

# Sermon Format for Students

**INSTRUCTIONS:** First, ensure you view this page in Outline View. Then, fill in the basic info below by changing the speaker, date, title, passage, etc., and put your name, title, and text in the header on page 2. Also study your passage in the sequence of seven steps on Homiletics, 27-28. Once your homiletical (sermon) outline is finished, paste it over the “Paste Homiletical Outline here to Develop Manuscript (Step 6b)” statement below. Then, flesh this outline with supporting material to explain, prove, or apply the main points and sub-points. If you think of illustrations or applications earlier than this while working on your outlines, add them at the appropriate place on this file. Then, paste them at the correct spots once your sermon outline has been pasted over the sentence below in step 6b. Of course, delete this paragraph as well. You may be tweaking your topic, theme (subject), thrust (complement), and purpose as you work along, so you may need to update this below as you go—or better yet, fill it in after you finish your manuscript by pasting these statements in from your manuscript. Finally, switch to Print Layout View and then print it out.

The place where the sermon is preached  
Day-Month-2024  
NIV (or whatever text you are preaching from)

Preacher's Name  
Message 1 of 2  
15 Minutes

## **Title** **Passage**

**Topic:** Give one word that sums up your message idea  
**Subject:** Generally a question or incomplete statement for the HO—not the EO  
**Complement:** Answers the question addressed by the subject in the sermon outline as above  
**Purpose:** The listeners will... (Complete this with the desired listener response)  
**Meditation:** Put a short passage here that can go in the church bulletin for pre-service prayer  
**Reading:** State the exact verses to be read aloud in the service (often a portion of your text)  
**Song:** What is the best closing song you know that will reinforce your main idea?  
**Benediction:** What verse in today's passage (or a cross-reference) is best for silent reflection?

**Paste the Sermon Outline here to Develop the Manuscript (Step 6b)**

**Study Questions (Step 1)**

PASTE THE PASSAGE OVER THIS IN THE TRANSLATION YOU'LL STUDY AND PREACH

**Context: What did the author record just prior to this passage?**

1.

**Purpose: Why is this passage in the Bible?**

1.

**Background: What historical context helps us understand this passage?**

1.

**Sources Used**

1.

**Questions & Answers (cf. p. 22 #1)**

1.

**Tentative Subject/Complement Statements**

Text

**Possible Illustrations**

1. Text

**Possible Applications**

1. Text

**Older Outlines of This Sermon Text or Outlines by Others (Books, Commentaries, etc.)**

1. Text

## Title Passage

PASTE THE PASSAGE OVER THIS IN THE TRANSLATION YOU'LL STUDY AND PREACH

### Exegetical Outline (Steps 2-3)

#### Exegetical Idea (CPT):

I.

A.

B.

II.

A.

B.

III.

A.

B.

#### Purpose or Desired Listener Response (Step 4)

The listeners will

### Sermon Outline (Cyclical inductive form but change to deductive if MI in intro)—Steps 5-6

#### Introduction

1. Interest: Write only *one* sentence with the illustration abbreviated in parentheses.
2. Need: What *one* question asks listeners to consider their lives (a “you” question related to the subject with 2-3 examples in parentheses that raise need or curiosity)?
3. Subject or MI or Intro to MPI (delete as needed): Match the EO subject if giving your subject but relate it to your listeners (match Z<sub>1</sub> and question, p. 34)
4. Background: Do NOT summarize your text here—share the context or information outside the passage that will orient listeners to the text you preach.
5. Preview: Share how many MPs will be in your message.
6. Text: Only *after* giving the above information should you share your passage.

(Transition to MPI here by restating your subject and how the next MP relates to it.)

#### I. Give a concise but full-sentence statement with both subject and complement.

[Restate MP here without using any of the words in your MP.]

- A. Show how you will explain, prove, or apply your MP at this level.
- B. Ensure you address the passage and give a real-life example of someone applying it.

(Transition to MP II here by restating your subject and how the next MP relates to it.)

**II. Give a concise but full-sentence statement with both subject and complement.**

[Restate MP here without using any of the words in your MP.]

- A. Show how you will explain, prove, or apply your MP at this level.
- B. Ensure you address the passage and give a real-life example of someone applying it.

(Transition to MP III here by restating your subject and how the next MP relates to it.)

**III. Give a concise but full-sentence statement with both subject and complement.**

[Restate MP here without using any of the words in your MP.]

- A. Show how you will explain, prove, or apply your MP at this level.
- B. Ensure you address the passage and give a real-life example of someone applying it.

(Transition into the MI here by repeating your subject again.)

**Conclusion**

1. Sum up the whole sermon's point for the audience here (MI).
2. Main Points go here unless they are included in your MI above.
3. Exhortation: Apply the MI with practical steps or a moving story that applies it.

## 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)  
32<sup>nd</sup> ed. 5 April 2021 (see examples on pp. 46, 116, 152, 178)

### Form

1. Did you write your questions & answers of the text and the text and version 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 double-spaced outline)?

### 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.) Is there only one EI?
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... so that...")
9. Does at least one  $Z_1$  in the MPs match that of the EI? Does the  $Z_1$  match the  $Z_2$ ? Are unused SPs deleted?
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 and give the text's significance—especially the 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 and 2-4 SPs?
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 text's main movements?
19. Do MPs (and SPs) avoid ideas that are 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 the 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 unnecessary words in each sentence ("TL" means 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)? Avoid widows.
23. Does each point contribute to its superior point? Does your content here explain the text? Is it 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 text, 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? Left justify each sentence.
27. Does each sentence include a different and correct verse, verses, or verse portion (1a, 1b, 1c, etc.)?
28. Are all verses/parts correctly expounded in the text's order 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 your title, passage, name, mailbox number, and speaker number at the top of the page?
31. Did you use a spell-checker or have a friend proofread your spelling and grammar? Use [grammarly.com](http://grammarly.com) to correct grammar and [turnitin.com](http://turnitin.com) to assure that original content is 20% or less. Use MS Word and not a PDF.
32. Did you correctly cite (cf. *SBC Writing Standards*) in Biblio from at least three reputable commentaries used?

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

AI	Authorial Intent—your interpretation is unlikely (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 (22-23)
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 two lines of text (21)
MP	Main Point needed (2)	Z	Use $Z_1+X+Z_2+Y$ form (2)

## Homiletical Outline Checklist

Here are 47 things to include in your sermon outline before starting to manuscript your message (-2% for each one missing)  
32<sup>nd</sup> ed. 5 April 2021 (see examples on pp. 51, 210 and an expanded outline on pp. 156-57; use the Sermon\_Format\_for\_Students\_eng\_pr\_1900\_v10.docx)

### **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. Does your *one* "you" question relate to the subject with 2-3 examples that raise need or curiosity?
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 you will preach? 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 noted at the appropriate spot? (In topical messages, give only the first text.)
9. Does the intro promise anything not given by the end? Does the restatement relate to the subject?
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 ("TA") by clearly taking one exegetical option?
18. Do you show the major movements in the passage—especially in a 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 keyword(s) of illustrations given (don't just write "ILL" or "examples")?
21. Are MPs & SPs one line yet still full sentences (cf. #24)? Delete all unnecessary 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)? Avoid "hanging" or widow 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 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, section, or verse portion underlined where you plan to read it aloud while preaching?
26. Are SPs included and 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 a different and correct verse, verses, or verse portion (1a, 1b, 1c, etc.)?
28. Does the sermon 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? Not "I. Intro..."
30. Are you direct: "Love others..." (not "Believers [or "We"] should love others...")? Use imperatives!
31. Did you: (a) spell-check, (b) proofread your grammar at grammarly.com, and (c) score <20% at turnitin.com?
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 EO1 included with this assignment with improvements suggested by the teacher visible?
35. Did you correct EO1 into EO2 over it (not two EOs) by tracking your improvements suggested by the teacher?
36. Is support given for your view on difficult verses? Do you say *why* you hold to your opinion?

### **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 state and sum up the MPs? Do you avoid adding new ideas in the conclusion?
40. Are specific examples of applications developed rather than simply listed? Do listeners know what to do after hearing you preach? Apply the MI *to us*—not to the original readers or your church or other audience.
41. Do you end with a clear appeal to apply the MI *now*? Use stories along with "you" statements and questions.
42. Does the conclusion (and introduction) use Arabic numbers in point form? Do you indent them from the left?

### **Heading**

43. Do you have a catchy title that doesn't reveal the Main Idea 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 desired listener response (purpose) clearly stated at the top relating to the audience and not to you?
46. Do you state the title, passage, your name, and box number at the top?
47. Is this HO printed or uploaded to Moodle (*not* emailed) and in MS Word and not a PDF?

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