

Delivery

How to Preach So People Will Listen

Adapted from Haddon Robinson, *Biblical Preaching*, 191-208

I. Introduction

- A. Delivery is neglected both in homiletics books and in preachers.
- B. The effectiveness of sermons depends upon two factors:
 - 1. *What* we say (content)
 - 2. *How* we say it (delivery)
- C. “In order of significance the ingredients making up a sermon are thought, arrangement, language, voice, and gesture. In priority of impressions, however, the order reverses. Gesture and voice emerge as the most obvious and determinative” (p. 191). In other words, that which takes the longest in the study (exegesis) actually has less impact than how we communicate this content.
- D. The importance of nonverbal communication:
 - 1. Silent language communicates more than spoken language.
 - 2. If nonverbal messages contradict the verbal, listeners will believe the silent message.
 - 3. Effective delivery begins with desires. If you don’t *want* to say it well, you won’t!

II. Nonverbal Factors to Consider in Delivery

- A. Grooming and Dress: should fit the audience, situation, and speaker.
- B. Movement and Gestures
 - 1. Spontaneous: don’t let your gestures look planned
 - 2. Definite: don’t make a “half gesture” (either make it or don’t make it!)
 - 3. Varied: using even a good gesture all the time will get old fast.
 - 4. Properly Timed: coordinate your mouth and body so they’re consistent!
 - 5. Audience Oriented: what should be seen as a left to right move must be reversed for the speaker in order to look natural to the listeners/viewers.
 - 6. Freedom of Movement: Please get out from behind the pulpit and walk around some.
- C. Eye Contact: don’t speak to the ceiling or only one side of the room.
- D. Vocal Delivery
 - 1. Pitch: vary your inflections (raise and lower how high and low your voice sounds).
 - 2. Punch: vary your volume (don’t only shout /speak with intensity, but whisper too).
 - 3. Progress: vary your rate (how fast you speak).
 - 4. Pause: vary your silence (give long pauses for effect, but not too much!).
 - 5. Practice: preach your sermon standing up—even in this very classroom to determine what your movement will be.