that day, what questions would you have asked? What intrigues you about this story?*

Turning to a letter written to a church instead of a story being told, (call on a student), will you read Philippians 4: 1-7?

*Allow students to respond.*

*Since you were not in the congregation at Philippi on the day Paul's letter was opened and read aloud to the gathered congregation, what questions do you have for this text?*

Knowing the right questions to ask is important in getting the text to open up and reveal its mysteries. Let's examine some good questions.

*Refer students to Resource 3-1.*

*Record answers on a marker board or overhead projector. Try to get the students to dig deeper than easy, surface answers.*

We will be looking at the two passages of scripture just read to us and asking the same five questions of each. First Luke 24: 13-35, then Philippians 4: 1-7.

### Five Questions

1. *What is the good news here?*
2. *What is the bad news?*
3. *How many places can you stand in these two scriptures? How many different vantage points do we find?*

*Possible answers:*

*Luke—The two on the road, Jesus, Luke the writer, disciples back in Jerusalem hearing the two tell what happened.*

*Philippians—The mail carrier, the reader, absent Paul, Euodia, Syntyche, one of their husbands, the relative of Clement, a visitor in the church that day.*

We usually take the best seat in the house and see the story as if we are the good guys. It helps to view the text from other vantage points. Sometimes we adopt one of these vantage points as the structure of the sermon. For example, try preaching Matthew 9: 9-13 from the perspective of Matthew's wife.

4. *What is God doing here?*

5. *What are humans doing here?*

*You may want to go through these questions with several texts to be sure the class understands the process.*

The skill of asking these questions is one of the most important moves in sermon preparation.

# Lesson Close

(5 minutes)

## Review

Becoming good preachers has everything to do with our ability to ask questions, to wonder, to imagine, to see what lies beneath the surface.

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

Look at the learner objectives for this lesson. Did you

- practice the art of asking the right questions of the text?

## Assign Homework

*Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.*

Read Psalm 137. How do these characters feel? What could have possibly caused these expressions? When have you felt this way? Be prepared to tell this story in class without notes. There will be a three-minute time limit.

For women: Using Matthew 9:18-26, tell the story from the perspective of the bleeding woman. Be prepared in the next class to stand without any notes and assume the role of this woman. Tell us what happened to you. Time limit: three minutes.

For men: Using the same story, tell us the story from the perspective of the synagogue leader. No notes. Three minutes.

Read Resource 3-3, "Good Preaching is Based on the Good Book," and write a one-page paper to compare and contrast this 10-step homiletical process with the five questions presented in Lesson 3.

*Refer students to Resource 3-2.*

**Note:** *The publishers are attempting to obtain rights to reprint this chapter from Meeting Jesus Again for the Very First Time as Resource 3-2. Unfortunately, at the time of this release rights had not been obtained. As the instructor you should try to obtain copies of this material or have the students locate the book at a local library or borrow it from a friend.*

Reading assignment

*Meeting Jesus Again for the Very First Time*, by Marcus J. Borg. Resource 3-2. [See note.]

Journal Prompt

What would it take to make you a more inquisitive person about a Biblical text?  
How have the five questions changed your thinking about sermon preparation?

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## Lesson 4

# Looking for Trouble

## *Lesson Overview*

### Schedule

| Start Time | Task or Topic                   | Learning Activity | Materials Needed             |
|------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|------------------------------|
| 0:00       | Introduction                    | Orient            | Student Guide                |
| 0:35       | When Trouble Comes              | Discussion        | Resource 4-1<br>Resource 4-2 |
| 0:50       | Story Plots                     | Small Groups      | Marker Board                 |
| 1:10       | Preaching from a Narrative Plot | Lecture           | Resource 4-3<br>Resource 4-4 |
| 1:25       | Lesson Close                    | Review, Assign    | Student Guide                |

### Suggested Reading for Instructor

Borg, Marcus J. *Meeting Jesus Again for the Very First Time*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1994, ch. 6.

# Lesson Introduction

(35 minutes)

## Accountability

*Begin the class with storytelling from the homework assignments. It is important to get each person on his or her feet in front of the class. Encourage animation, gesture, voice inflection. Be playful with the class. You are easing them into the role of preacher-as-teller of the grand old gospel story. If you can help them become comfortable in their own body before a crowd, you will aid their development as preachers who tell us what they see, instead of script-readers who read us what they wrote. This exercise may take significant time. Hold them to the three-minute limit.*

You will each have three minutes to tell a story from your homework assignments. You can choose between the Psalm 137 story or the Matthew 9:18-26 story.

*Collect and return homework.*

## Orientation

Let's look back at the objectives from Lessons 2 and 3 before looking at our objective for today.

## Learner Objectives

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

*Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.*

At the end of this lesson, participants should be able to

- detect human trouble in the texts of Scripture as a means of identifying the intersection of Scripture and human experience

## Motivator

*Allow the class to talk about their favorite detective heroes and their favorite stories.*

*Each culture has some form of mystery story. What is this literary genre in your world and who are its best writers?*

*Who is your favorite mystery writer or detective? Agatha Christie? Miss Marple? Columbo? Sherlock Holmes?*

# Lesson Body

## Discussion

(15 minutes)

Refer students to Resource 4-1.

Possible answer:  
When trouble comes.

You might need to adapt this list to fit the cultural experience of your students.

*When does a story grab your attention? When do you begin to feel the intensity?*

Every story in the world is about somebody that had trouble. The hook or grab in the story is the trouble. The story revolves around setting up a scene and talking about characters; who gets in trouble, then declare the trouble, and finally resolve the trouble.

I'll name a story, you tell me the trouble.

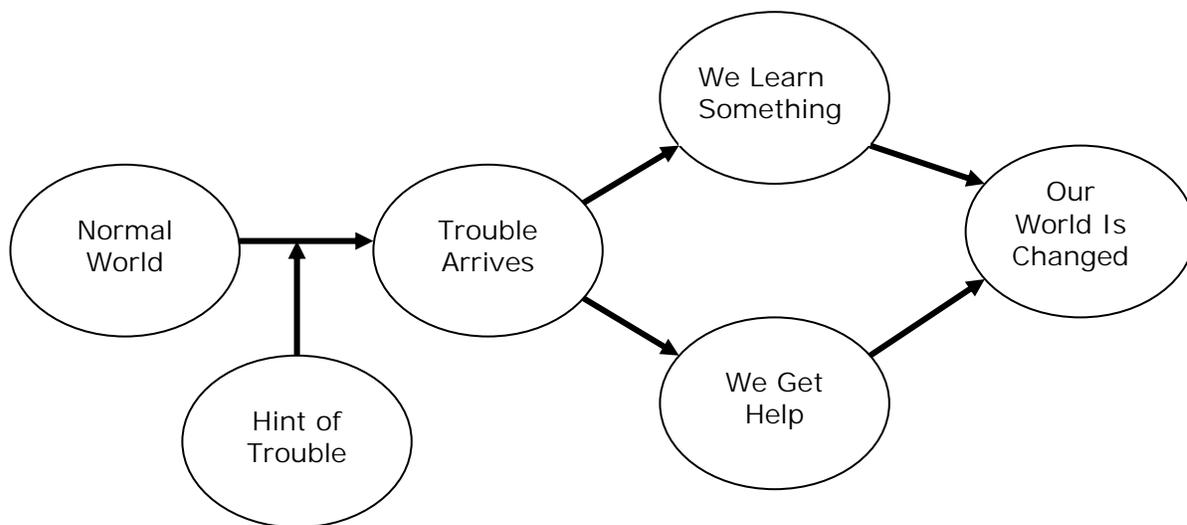
- *The Brothers Karamazov*
- "The Little Boy Who Cried Wolf"
- *Titanic*
- "Jack and Jill"
- The Creation account of Genesis 1-3
- Daniel
- "Three Little Pigs"

One of the primary connecting points between Scripture and the life of people in the church is that in both places we find people in trouble. People in trouble are always interested in hearing how they might get out of trouble. We are most open to new ways of thinking and living when we are in trouble. We are willing to view our life differently. We are willing to consider changing our ways. We are open to the story of how God comes to help those who are in trouble. For this reason, it is very important that a preacher go looking for trouble in a text.

Most stories begin in a normal world. This world is described in a way that makes listeners believe this could be their home, their neighborhood, and their friends. "Once upon a time . . ." Then crisis comes. A part of their world is turned over and examined. We find ourselves wondering what will happen.

Refer students to Resource 4-2.

The plot line of most stories runs like this:



Let's go back to the stories you just analyzed for trouble and plot one of them using this structure.

Example: *Titanic*

- Normal world—ship sets sail
- Hint of trouble—builder suggests *Titanic* is unsinkable
- Trouble arrives—ship strikes iceberg
- We learn something—ship is not invincible
- Or
- We get help—neighboring vessels to the rescue
- Our world is changed—we know life is fragile on the sea

## Small Groups

(20 minutes)

*Assign each group two stories. Each story will be assigned to more than one group.*

In small groups plot two of the stories and then write out your analysis on a marker board for the class to review.

## Lecture

(15 minutes)

### Seven Helps for Preaching from a Narrative Plot

*Refer students to Resource 4-3.*

1. Plot the story noting the common thread that holds the story together. Know where the story is going.
2. Develop the characters. Give them shape and form. Let them breathe. Note how they change and are changed as the story develops.

3. From what point of view is the story told? Whose vantage point governs the story? Example: Luke 1:26-38. Is this told from the perspective of Mary? The angel? God?
4. Capitalize on the dialogue. We are given the conversational skeleton in the text. Hang some skin on these bones and allow imagination to flesh out the conversation. Dialogue drives the plot and gives the story depth.
5. Watch the verbs. Go through the story and underline the verbs. This is the heart of God's activity. You want the sermon to be doing what these verbs are doing.
6. Preach the imperatives. Whatever the story calls on its characters to do, you must call on the congregation to do. The story is not told for our enjoyment, but for the sake of our identity and response. The story tells us who we are and how we are to behave in this world as the people of God.
7. Start the sermon with the tension of the story. Get somebody in trouble early on and let them wrestle trying to get out of trouble. Show Adam hiding from God or Jonah running from God. Or tell the story of a nonbiblical character with the same trouble as Adam or Jonah. The gospel is bad news before it is good news. We cannot get to a strong theology of grace except via a strong theology of human trouble.

Trouble is early in the plot, not late. And trouble is not the final word. We don't need long bashings about the mess we've gotten ourselves into. Don't fall into the trap of using the pulpit to bash and blame people, then walk away with your guns smoking thinking you have really preached. Good preaching moves to grace and hope that is celebrated!

Good preaching draws people into the process of examining their lives in light of trouble. They connect with the story being told in light of their own story. They anticipate/think ahead in the sermon. This is one of the differences between deductive and inductive preaching.

### **Deductive Preaching**

*Refer students to Resource 4-4.*

- Proceed from general truth to specific information.
- Give them the correct answer and then tell them the question.
- Show them the completed puzzle, and then explain how it was put together.

### **Inductive Preaching**

- Proceed from specific situation to a recognized truth.
- Ask the questions and explore the options before arriving at conclusions.
- Empty the puzzle pieces out on the table and construct the puzzle piece by piece.

Preaching that follows the plot line from normal world through trouble to a changed world is inductive. It is exploratory. There is a world of difference between inductive and deductive.

Illustrate this by telling the story of *Titanic* both ways.

- Deductive—let me tell you a story about a large ocean liner that sank, etc.
- Inductive—one day a large ship set sail, etc.

Each form has its strengths and weaknesses. Inductive preaching speaks the story of Scripture in a natural way. It is interesting and has a hook to grab and sustain attention. It is less “preachy” to a generation of younger people. It flows more smoothly. It is a time-tested literary form. Deductive preaching, on the other hand, fits the model of teaching. It organizes thought into logical sequence. It has the ability to explore multiple topics. It serves the classical disciplines of rhetoric.

The assumption of the modern world is that if we give people the right answers and tell them what to do, they will go do it. The postmodern world challenges that assumption. All of us “know” better than we “do.” Examples: eating habits, listening more than speaking, not worrying about things we can’t change. These are things we know already. Knowing the answers to our problems does not necessarily change us.

Our behavior changes when we experience a preferred future, when we see ourselves in a new light. Inductive preaching enables people to enter the world of Scripture and explore a new way of living. They view their world as “changed by the intervention of God.” We need to give people new eyes through which to see

their world. To do this we must locate them in their world first, then build the bridge to Scripture.

Henry Mitchell, in *Celebration and Experience in Preaching*, suggests that "tapes" are formed deep inside us. Our childhood is complete with tapes of fear, trust, low esteem, and prejudice. When trouble comes, we play these tapes. Preaching gives people new tapes, new stories, and new ways to respond to the trouble of life. Good preaching records over the old tapes.

# Lesson Close

(5 minutes)

## Review

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

Look at the learner objectives for this lesson. Can you

- detect human trouble in the texts of Scripture as a means of identifying the intersection of Scripture and human experience?

## Assign Homework

*Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.*

*Break the class into four groups. If the class is too small for there to be at least two per group, assign only the applicable number of passages.*

*If it is impossible for the class to meet outside of class time, you can make this an individual assignment.*

Looking for Trouble

Go “looking for trouble” in one of the following stories as assigned.

- Acts 16: 11-40
- Acts 17: 1-9
- Acts 27: 1—28: 10
- Luke 24: 13-35

In your group complete the following based on the text:

- Have someone read the text aloud.
- What hints of trouble do you hear?
- What is the trouble?
- Who is the trouble?
- How is the trouble resolved?
- What can we learn from this?
- How is this trouble like the trouble of the people to whom you will preach?

Plot Line Diagram

Using the plot line diagram (Resource 4-2), plot the story of the Jews in slavery in Egypt. Do the same with the story of Jesus. Refer to the chapter by Marcus Borg, “Images of Jesus and Images of the Christian Life.”

Journal Prompt: Write a brief story of your life including a time you were in trouble and how you experienced God.

## *Lesson 5*

# **Working with Images, Incidents, and Issues**

## *Lesson Overview*

### **Schedule**

| Start Time | Task or Topic | Learning Activity | Materials Needed              |
|------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|
| 0:00       | Introduction  | Orient            | Student Guide                 |
| 0:10       | Images        | Guided Discussion |                               |
| 0:45       | Bible Images  | Class Exercise    | Resource 5-1                  |
| 1:25       | Lesson Close  | Review, Assign    | Student Guide<br>Resource 5-2 |

### **Suggested Reading for Instructor**

Wilson, Paul Scott. *Imagination of the Heart: New Understandings in Preaching*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1988.

# Lesson Introduction

(10 minutes)

## Accountability

*Have students share their homework assignments.*

*Collect and return homework.*

## Orientation

*Hold up certain things that mean more than the obvious. Example: a flag means more than colors on cloth. It means history, patriotism, shared story, a political reality, etc. A credit card means more than plastic with letters and numbers. It means purchasing power, the ability to transact business.*

An image or symbol is a powerful vehicle for meaning.

These symbols image a larger meaning.

Today, we will work on finding the driving image, incident, or issue of the text to be preached.

## Learner Objectives

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

*Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.*

At the end of this lesson, participants should be able to

- practice the art of working with textual images as the means of broadening the interest in a text by preacher and listener

# Lesson Body

## Guided Discussion

(35 minutes)

*Write responses on a marker board or overhead.*

*Possible responses:*

*Cross            Staff  
Lost sheep    Towel and basin  
Cup            Snake  
Bread         Well of water  
Blood         Boat in a storm  
Father         Vine/Branches  
Lamb*

*Examples include the icons in the European cathedrals, stained-glass windows, and churches with banners.*

*Example:*

*Cross—lethal injection/noose  
Towel and basin—nursing care*

Christianity is a way of life rich in images. These visible symbols can be named in a few words, but it takes long explanations to declare their meaning. Let's list images that define Christianity.

*Have any of you worshiped in settings adorned with religious images?*

*How do these images speak to the human soul? Are some of us more visual in our worship?*

*What images are present where you worship each week? Why these?*

When we study a text, it is important to identify the dominant image, incident, or issue of that text. These become the connecting points for the world outside the text. Let's go back to the list above, and beside each image we've listed, let's list a current image that carries similar meaning.

To connect the world of Scripture to the world of our people, we need to make use of the images they already own. We want to attach biblical truth to images they are already conscious of. For instance, the rod of Moses was the image of God's signs and wonders before Pharaoh. What if we said Moses held in his hand God's personal magic wand or God's laser pointer? People begin to connect the dots between the world of the text and our world.

## Class Exercise

(40 minutes)

Read Matthew 5:14-16.

*What is the dominant image?*

*Answer: Light that can be seen.*

*Refer students to Resource 5-1.*

Using Resource 5-1 write "light that can be seen" in the middle. Then write all around it everything that

comes to your mind when you think of “light that can be seen.” Think in the following categories—songs, fairy tales, news event, science, nature, people you know, history, personal experiences, literature, and movies.

*Have students share some of their ideas.*

*Possible ideas:*

*Campfire*

*Airport runway*

*Oncoming headlights*

*Shooting star*

*“This Little Light of Mine”*

You are allowing the dominant image of the text from which you are preaching to travel through your world and find similarities. You will not use all this material in the sermon, but you will find many of these images useful when you begin to write your sermon. Don’t try to organize these thoughts or ideas. Let your mind wander and record all the associations.

Repeat the above process with the following texts and images. Create a page for each image.

- Psalm 137—“exiled”
- Psalm 23—“shepherd who cares”
- 2 Corinthians 4:7-12—“a clay jar that is fragile”
- Luke 24:13-35—“breaking bread”

## Conclusion

Thomas Troeger in *Imagining a Sermon* says:

Jesus is my greatest inspiration for drawing parables from life. He did not create his parables from scratch. His stories reveal someone who is attentive to what is, who closely observes common experience—the relationship of family members, the way people behave in the business world, the life of farmers and shepherds. It is striking how secular most of Jesus’ parables are. There is almost nothing explicitly religious about them.

*From Troeger, 92.*

If I could only tell you one thing I think would make you a better preacher, it is this: look for the activity of God in the common places of life and name God at work there. Connect the images of God at work in Scripture with images of God at work in the world around you.

## Lesson Close

(5 minutes)

### Review

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

Look at the learner objectives for this lesson. Can you

- practice the art of working with textual images as the means of broadening the interest in a text by preacher and listener?

### Assign Homework

*Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.*

#### One-page Paper

Where in the last 24 hours have you seen God at work? What was God doing? How would you tell someone the story of what you observed God doing? What biblical image captures the essence of this activity? Write a one-page paper to be shared with the class during the next class.

#### Reading Assignment

Read *Imagination of the Heart: New Understandings in Preaching*, by Paul Scott Wilson. Resource 5-2.

#### Journal Prompt

If you could not use words to speak about the gospel, what Christian symbol would you choose to portray your faith?

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## *Lesson 6*

# Pausing to Let the Text Speak to Me

## *Lesson Overview*

### Schedule

| Start Time | Task or Topic      | Learning Activity | Materials Needed                              |
|------------|--------------------|-------------------|---|
| 0:00       | Introduction       | Orient            | Student Guide                                 |
| 0:40       | Text Study         | Class Exercise    | Resource 6-1                                  |
| 1:20       | Craddock's Opinion | Lecture           | Resource 6-2                                  |
| 1:25       | Lesson Close       | Review, Assign    | Student Guide<br>Resource 6-3<br>Resource 6-4 |

### Suggested Reading for Instructor

Craddock, Fred B. *Preaching*, Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1985.

# Lesson Introduction

(40 minutes)

## Accountability

*Limit each person to three minutes.*

*This exercise will take significant time depending on the number of people in the class. Do not be tempted to shorten this. Preaching cannot be learned while sitting in a chair taking notes. Bodily experience is essential. Use this opportunity to point out any nervous habits or traits. Coach the presentation in a positive manner and allow the other members of the class to suggest ways the story might have been more effective.*

*Return and collect homework.*

The class will start with verbal reports from the one-page homework assignment. You are telling a story of God's activity in the world. This should be spoken from the heart, not read. This activity is part of learning to stand before others and speak of God's work in the world.

## Orientation

*Ask these questions for a time of discussion.*

*How was this like preaching?*

*Could these stories be a "move" in a sermon plot?*

*When you were telling your story, did you feel like you were preaching? Why? Why not?*

*Do you use a different voice when you preach?*

## Learner Objectives

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

*Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.*

At the end of this lesson, participants should be able to

- practice the art of receiving help from a text as a vital part of identifying one's interest in the text

# Lesson Body

## Class Exercise

(35 minutes)

*You may want to write this on a marker board or overhead.*

*Answer: Jesus said it to the religious leaders in Matthew 23 because they did not take advantage of the Scriptures they imposed on others.*

*Personalize this from your own experience and home.*

*Who said this?*

“Do not do as they do, for they do not practice what they teach.”

In our home we have a formal dining room. There is a lighted hutch where our best dishes are displayed. The table is set with plates, spoons, knives, forks, glasses, and napkins. There is a decorative centerpiece in the middle of the table. We rarely eat in there, unless other people come to visit with us. When it's just our family at home, we eat in the kitchen.

In preaching, we are always preparing to serve other people spiritual food. It's sad that we set the table for others, but never sit down to feed ourselves. Today's lesson is about opening our hearts to the Scripture to let it speak to us. One writer calls it “pausing to let the text do me good.”

*Refer students to Resource 6-1.*

*Read through the questions before having the class do the exercise.*

## Text Study

The following exercises will help you experience the gifts of the text intended for you:

- Underline the key ideas that stand out to you, then go back and ask why this is important to you.
- Where do you find yourself resisting this text? What part of the text do you want to avoid?
- Is there anything in the text that frightens you?
- What issues in your life are similar to the issue of the text?
- Why do you care about this text?
- What sounds like good news to you?
- What sounds like bad news to you?

Select one of the following texts and answer the above questions:

John 13:1-17  
Psalm 51  
Philippians 2:5-11  
Luke 24:13-35

*Have a few students share their insights with the class.*

## Lecture

(5 minutes)

*Refer students to Resource 6-2.*

It is impossible to separate who you are from what you do as a preacher. How does our own journey fit into our public preaching? Do we go into the pulpit every week and talk about ourselves? Let's hear Fred Craddock's opinion:

All preaching is to some extent self-disclosure by the preacher. This is not offered as a comment on the practice in some quarters of making the pulpit a confessional. . . . It is simply the truth about communication.

*From Craddock, Preaching, 23.*

Pertaining to the minister's own faith journey, it is the reflection of many who have spent a lifetime in ministry that of all the exercises for keeping athletically fit one's Christian values, perspectives and faith, none excels that of preparing and delivering sermons.

*Ibid.*

. . . The preacher is expected to be a person of faith, passion, authority and grace. Faith makes one believable, and if the messenger is not believable, neither is the message. The absence of faith is almost impossible to disguise for any period of time. No one can increase the volume in the pulpit to such a level as to muffle the echo of lost convictions.

*Ibid., 24*

When we open ourselves to a text and allow it to bring grace into our lives, the chances are we will have no problem recognizing how it will speak to others. The energy for preaching often comes from having news to share we already know is effective to meet human need, because it has helped us. This is where passion comes from.

# Lesson Close

(5 minutes)

## Closing Thought

*Read the following and discuss how this applies to preachers who are not personally involved in the text.*

In Herman Melville's novel *White Jacket* one of the sailors becomes ill with severe stomach pains. Dr. Cuticle, the ship's surgeon, is delighted to have a patient with a challenge greater than rope-blistered hands. His diagnosis is appendicitis. He prepares the operating table, recruits shipmates to assist him, and goes to work operating. Dr. Cuticle is enthralled with the surgery. He cuts with precision, points out to the sailors the internal anatomy of the patient, marvels at the interior of the human body. Dr. Cuticle knows his medicine and is totally absorbed in his work. It is an impressive performance. But the attending sailors are not impressed. They are appalled. The poor patient, by the time he is stitched up, has been long dead on the table. Dr. Cuticle, enthusiastic in surgery, hadn't noticed that his patient stopped breathing.

## Review

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

Look at the learner objectives for this lesson. Can you

- practice the art of receiving help from a text as a vital part of identifying one's interest in the text?

## Assign Homework

*Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.*

Read

Read "Preaching from Within Our Own Hope," by Don Wardlaw. Be prepared to share in class what this article says to you about preaching. Resource 6-3.

Survey

Preaching requires that we know ourselves. Unless we are aware of the doubts, questions, and struggles going on inside us, we will tend to project these upon our congregation and preach at them. This is called shadow-side preaching. Fill out "Exegeting Yourself," Resource 6-4.

Read John 13:1-17 and answer the following questions:

1. What sounds like good news to me?
2. What sounds like bad news to me?
3. Which characters do I identify with? Jesus? Peter? Judas?

4. What issue in my life is similar to the issue of this text?
5. Why do I care about this text?

Journal Prompt

What is it like when God speaks to you through Scripture? When was the last time this happened? What did God say?

## Lesson 7

# Consulting the Scholars

## Lesson Overview

### Schedule

| Start Time | Task or Topic   | Learning Activity | Materials Needed                               |
|------------|-----------------|-------------------|--|
| 0:00       | Introduction    | Orient            | Student Guide                                  |
| 0:30       | Resource Study  | Class Exercise    | Bible Commentaries<br>Computer/Internet<br>Lab |
| 0:45       | Studying a Text | Lecture           | Resource 7-1                                   |
| 0:55       | Text Study      | Class Exercise    | Bible Commentary                               |
| 1:25       | Lesson Close    | Review, Assign    | Student Guide<br>Resource 7-2                  |

### Suggested Reading for Instructor

Fee, Gordon. *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth: A Guide to Understanding the Bible*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1982.

Long, Thomas G. *Preaching and the Literary Forms of the Bible*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1989.

# Lesson Introduction

(30 minutes)

## Accountability

*The reading assignment, Preaching from Within Our Own Hope, is worthy of class discussion. Read the article and be prepared to summarize it in your own words.*

*You should give personal illustrations of how you found hope in the hope of others who dared to preach from the center of their experience with God.*

*Allow the class to share their thoughts from the article. Transition from this to asking class members to stand and tell why they care about John 13:1-17.*

*Again, this is similar to preaching. A sermon is testimony from the heart that rises out of the scripture. Allow plenty of class time for this. Depending on class size, this could take up to an hour.*

*Return and collect homework.*

## Learner Objectives

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

*Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.*

At the end of this lesson, participants should be able to

- experience the process of studying a text by using available resources

# Lesson Body

## Class Exercise

(15 minutes)

*Discuss this before moving to introduce the topic "Consulting the Scholars."*

*Does our opening discussion mean preaching is simply plotting the story, using modern images, and telling a congregation what a text means to us?*

Most pastors begin sermon preparation by going to commentary resources. When this happens, we eliminate our senses, experiences, and memories. We also locate the meaning of the text in our intellect rather than in our life-journey. Consulting the scholars is step 6 of 10.

*In leading this class you will want to research availability of commentaries and direct the class in their use. Also be aware of any web sites that could be useful.*

*Spend time working on a plan for building a preaching library. Be contextual. Do not talk about resources that are impossible for class members to acquire or books not in print in their language.*

*If you are near a theological school, take a tour of the library and point out useful materials. Do not assume the class already knows about all available resources.*

In this step, the preacher becomes a student of the text and a student of history regarding the text. The primary source for this study is a commentary. Availability will vary from place to place. Among the most useful in print today are *Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching*, *Word Biblical Commentary*, and *The Interpreter's Bible*.

## Lecture

(10 minutes)

*Refer students to Resource 7-1.*

### Studying a Text

1. Understand the book of the Bible from which the text comes. Before proceeding to study the text itself, read the overview of the book in which this text is found.
2. What kind of literature is this? Story? Psalm? Proverb? Letter? History? Prophecy? Two outstanding resources for this are Gordon Fee, *Reading the Bible for All Its Worth*, and Tom Long, *Preaching the Literary Forms*. These two books will instruct you in how to preach a parable, a psalm, a narrative, a letter, etc.

3. Select a Bible translation by reading several different versions of the Bible. The most reliable are the *New Revised Standard Version* and the *New International Version*.
4. Read commentaries, word studies, and lectionary resources. One excellent resource is *The Preacher's Magazine*, provided free to Nazarene pastors.
5. Read other sermons and articles on the text you are preparing to preach from. Recommended authors: Barbara Brown Taylor, Bob Benson, Fredrick Buechner, Kathleen Norris. Each of these has multiple books of sermons and stories.

The goal of this lesson is arriving at something to say. You want to identify the primary activity of God in this text. You will discover that some of your original thoughts about the text were wrong. This is useful in preaching. If you made initial wrong assumptions about the text, is it not likely that others did the same?

Fred Craddock calls this the first "ah-ha moment." This is arriving at the point where you have something to say. In one brief sentence you can declare the meaning of the text.

## Class Exercise

(30 minutes)

*Find a common resource available to the students you are teaching. From this commentary, review the general theme of the book of Scripture your text comes from. This is found in the introduction of the commentary. You will want to use one of the texts the class already has worked with, for example, John 13:1-17.*

*Guide the students through this summary. Next, lecture from the appropriate chapter of the Fee or Long book on how to preach from this literary genre of Scripture. Then guide them through your work on the text itself in the commentary. Demonstrate how to use this material from the same resources they will be using for their sermons. If nothing is available, you should consider copying material in a useful format and distributing it to the class.*

# Lesson Close

(5 minutes)

## Closing Thought

*This discussion will allow you to direct students to good theologians and writers.*

*List the writers on a marker board or overhead.*

The people of God have lived from these texts for centuries. They have recorded their findings in books. In studying the works of these faithful scholars, we are honoring the past. We are choosing teachers to help us prepare to preach. This is an important choice.

*Who are the writers you trust enough to allow into your study?*

## Review

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

Look at the learner objectives for this lesson. Did you

- experience the process of studying a text by using available resources?

## Assign Homework

*Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.*

*You will want to refer to the homework assignments they did on each lesson to help them remember what it means to do each of these. The goal of this homework exercise is to take them through the six steps of preparation sequentially.*

### Sermon Preparation

Using Luke 24: 13-35, walk through all six steps of sermon preparation from Lessons 2-7. You will write one page on each of the following:

1. experience the text through the senses—write notes for each sense
2. ask questions of the text—answer the lesson 3 questions
3. look for trouble—plot the story line of the text
4. identify the image, incident, or issue—create an image page
5. pause to let the text help you—answer the questions in Lesson 6
6. consult the scholars—arrive at a summary sentence—Resource 7-2

(Luke 24: 13-35 will be the scripture from which you will work for your sermon to be given during the last class sessions.)

### Journal Prompt

Where can you find good resources for studying scripture? List all possibilities you can think of.

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## *Lesson 8*

# Exegeting the Congregation

## *Lesson Overview*

### **Schedule**

| Start Time | Task or Topic      | Learning Activity | Materials Needed              |
|------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|
| 0:00       | Introduction       | Orient            | Student Guide                 |
| 0:45       | Know the Situation | Class Exercise    | Resource 8-1<br>Resource 8-2  |
| 1:25       | Lesson Close       | Review, Assign    | Student Guide<br>Resource 8-3 |

### **Suggested Reading for Instructor**

Farris, Stephen. *Preaching That Matters: The Bible and Our Lives*. Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1985.

# Lesson Introduction

(45 minutes)

## Accountability

*Begin the class with homework review. Divide them into groups of two to three and have them share their six steps with each other. You will want to collect these and evaluate them. Your input will be valuable in helping each student master each step. If it is clear the student does not understand the exercise, do not hesitate to ask him or her to repeat it. Give instruction as to how to do it better.*

*Ask each person to stand and give their one-sentence summary for the text from Luke 24.*

*Return and collect homework.*

## Orientation

You have reached an important point in sermon preparation—you have something to say. But this is not the place to begin writing the sermon. The goal of the preacher is not to get the sermon to your lips, but to get it to the ears of the people who will hear the sermon.

In the same way attention was given to the text, it now will be given to the people who will hear the sermon. Exegesis is the technical term for studying Scripture. In this lesson, we will focus on exegesis of the congregation. Good preaching means not only knowing how to get it “said” but also knowing how to get it “heard.”

## Learner Objectives

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

*Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.*

At the end of this lesson, participants should be able to

- ask questions about the people who will hear the sermon
- keep them in mind while creating the sermon

# Lesson Body

## Class Exercise

(40 minutes)

*Refer students to Resource 8-1.*

*Ask them to fill it out now.*

*Allow each person two minutes to stand and describe the setting in which they will preach. If there are class members who are not assigned to a preaching role, have them assume they are preaching to the congregation they regularly attend. It is important that you NOT allow someone to generalize this skill. They need to exegete a specific, known congregation.*

Imagine you are preaching from Luke 24:13-35. Using Resource 8-1 on "Exegeting Your People," describe the people who will hear your sermon.

During the week of normal sermon preparation, there are other exercises for knowing how your listeners might hear a particular text.

*Refer students to Resource 8-2.*

1. List the names of 20 listeners and ask what the text might mean to them.
2. Play a game called "what is it like to be \_\_\_\_\_." Fill in the blank with common situations. Examples: 5 years old and starting school, 13 with pimples, engaged, losing your job, in a difficult marriage. By identifying places where people often find themselves, you can ask how people in these situations might hear this text.
3. Gather a group of people and ask them about their hopes, fears, hurts, and beliefs. Keep the text in the back of your mind as you listen to people. Connect the dots between the activity of God in the text and the trouble of these people.
4. How will children hear this text? Youth? Older adults?

The skill you are developing is the ability to interpret your culture. You can become a pastor who moves through life inquisitively. Ask questions like these:

- What is sin doing to people?
- What are the most popular songs, movies, TV shows? What are they about?
- What issues are unique to this town?
- What are the leading news stories?

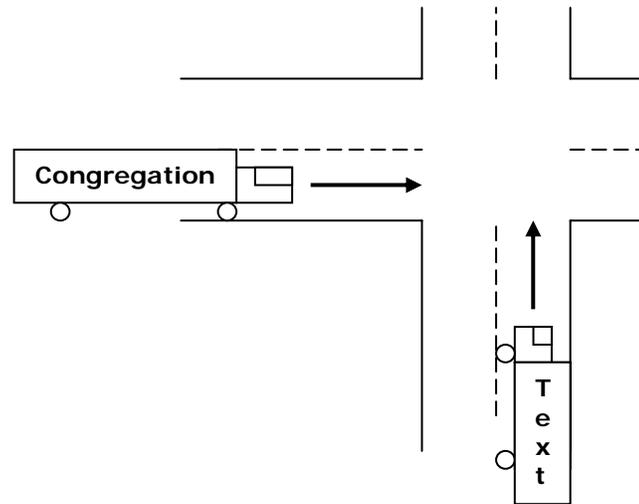
# Lesson Close

(5 minutes)

## Closing Thought

In the sermon, your role as a preacher is to create a collision at the intersection of text and congregation. The encounter between text and people must be unavoidable.

*Refer students to Resource 8-3.*



Another way to view this is an illustration from electricity. When we bring a positive wire and a negative wire together, it creates a spark. We must bring the world of the text and the world of the congregation close enough to create a spark.

## Review

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

Look at the learner objectives for this lesson. Can you

- ask questions about the people who will hear the sermon?
- keep them in mind while creating the sermon?

## Assign Homework

*Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.*

Using the ideas from Resource 8-2, select two of the four as part of the preparation for your sermon. Write a one-page paper about what you discovered.

Journal Prompt

Select one troubled person in your congregation. Write about his or her life as if you were in his or her skin.

## *Lesson 9*

# Selecting the Form of the Sermon

## *Lesson Overview*

### **Schedule**

| Start Time | Task or Topic     | Learning Activity | Materials Needed              |
|------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|
| 0:00       | Introduction      | Orient            | Student Guide                 |
| 0:15       | Four Sermon Forms | Lecture           | Resource 9-1                  |
| 1:25       | Lesson Close      | Review, Assign    | Student Guide<br>Resource 9-2 |

# Lesson Introduction

(15 minutes)

## Accountability

*Ask two to three students to share their one-page paper.*

*Return and collect homework.*

## Orientation

*Allow the class to wrestle with the response before giving any clarification to your question. You will get answers ranging from bicycle to jet plane.*

*Of course, the answer is, "It depends on where you want to go." If you want to go to the corner market, you may walk or ride a bike. But if you want to go to the other side of the globe, walking and biking are out of the question.*

*What vehicle do you take when you want to go somewhere?*

This lesson is about selecting the right sermon form to allow the text/Spirit to go where it wishes to go and do what it wishes to do. We will explore four basic sermon forms and illustrate them. Then each of you will select one of these and use it in the delivery of a sermon in Lesson 12.

## Learner Objectives

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

*Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.*

At the end of this lesson, participants should be able to

- become acquainted with some of the basic sermon forms
- illustrate how a text could take shape with each form

# Lesson Body

## Lecture: Four Sermon Forms

(70 minutes)

*You are going to take the class through the four sermon forms. They will preach their sermon from their study of Luke 24.*

*You will want to use a different text for illustration. I would suggest Exodus 3: 1-12. You should move through the preparation steps in Lessons 2-8 and be prepared to share your own personal discoveries in this text.*

*You will share how you sensed it, the questions you asked of the text, the trouble you found, the image you placed in the center of a page, how this text helped you, what you learned from the commentaries that led you to a summary statement, and the exegesis of the congregation to which you would preach this text. You are modeling the skills in front of the class. For illustration's sake, let's say your summary statement for this text is "Only God can tell us what our life is to be about." From this vantage point you will demonstrate the four sermon forms.*

*Refer students to Resource 9-1.*

*Remind the class of Resource 4-2.*

*You will want to review the lecture notes from Lesson 4, "7 helps for preaching from a narrative plot."*

## Running the Story

This sermon form uses the plot line that already exists in the story itself. It follows the pattern of normal world>hint of trouble>trouble arrives>we learn something/we get help>our world is changed. We become storytellers who use our imagination to fill in the details of the senses. Our study of the text helps us describe the geographical and cultural setting of the biblical world.

A sermon that runs the story of Exodus 3 might go like this:

### Normal world—move 1

*Describe the flock-tending world of Moses. Fill out the character—how big is he—who is his wife? How does he feel about doing a job for*

It was an ordinary day on the backside of Midian . . .

*which he is overqualified?—he has a palace education, etc.*

### **Hint of trouble—move 2**

Moses finds himself thinking about the people he left behind in Egypt when he fled. He can see them in the mud pits in Goshen. But this is a troubling memory. He tried to do something once, but he ended up killing an Egyptian. His reminiscing is interrupted by a strange sight. A bush is on fire, but the leaves are as green as a grasshopper. They aren't burning. He goes over to see.

### **Trouble arrives—move 3**

God wants Moses to see and hear what He sees and hears. This will send Moses back to the place from which he ran. It will place him in jeopardy and at risk. His life is about to become very complicated. Sometimes, following God does not make life simpler.

*Stay in this mind-set and explore how Moses feels about this interruption from God.*

### **We get help—move 4**

God promises to be with Moses. He will not have to do this alone. God even tells Moses what success looks like: standing with the liberated people at this mountain to worship God.

*Look ahead in the text for some of this.*

*Talk about the God who never asks us to do something without divine resources.*

### **Our world is changed—move 5**

Moses now knows what his life is to be about. He has direction for tomorrow. He can live into the promise of God, assured that his future matters to God. After multiple excuses and arguments, Moses says yes. And aren't we glad? Which brings us to ask, "What is God calling each of us to do with our lives?"

This five-move plot runs the story as we find it. There are three variations on this sermon form.

1. Running the story in biblical times. This is the example just given. Moses is in his time, culture, and context.
2. Running the story in contemporary times. This is easily accomplished by bringing Moses into your world. His name is Mo. He has a Ph.D. but works a minimum wage job at the local school. He sees a bush out behind the school . . . you get the idea.
3. Running the story with windows. This can be done with either biblical or contemporary times. Imagine yourself inside the "house" of the sermon form.

While inside the house, you walk to a window and look outside. You are taking a brief step away from what you are talking about to mention something of importance.

Example: in move 2 above (hint of trouble), you step out of the story and say, "Sometimes our memory reminds us of who we are. There are those times in our lives when something happened, like with Moses confronting that Egyptian over an injustice to an Israelite, and we know there was more to that than we understood at the moment. Could it be that hints of our calling in life are imbedded in our past experiences? That reminds me of a time when I was five years old and we played church. I always insisted on being the preacher. Was that God at work?" These window observations can come from several places—your work on letting the text help you, the stories of people in your congregation, the image page, songs, books, history, etc.

The windows need to be brief. Don't leave the main plot line very long or people will forget the story you are in. Make sure you don't have more window than wall in the sermon. The walls of the story support the window, not the reverse. One of the best places for windows is in the final move. In this example, you might name people in the congregation who have done what Moses did: the couple who brought elderly parents into their home to care for them, the busy executive who volunteered to teach junior boys, the widow who helps single mothers care for their children.

## Stitching Stories

Have you ever watched someone stitch a patchwork quilt? They connect small pieces together to make a whole. In this sermon form, the preacher uses similar size stories with a common thread, and connects them. The beginner should aim for three or four stories, one of which is the text told as story.

**Move 1**—the story of Nelson Mandella being called by God to work for freedom in South Africa.

**Move 2**—the story of Moses called by God to liberate the slaves in Egypt.

**Move 3**—the story of a local high school teacher in your town who sensed the call of God to influence a generation held in the grip of a godless world.

**Move 4**—what is your story? Where is God seeking to set people free today? How does this involve you?

These stitched stories can come from children's tales, Bible characters, the community, national history, a popular book, or something that happened to you.

## Four Pages of the Sermon

Paul Scott Wilson has written a book by this title and given this form popularity. This sermon has four moves and is balanced in the middle with move one-two on one side of the seesaw, and move three-four on the other side. The form name is not intended to suggest that the sermon have four literal pages, but rather that there are four distinct moves.

Page 1—sin/trouble in the text  
Page 2—sin/trouble in the world  
Page 3—grace in the text  
Page 4—grace in the world

Using our illustration from Exodus 3, the sermon might look like this:

**Move 1**—The people of God down in Goshen crying out under their harsh treatment. They have no power and there is no one who can deliver them.

**Move 2**—There are people all over our town crying out to God. Can you hear them? Listen. A lonely woman in a rest home. A junior high kid thinking about suicide. A single mom left with the burden of being parent and provider. A young man at the local bar who numbs his anxiety with alcohol at the end of every day.

**Move 3**—God appears to a man named Moses and calls him to invest his life in setting these people free. God will empower this man and do mighty deeds through him in the interest of the slaves. God cares about His creatures in bondage.

**Move 4**—God appears to people like us and calls us to invest our lives in setting these people free. We cannot do it in our own strength, but God can do it through us.

## Three-Point Sermon

This is a classic form and still useful for preachers today. However, we must be careful lest this form strip

stories of their mystery and power. Do not go looking for three points in a text as raw material for a sermon. Let the text suggest how it wishes to be preached. One of the best three-point forms is one called sociology, psychology, and theology.

*Give several illustrations.*

**Move 1:** Sociology—describe the world as it is. “Have you ever noticed people everywhere are trying to figure out what they want to be when they grow up? They have no idea what their life in this world is to be about.” From this you survey the world around you and point out the anxious wrestling of people to figure this out.

**Move 2:** Psychology—“Why do you think we have such a hard time knowing what we are to do with our lives? Could it be . . . ?” From here you go in search of dead-end answers. Suggest solutions that won’t work. These are called straw men. You set them up with the intention of knocking them down.

**Move 3:** Theology—“I wonder if God has anything to say about this? Well, I remember this man named Moses who was frittering his life away on the backside of nowhere. Maybe his story can help us. Let me tell it to you.”

*You should be prepared to play with these four forms in class. Allow students to suggest components for these sermons.*

*Place students in discussion groups and have them share what form they lean toward.*

*Now that we have explored four sermon forms, which form do you think your sermon on Luke 24 might take? Why?*

## Lesson Close

(5 minutes)

### Review

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

Look at the learner objectives for this lesson. Did you

- become acquainted with some of the basic sermon forms?
- illustrate how a text could take shape with each form?

### Assign Homework

*Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.*

Read Resource 9-2.

Using Resource 9-2 for guidance, write a summary of intent for your sermon on Luke 24. Your written summary of intent is due at the beginning of Lesson 11.

In Lesson 10 we will listen to two sermons and discuss their structure and form. Read Resource 9-3, "Good Preaching Needs Good Structure," and be prepared to analyze these sermons in light of the principles presented here.

Journal Prompt

Which of the sermon forms in Lesson 9 seem best suited to you? Why?

## Lesson 10

# Analyzing Sermon Form

## Lesson Overview

### Schedule

| Start Time | Task or Topic             | Learning Activity | Materials Needed                                   |
|------------|---------------------------|-------------------|--|
| 0:00       | Introduction              | Orient            | Student Guide                                      |
| 0:10       | Hearing the Sermon        | Listen/Analyze    | Audio CD player<br>Sermon CD #1<br>Resource 10-1   |
| 0:35       | Analyzing the Sermon Form | Class Discussion  |  |
| 0:55       | Hearing the Sermon        | Listen/Analyze    | Resource 10-1 (c. 2)<br>Sermon CD #1               |
| 1:20       | Analyzing the Sermon Form | Class Discussion  |  |
| 1:27       | Lesson Close              | Review, Assign    | Student Guide<br>Sermon CD #2<br>(multiple copies) |

### Material and Room Preparation

*Sermon CD #1 and Sermon CD #2 are required for this lesson.*

*You will need to make multiple copies of Sermon CD #2 so students can listen to the sermons and complete the homework assignment outside of class.*

*Find someone with a CD Writer on his or her computer that can assist you in making additional copies.*

*The CD copies can be collected at the next class session and reused in subsequent offerings of the Preaching module.*

#### Materials Needed:

- Sermon CD #1 (containing two sample sermons)
- Sermon CD #2 (containing two additional sermons)
- Multiple copies of Sermon CD #2 (approximately 1 copy for each student)

*Personally preview the sermons before class so you can give a brief introduction before playing the sermon.*

*Arrive early enough that you can setup the classroom before students arrive. You will need a portable CD player with adequate amplification so all students can hear the sample sermons clearly.*

Prepare an introduction for the two sermons you will play in class. Keep the introduction short. Students will need the preacher's name, sermon title, scripture text, location, and approximate size of the intended congregation.

Prepare notes on how you will lead the class discussion and analysis of the two sermons. Remember to guide students to answer the questions on Resource 10-1. Avoid the tendency to give the answers you have written.

**Equipment Needed:**

- Portable CD player

# Lesson Introduction

(10 minutes)

## Accountability

*Give students an opportunity to respond. Continue to solicit oral responses until most of the principles have been stated or no more are suggested. Writing the principles on an overhead or white-board as they are given will help generate additional recall.*

*Refer to Resource 9-3 in the Student Guide.*

Without opening our student guides, see if we can reconstruct the seven principles of inductive preaching presented in Resource 9-3, "Good Preaching Needs Good Structure."

*Who remembers one of the principles?*

Good. *What was another of the principles?*

Let's compare the list we created with Resource 9-3. *How does our list compare with the original?*

*Do you have any questions about the principles stated here?*

## Orientation

Today we will listen to two sermons and examine the sermon form of each. Each sermon has elements of the plot line and forms discussed in the last lesson, but each may not fall neatly into a single category.

## Learner Objectives

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

*Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.*

At the end of this lesson, participants should be able to

- recognize different sermon forms represented in sample sermons
- detect the moves and plot lines in a sermon

# Lesson Body

## Hearing the Sermon

(25 minutes)

*Refer to Resource 10-1 in the student guide.*

Open your Student Guides to Resource 10-1. As you listen to the following sermon, write down the sermon moves or outline the preacher uses. Following this first sermon we will discuss the moves you have identified and complete the rest of Resource 10-1 together.

This sermon is titled . . .

*Give your brief, prepared introduction.*

The preacher is . . .

The congregation where this sermon was preached is in . . .

*Play one of the sermons you have previewed.*

The church has a (small, medium, large) congregation in (a rural, urban, metropolitan) area in (region or country).

## Analyzing the Sermon

(20 minutes)

*Use your notes from previewing this sermon to guide students through Resource 10-1.*

*Pay particular attention to the sermon moves (outline) and its effectiveness in communicating the message.*

## Hearing the Sermon

(25 minutes)

*Refer to Resource 10-1 (copy 2) in the student guide.*

For this sermon, use Resource 10-1 (copy 2). As you listen, write down the sermon moves or outline.

*Give your brief, prepared introduction.*

This sermon is titled . . .

The preacher is . . .

The congregation where this sermon was preached is in . . .

*Play one of the sermons you have previewed.*

The church has a (small, medium, large) congregation in (a rural, urban, metropolitan) area in (region or country).

## Analyzing the Sermon

(7 minutes)

*Use your notes from previewing this sermon and guide students through Resource 10-1 (copy 2).*

*Pay particular attention to the sermon moves (outline) and its effectiveness in communicating the message.*

*You will not have sufficient time to complete Resource 10-1 for this sermon in class. Assign it as homework.*

*Assist students to organize themselves into study groups to complete the homework assignment. Students with CD players will need to be grouped with those who do not have access to CD players. No one should be excluded from the homework experience because they lack equipment.*

*If cassette tape is the dominant audio medium in your culture, make cassette tapes of the messages.*

# Lesson Close

(3 minutes)

## Review

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

Look at the learner objectives for this lesson. Can you

- recognize different sermon forms represented in sample sermons?
- detect the moves and plot lines in a sermon?

## Look Ahead

In the next lesson we will examine the steps for writing your sermon.

## Assign Homework

*Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.*

Complete your written summary of intent for your sermon.

*You will need to make multiple copies of Sermon CD #2 so groups of students can listen to the sermons and complete the homework assignment.*

Today in class we listened to two sermons representing two different sermon forms.

- Listen to the two additional sermons (CD) and complete the Listening Guides for each.
- Sermons can be listened to in small groups but the Listening Guides should be completed individually.

*Find someone with a CD Writer on his or her computer who can assist you in making additional copies.*

Journal Prompt

*The CD copies can be collected at the next class session and reused in subsequent offerings of the Preaching module.*

How does the preacher's personality influence his or her preferred sermon form? What form do you find the most effective? How do you select a form for your sermons?

## Punctuate the Finish

*Which of the sermons spoke most clearly to you? Was it a function of form or content?*

As preachers of the word, we can learn several different forms for sermons. Scripture itself seems to suggest certain forms for each text. It is best to choose one or two forms at a time and work on these until we become comfortable with them.

## Lesson 11

# Writing the Sermon and Preparing to Preach

## Lesson Overview

### Schedule

| Start Time | Task or Topic                             | Learning Activity | Materials Needed                                |
|------------|---|-------------------|---|
| 0:00       | Introduction                              | Orient            | Student Guide<br>Popsicle Sticks                |
| 0:30       | Sermon Skeleton                           | Lecture           |   |
| 0:32       | Creating a Skeleton                       | Class Exercise    | Resource 11-1<br>Resource 11-2<br>Resource 11-3 |
| 1:17       | Effective and Ineffective Public Speaking | Lecture           | Resource 11-4                                   |
| 1:27       | Lesson Close                              | Review, Assign    | Student Guide<br>Resource 11-5                  |

### Suggested Reading for Instructor

Boone, Dan L., and William Bray. *The Worship Plot*, unpublished manuscript. Used by permission of the authors.

Craddock, Fred B. *Preaching*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1985, 189-93.

# Lesson Introduction

(30 minutes)

## Accountability

*Have the students share with another classmate their summary statement.*

*Return and collect homework.*

## Orientation

*Give each member of the class 10 Popsicle sticks.*

*You are involving them in shaping something that up until now exists only in their imagination. Move from exhibit to exhibit and have the class guess what form is suggested by the arrangement of the sticks.*

Arrange the Popsicle sticks in a form that indicates the sermon form you have chosen for your text.

In writing a sermon, we bring structure to ideas.

## Learner Objectives

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

*Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.*

At the end of this lesson, participants should be able to

- understand the process for writing the sermon
- define six qualities of a good sermon
- identify characteristics of effective speaking

# *Lesson Body*

## **Lecture**

(2 minutes)

The human body hangs on a skeleton. We would take a very different shape if our skeletal structure were different. The skeleton isn't the visible part of a human, but without it, humans could not stand up and function. The sermon has a skeleton suggested by the form.

- The narrative sermon follows a plot line.
- Stitched stories have an order of appearance.
- Four pages have . . . well, four pages.
- Three points have . . . you guessed it, three points.

Each of these skeletal parts may have smaller parts. For instance, in the first move/skeletal segment of a "four page" sermon, you may be working on trouble in the text. In this section you may suggest the travelers on the Emmaus Road have:

- Lost hope
- Forgotten what Jesus had said
- Failed to believe the Scriptures

The beginning of writing the sermon is to create a skeletal structure that will guide the direction of your writing. This sounds a lot like an outline. In many ways, it is. But outlines tend to become speeches with points instead of stories with plots. And the Bible is not a collection of texts with points, but rather a collection of stories that tell us who we are. Think more in line with the spine of a story rather than an outline with points and subpoints.

One way to do this is storyboarding. Create your sermon in cartoon characters. Draw one page per move and see your sermon as a series of pictures rather than a page with words. Some preachers have learned to preach from sketches rather than manuscripts. They tell people what they see rather than read them what they wrote.

## **Class Exercise**

(45 minutes)

Create the skeleton of your sermon by summarizing each move on the Popsicle stick. Write a few words that suggest the function of this part. Note: you may have some sub-sticks. Then try storyboarding your

sermon, with one drawing per move. (A move is any part of a narrative plot line, any story to be stitched, any of the four moves in a “four page” sermon, or any point in a three-point sermon.)

Once the structure is clear, you can proceed to put muscle and skin on the bones. This is the creative writing exercise that allows you to choose words to say what you see.

*Refer students to Resource 11-1.*

### **Six qualities of a good sermon**

Fred Craddock suggests that a good sermon has six qualities:

- **Unity**—it is specific, clear, and simple—it hangs together as one message
- **Memory**—it knows who is listening to this sermon
- **Recognition**—it says what we already know
- **Identification**—it draws the listeners into the plot/story—it causes them to identify with the characters
- **Anticipation**—it sustains interest and delays resolution
- **Intimacy**—it cares, loves, respects, and trusts

In two class sessions, you will begin preaching 20-minute sermons. The class will provide feedback by answering questions that indicate the presence or absence of these six qualities. The questions are:

*Refer students Resource 11-2.*

1. Did the sermon have unity? What unifying theme held it together?
2. How did the sermon connect with the existing memory of the congregation?
3. What did the sermon say that you already knew? What did the sermon say that was new to you?
4. Where did you identify with the sermon? At what point did you connect?
5. Where was the suspense? Did the preacher keep your interest? How?
6. How did the preacher establish a sense of intimacy and nearness with the listeners?

The goal is not to write a sermon, but to preach it. When writing shuts down the creative process before Sunday arrives, it has done a disservice to the task of preaching. Writing also causes one to think writing rather than speaking. Be sure to write for speaking rather than for reading. This may mean written sentences are incomplete, or that there are drawn stick figures on some pages reminding you to tell a story from memory. Writing needs to be in the service of preaching. To put something on the page and then

*From Craddock, Preaching, 189-93.*

have to retranslate it into the air in a different form is one wasted move.

This is not to say that writing is unnecessary. It is very necessary. But it must not hinder the process of telling people what you have seen. Writing serves preaching in the following ways:

*Refer students to Resource 11-3.*

1. It keeps the mind in focus and does not allow the preacher to wander.
2. It orders the material in some sequence and creates movement.
3. It allows you to look at each move and work on that move separately.
4. You can craft any sections of the sermon that need careful attention due to the possibility of misunderstanding.
5. You can rearrange the pieces should a different sermon form suggest itself in the process of writing.

*Allow the remaining time of this 45-minute segment for the students to work.*

One further note before you begin to write: each text we preach from is "doing something." Some texts encourage, others teach, others call for confession, etc. Be sure you are in the same mood as the text when you write the sermon. If the text is "loving people," be loving as you write.

## Lecture

(10 minutes)

*Refer students to Resource 11-4.*

*As you teach these traits and characteristics, you should play with the class by demonstrating them in your lecture. For instance, speak boringly or rattle the keys in your pocket while you are talking. They will understand these habits better if they can see them demonstrated rather than hear a lecture about them.*

## Effective and Ineffective Public Speaking

Allen Monroe has discovered six characteristics of an ineffective speaker:

- Monotonous voice
- Stiffness
- Lack of eye contact
- Fidgeting
- Lack of enthusiasm
- Weak voice

The five characteristics of an effective speaker are:

- Direct eye contact
- Alertness
- Enthusiasm
- Pleasant voice
- Physical activity

In using the body to speak, there are six effective traits:

- Be relaxed
- Be definite

- Be appropriate
- Be yourself
- Use variety
- Adapt your movement to the audience

The ineffective use of the body is seen in these traits:

- Random movement
- Nervous pacing
- Shifting weight
- Adjusting clothes
- Fiddling with keys, wallet, money, glasses, etc.

Being nervous at the thought of public speaking is common. The best ways to control nervousness are slowing the rate of your speech, rotating your shoulders to remove stress before you begin, taking deep breaths, and stretching your upper body. Nervousness is a physical reaction that can be helped by consciously slowing down and relaxing your body.

Some of the common voice problems are listed below with suggestions for improvement:

- Too high pitch—slow down
- Too low pitch—speed up
- Monotone—intentionally vary the pitch
- Too harsh/tense—breathe more and pause longer
- Boring—increase your rate and pitch
- Nervousness—pause, breathe deeply, stretch muscles
- Mumbling—slow down, be intentional

# Lesson Close

(3 minutes)

## Review

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

Look at the learner objectives for this lesson. Can you

- understand the process of writing the sermon?
- define six qualities of a good sermon?
- identify characteristics of effective speaking?

## Assign Homework

*Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.*

Read *The Worship Plot* (Resource 11-5).

- Apply the principles to the sermon you are writing.
- Create a worship service for the sermon you are preparing.
- Be prepared to give an oral summation of *The Worship Plot*.

Begin writing your sermon.

Journal Prompt

What would listeners say about you as a preacher?

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## *Lesson 12*

# The Place of the Sermon in Worship

## *Lesson Overview*

### **Schedule**

| Start Time | Task or Topic      | Learning Activity | Materials Needed               |
|------------|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------|
| 0:00       | Introduction       | Orient            | Student Guide                  |
| 0:02       | The Worship Plot   | Class Discussion  |                                |
| 0:32       | Worship Service    | Class Exercise    |                                |
| 1:02       | Lesson Close       | Review, Assign    | Student Guide<br>Resource 12-1 |
| 1:12       | Sermon Preparation | Individual Work   |                                |

# *Lesson Introduction*

(2 minutes)

## **Accountability**

*Return and collect homework.*

## **Orientation**

In the same way biblical narratives have a plot, worship has a plot. We are going somewhere and doing something together.

## **Learner Objectives**

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

*Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.*

At the end of this lesson, participants should be able to

- present a worship structure that flows out of the text
- suggest a way of going about planning a worship service

# Lesson Body

## Class Discussion

(30 minutes)

*Ask for volunteers (or assign students) to review each of the five moves in the worship plot. They should stand in front of the class to make their summary presentations. The teacher should be prepared to fill in any key thoughts missing. This is also a good time to coach their speaking habits. Note the characteristics of effective and ineffective speaking in their presentations. To correct them at this point will be easier than stopping them midsermon to point out bad habits.*

### Five moves in the worship plot

1. Entrance—locating us in the presence of God
2. The Bad News—how sin separates us from God and destroys us
3. The Good News—preaching the gospel
4. Response of the People—altar, Communion, testimony, deeds, offering
5. Benediction/Blessing—sending people into the world under the blessing of God

## Class Exercise

(30 minutes)

*Divide the class into groups and have them create a service for the sermon they are writing. Place them in "same text" groups so they can help each other with creative ideas around the text. All worship forms will not look the same for each text, but there may be similarities.*

*Give the groups at least 30 minutes. Walk around and listen to their work. Provide hymnals, drama resource books, and other available worship resources. Knowing their texts in advance will allow the teacher to have suggestions for the services. As each group finishes its work, ask them to write it on a marker board for all to see.*

## Lesson Close

(10 minutes)

### Review

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

Look at the learner objectives for this lesson. Can you

- present a worship structure that flows out of the text?
- suggest a way of going about planning a worship service?

### Look Ahead

*For each student, this process will require 28-33 minutes. Two students per hour is a good pace.*

*You will need one copy of Resource 12-1 for each student per sermon. If there are 10 people preaching, you will need 100 copies. Be sure to fill one out for yourself. On the day of preaching, the student will preach. Immediately upon completion of the sermon, the class will fill out the evaluation form. Students are learning to look for certain skills, habits, and patterns in preaching. This is a vital learning exercise.*

*If there are 10 students in your class, it will take at least five hours to hear everyone preach once. Do not eliminate this exercise. The only way to learn to preach is to preach. The goal is not to know about preaching, but to preach.*

*If time permits or there is student interest, you can assign a second sermon and repeat the process. In this second sermon, you will be looking for improvement in areas noted during evaluation of the first sermon.*

In the next session, you begin preaching. You have a time limit of 15-20 minutes. Test your sermon for length before preaching it in class. After each sermon we will allow three minutes for the class to write an evaluation of the sermon, and 10 minutes for discussion/feedback from class and teacher to the preacher. We will not begin to discuss the sermon before everyone has completed his or her form. We will use Resource 12-1 as the form for class feedback.

We will meet as many times as needed to allow everyone to preach.

### Assign Homework

*Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.*

Complete and prepare to present your sermon.

Journal Prompt

How will you go about planning a worship service?

## **Individual Work**

During the remaining class time you may work on your sermon. I will be available to answer any questions or concerns you may have.

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## *Lesson 13*

# Preaching

## *Lesson Overview*

### **Schedule**

| Start Time | Task or Topic   | Learning Activity | Materials Needed               |
|------------|-----------------|-------------------|--------------------------------|
| 0:00       | Introduction    | Orient            | Student Guide                  |
| 0:05       | Sermon Delivery | Preaching         | Resource 11-1                  |
| 1:25       | Lesson Close    | Review, Assign    | Student Guide<br>Resource 13-1 |

# Lesson Introduction

(5 minutes)

## Accountability

*Return all homework.*

## Orientation

*Instructions for this session have already been given in the Lesson Close of Lesson 11. This part of the class could take several sessions to complete. It is the most essential session because students are applying all they have learned in other sessions. Be aware of teaching moments to remind the class of specific skills and issues.*

*Do you have any questions about the procedure or format we will be using for your sermons?*

## Learner Objectives

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

*Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.*

At the end of this lesson, participants should have

- successfully presented a sermon

# *Lesson Body*

## **Preaching**

(80 minutes)

*Ask for volunteers, assign the order or draw names out of a hat for the presentation of the sermons.*

*Be sure to have plenty of copies of Resource 11-1.*

# Lesson Close

(5 minutes)

## Review

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

Look at the learner objectives for this lesson. Have you

- successfully presented a sermon?

## Look Ahead

*It is important to end the class on a note of celebration and affirmation. This is a perfect opportunity for the teacher to offer a service of encouragement and blessing. Create it as a model of everything you have taught.*

*You may wish to share Communion during the final gathering. End the class by lifting your hands and pronouncing a blessing on their preaching.*

## Assign Homework

*Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.*

Commit to continual improvement in the preaching of the Word.

Read Resource 13-1. The story is a great reminder of our call to offer grace each time we step into a pulpit.

Journal Prompt

What frightens you about preaching in front of your peers?