# Spiritual Gifts

# The Holy Seed Church

# APOSTLES

Apostles have some basic characteristics that are essential to the fulfillment of the call upon their lives. These characteristics enable them to do what The Lord has called them to accomplish.

## Visioning capacity.

They need to be able to "see" what The Lord has called them to accomplish in the ministry they are currently undertaking. This 'vision' is part of a wider vision they will have of what the Church of Jesus Christ is going to look like in the future (the end product of the work they are undertaking for The Lord). So, they will have a vision of the local church they are working with or currently planting, a vision of the Church Jesus is building, as well as the bigger Kingdom picture.

## They create ownership of the ministry.

They are able to share their vision and the work they are currently doing in such a way that others can "buy into" the vision and take ownership of the ministry that is on-going and that they are now a part of. An apostle can share their story and their ministry is such a way that others catch the vision, realize that this is what God is currently doing, and come to understand that God wants them to have a part in the fulfillment of this vision.

## An apostle is able to relate to the unchurched.

He is comfortable relating to those who are not followers of The Lord and who may even be opposed to his work of planting the Gospel so The Lord can raise up and build His Church. An effective apostle is neither part of a Christian sub-culture that few can relate to nor has he bought into the culture that he is working to impact for the Kingdom. He does not stand out as odd and irrelevant and does not blend in so as not to be seen as someone offering an alternative lifestyle and a different set of values. As the Scriptures state, he will be "in the world but not of it."

## An apostle is effective at building relationships.

He enjoys people and is a good listener. By listening he is showing others that he cares and that they are important to him and thus to Who he represents — Jesus. An effective apostle (and apostolic team member) can have hundreds of relationships in the community that he is reaching for Jesus. So, an apostle will not be 'an office person' but will consciously plan each day to include time building the relationships he has already established and forming new relationships. He will, as a result of this, be active in his community.

## Apostles recognize

the giftedness and calling that is upon people and are constantly encouraging and releasing this giftedness within the church and ministry they are establishing. Apostles are able to prophetically see the giftedness of people, their role in the body, the supernatural gifts of the Spirit the person can flow in to successfully function within their role and calling. They understand where each person "fits" within the life of the local church and equips and enables the person to fit and function where they belong.

## An apostle is flexible and adaptable.

In fact, one of their favourite non-biblical proverbs is: "Blessed are the flexible for they shall not be broken." Because apostles recognize that today's church needs to be fluid because of the rapid and constantly changing culture and society in which we live — they understand that change is a constant in the life of the church, especially in a church plant. Apostles and apostolic people find their stability in their relationship with The Lord who never changes. They do not find their identity or sense of worth in the ministry that they have or in the on-going life of the church

that is being planted. They are releasing the life of God among the people and anything that does not enable or help to release and grow this 'life' is removed. So they travel light on the 'organizational' and 'structure' side of the ministry and are very flexible thus enabling them to respond quickly and effectively to the community they are working in. Change is expected and experienced regularly.

## As a result of the above there is no standard plan or approach to planting churches.

Because each and every location is different the apostle will seek The Lord as to the way a particular area can be reached and how the Gospel will be presented. The message never changes but the methods, approach, and the ways of planting the Gospel and thus birthing a church are constantly adjusting to the target community or people group being reached.

Once the work is established the apostle and his team remain very responsive to the community. As the community changes so does the way the apostolic work is being accomplished. The mission to reach the people for Christ and the Kingdom remains solid and firm; Christ remains the cornerstone of everything that is attempted in His Name. However, the way things are accomplished remain fluid and responsive to the community.

### A true apostle knows how to build group cohesiveness.

They are never a one-man show. First, he must know how to gather a team and help them to become one – sharing one vision and one task, one hope and one plan. Withing this plan and the task at hand there are many variables and much room for creative thinking and planning, action and risk-taking. But, there is one goal, one vision, one direction, one desired end result.

This same group cohesiveness will eventually be seen in the local church that is raised up as the Gospel is planted in new territory. The leaders and members of the local church must share the same DNA and vision so as to moving together in one direction to become all that God has designed this local church to be and then do. In other words, like a city bus – this church will have a destination, a route, and a certain speed as it moves through the route making scheduled stops along the way. There will be a leader (the bus driver) and many active members but one common life being shared as they move towards a jointly shared and understood destination.

### An apostle is committed to Church growth.

An apostle understands that healthy disciples are reproducing bringing new disciples into the Kingdom and the local church. He also understands that healthy churches reproduce healthy churches. Thus, true apostles are committed to Church growth and will be constantly sharing the vision of disciple-making and church planting with everyone and anyone who will listen. A true apostolic church will also have disciple making and church planting as a vital part of their DNA. It won't be a program that is added after the church is founded and established – it is a part of the very life and nature of the church right from the start. A church plant should be immediately planning to plant another church within a year or two of its own beginning. And, a new disciple should be taught immediately how to share their faith and influence others towards meeting Jesus and becoming one of His disciples.

### If the apostle is married he must have spousal cooperation.

Because of the amount of time and attention planting the Gospel and raising up a local church takes the spouse of the apostle will need to be completely on board

with the specific task at hand. The spouse must be an active and willing participant in the work that the apostle is called to accomplish and thus an active and involved member of the initial team and a willing worker in the spreading of the Gospel into new territory for the Kingdom. This role may be limited by many factors such as the need to work to help support the household, the care of young children if a family is involved, as well as other factors such as age and health. But, the spouse must be supportive and cooperative.

### An apostle will exercise his faith.

Because of the work that an apostle is involved in by the nature of his calling, he will need to exercise strong faith. As he plants the Gospel with the hope of raising up a vibrant and dynamic reproducing local church body he will be apposed by the forces of darkness. The last thing the domaine of darkness wants is the light of the Gospel shining brightly in it's territory. Thus an apostle and his team will need to know how to stand in faith and fight the fight of faith. They will need to seriously understand the Lord's words; "Be it done unto you according to your faith" (Matthew 9:29).

The other main aspect of the apostle's work is working within already existing churches laying biblical foundations. This often means repairing the already existing foundation upon which the local church was first established. Change is never easy and the apostle will need to stand strong believing God that the local leadership will respond in a positive manner to his correction and direction. Often the apostle will be involved in times of conflict and confrontation during which he will need to stand in faith knowing that he has been called to this ministry and that the Church belongs to the Lord and He will have His way with the local church even if circumstances say otherwise.

### An apostle needs to have resilience.

The dictionary definition of resilience is: the power or ability to return to the original form or position after being bent, compressed, or stretched; elasticity. The second definition is the ability to recover readily from illness, depression, adversity, or the like; buoyancy. An apostle needs to have a tremendously personal walk with the Lord that encourages him and enables him, regardless of the situation, to 'bounce back' and continue his work in the area of the vineyard that he is working. Because of the opposition (both spiritual and human) to his work and the intensity of the work that he is involved in – he will need to be strong and resilient. This needs to be an inner strength because he will often not receive encouragement from others or from any immediate results of the work that he is involved in.

### An apostle needs to be intrinsically motivated.

As a result of #12 an apostle will need to be intrinsically motivated. He needs to be a self-encourager if there is such a thing. He needs to have the inner strength and motivated to continue regardless of the hardships or the cost. His calling from the Lord is the source of this motivation so he needs to be seriously assured of his call and the current work that he is attempting because of his call. He will need to have the inner assurance of being called and commissioned by the Lord and empowered for the work that he is doing in the geographical area that he is working in. He needs to be a self-started so as not to rely on external things to motivate his daily ministry in difficult situations.

Recently I heard a great prophetic teacher (Thamo Naidoo from South Africa) mention in his message that there is a difference between apostles of churches and apostles of Christ. He said that while there were many apostles of churches, there

were only very few true apostles of Christ on the Earth today. That one statement exploded on the inside of me and gave me much illumination. I had never heard anyone make this delineation before, but it makes a lot of sense to me. The following is what I have unpacked in the scriptures since Thamo made this statement. Essentially, the word "apostle" means a person who is sent to represent another—whether a king, kingdom or entity like a church. First Corinthians 12:28 teaches that God places first in the church apostles, since they are sent by God to represent Him in a city to pioneer a beachhead (a church or ekklesia as shown in Matthew 16:18-19) for city transformation.

Apostles are the "sent ones" who represent the essence of what the church vision or mission is all about. In John 17, Jesus constantly referred to the fact that He was sent by the Father to the world, which is one reason Hebrews 3:1 refers to Jesus as our Apostle. Jesus was God's apostle sent into the world to redeem it. In Revelation 21:14, we see the term "the 12 apostles of the Lamb." There will never be another apostle added to that list since there were only 12. However, it seems evident (at least to me) that Paul was also an apostle of Christ, which means this general category was not limited to merely 12 in total. Paul qualified his apostleship not only by planting churches but also by seeing Jesus (1 Cor. 9:1), which means that apostles at this level must have experienced a dynamic encounter and intimate walk with the Lord.

Get Spirit-filled content delivered right to your inbox! Click here to subscribe to our newsletter. In the New Testament there were dozens of people identified as apostles. It is my view that since Paul was an apostle of Christ his apostleship transcended the churches he founded. Although Paul did not found the church in Rome, he was respected enough by the general body of Christ that he was able to write the letter to the Romans with apostolic weight and authority as if he was the one who planted it. Hence, apostles of Christ garner a high level of respect beyond the borders of their own church networks, even though they would never attempt to supplant the authority of an apostolic leader who is the founder and/or leader of another network (unless there was heresy or a gross violation of biblical ethics).

Also, Paul warned that there were some who were masquerading as apostles of Christ (2 Cor.11:13), which probably means that this term (apostle of Christ) was used to identify some significant apostles who were not among the original 12. Furthermore, in 2 Corinthians 8:23, Paul identified some as "apostles of the churches" (not "apostles of Christ"), which I believe refers to the fact that these leaders only had limited recognized apostolic authority related to representing a particular constellation of churches. Since apostles of Christ directly represent the Lord Jesus, they have a burden and calling for the whole body of Christ and/or a large expression of the global body of Christ. Apostles of Christ are also trans-cultural, trans-generational, and are more loyal to the kingdom of God than to a specific geopolitical affinity.
The following are 10 characteristics of apostles of Christ:

### Apostles of Christ Build the Kingdom

Oftentimes, church apostles are just focused on their local church and/or their network or denomination. One of the reasons is because their assignment is limited to those works they personally oversee or have founded. They do not have the grace or leadership capacity to go beyond their particular church system, doctrine and/or culture. On the other hand, apostles of Christ have an ambassadorial call that transcends any one church, movement or denomination. Hence, even if they try to focus on one group or movement,

God will constantly pull them into other church communities and/or nations to build apostolic foundations related to doctrine or kingdom life.

### Apostles of Christ Are Not Hierarchical
Generally speaking, church apostles can be caught up in titles, measures of influence within their movement, and/or church politics. Apostles of Christ do not personally crave titles (they will use them when appropriate) and do not need institutional church structures to validate their ministry or calling.

### Apostles of Christ Don't Strive For Recognition
Philippians 2 teaches us that Jesus made Himself of no reputation. Apostles of Christ are often hidden and do not seek public attention, since they are already rooted strongly in their identity as sons of God and have no innate need for public acclaim.

### Apostles of Christ Are Not Driven by Money
Apostles of Christ have so much faith in their assignment from God, they trust God will provide all their needs as long as they are in His will. They do not go to a place to minister only because the offerings are good but will go only where the Lord is leading. Paul said he did not peddle the word of God for money (2 Cor.2:17), and the apostle Peter warns shepherds not to minister for dishonest gain (1 Peter 5:2). Although I believe those who labor in the word full-time are worthy of double honor and should make a living from the gospel (1 Timothy 5:17; 1 Cor. 9:14), the bottom line for apostles of Christ is the will of God, not material gain.

### "Ministers do the evangelism, not members"
Contrary to the example of Scripture o Assertion that the great commission in Matthew 28 and elsewhere is only for the ministry Is it said by ministers who do not do it themselves and forbid their members to do it either? Is it working? How many are they baptizing? How much are the spending? Our Job Is to Warn the World as a Witness, Not "Save Souls" Probably a fair description of what they are actually doing o It is a misrepresentation of the mission of the church ƒ "If God is calling someone, they will find us." Does happen on occasion Is it justification for the neglecting of other forms of evangelism are neglected or preached against at 2004 Management and Technology Consultants. All Rights Reserved 12 What the Bible REALLY Says About Evangelism Breaking Through Church Growth Myths and Excuses. Not the method of the New Testament Church of God Most churches today that practice this teaching to the exclusion of the New Testament methods of evangelism will not exist in their present form in 15 years. They will be much smaller, absorbed by others or cease to exist.

### Church Growth Myths:
### ƒ Evangelism is setting a growth goal "10% growth this year in attendance"
Numerical growth is not in your control — God gives the growth o We can control quality of our congregation We can control the kind and frequency of our planting and watering activities ƒ Churches that grow are lowering the bar so much that anybody can be a Christian with them. An anecdotal statement that is unsupported by research or a validated study This is really a fools argument: If only one congregation grows while having high standards, the myth is exploded What constitutes high standards?

Keeping the Sabbath and the commandments of God? An expectation to be a full-time Christian, not just a Sabbath Christian? Abstaining from immorality? Following

the Biblical food laws? Dressing in a suit or nice clothes for church? Not smoking or "doing" drugs? Tithing? Being industrious and not slothful? Encouragement to marry within the faith? o Seventh Day Adventists expect these things of new disciples and more. What have they done? In 1984 – six times the revenue of WCG – 144 times the number of baptisms Today: 211 times the baptisms of WCG in 1984 SDA's are THE expert in evangelism among the Sabbath keeping communities of faith. Low standards attributed to other churches are not a justification for churches in decline, but rather an excuse "Evangelism is really just marketing yourself better" Good marketing of a bad product can kill a company at 2004 Management and Technology Consultants.

What the Bible REALLY Says About Evangelism Breaking Through Church Growth Myths and Excuses o Growth that is a result of good marketing does not necessarily produce a quality congregation – or a quality Christian on Evangelism is not better marketing

It is following God's lead and guidance in planting and watering activities. It is improving the quality of our congregations so we reflect God's love and new people can see a difference It is improving the quality of our congregations so our members love it and are excited and passionate about church and their faith. "Our church is growing exactly as fast as God is calling people" Generally said by churches that are not growing very much – or are shrinking Self-justification mixed with fatalism: What is happening is what was destined to be and we have no control over it. "Jesus said His would be a "small flock" – large flocks are not Godly. Said recently by ministers who are pastoring congregations 1/10th the size they were 10 years earlier. o Said by those same pastors when they were pastoring congregations that were 10 times the size of their current congregations Little flock = a relative term justifying the lack of growth? Matt. 26:31 and Luke 12:32 "Little flock" of apostles – did they understand it to mean it would only be 12, or 120, or 3,000 or 10,000 or ? When did Paul think he had done enough evangelism? ƒ Is evangelism trying to talk someone into becoming a Christian?

New Testament Evangelism is giving people a reason for hope for now and in the future o New Testament Evangelism is planting and watering seed and looking for God to give the growth through His Holy Spirit o God calls best through people who are willing to follow the lead of the Holy Spirit Is evangelism talking someone into going to my church and not another? False value: My church is the only true church o True value: My job is to lead people to Christ. Where they attend church is not the concern. They should attend where they can make the best contribution to the work of the Church. Horrible Truth: Lack of growth = a lack of interest. The Christian truth is a wonderful truth and a great message o If there is a problem, it is with us Wrong emphasis in what we say Infertile seed = platitudes in speaking and in writing o A message that lacks relevance to the community at 2004 Management and Technology Consultants. at 2004 Management and Technology Consultants. What the Bible REALLY Says About Evangelism Breaking Through Church Growth Myths and Excuses o Unhealthy congregations. Unhealthy examples "I wouldn't invite people to my church because it is boring and I would be likely be embarrassed by what they would hear." Question: "Will our congregation become a great place for me to invite people to come?"

## PROPHETS

The office of the prophet is probably the least-understood and most-neglected ministry office in the Church today. If we refuse to receive an apostle, we refuse order. However, if we refuse to receive a prophet, we refuse destiny. Where there is no destiny there is no future. The Church then becomes relegated to the narrow existence of the here and now. The prophet is the key to the Church's destiny and power.

The Church today needs to recognize and receive the ministry of the prophet and to pray that God will raise those with the prophetic gifting into their proper prophetic office. Those who hold the office of prophet form a charismatic order to which a recognized position should be given in the Church. A special recognition and authoritative status should be conferred upon those who have manifested certain gifts in a prominent and/or continuing manner. The prophet is the Lord's instrument, one of several means by which Jesus Christ leads His Church. In the power of the Spirit, the prophet manifests the character of the Lord, who is the prophet of the end time.

### The Authority of the Prophet

When a prophet is recognized and comes into his office, he brings with him an authority from God that accomplishes two things in the Church. First, it helps us to realize that God is a God of the now. A prophet is always reminding us that God is, not just that He was; he tells us what God is doing, not just what He has done. Knowing what God has done throughout history is important; it is a powerful legacy for us. However, we also need to know beyond doubt that the God of the Bible is the God of today; that the God who blessed Moses, helped David, and anointed Jesus will also bless, help, and anoint us. Our God is a now God, and the prophet helps us to remember that.

**Prediction and fulfillment of prophecy.** In other words, a prophet speaks something concerning the future, and God fulfills that prophecy. It could be a prophecy spoken into the life of an individual or an entire congregation. Whatever form it takes, such a prophecy will be specific in nature with clearly measurable fulfillment. Once the event comes to pass we know that God has raised that prophet into office.

**Spiritual discernment in the lives of others.** This one sometimes makes people nervous, particularly those who know that their lives are not what they should be in the Lord. A prophet has the ability in the Spirit to discern spiritual reality in the lives

of others, good or bad, and speak concerning that reality. This prospect creates anxiety in some people who fear that the prophet will uncover all the mess they have allowed into their lives. Have no fear. A mature prophet will never publicly uncover mess because God does not embarrass people. The prophet may address the problem privately with the person, if the Lord leads that way. However, he is more likely to exhort the person to follow God's will and obey what God has told him to do.

**Declaration of divine judgments when needed.** This is another one that makes people nervous. Sometimes a situation is so bad or has gone on so long that the word of the Lord through the prophet is one of judgment. Prolonged rebellion or disobedience to God, or refusal to heed prophetic warnings or respond to calls for repentance, will ultimately bring about God's judgment. No one likes these kind of pronouncements, least of all the prophet, but sometimes they are necessary.

**Willingness to suffer for speaking the truth without saving self.** A mature prophet has long since committed his or her life totally into God's keeping and has recognized that suffering is an "occupational hazard." Speaking the truth for God is more important than personal comfort. Sometimes suffering comes as a result of declaring divine judgment. Jeremiah spoke the truth about God's coming judgment on the southern kingdom of Judah and was convicted of treason and imprisoned in a dry cistern. A true prophet is not afraid to suffer for the truth.

**A message in harmony with the Word of God and the known will of God.** A prophet's message will never, repeat never, contradict the Word of God. The Spirit and the Word always agree. Since a prophet is a "pneumatic" (Spirit-person), his word will also be in agreement with the Word of God. A message that goes against God's Word is a sure indicator of a false prophet.

**Employment of symbolic actions.** Prophets preach with pictures. Jesus used this method all the time in His teaching, painting pictures in people's minds through the stories and parables He told. Prophets use pictures because that's the way God reveals His will and His Word to them. A prophet sees how things are done in the natural and applies it to the spiritual.

**Ability and authority to judge the manifestations of prophetic gifts.** A prophet serving in a recognized and acknowledged prophetic office has the ability and authority to identify and judge the presence, display, and use of prophetic gifts in others. In other words, a prophet has the ability to recognize and identify other prophets (both true and false).

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## EXSAMIN YOU BIBLE
### Personal life during birth until death
I would like to share with you regarding personal life during birth until death as follows:-

**40% stand for your mother's** care we got that most of your time is being cared by your mother. So our background is laid by our mothers. Care whether is bad or good, depend on them.

**20% stand for your father;** father takes very little time to share with he or her child because of working respective duties. Father gives very little to bring up a child, that's why many children are brought up by their mothers.

**20% stand for school payment and relatives** most of the time after a child lives mother goes to school he or she take this opportunity from morning to sunset sharing with teachers, school mates and after school he or she depend on relatives, play around.

**10% stand for church attendance.** We find that very little time is being spent to worship God plus sharing with fellow believers we show that all the time we're so busy struggling to fulfill our own needs, rather worshipping our God.

**10% stand for you and I** most of the time we spend on different matters than planning our personal life. How we should live? I request each one of you that let us have enough time to plan programs before is too late. Your prosperity depends on your personal planning for your future not from others.

**NOTE:** We discover most of the time as we learn from our friends, as we exchange views. Every person has been given different skills from God. Besides being trained, let us unite together as we bring up different ideas from various people to make up a sensible story that will make us believe that God is in existent to really believe in Jesus Christ? The holy seed program good news to you that Jesus is coming soon. All of us we should strong and have good courage as we take faith toward Jesus Christ, surely is coming Romans 10:1-13.

**What does the bible says about the nature of man?**
How did human life begin on earth? God formed man of the dust of the ground?
Genesis 2:7. How does the bible describe the dead? Them which are asleep?
1Thessalonians 4:13Where for the dead sleep? In the dust of the earth? Daniel 12:2
What happens to a person at death? The dust shall return to the earth as it was and
the spirit shall return unto God? Ecclesiastes 12:7. What is this spirit that returns to
God? The so the breath and the spirit are the same Job 13:12-14

What is the soul then? God formed man of the dust and breathed into his nostrils
the breath of life and man became a living soul"? Genesis 2: therefore the body
(dust) plus the breath (Spirit) a living soul Do souls die the soul that sinneth it shall
die Ezekiel 18:20 "All have sinned Romans 3:23 but the gift of God is eternal life
Romans 6;23. Is there anyone with immortality? 1 Timothy 6; 16 says that only God
his immortality

What does the dead person know? "the dead know not anything "Ecclesiastes 9:5.
Can the dead praise God? The dead praise not he Lord Psalm 115:17 How much can
we know about god when we are dead? For in death there is no remembrance of
thee? Psalm 6:5. Can we work or study after we die? "there is no work nor
knowledge nor wisdom in the grave "Ecclesiastes. 9;10".

Where do we go after we die? All unto one place all are of the dust and all turn to
dust again" Romans 6:23. But don't righteous go straight to heaven? David is not
yet accented into the heavens Acts 2:34. When did David say he would be satisfied?
I shall be satisfied when I wake with thy likeness "psalm 17:5 "And the dead shall
be raised incorruptible and we shall be changed "1 Corinthians 15:52.

By whom is redemption form he grave? For since by man came death. Even so in
Christ shall all be made alive? 1 Corinthians 15:21-22 What two distinct gums will
be resurrected? "there shall be a resurrection of the dead both of the just and the
unjust. Acts 24:15 When will the resurrection of the just take place? For the Lord
himself shall descend from heaven, and the dead in Christi shall rise first
"Thessalonians 4:16"

When will the resurrection of the unjust take place? "And they (the righteous) lived
and reigned with Christ thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived to again until
the thousand years were fmished "revelation 20:4-5. How long will the righteous
live? Neither can they die anymore for they are equal unto the angles and are the
children of God being the children of the resurrection Luke 20:36 "There shall be no
more death "Revelation 20:14.

Satan lied eve he said she wouldn't die this statement you will not surely die?" is
the cornerstone of satans's kingdom satan has worked great miracles through the
ages by people who claim to receive their power form the dead such as the
magicians of Egypt (Exodus 7:1 1) the with of endor(1 Samuel 28) sorcerers (Daniel
2:2) a certain damsel (Acts 16:16- 18) Satan works powerfully today through
religious leader to deceive if it were possible the very elect by saying the dead are
alive."

How can God's people avoid being deceived? They received the word with all
readiness of mind and searched the scriptures daily whether these things were so"
Acts 17:11 To the law and to the testimony if they speak not according t this word it

is because there is no light in them Isaiah 8:20. Listen my voice I stand at the door and knock if anyone hears my voice and open the door I will in and eat with them and they will eat with me to those win the victory I will give the right to sit beside me on throne just as I have been victorious and sow sit my father on his throne. Revelation 3:20-21.

## Do you have Wisdom?

1.  I trust in God that all things is possible , where is bad or good. Learn and flexible for fast and effective decisions making. I trust in you that you have abilities to win and show your support. Learn what you want and ask more of it. Daniel :12

2.  You can only convince others by their arguments, find out on what points your opinions are different and avoid those you find out on what parts your opinions are similar and emphasize those. Present your point of views based on the point upon which you agree then stick on that and appreciate Ephesians 4:8 Join us, we grow together in the spirit of God. Who has made us se these day. God bless you.

3.  Do things at a pace that give you inner peace. Discover the pace at which you are most effective and stick to it. Package yourself effectively, speak, dress act like you are successful. Radiate personal magnetism personal magnetism is a result of all the following emotions simultaneously presented excitement, exhilaration , anticipation elation and confidence. James 4:7 Avoid resettlement, fear, worry, anxiety, anger and precipitations. These are negative emotions that will evade your vital strength and energies

4.  Philippians 4:1-4 Have a high unnecessary plans. Don't' let anybody involve you in the plans unless their plans merge with your James 4:1-17.

5.  Learn the act of public speaking speak coherently and effectively and strike a report with and audience Mathew 6:1-8. Learn the art of controlling conversation
    A) Listen more, talk less
    B) How to converse and even ask sensitive questions without arousingresettlement. Deuteronomy 29:3-4.
    C) Exclude yourself as a subject of conversation. Let the other person talk about him self. Ephesians 3:18-21

6.  Establish the reputation of being punctual to the minute if possible react in the mature manner to every circumstance regardless o whether It is favourable or unfavorable to you. Hebrews 10:14-26Establish a record of having this done and a problem solver. Matthew 10. Good problem solvers are good thinkers. They have less drama and problems to begin with and don't get overly emotional when faced with a problem. They usually see problems as challenges and life experiences and try to stand above them, objectively.

Good problem solvers use a combination of intuition and logic to come up with their solutions. Intuition has more to do with the emotional and instinctive side of us and logic is more related to our cognition and thinking. Good problem solvers use both of these forces to get as much information as they can to come up with the best possible solution. In addition, they are reasonably open minded but logically skeptical.

Some of the general characteristics of good problem solvers are:
i. They don't need to be right all the time: They focus on finding the right solution rather than wanting to prove they are right at all costs.

**ii. They go beyond their own conditioning:** They go beyond a fixated mind set and open up to new ways of thinking and can explore options.

**iii. They look for opportunity within the problem:** They see problems as challenges and try to learn from them.

**iv. They know the difference between complex and simple thinking:** They know when to do a systematic and complex thinking and when to go through short cuts and find an easy solution.

**v. They have clear definition of what the problem is:** They can specifically identity the problem.

**vi. They use the power of words to connect with people:** They are socially well developed and find ways to connect with people and try to find happy-middle solutions.

**vii. They don't create problems for others:** They understand that to have their problem solved they can't create problems for others. Good problems solvers who create fair solutions make a conscious effort not to harm others for a self-interest intention. They know such acts will have long term consequences even if the problem is temporarily solved.

**viii. They do prevention more than intervention:** Good problem solvers have a number of skills to prevent problems from happening in the first place. They usually face less drama, conflict, and stressful situations since they have clear boundaries, don't let their rights violated and do not violate other people's rights. They are more of a positive thinker so naturally they are surrounded with more positivity and have more energy to be productive.

**ix. They explore their options:** They see more than one solution to a problem and find new and productive ways to deal with new problems as they arise. They also have a backup plan if the first solution does not work and can ask for support and advise when needed.

**x. They have reasonable expectations:** Good problem solvers have reasonable expectations as to what the solution would be. They understand that there are many elements effecting a situation and that idealistic ways of thinking and going about solving a problem will be counterproductive.

At the end, good problem solvers do not have too many irrational fears when dealing with problems. They can visualize the worst case scenario, work their way out of it and let go of the fear attached to it. Fear can make your logic and intuition shady and your decisions unproductive.

7. Dress well, People's first assessment of you will be through your clothes
   Deuteronomy 22:17, 1peter 3:1-10
8. You should always be reaching act for now door to open revelation 3:18-20
9. Learn ten things can help you improve the kind of person you present to the public by creating in you a powerful and magnetic personality:-
   1) Enthusiasm6) Socializing ability
   2) Intensity of purpose7) Drinking enough

3) Sense of humour8) Cultural attainments
4) Image projection9) Good nutrition
5) Special skills10) Enough time always
10. In all your plans and projections always aim to achievement higher than our skills talent or competence currently. Take a course in concentration and memory training learn to control your thought out and gestures. Develop your will power to decide what you must do then do it without fail. Romans 10:8-13
11. Improve your power of observation and do not be like others who look without seeing or see without observing. 2 Corinthians 6:1-2.



## PASTORS
### The Qualities of an Effective Pastor
**Integrity:** Stephen L. Carter of the Yale Law School, in his book, Integrity, defines this characteristic as "discerning what is right and what is wrong; acting on what you have discerned, even at personal cost; and saying openly that you are acting on your understanding of right and wrong"

**Humility:** Leaders tend to be aggressive/assertive types ("type A"). But great leaders temper this with genuine humility. They have to work at this — and sometimes they struggle with it. But the best genuinely see themselves as servants for others, and strive to put the needs of others before their own.

**Passion:** Leaders truly believe in what they are doing; they have convictions. But leadership goes beyond mere convictions to the ability to inspire others with those convictions. Vision: Leaders see things that others do not see. They see opportunities others miss. They anticipate problems before the become problems. They know how to think strategically. They see potential others simply do not see.
**Perseverance:** Leaders never give up on anything critical without a fight. They know that there will always be opposition and roadblocks to accomplishing great things. They don't run over people, but they are also not deterred at the first sign of opposition and they don't allow temporary setbacks and defeats to determine their future.

**Decisiveness and Risk Taking:** Leaders make decisions. Effective pastors must always weigh the risks and rewards of their decisions, and they must also be wiling to fail. Being Purpose-Driven: Sometimes the word driven is used in a negative sense, but here I mean those leaders who hearts beat and whose deepest desires are to see the church faithfully pursuing God's purposes. Purpose-driven leaders align resources including staffing, facilities, and finances, as well as their own time, to accomplish the purpose or mission of their organizations, as they understand them.

**Communication Skills:** Effective pastors are nearly always effective communicators. Effective pastors have strong interpersonal skills, sometimes demonstrated by initiating conversations with parishioners rather than waiting for others to speak first. They demonstrate strong listening skills so that others feel heard by them.

**Encouragement and Mentoring:** Great leaders know how to encourage others. They constantly praise others and build them up. They love to help others succeed and be their best. They exercise restraint in criticism but pursue praise and encouragement with a passion. Successful leaders mentor others and help others hear God's call into ministry.

**A Personal Relationship with Jesus Christ:** It would be very difficult to lead a congregation of Christians to "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ," if the pastor is not doing this herself. This is the most important characteristic of effective pastors and church leaders; it is the foundation upon which the rest of the ministry will be built. Effective church leaders pursue the spiritual disciplines, are involved with others in accountability groups, and earnestly seek to grow in their relationship with Christ. The Bible specifically speaks about the qualifications for those who will lead a congregation of people. These qualifications have been the same for almost 2,000 years. Jesus is the perfect fulfillment of these qualifications as the "senior pastor" of the Church. Above Reproach (Titus 1:6, 7; 1 Tim 3:2)

This is the overarching, summarizing characteristic. You will find similar (but not identical) lists in First Timothy and Titus. Living a life above reproach is the first requirement in both lists and Titus repeats it. The other items on the list explain what "above reproach" means. If we peruse the two lists, as well as First Peter, we find 17 qualifications of an elder who is above reproach.

A pastor must be devoted to his wife; one-woman man (Titus 1:6; 1 Tim 3:2). The pastor's marriage illustrates Christ's love for His church—His bride (Eph. 5:22 .). A Pastor must love his wife exclusively with his mind, will and emotions and not just his body.

A pastor's children must be in submission, though not perfect (Titus 1:6; 1 Tim 3:4-5). If a man does not know how to manage his own family, he will not know how to take care of God's church. The first flock for a pastor is his own family as Pastor Francis Munyutu. A Pastor's qualification for the church starts in his home management as he leads them up in the discipline and admonition of the Lord (Eph. 6:4).

A pastor is a faithful steward (Titus 1:7). Here the term used is overseer (Greek episkopos). It is not another office, but a functional title of the elder. It is what he does. He is a steward, a manager of God's resources and Jesus' flock. He takes responsibility, but not ownership.

**A pastor must be humble** — not arrogant (Titus 1:7). A pastor must constantly demonstrate the gospel by admitting when he is wrong and assuming responsibility and restoring relationships.

**A pastor must be gentle** — not quick-tempered (Titus 1:7; 1 Tim 3:3). No man will be of any use in the kingdom that is quick-tempered. The difference between how Jesus demonstrated anger is that He was angry at the abuse of others in the name of religion and the dishonoring of God. We get angry at how it affects us.

**A pastor must be sober** — not a drunkard (Titus 1:7; 1 Tim 3:3). This is not just overindulgence in alcohol but is idiomatic for any behavior that fuels addictive responses.

**A pastor must be peaceful** — not violent (Titus 1:7; 1 Tim 3:3). A pastor is prone to inflict violence through his words. He is to be a peacemaker.

**A pastor must have financial integrity** — not greedy for gain (Titus 1:7; 1 Tim 3:3; 1 Peter 5:3). A pastor is to be upright in his financial dealings and not accused of pursuing money over the kingdom of God.

**A pastor must be hospitable (Titus 1:8; 1 Tim 3:2).** A pastor's home is to be open for others to enjoy. A pastor's home is not a heaven on earth, but rather a place of ministry.

**A pastor must be a lover of good (Titus 1:8).** A pastor genuinely loves what is good. He does not just think he should love it.

**A pastor must be self-controlled (Titus 1:8; 1 Tim 3:2).** Self-control is a characterization of every area of a pastor's life: diet, time, mouth, exercise, relationships, sex, and money.

**A pastor must be upright (Titus 1:8).** He has integrity in his relationships and in how he treats others.

**A pastor must be holy (Titus 1:8).** His life is devoted wholeheartedly to Jesus externally and internally.

**A pastor must be able to teach (Titus 1:9; 1 Tim 3:2).**
All of the other qualifications are character qualities. This is the only ability-based requirement. He is to be able to teach sound doctrine, not just be able to communicate in an excellent manner. His teaching can be to one or two, to twenty, to a hundred or to a thousand. Most of the churches in Crete were house churches. The elders were to defend the faith once delivered to the saints against the numerous false teachers that arose.

**A pastor must be spiritually mature (1 Tim 3:6).** Positions of authority without spiritual maturity lead to the trap of pride. When pride grows in a man, sin abounds.

**A pastor must be respectable (1 Tim 3:7).** That does not mean that everyone must like him or even appreciate him. It means that there is no credible witness to an ongoing sinful behavior.

**A pastor must be an example to the flock (1 Peter 5:3).** Elders are examples of biblical expressions sexually, time management, marriage, parenting, worship, relationships and any other way. A pastor should be someone your sons could pattern their life after and the kind of man your daughter should marry.

### A World Of Encourament
What would you do if an elder violates one of these requirements? ( 1 Timothy 5:19-20) warns us not to accuse an elder flippantly. (Matthew 18:15-18) gives us the steps: 1) Go to the elder alone, 2) If still unsatisfied, go with another person, 3) If

**still unsatisfied, let the greater eldership know. If accusations are verified and the elder remains unrepentant, rebuking that elder before all is the next biblical step.**



# Evangelism
## INTRODUCTION

Religion had always been an unwritten taboo subject for coffee pot conversation., but Sandra., who was a new employee., had not yet learned all of the office protocol. She happened to notice the Scripture plaque on George "s desk, so she broached the subject when a break came in George "s conversation with Bob. "'I see you have a plaque on your desk, George, with-is that a Bible quote or somethingT" Sandra asked. Bob"s eyes rolled as George answered, "Uh, yes it is. Why do you ask? Are you a Christian., too?" "Me? Oh, no," Sandra replied. "Oh, I suppose I believe in God or at least spiritual things. I really don't know what's out there, but I guess I'm kind of curious. My dad was diagnosed with terminal cancer last month, and I've been praying for the first time in my life. I just don't know what or who to pray to." "I'm sorry to hear that," George replied. "Have you been to church?" Sandra replied, "Actually I did a couple of times. I even went to one last week hoping to find some answers to my search, but it was hopelessly boring. The preacher was hard to follow. He never looked up from his notes and did not seem to say anything relevant to my life at all."

8 four analyses presented in chapters 2 -5. The author listened to actual sermons by audio., video., and in person and evaluated each according the criteria. Appendix B lists the compiled results of these evaluations. The results of this study accorded with the findings of the other analyses in this paper. Evangelistically effective pastors demonstrated significantly more relevance, better persuasive reasoning, more engaging illustrations., more dynamic delivery, and more authenticity. The vast majority of both target and comparison pastors preached biblical and Christ-centered sermons. As appendix B discusses, it is difficult to measure the empowering work of the Holy Spirit, so those scores are very subjective; however, the reviewer's scores show a greater sense of the Spirit's presence in effective churches. Definitions In order to be of benefit to pastors and educators who want to see an improvement in the quality and effectiveness of evangelism in the local church, the terms that constitute this paper's claims need to be defined and clarified: Evangelistically effective preaching-For the purpose of this paper, evangelistically effective preaching consists of oral presentations during regular weekly services at local churches by pastors that present the message of Jesus Christ in ways that are likely to lead unbelievers to lasting faith in Jesus Christ.

Biblical, Christ-centered content-Biblical content means that the primary source of authoritative evidence in sermon arguments is the Bible. Other sources may provide additional evidence and support for sermons, but the Bible is specifically quoted, treated as authoritative and used to support sermon conclusions. Christ-centered means that 9 sen11ons lift Jesus Christ as Lord and present him as the ultimate source of spiritual hope. The topics of sermons may or may not deal with Jesus' ministry or Christology directly., but sermons reference him in a decisive way at some point. Relevant to unbelieving listeners-Sermon topics, wording, and modes of address are within the understanding and life experience of non-Christian visitors from churches' target communities. Pastors avoid addressing only Christians. They avoid using terms and phrases that are likely to be understood only by "insider" Christians. The topics may be spiritual in nature, but preachers effectively show how topics relate to the lives of unbelieving listeners.

Persuasive reasoning-Sermons have clear lines of thought that are easy to follow and well supported by appropriate evidence and well-warranted claims that would likely lead listeners to clear decisions for commitment to Christ. Engaging illustrations-Preachers use interesting stories, metaphors, testimonies and humor to keep the listeners' interest and explain spiritual truths. Dynamic delivery-Pastors use vocal variety, timing, and gestures to communicate authentic passion for the people and the message and keep the people focused throughout the sermon. Authentic preacher-Pastors sincerely believe the messages they communicate, love the Lord they serve, love the people to whom they communicate, and live the principles they teach on a daily basis. Pastors are honest about their failings, and they possess enough credibility to be considered trustworthy.

10 Holy Spirit empowering-The Holy Spirit is at work in the preparation and delivery of sermons to convince unbelievers of the truth of the messages and their need to respond to them. Concessions This paper does not claim that better preaching alone will reach this generation of unbelievers. Preaching is only one of a large number of factors affecting the decline of church attendance and conversions in America today. It is beyond the scope of this paper to identify all the factors; however, preaching is an important element in evangelism. Rainier and Barna both have conducted recent studies that found preaching is one of the top two factors in people becoming Christians. 5 Barna also found the worship service is the preferred point of entry to faith and church.6 In another survey, Barna found that providing better and more interesting sermons was the number one thing churches could do to attract the unchurched to their services.
7 The Bible mandates preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Jesus' last command to his disciples, often known as the Great Commission, had a clear objective. Though the exact wording varies in each account, perhaps Mark's least attested version says it clearest, "Preach the gospel to all creation" (Mark 16: 15 NAS). Peter said that God "ordered us to preach to the people" (Acts 10:42 5 Thom Rainier, .. Preaching that Connects, Part 1/' 14 Dec 2004, http://www.churchcentral.com/ nw/s/template/ Article.html/id/21666 (accessed 4 Jan 2005). Rainier reports his organization surveyed a large group of formerly unchurched people and asked them, "Did the pastor and his preaching play a part in your coming to the church?" More than 97 percent of the respondents said yes. Barna, 114, found the quality of sermons preached was the second most important factor in selecting a church to visit. The first was how much the people in the church seemed to care about each other. 6 Barna, 90. 7 Barna Research Group, Never on a Sunday (Glendale, CA: Barna Research.

## 1. The Importance of Preaching Definitions Concessions Effective Evangelism Preaching In The New Testament: A Study Of Jesus, Peter and Paul

The Apostle Paul declared., HI am under compulsion; for woe is me if I do not preach the gasper" (Mark 3: 14 NAS). Jesus tied his return to the completion of the mission of evangelistic preaching: This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come" (Matt. 24: 14 NAS). If evangelical Christians take seriously the Bible, their mission., and the findings of the experts, preaching will remain an important element of evangelism and warrants improvement wherever possible. One could argue that another set of characteristics might represent the enormous amount of data

generated by these studies equally well if not better than the seven this paper identifies as characteristics of effective evangelistic preaching.

Although it might be possible to come up with a slightly different set of terms, the list this paper uses was developed after a thorough study of all the data generated by the five studies. The author of this paper sought a manageably small list of characteristics broad enough to include most of the findings that occurred regularly in all of the analyses and specific enough to be of practical use to pastors and educators who seek an improvement in evangelistic preaching. The terminology this paper uses comes largely from phrases that occurred often in the analysis of contemporary experts discussed in chapter 4. Although another researcher might choose to use slightly different terms or divide the results in this study into slightly different categories, the characteristics this paper uses represent the findings of all the analyses and are appropriate to improve evangelistic preaching in pulpits across America.

12 One final concession is that application of the principles identified by this paper wi II not guarantee a large increase in the number of people coming to faith in Christ. As mentioned above, preaching is only one of many factors related to effective evangelism in the American church today. Several of these factors may mitigate any gains that might otherwise come to a particular church; however, there is a good likelihood churches will begin to see more conversions if pastors incorporate these elements, because throughout history and in a wide variety of settings effective evangelistic preaching usually consists of 1) biblical, Christ-centered content, dealing with issues 2) relevant to the lives of unbelievers, presented with clear 3) persuasive reasoning, using 4) engaging illustrations and 5) dynamic delivery, by an 6) authentic preacher, who is 7) empowered by the Holy Spirit.

## CHAPTER2

## EFFECTIVE EVANGELISTIC PREACHING IN THE NEW TEST AMENT:

A STUDY OF JESUS, PETER AND PAUL This chapter argues that the preaching of Jesus, Peter and Paul that effectively led people to faith in Christ as recorded in the New Testament was characterized by: I) biblical, Christ-centered content, 2) relevant to unbelieving listeners, preached with 3) persuasive appeal, using 4) engaging illustrations and 5) dynamic delivery, spoken by an 6) authentic preacher, who is 7) empowered by the Holy Spirit. This chapter is the culmination of a systematic study of the recorded sermons of Jesus, Peter, and Paul; any instruction on preaching they gave; plus the observations and comments of eyewitnesses and the writers of Scripture. A large number of secondary sources provided additional insight on the historical and cultural setting of the New Testament and what that preaching was probably like. Jesus, Peter, and Paul serve as excellent models for effective evangelistic preaching today because the culture of the first century was more similar to that of the twenty-first century than any since.1 "Not only did [Jesus'] preaching move the unlettered multitudes of the first century, but ... His preaching methods and communication style I Ralph L. Lewis and Gregg Lewis, Learning to Preach like Jesus (Westchester, IL: Crossway Books, 1989), 19; Robert D. Dale, Seeds for the Future: Growing Organic Leaders for Growing Churches (Atlanta, GA: Lake Hickory Resources, 2005), 122-123. 13 14 seem especially well-suited for twenty-first-century listeners.'"1 These three figures also stand as authoritative examples. In Mark's account of the calling of the disciples he wrote., "He appointed twelve, so that they would be with Him and that He could send them out to preachn (Mark 3: 14 NAS). They were with him and watched him" and he sent them out to do what he had done. Jesus' preaching served as the prime example for his first followers as it should for those of the twenty-first century.

Jesus, Peter, and Paul are worthy of imitation because they were effective in their evangelistic ministries. Jesus saw enormous crowds respond to his preaching (Matt. 4:24-25, Mark 3:7-8., and Luke 6: 17-19). Because of Peter's Pentecost preaching., "The infant church was multiplied out of all recognition by a single sermon."2 Paul's evangelistic tours laid the foundations for numerous churches and won so many converts that his opponents said of him, ''Not only in Ephesus, but in almost all of Asia, this Paul has persuaded and turned away a considerable number of people" (Acts 19:26 NAS), and, "These men who have upset the world have come here also" (Acts 17:6 NAS). Finally, the Bible should be consulted for good preaching models because it has stood as the church's authority since its original writing. Eckhard Schnabel writes: Based on the conviction that the Bible, as sacred Scripture, is the authority not only for faith but also for practice, and not only for the private life of the individual Christian but also for the life of the church of Jesus Christ as a whole, both in its universal and local expressions, attempts to adopt 'lessons' from the missions of Jesus and the apostles are to be welcomed.3 I Lewis and Lewis, 13. 2 F. D. Coggan, The Ministry of the Word: The New Testament Concept of Preaching and Its Relevance/or Today (London: Lutterworth Press, 1964), 11; Acts 2:41, 47, 3:4, 5:42-6:1. 3 Eckhard J. Schnabel, Early Christian Mission, vols I and II (Downers Grove, IL: Inter Varsity, 2004), 1569.

15 Some question whether any of the sermons recorded in the New Testament, and especially Acts, were preached by those claimed. 0. C. Edwards claims, ~~There are probably no sermons as such in the New Testament, no texts that had been delivered orally to an assembly for evangelization, instruction, or worship."4 C.H. Dodd, however, in his seminal work, The Apostolic Preaching and its Developments, argues that Luke was an eyewitness to Paul's later preaching and records it as he remembers it. As a case in point, he demonstrates the similarities between Paul's words to the Ephesian elders in Acts 20 and those in his epistles. The reason his sermons may seem different in some cases is that his letters lack examples of evangelistic preaching because he wrote them to people who were already Christians. Dodd also believes Luke probably had access to reliable sources for Peter and Stephen's speeches because none of them shows influences of Pauline theology nor addresses the issues of the late first century church. In addition, the sermons of Acts include many "Aramaisms. "5 Witherington and Schnabel independently point out that Luke's writing style and objectives in Acts are much like the school of Greek historians Polybius, Ephorus, and Thucydides who placed a high value on ascertaining the accuracy of speeches.6 Polybius, whose writing Luke's especially resembles, wrote: The whole genus of orations ... may be regarded as summaries of events and as the unifying element in historical writing.

It is the function of history in the first place to ascertain the exact words spoken, whatever they may be. A historian, who suppresses both the words spoken and their cause and replaces them by fictitious expressions and verbosities, destroys, in so doing, the characteristic quality of history. 7 16 Schnabel also points out that the speeches in Acts ''reflect different historical and theological perspectives" and this greatly reduces the likelihood that Luke invented them.8 Underneath this argument is the even greater debate on the authenticity of the New Testament. It is beyond this paper's scope to discuss issues of textual criticism. Instead, this paper will proceed with "advance confidence"9 and assume the authenticity, reliability, and authority of the New Testament. Preaching in the New Testament Preaching and sermons form a major part of the New Testament.

The Synoptic Gospels record several extensive sermons of Jesus,'0 shorter conversations with 6 Schnabel, 398-400; Ben Witherington III, The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998), 32-33. Witherington cites a TLG and computer aided comparison reported in D. Mealand, "The Phrase 'Many Proofs' in Acts 1,3 and in Hellenistic Writers," Zeitschrift fur die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft 80 ( 1989): 134-45, which provides concrete evidence of the similarities between Luke and Polybius. 1 Witherington, 33, quotes Polybius with the reference 12.25a-b. 8 Schnabel, 400. 9lbid., 20-34. Schnabel provides an excellent definition and defense for the reliability of the New Testament in such historical studies. 10 Those directed at general audiences that could be termed evangelistic include the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5:1-7:29), the Sermon on the Plain (Luke 6:20-49), the extended sermon of Luke 11:1-13:35, 17 individuals and groups of people, plus many summary statements about Jesus' preaching ministry. 11 These latter summary statements show repeated use of certain words: preaching (kerusso), Gospel (euangellion), and Kingdom (basileia), and demonstrate the main intent of Jesus' preaching was to announce the "good news of the Kingdom." Some of these summary statements also describe the results Jesus sought in his hearers: repentance and faith.12 Blomberg says, "'The Kingdom' depicts the irruption of God's power into history in a new and dramatic way with the advent of Messiah Jesus.

Thus to declare that the kingdom is at hand 'means that the decisive establishment or manifestation of the divine sovereignty has drawn near to men so that they are now confronted with the possibility and the ineluctable necessity of repentance and conversion."13 The Synoptic Gospels also contain several summary statements of the uniqueness and effect of Jesus' preaching.14 parables (Matt. 13: 1-53 and 20: 1-16, Mark 4: 1-34, Luke 8:4-18, 14:5-17: 10 and 19: 11-27), and his teachings at the Temple (Matt. 21:28-46, Mark 12:1-40, Luke 21:1-47). II These include Matt. 4:17, 4:23, 9:35, 11:1, 11:5; Mark 1:14, 1:39; Luke 4:44, 8:1 and 20:1. 12 For example, Mark 1: 14-15 NAS says, "Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.'" John D. Grassmick, "Mark" in The Bible Knowledge Commentary, ed. John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck (Wheaton, IL: Victor, 1983), I 07-108, writes of this verse, "Repentance and faith (belief) are bound together in one piece (not temporally successive acts). To "repent" is to turn away from an existing object of trust (e.g., oneself). To "believe" is to commit oneself wholeheartedly to an object of faith. Thus to believe in the good news meant to believe in Jesus Himself as the Messiah, the Son of God. He is the 'content' of the good news. Only by this means can one enter into or receive (as a gift) the kingdom of God." 13 Craig L. Blomberg, New American Commentary: Matthew (Nashville, TN; Broadman, 1992), 73-74, quoting D. Hill, New Century Bible: The Gospel of Matthew (London: Oliphants, 1972), 90. 14 For example, Matt. 7:28-29, 13:34-35, 22:33 and 46; Mark 1 :22, 4:33-34, 10: 1 and 12:37; Luke 4:15, 22 and 31-32.

(Most of Jesus' speech in the Gospel of John is not set in typical sermons. Jesus speaks with individuals or groups of people in conversational and circumstantial settings that provided opportunities to explain his nature and ministry. 15 The words for preaching (kerusso) and preaching the gospel (euangalizo) never occur in John. Yet, evangelistic communication was at the heart of Jesus' message in John to the extent that John records the purpose of his book: "These have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you

may have life in His name." This concept of eternal life through faith in Christ is a recurrent theme in Jesus' words in John. The Book of Acts, as noted earlier, records several sermons in a manner that seems to convey both their salient authenticity and truncation.

Other than the Acts 7 sermon by Stephen, all the sermons in Acts were preached by the other two targets of this study: Peter16 and Paul. 17 The Acts sermons occurred in a variety of settings to a variety of audiences. 15 For example, Jesus speaks with the Pharisee Nicodemus in John 3:1-21, the Samaritan woman at the well in John 4: 1-29, Jewish leaders in Jerusalem in John 5: 17-47, Galilean Jews in John 6:25-65, Jerusalem Jews in John 7:16-42, 8:12-58, 10:1-38, Greeks in John 12:20-36, his disciples in John 13:12-16:33, and Pilate in John 18:33-19: 12. 16 Peter's recorded sermons include the Pentecost sermon of Acts 2:14-40, the address at Solomon's Portico in Acts 3:12-29, his two defenses before the Sanhedrin in Acts 4:8-20 and 5:28-32, and his address at Cornelius' home in Acts 10:34-43. 17 Paul's sermons in Acts include the Psidian Antioch address in Acts 13: 16-41, the appeal to the people ofLystra in Acts 14:15-17, the Mars Hill address in Acts 17:22-31, the defense on the Temple steps in Acts 22: 1-21, his defense before Felix in Acts 24: 10-21, and his defense before Festus, Agrippa and Bernice in Acts 26:2-29. It is noteworthy that although his legal defenses did not take place in typically evangelistic settings, Paul used those opportunities to communicate evangelistic messages.

walked from town to town to be able to preach to as many people as possible. 30 The Galilean commissions of Matthew 10 and Luke 9 and IO plus the Great Commission entailed going to the people to communicate the message. Both Peter and Paul traveled extensively in their preaching ministries to reach as many as possible with the Good News. Schnabel decisively points out how this type of missionary endeavor was unprecedented among the Jews, or any other part of the Greco-Roman world of the first century.31 22 They also deliberately connected with their listeners' minds and hearts through their speaking in order to help them understand the message and the spiritual truth it brought. This connection started with a respect for the listeners.

Paul summarized his approach toward people, "Though I am free from all [men], I have made myself a slave to all, so that I may win more" ( I Cor. 9: 19 NAS). He both identified with and respected his listeners. Jesus showed respect to those that no one else in his culture would: a woman caught in adultery, a cohabiting Samaritan woman shunned by her community and forced to draw water in the heat of the day, lepers, prostitutes, tax collectors, and officers of the occupying Roman army (John 4: 1-42, 8: 1-11; Matt. 8: 1-7, 9:9-13 ). Peter willingly broke the Jewish taboo against visiting Gentiles when he went to the Roman Centurion Cornelius' home in Acts IO to preach there. In each case, the preachers demonstrated an authentic respect for their listeners far beyond the normal expectations of their society 28 competition in I Corinthians 9, clay jars in 2 Corinthians 4, fruit in Galatians 5, and a nursing mother in I Thessalonians 2 for just a few examples.45 Peter also used word pictures in his letters to help his readers better understand who they were as Christians by equating them to aliens ( 1 Pet. I: 1 ), heirs ( 1 Pet. 1: 13 and 4: 1 ), soldiers ( 1 Pet. I: 13 and 4: 1 ), children ( I Pet. I: 14 and 2:2), and sheep ( I Pet 2:25 and 5 :2).

Some may observe a paucity of illustrations in the Acts sermons. As was noted earlier, Luke seems to have abbreviated most of these messages and focused on the

primary message-that is the flow of argument and "proof' of the sermons-and did not take the time or space to record all of the illustrations. Since Paul and Peter filled their letters with metaphors to help illuminate the arguments of their writings, it is reasonable to expect their preaching would also have included such illumination. Dynamic Delivery The Scriptures record little about the actual vocal and physical delivery of the sermons they contain, but there are strong hints that the great New Testament preachers used dynamic styles of delivery.

For example in John 7:37, "Jesus stood and cried out, saying, 'If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink."' The verb for "cry out," krazo, means "to make a vehement outcry" or "to communicate something in a loud voice, call, call out, cry. "46 This was a deeply passionate invitation from Jesus in the words he used and in how he said them. Morris says of this verse, "It is proclaimed 45 Braxton, 42. 46 Frederick William Danker, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature, 3d ed. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2000), 563.

## 2. Biblical, Christ-Centered Content Relevance Persuasive Appeal Engaging Illustrations Dynamic Delivery Authenticity Holy Spirit Empowered Conclusion Effective Evangelism Preaching In Church History

This chapter will demonstrate that the preaching of four outstanding and effective evangelistic preachers from different periods in church history was characterized by: I) biblical, Christ-centered content, 2) relevant to unbelieving listeners, preached with 3) persuasive appeal, using 4) engaging illustrations and 5) dynamic delivery, spoken by an 6) authentic preacher, who is 7) empowered by the Holy Spirit. This chapter is the culmination of a systematic analysis of the recorded sermons of John Chrysostom, Girolamo Savonarola, George Whitefield, and Charles Haddon Spurgeon; any instruction on preaching they gave; plus the observations and comments of eyewitnesses and their early biographers.

A large number of secondary sources provided additional insight on the historical and cultural settings of each of these preachers and the nature of their preaching. This chapter looks at these four preachers because: I) they represent distinct eras and settings of preaching, 2) their preaching resulted in large numbers of conversions, 3) each lived and preached in a time of cultural turmoil, and 4) a good number of their recorded sermons and eyewitness accounts are extant today. This chapter will begin by briefly summarizing each of these preacher's careers and continue by showing how each preacher demonstrated the seven characteristics of effective evangelistic preaching 46 stylist of grace,'' said John Chrysostom had clarity of diction unequalled by any other he knew.

42 In Priesthood, Chrysostom complained that people came to his sermons more for pleasure than for profit,43 and his eloquence brought the enormous crowds who came to hear him much pleasure. He did not consider his verbal skills only a gift, however. He wrote, "Eloquence is not given by birth, but the preacher must cultivate its force by constant app 1cat1on an exercise. Savonarola's preaching was marked by passion and an unmatched eloquence. Eyewitness Pico della Mirandola describes himself in third person upon hearing the monk preach, "A cold shiver ran throughout his whole body, and his hair stood on end.

"45 Even his outspoken critic Niccolo Machiavelli had to acknowledge his eloquence, "If you had heard with what boldness he began preaching and with how much he continued it would be an object of no little admiration."46 Savonarola integrated play-acting and humor into his sermons to keep his listeners engaged. 47 He also used mock dialogue in his sermons-sometimes even mocking himself-as a way to add levity and increase his credibility by reaching out to all types of people.48 Yet, Savonarola's preaching ability was mostly 42 Kelly, 82. 43 Chrysostom, Priesthood, 127-128. 44 Ibid., 145. 45 Misciatelli, 84. 46 Machiavelli, 8. 47 Martines, 71. 48 Ibid., I 00.

47 learned and not a natural gift. His first preaching tour in Florence was unremarkable. It took several years of itinerant ministry farther north to prepare him to take on Florence. 49 Whitefield's passionate delivery was key to his success. Trained in theater as a young man, he used every trick of the dramatic trade to engage his audience in the biblical message. He spoke completely without notes, yet often preached the same sermons many times, which enabled him to perfect their delivery. In fact, his friend Benjamin Franklin noted, His delivery [ of the often preached sermons] was so improved by frequent repetition that every accent, every emphasis, every modulation of voice, was so perfectly well turned and placed that without being interested in the subject, one could not help being pleased with the discourse. 50 His voice was powerful as well. Franklin estimated he could preach to at least 30,000 outdoors.

51 Contemporary accounts claimed he once preached to 80,000 in Hyde Park. 52 Yet in spite of the volume required, he was able to produce a remarkable variety of tone. "Tenderness and sternness, love and anger-the whole gamut of emotions could be communicated through what must have been one of the most remarkable voices in speech history."53 The actor David Garrick said Whitefield could "make his audience weep or tremble merely by varying his pronunciation of the word Mesopotamia. "54 Sarah 49 Eisenbichler, 4-5; Edwards, 256; Misciatelli, 49-50. Martines, 17, says his first preaching in Florence was "a disaster. Savonarola all but drove his listeners away by his funny Lombard speech, weak voice, ungainly gestures, and poor delivery." Before he returned to Florence in 1490, Martines, 23, says, ouring his years away from Florence, the militant knight of Christ had found the skill to tum himself into a superb orator and public personality." 5° Franklin, 134. 51 Ibid., 133. 52 Edwards, 433. 53 Demaray, 162. 54 Edwards, 435.

48 Edwards, the great theologian Jonathan's wife, saw his speaking gifts as God given. "He is a born orator," she said.55 Spurgeon 's voice and gestures also set him apart from his contemporaries. He easily filled the Metropolitan Tabernacle with volume and vocalizations that moved people to repentance. Like Chrysostom, he eschewed pulpits because they restrained his gestures. 56 Sheridan Knowles was a popular actor and playwright in London who heard Spurgeon 's first two sermons at New Park Street Chapel. He immediately recommended the students at Regent's Park College hear Spurgeon preach, "He is only a boy, but the most wonderful preacher in the world. He has nothing to learn from me or anyone else. He is simply perfect."57 Yet Spurgeon disagreed. He made it a lifelong pursuit to improve his preaching and study preachers, particularly the Puritans. 58 He even started a school for aspiring preachers next to the Metropolitan Tabernacle. The lectures he gave were published in three volumes, which provide specific instruction in preparation and delivery of sermons and the necessary character of the preacher. These men all used a great deal of vocal variety (volume, pitch, pace, etc.), strong

gestures, and manifested overt emotions. One commonality they shared which no doubt aided their delivery was preaching without (or with very few) notes.

Similarly, Savonarola gave God credit for the effectiveness of his preaching.74 In many of his sennons., George Whitefield specifically identified the Holy Spirit as the only real power that could convict a person of sin through his preaching and bring someone to faith in Christ. For example he once preached, "I shall proceed to explain the general way whereby the Holy Ghost works upon every converted sinner's heart; and I hope that the Lord, even whilst I am speaking, will be pleased to fulfill it in many of your hearts."75 Far above any skill of preparation of delivery, Spurgeon believed a reliance on the Holy Spirit was the most important trait of any preacher. He said, "His place as God is on the throne, and in all our enterprises he must be first, midst, and end. "76 His biographer, Lewis Drummond, credits the Holy Spirit for Spurgeon 's incredible success as a preacher.

77 Conclusion A study of the lives of the great people of history may strike readers as irrelevant because they might consider the people to be gifted prodigies who lived in rarified cultures; however, each of these outstanding preachers of history believed great preaching was more a matter of hard work and continual learning than innate gifts. Savonarola practiced preaching for years to gain the voice that revolutionized a city, 73 Ibid., 347, from "Homily II, Concerning the Statues." 74 Savonarola, 1 14-115. 75 George Whitefield, 40. The Holy Spirit Convincing the World of Sin, Righteousness, and Judgment," in Selected Sermons of George Whitefield, Christian Classics Ethereal Library.

http://www.ccel.org/ccel/whitefield/sermons.xlii.html (accessed 3 January 2007). Other sermons in this work that also referenced the Holy Spirit's work in drawing unbelievers to conviction and faith in his preaching include Numbers 8, 9, 12, 20, 23, 37, 38, 41, 42, 45, 49, 51, 54 and 56. 76 Spurgeon, Lectures to My Students, Second Series, 266. 77 Lewis A. Drummond, Spurgeon: Prince of Preachers (Grand Rapids, MI: K.regel, 1992), 258-274.

53 Spurgeon never stopped studying and learning from great preachers of history, and Chrysostom believed good preaching came only from hard work. If these, some of the greatest of preachers in all history, placed a priority on growing in homiletic skills, then today's preachers can learn from them and follow their examples. As this chapter has shown their examples are best summarized as sermons with 1) biblical, Christ-centered content, 2) relevant to unbelieving listeners, preached with 3) persuasive appeal, using 4) engaging illustrations and 5) dynamic delivery, spoken by an 6) authentic preacher, who is 7) empowered by the Holy Spirit.

## Biblical, Christ-Centered Content Relevance Persuasive Appeal Engaging Illustrations Dynamic Delivery Authenticity Holy Spirit Empowered Conclusion What Today's The Holy Seed Church Experts Say Works Best In Evangelism Preaching

This chapter argues that a majority of experts in the field of preaching today would say preaching most effectively brings unbelievers to faith in Christ when it is characterized by: I) biblical, Christ-centered content, 2) relevant to unbelieving listeners, preached with 3) persuasive appeal, using 4) engaging illustrations and 5) dynamic delivery, spoken by an 6) authentic preacher, who is 7) empowered by the Holy Spirit. The data for this chapter come from relevant literature produced in

recent years dealing with evangelistic preaching in the setting of local churches. Sources consulted include homiletics professors, successful pastors, and other authors who study preaching. The literature consulted reflects a variety of denominational and theological perspectives.

Most of the writers do not attempt to provide a comprehensive guide to effective evangelistic preaching, so complete agreement is unexpected. In many cases, experts choose to focus on one element of preaching they consider important. Sometimes the nature of the article or book directs writers to focus their comments on a specific aspect of preaching. Some of these individuals write from their personal experience. Others provide the results of studies they conducted. Several are theorists who attempt to grapple with the 54 55 realities of postmodemism and how to approach them. Many reflect their theological or ecclesiological biases in their suggestions. Some references specifically focus on evangelistic preaching. Others books are more general and apply to homiletics in congregational settings.

Although the latter writers do not speak to the issue of evangelistic preaching directly, other works reference these writers as today's leading experts in the subject of preaching. The table and annotated bibliography in appendix A identify the perspectives and objectives of each writer's work consulted for this paper. One recently published work, A Light unto My Path: Crafting Effective Homilies, by Catholic priest James Bacik and psychologist Kevin Anderson, reveals the results of a study that produced nearly the same findings as this paper. Bacik and Anderson conducted four studies between 1994 and 2002 to determine what made preachers effective.

Although their target population was primarily active The Holy Seed Church attenders, one of their studies integrates survey responses from people chosen randomly from the American public. Each of their top ten findings fits within one of the seven characteristics of effective evangelistic preaching claimed by this paper. These ten items identify most distinguished preachers who give "effective sermons" in the minds of the listeners from those who do not.1 I James Bacik and Kevin Anderson, A Light unto My Path: Crafting Effective Homilies (New York: Paulist Press, 2006), 148-169.

Table l. Bacik and Anderson Compared to Corresponding Characteristic Bacik/ Anderson Rank and Finding Corresponding Characteristic l. This preacher's style of delivering Dynamic Delivery the sermon helps keep my attention 2. This preacher's sermons make me Relevant feel like he or she knows what's in my heart 3. This preacher helped me get a new Biblical and Christ-Centered or deeper appreciation of the Scripture readings 4. This preacher's sermons usually Persuasive Appeal have a clear central message 5. This preacher's sermons are Relevant relevant to my daily life 6. This preacher makes creative use Engaging Illustrations of stories and examples to enhance the sermon 7. This preacher uses humor Engaging Illustrations effectively in sermons 8. This preacher usually presents Relevant ideas in the sermon very similar to my own 9. This preacher is a very likeable Authentic person 10. This preacher knows the real struggles of life Authentic/Relevant Note the eighth strongest variable identifying effectiveness in the Bacik and 56 Anderson study, "This preacher usually presents ideas in the sermon very similar to my own," may not apply in evangelistic preaching because an evangelist.

57 sermon's objective is to get individuals to change their faith. This entails a fundamental shift of views. The psychological information that forms the basis of chapter 5 of this paper, however, shows that "similarity" often improves a speaker's persuasive ability. 2 Preachers' identification with their listeners can occur in areas other than faith and promote the kind of similarity the Bacik/ Anderson study reveals. Responses numbers two, nine, and ten in their study also promote this kind of similarity and identification. The only item from this dissertation lacking in the Bacik/ Anderson study is "Holy Spirit Empowered." The Bacik/Anderson study used a prescribed set of 36 possible responses in their survey.

None of these addressed the Holy Spirit or any type of supernatural or spiritual comments on sermons. The structure of their study, therefore, prevented respondents from identifying the role of the Holy Spirit as a distinguishing characteristic of effective preaching. The fact that the findings of the Bacik/ Anderson study closely match the findings of this dissertation, although their target population was active church attenders, may show that preaching that effectively connects with unbelievers and that which is seen as effective by church attenders is similar. 2 Robert B. Cialdini, Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 2000), 176; Daniel Goleman, Working with Emotional Intelligence (New York: Bantam, 1998), 170; Kevin Hogan, The Science of Influence: How to Get Anyone to Say "Yes" in Eight Minutes or Less, New York: Wiley and Sons, 2004, 29; Richard M. Perloff, The Dynamics of Persuasion: Communication and Attitudes in the 21st Centu,y (Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum, 2003), 169.

58 The remainder of this chapter analyzes comments from homileticians to demonstrate how the seven characteristics distinguish effective evangelistic preaching. Biblical and Christ-Centered More writers call for sermons to be biblical than any other characteristic. Even the most liberal writers consulted plead for biblical sermons.3 Rainier's study shows that people investigating church actually prefer Bible teaching to watered-down messages. 4 As John Stott writes, "How dare we speak if God has not spoken? By ourselves we have nothing to say.

To address a congregation without the assurance that we are bearers of a divine message would be the height of arrogance and folly."5 "As important as it is to preach with relevance, it must never be thought that any style, approach, methodology, or creative instinct can substitute for the proclamation of God's Word."6 Warren Wiersbe says that biblical preaching by definition will be Christ-centered. "Faithful preaching of the Scriptures means 'preaching Christ.' I 3 Thomas H. Troeger, Preaching While the Church Is Under Reconstrnction: The Visionary Role of Preachers in a Fragmented World (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1999), 30-31. Troeger makes a distinction between being "biblical" and "biblicist," and on p. 96 argues against what he considers two dangerous forms of Biblicism: fundamentalist literalism and scholarly Biblicism that never risks boldness. 4 Rainier, p. 45. 5 John R.W. Stott, Between Two Worlds (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1982), 96. 6 Richard L. Dresselhaus, "Pentecostal Preaching and Exegesis," in Foundations for Pentecostal Preaching, James Bridges, ed. (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 2005), 67.

59 suggest that preaching Christ means proclaiming the Word of God in such a way that Jesus Christ is clearly presented in all the fullness of his person and the greatness of his work." 7 In describing his own experience of building a church focused on leading unbelievers to faith in Christ, Mark Driscoll writes: I decided that

being cool, having good music, understanding postmodern epistemology, and welcoming all kinds of strange people into the church is essentially worthless if at the bedrock of the church anything other than a rigorous Jesus-centered biblical theology guides the mission of the church. And I needed to labor to continually improve as a Bible preacher because there is enough power in the preaching of God's Word alone to build a church from nothing.

Relevant A majority of the experts call for relevant sermons. Both those who advocate expositional sermons for evangelistic messages and those who prefer topical sermons agree that there must be something hearers can put into practice in their lives if the message will connect. 9 Miller says an effective preacher will work to learn "the interests, tastes, and desires of those outside the church and [show] how Christ is adequate to fill them."10 Steve Gaines agrees, "Although the 1 Warren Wiersbe, The Dynamics of Preaching (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1999), 31-32. 8 Mark Driscoll, Confession of a Reformission Rev.: Hard Lessons.from an Emerging Church (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2006), 78. 9 Graham Johnston, Preaching to a Postmodern World: A Guide to Reaching Twenty-First Century Listeners (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2001), 70 and 85; Rainier, 218; George G. Hunter III, Church/or the Unchurched(Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1996), 160-163; Ron Martoia, Morph: The Texture of Leadership for Tomorrow's Church (Loveland, CO: Group Publishing, 2003), 160; Barna, 81, 103 and 112; Craig Loscalzo, Apologetic Preaching: Proclaiming Christ to a Postmodern World (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 56. 10 Miller, 26 and 133.

60 message of the Gospel never changes, how it is presented should connect with the cultural persuasions and unique personalities of the people addressed."11 Part of being relevant to the unchurched is speaking to their felt needs. "Preaching that connects-preaching that changes lives-addresses the felt needs of people."12 It may seem obvious that a message must be understandable to be relevant, but many authors insist that preachers avoid insider church terms that are meaningless to unchurched people. In Hunter's landmark Church for the Unchurched, he prescribes ten principles of pioneering outreach, one of which is: "Use the language of the target population."13 As Sweet says, "Communication does not begin with being understood, but with understanding others.

"14 Ron Martoia speaks for many when he writes, When it comes to communicating that message in the context of our current culture, many of these messages entirely miss the mark. The problem is that they continue to "preach the Word of God" so they say, but the Word of God is miscommunicated and not faithfully rendered when the culture to which it is spoken doesn't understand the categories, Christian-ese language, and in-house slang we use in most of our churches.

A person in our culture today without any background in Bible stories or Christian language has no better chance of understanding the typical pastor than the audiences I speak to in Asia or Eastern Europe have 11 Steve Gaines, "The Setting of the Evangelistic Sermon," Al Fasol et al., Preaching Evange/istical/y (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2006), 2. 12 Leroy Bartel, "Pentecostal Preaching and Homiletics," in Foundations/or Pentecostal Preaching, James Bridges, ed. (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 2005), 125. 13 Hunter, 161. 14 Leonard Sweet, "And Glory Crowns the Mercy Seat: Towards an Abductive Homiletic," l, http://www.theholyseedchurch.com home; Internet; (accessed 20 April 2, 2012).

61 of understanding my English. Without careful biblical and cultural work, we'll never faithfully translate the message into the target culture we are attempting to reach.15 Persuasive Reasoning Nearly every writer consulted acknowledges a need for clear reasoning. Many writers speak of a need for one clear theme for each sermon. Several writers advocate developing a theme statement to provide focus for the sermon.16 Andy Stanley and Lane Jones urge limiting a sermon to a single main point.17 Postmodern cynicism, especially, demands "apologetic preaching" that deals with the doubts a seeker may wrestle with in coming to faith in Christ; 18 however, imperative preaching filled with "you musts" is out. In its place, the experts call for an inductive approach that "implies leadership without coercion." 19 Some writers propose anticipating objections and arguing both sides of an issue before drawing conclusions.

Hugh Mackay cautions, "If you attack someone else's point of view, the most likely outcome is that you will reinforce 15 Martoia, 160. 16 Bartel 124-125; Ronald Allen, Interpreting the Gospel: An Introduction to Preaching (St. Louis, MO: Chalice, 1998), 149-150. 17 Andy Stanley and Lane Jones, Communicating for a Change (Sisters, OR: Multnomah, 2006), 101-111. 18 Loscalzo, 11-28; Johnston, 82; Lee A. Wyatt," Preaching to Postmodern People." Confident Witness-Changing World: Rediscovering the Gospel in North America. Ed. Craig Van Gelder, (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999), 157-163; Kenton C. Anderson, Preaching with Conviction: Connecting with Postmodern Listeners, (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 2001), 144-148. 19 Calvin Miller, Marketplace Preaching (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1995), 57 and 65; Michael Duduit, Preaching with Power: Dynamic Insights from Twenty Top Communicators (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2006), 158.

62 the very view you wanted to change."20 Wiersbe writes, "Some people's minds are like medieval fortresses, with their fears and prejudices united to keep God's truth from getting in. "21 Addressing those fears and prejudices in a respectful and understanding way, showing how Christ's way is better, can help knock down the walls of those fortresses. Brian McLaren advocates dialogue with other faiths rather than fighting them. 22 writes, Such a dialogue, however, does not mean compromise. Bryan Chapell Proclaiming the message of eternal salvation in Christ alone unquestionably evidences undiluted arrogance, gross insensitivity, and religious bigotry-unless the message is true. Then, proclamation of the only true hope is the most important person can commumcate. Rainier reports that the unchurched who start attending church place a greater emphasis on doctrine than do long-term Christians. Of the recently churched, 91 percent stated that doctrine was an important factor in their decision to join a church.24 Although many people today embrace pluralism, biblical 20 Hugh Mackay, Why Don't People Listen? (Sydney, Australia: Pan Macmillan, 1994), 14-15. 21 Wiersbe, 49. 22 Brian McLaren, A Generous Orthodoxy (El Cajon, CA: Youth Specialties, 2004); and McLaren. Reinventing Your Church, p. 83. He suggests a threefold approach: I) Present the Christian faith as one of many religious armies at war fighting evil. 2) Call people to join an army. 3) Help them decide which army to join. 23 Bryan Chapell, "The Necessity of Preaching Christ in a World Hostile to Him," Preaching to a Shifting Culture: 12 Perspectives on Communicating that Connects. ed. by Scott Gibson, 66. 24 Rainier, 126-127.

63 Christianity is a legitimate option for them. Watering down the message to make it culturally acceptable does not make it more inviting.25 Although some writers advocate open-ended sermons to allow listeners to draw their own conclusions, the

majority of experts call for faith decisions to conclude each sermon. Miller writes, "Whether or not there needs to be an actual altar call the 'altar mystique' should characterize great preaching." He calls the altar the place of "eternal reckoning." 26 Billy Graham calls for preaching with urgency and decision: "Preach for a verdict like Jesus did."27 The goal of evangelistic preaching is to persuade people to come to faith in Christ; therefore, experts say sermons should be simple, direct, respectful, and uncompromising, with a clear call to commitment.

Engaging Illustrations A large number of writers advocate a liberal use of stories, word pictures, visual images, and other creative ways of communicating to reach unbelievers. This is a visual generation with stories in the form of movies, television, and novels flooding the senses daily. People unaccustomed to attending church that stumble in on a textual treatise will likely lose interest and not see the connection to their lives. As Sweet says, "The emerging culture is expressing its spirituality through images and metaphors, symbols and stories."28 He quotes Swedish filmmaker Ingmar Bergman, "Facts go straight to the head; stories go straight to the heart. "29 Loscalzo calls for the use of "image-rich narratives and stories" to make the Gospel clear.

30 Unbelieving listeners may have trouble grasping a spiritual concept until a sermon illustration becomes "a doorway into a larger room of understanding and experience. "31 In particular, real world examples and stories that apply the biblical principles to preachers' own lives may carry more credibility with postmodern listeners than Scripture itself. 32 John A. Huffman Jr. writes, "'My use of personal experience, illustration, and selfhood as a person in preaching does considerably enhance my communication of biblical truth. "33 64 These illustrations can have a powerful effect on listeners. Fred Craddock writes.

In good preaching what is referred to as illustrations are, in fact, stories or anecdotes, which do not illustrate the point; rather they are the point. In other words, a story may carry in its bosom the whole message rather than the illumination of a message, which had already been related in another but less clear way.34 28 S weet, And Glory Crowns the Mercy Seat, 1. 29 Ibid., 21. 30 Loscalzo, 22. 31 Thomas Long, The Witness of Preaching (Louisville, KY: Westminster I John Knox Press, 1989), 175. 32 Johnston, 73 and 11 O; Miller, 69; Gaines, "Preparing the

Evangelistic Sermon," Fasol et al, 55. 33 John A. Huffman Jr., nThe Role of Preaching in Ministry," The Pastor's Guide to Effective Preaching (Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press, 2003), 40. 34 Fred Craddock, Preaching (Nashville, TN; Abingdon, 1985), 204.

65 Preachers are encouraged to be as imaginative as possible in developing ways to communicate eternal truth. As Troeger puts it, the role of today's preacher is "to give witness to God with an imaginative power that vitalizes the faith and ministry of the congregation."35 Brian McLaren seeks to live by the words of the Christian novelist Walker Percy who considered writing fiction as a way to preach: "[A preacher must call on] every ounce of cunning, craft, and guile he [sic] can muster from the darker regions of his soul."36 Sweet and several others advocate building each sermon around a single metaphor. 37 One newer form of sermon that many advocate is the "narrative sermon." Preachers communicate their messages through stories, much as Christ did through His parables.

The goal of illustrations in messages according to these authors is two-fold: 1) to engage the listeners by holding their interest and motivating their assent to the Gospel and 2) to explain spiritual truth in an understandable and memorable way. 35 Traeger, 16-17. 36 Walker Pearcy quoted from a personal Jetter in Brian McLaren, Reinventing Your Church (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1998), 93. 37 Sweet, And Glory Crowns the Mercy Seat, 19, "The genuine sign of greatness in a sermon is one image-a deep metaphor, not superficial analogy." Rob Ronglien, "Experiential Preaching," and Alan Nelson, "Creating Messages that Connect," seminars presented at the Emergent YS Convention, San Diego, February 1-5, 2005, both advocated the use of a thematic metaphor for each sermon and visual images to reinforce it.

rehearsing a message several times and speaking without notes to improve e 1very. -Sweet urges an energetic humorous sty e to capture t e attention. Miller calls for passion in preaching.44 Michael Frost encourages the use of rhythm and aural signals: The use of pitch, tone, and rhythm actually says something more to a postmodern listener than just making it easy to listen .... In this regard, start thinking of sermons as if they were movies. What 'soundtrack' does a sermon need to enhance the narrative line? At what speed should the sermon be preached? This is about more than mere enhancements. Some listeners will learn by the very use of voice, rhythm, language, and body movement. 67 Frost also encourages preachers to "go for the emotion" because emotion carries so much more weight in the postmodern world than it did in the modem.

Postmodems tend to evaluate the validity of something on the basis of how they feel about it. 45 The importance of preachers' authenticity, though, tends to temper how preachers should deliver their passion. Kenton Anderson summarizes well the goal of sermon delivery for many of these writers: "An inviting physical style coupled with conversational passion and a minimum of obstacles will enhance the possibility that the listeners will be drawn into the presence of God. "46 42 Michael Duduit, "Preaching Truth in a Whatever World" (seminar, Preaching Magazine. Northwest Baptist Seminary, Tacoma, WA. October 6, 2004). 43 Leonard I. Sweet, AquaChurch (Loveland, CO: Group Publishing, 1999), 178-179. 44 Miller, 47. 45 Michael Frost, "Preaching in a Post-Literate Age," http://www.cegm.org.au/articles (accessed 20 November 2004). 46 Anderson, 149-150.

68 Authenticity A wide span of authors notes that authenticity (including integrity and character) is critical in effective preaching. One survey of 100,000 Pentecostal preachers reports the majority of them considered pastors' character more important than their preaching skills.47 Many of the writers note how today's listeners tend not to accept the authority of pastors by their titles alone. Many experts believe unchurched people respond better to preachers who are transparent in their weaknesses, use loving tone, and focus more on grace than judgment.48 Stanley and Jones say, "An audience has to buy into the messenger before they buy into the message. A lack of genuineness makes it difficult to trust a speaker. "49 Rainier's study of unbelievers who came to faith found that pastors' authenticity was a major factor in their decision to trust Christ. Their own phrases to describe these pastors included: down-to-earth, friendly, willing to admit mistakes, not holier-than-thou, real, enthusiastic, walks the talk, relates well, and a regular guy [sic].50 Part of preachers' authenticity is their ability to "embody" their sermons. Ronald Allen says, "The sermon becomes a sermon only when it comes to life 47 Aldwin Ragoonath, Preach the Word: A Pentecostal Approach (Winnipeg, MB: Agape

Teaching Ministry of Canada, 2004), 16-17. 48 Johnston, 105, 129, and 144; Rainier, 60; Frank G. Honeycutt, Preaching/or Adult Conversion and Commitment: Invitation to a Life Transformed (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2003), 95; McLaren, Reinventing Your Church, 179. 49 Stanley and Jones, 121-122. 50 Rainier, 60.

69 through the self of the preacher in living conversation with the congregation." In other words, preachers incarnate their sermons. This happens when the delivery and content of sermons are consistent with the characters and personalities of the preachers. 51 Another aspect of authenticity in preaching is preachers' sincere faith in what they are preaching. 52 Miller says the most important question to ask about preachers is, "Are the preacher[s] and Christ walking as one through daily life? ... [The] pastor[s] must know God."53 Robert Farrar Capon calls this, "A passion for the Passion. A passion of the preacher's heart for Jesus himself--a wild romance with the Person for the incarnate Word who reigns in death at the roots of the being of every creature, bar none.

"54 Preachers are far more likely to win the lost if they are humble, transparent, sincere, loving, and passionate about the Lord they preach. Holy Spirit Empowered Several writers identify the Holy Spirit's work as the most important element of a sermon. As Jerry Vines tells Michael Duduit, "The preacher who is walking with God has a communicative tool that is unavailable to any other 51 Ronald Allen, 223-225. 52 Al Fasol "Preaching Evangelistically with Biblical Authority," Al Fasol et al; Rainier, 62. 53 Miller, 7. 54 Robert Farrar Capon, The Foolishness of Preaching (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998), 9.

70 communicator on earth-and that is the power of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit can take a stumbling, stammering preacher's message and uses it to bring about miraculous change. "55 Even revisionary theologian and homiletician Ronald Allen acknowledges, HThe Holy Spirit is a partner in the preaching conversation."56 Martoia reports that churches that are effective in bringing postmodems to faith deliberately mediate a connection with God through deeply moving spiritual experiences. 57 Several postmodern preachers focus on creating spiritual environments through visual images, creative experiences, physical objects, and ancient liturgical practices.58 Johnston says, "Preachers must help listeners re grasp the spiritual that is all around us.

"59 Randy Hurst points out the Apostle Paul urged his readers to pray for his preaching because he understood that preaching is a spiritual event, that God can affect its effectiveness, and prayer moves him to make it more effective. 60 Gaines says that worship services should not be designed to attract people but ''the manifest presence of God. When He 55 Duduit, Preaching with Power, 204. 56 Ronald Allen, 121. 57 Martoia, 135. 58 For examples of this see Martoia 130-143; Dan Kimball, "Preaching in the Emerging Church: An Interview with Dan Kimball," Preaching 20 (Nov-Dec 2004): 9; Eric Landstrom, .. Postmodern Worship Needs," http://www.ovrlnd.com/GeneralInformation/ Postmodern_ Worship.html (accessed 23 October 2004). 59 Johnston, 45. 60 Randy Hurst, "Cross Culture: Communicating Christ Clearly to a Secular World," Enrichment 4 (Summer 1999): 56.

71 ~shows up' He will attract the people.''61 Honeycutt advocates providing room for the Holy Spirit to work in every sermon. 62 Will Willimon goes so far as to say, "If there is no Holy Spirit, if Jesus has not been raised from the dead, then our preaching is doomed to fall on deaf ears. "63 Conclusion More than a dozen major

books and hundreds of articles on preaching are published every year. Although a complete review of all of these writings in the last decade was impossible, the major works on preaching, especially those targeting evangelistic preaching, reveal harmony in some specific areas. Current preaching experts tend to call for evangelistic sermons to include: I) biblical, Christ-centered content, 2) relevant to unbelieving listeners, preached with 3) persuasive appeal, using 4) engaging illustrations and 5) dynamic delivery, spoken by an 6) authentic preacher, who is 7) empowered by the Holy Spirit. 61 G. ames, 4. 62 Honeycutt, 152. 63 William H. Willimon, The Intmsive Word (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1994), 22.

## 4. Biblical, Christ-Centered Content Relevance Persuasive Appeal Engaging Illustrations Dynamic Delivery Authenticity Holy Spirit Empowered Conclusion 5. Preaching Lessons From Psychology's Elaboration Likelihood Model Of Persuasion

This chapter will show how the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) of persuasion developed and tested by academic psychologists supports a model of evangelistic preaching characterized by: I) biblical, Christ-centered content, 2) relevant to unbelieving listeners, preached with 3) persuasive appeal, using 4) engaging illustrations and 5) dynamic delivery, spoken by an 6) authentic preacher, who is 7) empowered by the Holy Spirit. This chapter will begin by briefly explaining the theory and concepts of ELM and their relevance to evangelistic preaching. It will then describe how ELM supports each of the seven characteristics of effective preaching to reach unbelievers. It is important to clarify that ELM is a secular theory of academic psychology used to understand how persuasion happens in a variety of settings. While valuable for a study on evangelistic preaching, ELM does not expressly advocate some of the major findings from the other studies reported by this paper. In particular, ELM literature rarely refers to biblical, Christ-centered content and the work of the Holy Spirit, nor does it promote a theistic worldview. However, there are aspects of ELM that correspond to each of the seven characteristics of effective evangelistic preaching. 72

How the Elaboration Likelihood Model Works Academic social psychologists have been researching effective means of persuasion for more than half a century. Carl I. Hovland led a team of researchers in World War II seeking to find ways to better motivate large numbers of people through indoctrinational films. His ground-breaking research't published after the war in Experiments in Mass Communication, 1 launched a new field of psychological research into what persuades people. The Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) of persuasion was developed by Richard Petty and J. T. Cacioppo in 1984.The ELM, and the similar Heuristic Systems Method (HSM) developed by Shelly Chaiken and A. H. Eagly, have been the basis of the majority of persuasion studies over the past two decades. 2 Both theories assume that people make decisions by two routes. The central (ELM) or systematic (HSM) route is deliberate, cognitive, and based on a careful evaluation of the merits of an argument. The peripheral (ELM) or heuristic (HSM) route is taken when a person lacks the ability or motivation to process an argument cognitively and instead depends on simple "cues" to make a quick decision on the message's validity. Many studies since the development of these ideas have illuminated which routes are taken by different kinds of people under various circumstances and how to present persuasive 1 Carl I. Hovland, Arthur A. Lumsdaine, and Fred D. Sheffield, Experiments on Mass Communication (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1949). 2 James B. Stiff, and Paul A. Mongeau, Persuasive Communication (New York: Guilford, 2003), 233.

messages in a variety of situations. 3 Since evangelistic preaching is, by its nature, persuasive communication, the results of these studies are relevant to an ongoing effort to determine how to persuade people to come to Christ through the pulpit. Although ELM and HSM are similar theories, this chapter will use the tenninology of ELM for the sake of simplicity. According to ELM, a certain number of unbelievers in church services are likely to weigh carefully the arguments preachers include in their sermons, while the remainder will seek peripheral cues to determine whether the Gospel is true and something to which the listeners are willing to commit. These peripheral cues can be anything other than the direct arguments of the speakers.

For example, these cues can come from speakers' mannerisms or listeners' emotions. By definition, ELM functions as a continuum. In a room with hundreds of people, listeners will be at slightly different points in how likely they are to use central cognitive processing to analyze the message instead of seeking peripheral cues.4 Two factors must be present for listeners to process messages through the central route using deliberate, thoughtful evaluation of the arguments. First, they must have the ability. Listeners must fully comprehend the subject matter and the words and phrases speakers use to communicate. Listeners must have the intellectual ability to follow trains 3 Perloff, 128-142; Stiff and Mongeau, 217-235; Penny S. Visser and Joel Cooper, "Attitude Change," in The SAGE Handbook of Social Psychology, ed. Michael A. Hogg and Joel Cooper (London: SAGE Publications, 2003), 211-231. 4 Visser and Cooper, 213; Stiff and Mongeau, 218; Richard E. Petty, Pablo Brinol, and Zakary L. Tormala, "Thought Confidence as a Determinant of Persuasion: The Self-Validation Hypothesis," Journal of Personality and Social Psychology 82, no. 5 (2002): 722-741.

of thought and consider their implications. Next, they must have the motivation. Ambivalent, tired, or distracted listeners are unlikely to follow arguments but will instead look for simple peripheral cues to determine the veracity of messages. The majority of research shows that attitudes fonned as a result of central, cognitive processing are more likely to be durable than those formed through the peripheral route; however, peripheral strategies that enable listeners to access their attitudes and increase their confidence in the validity of their experiences and the message also lead to increased attitude durability. 5 The best preachers will use methods that reach those who are able and willing to receive through the central route as well as those who will depend on peripheral cues. Daniel Goleman implies this when he says, People adept at influence are able to sense or even anticipate their audience's reaction to their message and can effectively carry everyone along toward an intended goal. ... Critical in these skills is being able to notice when logical arguments are falling flat and when appeals that are more emotional may add impact. 6 Ideally, preachers speak in ways that reach as many people as possible who want and are able to take a central route to process and be persuaded by their messages, and the preachers employ peripheral cues to reach those who are unable or unwilling to process centrally. The remainder of this paper will demonstrate how the seven elements this paper claims as the characteristics of effective evangelistic preaching are in line with the concepts of ELM. One of the characteristics (biblical, Christ-centered content) aids in 5 Visser and Cooper, 215. 6 Goleman, 169.

central processing. Three of the characteristics (preachers' authenticity, dynamic delivery, and Holy Spirit empowering) increase the likelihood that those who use peripheral processing will accept preachers' messages. Three of the characteristics

(persuasive appeal, relevance, and engaging illustrations) serve a dual purpose by increasing both the likelihood of central processing and the acceptance of messages through peripheral processing. Because of this grouping, this chapter will list these seven characteristics in the above order in this section rather than the order presented in the rest of the paper. Christian faith. It naturally follows that evangelistic sermons must contain Christ-centered content. If sermons are other than Christ-centered, they cannot contain reasonable arguments to lead people to faith in Christ.

77 Several types of information can be effective in helping unbelievers centrally process the message of an evangelistic sermon. Many of these have been included in the category of "Persuasive Reasoning" in this paper, including scientific data, historical evidence, personal testimonies, metaphors and appeals to common sense. As will be shown below, all of these can help meet the standard of "infonnation with central merits relevant to the object." However, one type of information has taken precedence as a source of information about Jesus: the Bible. The New Testament contains the only recorded statements of the eyewitnesses of Jesus Christ.

It has strong documentary and historical evidence dating to the first century, and therefore meets the basic definition of evidence in a persuasive argument: "factual statements originating from a source other than the speaker, objects not created by the speaker, and opinions of persons other than the speaker that are offered in support of the speaker's claims."8 The Bible has remained the authoritative work for messages about Christ throughout Christian history. Therefore, although ELM is a secular psychological theory that does not directly address issues of faith, the application of ELM to evangelistic preaching supports the use of biblical, Christ-centered content for those who will centrally process sermons and carefully evaluate the arguments' merits before deciding for or against Christ. 8 Stiff and Mongeau, 129.

Facilitating Peripheral Processing Peripheral cues can often play a role in the decisions people make, and choosing to believe or reject the Gospel of Jesus Christ is no exception. Salesmen have been using various techniques to try to produce a nearly automatic "Yes" to their requests for generations. Robert Cialdini calls this the "Click! Whirr!" phenomenon, parodying machines that simply do what they are told without thinking about it. 9 With their association with crooked salespeople, we may be tempted to dismiss these peripheral tools in preaching altogether. Unfortunately, many charlatan evangelists have earned reputations for insincerely conning people into the faith using some of these heuristic devices. However, Bennett and Bennett point out that religious conversion often happens through a peripheral process: "Rational apologetics can be useful in effecting conversion. But it will be useful only with someone whose rational arguments express his true motivations."1° For the others, peripheral routes, when used with integrity by preachers, are essential in faith decisions for Christ. Authenticity The literature of academic psychology identifies authenticity as essential to messages' success with peripheral processors. Aristotle held that ethos ( the character of the speaker) was the most potent of all means of persuasion.11 If their audiences do not 9 Cialdini, 9-10. 10 Art and Laraine Bennett, "Conversion and the Psychology of Change," The New Oxford Review 66, no. 10 (November 1999): 33-38. 11 Stiff and Mongeau, 104.

consider preachers trustworthy, neither will they trust preachers' messages. 12 If preachers do not live in line with the Gospel, both in and out of the pulpit,

peripheral processors are unlikely to take their messages seriously. Social psychologists refer to authenticity as "credibility." Credibility is "the attitude toward a source of communication held at a given time by a receiver. "13 Although credibility is receiver-based, consistent character is essential for speakers to be credible in the eyes of their listeners. A related aspect of authenticity is the listeners' sense of speakers' authority. Decades of psychological studies, going back to Stanley Milgram in the 1960s, show that many people respond to authority without considering the message at all. 14 Preachers' authenticity and credibility in the minds of their listeners can be enhanced by preachers' expertise on the subject.

15 Sometimes, speakers undermine their own authenticity by powerless speech, for example: hedging their statements ( e.g. "I'm not really sure''), using tag questions ( e.g. "Don't you think?"), rising intonation, and hesitation. These habits of speech imply speakers are uncertain in their convictions and lack authentic faith in what they preach. Studies have shown that speakers who use powerful, confident speech bolster their authenticity and persuade their audiences more effectively. 16 12 Perloff, 164. 13 Ibid., 159. 14 Ibid., 153-158; Cialdini, 20 I. 15 Perloff, 162; Hogan, 54 and 64. 16 Kimberly A. Noels, Howard Giles, and Beth Le Poire, "Language and Communication Processes," in The SAGE Handbook of Social Psychology, ed. Michael A. Hogg and Joel Cooper (London: SAGE Publications, 2003), 241-242.

Authenticity is a hallmark of biblical preaching, and secular psychologists acknowledge the value of authenticity in persuasive communication. Dynamic Delivery The way preachers deliver their sermons may determine whether peripheral processors will accept the message, and dynamic delivery is more effective than passionless presentation. Those who are emotionally expressive are more emotionally contagious than other speakers and can influence the emotions of those around them.17 "An audience must be emotionally engaged, but mediocre presenters rarely go beyond the same dry litany of facts, however flashily displayed, and never take into account the emotional temperature of the audience."

18 Malcolm Gladwell says effective salespeople "seem to have some kind of indefinable trait, something powerful and contagious and irresistible that goes beyond what comes out of his [sic] mouth that makes people who meet him want to agree with him. It's energy. It's enthusiasm. It's charm. It's likeability. It's all those things and yet something more."19 Part of that emotional expressiveness is the rate at which preachers talk. Studies have shown that a moderately fast or fast speech rate enhances speakers' credibility and makes a strong heuristic cue for low-involvement listeners. When the moods of messages change to sensitive or intimate issues, though, a 17 Malcolm Gladwell, The Tipping Point:

How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference (Boston: Back Bay Books, 2002), 85; Goleman, 164. 18 Goleman, 173. 19 Gladwell, 73.  slower rate is usually more effective as it can show concern and empathy.20 Another important aspect of delivery is smiling. A study of network news anchors' influence on voters' actions in the 1984 Reagan/Mondale election showed that Peter Jennings' subtle smiles while talking about Reagan tipped the scales for ABC viewers.21 Pastors who are emotionally expressive and smile often during their messages are likely to be more persuasive. Holy Spirit Empowering The final type of peripheral cue is perhaps the most powerful in an evangelistic setting. Howard Gardner calls it "resonance."

22 Other writers use the terms "affect" and "feeling right. "23 A growing number of researchers have been investigating the role of non-cognitive factors in persuasion and decision making, a concept integral to the ELM and HSM persuasion theories.24 Most secular psychologists focus on the message 20 Perloff, 198-199; Hogan, 64. 21 Gladwell, 74-77. 22 Howard Gardner, Changing Minds: The Science of Changing Our Own and Other People's Minds (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 2004), 15. 23 Dolores Albaraccin and G. Tarcan Kumkale, "Affect as Information in Persuasion: A Model of Affect Identification and Discounting," Journal of Personality and Social Psychology 84, no. 3 (2003): 453-469; Joseph Cesario, Heidi Grant, and E.

Tory Higgins, "Regulatory Fit and Persuasion: Transfer from .. Feeling Right," Journal of Personality and Social Psychology 86, no. 3 (2004): 388-404. 24 Albaraccin and Kumkale, 453-454, found that people use emotions in making decisions if they believe their feelings are a sound basis for judgment. They found that people tend to use emotional affect as evidence most often when their ability and motivation to process are moderate rather than high or low. High motivation processors tend to use direct evaluation of arguments. Low motivation processors tend to dismiss emotions altogether. Cesario, Grant, and Higgins, 401, discovered this state of feeling right is more likely to occur when messages are framed in ways compatible with the regulatory fit of receivers.

They postulate some people are promotion-focused-i.e. more concerned about what can be gained-while others are prevention-focused-i.e. more fearful about what is at risk of being lost. When messages are framed in an eager (as opposed to a vigilant) way to promotion-focused people, regulatory fit occurs and recipient's mood or emotion when discussing affect, but this concept extends to other experiential ways people seek to determine the validity of an argument. 25 Gardner explains resonance this way: A view, idea, or perspective resonates to the extent that it feels right to an individual, seems to fit the current situation, and convinces the person that further considerations are superfluous. It is possible, of course, that resonance follows on the use of reason and/or research; but it is equally possible that the fit occurs at an unconscious level, and that the resonant intuition is in conflict with the more sober considerations of Rational Man or Woman.26 82 This definition matches closely with the description of religious conversion given by Kahn and Greene, Religious writers from Augustine to Eldridge Cleaver have maintained that an essential, and perhaps the essential, element in the experience of surrender [ commitment to the new faith in the conversion process] comes from outside the individual, that is, from God or the transcendent dimension of experience. This dramatic inbreaking of the transcendent, or "transforming moment," is often at the heart of surrender. 27 In other words, the most decisive element in religious conversion is not usually a cognitive evaluation of the facts or even the speaker himself, but something transcendent proposals are more likely to feel right to listeners. Chana Ullman, The Transformed Self: The Psychology of Religious Conversion (New York: Plenum, 1989), 139-147, attempted to define transcendent religious conversion experiences as "narcissistic mergers with the perfect object." Wegener and Petty, 177-210, describe how the mood or emotional state affects a message recipient at all levels of motivation and cognitive ability. Other major recent works exploring the roel of affect in persuasion include: Handbook of Affect and Social Cognition, ed. J.P. Forgas (Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum, 2001) and Handbook of Affective Sciences, ed. R. J. Davidson, K. R. Scherer, & H. H. Goldsmith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003). 25 Cesario, Grant, and Higgins, 388. 26 Gardner, 15-16. Though Gardner does not explicitly cite ELM or HSM, his

concepts are completely in line with and use the same terminology as ELM. On page 162, he asks persuaders to consider whether to use "central or peripheral routes"- the exact terminology of the core concept of ELM. 27 Peter J. Kahn and A.L. Greene, "Seeing Conversion Whole: Testing a Model of Religious Conversion," Pastoral Psychology, 53, no. 3 (January 2004): 223-258.

and experiential. Bennett and Bennett similarly point out that religious conversion can happen through "first order change" - that is central processing and cognitive evaluation of the message - but more frequently occurs as the result of the peripheral process of second order ( dramatic, seemingly illogical, but life-transforming) change. 28 In the arena of spiritual decisions, affective and transcendent experience can be powerful. It goes beyond the realm of psychology to show whether such experiences are internal emotional processes or authentic spiritual encounters. Yet in the Gospels, Jesus Christ describes the role of the Holy Spirit in effecting conversion in a way not incompatible with ELM's concept of an affective, transcendent, peripheral route of persuasion.

In John 3:5-8 (NAS), Jesus compares the Spirit's super-cognitive role in conversion to the blowing of the wind: Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be amazed that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit." Later in John's Gospel Christ again describes how the Holy Spirit works in the conversion process: "And He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment. ... But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth" (John 16:8 and 13 NAS). The Holy Sprit's role in the conversion process clearly goes beyond a central-type evaluation of the sermon's merits. ''He breaks 2s B ennett and Bennett, 33-34.

through our defenses and rationalizations and confronts us with at least a glimpse of our true selves in relation to God's standards."29 In describing his own evangelistic ministry, Paul claimed that the Holy Spirit plays a vital role in enabling peripheral processors to come to faith in Christ: My message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith would not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God. Yet we do speak wisdom among those who are mature; a wisdom, however, not of this age nor of the rulers of this age, who are passing away. (1 Cor. 2:4-6 NAS) Wisdom, as Paul describes it, requires a deliberate cognitive evaluation of the message, but the "demonstrations of the Spirit and power" would not be direct parts of the message argument according to ELM. Instead, they would serve as powerful peripheral evidence of the credibility of communicators and the validity of their messages. 30 Although the New Testament does not precisely describe how the Holy Spirit works in the conversion process, it clearly states the Spirit provides an essential and affective role in the process. ELM also does not attempt to explain spiritual experiences, yet there remains much in common with these two arenas: An affective, transcendent encounter with something beyond a listener's own central cognitive processing can lead to major attitude change such as that experienced during religious conversion. The 29 Bruce B. Barton, Philip Comfort, David R. Veerman, and Neil Wilson, Life Application Bible Commentary: John, STEP Electronic Edition, ed. Philip Comfort (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 1993). 30 Perloff, 129.

empowerment of the Holy Spirit in preaching events can produce this kind of resonance and be a powerful way to persuade peripheral processors to come to faith. Appealing to both Central and Peripheral Processors As was pointed out earlier, a person who carefully reasons through the Gospel message before making a commitment to Christ is more likely to retain that commitment. An effective preacher can increase the likelihood his congregation will cognitively evaluate his message by integrating relevance, persuasive appeal, and engaging illustrations. Even if these three things do not fully equip or motivate a listener to process a sermon centrally, they can help persuade peripheral processors if used in the right way.

Relevance Relevance of sermons helps listeners centrally process the arguments in two ways: First, preachers speak in language understood by their audiences. People can cognitively process messages only in language they understand. Next, preachers demonstrate how messages apply and can benefit listeners' lives. Claypool and colleagues discovered that the personal relevance of a message greatly increases the likelihood of central processing. 31 Gladwell confirms that listeners are more likely to consider seriously relevant messages than those lacking application in their lives. 32 Darke 31 Heather M. Claypool, Diane M. Mackie, Teresa Garcia-Marques, Ashley Mcintosh, and Ashton Udall, '"The Effects of Personal Relevance and Repetition on Persuasive Processing," Social Cognition 22, no. 3 (2004): 310-335. 32 Gladwell, 98.

and Chaiken demonstrates that listener consider more seriously messages benefiting their self-interests. 33 Peripheral processors are more likely to consider preachers and their messages relevant if they find preachers likeable. If audiences like speakers, they are more apt to like their messages even if they fail to consider all of its implications. Likeable speakers make I isteners feel good, and those good feelings usually transfer to speakers' messages. 34 Speakers can increase their likeability factor by demonstrating authentic concern for their listeners through the relevance of their messages.

35 Speakers who are similar to listeners also demonstrate their relevance to their listeners. Similarity builds rapport and promotes positive responses to persuasion, especially when the similarity directly relates to the message and deals with personal and emotional decisions. 36 This certainly includes most spiritual commitments. Preachers who can tell their personal stories in ways to which their listeners can relate may be more effective at leading listeners to Christ. Persuasive Appeal Central processors, by definition, evaluate arguments presented by preachers. The argument forms the basis of the persuasive appeal in any kind of persuasive 33 Peter R. Darke, and Shelly Chaiken, "The Pursuit of Self-Interest: Self-Interest Bias in Attitude Judgment and Persuasion." Journal of Personality and Social Psychology 89, no. 6 (2005): 864. 34 Perloff, 168. 35 Hogan, 26. 36 Cialdini, 176; Goleman, 170; Hogan, 29; Perloff, 169.

communication. In their most common and basic form effective arguments consist of claims connected by good warrants to solid evidence.37 The claims are the conclusions of the arguments and the primary points preachers want their listeners to accept. The warrants make logical connections between the evidence and the claims and explain how the evidence helps prove the claims.38 For sermons to meet these criteria, preachers must be clear and focused in their presentations, with as little extraneous material as possible. Every claim in effective arguments must be

tied to quality evidence with good warrants. Although, as noted above, biblical material is often the best evidence, other types of evidence can also strengthen the persuasive appeal of sermons.

Statistics can serve as good evidence if used properly.39 Vivid testimonies and real-life stories can also be effective, when properly warranted to the claims of messages. 40 As will be demonstrated below, engaging illustrations can also serve as this kind of narrative evidence. A combination of well-used statistics and narrative evidence is recommended for evangelistic sermons. Some types of persuasive appeal are more effective with peripheral processors than central processors. Some peripherally-processing listeners use the number of arguments or the amount of evidence in favor of a claim as a peripheral cue for speakers' 37 Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams, The Craft of Research, 2d ed. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2003), 114. 38 Gardner, 15. 39 Perloff, 184; Gardner, 16. 40 Perloff, 182.

credibility and messages' validity.41 Too many arguments, especially weak ones, however., can be counterproductive for the central processors in the crowd and may undermine the credibility and authenticity of the speakers in the eyes of central processors. 42 Since any Sunday service will likely have both central and peripheral processors present, preachers should use a reasonable number of solid arguments to reach both groups. In some cases, evangelistic preachers may find emotional appeals effective at persuading peripherally processing people to come to faith. Effective speakers can provoke powerful feelings of fear or guilt that can motivate listeners to take action. Cialdini calls the most common form of fear appeal "scarcity." When people perceive a limited availability of something, their desire for it is often increased. One application of the scarcity principle is the deadline tactic. Salesmen high pressure their customers with warnings like, "This deal is only good today."43 Some evangelistic crusades incorporate the deadline tactic to motivate people to respond to altar calls, "You don't know whether you' II die on your way home tonight and you may not have time to get right with God. So, come forward now!" Fear appeals work only if they nudge people into danger control and motivate them to change their at-risk attitudes or behaviors. Often, however, people move into fear control mode. In this case, listeners try only to eliminate the emotion of 41 Ibid., 180; Gladwell, 70. 42 Perloff, 180. 43 Cialdini, 207-209.

fear without taking action on its cause.44 For example, unbelievers frightened at the thought of eternity in hell during evangelistic services, may leave services as quickly as possible and swear never to return to church because of the negative feelings they felt. Such people might never respond to the message that provoked the fear. Fear appeals also may fail completely because they never arouse the desired emotion nor motivate the desired result.45 Persuasive speakers may try to arouse guilt in an attempt to motivate changes in attitudes and behaviors. Cognitive Dissonance, a theory of persuasion popular in the 1950s, incorporates guilt appeals.46 In essence, it states, "Once we make a choice or take a stand we will encounter personal and interpersonal pressures to behave consistently with that commitment. "47 Many salespeople try to use cognitive dissonance to change peoples' minds through the "Low Ball Technique." Persuaders get their targets to make public commitments to something with which targets may disagree.

Persuaders point out the hypocrisy if targets fail to act in accordance with their newly stated views.48 Preachers can incorporate cognitive dissonance in preaching

if they get their audience to agree that certain behaviors are bad or good and then point out how the audience fails to live up to that standard. Preachers can then point out how Christ died to forgive such sin and ask the people to repent and believe. 44 Perloff, 185. 45 Stiff and Mongeau, 147. 46 Perloff, 223; Stiff and Mongeau, 80; Visser and Cooper, 219. 47 Cialdini, 53. 48 Ibid., 88-89; Hogan, 91.

Reciprocity is another tool salespeople use to generate feelings of guilt and obligation to make a sale. Salespeople give items of perceived value to their customers without charge in the hope that a strong sense of obligation will motivate the receivers to purchase the items the salesperson wants to sell. 49 If evangelists seek to use reciprocity, perhaps they could point out how Jesus has already died for the listeners' sins. The gift has already been given. If they reject Christ's gracious offer of salvation, they are ungracious people and Christ's efforts for them will have been wasted. More recent studies, however, found that guilt appeals, like fear appeals, arouse a diversity of emotions and rarely lead to desired attitude or behavior changes among people today. 50 Another peripheral cue that could lead some people to convert to Christianity is social proof.

Social proof exists in the presence of several others who embrace the message communicated and can wield powerful influence.51 In a study of what psychological factors led people to convert religions, Chana Ullman found the presence of a group of believers played a significant role for nearly half of the converts she studied. 52 Billy Graham and other evangelists often ask their altar workers to leave their seats and come to the front when they give salvation invitations. The movement of the altar workers gives the impression of an enormous response and can influence listeners who are wrestling with making a faith commitment.53 Some churches encourage the power of social proof through ''call and response." The congregation becomes verbally involved in the sermon with responses like, "Amen!" and "Preach it!" To newcomers this may be evidence that the rest of the congregation embraces the message the preacher is speaking. This can be a strong peripheral cue that the message is valid. In more restrained churches, pastors can still point to the number of people involved in the church or Christianity in general as social proof.

Testimonies shared by congregants can wield this kind of influence. Group involvement may solidify the commitment of converts and increase the likelihood their faith commitments will last. Gladwell presents John Wesley as an effective example of leading lasting religious change this way: "Wesley realized that if you wanted to bring about a fundamental change in people's belief and behavior, a change that would persist and serve as an example to others, you needed to create a community around them, where those new beliefs could be practiced and expressed and nurtured. "

54 Emotional appeals have been shown to have some effect on peripheral processors in the past, but often produce negative results on central processors because of 52 Ullman, 78. 53 Cialdini, 100. 54 Gladwell. 172-173.

Their perceived manipulative nature. Preachers should use these emotional appeals sparingly and with care; however, studies have shown both central and peripheral processors are more likely to accept the message of persuasive communication when it is has a definite conclusion and call for a specific commitment.55 Rather than letting listeners determine their own ending to a sennon, preachers may be more effective when they invite their listeners to respond to sermons through altar

calls, raised hands, or faith commitments to Christ. Engaging Illustrations Perhaps the most powerful tool in helping potential converts centrally process the Gospel message is the use of engaging illustrations. Scientific studies have shown that metaphors and illustrations help people who otherwise would rely on peripheral cues to process cognitively a persuasive message for two different reasons: First, metaphors or stories dealing with subjects of interest to listeners greatly increase the probability of systematically processing messages even if the metaphors are irrelevant to the arguments.

A study that used random sports metaphors completely unrelated to the message found listeners interested in sports seriously considered the same message they would have used peripheral cues to evaluate without the athletic imagery.56 Secondly, well-used illustrations enable some people to process cognitively where they otherwise would have 55 D.J. O'Keefe, "Standpoint Explicitness and Persuasive Effect: A Meta-analytic Review of the Effects of Varying Conclusion Articulation in Persuasive Messages," Argumentation and Advocacy 34 (1997): 1-12. 56 Victor Ottati, Susan Rhoads, and Arthur C. Graesser, "The Effect of Metaphor on Processing Style in a Persuasion Task: A Motivational Resonance Model," Journal of Personality and Social Psychology 77, no. 4 ( 1999): 688 and 695.

No choice but to depend on peripheral cues. One study showed that when metaphors accurately demonstrated principles of the argument they increased listeners' ability to understand and remember the messages. 57 Emotionally-moving stories and illustrations can lead peripheral processors to accept Christ even when they have been unable to follow the complete argument of a message. Many studies have shown that persuasive messages using metaphors are more effective at changing attitudes than those without. 58 Gardner found that a story that is "simple, easy to identify with, emotionally resonant, and evocative of positive experiences" can be a positive tool to persuade a diverse group.

59 Preachers who integrate relevance, emotional appeal, and engaging illustrations may increase the likelihood people wiil use their central cognitive skills to evaluate their messages positively. Simultaneously, those who are unable or unwilling to weigh the merits of their arguments will be more likely to accept Christ because of peripheral cues. 57 S. 1. Read, I. L. Cesa, D. K. Jones, and N. L. Collins, "When is the Federal Budget Like a Baby? Metaphor in Political Rhetoric," Metaphor and Symbolic Activity 5 ( 1990): 125-149. As a case in point, one Sunday I preached on the life of Josiah but used the metaphor of"finishing the race well." I used stories and examples from my own life and others in the real world related to races to show that how people finish depends on how well they run throughout the race. The next day a young moms' study was meeting at the church. The leader has a son named Josiah but she was unable to attend the service on Sunday. Another lady in the study came up to me and expressed how much she appreciated the message the day before. The leader asked what it was about and I remarked how it was about her son's namesake. However, the lady who was in the service looked uncomprehending the relevance of the name Josiah and said, "No, it was about finishing the race." She did not remember the name of the main character in the sermon, but she had not forgotten the metaphor and its relevance to her life. 58 Perloff, 203. 59 Gardner, 82.

Conclusion Although this author is not aware of a single previous study or work that seeks to apply the findings of the Elaboration Likelihood Model or Heuristic Systems Method of persuasion psychology to preaching directly, the principles of these two

theories support the claim of this paper: preaching is more likely to persuade unbelievers to come to faith in Christ when it is characterized by: 1) biblical, Christ-centered content, 2) relevant to unbelieving listeners, preached with 3) persuasive appeal, using 4) engaging illustrations and 5) dynamic delivery, spoken by an 6) authentic preacher, who is 7) empowered by the Holy Spirit.

## CONCLUSION

This paper has shown how evangelistically effective preaching tends to be characterized by: 1) biblical, Christ-centered content, 2) relevant to unbelieving listeners, preached with 3) persuasive appeal, using 4) engaging illustrations and 5) dynamic delivery, spoken by an 6) authentic preacher, who is 7) empowered by the Holy Spirit. This conclusion summarizes the results of the analyses that led to these seven characteristics and describe how preachers might implement these principles in their preaching.

### Chapter 1 served as the paper's introduction.

It provided a story to show anecdotally how much of a difference the effectiveness of preaching makes on the likelihood of an unbelieving listener coming to faith in Christ and returning to church. The first chapter laid out the problem of preaching in America today and presented the methodology for the five analyses that produced the findings of this paper. It also defined relevant terms for the paper. Chapter 2 analyzed the preaching of Jesus, Peter, and Paul as recorded in the New Testament. used New Testament accounts and the conclusions of Bible scholars and historical researchers to demonstrate how the preaching of the three demonstrated the seven characteristics of effective evangelistic preaching. Chapter 3 demonstrated how the preaching of John Chrysostom, Girolamo Savonarola, George 95

Whitefield, and Charles Spurgeon also demonstrated the seven characteristics of effective evangelistic preaching. Chapter 4 examined the writings of a large number of today's preaching experts, and showed how the seven characteristics of effective evangelistic preaching harmonize their theories. Chapter 5 showed how the Elaboration Likelihood Method of persuasion as developed by academic psychology supports a model of evangelistic preaching consisting of the seven characteristics of effective evangelistic preaching. Appendix B analyzed the results of an empirical study of evangelistically effective and ineffective pastors, and their preaching illustrated the seven characteristics that tend to distinguish effective preaching to reaching unbelievers. Improving the Evangelistic Effectiveness of Preaching Today Nearly every preacher can apply these seven characteristics.

This section will give some specific suggestions for pastors who want to see more people reached through their preaching to actualize the characteristics. The characteristics must be tailored to the unique cultural issues of different communities by pastors who know their communities and listeners; however, the principles behind the characteristics can be applied in any church. Biblical, Christ Centered Content For a sermon to be biblical and Christ-centered, the main principles the sermon communicates should be drawn from the Bible and seek to direct the listeners to Christ. Long says, Preaching is biblical whenever the preacher allows a text from the Bible to serve as the leading force in shaping the content and purpose of the sermon. More dynamically, biblical preaching involves telling the truth about-bearing witness to-what happens when a biblical text intersects some aspect of our life and exerts a claim upon us.

1 This means that some Scripture should be included in every message and specifically support any conclusions preachers try to make. The Bible should be interpreted and applied in harmony with good exegesis of the original intent of the passage. Trask says that when preachers seek to persuade people to come to faith, they should "allow 97 integrity with impartiality to guide the use of the text."

2 This means doing adequate study to ensure preachers are not reading incorrect messages into the text. The Bible text(s) can interact with the structure of sennons in a variety of ways. Among today's preaching experts, the starting place for the message showed more disagreement and emotion than any other issue. Many seminary professors and several pastors urged the use of expositional sermons at all times. They express concern that sermons that begin at the point of felt needs of the audience with Scripture as an after thought are like "cotton candy that appeals to people's hungers but possesses no value as food. "

3 Bartel explains how ex positional sermons work: "Expository preaching proclaims the message of a passage of Scripture to a contemporary audience in such a way that I Long, 48. 2 Trask, 175. 3 Haddon W. Robinson, "The Relevance of Expository Preaching," Preaching to a Shifting Culture: 12 Perspectives on Communicating that Connects, ed. Scott Gibson (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2004 ), 82. People hear what a passage of Scripture says, identify with the situation it addresses, become aware of how it applies to their lives, and are led to a decision."

4 On the other hand, several pastors whose ministries have led thousands to faith in Christ in recent years lean more heavily on topical sermons than exegetical ones. Rick Warren, Joel Osteen, Andy Stanley, Ed Young Jr., and Craig Groeschel do topical series and deliver them when unchurched guests are most likely to attend.

5 These preachers argue their sermons are no less biblical because their outlines are created to fit topics rather than from the text.

6 Topical sermons can provide a broader view of the whole Bible's teaching on a topic and often work better in teaching practical life skills. Hunter supports this approach on a list of "Ten ways that apostolic churches communicate the Gospel;" the first item is, "They begin where people are-their felt needs and wants."

7 The study of actual preachers discussed in appendix B supports this view. Nearly 60 percent of evangelistically effective preachers used topical sermons while 70 percent of the comparison group used exegetical sermons. Barna' s research also supports the use of topical messages rather than book series.

8 The people Rainier interviewed disagreed, and he advocates using exegetical series.

9 The strong disagreement by these two researchers is indicative of the broader 99 disagreement among preaching experts. Some experts advocate a variety of approaches. Nearly all of the New Testament sermons analyzed quoted from several Old Testament texts. Although Peter, in Acts 2, does some exegesis work on Psalm 16 and 110 and Joel 2, his Pentecost sermon's outline was not driven by any one of these texts. His exegesis simply supported the topical claim that Old Testament prophesied the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and the resurrection of Christ. The historical preachers analyzed used a variety of approaches to the text. Chrysostom

nearly always preached exegetically, Savonarola used a systematic series approach to determine his preaching texts, but more often than not interpreted his texts allegorically. Spurgeon and Whitefield preferred textual sermons but did not preach systematically through books of the Bible.

10 Contemporary preachers who want to reach unbelievers will do well to consider the education level and spiritual experiences of their listeners in deciding how to approach the biblical content of their sermons. To ensure their sermons remain Christ-centered, pastors should make sure they points their listeners to Jesus in every sermon. Dresselhaus writes, "The preaching of 8 Barna, 103. Unchurched people in Barna's survey much preferred sermons dealing with issues and concerns people face in their lives (44% strongly, 19% somewhat) over book studies with verse by verse explanations ( 15% strongly, 6% somewhat). 9 Rainier, 45 and 58. 100 Jesus Christ and him crucified must form the nucleus o aut enttc proc amat1on.

Ven an exegetical study of the Old Testament can point to Jesus as the fulfillment of the passages pastors use. Pastors should avoid the temptation of preaching sermons solely providing psychological solutions to common problems without directing people to Jesus. Preachers should communicate the hope and grace Jesus offers in every message if they want to see unbelieving listeners respond to the Gospel. Relevance Though the principle of relevance is timeless, its very nature means that its application is constantly changing.

Chris Altrock uses the metaphor of boarding an airplane in the US-a land where he speaks the language, eats the food, and knows some of the history-and landing in Amsterdam where he finds himself surrounded by people speaking a language he does not understand, eating food he cannot pronounce, holding values he does not share, and having a history foreign from his own. This, he says, is what has happened in the postmodern revolution of thought.

11 The non-Christian world has changed radically in the last few decades. Relevant preaching in 2007 is very different from relevant preaching in 1977. Pastors who want to see the unchurched in their communities come to faith need to understand how this cultural change has affected the lives and understandings of those outside the church. Spending time with unbelievers, 10 Dresselhaus, 79. 11 Chris Altrock, Preaching to Pluralists (St. Louis, MO: Chalice, 2004), 7. Listening to their concerns, understanding their ways of viewing the world, and even learning their ways of communicating is essential to communicating relevantly.12 101 Altrock gives pastors a head start on this process for those whose context includes preaching to postmoderns by identifying seven characteristics of postmodemism and prescribing two ways preachers can address each:

l) Postmodems are uninformed about Christianity, so preachers should not use words and stories that presume knowledge of the Bible but instead teach them the basics of the Gospel.

2) Postmodems are interested in spiritual things, so preachers should connect their listeners with God and equip them to experience God's presence on a daily basis.

3) Postmodems have an anti-institutional bias, so preachers should point out the benefits of a faith community and help them experience those benefits first hand.

4) Postmoderns tend to be pluralistic, so preachers should reveal the inclusive nature of the Gospel, while revealing the uniqueness of Jesus and the Gospel and pointing out the fallacies of pluralism.
5) Postmoderns are usually pragmatic, so preachers should show how the Gospel relates to everyday concerns and offers a better life before death, not just after.
6) Postmoderns are relational, so sermons should reveal the community the church offers, bring practical help for relationships, and connect the listeners in meaningful relationships with other Christians.
7) Postmoderns are experiential, so sermons should enable postmodern listeners to experience the Gospel 12 Bacik and Anderson, 110.

Through inductive and narrative preaching, testimonies, multi-sensory methods and experience. It is important for preachers to address issues their listeners face and clearly show how their messages are relevant to their listeners' lives. Warren writes, By beginning with people's needs when you preach, you immediately gain the attention of your audience .... Three things always make it past your reticular activating system: things you value; things that are unique; and things that threaten you .... While sharing the Good News in a unique or threatening way can get attention of unbelievers, I believe showing its value to people is most consistent with how Christ taught. While most unbelievers aren't looking for truth, they are looking for relief. This gives us the opportunity to interest them in truth.

14 Even spiritual issues such as salvation, eternity, and spiritual growth can be connected to peoples' experience of peace and well-being in this life. Bacik and Anderson list several "great questions" that people, including unbelievers, often ask that, when addressed in sermons, connect with their hearts and lives: Who am I? What am I meant to do with my life? How can I experience deep, loving relationships? What should I do for meaningful work in the world? How do I support my family financially, yet not make money too important? How do I create a beautiful marriage? How do I raise my children in the best manner possible? Why do evil and suffering exist? How do I handle conflict, forgiveness, failure, sin, and other shadow sides of being human? How do I get through life's difficult crises?

How do I create a healthy relationship with time? Is it wrong to be wealthy or want to be wealthy? How can I celebrate a responsible and enjoyable sexuality? 13 Altrock, 11-12. These seven characteristics and Altrock's suggested responses form the outline for his book. 14 Rick Warren, "A Primer on Preaching like Jesus," Rick Warren's Ministry Toolbox (Online Resource), (#47), April 10, 2012, What is happiness and how does one find it? Why is it often so fleeting?

Who or what is God? How can I be more aware of or connected to God? What happens when we die?15 103 Preachers should clearly demonstrate how the messages they preach relate to the lives of their listeners (normally both pre-Christian and Christian) early in the messages to engage the attention and interest of their listeners. Jud Wilhite pastors Central Christian Church in Las Vegas. In June 2006, he preached a message series with the title ''Lost'' derived from the popular television series. One of these messages was entitled "Secrets." To demonstrate the relevance of his message early on, Wilhite described the postsecrets.com phenomenon.

Tens of thousands of people have sent in post cards containing secrets they have never shared, and the anonymous postcards are published on a popular website.

Wilhite showed a video of the cards early in his message to encourage his listeners to think about their own secrets. He followed the video with the statement, "We all have secrets." This is a good lead into the message's theme of forgiveness, and it hit people at a place of deeply felt needs. It spoke to both Christians and the uncommitted. Finally, he identified himself as needing forgiveness. That increased his humility and credibility and his identification with unbelieving listeners. After explaining sin and Christ's forgiveness, he concluded the message by giving several examples of common secret sins people by introducing each with the statement, "In a room this size, there is a man who. " After sharing many examples that were specific enough to be engaging, and general enough to apply to his listeners, Wilhite invited people to fill out 15 Bacik and Anderson, 61.

Their own secret cards and drop them in trashcans on the way out as a visual reminder of Jesus' forgiveness of their sins.16 One way preachers can demonstrate their messages' relevance to unbelievers is to identify with and specifically address their unbelieving audiences. Mark Driscoll pastors Mars Hill Church in Seattle. This church has been exceptionally effective at reaching postmodems in a culture typically hostile to what it sees as an intolerant evangelical Christianity. Mars Hill has not compromised the message of Christ to reach this group; however, Driscoll deliberately identifies with his unchurched listeners. In a message on 1 Corinthians 2, Driscoll began, "If you are like me ... before I became a Christian, I thought Christians were some of the weirdest, freakiest, nut jobs on the planet-social outcasts and just the weirdest people I had ever met.

Some of you who are still non-Christians are, like, 'I know!"' Driscoll went on in detail and with humor to describe his negative early impressions and experiences with Christians. Many unbelievers in his congregation that day likely shared these impressions. As Driscoll shared his journey from skepticism to faith in Christ, he established a common road that motivated and equipped unbelieving listeners to make the same journey. 17 Some basic principles of relevant communication are easy to overlook but essential for effective preaching to unchurched people. Preachers need to avoid churchy jargon and terms that those without church experience are unlikely to understand. They 16 Jud Wilhite, .. Lost: Secrets," (sermon, Central Christian Church, Las Vegas, NV, June 11, 2012), http://www.theholyseedchurch.com (accessed 15 June 2012). 17 Mark Driscoll, "Boasting about Jesus," (sermon, Mars Hill Church, Seattle, January 29, 2006), http://www.theholyseedchurch.com (accessed 5 September 2012).

Should avoid using words that imply everyone in the room should already be familiar with the Bible. For example, pastors who say something like, "Of course you know the story of Joseph" insults those who have never read Genesis. Pastors should be careful to be inclusive in their address and avoid insulting unbelievers unnecessarily. One comparison preacher in the empirical study actually began his sermon with disparaging remarks about non-Christians in America. All of the analyses showed relevant sermons are more effective than irrelevant ones. Preachers' efforts at understanding the unchurched and learning to communicate in a relevant way will likely bear much fruit in reaching unbelievers for Christ. Persuasive Appeal To make sermons persuasive in leading unbelievers to faith, preachers should find simple~ clear approaches and structure their sermons accordingly. They should use a wide variety of good quality evidence to support their points and, in most cases, call their listeners to specific commitments.

The majority of the experts said sermons targeting unbelievers should stay simple, to the point, and easy to understand. Even many who advocate exegesis do not recommend deep teaching in weekend sermons. Duduit, editor of Preaching journal, Miller, and Stanley and Jones strongly suggest having one simple idea in every message.18 Miller points out that nearly all other public events use one-point kind of listener participation in sermons to connect with postmodern listeners. He suggests [M]onitoring the reaction and resistance of your congregation with feed-back loops like "I see some smiles" or "I feel some scowls out there. " Non-threatening interactivity includes call-backs like "Will you repeat after me?" or "Tum to your neighbor and say, " or safe karaoke sermons like Hletters from home," pageants, or dramatic monologues and dialogues ("duet sermons"). Or it can include risky karaoke sermons like "brown bag sermons," mediated sermons, talk-back sessions, sermon seminars, or ... "roundtabling" where the dynamics of roundtable conversation actually midwife the sennon.22 107 Several of the target preachers evaluated for the empirical study described in appendix B integrated these kinds of interactive elements-especially the call-backs.

The writers consulted for chapter 4 called for a variety of logical approaches to help preachers convince the unconvinced. Several writers advocated Socratic dialogue. Jeffrey Arthurs calls this a "two-sided argument." To bring listeners along in the process and help their faith development, preachers explore other explanations of reality and spiritual issues. Preachers present and analyze multiple perspectives on an issue, and anticipate listeners' objections.23 Honeycutt encourage preachers to raise doubts in cynical listeners about the listeners' own doubts. If skeptics can begin to doubt their skepticism as much as they doubt the Christian faith, they are near to the Kingdom of God.24 22 S weet, And Glory Crowns the Mercy Seat, 13. 23 Jeffrey D. Arthurs. The Postmodern Mind and Preaching." Preaching to a Shifting Culture: I 2 Perspectives on Communicating that Connects. Scott Gibson, ed., 191-192; Johnston, 150-151. 24 Honeycutt, 94-95.

Loscalzo and Johnston suggest structuring sermons inductively. In past centuries, when most people accepted the veracity of the Scriptures and the authority of pastors, deductive approaches worked. Today's listeners, however, often accept their own experience and ideas as the ultimate authority. If preachers can connect with their I isteners at the point of their experience, they can then lead listeners to the bigger story of Scriptural truth their messages seek to convey. The inductive process naturally provides a suspense that postmoderns are accustomed to in the entertainment world and develops a greater desire to hear the conclusion.25 Loscalzo, however, cautions against protracted arguments because postmodems tend to think mosaically-always aware of the whole while looking at the component parts-rather than linearly.26 Sweet says Postmodemism demands going a step beyond inductive sermons to abductive sermons. "Abduction is 'a feeling kind of knowing' not sufficient in and of itself but indispensable in the knowledge of truth. It is a more basic form of reasoning than deduction or induction because it is the function of induction and deduction to test abductions and because it is sensory knowing."27 He urges preachers to make their sermons as "EPIC" (Experiential, Participatory, Image-rich, Connective) as possible.28 Preachers should strive to integrate a wide variety of good quality evidence. In addition to the Bible, preachers can use statistical and scientific data, quotes from experts, 25 Loscalzo, 39-40; Johnston, 151-155. 26 Loscalzo, 118. 27 Sweet, And Gl01y Crowns the Mercy Seat, 3. 28 Ibid., 5-25.

testimonies from real people, and real world examples of sermons' principles to help convince listeners of the messages' truth. A majority of the preachers evaluated for appendix B used common sense and everyday experiences most listeners could understand to prove their points. Mike Hosueholder pastors the Lutheran Church of Hope in Des Moines, Iowa. His church has experienced explosive growth in recent years-most of it from previously unchurched people. For their Easter 2006 message, the church rented the largest arena in the city. Householder presented a variety of types of evidence in that message. He did some biblical exegesis on the resurrection texts and added some historical insight. He used archaeological and scientific data to refute some common arguments against the resurrection of Christ. He had a doctor from the congregation share what a crucifixion victim goes through physically and how the Gospel of John's account of Jesus' crucifixion accurately describes that medical condition.

A couple from the church shared testimony of how their lives had changed since they came to faith in Christ. Householder explained the relevance of the resurrection to the lives of his listeners, and he concluded the message with a specific and passionate call to faith in Christ. Householder's faith in Jesus and love for all the people was evident through an emotional breaking in his voice.29 It is important to call listeners to a spiritual commitment at the end of the message. On some occasions, a sermon's topic may not lend itself to a specific call to faith or action, but in most cases, people are far more likely to experience life change if 29 Mike Householder, "Rolling Stones,'' (sermon, Lutheran Church of Hope, Des Moines, IA, April 16, 2012), http://www.theholyseedchurch.com (accessed 20 April 2012).

Experiences" in their sermons improved preachers' effectiveness.31 Having other people share their stories can move unbelievers' emotions and encourage them to respond to sermons. When testimonies are live, pastors should coach those who share to make sure their stories are short yet effective. Many churches use video to share these kinds of testimonies to enhance the experience and control timing. Sometimes pastors may hear stories of real people in their congregations that involve important issues, yet are far too personal or embarrassing to be shared by name. In some cases, it may be appropriate to build composite stories that deal with real issues in a natural way while protecting the anonymity of the sources.32 Whether a story is personal or not, it is important that it relate directly to the main point of the sermon. 33 Metaphors and verbal images can help listeners understand and remember a sermon. Allen says, ''An image is a word-picture. When it is spoken, it evokes or creates a scene in the mind, heart, and will of the listeners. An image can be very short, or it can be developed in several sentences, even paragraphs." An entire sermon can be built around a metaphor. The Bible texts often use metaphors and images to communicate spiritual truths. Preachers can adapt biblical metaphors and images. For example, Bob Marvel preached a message using water as a metaphor for sex derived from Proverbs 5: 15. After explaining God's standard for purity, Marvel took a bottle of water with some dirt and cat litter added. It provided a tangible illustration for how damaging a little bit of 31 Bacik and Anderson, 17. 32 Ibid., 64. 33 Ibid., 127.

Mpurity can be. He closed with an invitation for everyone to take a bottle of pure water on the way out. He even addressed those who did not accept his message specifically and ask them to take a bottle anyway and read the label. For those who accepted the challenge of his message, the bottle was to represent a lifelong commitment to sexual purity. 34 Pastors can also look for non-biblical metaphors

and images to help their listeners understand and implement the truths of their messages. For example, Wayne Cordeiro preached an entire sermon around a metaphor derived from a harbor in Italy with one narrow safe access from the sea that required the harbormaster to place three separate lights on the hillside above the harbor. Only when a ship's captain could see all three lights in one line did he know it was safe to entire the harbor.

Cordeiro went on to equate those three lights to three attitudes his listeners need to have aligned in their hearts to be able to enter with Jesus.35 Humor can be a very effective way to keep listeners engaged. The Bacik and Anderson study identified humor as the seventh most important factor in distinguishing effective preachers. The effective preachers in this paper's empirical study used humor more effectively than the ineffective preachers. Some of the experts consulted for chapter 4 caution against certain types of humor, however. Miller warns against jokes, and instead advocates light-hearted humor from real Iife.36 Pastors should avoid humor that 34 Bob Marvel, .. Let's Talk about Sex I," (sermon, Cornwall Church, Bellingham, WA, March 26, 2006), http://www.comwallonline.com (accessed 20 April 2006). 35 Wayne Cordeiro, .. Palm Sunday," (sermon, New Hope Christian Fellowship, Honolulu, April 9, 2012), http://www.theholyseedchurch.com (accessed 20 April 2012). 36 Miller, 105-106 and 183.

Insults groups of people or individuals; however, it may be beneficial for preachers to make fun of themselves. 37 As long as self-depreciating humor does not undermine their credibility, well-told personal stories of pastors' mistakes and difficulties can help on many fronts: People more readily identify with the pastors. Laughter makes listeners feel better about the church experience. Pastors seem more humble and authentic. People understand the grace of Christ can apply to them. This kind of humor may move listeners emotionally to be more ready to respond to the Gospel. Another kind of humor used by the majority of effective preachers in the empirical study is off-the-cuff comments, usually one or two sentences thrown out at various times during messages. Stand up comedians, television situation comedies, and humorous movies use off-the-cuff comments to keep people laughing. Off-the-cuff comments include: plays on words (for example, Mark Driscoll's, "We put the fun back into /undamentalism"38), use of irony and appropriate exaggeration (for example, David McDonald describing his baptism,

"It was my dad who was able to baptize me, holding me under for eight or ten minutes before letting me up for air"39), and preachers making fun of their own verbal mistakes. Timing and use of vocal tone can enhance the delivery of all humor and especially these one-liners. Some people are naturally gifted at this kind 37 Earl Creps, "Text Meets Text: Preaching with Real-Time Feedback," (article on-line), http://mondaymorninginsight.com/index. php/site/comments/text_ meets_ text_preaching_ with_real_time_feedback/ (accessed 19 February 2007), promotes the value of self-deprecating humor and says, "Humor can have no victim but me." 38 Mark Driscoll, "Under Authority like Christ," (sermon, Mars Hill Church, Seattle, July 19, 2006, 9 AM service). 39 David McDonald, "Insurresurection," (sermon, Westwinds, Jackson, MI, April 16, 2012), http://www.theholyseedchurch.com (accessed 20 April 2012), of humor, but if pastors study other effective preachers and comedians, they can develop comedic timing and sensitivity to the opportunities for off-the-cuff comments. 40 Mark Driscoll specifically studied stand up comedians to improve his humor delivery.41 An example of the good use of comedic timing is Bob Marvel who completed the introduction of his sermon on sex

by saying, "So we're going to talk about sex" as if he. were going to continue the sentence. Instead, he paused for about two seconds then said, "So, I think we ought to pray." His tone of voice communicated that he understood this would be a tough subject for everyone and that they needed God's help.

The suspense his brief pause brought was resolved with humor through his light-hearted request for prayer. Later in the same message, he quoted from Genesis 2, "Adam said, 'You are bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh."' Then he said, "That's Hebrew for, 'Hubba-hubba, ding-ding, she's got everything! "'42 Although these one-liners sound off-the-cuff, preachers can write them into their messages in advance to keep their listeners engaged throughout their sermons. Creativity and variety in illustrations and the means of presentation can help engage listeners and maintain their interest and attention. Sweet says such creative variety is essential in this postmodern world: "To embrace participation is to embrace imperfection over control; to leave lots of breathing room for God's Spirit to work. It is worship that's more slot machine than gumball machine: worship where you never know 4° Creps says, "The optimal large-group communication genre is stand-up comedy." 41 Driscoll, Confessions, 70. 42 Marvel.

What's coming up next versus putting a quarter in and the same thing comes out except in different colors. "43 Well-illustrated messages are far more memorable and far more likely to lead to life change than those without illustrations. Dynamic Delivery Preachers who want to see people come to faith through their preaching need to ensure their deliveries are a good as possible. Natural, passionate delivery with lots of vocal variety and a positive tone using good gestures and few notes can increase the effectiveness of pastors' preaching. Preachers need to fight the urge to put on a "preaching voice." Even Holden Caulfield, the anti-hero of J. D. Salinger's classic Catcher in the Rye, hated inauthenticity: "If you want to know the truth, I can't stand ministers.

The ones I've had at every school I've gone to, they all have these Holy Joe voices when they start giving their sermons. God, I hate that. I don't see why ... they can't talk in their natural voice. They sound so phony when they talk."44 Bacik and Anderson say., "You will be more effective as a homilist when your style matches your personality, when you can be yourself in the act of sharing the good news with others. ,,4s While maintaining an authentic style, preachers should also be energetic and passionate in their delivery. Miller encourages preachers to draw energy from three sources: 1) personal interest in the subject, 2) a conscious push, and 3) the Holy Spirit's 43 Sweet, And Glory Crowns the Mercy Seat, 14. 44 J. D. Salinger, Catcher in the Rye (Boston: Little, Brown, 1951), 100. 45 Bacik and Anderson, 138.

Empowering work. 46 As the psychology analysis in chapter 5 revealed, a slightly faster than normal rate of speech helps communicate energy, passion, conviction, and expertise.47 Good vocal variety in tone, rate, and volume with good use of pauses keep a sermon interesting; however, in many American churches speakers overdo the volume and energy and rob themselves of authenticity. Significant exceptions are African American and Latin American churches that may respond well culturally to enthusiastic preaching. Preachers should also use a positive, loving tone of voice on most occasions to prevent alienating spiritual seekers. Avoid sharp and falling tones at the end of words, and instead use varying pitch. Many of the effective preachers analyzed for appendix B used vocalizations and characterizations that introduced humor and maintained interest.

The variation ranged from using different voices for different characters-including retellings of the Bible stories-to using sound effects to enhance illustrations. Preachers should develop a natural physical presence in sermon delivery. Childers asks, "Want your sermons to sail out into the listener's minds and hearts and not just dribble down the front of the pulpit? Let your body have its say."48 She suggests maximizing visual interest by moving in triangles. Preachers should save the middle front of a platform for peak moments and move in 45-degree angles on either side of that 46 Miller, 83-86. 47 See page 807. 48 Childers, 135. point. 49 One simple way preachers can improve their delivery is to smile as they speak. This can increase speakers' likeability and credibility.

50 Several experts advocate memorizing a sermon and delivering it without notes. Stanley and Jones ask why preachers would expect their congregations to remember their sermons if preachers cannot. "Constantly referring to notes communicates, 'I have not internalized this message. I want everybody else to internalize it, but I haven't. "'51 Many of the target preachers evaluated spoke from memory or used few notes. Authenticity Because preachers are major parts of their messages, their authenticity is vital to their effectiveness. Sermons must communicate pastors' humility, integrity, conviction, and love for their Lord and listeners. Several of the other six characteristics intersect here.

The content, structure, illustrations, delivery, work of the Holy Spirit, and relevance of messages cue listeners to preachers' authenticity. Huffman explains how these all cooperate: I discovered that people sense our desperate desire to apply the biblical message to ourselves and our problems prior to sharing that word with them. This builds a personal identification factor. They want to identify with the preacher who is a real person dealing with the real world in his or her own life. The hearers of the Word want to sense "believability," "credibility," and "integrity" in their preacher. Nonverbal gestures, physical bearing, eye contact, vocal variety, and the use of comic relief, all with one's normal communication style, are important to the hearer.52 49 Ibid., 142. 50 See page 78. 51 Stanley and Jones, 135. 52 Huffman, 40.

Probably the most important thing preachers can do to maintain this kind of authenticity is to stay deeply in love with Jesus Christ. It is also important to love the people who hear the sermon-both those in church every Sunday and those there for the first time. Preachers should convey a sincere love for their Lord and their listeners through their words and delivery. Preachers should also be authentically transparent about their own struggles when appropriate. Anderson says, "A preacher who can communicate a genuine sense of having wrestled with the difficulty of keeping spiritually centered in a materialistic, work-centered, time-starved culture will have listeners' full attention."53 Creps says authenticity: Seems to require a high level of spontaneity, is helped by using either no notes or a manuscript (for word control), and feels like a roller coaster ride when you 're in the middle of it. What it lacks in polish is made up for in energy, sincerity, and personal commitment. 54 Preachers should never compromise their convictions in the messages they preach. Authentic humility and conviction are powerful forces in the effort to encourage listeners to respond to gospel messages. Holy Spirit Empowering The final characteristic of effective preaching may be outside preachers' control; however, all the analyses in this paper indicate the importance of the Holy Spirit's role in 53 Bacik and Anderson, 60. 54 Creps.

Preaching. The most important thing pastors can do to increase the empowering work of the Spirit is to pray. Capon says, "You must pray if you're to be of any use to God as a preacher-or as anything else. "55 Bacik and Anderson write, "Prayer reminds us of our absolute dependence on God in carrying out the crucial preaching ministry, and it makes us more receptive to the wealth of meaning found in the Scripture passages. "56 Preachers should begin their preparation with prayer and pray throughout the process, allowing time for the Spirit to give guidance on what and how to deliver a message. Most of the experts from chapter 4 who dealt with preparation encouraged a week-long preparation process saturated in prayer to give God plenty of opportunities to speak through the process. Prayer before delivering the sermon is important, too. Adam Hamilton, pastor of one of America's largest United Methodist churches, tells of a time he spent so much time in sermon preparation, he neglected to pray.

He sensed God convict him of that as he was on his way to the first of six Christmas Eve services. He took what little time he had left to pray for those who were about to come. An hour later I got up to preach and the sermon was fine. It was well written. My presentation was okay. Yet I knew there was something missing .... So it went for the first three services .... Just before I got up to preach the fourth service I felt God speaking to me again. This time I heard the Lord say, "I let you do the first three on your own power. Now I will show you what happens when you preach with the power of my Spirit." As I began to preach at that service, I felt the heaviness in my heart dissipate. I felt a power in my preaching. In the midst of the congregation something palpable happened to the congregation. You could hear a pin drop. The service was almost overwhelming. This continued through the rest of the evening's sermons. At the end of one of 55 Capon, 69. 56 Bacik and Anderson, 109. the last services my wife came to me-she had been present for the first service and now for one of these last three. She said, "What did you do to your sermon? It was so different from before."

The truth is, it was exactly the same manuscript, exactly the same sermon-only this time it was preached with the power of the Holy Spirit. 57 120 Finally, the message and the entire worship service should be structured to allow people to experience the working of the Holy Spirit. How this happens will vary depending on the denominational and cultural leanings of the individual church. In some cases, God speaks in shared silence. Sometimes an appropriate song at the end of a message allows the Holy Spirit to bring the message home. Altar calls are effective in many settings. In many churches, the Eucharist can be a powerful, participatory experience with God at the conclusion of a message. Jesus said the Holy Spirit would be the convicting and empowering force in the church's ministry of communicating the gospel (John 16:8-11, Acts 1 :6-8).

Preachers who want to reach people with that message must be empowered by the Holy Spirit and give the Spirit an opportunity to work on the minds and hearts of the listeners. Conclusion This chapter has provided some guidelines preachers can follow to incorporate the seven characteristics of effective evangelistic preaching advocated by this paper. Pastors can measure the effectiveness of their efforts in three ways. The first is to measure their own performance based on the seven characteristics. Some writers advocate self-57 Adam Hamilton, Unleashing the Word(Nashville, TN; Abingdon, 2003), 147-148.

Evaluation through video or audio recordings. 58 Preachers can begin by listening to their messages before they implement these suggestions. As they incorporate the seven characteristics, they could listen to their messages on a weekly basis, periodically going back to the earlier sermons to ensure they are making progress. Pastors could also enlist the help of their congregations or unbelieving acquaintances. They could develop an evaluation sheet based on the seven characteristics and ask people to evaluate their messages on the seven criteria. As their average scores increase, pastors can be encouraged that their preaching is improving. Finally, pastors can measure the outcome of their efforts.

The ultimate objective of this paper is to see increasing numbers of people come to faith in Christ. As more people become Christians through their preaching, pastors will obtain their real objective. Preaching alone will not solve all the evangelistic problems of the twenty-first century church in the United States.59 God has chosen throughout history, however, to use preaching to bring people to faith in his Son, Jesus Christ. If this generation of preachers can learn their lessons from the New Testament, history, homiletic experts, and those who are doing it right, with God's help evangelistic preachers can see many more come to know Jesus in the years ahead. May the Lord enable them to make that happen. 58 Stanley and Jones, 179-180. 59 See page I 0.

## 5. How the Elaboration Likelihood Model Works Facilitating Central Processing Biblical, Christ-Centered Content Facilitating Peripheral Processing Authenticity Dynamic Delivery Holy Spirit Empowered Facilitating Both Central and Peripheral Processing RelevancePersuasive Appeal Engaging Illustrations Conclusion

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## Improving the Effectiveness of Preaching Today Biblical, Christ-Centered Content Relevance Persuasive Appeal Engaging Illustrations Dynamic Delivery Authenticity Holy Spirit Empowered Conclusion Appendix Research Of Current The Holy Seed Church

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This work consists of twelve separate articles written by theologically conservative homiletics professors and two pastors on how to preach effectively to postmodems. Wilhite taught at Dallas Theological Seminary until his death in 2003. Willimon, W. H. The Intrusive Word: Preaching to the Unbaptized Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1994. Willimon teaches at Duke University and is one of the most renowned experts on preaching in the mainline church today. This book is more theoretical than practical, but focuses on preaching to the unbaptized. _____ . "Postmodern Preaching: Learning to Love the Thickness of the Text." Journal for Preachers 19 (March 1996): 32-37. This article provides Willimon's theories on how best to preach to postmodems. Wyatt, Lee A. "Preaching to Postmodern People." Confident Witness-Changing World: Rediscovering the Gospel in North America, ed. Craig Van Gelder, 155-170. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999. This is a transcript of a 1996 interdenominational conference by the same title. The speakers covered a broad range of background and ministry settings. This article addressed preaching to unchurched postmoderns. Young, Ed, and Andy Stanley. 24 Best Practices: Discovering what Works in the 2 I st Century Church. Keller, TX: HeartSpring Media, 2001. Ed Young pastors Fellowship Church in suburban Dallas, and Andy Stanley is founding pastor of Northpoint Church in suburban Atlanta. In this book, they tell how their churches approach ministry in many different areas including preaching

## The Empirical Study of Evangelistically Effective And Ineffective Preachers

This appendix provides and analyzes the results of an empirical study by the author of actual preachers. This study provides anecdotal evidence that supports and illustrates the claim of this paper: preaching can become more effective at leading unbelievers to lasting faith in Christ if it consists of: I) biblical, Christ-centered

content, 2) relevant to unbelieving listeners, with 3) persuasive appeal, using 4) engaging illustrations and 5) dynamic delivery, spoken by an 6) authentic preacher, who is 7) empowered by the Holy Spirit. Chapters 2 and 3 demonstrated that these seven characteristics typified effective evangelistic preaching in the New Testament and at various times in church history.

Chapter 4 showed how today's preaching experts recommend these seven characteristics, and chapter 5 demonstrated how the principles of contemporary persuasion psychology are compatible with these characteristics. In order to see how these elements of preaching impact actual preaching settings, the author of this paper developed a list of target churches of various sizes, locations, settings, and denominations that have seen significant conversion growth since the arrival of the current senior pastor. Data from the first group were compared to a group of churches that have seen a significant decline in conversions since the arrival of the current senior pastor. These lists went through several iterations as some churches that appeared to have significant growth did not see many conversions, experienced pastoral change, or had large fluctuations in attendance.

The final list consisted of 32 target preachers and ten comparison preachers. The author of this paper developed an evaluation grid including 184 elements of each message to evaluate. These included all of the factors suggested in the four previous studies plus other elements often recommended by experts in public speaking. Specific criteria for the churches are provided, but the pastors and churches are anonymous to protect the self-esteem of the comparison pastors. Whenever possible, three sermons from each preacher were reviewed and scores were averaged and placed into the grid. Each preacher was scored on each element. Table 3 lists these scorings.

The numerically scored elements were rated between 0.0 and 5.0. The mean and standard deviation of each item for target preachers and comparison preachers were calculated on the grid to determine which elements were not significant (N-Less than ~ standard deviation between the target and comparison preacher means), possibly significant (P-between and 1 standard deviation difference between the targets and comparison preachers), significant (S-between 1 and 2 standard deviation difference) and very significant (VS - more than 2 standard deviation difference between the target and comparison means). Table 3 lists the evaluated pastors by a letter (T for target preachers and C for comparison preachers) and a number. The key for church characteristics (noted on pages 159-160) is found on pages 183-184. Several items were scored quantitatively. These categories were compared on a percentage basis to determine significance. Other items were scored verbally. A visual comparison was used to determine significance.

There is admittedly a large subjective element in this study. One evaluator conducted all of the reviews. Many of these categories are subjective by nature. A different series of churches or a different evaluator might lead to slightly different results. On the other hand, the scope of preachers studied, the clear definition of each criterion, and the enormous number of sermons evaluated offers objective and consistent summary results to this study.

churches are more likely to see a large number of conversions. However, what the results of this section do show is that preachers holding to the authority of Scripture and Christ as the only way to God can be ineffective. In other words, the view that

the Bible alone leads people to faith in a sermon is simply not true. The truth of Scripture must be effectively communicated. This leads to the significance of the other factors. Relevance Relevance to Unbelievers All earlier studies showed that a message relevant to the life of the listener was far more likely to be accepted.

A large number of preachers today, however, preach sermons directed specifically to members of their churches or Christians in general. This element determined how relevant the topics of the sermons by a given preacher were to a non-Christian listener. Several preachers' sermons varied in their relevance from week to week depending on the topic for any given week. There was a wide variety of scoring in this category for both groups. However, target preachers' sermons overall were significantly more relevant to unbelievers than those of comparison preachers. Issues Listeners Deal With This question probes the practicality of a sermon's topic and material.

The other studies showed preaching is more effective when it addresses an issue the listener deals with in her everyday life. A sermon that was theoretical or theological in nature or addressed a topic only relevant to church-going Christians was scored low. Effective churches were much more likely to tackle issues that unbelievers deal with in their everyday lives. Felt Needs and Wants 168 Some experts said a sermon should address the felt needs and wants of unbelieving listeners. Although highly subjective, evaluation of this element considered the likelihood of the topic being an emotional issue for an unbelieving listener. If the sermon addressed common concerns such as family, money, happiness, fear or overall well-being it was scored high. Once again, target preachers were more likely to address these types of issues in their preaching.

Demonstration of Relevance Part way through the evaluations it became clear that although two preachers may both address equally relevant issues for an unbeliever, one preacher might be far more effective at motivating the listener to consider the message by demonstrating its relevance. Although this category has much in common with the evidence categories discussed later, rather than persuading the listener of the message's truth, this element draws the reader in by showing him how the topic applies to his life. The use of rhetorical questions, personal stories, and even jokes can help a listener understand that a message is relevant. In this case, there was a very significant difference between the target and comparison preachers.

Language a11d Style oftl,e Target Audience 169 All studies showed that listeners are far more likely to respond to a message communicated in their everyday language. This is a function of the elements of verbosity (a high number of long words and sentences), unfamiliar words (Christianese is a slang term referring to words used only among Christians and not likely to be understood by an unbeliever), and the use of slang or vernacular. Though this element did not show as much significance as other elements of relevance, target churches are less likely to use Christianese and verbosity, and more likely to use slang and vernacular and speak the way unbelievers do. Intended Audience One way a preacher shows the relevance of his message is by specifically identifying an intended audience. When a preacher specifically speaks directly or indirectly to unbelievers, he is more likely to gain their attention than by specifically addressing only Christians.

In this study target preachers specifically addressed unbelievers or both believers and unbelievers far more often than the comparison pastors did. They also avoided negative remarks about unbelievers ( except in jest in a few cases) and readily identified themselves with unbelievers. The preacher and his unchurched listeners were also more culturally similar. All of these illustrate how an evangelistically effective preacher works to make his message relevant to unbelievers and skeptics.

Category Summary Target pastors in the study tended to be more relevant to unbelieving listeners. They usually chose topics to which unbelievers could relate and addressed the felt needs of unbelievers. They were also much more effective at demonstrating the relevance of their topics to the lives of unbelieving listeners through stories, examples, and statistics. Target preachers tended to identify more with unchurched people and speak to them directly to help demonstrate the relevance of the message to their lives. The vast majority of comparison preachers addressed only believers.

Target preachers were more likely to speak in the same way unbelievers do by using common vernacular and slang and avoiding church-specific terms and interjections. In every evaluated element related to the relevance of sermons, target preachers were more effective on average than the comparison preachers were. Persuasive Appeal I ntrod11ction Preachers introduced their sermons in a wide variety of ways.

Although no one approach stood out, the effective preachers were more likely to engage the audience and the topic in a compelling way from the beginning of the message. Two of the comparison pastors would likely have offended an unbelieving listener from the very beginning. Structure of tl,e Sermon Some contemporary experts advocate using nothing but expository preaching, in which a sermon's structure and content is drawn directly from one passage of Scripture.

Although more than 30% of effective preachers used this approach, more than twice that number preferred a topical outline drawing from many passages. Evangelistically ineffective preachers were more than twice as likely to use an expositional approach as effective preachers were. Length Although the comparison pastors studied preached an average of 8 minutes less than the target preachers, a larger portion of the comparison preachers come from mainline denominations that typically allocate less time for the preaching portion of the service than fundamentalist or Pentecostal churches. There was a great variety of sermon lengths in both categories leading this item to be insignificant in the results of the study. Complexity of Argument This item attempted to measure the intelligence ability and effort required to follow the argument through to its completion. A higher score means a more complex structure was used.

A high score could also indicate a sermon with multiple unrelated thoughts. In general, arguments of effective preachers were simpler and easier to follow. Appropriate for the People? A church with a high percentage of well-educated people in its community can do well with a complex, but well structured sermon argument. However, most of the population prefers a simpler structure. Again, target churches are better at communicating at a level the unchurched in their community can understand.

Structure Clear and Obvious? Some preachers do not clearly tie in the data, stories and biblical texts in their sermons. Others clearly identify their thesis and the

relationship of all the material. Target preachers were significantly more likely to use clear and obvious structures in their sermons. Amount of Random Content or Str11ct11re This item measured the amount of material in the sennon not directly related to the thesis, if there was one. When a sermon had a large amount of random or irrelevant material, it was scored high.

Effective pastors had far less random content than ineffective ones. Use of Claims and Warrants This item sought to measure how well a pastor argued the main points of his 172 sermons. Comparison pastors were significantly more likely to make claims that were not well connected to good evidence than the target preachers were. Quantity of Evidence The Elaboration Likelihood Method (ELM) of persuasion theory suggests that people who do not have the time, energy, or ability to evaluate the quality of an argument will often do so on the basis of the number of arguments used.1 This empirical study supported ELM as preachers who are more effective at leading people to make faith I Perloff, 180; Gladwell, 70.

commitments tend to use significantly more evidence in their sermons than the comparison preachers. Type of Evidence 173 This study looked for both substantive (Bible, data, statistics, examples) and affective ( common sense and experience, narrative evidence, appeal to authority, explaining both sides of the argument, fear appeal, guilt appeal and social proof) evidence in sermons. The results for each item are listed on the table. In general, effective preachers use a wider variety of evidence and are more likely to use evidence that appeals to the affective (ELM's peripherally processing approach) listener.

Comparison pastors tend to stick more with substantive ( direct approach) evidence plus fear and guilt appeals. Quality of Evidence This item was a measure of the objective quality of the evidence presented. In other words, how well would it stand up in a court of law or in an advanced academic paper? Although the target preachers used more peripheral-type evidence than the comparison preachers, the data they presented was significantly better quality than the comparison preachers' data. Powerful Speech Many psychologists have found that "powerful speech" ( confident, unqualified assertions) is far more effective at persuasion than weak speech. This study supported that theory with target preachers speaking significantly more powerfully than the comparison preachers did.

Cal/for Commitment A few preaching experts call for open-ended sermons in which listeners draw their own conclusions. 2 More comparison preachers than target preachers followed this recommendation. Target preachers were also more likely to call for a faith response of some kind, while comparison pastors were more likely to call for some kind of action after they left the worship service. Were Core Doctrines Addressed? Some preaching experts advocate teaching on core doctrinal themes. A large minority of target preachers did address core doctrines periodically but not necessarily on a weekly basis. Approach to Words Preachers go to varying degrees of effort in the verbal preparation of their sermons. Certain clues in word choice and verbal precision can indicate if a sermon was scripted word for word, written with a detailed outline, based on a loose outline or spoken extemporaneously. Ineffective preachers were far more likely to use a verbatim script not from memory and effective preachers tended to use a tight outline not written out word for word message.

More comparison preachers used exegetical sermons in which one passage of Scripture determined the structure of the sermon. There was also not a significant

difference in the lengths of the sermons of both groups of preachers. Target preachers were better at clearly demonstrating the arguments and making them easy to follow. They included much less random content including stories and comments unrelated to the main theme of the message. They were more likely to repeat the theme and/or key words throughout the message to reinforce the central theme and help the congregation remember it.

Target preachers used significantly more and better evidence in their sermons and did a better job of demonstrating how the evidence supported their conclusions. Finally, target preachers were more likely to call for a specific, personal, spiritual response from their listeners than comparison pastors. Although target pastors chose a variety of types of evidence, they were better at delivering sermons with clear, concise, compelling persuasive arguments and calling for a specific response from the listeners than the comparison preachers. This study illustrated well the claim that sermons with simple, clear, well supported and structured arguments and a specific call to faith are far more likely to lead people to lasting conversion than poorly supported, complicated or confusing arguments. Engaging Illustrations Stories Both target and comparison preachers used stories, but target preachers used more stories and told them much better. The ability to hold an audience's attention with a good.

177 use of vocal variety, concise yet graphic description without verbosity, suspense and plot twists and the effective use of pauses made a sermon more engaging. Narrative Preaching None of the over 150 sermons sampled for this study were done in a strictly narrative format. Object Lessons A small portion of the target preachers used physical objects for teaching. None of the comparison pastors used object lessons. Metaphors All of the earlier academic studies revealed the importance of metaphor in public speaking and preaching. This item was scored either "few," "some," or "lots" in terms of the quantity of metaphors used in two ways: 1) Were the metaphors used likely to be interesting to unbelieving listeners? 2) Did the metaphors aid understanding of the argument?

There was an enormous difference in the quantity and quality of metaphor use between the two groups. Type of H11mor Target preachers used more humor of nearly every kind: Published jokes include those circulating the Internet or obtained from a book. Off the cuff comments include one-liners, spontaneous comments to the crowd, or funny jests at a person, incident or topic. Self-deprecation occurs when a speaker pokes fun at himself in a way that shows humility without undermining his credibility as a preacher of the Gospel. Some preachers 178 teased other people, used puns or told funny stories. Some made light of common experiences to which most people can relate. Others used funny physical gestures to add levity to their sermons.

Quantity of Humor Target preachers used nearly twice as much humor as comparison preachers. Pop Culture References A similar number of target and comparison churches referred to popular movies, television shows, music, personalities or cultural phenomenon. Interactive Exercises Several target preachers asked the congregation to participate in a brief activity of some kind to reinforce the teaching of the sermon. None of the comparison churches did this. Quantity of Illustrations There was a very significant difference between the quantity of illustrations used by target preachers and those by the comparison group. Category Summary Target preachers used significantly more illustrations and told them more effectively than comparison preachers did.

The study showed that target preachers were more likely to tell personal stories, emotional stories, and the testimonies of other people. These stories both served as evidence for the claims of the sermons and examples of how 179 to live the principles of the sennons in everyday life. Target preachers tended to tell the illustrations in a more engaging way without letting them get too long. Target preachers used more humor and used it more effectively than comparison preachers. In particular, target preachers told more funny stories, especially personal stories in which they were the object of their own joke. This self-deprecating humor tended to reinforce their humility and authenticity, another major factor this paper identifies as a characteristic of evangelistically effective preachers. Nearly all target preachers used off-the-cuff comments for humor.

In most cases, these appeared to be spontaneous remarks or one-liners typical of stand-up comedians. Target preachers used metaphors more often to aid the understanding of abstract concepts, reinforce their argument, or maintain interest of their listeners. This study clearly reinforced the claim that evangelistically effective pastors preach sermons with more and better illustrations. Delivery Passion Though passion is difficult to measure objectively, several components can give a speaker a sense of passion: the amount of energy the preacher puts into his delivery, the rate of speech, the intensity of vocal tone and body language, the variety of rate and intensity and the use of pauses and rhythm and other vocal signals. Effective preachers used significantly more of all of these items on average than evangelistically ineffective preachers with the possible exception of rate of speech.

Tone of Voice 180 The study looked for the following types of vocal tones in the preachers studied: shouting, anger, positive tone, whispers, chanting, and voice characterizations. There was only a significant difference between effective and ineffective preachers in two areas. Effective preachers were far more likely to have a positive tone of voice and to use a variety of voice characterizations in their preaching. Style This section includes a brief phrase characterizing the vocal style of each preacher studied. It provides more of a point of reference than an effective tool to detennine commonalities among effective preachers. Gestures Only a small number of comparison preachers were evaluated live or by video, but those that were seen all stayed behind the pulpit, while the majority of target preachers walked around the platform or into the seating area. Most preachers in both categories made effective gestures with their hands. Quantity of Note Use/Eye Contact Comparison preachers were much more tied to their notes and thus had much less eye contact than the target preachers had. A large number of target preachers used no notes at all except for their Bibles .

181 Vocal Pitch This study found no significant difference between the pitch or variety of pitch of effective preachers and ineffective preachers. However, target preachers' voices were slightly more resonant ( containing multiple audio frequencies and overtones in the voice's normal range). Diction Three items were used to determine if a preacher's speaking was similar to everyday speech patterns: how understandable the preacher was, how much he overemphasized certain words and phrases and how natural his diction was. Although target preachers were more likely to use natural diction, no other real difference was noted in the area of diction. Category Summary This study illustrates the claim that evangelistically effective preachers tend to use a more dynamic delivery style and helps illustrate the range of effective delivery styles.

There was not a significant difference between the target and comparison groups in many of the elements of delivery evaluated in this section; however, several key features of delivery characterized the effective preachers in this study. Target preachers used more energy, intensity, and vocal variety in preaching, but they did not sacrifice a natural tone as comparison preachers often did. Target preachers were significantly more likely to use a positive tone of voice than comparison preachers. Target preachers had more eye contact and referred to their notes less often. In summary, the style of delivery that best represents the target group combined an authentically • natural and positive tone of voice with lots of energy and eye contact to convey authenticity, passion, and conviction. Authenticity A 11the11ticity 182 Authenticity came up repeatedly as a key component of effective evangelistic preaching in the academic studies.

Although authenticity in preaching is easily defined as a congregation's sense that the preacher believes and lives what he is talking about and is what he claims to be, it can be difficult to verbalize what that really consists of in preaching. Some suggestions are that humility, transparency with one's own weakness, a sense through voice and words that the preacher holds a sincere conviction in what he preaches, and a real passion for the message he preaches. Effective preachers tended to demonstrate more of all of these characteristics in their preaching. Likeability The persuasion psychology study revealed that one factor peripheral processors use to evaluate a message is the likeability of the speaker.

3 Some studies showed things like a speaker's apparent love for his audience, similarity with the listeners, and identification with the listeners improves likeability. 4 There was a significant or very significant difference in each of these areas. Evangelistically effective preachers met all the criteria of being more likeable to an unbelieving crowd than the comparison preachers 3 Hogan, 26; Perloff, 168. 4 Cialdini, 176; Goleman, 170; Hogan, 29; Perloff, 169 .

.. 183 were. Some psychology studies suggested the physical appearance of a speaker could increase or decrease acceptance of a message. Effective preachers were more attractive on the average and less likely to be overweight. They also smiled slightly more. Loving Tone A majority of current day preaching experts advocate a loving tone in preaching. This study evaluated a combination of tone of voice and word choice to determine if a preacher's tone was loving or adversarial. There was a wide variety of scores in both categories regarding the adversarial tone of the preaching, but effective preachers' sermons were significantly more loving. Expertise The psychology study showed a speaker's perceived expertise increased his credibility. This study looked for any reference to training or expertise in a preacher's speaking as a clue for this. The biblical study showed how Jesus, Peter and Paul used miracles to add credibility to their message. Reference to any kind of miracle including a dramatic testimony of a changed life resulted in a check in this item. The initial biblical study also showed that divine calling was a key element of effective preachers. If a preacher referenced his or her personal call, a check was placed here. Few preachers studied used any of these elements in their sermons Category Summary As chapter 5 pointed out, individual listeners determine speakers' credibility. 5 Individual listeners could let tone of voice, action, or encounters with preachers reduce the preachers' credibility in their minds. Although listeners likely use a slightly different set of criteria to determine preachers' levels of authenticity, the elements evaluated in this section primarily were items the psychology study showed affect listeners' attitudes toward speakers.

The evaluation of these elements shows that target preachers are more likely to use characteristics that tend to convey authenticity to listeners. As seen in the previous section, target preachers demonstrated more authenticity through natural, yet passionate, vocal styles. They used words that conveyed an authentic love for Jesus Christ and the people they spoke to as well as conviction in the truth of the message they spoke. The target preachers used more self-deprecating humor and openly and seriously confessed their own failings and weaknesses to communicate humility.

Preachers in the southern United States were less likely to demonstrate humility in their preaching than those in other regions, however. This could be a cultural phenomenon. In some places, the expertise or perceived holiness of preachers may be more important in establishing credibility and persuading unbelievers to come to Christ than preachers' frailties. As mentioned earlier, target preachers were less likely to use notes than comparison preachers. This could also increase listeners' sense of preachers' authenticity by conveying that preachers speak from their hearts. 5 See page 76.

185 Though perceived credibility is very personal and subjective, effective preachers demonstrated some common indicators significantly more often: particularly authenticity and likeability. This supports the findings of the other studies in this paper. Holy Spirit Empowered The biblical and homiletical studies clearly demonstrated the importance of the role of the Holy Spirit in bringing unbelievers to faith in Christ. The analysis of historical preachers supported this claim, and chapter 5 demonstrated that secular psychologists acknowledge the role of affect-which may be a good description of the Holy Spirit's work during an evangelistic sermon-in peoples' decisions. 6 This is the most subjective element of this empirical study. The author of this paper debated about attempting to measure the level of Holy Spirit anointing in worship services for several reasons: I) he could not be physically present at most of the sermons evaluated, 2) he has found his level of sensitivity to the Spirit varied depending on a number of factors, and, most of all, 3) it seemed presumptuous to try and claim where and when God's Spirit was and was not at work. This dissertation would be incomplete or inaccurate, however, without "empowered by the Holy Spirit" as a characteristic of evangelistic preaching. The author has experienced powerful worship services with a sense of the Holy Spirit's presence verified by the testimony of many participants. The author is accustomed to this sense of the presence of the Spirit in his church's services and has been aware of the presence or absence of the Holy Spirit in gatherings of 6 See pages 78-82.186 believers.

Though it may be subjective and presumptuous, the author evaluated the perceived Holy Spirit anointing of the sermons based on verbal cues and the evaluator's sense of the Holy Spirit's presence in the message and posted the scorings on the results in Table 3. Target preachers had a significantly higher level of perceived anointing than the comparison preachers. Other Tools A final part of the study looked to see if the use of extra tools such as video, objects, image projectors, etc. had any significant impact on a preacher's success. No significance was found in any of these. Other Trends The data was also evaluated to see if there were general trends in preaching depending on I) the denominational/theological affiliation of the church, 2) the size of the church, 3) the setting of the church, and 4) the geographical region of the church.

The denomination/theological (D/T) affiliation was divided into three major categories: Pentecostal/Charismatic, Fundamentalist, and Mainline. Although many churches would not necessarily identify themselves by these categories, these labels generalize churches by their historical identification. Pentecostal/Charismatic churches are those that believe in supernatural experiences today, often including speaking in tongues as evidence of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. This larger group includes two subgroups: 1) Assemblies of God churches (A), and 2) all other Pentecostal/Charismatic churches (P). Fundamentalist churches (F) place a high value on the authority (and usually inerrancy) of Scripture and 187 the need for individuals to make a personal faith commitment to receive salvation through Jesus Christ but do not traditionally seek supernatural experiences.

There is a huge breadth of theology on other issues within these churches. Baptist churches (B) are evaluated as a separate category within this group because of the large numbers of Baptist churches represented in America's fastest growing churches. The final group includes the historical mainline churches (M). The majority of these churches studied embrace evangelical theology. Church sizes were broken down into three categories: small (S), large (L) and megachurch (M). Small churches average less than 400 in Sunday morning attendance, large churches range from 400 to 3,000, and megachurches run more than 3,000 in attendance each week.

Although these size categories are not proportionally representative of American churches in general, there are limited resources available for research of much smaller churches. Settings for the churches studied included: 1) Urban (U), located within the city limits of the primary city of a metropolitan area of more than 500,000 population; 2) Suburban (S), located outside the city proper but within a metropolitan area of 500,000 or more; 3) City (C), located in or near a city with a population of between 50,000 and 500,000; and 4) Town (T), located in or near a community ofless than 50,000 people. Regions were divided into Northwest (NW), Southwest (SW), South (S), Midwest (MW) and Northeast (NE).

188 Summary scores of the preachers divided into these different categories are published below. Although of limited value for the study as a whole, this data does show where trends vary between categories. Conclusion The results of this empirical study illustrate the paper's thesis and are consistent with the findings of the four other analyses. Each of the seven characteristics that typify evangelistic preaching-I) biblical, Christ-centered content, 2) relevant to unbelieving listeners, 3) persuasive reasoning, 4) engaging illustrations, 5) dynamic delivery, 6) authentic preachers, and 7) Holy Spirit empowerment-were more prevalent in evangelistically effective churches than in evangelistically ineffective churches.

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## 6. Pray!

I was in an hour-and-fifteen minute worship service recently which had two minutes of prayer. A friend told me of attending a well-known, evangelistic church which had two prayers totaling less than thirty seconds. Prayerless worship may be an oxymoron, but it is increasingly common in the contemporary evangelical church. True, unbelievers present will find prayer boring, but why should we let the spiritually dead dictate the prayer life of the body of Christ? Can you imagine the apostles and the first century church having worship without prayer? If prayer isn't worship, what is? As you think of rebuilding the public prayer life of the church, keep in mind that the worship experience of everyone in the congregation probably could be improved by one short session of training on praying publicly.

**7. Transition smoothly between elements of worship.** This is an application of the inspired words of the Apostle Paul, "But all things must be done properly and in an orderly manner" (1 Corinthians 14:40), which is a command in a passage on worship. Without a smooth and orderly transition between them, too many worship elements are often left to stand alone, unconnected to anything else in the service.

A hymn is sung, then we're told, "And now turn to page 325." Following that selection we hear nothing more than, "And now turn to page 227." A good transition between those two hymns explaining why we are singing the hymn on page 227 would help us worship God better as we sing. When making transitions, remember that briefer is usually better.

When planning them, think sentence or paragraph-length at most. Above all think "purpose and flow." In other words, as concisely as possible, help the movement of worship flow from one element to the next, and do so by giving a reason for the next element. For example, having just sung Amazing Grace, you could transition with, "Let's continue worshiping our gracious God by singing number 329, Grace Greater Than Our Sin." In that one sentence the congregation has been instructed what to do next (prepare to sing the hymn on page 329) and why we will be singing it (we've chosen this hymn because we want to continue praising God for His grace), and in a way that helps people's thoughts flow from one element to another without losing their Godward focus.

Not every element needs a transition into it (the sermon, for instance). Some transitions need not mention the previous activity. After singing a hymn, it would be appropriate to say, "Take your Bible and turn to Matthew 10. The Bible tells us to 'give attention to the public reading of Scripture,' and so we read God's Word publicly each Lord's Day. In our consecutive reading of the book of Matthew we

have come to chapter ten. Please listen as I begin reading at verse one." Thus good transitions can also remind us that there are reasons for doing what we do in worship. You do want to improve the worship services at your church, don't you? Then consider these next recommendations:

### 8. Do as much as possible congregationally.

Our entertainment saturated culture has soaked into the church. In growing numbers of churches, the congregational worship of God has been degraded into a parade of individual religious performances to be applauded. I've attended services where the congregation sang but twice yet listened to more than half-a-dozen musical presentations. Do not let the sound of solo, small group, and/or choral music characterize your church's worship more than the voice of all your people lifted together in the worship of God. Biblical worship involves the whole congregation, prompted by worship leaders, focusing on and responding to God. Every believer present should engage in worship, not observe it. So sing God's praises together, read Scripture together sometimes (as in responsive readings), and pray together (recite the Lord's Prayer, pray in small groups, or place microphones throughout the worship space for all those willing to pray publicly). Never let worship decompose into a vicarious experience where the many in the congregation merely watch the few on the platform who at best are worshiping, and at worst are performing.

### Empirical Evaluation of Target and Comparison Preachers
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# TEACHERS

A great teacher is one a student remembers and cherishes forever. Teachers have long-lasting impacts on the lives of their students, and the greatest teachers inspire students toward greatness. To be successful, a great teacher must have:

1. **An Engaging Personality and Teaching Style**
   A great teacher is very engaging and holds the attention of students in all discussions.

2. **Clear Objectives for Lessons**
   A great teacher establishes clear objectives for each lesson and works to meet those specific objectives during each class.

3. **Effective Discipline Skills**
   A great teacher has effective discipline skills and can promote positive behaviors and change in the classroom.

4. **Good Classroom Management Skills**
   A great teacher has good classroom management skills and can ensure good student behavior, effective study and work habits, and an overall sense of respect in the classroom.

5. **Good Communication with Parents**
   A great teacher maintains open communication with parents and keeps them informed of what is going on in the classroom as far as curriculum, discipline, and other issues. They make themselves available for phone calls, meetings, and email.

6. **High Expectations**
   A great teacher has high expectations of their students and encourages everyone to always work at their best level.

7. **Knowledge of Curriculum and Standards**
   A great teacher has thorough knowledge of the school's curriculum and other standards they must uphold in the classroom. They ensure their teaching meets those standards.

8. **Knowledge of Subject Matter**
   This may seem obvious, but is sometimes overlooked. A great teacher has incredible knowledge of and enthusiasm for the subject matter they are teaching. They are prepared to answer questions and keep the material interesting for the students.

9. **Passion for Children and Teaching**
   A great teacher is passionate about teaching and working with children. They are excited about influencing students' lives and understand the impact they have.

## 10. Strong Rapport with Students
A great teacher develops a strong rapport with students and establishes trusting relationships.

Educational studies suggest that the essential qualities of good teachers include the ability to be self-aware of one's biases; to perceive, understand and accept differences in others; to analyze and diagnose student understanding and adapt as required; to negotiate and take risks in their teaching; and to have a strong conceptual understanding of their subject matter.

### Measurable and Measuring
Most teachers are paid according to their experience and educational attainment, but as educator Thomas Luschei has demonstrated, there is little evidence that more than 3-5 years of experience boost teachers' ability to increase student test scores or grades. Other measurable attributes such as how well the teachers did on their qualifying examinations, or what level of education a teacher has attained also do not significantly impact the student's performance in classrooms. So although there is little consensus in the education profession about which measurable features make a good teacher, several studies have identified inherent traits and practices which assist teachers in reaching their students.

### To Be Self-Aware
American teacher-educator Stephanie Kay Sachs believes that an effective teacher needs to have a basic sociocultural awareness of and acceptance of their own and other's cultural identity. Teachers need to be able to facilitate the development of a positive self-ethnic identity and be aware their own personal biases and prejudices. They should use self-inquiry to examine the relationship between their fundamental values, attitudes, and beliefs, particularly with regard to their teaching. This inner bias affects all interactions with students but does not prohibit teachers from learning from their students or vice versa. Educator Catherine Carter adds that an effective way for teachers to understand their processes and motivation is to define an apt metaphor for the role they perform. For example, she says, some teachers think of themselves as gardeners, potters shaping clay, mechanics working on engines, business managers, or workshop artists, supervising other artists in their growth. To Perceive, Understand and Value Differences

Teachers who understand their own biases says Sachs, are in a better position to view their students' experiences as valuable and meaningful and integrate the realities of the students' lives, experiences, and cultures into the classroom and subject matter. The effective teacher builds perceptions of her own personal influence and power over factors that contribute to student learning. In addition, she must build conceptual interpersonal skills to respond to the complexities of the school environment. The experiences of both teachers and students with individuals of differing social, ethnic, cultural, and geographic backgrounds can serve as a lens through which future interactions can be viewed.

### To Analyze and Diagnose Student Learning.
Teacher Richard S. Prawat suggests that teachers must be able to pay close attention to student's learning processes, to analyze how students

are learning and diagnose issues that prevent understanding. Assessments must be undertaken not on tests per se, but rather as the teachers engage students in active learning, allowing debate, discussion, research, writing, evaluation, and experimentation. Compiling results from a report of the Committee on Teacher Education for the National Academy of Education, Linda Darling-Hammond and Joan Baratz-Snowden suggest teachers must make their expectations for high-quality work known, and provide constant feedback as they revise their work towards these standards. In the end, the goal is to create a well-functioning, respectful classroom that allows students to work productively.
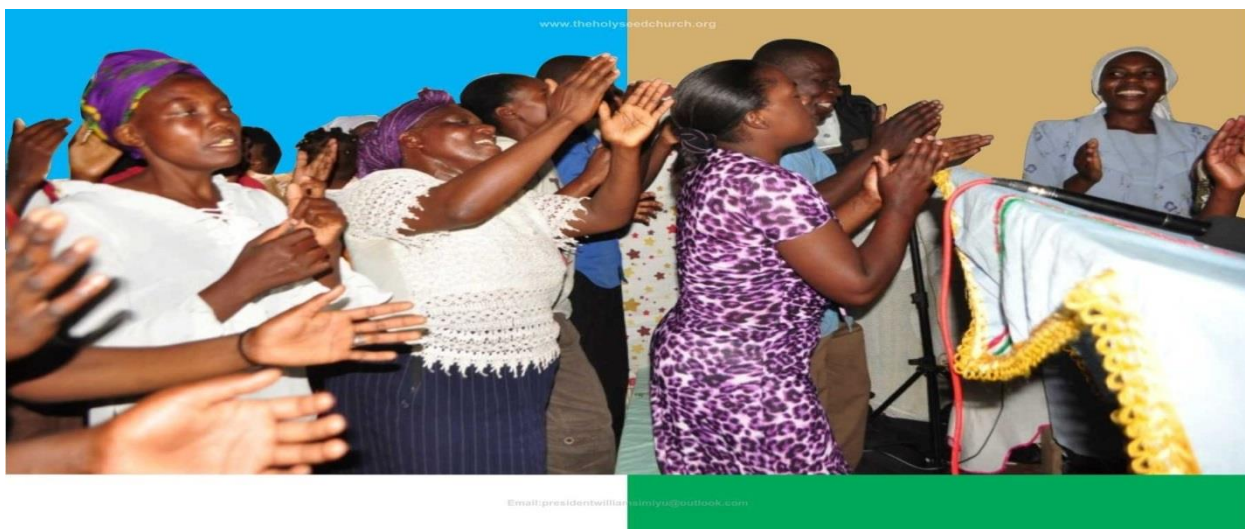
### To Negotiate and Take Risks in Teaching

Sachs suggests that building on the ability to perceive where students are failing to fully understand, an effective teacher must not be afraid to seek out tasks for herself and the students that are optimal for their skills and abilities, recognizing that those efforts may not be successful. These teachers are the pioneers and trailblazers, she says, individuals who are challenge-oriented. Negotiation involves moving students in a certain direction, towards a view of reality which is shared by those in the disciplinary community.

At the same time, teachers must recognize when some obstacles to such learning are misconceptions or faulty reasoning which need to be highlighted, or when a child is simply using her own informal ways of knowing which should be encouraged. This, says Prawat, is the essential paradox of teaching: to challenge the child with new ways of thinking, but negotiate a way for that student to not dismiss alternate ideas. Overcoming these obstacles must be a collaborative enterprise between student and teacher, where uncertainty and conflict are important, growth-producing commodities.

### To Have a Depth of Subject Matter Knowledge

Particularly in the maths and sciences, educator Prawat stresses that teachers need to have rich networks of knowledge in their subject matter, organized around key ideas that could provide a conceptual basis for understanding. Teachers obtain that by bringing focus and coherence to the subject matter and allowing themselves to be more conceptual in their approach to learning. In this manner, they transform it into something meaningful for students.

# Church's Worship Services

The enthusiastic response to *Ten Ways to Improve Your Church's Worship Service* has encouraged me to write a sequel. If you are unfamiliar with the *Ten Ways* article, you should read it first. While there are some exceptions here, the suggestions in that article, as a whole, are more important than these. You can link to it by clicking here or by pointing your browser to www.SpiritualDisciplines.org/10ways.html.

1. **Plan worship only for people who *can* worship.**

Many churches plan their worship services as though unbelievers can worship. But the Apostle Paul makes plain in 1 Corinthians 12:3 that "no one can say, 'Jesus is Lord,' except by the Holy Spirit." Anyone can utter the words, of course, but unless the Holy Spirit indwells a person they cannot say such things as a sincere expression of true worship. In other words, those who do not know Jesus as Lord (and thus do not have the Holy Spirit) cannot worship God, so why design the worship of God for those incapable of worship? We plan evangelistic services and events for unbelievers; worship services are for believers.

In this same letter to the church at Corinth, the apostle criticized some of their worship practices and asked, "Therefore if unbelievers enter, will they not say that you are mad?" (1 Corinthians 14:23). Whatever may be said about this passage, since Paul considered the entrance of unbelievers into the worship service only a possibility, he clearly expected worship to be a gathering for believers. And when Paul instructed these Corinthian believers further about the elements of worship, he concluded, "All of these must be done for the strengthening of *the church*" (1 Corinthians 14:26, NIV, emphasis added). Thus the worship of God is an event to be planned primarily for the church of God. While it's good to be sensitive to the presence of unbelievers when we worship, we shouldn't design the service for them.

2. **Keep technology on a leash.**

I'm referring primarily to the use of computerized audio-visual technology in worship. Be wary of its beguiling power. While technology can be useful and effective, the limitless possibilities of experimentation with it can siphon off time better spent preparing the content the technology will present. It's often more fun to prepare a PowerPoint presentation than a sermon. But the result can be a dazzling presentation of drivel.

Make sure the technology calls attention to the message, not to itself. You don't want the computer savvy people in your congregation wondering how you developed that clever PowerPoint slide instead of absorbing what it says. Also take care that the tools do not distract from the messenger. The Spirit of God falls upon people, not technology. So be certain that the hardware and software serve and enhance the human relationship between the messenger and hearers instead of depersonalizing it. Also beware that a

spirit of professionalism does not accompany the growing use of technology and foster a performance mentality on the part of those who use it.

It's easy to become overly dependent on audio-visual technology. As the influence of technology grows in our culture, so its use in the church can demand increasing amounts of time and resources (human and financial). It's true that poorly used technology can be just as distracting as that which is overdone. With even a state-of-the-art audio-visual system, worship is impossible when there's ear-piercing feedback or a frantic flipping through the PowerPoint slides to find the right one. The technicians need to be as skillful as the musicians and other worship leaders. But as the latter can call too much attention to their role in worship, so can the former. Don't get into a position where a software glitch, hard disk failure, or unexpected absence by a technician would cripple the worship of God in your church.

**P.S.** If your worship service is on TV or webcast, keep all cameras to the rear of the congregation (and stationary if possible), *even if* this significantly reduces the quality of your "production." Your responsibility for the worship experience of those present should never succumb to the seduction of "excellence" in packaging the experience for viewers elsewhere. Nothing can divert focus from God more than a roving cameraman in the worship service. And nothing so conveys the impression that people are watching a performance instead of participating in worship than the presence of cameras between the worshipers and worship leaders.

3. **Move the announcements, welcome, and time of greeting to the beginning or the end of the service.**

The first two ways to improve your church's worship service that I suggested in the initial article were "Focus on God in Every Element of Worship" and "Have Clear Biblical Support for Every Element in Worship." How can the announcements stand either test? Historic confessions of faith as far back as the Westminster (1647) and the Second London Baptist Confession (1689) have recognized that there are "actions common to human societies" which are permissible in worship under the guidance of "the general rules" of Scripture. All "human societies," including the church, must have announcements. It is not always possible to print every announcement, and even then some are so important as to require verbal emphasis. And usually the best time to announce important matters is when the greatest number of people in the society are present. In the church, that time is the worship service. It is also "common to human societies"—including churches—to welcome guests to the gathering of the society. In addition, many churches have a practice of greeting one another during the course of the service, and some find biblical support for this in texts like Romans 16:16, "Greet one another with a holy kiss."

At any rate, it would be hard to argue that these activities are as God-focused as elements of worship such as Scripture reading, prayer, and singing praise to the Lord. Therefore, in order to make way for as much time

of unbroken focus on the Lord as possible, move the announcements, the welcome of guests, and the greeting of one another to either the very beginning or the very end of the service. Some will say that announcements, etc., before the service distracts them from worship preparation. Others will protest that having these things at the end diminishes the impact of the sermon. But some announcements are inevitably necessary, and interrupting the flow of worship for them is worse than opening or closing the service with them.

### 4. **Prepare the congregation for worship.**

Just before the worship service begins, does your congregation sound like the crowd at a basketball game? That used to trouble me a great deal, especially after a visit to a Korean church where worshipers entered silently and prayed individually until the start of the service. Although I desired the same for our own church, I came to realize that the noise before the service was the sound of a family reunion. I like that too. It's a good sign when church members are glad to see each other. And it's spiritually healthy for them to want to speak with each other, particularly in a church where the members are so widely dispersed that they never see each other between Sundays.

Our solution was to enjoy the family reunion before the service, but then to transition into a time of silent and thoughtful preparation. In summary I said something like this: "Welcome to the worship of the risen Lord Jesus Christ. This is the Lord's Day. And our great privilege and responsibility on this day is to worship Him with His people. Let's spend the next few moments in a time of silence as we prepare our hearts and minds to worship Him."

Without guidance, most worshipers won't prepare for worship. Remind them what they are about to do, and give them some time to prepare themselves for it.

### 5. **Construct a call to worship.**

Worship begins too abruptly in many churches, even in some that observe a time of silence beforehand. "Welcome to our church. We're glad that you're here this morning, especially if you are visiting with us. Please take a hymnal and turn to .)

A clear commencement of the worship service with what is known as "the call to worship" helps people transition from preparation into actual worship. It goes beyond the welcome and the announcement of the first song. Instead it explicitly notifies the people that worship has begun and focuses their attention on the person of God, not merely the next thing they are supposed to do ("Please take a hymnal and turn to.").

Examples of calls to worship abound in the Psalms, as in Psalm 95:6-7:

Come, let us worship and bow down,
Let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.
For He is our God,
And we are the people of His pasture and the sheep of His hand.

Texts like these are sufficient to stand alone as a call to worship. But they can also serve as patterns of calls to worship that you compose. Notice in this text both a *call* to worship the Lord and a *reason* to worship Him. These are the simple, essential elements in a call to worship.

This passage also shows how the introduction of worship can be very brief. While this one epitomizes economy, sometimes a good call to worship extends into two or three short paragraphs which begin with the events of the world or the season and translates them into a call and reasons to worship God.

### 6. **Introduce new music wisely.**

Because congregations occasionally discover good hymns previously unknown to them and because new music will always be written, the worship repertoire of every church must always be expanding. So while a healthy church is often learning new music, new music should be introduced wisely. Too much new music too quickly is overwhelming and distracting. Even one new song each month is more than many churches can joyfully bear.

But *when* you introduce new music is as important as *how often*. Sunday morning worship is rarely the best time for it. People usually find it much harder to focus on God when singing an unfamiliar song than with one that's well known. Sunday morning worship should flow easily, not hesitate with uncertainty. So if you must introduce new music on Sunday morning, have an individual or group sing part or all of the song so the congregation can hear it before trying to sing it. Better yet, teach it in another service first, such as Sunday or Wednesday night, or when your small groups meet. I know of one large church which meets at location than the church building one Sunday night per quarter just to sing together, and that's when they learn new music. They have unhurried time to learn about the background and theology of the song, how to sing the tune, and they experience a unique occasion of fellowship as well. It's an enjoyable way to learn new music, and then when the song is first used on a Sunday morning most people don't stumble through it.

### 7. **Don't hide the ordinances.**

A growing school of ministerial thought believes that the nature of baptism and the Lord's Supper makes unconverted people feel excluded and that such feelings make them less responsive to the Gospel. As a result increasing numbers of churches intentionally observe the ordinances only at times (such as a midweek gathering) when few unbelievers are expected. But unbelievers *should* feel excluded from the family of God, for they are. Both Jesus and the Apostle Paul referred to them as "outsiders" (see Mark

4:11, 1 Corinthians 5:12-13, Colossians 4:5, and 1 Thessalonians 4:12). In fact, any feelings of separation from the life and family of Christ are often the means the Lord uses to create longings within them for what they are missing.

In addition, both ordinances are designed in part to present the Gospel. Regarding the Lord's Supper, for example, 1 Corinthians 11:26 says, "For as often as you eat the bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes." And the proclamation of the Lord's death is exactly what unbelievers need. Many of them are never more attentive than when watching new believers testify at their baptism of the saving power of Jesus Christ. Don't withhold the blessings of the ordinances from the Lord's people on the Lord's Day, and don't withhold the presentation of the Gospel given to the unconverted through the ordinances.

### 8. **Use confessional material.**

I was invited to preach in a fairly large church in a county seat town near a major metropolitan area. The associate pastor was my host, and I asked him what statement of faith the church embraced. He didn't know. He had been on staff there for seven years and didn't know the church's confessed beliefs. Moreover, he wasn't sure how to find out. After much searching through literature given to visitors and other church publications, he finally discovered a document deep in a file cabinet where the church's confessional position was identified. When even long-term staff members don't know the doctrinal statement of a church, how important do you think right doctrine and confessional integrity are to that church?

One way to keep your church's statement of faith from being forgotten is to read from it congregationally on a regular basis. Take a paragraph per week and read it aloud together, possibly taking the opportunity to briefly explain or illustrate the meaning. You may want to cycle through it continually, or each time you finish it you may add a catechism (use a question or two per week), your church covenant, or ancient statements of faith like the Apostles' Creed into the mix before returning to your doctrinal statement. In so doing you will not only keep these vital documents visible, you'll also fulfill the biblical mandate Jesus gives us to teach His people all that He commanded us (Matthew 28:20).

### 9. **Lead in the corporate confession of sins.**

When was the last time you heard someone leading the church in prayer during Sunday morning worship and saying something like, "Lord, both as a church body and as individuals we sin against You, and so we pause now to silently confess our sins and ask Your forgiveness"? The same major elements of private prayer (such as praise, thanksgiving, asking, etc.) should be present in prayers offered on behalf of the church. Therefore, just as we confess sins when praying individually, so we should confess sins when praying corporately. Agreed? But does this regularly happen at your church?

I do not mean that the prayer leader should always attempt to *name* the sins committed by the church together. That should be done only when the church agrees together on its sin. Nor do I mean that the confession of sin that is done when we are alone is any less important than sin we confess silently to God during a worship service. Rather I am emphasizing that just as private worship is usually characterized by the confession of sin and asking forgiveness, so the same spirit should mark our worship of God with others.

The words originally inspired for the people of God to use in corporate worship (that is, the Psalms) teach us by example to pray this way (see Psalm 51, for instance). The Model Prayer given to us by Jesus (in Matthew 6:9-13) is another case in point. And whenever we pray this in church, we are saying to the Lord *together*, "And forgive us our debts." Incidentally, in a day when sin is seldom mentioned in worship, a public expression of humility before the Lord such as the confession of sin and asking His forgiveness may be a means of convicting the lost of their need to do the same.

### 10. Scripturalize routine prayers.

I was in a worship service in suburban Chicago one Sunday when "Joe" was asked to pray, something he had done in that church many times. As he spoke, a five-year-old boy near the front began to pray with him, speaking the same words in unison with Joe. Like a prayer duet, the two continued as if they were reciting the Lord's Prayer together, except that they were using "Joe's prayer" instead. Joe repeated the same prayer so often that a child of only sixty months was already able to recite it verbatim.

We've all heard—and perhaps offered—such "spontaneous" prayers in worship. Any repetitious prayer *situation* tends to breed repetitious *prayer*. For example, when I found myself in the situation of offering the pastoral prayer in worship each week year in and year out, I was tempted to repeat the same words and phrases since the purpose and goals of that prayer were almost identical each time. And the number and kind of prayer situations (such as at the beginning or end of the service, before the offering, etc.) in Sunday worship rarely change.

So changing the content of these routine prayers could immediately and noticeably affect worship. And there's no easier or better way to continually change their content than to "scripturalize" them. Use the words of Scripture as the basis of your prayers. Take part or all of a prayer found in the Bible (and I'm including the Psalms among the prayers found in Scripture) as the words you voice in public prayer. If you were praying through Psalm 23, for example, after reading it you could begin to pray with, "Lord, we thank You that You are our Shepherd. You are truly a Good Shepherd. Please shepherd our church, especially in the matter of "You would continue praying in this manner through the Psalm until you came to the end of the chapter or felt it was time to conclude the prayer. Another option is to pray your way through a few verses of a New Testament letter, again using the passage before you

as the framework of what you offer to the Lord on behalf of the congregation.

In using this method you will not only pray about the matters you always want to pray for in these customary situations, but you'll be praying for them in stimulating ways you've never expressed before. Moreover, the Scripture will prompt you to pray about relevant matters that you otherwise would never think to mention. No other approach generates such potential for every prayer offered in the service—from the pastoral prayer to the spur-of-the-moment one requested of a layman—to be fresh and alive with the power of the Word of God.

You could incorporate some of these changes into your worship service this coming Sunday. A number of them call for discussion and coordination with others first. A few require some teaching and perhaps a Sunday morning explanation before implementation. Regardless of the order in which you pursue them, may the Lord bless you with His wisdom and the grace to move forward. He is worthy of the best worship your church can offer

## HOW TO HELP YOUR CHOIR DIRECTOR

I love and admire God's choir directors! After serving in church music ministries for over thirty years, I like to find ways to be helpful to these music leaders. So here are some ideas that choir directors may wish to print, post, or distribute to their choir members. All good choir directors say these things, but perhaps I have stated them in a slightly different way that you may find helpful.

1. **Attend every rehearsal.** Every rehearsal is important!
2. **Always be on time, or preferably be early.** There is not a good excuse for being late to every rehearsal!
3. **Have a pencil ready to mark your music from the director's instructions.** Spell musical terms as correctly as possible. (Can you spell *Crescendo?)*
4. **Limit your talking during the choir rehearsal.** Directors know that you will talk a little, but discipline yourself to be courteous to your choir director. It is frustrating to have conversations going on while trying to rehearse!
5. **Encourage your choir director.** A note or small gift (such as homemade cookies) can show your gratitude!
6. **Let your choir director know when you will be absent.** You are important, and it helps in planning to know when members will be absent from a rehearsal or service.
7. **Work to improve as a musician.** Strive for excellence.
8. **Attempt to blend your voice.** It is amazing to hear every tone color (timbre) mixed well together.
9. **Memorize Scripture about music.** Psalm 104:33 is great verse with which to start!
10. **Pray for your pastor and choir director daily.** We all need the blessings of the Lord!