

- (a) *Newspaper articles and comics—especially on the morning you preach!*
 - (b) *Christian Books—especially by Charles R. Swindoll (read Living on the Ragged Edge, For Those Who Hurt, Improving Your Serve, Strengthening Your Grip, Dropping Your Guard, Growing Strong in the Seasons of Life)*
 - (c) *Secular Books—see Tan Huay Peng, Fun with Characters: The Straits Times Collection. 3 vols. Singapore: Federal Publications, 1982.*
 - (d) *Magazines—especially Reader's Digest, Insight, and U.S. News and World Report*
 - (e) *Devotional guides—especially Our Daily Bread*
 - (f) *Written sermons—especially Haddon Robinson, Biblical Sermons*
- (iii) *Films and Television—including advertisements (printed ones too)*
- (iv) *People's Experiences*
- (a) *Your own personal experiences in life (but be transparent)*
 - (b) *Other people's life experiences or quotes (good for clarity and authority)*
 - (c) *Other teachers (exchange your best stories with one another)*
- (v) *Your imagination (make up a scenario or conversation as if the listener is in it)*

(2) Overhead Transparencies

- (a) *Make at least 18 point fonts.*
- (b) *Don't clutter them.*
- (c) *Use charts.*

(3) Whiteboard

- (a) *Use 2-3 colours.*
- (b) *Have students use the board too.*

(4) Handouts

- (a) *Delete unnecessary material such as copying long sections of Scripture.*
- (b) *Cite sources of material that is not your own (provide a bibliography).*

(5) Objects

- (a) *Avoid costly learning aids.*
- (b) *Realize that adults like objects too (e.g., pass around suggested books).*

d) Schedule

- (1) Assure that each activity contributes towards the teaching objectives.
- (2) Suggest feasible activities that learners can perform (tasks that are too difficult will discourage students).
- (3) Be realistic about how much time each activity will take—short enough to keep the class moving but long enough so as not to frustrate students by hurrying them.

Continued from page 81

- | | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Often | Always |
|--|-------|--------|-----------|-------|--------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 15. In my courses I emphasize process as well as product, i.e., I teach the student not only what I have learned but the ways in which he can learn. | | | | | |
| 16. As I enter each class I have with me a written set of learning objectives which are clear, precise and worded in terms of student skills and competencies. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 17. I base my teaching on a conscious awareness of student readiness: what they know and don't know I am aware of. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 18. The basis for my grading is broad, that is, in order to arrive at a final course grade I measure student learning by several means which vary in type and intensity. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 19. I encourage students to ask questions, provide ample opportunity for them to do so, and neither intimidate nor patronize with my answers. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 20. I take seriously the faculty evaluations filled out by my classes and conscientiously plan teaching improvements on the basis of that information. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

B. Teaching Your Lesson

1. Evaluating Your Teaching

AM I A PEDAGOGUE OR AN ANDRAGOGUE?
(A self-analysis for teachers of adults)

circle one

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
1. My students are independent and self-directed in the way they view their responsibility for the learning experiences of the class.	1	2	3	4	5
2. My classroom sets a climate of mutuality and collaboration between/among students and teacher in the quest for truth.	1	2	3	4	5
3. My syllabus is designed to utilize and maximise the experience of the student as a resource for further learning.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Classroom learning experiences are planned jointly by teacher and students.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Class sessions take into consideration the social roles my students have already taken and/or those which are currently developing.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Needs of the students, with respect to the content of any given course, are identified by the students themselves.	1	2	3	4	5
7. The application of the content I teach is immediate, that is to say, the students are able to perceive and implement the learning in real life without any substantial delay.	1	2	3	4	5
8. The learning objectives for my classes are jointly agreed upon by teacher and students, i.e., they not only "own" my objectives but are encouraged to identify their own.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I design the learning experiences of my courses to be problem-centered (solutions to practical life situations) rather than subject-centered (memorization of data).	1	2	3	4	5
10. The actual class methodology leads students through experiences which relate content to life rather than cognitively adding content to content.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I aggressively teach for <u>affective</u> (attitudinal) goals as well as <u>cognitive</u> (assimilation of content) goals.	1	2	3	4	5
12. My tests and other required assignments reflect <u>conative</u> (skill, competency) as well as cognitive concerns.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Evaluation and grading are inseparably linked with learning goals clearly announced at the outset of the class and emphasized throughout the term of learning.	1	2	3	4	5
14. Student feedback in various forms is utilized to re-organize and improve the learning process.	1	2	3	4	5

continued on page 80

2. Preparing Your Lesson
 - a) Follow the Observation-Interpretation-Application model.
 - b) Design your lesson plan keeping in mind the other things noted in this class

3. The Day Before You Teach
 - a) Pray much about your lesson and the students
 - b) Consult lesson plan to gather materials
 - c) Have everything ready before you go to bed
 - d) Teach the whole lesson aloud

4. Tips for Teaching for Life-change
 - a) Arrive early enough to have your stuff set up before students arrive.
 - b) Be fun
 - c) Use a variety of teaching methods
 - d) Learn students' names
 - e) Read as little as possible
 - f) Don't be afraid to say: "I don't know"
 - g) Ask good questions
 - (1) Ask questions for which they have some background knowledge.
 - (2) Ask open-ended, not closed-ended questions.
 - (3) Ask questions in a permissive atmosphere.
 - (4) Ask questions on various cognitive levels.
 - (5) See the next page for four types of questions.

Student _____ Box _____ Assign. Grade _____

“A Mighty Fortress” (Assignment #2)

Directions: Read this famous hymn written by Martin Luther and write what you believe to be the subject (what the hymn is *about*) and complement (what the hymn *says* about this subject) below. The subject should be an *incomplete*, short statement of at least three words which describes the major thrust of a biblical passage but is a sentence fragment without its complement. The complement may be an *incomplete or full* sentence which completes or answers the question posed by the subject. Do *not* use the words “mighty” or “fortress” in either statement and avoid using the same phrases as appear in the text. Follow the helpful guidelines in Robinson’s chapter 2 to do this assignment.

Subject:

Complement:

HYMNS OF WORSHIP: THE FATHER

36

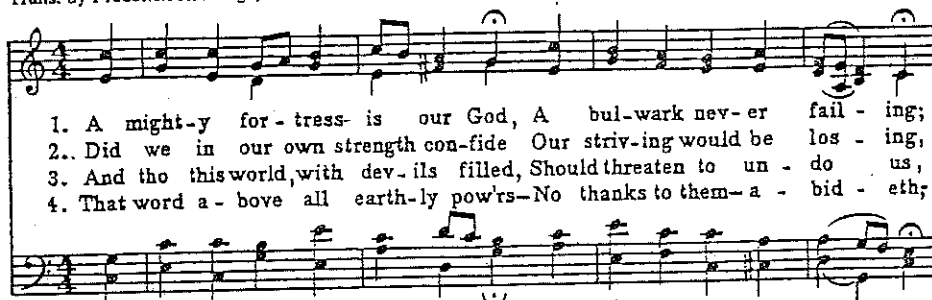
A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

EIN' FESTE BURG -

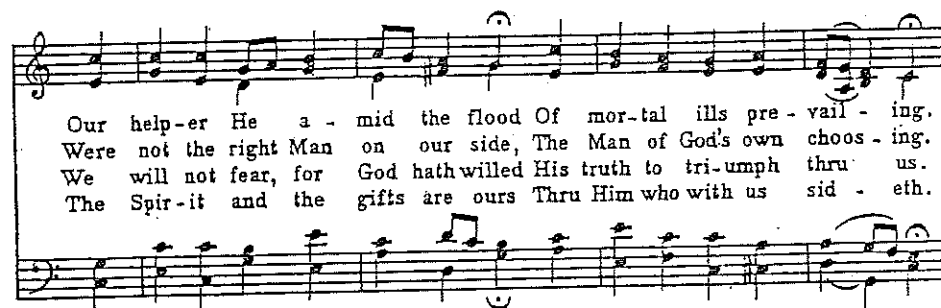
MARTIN LUTHER, 1483-1546

MARTIN LUTHER, 1483-1546

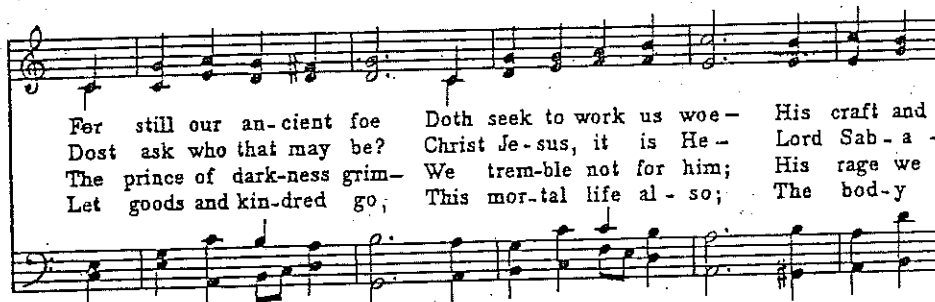
Trans. by Frederick H. Hedge, 1805-1890



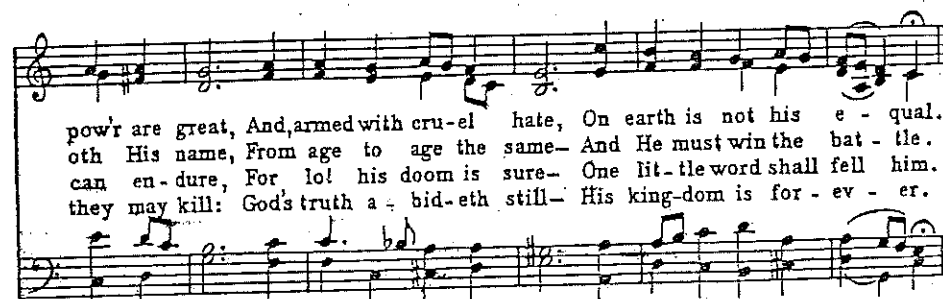
1. A might-y for - tress - is our God, A bul-wark nev - er fail - ing;
 2. Did we in our own strength con-fide Our striv-ing would be los - ing,
 3. And tho this world, with dev - ils filled, Should threaten to un - do us,
 4. That word a - bove all earth-ly pow'rs - No thanks to them - a - bid - eth;



Our help - er He a - mid the flood Of mor - tal ills pre - val - ing.
 Were not the right Man on our side, The Man of God's own choos - ing.
 We will not fear, for God hath willed His truth to tri - umph thru us.
 The Spir - it and the gifts are ours Thru Him who with us sid - eth.



For still our an - cient foe Doth seek to work us woe - His craft and
 Dost ask who that may be? Christ Je - sus, it is He - Lord Sab - a -
 The prince of dark - ness grim - We trem - ble not for him; His rage we
 Let goods and kin - dred go, This mor - tal life al - so; The bod - y



pow'r are great, And, armed with cru - el hate, On earth is not his e - qual.
 oth His name, From age to age the same - And He must win the bat - tle.
 can en - dure, For lo! his doom is sure - One lit - tle word shall fell him.
 they may kill: God's truth a - bid - eth still - His king - dom is for - ev - er.

New Concepts

Expository preaching

Definitions

Expository preaching—the communication of a biblical concept, derived from and transmitted through a historical, grammatical, literary study of a passage in its context, which the Holy Spirit first applies to the personality and experience of the preacher, then through him to his hearers.

Chapter 2

What's the Big Idea?

I do not appreciate opera; what is worse, I have several friends who do. Living with them makes me feel like I exist in a cultural desert, and I have taken several steps to change my condition. On occasion I have actually attended an opera. Like a sinner shamed into attending church, I have made my way to the music hall to let culture have its way in me. On most of these visits, however, I have returned home unresponsive to what the artists have tried to do.

I understand enough about opera, of course, to know that a story has been acted out with the actors singing rather than speaking their parts. Usually, though, the story line stays as vague to me as the Italian lyrics, but opera burfs tell me that the plot is incidental to the performance. Should someone bother to ask my evaluation of the opera, I would comment on the well-constructed sets, the brilliant costumes, or the heftiness of the soprano. I could render no reliable judgment on the interpretation of the music or even the dramatic im-

pact of the performance. When I return from the music hall with a crumpled program and an assortment of random impressions, I actually do not know how to evaluate what has taken place.

When people attend church, they may respond to the preacher like a novice at the opera. They have never been told what a sermon is supposed to do. Commonly the listener reacts to the emotional highs. He enjoys the human interest stories, jots down a catchy sentence or two, and judges the sermon a success if the preacher quits on time. Important matters, such as the subject of the sermon, may escape him completely. Years ago Calvin Coolidge returned home from services one Sunday and was asked by his wife what the minister had talked about. Coolidge replied, "Sin." When his wife pressed him as to what the preacher said about sin, Coolidge responded, "I think he was against it." The truth is that many people in the pew would not score much higher than Coolidge if quizzed about the content of last Sunday's sermon. To them, preachers preach about sin, salvation, prayer, or suffering—all together or one at a time in thirty-five minutes. Judging from the incomprehending way in which listeners talk about a sermon, it is hard to believe that they have listened to a message. Instead the responses indicate that they leave with a basketful of fragments but no adequate sense of the whole.

Unfortunately some of us learn to preach as we have listened. Preachers, like their audiences, may conceive of sermons as a collection of points that have little relationship to each other. Here textbooks designed to help the speaker may actually hinder him. Discussions of outlining usually emphasize the place of Roman and Arabic numerals along with proper indentation, but these factors, important as they are, may ignore the obvious—an outline is the shape of the sermon idea, and the parts must all be related to the whole. Three or four points not related to a more inclusive point do not make a message; they make three or four sermonettes all preached at one time. Reuel L. Howe listened to hundreds of

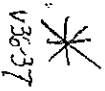
taped sermons, held discussions with laymen, and concluded that the people in the pew "complain almost unanimously that sermons often contain too many ideas."¹ That may not be an accurate observation. Sermons seldom fail because they have too many ideas; more often they fail because they deal with unrelated ideas.

Fragmentation poses a particular danger for the expository preacher. Some expository sermons offer little more than scattered comments based on words and phrases from a passage, making no attempt to show how the various thoughts fit together. At the outset the preacher may catch the congregation's mind with some observation about life, or worse he may jump into the text with no thought about the present at all. As the sermon goes on, the preacher comments on the words and phrases in the passage with subthemes and major themes and individual words all given equal emphasis. In the conclusion, if there is one, he usually substitutes a vague exhortation for relevant application, since no single truth has emerged for him to apply. When the congregation goes back into the world, it has received no message by which to live since it has not occurred to the preacher to preach one.

A major affirmation of our definition of expository preaching, therefore, maintains that "expository preaching is the communication of a biblical concept." That affirms the obvious. A sermon should be a bullet and not buckshot. Ideally each sermon is the explanation, interpretation, or application of a single dominant idea supported by other ideas, all drawn from one passage or several passages of Scripture.

The Importance of a Single Idea

Students of public speaking and preaching have argued for centuries that effective communication demands a single theme. Rhetoricians hold to this so strongly that virtually



1. *Partners in Preaching: Clergy and Laity in Dialogue*, p. 26.

every textbook devotes some space to a treatment of the principle. Terminology may vary—central idea, proposition, theme, thesis statement, main thought—but the concept is the same: an effective speech “centers on one specific thing, a central idea.”² This thought is so axiomatic to speech communication that some authors, such as Lester Thonssen and A. Craig Baird, almost take it for granted:

Little need be said here about the emergence of the central theme. It is assumed that the speech possesses a clearly defined and easily determined thesis or purpose; that this thesis is unencumbered by collateral theses which interfere with the clear perception of the principal one; and that the development is of such a character as to provide for the easy and unmistakable emergence of the thesis through the unfolding of the contents of the speech.³

Homiletics join their voices to insist that a sermon, like any good speech, embodies a single, all-encompassing concept. Donald G. Miller, in a chapter devoted to the heart of biblical preaching, speaks clearly:

... any single sermon should have just one major idea. The points or subdivisions should be parts of this one grand thought. Just as bites of any particular food are all parts of the whole, cut into sizes that are both palatable and digestible, so the points of a sermon should be smaller sections of the one theme, broken into finer fragments so that the mind may grasp them and the life assimilate them. . . . We are now ready to state in simplest terms the burden of this chapter. It is this: *Every sermon should have a theme, and that theme should be the theme of the portion of Scripture on which it is based.*⁴

2. William Norwood Brigrance, *Speech: Its Techniques and Disciplines in a Free Society*, p. 35. See also the discussions of the central idea in: Donald C. Bryant and Karl R. Wallace, *Fundamentals of Public Speaking*, 3d ed., pp. 146–48; Milton Dickens, *Dynamic Communication*, pp. 58, 254–56, 267–71; Alma Johnson Saret, Lew Saret, and William Truitt Foster, *Basic Principles of Speech*, p. 215.
3. *Speech Criticism: The Development of Standards for Rhetorical Appraisal*, p. 393.
4. *The Way to Biblical Preaching*, pp. 53, 55. Italics his.

From a different tradition Alan M. Stubbs adds a seconding voice: the “preacher must develop his expository treatment of the text in relation to a single dominant theme. . . .”⁵ H. Grady Davis develops his book *Design for Preaching* in support of the thesis that “a well-prepared sermon is the embodiment, the development, the full statement of a significant thought.”⁶ A classic statement of this concept comes from J. H. Jowett in his Yale lectures on preaching:

I have a conviction that no sermon is ready for preaching, not ready for writing out, until we can express its theme in a short, pregnant sentence as clear as a crystal. I find the getting of that sentence is the hardest, the most exacting, and the most fruitful labour in my study. To compel oneself to fashion that sentence, to dismiss every word that is vague, ragged, ambiguous, to think oneself through to a form of words which defines the theme with scrupulous exactness—this is surely one of the most vital and essential factors in the making of a sermon: and I do not think any sermon ought to be preached or even written, until that sentence has emerged, clear and lucid as a cloudless moon.⁷

To ignore the principle that a central, unifying idea must be at the heart of an effective sermon is to push aside what students of preaching have to tell us.⁸

A novice may dismiss the importance of a central idea as the ploy of homiletics professors determined to press young preachers into their mold. It should be noted, therefore, that this basic fact of communication also claims sturdy biblical support. In the Old Testament, the sermons of the prophets

5. *Expounding God's Word: Some Principles and Methods*, p. 40.
6. P. 20.
7. *The Preacher: His Life and Work*, p. 133.
8. For example, see: Andrew W. Blackwood, *Expository Preaching for Today: Case Studies of Bible Passages*, p. 95; John A. Broadus, *On the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*, pp. 52–56; James W. Cox, *A Guide to Biblical Preaching*, p. 61; Farris D. Whitesell and Lloyd M. Perry, *Variety in Your Preaching*, p. 75; John Wood, *The Preacher's Workshop: Preparation for Expository Preaching*, p. 32.

Biblical support for #1.

are called "the burden of the Lord." These proclamations were not a few "appropriate remarks" delivered because the man of God was expected to say something. Instead the prophet addressed his countrymen because he had something to say. He preached a message, complete and entire, to persuade his hearers to return to God. As a result the sermons of the prophets possessed both form and purpose. Each embodied a single theme directed toward a particular audience in order to elicit a specific response.

In the New Testament, the historian Luke presents samples of the preaching that enabled the church to penetrate the ancient world. The sermons of the apostles were without exception the proclamation of a single idea directed toward a particular audience. The conclusion of Donald R. Sunkian about the preaching of Paul could apply equally to the sermons of every preacher in Acts: "Each of Paul's messages is centered around one simple idea or thought. Each address crystalizes into a single sentence which expresses the sum and substance of the whole discourse. Everything in the sermons either leads up to, develops, or follows from a single unifying theme."⁹

It should be noted that each idea receives different treatment by the apostolic preacher. In Acts 2, for instance, on the day of Pentecost Peter stood before an antagonistic audience and, to gain a hearing, preached an inductive sermon. He does not state his idea until the conclusion: "Let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ—this Jesus whom you crucified" (Acts 2:36 NASB). In Acts 13, on the other hand, Paul uses a deductive arrangement. His major idea stands at the beginning of the sermon, and the points that follow amplify and support it. The statement found in verse 23 declares, "God, according to the promise, has brought to Israel a Savior, Jesus." In Acts 20, when the apostle spoke to the Ephesian elders, his structure

9. "Patterns for Preaching: A Rhetorical Analysis of the Sermons of Paul in Acts 13, 17, and 20," p. 176.

was both inductive and deductive. First Paul draws from his own life an example of care for the church, then he warns in verse 28, "Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock" (NASB). Having stated that central thought, Paul goes on to explain and apply that idea to the leaders seated before him. While not all the sermons in Acts develop in the same way, each focuses on a central unifying concept.

If we preach effectively, we must know what we are about. Effective sermons major in biblical ideas brought together into an overarching unity. Having thought God's thoughts after Him, the expositor communicates and applies those thoughts to his hearers. In dependence upon the Holy Spirit, he aims to confront, convict, convert, and comfort men and women through the preaching of biblical concepts. He knows people shape their lives and settle their eternal destinies in response to ideas.

The Definition of an Idea

What do we mean by an idea? A glance at the dictionary demonstrates that defining an idea is like packaging fog. A complete answer would send us into the broad fields of philosophy, linguistics, and grammar. Webster ranges all the way from "a transcendent entity that is a real pattern of which existing things are imperfect representations" to "an entity (as a thought, concept, sensation or image) actually or potentially present to consciousness."

The word *idea* itself moved into English from the Greek word *eidō*, which means "to see" and therefore "to know." An idea sometimes enables us to see what was previously unclear. In common life when an explanation provides new insight, we exclaim, "Oh, I see what you mean!" Still another synonym for *idea* is *concept*, which comes from the verb "to conceive." Just as a sperm and egg join in the womb to pro-

duce new life, an idea begins in the mind when things ordinarily separated come together to form a unity that either did not exist or was not recognized previously.

The ability to abstract and synthesize, that is, to think in ideas, develops with maturity. Small children think in particulars. A child praying at breakfast thanks God for the milk, cereal, orange juice, eggs, bread, butter, and jelly, but an adult combines all these separate items into the single word *food*. An idea, therefore, may be considered a distillation of life. It abstracts out of the particulars of life what they have in common and relates them to each other. Through ideas we make sense out of the parts of our experience.

All ideas, of course, are not equally valid; we have good ideas and bad ideas. Bad ideas offer explanations of experience that do not reflect reality. They read into life what is not there. Often we embrace invalid ideas because they have not been clearly stated and therefore cannot be evaluated. In our culture, influenced as it is by mass media, we are bombarded by ridiculous concepts that are deliberately left vague so we will act without thinking. Years ago Marlboro cigarettes were marketed as cigarettes for sophisticated women, but Marlboro captured less than one percent of total sales. Consumer research revealed, however, that men smoke because they believe it makes them more masculine, while women smoke because they think it makes them attractive to men. As a result of these findings, the advertisers switched their campaign away from women to men and gave Marlboros a masculine image. Rugged, weather-beaten cowpunchers were portrayed smoking cigarettes as they rounded up cattle, and the theme line invited the consumer to "come to Marlboro country." Because the association of cigarettes with cowboys conveyed the idea that smoking Marlboros makes men masculine, sales jumped four hundred percent. The idea, of course, is nonsense. Medical evidence warns us that Marlboro country is a cemetery and the Marlboro man probably suffers from cancer or lung disease. Yet because the idea that "smoking makes you masculine" slipped into the mind with-

out being clearly stated, it gained wide acceptance and boosted sales dramatically.

This is not an isolated incident. William Bryan Key, speaking about advertising, makes this unsettling statement of a Madison Avenue doctrine: "No significant belief or attitude held by any individual is apparently made on the basis of consciously perceived data." If that stands as a fundamental affirmation behind the "word from the sponsor," we should not be surprised that truth in advertising is hard to come by.

Ideas sometimes lurk in the basement of our minds like ghosts difficult to contain. At times we struggle to give ideas expression. "I know what I mean," we say, "but I just can't put it into words." Despite the difficulty of clothing thought with words, a preacher has to do it. Unless ideas are expressed in words, we cannot understand, evaluate, or communicate them. If a preacher will not—or cannot—think himself clear so that he says what he means, he has no business in the pulpit. He is like a singer who can't sing, an actor who can't act, an accountant who can't add.

The Formation of an Idea

To define an idea with "scrupulous exactness" means that we must know how ideas are formed. When reduced to its basic structure, an idea consists of only two essential elements: a subject and a complement. Both are necessary for an idea to be complete. When we talk about the subject of an idea, we mean the complete, definite answer to the question, "What am I talking about?" The term *subject* is being used here in a technical sense. For example, the subject as it is used in homiletics is not the same thing as a subject in grammar. A grammatical subject is often a single word. The subject of a sermon idea can never be only one word since it calls for the precise, full answer to the question, "What am I talking about?" While single words such as *discipleship*, *wit-*

Biblical Preaching

nessing, worship, grief, or love may masquerade as subjects, they are too vague to be viable.

A subject cannot stand alone. By itself it is incomplete, and therefore it needs a complement. The complement "completes" the subject by answering the question, "What am I saying about what I am talking about?" A subject without a complement dangles as an open-ended phrase. Complements without subjects resemble automobile parts not attached to a car. An idea emerges only when the complement is joined to a definite subject.

An example of a subject is *the test of a person's character*. (To be absolutely precise the subject is, *What is the test of a person's character?*) But that phrase must be completed to have meaning. Standing by itself we do not know what the test of character is. A variety of complements could be added to this subject to form an idea. Here are a few:

The test of a person's character is what it takes to stop him.

The test of a person's character is what she would do if she were certain no one would ever find out.

The test of a person's character is like the test of an oak—how strong is he at the roots?

Each new complement tells us what is being said about the subject, and each new complement forms a different idea. Each idea can be explained, proved, or applied.

A student of preaching must search for ideas when he reads sermons or prepares sermons of his own. Davis stresses that a beginner especially must give attention to the way ideas are formed:

He must stop getting lost in the details and study the essential structure of sermons. For the time being he has to forget about the sentences, the arguments used, the quotations, the human interest stories. He has to stand off from the sermon far enough to see its shape as a whole. Stubbornly he has to ask, "What is the man really talking about, and what are the basic things he is saying about it?" This means that he must learn to distin-

guish between the organic structure of the idea, on the one hand, and its development on the other. It is like beginning with the skeleton in the study of anatomy.¹⁰

Finding the subject and complement does not start when the expository preacher begins construction of his sermon. He pursues the subject and complement when he studies his Bible. Since each paragraph, section, or subsection of Scripture contains an idea, an exegete does not understand a passage until he can state its subject and complement exactly. While other questions emerge in the struggle to understand the meaning of a biblical writer, the two—What is the author talking about? and What is he saying about what he is talking about?—are fundamental.

Examples of Forming an Idea

In some passages the subject and complement may be discovered with relative ease, while in others determining the idea stands as the major problem in Bible study. Psalm 117 provides an example of an uncomplicated thought. The psalmist urges:

*Praise the Lord, all nations;
Extol him, all you people!
For his love is strong,
his faithfulness eternal.*

We do not understand the psalm until we can state its subject. What is the psalmist talking about? The subject is not praise, which is large and imprecise. The psalmist does not tell us everything about praise. Nor is the subject praise of God, which is still too broad. The subject needs more limits. A precise subject is why everyone should praise the Lord. What then does the psalmist say about that? He has two com-

10. *Design for Preaching*, p. 27.

plements to his subject. The Lord should be praised first because His love is strong and also because His faithfulness is eternal. In this short psalm the psalmist states his naked idea, stripped of any development, but in its bare bones it has a definite subject and two complements.

Longer passages in which the idea receives extensive development can be harder to analyze for subject and complement, but the work must be done. In Hebrews 10:19-25 the author applies a previous discussion of the high-priestly work of Jesus:

Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by the way which he dedicated for us, a new and living way, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and having a great [high] priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart in fulness of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience: and having our body washed with pure water, let us hold fast the confession of our hope that it waver not; for he is faithful that promised: and let us consider one another to provoke unto love and good works: not forsaking our own assembling together, as the custom of some is, but exhorting one another; and so much the more, as ye see the day drawing nigh. (ASV)

While many details in this passage demand explanation, a careful student will separate the branches from the trees. Until a subject emerges, it is not possible to determine the value or significance of anything else that is said. A casual reader might be tempted to state the subject as *the high priesthood of Jesus*, but that subject covers too much. The author of Hebrews does not tell his readers everything about Christ's high-priestly work in this single paragraph. Nor is he talking about *boldness to enter the holy place*, which is actually a subidea in the passage. Instead the discussion narrows to *what should happen since we can enter into God's presence with confidence and have a great high priest*. We expect then that the complements of this subject will be a series of results, and there are three. First, let us draw near

to God with the assurance that comes from a cleansed heart and life; second, let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess; and third, let us spur on one another to love and good works. Everything else in this paragraph enlarges on this subject with its complements.

In each of these passages, we determined the subject and its complement(s) to discover the structure of the idea. In order to think clearly we must constantly distinguish the structure of the idea from the way the idea develops. The effort to state the idea of a passage or of a sermon in exact words can be frustrating and irritating, but in the long run it is the most economical use of time. What is more important, you cannot get anywhere without doing it. You do not understand what you are reading unless you can clearly express the subject and complement of the section you are studying. Those who hear you do not understand what you are saying unless they can answer the basic questions: What is the preacher talking about today? What is he saying about what he is talking about? Yet Sunday after Sunday men and women leave church unable to state the preacher's basic idea because the preacher has not bothered to state it himself. When people depart in a fog, they do so at their spiritual peril.

Thinking is difficult, but it stands as the essential work of the preacher. Let there be no mistake about the nature of the task. It is often slow, discouraging, overwhelming, but when God calls men to preach, He calls them to love Him with their minds. God deserves that kind of love and so do the people to whom we minister. On a cold, gloomy morning a preacher worked on his sermon from breakfast until noon with little to show for his labor. Impatiently he laid down his pen and looked disconsolately out the window, feeling sorry for himself because his sermons came so slowly. Then there flashed into his mind a thought that had profound effect on his later ministry: your fellow Christians will spend far more time on this sermon than you will. They will come from a hundred homes. They will travel a thousand miles in the ag-

gregate to be in the service. They will spend three hundred hours participating in the worship and listening to what you have to say. Don't complain about the hours you are spending in preparation and the agony you experience. The people deserve all you can give them.

New Concepts

What's the Big Idea?

- Idea
- Two essential elements in the statement of an idea:
 - subject
 - complement

Definitions

- Complement*—the answer to the question, What exactly am I saying about what I'm talking about?
- Idea*—a distillation of life that abstracts out of the particulars of experience what they have in common and relates them to each other.
- Subject*—the complete, definite answer to the question, What am I talking about?

The CPS or Big Idea (Step 5)

I. Introduction

- A. Importance of a “Big Idea”: “A major affirmation of our definition of expository preaching, therefore, maintains that ‘expository preaching is the communication of a biblical concept.’ That affirms the obvious. A sermon should be a bullet and not buckshot. Ideally each sermon is the explanation, interpretation, or application of a single dominant idea supported by other ideas, all drawn from one passage or several passages of Scripture” (Haddon Robinson, *Biblical Preaching*, 33).
- B. Synonyms for “Big Idea”: central proposition of the sermon (CPS), biblical concept, central idea, central thought, dominant idea, homiletical idea, main idea, main thought, proposition, sermon idea, subject/complement statement, synthetic statement, and thesis statement.
- C. Forming the “Big Idea”: The big idea is the sum of a subject and a complement (or, in the words of Ramesh Richard, the central proposition of the sermon is the theme plus the thrust).
1. Subject (Theme): an *incomplete*, short statement of at least two words that describes the question asked within a Bible passage but is a sentence fragment without its complement.
 - a. It answers the question, “What am I talking about?”
 - b. It can be worded as a question that doesn’t elicit a “yes” or “no” response.
 - c. It can never be a single word since one word cannot fully answer the above question. I call these single words that describe sermons a “topic” rather than a subject (theme). If it has more than one word but still can’t be reworded as a question, let’s just call it a longer topic.
 - d. Examples of Subjects (themes):
 - 1) The reason people should praise God...
 - 2) The test of a person’s character...
 2. Complement (Thrust): an *incomplete or full* sentence that completes or answers the question posed by the subject.
 - a. It answers the question, “What exactly am I saying about what I am talking about (i.e., what am I saying about the subject)?”
 - b. It often is a brief series of two or three points mentioned in the passage that are sub points to the big idea.
 - c. It should be able to be worded as an answer to the question posed by the subject. However, this answer should be more than a simple “yes” or “no” response.

II. Examples

<u>Subject/Theme</u>	<u>(“to be” verb)</u>	<u>Complement/Thrust</u>
The reason people should praise God	is because	God is worthy to be praised.
The test of a person’s character	is	how he acts when he’s alone.

Subject/Complement Samples

Study these student attempts at writing main ideas and tick which of the three descriptions actually apply (i.e., was it actually only a topic or subject, or was it a full idea?). Then in the last column explain why the statement was not a main idea or how to improve it.

<u>Student's Example</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>MI</u>	<u>Evaluation</u>
1. God has put us together as a family so that we can help one another.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. What is a peacemaker? Who is a peacemaker?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. No substitute for leadership.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4. What is God's prescription for anxiety?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5. One of the essential qualities of a servant of God is dependence on God.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
6. Consecrated Christians, courageous commitment, and continuing convictions are the three foundational pillars of the missions-minded church.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
7. How and why your work matters to God.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
8. To be a faithful servant of God till the end is the third quality of a faithful servant of God.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
9. As a Christian, we must set our mind on Jesus.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
10. Why will many who are first be last and many who are last will be first?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Subject/Complement Exercises

Haddon Robinson, *Biblical Preaching*, 46-47 (answers on pp. 211-12)

What's the Big Idea?

Subject: _____
Complement: _____

6. Everybody needs his memories. They keep the wolf of insignificance from the door.

Subject: _____
Complement: _____

7. Do not speak harshly to a man older than yourself, but advise him as you would your own father; treat the younger men as brothers and older women as you would your mother. Always treat younger women with propriety, as if they were your sisters.
I Tim. 5:1-2

Subject: _____
Complement: _____

8. Walking is the exercise that needs no gym. It is the prescription without medicine, the weight control without diet, the cosmetic found in no drugstore. It is the tranquilizer without a pill, the therapy without a psychoanalyst, the fountain of youth that is no legend. A walk is the vacation that does not cost a cent.

Subject: _____
Complement: _____

9. The nation's latest interest in astrology, brought to public attention in the 60s, is still very much alive. The American Federation of Astrologers has doubled its national membership in the last five years to upwards of four thousand, and its mysteries, as ancient as Babylonia, have even infiltrated such a "no-nonsense" place as Washington, D.C.
New York Times

Biblical Preaching

Exercises

Determine the subject and complement in the following paragraphs:

1. A good sermon leaves you wondering how the preacher knew all about you.

Subject: _____
Complement: _____

2. Today's pulpit has lost its authority because it has largely ignored the Bible as the source of its message.

Subject: _____
Complement: _____

3. G. K. Chesterton once said that it is often supposed that when people stop believing in God, they believe in nothing. Alas, it is worse than that. When they stop believing in God, they believe in anything. *Matcolm Muggerridge*

Subject: _____
Complement: _____

4. A good name is more desirable than great wealth; the respect of others is better than silver or gold.
Prov. 22:1

Subject: _____
Complement: _____

5. Praise the Lord, all nations;
Extol him, all you people!
For his love is strong,
his faithfulness eternal.

Ps. 117

Structure & the CPT or Exegetical Idea (Steps 2-3)

I. Introduction

- A. In sermon outlining the ultimate goal is to *apply the big idea (homiletical idea) for life change* in your listeners by having all of the main points of the sermon support this main idea.
- B. However, there exists a great *temptation to do shallow exegesis* to derive this big idea. This section is designed to force you to do some serious thinking before coming up with a cute sermon outline. This happens by first designing an exegetical (passage) outline before a homiletical (sermon) outline.
- C. Note on the “Seven Steps” study (pp. 27-28) that we are picking up at Step 2: “Structure: Determine the Exegetical Outline.” The following point follows the three section procedure outlined on Step 2 in order to achieve Step 3: CPT...

II. Exegetical Outlining in Basic Form

The three exegetical outlining steps can be illustrated in Luther’s *A Mighty Fortress* hymn (Assignment #2 on p. 6). Basically, the idea is to get the parts in order to determine the whole.

- A. *Reword each verse to remove all figures of speech.*

Combining lines 1-2 and 3-4 of each verse provides two statements per verse:

- Verse 1 God is our unfailing refuge and helper in all human difficulties
No one can defeat Satan’s experienced trickery, power, and hate which hinders us
- Verse 2 Fighting [Satan] in our own strength fails until we trust God’s victorious choice
God’s choice is Jesus who is omnipotent, eternal, and victorious [over Satan]
- Verse 3 We need not fear demonic threats because God’s Word gives us victory
We need not fear Satan’s anger since Christ’s Word assures his doom
- Verse 4 We thank God that Christ’s Word, Spirit, and gifts overcome demons
Seek not materialism, relationships, or life itself, as His truth and kingdom are eternal

- B. *Group similar statements into sections to reveal major divisions (“hunks”) in the passage.*

Combining the two statements per verse gives one statement per verse. Also, since vv. 1-2 share what God has done for us while verses 3-4 relate to our response, so I group these verses:

- Verse 1 God is our unfailing refuge against Satan’s powerful devices.
Verse 2 God chose Christ as our omnipotent and eternal strength for victory [over Satan].
- Verse 3 We have confidence against satanic powers because Satan’s doom is assured.
Verse 4 We thank Christ’s eternal provisions (Word, Spirit, gifts) rather than temporal ones (materialism, other humans).

- C. *Write out a full sentence statement for each section, then make sure that the sub points (“A” above) really do fit under each of the major hunks. Subdivide the sub points further if you wish.*

Now I summarize the vv. 1-2 and 3-4 statements above into single sentences like this:

- I. God has provided triumph over Satan only through Christ (vv. 1-2).
- II. We must fearlessly trust in Christ’s powerful—not our powerless—provisions (vv. 3-4).

Even though I'll add minor transitions later it may help to add in my major transition now:

I. God has provided triumph over Satan only through Christ (vv. 1-2).

(But *how* can we experience Christ's victory over Satan?)

II. We must fearlessly trust in Christ's powerful—not our powerless—provisions (vv. 3-4).

Now I'll add some sub points ("A" and "B" under my main points):

I. God has provided triumph over Satan only through Christ (vv. 1-2).

A. Satan has powerful weapons so we must trust God (v. 1)

B. God says that His solution to Satan is Christ (v. 2)

(But *how* can we experience Christ's victory over Satan?)

II. We must fearlessly trust in Christ's powerful—not our powerless—provisions (vv. 3-4).

A. Don't fear Satan since you have God's Word (v. 3).

B. Don't trust in your temporal provisions (v. 4).

Now I'll add some divisions under my sub points under the second main point & remove "v":

I. God has provided triumph over Satan only through Christ (1-2).

A. Satan has powerful weapons so we must trust God (1)

B. God says that His solution to Satan is Christ (2)

(But *how* can we experience Christ's victory over Satan?)

II. We must fearlessly trust in Christ's powerful—not our powerless—provisions (3-4).

A. Don't fear Satan since you have God's Word (3).

B. Trust eternal rather than temporal provisions (4).

1. Trust Christ's eternal provisions (4a-c):

a. Trust in the Bible (4a).

b. Rely upon the Holy Spirit (4b).

c. Utilize the gifts of the Spirit (4c).

2. Never trust in temporal provisions (4d-e).

a. Never trust in any material thing (4d).

b. Never rely upon another person for ultimate strength (4e).

Step 3: CPT—Sum up your MPs in a subject/complement sentence called the central proposition of the text ("exegetical idea")

I. God has provided triumph over Satan only through Christ (1-2).

+

II. We must fearlessly trust in Christ's powerful—not our powerless—provisions (3-4).

=

Options:

E.I. Christ alone protects us from Satan's powerful devices so we should trust in His power

E.I. Trusting Christ's powerful provisions is the only way to defeat Satan's powerful devices

E.I. Victory over Satan's devices is possible only by trusting Christ's provisions

E.I. We can triumph over Satan only through Christ

In step 5 we'll reword this into a big idea like: "Trust Christ against Satan—not yourself!"

III. Exegetical Outlining in Z₁+X+Z₂+Y Form

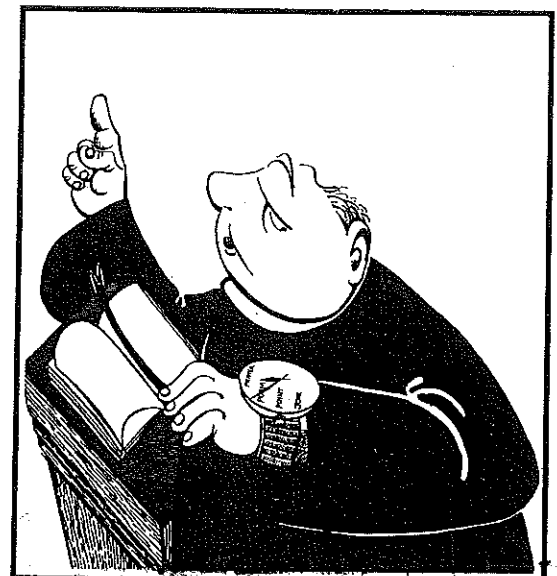
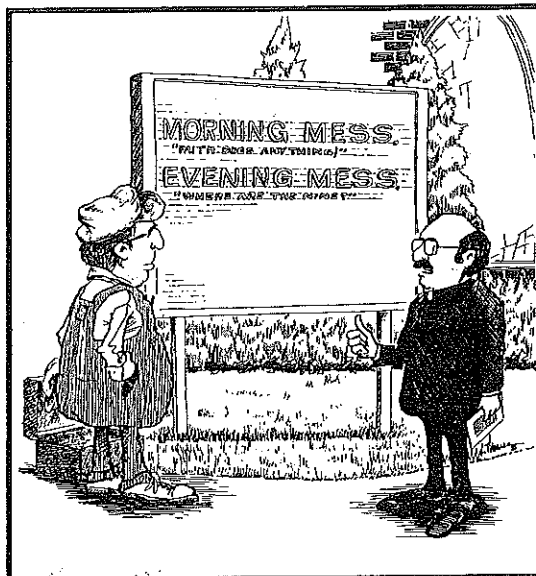
A. Sometimes it's difficult to come up with your initial exegetical statements for each verse. In such cases it may be helpful to write each sentence into a four point form which is known as the Z₁+X+Z₂+Y form. Start by determining the theme (X), then add one of the many Z₁ grammatical classifications in "B" below to arrive at the subject (Z₁+X). Then add an appropriate Z₂ phrase and finish with the subtheme (Y) to form the complement (Z₂+Y).

Subject (Z₁+X)

Complement (Z₂+Y)

Z ₁	X	Z ₂	Y
	Triumph over Satan		trust in Christ
The means by which (i.e. "The way...")	God provides triumph over Satan	is by	enabling us to trust in Christ alone
The means by which	we must fearlessly trust Christ	is by	trusting His provisions instead of our own
The means by which (i.e., How can we...)	we triumph over Satan	is by	trusting His provisions instead of our own
The reason (i.e., Why can we...)	we can feel secure	is because	God is with us and is stronger than Satan
The reason	God is trustworthy	is because	God is our deliverer and is stronger than Satan
The reason	we can live victoriously	is because	God helps us fight Satan

A correctly written Z₁+X+Z₂+Y statement should be a shorter, grammatically correct sentence if the Z₁ and the "to be" verb ("is" above) are both removed. Thus "The means by which God provides triumph over Satan is by enabling us to trust in Christ alone" becomes "God provides triumph over Satan by enabling us to trust in Christ alone." This will later be worded in a more "catchy" way in a homiletical (preaching) big idea like "You can't defeat Satan in your own strength—only Christ's."



"I think we'd better buy smaller letters and spell the word out."

B. Here's a list of qualifiers which will help you determine future exegetical statements:

-----Subject (Z₁+X)----- Complement (Z₂+Y)-----

Homiletical Question	Z ₁	X	Z ₂	Y
Who?	The one(s) to/for/by whom...		is(are) the...	
What?	The advantage(s) of... The characteristic(s) of... The content of... The evidence of... The extent to which... The identity of... The nature of... The object of... The problem of.../solution to... The quality(ies) of... The response of... The result(s) of... The setting of... The test of...		is(are)... is(are)... is/consists of... is(was)... is(was)... is(was)... is(was)... is(was)... is(was)... is(was)... is(was)... is(was)... is(was)/are(were) that... is(was)... is(was)...	
Where?	The place at/to/from which... The sphere/content in which...		is at/to/from which... was in...	
When?	The time when/before/at/during/after which...		is(was)...	
Why?	The reason(s) for/that... The purpose(s) for... The motivation(s) for... The consequence(s) of... The cause(s) for...		is(was)/are(were) <u>because</u> ... is(was)/are(were) <u>so that</u> ... is(was)/are(were) <u>so that</u> ... is(was)/are(were)... (" <u>therefore</u> ") is(was)/are(were)...	
How?	The means by which... The agent(s) by which... The manner in/by which... The way(s) in which... The uniqueness of...		is(was) <u>by/through</u> ... is(was)/are(were) <u>by</u> ... is(was) <u>by</u> ... is(was)/are(were) <u>by</u> ... is(was)...	
Under what condition?	The condition(s) by/despite which... The exception(s) of...		is(was)/are(were) <u>if/despite</u> ... is(was)/are(were)...	

How do you know *which* Z₁ above to use? Look for key connectives in the text (e.g., "and," "but," "so that," "because," etc.) and match them with the Z₂ above (underlined). For example, Ephesians 6:11 says, "Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes." This leads us to a statement with a corresponding Z₁, such as: "The purpose for consistent spiritual disciplines is so that we can defend ourselves against Satan's attacks."

Remember that correspondence must also exist between your exegetical and homiletical outlines. In other words, the Z₁ used in your exegetical outline should have its matching interrogative (homiletical question) in the homiletical outline. In effect we are starting with the second column and moving across to the right, then finishing with the associated homiletical question on the far left. Notice how the two ideas match on pages 46, 116, and 152.

Student _____ Box _____ Assign. Grade _____

Assignment #3 Exegetical Idea Exercises

Directions: Write the subject (what the quote is *about*) and complement (what the quote *says* about this subject) for each of the following statements. The subject should be an *incomplete*, short statement of at least four words describing the major theme of the text but is a sentence fragment without its complement/thrust. Make the complement an *incomplete* sentence also so it completes the sentence begun by the subject. In short, follow a Z₁+X+Z₂+Y form in a single sentence.

① I shall not pass through this life but once.
Any good, therefore, that I can do
Or any kindness I can show to any fellow creature,
Let me do it now.
Let me not defer or neglect it,
For I shall not pass this way again.

SUBJECT: The reason I should do good to others now
COMPLEMENT: is because I won't have the same opportunities again.

② America was discovered accidentally by a great seaman who was looking for something else; when discovered, it was not wanted; and most of the exploration for the next 50 years was done in the hope of getting through or around it. America was named after a man who discovered no part of the New World. History is like that, very chancy.
Samuel Elliott Morison

SUBJECT: _____
COMPLEMENT: _____

③ Now that the regular first-class postage stamp is advancing to 13¢, maybe people will discover the virtues of the 10-cent postcard. Except for purely confidential matters, here is an ideal way to write what you have to say without unnecessary verbiage, and still be gracious about it.

Think; no envelope to lick, no paper to fold, and the temptation to say too much denied. And when you receive it, how the advantages do pile up. The message right before you, easy to get at. No envelope to open and throw away -- only one disposal piece. And everything is so aboveboard, so beautifully in keeping with today's emphasis on openness.
Letter to the Editor, New York Times

SUBJECT: _____
COMPLEMENT: _____

Assignment #3 (2 of 3)

4

A straight-A student may be just as despondent as an academic dunce, a graduate student just as lonely as a freshman. Preliminary findings of a Los Angeles study of college students concludes, "The typical pattern that emerges of the committed suicide is that of a sensitive, lonely, unhappy boy (males outnumber females by about four to one) who may have many acquaintances and even some successes, but who seem to have lacked a close, meaningful relationship. Perhaps the most frequent single comment made about this group of suicides is, 'No one really seemed to know him.'"

SUBJECT: _____

COMPLEMENT: _____

5

The best executive is one who has sense enough to pick good men to do what he wants done, and sense enough not to meddle with them while they are doing it.

Teddy Roosevelt

SUBJECT: _____

COMPLEMENT: _____

6

Planning to send your new child to your old alma mater? Well, you had better start putting some money away -- \$1,860 a year, to be exact. Predicating it upon present costs for a state college, a one-year-old child, 7% inflation, and 5% interest on your savings, it all adds up to a projected \$56,160 for four years at State. For a private college, four years' room, board and tuition -- 17 years from now -- will add up to a horrendous \$98,280.

SUBJECT: _____

COMPLEMENT: _____

7

People of great ability do not emerge, as a rule, from the happiest of backgrounds. So far as my own observation goes, I would conclude that ability, although hereditary, is improved by an early measure of adversity and improved again by a later measure of success.

SUBJECT: _____

COMPLEMENT: _____

Assignment #3 (3 of 3)

8

Presidents come and Presidents go, but real power in Washington rarely changes. This is why it would be naive to anticipate Jimmy Carter's turning the ramshackle of American life back into Columbia the Gem of the Ocean. Despite the press's myopic obsession with the White House, Presidents still must dance to the music of the power structure encasing them. Although Mr. Carter is new, most of the power centers he must deal with are old, experienced, cunning, entrenched and intractable.

They do not yearn to be born again. They like the country the way it is. And why should they not? America works for them. It has worked successfully for them for a generation and more, through Republican White Houses and Democratic White Houses. Their aim is to keep it working for them.

Among the rest, the old gang is back in good health. The great powers in Washington have long included the South, the suburbs, oil, munitions, big business, big labor, lawyers and the press. All are back as powerful as ever, and most of them are prepared to resist with ferocity any incursions on their power.

New York Times

SUBJECT: _____

COMPLEMENT: _____

9

And when you pray, do not imitate the hypocrites; they love to say their prayers standing up in the synagogues and at the street corners for people to see them. I tell you solemnly, they have had their reward. But when you pray, go to your private room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in that secret place, and your Father who sees all that is done in secret will reward you.

SUBJECT: _____

COMPLEMENT: _____

10

In order to discover the rules of society best suited to nations, a superior intelligence beholding all the passions of men without experiencing any of them would be needed. This intelligence would have to be wholly unrelated to our nature, while knowing it through and through; its happiness would have to be independent of us, and yet ready to occupy itself with ours; and lastly, it would have, in the march of time, to look forward to a distant glory, and, working in one century be able to enjoy in the next. It would take God to give man laws.

Rousseau

SUBJECT: _____

COMPLEMENT: _____

Exegetical Outline Checklist

Here are 32 things to check in your exegetical outline as the basis for your sermon outline on page 23 (-3% for each one missing)
25th ed. rev. 1 Mar 2017 (see examples on pp. 46, 116, 152, 178)

Form

1. Have you written your questions & answers of the text and the text itself at the top (if preaching 1-2 verses)?
2. Are the Exegetical Idea (EI) and Main Points (MPs) all written in proper Z_1+X+Z_2+Y form?
3. Is the background/previous context given to appreciate the EI? Don't summarize your text here.
4. Have you single-spaced (except between sections of the outline which is double-spaced)?

Exegetical Idea (EI): If missing then -18% (no credit for 2, 5, 6, 8, 9, and 10)

5. Is your subject derived from the main verb in the passage? (Generally this is the best way to find the correct subject in epistles, especially if the main verb is a command.)
6. Is the EI and outline exegesis true to the author's intent? (AI = evaluate Authorial Intent)

Main Points (MPs): If missing then -45% (no credit for 2, 7-18)

7. Do the connectives in the text (e.g., "and," "but," "so that," "because," etc.) match those of the Z_1 s in the outline (cf. p. 34)? Note that the NASB is better for connectives than the NIV.
8. Does each MP & EI have but one Z_1 and Z_2 ? (Not "The reason for... is because...in order that...")
9. Does at least one Z_1 in the MPs match that of the EI? Does the Z_1 match the Z_2 ?
10. Is each MP's thrust in the EI and each SP's thrust in their MP (cf. #19)? And are there 2+ MPs and 2+ SPs?
11. Do the MPs tell the story as well as give the significance of the text addressed—esp. teaching about God?
12. Is each MP distinct from the others rather than sounding the same? Are phrases redundant?
13. Do the MPs flow without reading the various SPs (sub-points)? Are there 2-4 MPs?
14. Do the MPs use Roman numerals (I, II, III, etc.) and the SPs use letters (A, B, C, etc.)?
15. Is each MP an indicative statement (not a question)?
16. Do statements translate figures of speech rather than use the text's words? ("TF")
17. Do statements translate ambiguities ("TA") by clearly taking one exegetical option? Compare the NASB and NIV to clarify which verses are unclear. Greek & Hebrew students must interact with the original language.
18. Does the EO & EI have the same overall flow (same number of MPs) as the main movements of the text?
19. Do MPs (and SPs) avoid ideas not in the text (e.g., from cross-references)? ("NP" = not in passage)
20. Is the focus the recipients in the past (not present) tense (Write "The way the Colossians should..." not "We should...") and in active (not passive) voice? Tell the story as well as the theology (cf. #11 and #25).
21. Are statements two lines or less? Delete all unneeded words in each sentence or I will write "TL" (too long).

Sub Points (SPs)

22. Does each point have a coordinating point ("I" has "II", "A" has "B"; p. 61 [II.A.1.] & p. 55)?
23. Does each point contribute to its superior point? Does your content here explain the text? Is it really needed?

Miscellaneous

24. Is each point one (not 2-3) full sentence ("FS") with one subject (cf. #8) and complement(s) and not just a phrase? (Not "The rewards of blessed people are stated" as this only has a subject, but "The rewards of blessed people are prosperity and children" with a complement.)
25. Is each statement specific enough to relate only to this passage and does it make sense without needing to read the text (not "God fights His enemies" but "The way God fought the alliance of southern kings was by causing the sun to stand still")? Are enough details included? Pay attention to what God said and did (cf. #11 & #20).
26. Is each level of subordinate points indented in from the previous level? (Don't start or continue each SP from the far left side of the page or from the MP level in outlining.)
27. Does each sentence in the outline include its correct verse, verses, or verse portion (1a, 1b, 1c, etc.)?
28. Are all verses/parts correctly expounded in the order of the text rather than switching verses around?
29. Is each point of the outline numbered/lettered rather than in paragraphs or parentheses or multiple sentences?
30. Do you state at the top your passage, name, mailbox number and speaker number?
31. Did you use a spell-checker or have a friend proofread your spelling and grammar?
32. Did you correctly cite (cf. *SBC Writing Standards*) at the bottom at least three reputable commentaries used?

Abbreviations Used to Mark Outlines (numbers refer to the points above)

AI	Authorial Intent needs to be rechecked (6)	NC	Not Clear—ambiguous statement (16-17)
APP	Application needed	NP	Not in the Passage (19)
EI	Exegetical Idea or CPT (5-6)	R	Restatement needed
EO	Exegetical Outline	SP	Sub Point (19-23)
FS	Full Sentence is required (24)	T	Transition needed
HO	Homiletical Outline	TA	Translate Ambiguity—no unclear words of text (17)
ILL	Illustration needed	TF	Translate Figure—no unclear words of text (16)
MI	Main Idea (same as Homiletical Idea or CPS)	TL	Too Long—don't exceed 2 lines of text (26)
MP	Main Point needed (2)	Z	Use Z_1+X+Z_2+Y form (2)

Homiletical Outline Checklist

Here are 46 things to include in your sermon outline before starting to manuscript your message (-2% for each one missing)
25th ed. rev. 1 Mar 2017 (see examples on pp. 51, 210 and an expanded outline on pp. 156-57)

Introduction: If missing then -12% (no credit for 1, 2, 5, 8, 9, and 10)

1. Is a contemporary illustration given that gets attention on the subject and includes its point in one sentence?
2. Do you give 2-3 examples of how you will raise need or curiosity listed? Make this a “you” question.
3. Does a single sentence of background/setting of the text cover: (a) the preceding verses, or (b) only *relevant* historical background, or (c) the beginning of the text to be expounded? Don’t summarize your text here.
4. Do you single-space except between sections of the outline? Is the design of each point stated?
5. Do you correctly specify whether your direction is towards the subject (theme), MI (= CPS), or MPI?
6. Is this MI and outline exegesis true to the author’s intent? (AI = evaluate Authorial Intent)
7. Do you identify a homiletical subject (relating to *us*)—not the EO (exegetical outline) subject? Does the HO subject/MI match the EO subject/EI (correct)? Is it a question that avoids speaking of “points” or “things”?
8. Is the text to be preached clearly noted at the appropriate spot? (In topical messages, give only the first text.)
9. Does the intro avoid promising anything not given by the end? (Are the “goods delivered”?)
10. Do you give the correct number of MPs to preview the sermon structure? Is this preview linked to the subject?
11. Does a transition make the introduction flow naturally to the first MP by restating the subject in parentheses?

Body and Main Points (MPs)

12. Do the MPs of the HO match the MPs of the EO? (Please edit your EO to make it consistent with the HO.)
13. Does the message flow when you read only the key concept in the introduction (MI, subject, or MPI intro) through preferably 2-4 MPs to the MI in the conclusion? (Don’t let MPs sound the same.)
14. Do the MPs use sequential Roman numerals (I, II, III, etc.) and the SPs use capital letters (A, B, C, etc.)?
15. Are MPs and SPs indicative statements with a subject and complement rather than questions?
16. Do statements translate figures of speech rather than use the text’s words? (“TF”)
17. Do statements translate ambiguities rather than use the text’s words? (“TA”)
18. Do you show the major movements in the passage—especially in narrative? Do the MPs cover the *whole* story?
19. Is there at least one real life illustration that applies for every three minutes of preaching put within the HO?
20. Is the proper point and key word(s) of illustrations given (don’t just write “ILL” or “examples”)?
21. Are MPs one line in length? Do you delete all unneeded words in each sentence?

Form and Sub Points (SPs)

22. Does each point have a coordinating point (“I” has “II”, “A” has “B”; p. 61 [II.A.1.] & p. 55)? In other words, don’t have “hanging subordinate points.” Develop the HO at least to the SP level (“A,” “B,” etc.).
23. Does each point contribute to its superior point? Does your content here explain the text? Is it really needed?
24. Is each point one, short (“TL” = too long), active (not passive voice), clear, full sentence with *one subject* and complement(s)—not just a phrase (“FS” = full sentence is needed)? Are MPs restated in brackets (optional)?
25. Is each verse, verses, or verse portion underlined when it is to be read?
26. Are SPs indented from the MPs at the far left? (Don’t start or continue SPs from the far left side.)
27. Does each SP & MP include its correct verse, verses, or verse portion (1a, 1b, 1c, etc.)?
28. Does the sermon at least summarize all verses/parts of the text in 2-4 SPs or MPs?
29. Is each point of the outline numbered/lettered rather than in paragraphs, brackets, or parentheses?
30. Are you direct: “Love others...” (not “Believers should love others...”) Use imperatives!
31. Did you spell-check or have a friend proofread your spelling and grammar? Replace “(“ with “;”
32. Are transitions before MPs in parentheses? Do they repeat the subject rather than say “my second point...”?
33. Is the whole outline on a single page? You should sum up each point in *one* sentence, not a paragraph.
34. Is your EO#1 attached to this assignment with improvements suggested by the teacher clearly seen?
35. Is your EO#2 attached to this assignment with improvements suggested by the teacher now corrected?
36. Is support given for your view on difficult verses or facts in illustrations? Do you say *why* you hold to your view?

Conclusion (note in bold text)

37. Is the Main Idea stated and labeled as the MI (CPS)? Is it parallel to the EI (CPT)? Does it sum up all MPs?
38. Is the MI clear and short (TL = too long) enough to be grasped by ear but still applies the text (cf. #21 above)?
39. Does the conclusion review concepts in the MPs? Do you avoid adding new ideas in the conclusion?
40. Are specific examples of application developed rather than simply listed? Do listeners know specifically what to do after hearing you preach? Do applications and the MI relate to us (not to the original readers)?
41. Do you end with a clear exhortation to apply the MI? Use stories along with “you” statements and questions.
42. Does the conclusion (and introduction) use Arabic numbers in point form? Do you indent them at the left?

Heading

43. Do you have a catchy title that doesn’t reveal the Main Idea so as to draw interest?
44. Is your correct sermon form at the top (cyclical inductive, simple deductive, etc.) with MI at the right place?
45. Is the correct purpose (desired listener response) clearly stated at the top?
46. Do you state the passage, your name and box number at the top? Is this HO printed (*not* emailed)?

Abbreviations Used to Mark Outlines (see the Exegetical Outline Checklist on previous page)

Seven Steps to Preaching Expository Sermons

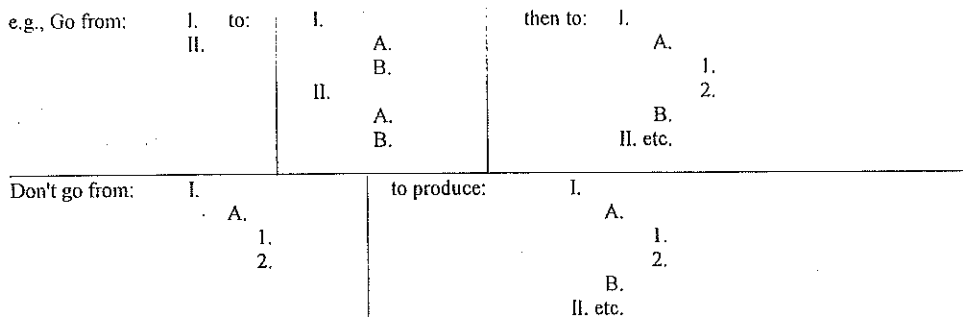
Adapted from Ramesh Richard, *Preparing Expository Sermons*; Robinson, *Biblical Preaching*; and Don Sunukjian (DTS)

1. Study the Text.

- a. Choose the Text before Tuesday in your week; make sure it is not too long for a single message.
- b. Exegete the Passage (Analyze the Parts) and Gather Your Notes.
 - 1) Pray for wisdom, read the translation most of your church members use, and list every question your members would ask (or 15 study hours later you'll have all the answers but will have forgotten the questions). Answer these questions.
 - 2) Read a few other translations and note the differences and additional questions.
 - 3) Read the original text if you can; use tools and do brief word studies on important words.
 - 4) Consult the commentaries if you are really stuck (most of the time I do this after step 5).
 - a) Look up difficulties in Greek or Hebrew commentaries (if you can read them!).
 - b) See the *Expositor's Bible Commentary* for both the big picture and problem areas.
 - c) Read a sermonic commentary (by Stott, Wiersbe, Boice, Criswell, Swindoll, etc.).

2. Structure the Text: Determine the Exegetical Outline.

- a. Reword each verse in Z₁+X+Z₂+Y form and remove all figures of speech (pp. 33-34). If the text exceeds 15-20 verses or is a narrative then write statements for groupings of 3-5 verses.
- b. Group similar statements under main titles to show big divisions ("hunks") in the passage.
- c. Write out each Main Point ("major hunk") tentatively, then make sure the various subpoints (2.a. above) really do fit under each major hunk. Subdivide the subpoints further if you wish.



3. CPT: Summarize the Main Points in a Subject/Complement Sentence called the Central Proposition of the Text (CPT) or "Exegetical Idea" (EI).

4. Purpose Bridge

- a. Submit the Exegetical Idea to Three Developmental Questions (pp. 38-39): Which of the following is needed most in your sermon for your particular audience?
 - 1) *Explain it:* What do I need to explain (about the EI/CPT)?
 - 2) *Prove it:* Do my listeners believe this idea?
 - 3) *Apply it:* Where does this concept show up in real life?
- b. Write the Desired Listener Response: what you want the hearers to know, feel, or do in measurable results (observable behavior) during or after the sermon (pp. 86, 148, 156, 170).

5. CPS: Write the Central Proposition of the Sermon or Homiletical Idea (HI).

- a. Think through how *your listeners* need to know and act upon the exegetical idea (CPT).
- b. Convert the exegetical idea into a concise, memorable sentence called the "big idea" (p. 40).

6. Structure the Sermon.

a. Outline the Sermon (pp. 47-50, 138):

- 1) Place the Main Idea: Taking into account your purpose on Step 4, have the main idea appear where it should best occur in the sermon.
 - a) Deductive: The main idea is given at the beginning, then developed (p. 50).
 - i) This outline is clear but less interesting. It closely follows the exegetical subpoints.
 - ii) Examples: an idea to explain, a proposition to prove, a principle to apply.
 - b) Inductive: The main idea is not revealed until the conclusion (pp. 49, 51).
 - i) This outline is less clear, but more interesting. Exegetical points need reworking.
 - ii) This outline is also better for hostile audiences in that it builds up to a conclusion.
 - iii) Examples: subject to complete, problem to explain, story to tell, cause with effects.
- 2) Place the Application Locations: Taking into account your purpose on Step 4, decide the principles to apply and where they should best occur in the sermon.
 - a) Simple: The entire text is explained before any of it is applied (pp. 49-50, top).
 - a) Cyclical: Applications appear within the body as the text unfolds (pp. 46, 49 bottom).
- 3) Write out your main points with their verse references following the order of the passage.
- 4) Develop each of these points with two things in mind: the developmental questions in Step 4 and answers to the key issues you raised in your preliminary questions in Step 1.

b. Plan for Oral Clarity (pp. 64-73): Remember that you know the sermon in outline form but your listeners don't (p. 67).

* This is what you mean to say...

I.

A.

B.

II.

but this is what the listeners hear...

I.A.B.II.

To alleviate this problem you must clearly emphasize your major points in several ways:

- 1) Add restatements of the major points—rephrasing them to give the same idea (p. 68).
- 2) Add transitions in parentheses between the major points (p. 68).
- 3) Add illustrations to support and clarify the main points (pp. 64-66).
- 4) Add applications to specifically show how the main idea relates to real life (pp. 70-73).
- 5) Give the interpretation of verses first, then read them (p. 68, pt. 5).
- 6) Underline the verse references wherever you plan to read the Scripture (pp. 87, 157).

c. Prepare the Introduction and Conclusion (pp. 74-77):

- 1) The introduction should accomplish three objectives. It should:
 - a) Gain favorable attention.
 - b) Create interest in listening further (touch a need or arouse some curiosity).
 - c) Orient the listeners either to the main idea or to the subject (or to the first main point).
- 2) The conclusion should accomplish three objectives. It should:
 - a) Summarize the major points of the message and state (or restate) your main idea.
 - b) Apply the passage in areas not already touched upon in the body of the sermon.
 - c) Exhort the listeners to obedience (reminding of applications stated earlier).

7. Preach: Manuscript and Practice the Message until it is Internalized.

- a. Manuscript the entire message (including the verses) to force the best possible word-choice and to preserve the message for future use (pp. 78-90).
- b. Memorize your Subject, MI, and MPs, and the general flow of the message.
- c. Internalize the sermon by preaching it 6-8 times, each time weaning yourself more from the notes. Practice gestures while standing up with a makeshift pulpit in front of your mirror.

*An Example of Moving from Exegetical to Homiletical Structures***Psalm 23****Responding to God's Provision and Protection****Exegetical Outline**

Exegetical Idea: The response of David to God's goodness shown in *providing* for and *protecting* him was to fearlessly commune with God at the tabernacle the rest of his life.

- I. (1-4) The response of David to God's provision and protection [like a shepherd does for his sheep] was comfort instead of fear.
 - A. (1-3) The way the LORD satisfied David was by providing all of his needs.
 1. (1-2) The LORD provided quality *physical provisions* (food, rest & water) that satisfied David.
 2. (3a) The LORD provided *spiritual refreshment* that restored David's soul.
 3. (3b) The LORD provided *guidance in holiness* to protect His own name.
 - B. (4) The response of David to the LORD's protection during danger was comfort instead of fear.
- II. (5) The way God showed His goodness was by protecting David so that he was honored like a banqueting victor before his enemies.
 - A. (5a) The LORD protected and exalted David like a banqueting victor before humbled enemies.
 - B. (5b) The LORD honored David.
 - C. (5c) The LORD provided more blessings than David could possibly enjoy.
- III. (6) The response of David to God's continued goodness was to commit to commune with the LORD at the tabernacle the rest of his life.
 - A. (6a) David expressed confidence that he would see the LORD's goodness and love the rest of his life.
 - B. (6b) David's response was to commit to commune with God at the tabernacle the rest of his life.

Homiletical Exposition (cyclical inductive form)

Introduce Subject: How should we respond to God's goodness towards us?

- I. God shows His goodness by providing everything His people need. *Principle*
 - A. David saw that God provided for him as a shepherd provides for his sheep (1-4). *Text*
 - B. None of us can say that God has not properly provided for all our needs (examples). *Appl.*
- II. God shows His goodness by protecting His people from harm. *Principle*
 - A. The LORD protected David from his foes and even honored him before them (5). *Text*
 - B. Each of us has witnessed God's protecting hand (examples). *Appl.*
- III. The right response to God's provision & protection is to publicly commune with Him. *Principle*
 - A. David sought to regularly and publicly commune with God at the tabernacle (6). *Text*
 - B. Regularly fellowship with God at church in response to His provision and protection. *Appl.*

Main Idea: God's good to you, so publicly worship Him without fear.

A Sample One Page Sermon Outline

(This is like what I expect for Assign. #5 on Colossians 4:6. See other examples on pages 49-50, 54. The manuscript is on pages 82-85)

Awe? Or Blah?**Ecclesiastes 5:1-7 (Cyclical Inductive)**

Purpose: Listeners will renew their worship or vows in at least one new way.

Introduction

1. Arouse interest: A wife's marital dissatisfaction and a little boy's desire for God's presence illustrate our going through religious motions without a heart desire for God.
2. Need: Do you struggle worshipping God (QT, clichés)? "Rather than awe, it's blah!"
3. Subject: How can we honor God? How can we give him the reverence he is due (restated)?
4. Background: Jews disrespected God in Solomon's time (temple next to palace).
5. Preview: Today's text shows two ways we should honor God. Restatement: Solomon tells how to truly honor God in Ecclesiastes 5:1-7 (text). Verses 1-3 tell you to... (transition)

I. Honor God in your worship (5:1-3).

- A. Proper worship can best happen when we *prepare ourselves* (5:1a; house, seminary, music).
- B. Proper worship also happens when we *listen to God* (5:1b-2).
 1. Fools unknowingly sin by offering up a meaningless "sacrifice" (5:1b).
 2. Weigh your words and thoughts carefully because of who God is (5:2).
 - a. Don't be an obsessive talker or thinker (5:2a; "bless," "I Surrender All").
 - b. Realize God is awesome and majestic and we are puny in comparison (5:2b).
 - c. Listen by keeping your own mouth shut (5:2c; Ps. 46:10, pre-service Scripture).
- C. Proper worship happens when we *set aside our cares* (5:3; stand up, list cares).

(Verses 1-3 say to honor God in your worship. This happens when we prepare ourselves, listen to God, and set aside our cares. Now verses 4-6 give us a second key how to honor God. They say to...)

II. Honor God in your vows (5:4-7).

- A. Fulfill every vow you make (5:4; vows = purity, Bible, wedding, missions).
- B. No vow at all is better than an unfulfilled vow (5:5; Sunukjian pastorate).
- C. Don't sin though an impulsive vow then later confess it was a mistake (5:6a; Jew).
- D. God's anger at rash vows may wipe out your accomplishments and possessions (5:6b).
- E. Fear God by not dreaming and making rash vows (5:7).

(So what's Solomon's key point? This whole passage basically says...)

Conclusion

1. Honor God in your worship and vows (Main Idea).
2. Don't dishonor God by "worshipping" Him frivolously or in unfulfilled, stupid vows (Restated MI).
3. Application: Ask God to renew in a new way your worship (stand, etc.) or vows (recall & obey).
4. Prayer