

Notes about Sermon Preparation

1. Decide what passage or topic you want to talk about.
 - a. If a passage, it should be at least 7 verses long or you will run out of things to say. Do not jump to other verses to “support” your conclusions. The audience cannot follow you, so has no way of determining if you speak the truth.
 - b. If a topic, you need to read the entire New Testament and note every passage that relates to your topic. A few verses is not intellectually honest. Every passage must fit into the conclusions you draw, not just some of them.
2. Write one simple sentence to describe your objective. This must include action. Do not make your objective that people will “understand.” They must be moved to action. Everything that follows must relate to that one sentence (the objective). If it does not relate directly, save it for another sermon.
3. Write one simple sentence for each sub-point you see in your passage or topic. Each sub-point must be a portion of the main objective. It is nice if you can use the same sentence structure for each; the audience will find this easier to remember. Alliteration helps. Each sub-point must point to an action, just like the overall objective.
4. For each point, there are three parts:
 - a. Explanation: Define big words and religion words. Make sure that the vocabulary is understandable to the audience. Tell about any relevant history and customs that affect the passage. If Old Testament references are quoted in a New Testament passage, give the context of where it came from and why the author quoted it.
 - b. Illustration: This is the bridge between something long ago and far away to the here and now. Put the passage or topic point in an everyday setting.
 - c. Application: What do you want the audience to do? Action is required. Tell them what it is.
5. Go back and write the introduction and conclusion. In the introduction, briefly tell the audience what the objective is and summarize what you are going to tell them and what you want them to do about it. In the conclusion, repeat the objective and the sub-objectives and the desired actions. So, in short, tell them what you are going to tell them, then tell them, then tell them what you told them.

With this format, you will be understandable, simple, and meaningful. It is not about excitement, but about conviction that leads to action.