

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