



Village Missions
Contenders Discipleship Initiative

Website: <http://www.vmcidi.com>
E-mail: info@vmcontenders.org



Course Contents

Evangelism:

Biblical Foundation
Responsibility of Evangelism
Content of Evangelism
Developing Personal Evangelism

Teaching:

Exposition and Old Testament
Exposition and New Testament
Lesson Plan and Exegesis

Preaching:

Steps to a Sermon
The Big Idea Approach
The Problem/Question Approach
Sermon Introductions
Sermon Transitions & Conclusions
The Call and Worth of a Preacher

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Evangelism, Teaching and Preaching Student's Guide

TRAINING MODULE SUMMARY	
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Contenders Bible School was a tuition-free two-year ministry equipping program started in 1995 by Pastor Ron Sallee at Machias Community Church, Snohomish, WA. It is now run as a tuition-free online equipping ministry by Village Missions. The full Contenders Discipleship Initiative program with pdf copies of this guide and corresponding videos can be found at www.vmcontenders.org.

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 LOCAL INSTRUCTORS using the CDI in a classroom setting are encouraged to fill in any gaps and add to the discussion of content provided by our ONLINE INSTRUCTORS.

At times content will be designed to provoke thoughtful discussion of various viewpoints. It is up to the LOCAL INSTRUCTOR to guide discussions in such way that students come to their own conclusions of what they believe and why they believe it from careful study of the Bible.

Student Registration

You must register as a student for the CDI to gain access to the video instruction. You will find the online registration link at the top of the page at www.vmcontenders.org

You are encouraged to take these classes under the guidance of a Local Instructor/mentor. If a Local Instructor/mentor is not available in your area, you are welcome to take these classes on your own. If you take these courses as an independent distance learner download and use the Local Instructor guidebook in conjunction with the Student Guidebook as it has additional information.

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EVANGELISM, TEACHING AND PREACHING

This is the Sixth Course in the CDI Program

The core CDI courses are:

1. Bibliology and How to Study the Bible
2. Doctrine
3. New Testament
4. Old Testament
5. Church History
- 6. Evangelism, Teaching and Preaching**

This course will be a study in communicating God’s Word through the three different avenues of **Evangelism, Teaching and Preaching**. Methods and practices for developing clear biblical messages in all three areas will be studied and practiced.

The historical and biblical backgrounds for communicating biblical truth from these three areas will be surveyed.

This course will be a practice of public speaking with the goal of effectively communicating the truth of God’s Word in a variety of settings. Public speaking will not be taught in this course as a separate subject so much as it will be practiced through the various assignments and exercises surrounding the three main areas of emphasis outlined above.

The activities of evangelism, teaching and preaching are not reserved solely for the so-called professional clergy, nor are they only to be practiced by those who have been called into full-time Christian ministry. God’s Word makes it clear that every follower of Jesus Christ is to be sharing his faith with others:

“But sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence.” (1 Peter 3:15) NASB

Christ commanded His disciples to teach others what He had taught them:

“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you.” (Matthew 28:19-20a) NASB

Peter, speaking to Cornelius’ household of the command given by Christ to His disciples, stated: “And He ordered us to preach to the people, and solemnly to testify that this is the One who has been appointed by God as Judge of the living and the dead. (Acts 10:42) NASB

REGISTER WITH THE CDI AS LOCAL INSTRUCTORS AND STUDENTS

The CDI Learning Management System requires all Local Instructors and Students to register individually. Once registered with the CDI, access to all courses and videos are open to view and/or download. For those taking CDI courses in a classroom setting the Learning Management System will track student progress if they periodically log in and check off lessons completed.

STUDENT EVALUATIONS

Contenders Discipleship Initiative uses a narrative evaluation approach rather than issuing grades during a student's course of study. An online form is completed after each course that indicates what a student has learned.

The complete Contenders Discipleship Initiative Narrative Evaluation consists of two written evaluations for each course: one from the Local Instructor for each student attending a course and one from the student giving a self-assessment.

Students who subsequently apply to Village Missions will need to have these evaluations recorded in the CDI Learning Management System for each course.

The online Local Instructor's Student Evaluation can be found at:

http://vmcontenders.org/pastor_assessment.html

The Student Self Evaluation form can be found at:

http://vmcontenders.org/student_assessment.html

The student's Self Evaluation summarizes your accomplishments while taking the course, any new understandings achieved, and the your goals for the future.

COURSE SYLLABUS

This course will be a study in communicating God's Word through the three different avenues of Evangelism, Teaching and Preaching. Methods and practices for developing clear biblical messages in all three areas will be studied and practiced.

The historical and biblical backgrounds for communicating biblical truth from these three areas will be surveyed.

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Subjects covered:

Evangelism:

- The Biblical Foundation
- The Responsibility of Evangelism
- The Content of Evangelism
- Developing Your Personal Evangelism

Teaching:

- Exposition and the Old Testament
- Exposition and the New Testament
- Lesson Plan and Exegesis

Preaching:

- Steps to a Sermon
- The Big Idea Approach
- The Problem/Question Approach
- Sermon Introductions
- Sermon Transitions and Conclusions
- The Call and Worth of a Preacher

It is highly recommended that you have completed *Bibliology and How to Study the Bible* as this course will build upon skills learned there. The ability to study a passage of Scripture and determine what it says, what it means, and how it applies to your life is essential in constructing Biblical lessons and messages. Ideally, you would have completed all previous courses in the Contenders Discipleship Initiative prior to this course.

Upon completing this course, you will have the basic tools needed to effectively communicate God's Word in your home, at your local church, among acquaintances or co-workers, and anywhere else the Lord may call upon you to share the truth of His life-changing Word.

Classroom sessions will involve:

- Lectures
- Class discussions
- In-class speaking assignments

Outside assignments will include:

- Developing and sharing your personal testimony
- Memorizing several key Bible passages for evangelism
- Developing a Bible lesson
- Preparing two sermons from assigned biblical texts

COURSE TEXTBOOKS AND READING SCHEDULE

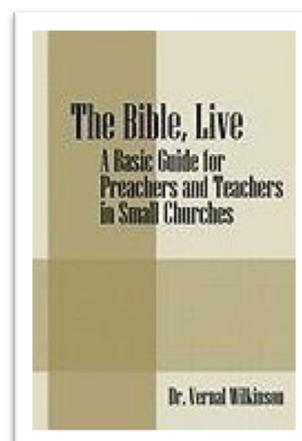
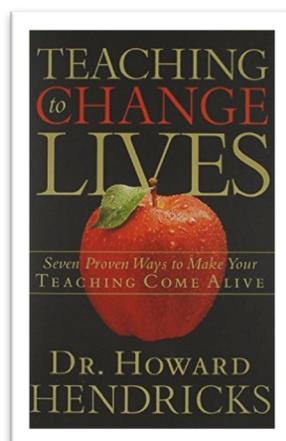
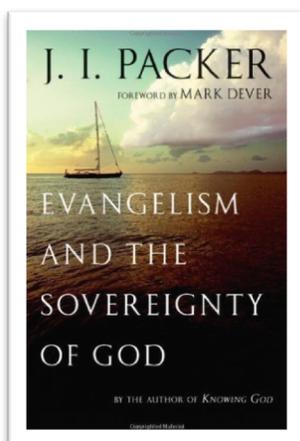
All reading is assigned and should be read prior to the beginning of the Session.

Course Text Books:

Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God by J.I. Packer

Teaching to Change Lives by Howard G. Hendricks

The Bible, Live by Dr. Vernal Wilkinson



Session	Reading / Memory Assignments
Session 1, Part 1	Read Ch. 1 of "Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God"
Session 1, Part 2	Read Ch. 2 of "Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God"
Session 1, Part 3	Read Ch. 3 of "Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God"
Session 1, Part 4	Read Ch. 4 of "Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God"
Session 2, Part 1	Memorize Ephesians 2:8-9
Session 2, Part 2	Memorize Romans 3:23, 6:23, 5:8
Session 2, Part 3	Memorize Romans 10:9-10, 10:13
Session 4	Memorize the 4-part presentation of the Gospel given in this session
Session 6	Read Chs. 1-4 of "Teaching to Change Lives" highlighting passages that make key points
Session 7, Part 1	Read Chs. 5-7 of "Teaching to Change Lives" highlighting passages that make key points
Session 7, Part 2	Read ppg. 1-78 of "The Bible, Live"
Session 8, Part 1	Read ppg. 81-151 of "The Bible, Live"

SESSION 1, PART 1 - INTRODUCTION

At the end of this session, you will:

- Understand the connection between theology and evangelism.
- Review the relationship between God’s attributes and evangelism.
- Understand God’s holiness.

At the end of this session:

You will KNOW:

- How theology and evangelism are connected

You will BE ABLE TO:

- Explain how inadequate theology undermines evangelism

You will THINK ABOUT:

- How God’s holiness is essential in grasping both the content and motivation for evangelism

Begin video.

Outline of this Course:

- The three topics to be covered:
 - The reading assignments
 - The memory assignments
 - The speaking and preaching assignments

The Biblical Foundation for Evangelism

- A.W. Tozer’s Quote: “What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us.”
- Theology is the very foundation for evangelism. What we believe about God, what we believe about man and his relationship to God and what we believe about the process of someone coming to salvation through faith in Jesus Christ will determine not only what we say when sharing our faith, but whether we even open our mouth to begin with.
- Solid theology informs and directs our efforts at evangelism. Conversely, inadequate theology undermines evangelism.

- Some examples of what I'm referring to are:
 - Inadequate theology can result in a distortion of the Gospel. For instance, a skewed understanding of theology can result in the Gospel becoming a means to self-actualization rather than a means to reconciliation with God. For some the focus in evangelism is upon a message that claims the Gospel is a means to realizing happiness. However, an individual's greatest need is to be reconciled to God, not to discover what makes them feel good about themselves in this life. In a similar vein the health-and-wealth Gospel makes personal comfort and materialistic gain the motivation for accepting Christ.
 - Some preach the Gospel as though it were a lottery ticket. By this I mean that evangelism becomes a means by which we can obtain wealth. In some foreign countries people accept Christ because they equate Christianity with American prosperity . . . inadequate theology!
 - Another example of inadequate theology undermining evangelism is the presentation of the Gospel as "fire insurance." In this instance salvation is seen only from the perspective of obtaining freedom from hell rather than a call to a personal relationship with the living God that results in a transformed life.
 - Not only does inadequate theology distort what we say, but it can undermine our motivation for evangelism. As an example, either extreme of the Calvinist-Arminian debate could lead to an unwillingness to engage others in sharing the Gospel message. The danger of Calvinism, with its emphasis upon the sovereignty of God, is that it can result in the attitude that evangelism doesn't matter. The danger of Arminian theology is that it minimizes the total depravity of man and thus downplays the degree that man has been affected by sin. If sin is no longer viewed as rebellion against God, but only as a sickness that controls us, then the motivation for evangelism is undermined.
- Inadequate theology can also minimize the exclusiveness of Christ. If other religions are seen as legitimate means of gaining access to God, then why preach Christ? Post-modernism, which strikes at the heart of objective truth, would have us accept that everyone is developing their own version of truth. Any theology that does away with objective truth leaves little motivation for preaching Christ.
- As we'll see in this course, evangelism must be based upon a theology that is genuine in the sense that it is lived out in our lives as opposed to a theology that is for display only encased in our formal Statement of Belief. How we live our life reveals the real nature of our beliefs rather than our intellectual assent to a set of theological propositions.

- Even more, if we confess one set of beliefs but live our lives by a different theological standard, our evangelistic efforts send a confusing message at best and very possibly dim the shining light that the follower of Christ is to manifest. Why? Because ultimately our lifestyle determines our effectiveness in evangelism. We have only to look at the stories in the Gospel accounts to see that as often as not individuals were drawn to a person, Jesus Christ, as much or more than they were drawn to a theological system. The lives we live shout much more about what we truly believe than do the formal creeds we subscribe to.

The Holiness of God

- Any theological foundation for evangelism must begin with what we believe about God. For the rest of this session, and the next session as well, we will consider the Bible's teaching on those attributes of God that bare most directly upon evangelism. We'll begin with the holiness of God.
- Isaiah 6:1-8. In a very powerful passage of Scripture, the prophet Isaiah is confronted with the holiness of God. The concept of holiness is derived from the meaning "to be separate."
- Essential holiness: That God is separate from and transcendent over all things.
- Ethical holiness: That God is separate from evil and is thus perfect. Not only is God free from any taint of sin in His own being, but He cannot be associated or connected with anything that is tainted by sin. Thus, God abhors sin and demands purity in His moral creatures.
- 1 John 1:1-10 . . .
- Holiness is the one quality that defines the very essence of God's character for it is that which unifies and integrates all other aspects of His nature. Holiness is not just one trait among other divine traits, rather God's holiness integrates and unifies all the other incomparably good characteristics of the divine life. When we say that God is holy we are asserting that God is perfect in purity, both in His essential nature and in every energy, operation, or activity that proceeds out of that nature.

- So, what does the holiness of God encompass?
- First, it encompasses the holiness of God’s character. God is good without defect. As we saw in the case of Isaiah 6, it is impossible to stand in the presence of this holy God without profoundly feeling the moral inadequacy of our own human lives.
- Secondly, the holiness of God encompasses the holiness of God’s activity. Everything God does, the entirety of His activity is perfect and without defect. As a result, there is no inconsistency between God’s being and God’s activity.
- Finally, the holiness of God encompasses the holiness of God’s requirements. Because God is holy He demands holiness in character and action. Because God is holy, His demand is that we be morally perfect in our character and actions as well.
- As Isaiah became aware of his sinfulness when confronted with the holiness of God, we also become confronted with our own sinfulness in the light of God’s holiness. When confronted with a holy God we are also confronted with our own pending judgment.
- As we saw in Isaiah 6, several other theological truths flow out of the prophet’s encounter with the holiness of God. There was the awareness, not only of his own sin, but also an awareness of the sins of other people. There was the realization of God’s grace when the angel was sent to touch his lips with the burning coal from the altar. Finally, there was the call on Isaiah to tell others. We might say that as the prophet confronted the very holiness of God, he grasped in a fresh and powerful way the true motivation for evangelism.

Review

- We looked at the connection between evangelism and theology.
- We discovered that what we believe about God, what we believe about man, and the convictions we hold about the process of salvation will influence not only what we say but will also determine whether we even open our mouths to share Christ with others.
- We looked at the attributes of God beginning with God’s holiness. We saw that the holiness of God integrates every other attribute about Him.
- Because God is holy – that is, He is separate and transcendent over all things – He is perfect in purity, both in His character and in all His actions. God’s holiness also extends to what He requires of us.

In the Next Session

- We will look at seven attributes of God that connect to evangelism.
- We will discuss God’s righteousness, His goodness, His benevolence, His love, His grace, His mercy, and His truth.

ASSIGNMENT: STUDENT INTRODUCTIONS

We begin today with something easy and familiar as you start to get comfortable standing in front of a group and speaking.

Write down the main points on a card or piece of paper to help you follow a script or notes while standing in front of the class.

These points are:

- introduce yourself to the class,
- tell where you grew up,
- your family origin,
- where you went to school,
- what you are doing in your lives right now, and
- share why you are taking this course.

Your instructor may ask you additional questions if your comments are brief or incomplete.

Read Ch. 1 of “Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God” by J.I. Packer

SESSION 1, PART 2 - EVANGELISM AND THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

After this session, you will:

- Examine the seven attributes of God that connect to evangelism.

At the end of this session:

You will KNOW:

- Certain attributes of God that have direct impact on evangelism.

You will BE ABLE TO:

- Discuss the truths revealed in Scripture about God's nature and how they relate to evangelism.

You will THINK ABOUT:

- What they believe about God and how that connects to the message and motivation of evangelism.

In the Last Session

- We looked at the connection between evangelism and theology.
- We discovered that what we believe about God, what we believe about man, and the convictions we hold about the process of salvation will influence not only what we say but will also determine whether we even open our mouths to share Christ with others.
- Looked at the attributes of God beginning with God's holiness. We saw that the holiness of God integrates every other attribute about Him.
- Because God is holy – that is, He is separate and transcendent over all things – He is perfect in purity, both in His character and in all His actions. God's holiness also extends to what He requires of us.

Begin video.

The Righteousness of God

- Continuing our brief look at the attributes of God as they bear on the subject of evangelism, we now turn to God's righteousness.
- While holiness relates to God's separateness; righteousness relates to God's justice. Righteousness has to do with conformity to a standard. As it relates to God, that standard is the law of God's own nature.
- Psalm 11:7 tells us: "For the Lord is righteous; He loves righteousness. The upright will behold His face." And Psalm 9:8 informs us that God "will judge the world in righteousness; He will execute judgment for the peoples with equity."
- Because God is righteous, all His dealings and relationships are preformed according to righteousness. The standards of God's perfect nature are never altered or sacrificed for the sake of expediency or due to whim. This means that the guilty will not be cleared on the one hand, and that the justified will not be condemned on the other. God's justice is therefore just as He executes His law in relationship to us so that He gives either rewards or punishments.
- Putting these first two attributes of God together, God's holiness and His righteousness confront us with the guilt of man and the fact that humanity stands condemned before God.

The Goodness of God

- God is the source of all in the universe that is good. Furthermore, God desires to communicate His goodness to others. God wills the happiness of His creatures and desires to impart to them all the goodness they can receive.
- God's goodness includes benevolence, love, grace, mercy and longsuffering, each having a significant impact on His actions towards us in salvation. These very same attributes of God then impact and shape our attitudes and actions toward others in evangelism.

The Benevolence of God

- Benevolence is that aspect of God which embraces all of God's creatures in general and secures their welfare. Psalm 145:9 states that: "The Lord is good to all, and His mercies are over all His works." There are aspects of God's goodness and grace which are enjoyed by all His creation simply because God takes personal interest in that which He has originated.
- This teaches us that if we would be a son or daughter of our Father who is in heaven; if we would in any way mirror His godly character; we, too, must be indiscriminate in showing the common courtesies and provision of life to our fellow humans whether they are of the household of faith or not.
- Because God is benevolent He desires that none should perish. See 2 Peter 3:9.

The Love of God

- Love is the prime motive, together with holiness, in all God's actions. To have holiness without love is to have a God who is only concerned about His own being. To have love without holiness is to have a God who is inconsistent with His own being, for in His actions, He violates His very nature. Love is relational, it is the desire to enter into communion with the object loved, to have a personal relationship with the person.
- God's love is unconditional. Because God is love by nature, external circumstances do not affect the way or the ones He loves. Despite our sins, God loved us before we responded in love to Him (1 John 4:19). The supreme evidence of God's love, and the motivation for our response of love, is His prior love for us as set forth in His sending His son to provide satisfaction for our sins and the gift of life which is life indeed (1 John 4:9-11).
- God's love is active (John 3:16). Love is not measured by feelings, but by actions, not by what one is willing to do, but by what one is willing to sacrifice for the wellbeing of another (John 3:16).
- To love people is to desire to enter a relationship with them, to demonstrate unconditional love and to desire them to have a relationship with God.

The Grace of God

- Grace in God refers to God's unmerited love in action towards those who have forfeited it and deserve the very opposite, being under a sentence of condemnation. Eph. 2:8-9 declares: "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast."
- To affirm that God is gracious is to affirm that God does not deal with creatures because of their works, merit, or what they deserve, but rather out of an upwelling, abundant divine compassion. 2 Cor. 8:9 tells us: "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich."
- Grace is free. We cannot merit grace for then it would no longer be grace. Grace is made possible through the act of Christ upon the cross, for because God's justice has been fully satisfied by Christ, He can now act with grace towards us.
- Grace is infinite. Grace covers all our sins. Grace exceeds the depths of our sin. Titus 2:11 tells us, "For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men." The phrase "bringing salvation to all men" indicates that it is the expression of God's grace that makes salvation possible.

The Mercy of God

- The mercy of God refers to God's goodness as exercised on behalf of the need of His creatures. It contemplates man in his misery, and distress irrespective of what he truly deserves. Eph. 2:4-5, "But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)."
- Evangelism is based upon the expression of mercy whereby we see the plight of people and the needs they have and then are moved to action to meet their needs. The greatest need is spiritual life.

The Truth of God

- God is a God of truth. That is, He is perfectly reliable in His revelation. Because God is true His message to us in Scripture has absolute reliability. His declarations are trustworthy. John 17:17, "Sanctify them in the truth; Thy word is truth."
- Because God is truth and true to His Word His promises to me cannot fail. 2 Timothy 2:13 states that: "If we are faithless, He remains faithful; for He cannot deny Himself." This means that the promise of salvation given to those who call upon Him is absolute truth, furthermore, the certainty of judgment to those who reject the truth is equally true.
- God has then communicated that truth to us so that we can know we have eternal life. "These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, in order that you may know that you have eternal life." (1 John 5:13). This means that the message of the Gospel is certain and it is not contrived by man.

Review

- In this session, we looked at seven attributes of God that connect to evangelism.
- We discussed God's righteousness, His goodness, His benevolence, His love, His grace, His mercy, and His truth.

In the Next Session

- We will discuss how the Fall of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden not only changed man's relationship to God, but also his relationship to his fellow man and even his relationship to creation.

ASSIGNMENT: EIGHT ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

Be prepared to discuss the eight attributes of God that were covered (the seven listed above and God’s Holiness which was covered in the previous session), and see what you recall and what you might add to your own in thinking about how these divine attributes relate to evangelism, both in terms of its content and the motivation for sharing Christ with others.

Read Chapter 2 of Packer’s book, “Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God.”

SESSION 1, PART 3 - EVANGELISM AND ANTHROPOLOGY

After this session, you will:

- Understand the implication of man being made in the image of God.
- Discuss the consequences of the Fall.

At the end of this session:

You will KNOW:

- The devastating consequences of the Fall.

You will BE ABLE TO:

- Discuss how being made in God's image underlies our motivation for evangelism.

You will THINK ABOUT:

- Why people are often so resistant and closed to hearing the Gospel message.

In the Last Session

- In the last session, we looked at 8 attributes of God and saw how they connected to both the content of and motivation for evangelism.

Begin video.

Who is Man?

- Evangelism requires an understanding of who man is.
- Evangelism is an outgrowth of anthropology. Anthropology is the study of man.
- Looking first at the nature of man, Genesis 1:27 informs us that man is created in the image of God. "And God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them." Being created in God's image does not refer to a physical similarity but rather refers to the personal, moral and spiritual attributes that we possess. Because God's intention is that when we manifest His image, we find our full identity when we most express His character. This reality places discipleship at the heart of the human identity. Discipleship is the intentional process whereby the individual follower of Jesus Christ seeks to pattern his/her life after the teaching and example of Christ.
- Because we were created in the image of God we cannot discover true happiness and fulfillment until we are in a relationship with God. We exist to know God and be in a dynamic relationship with Him. Any other attempt to find happiness apart from God is destined to disappointment and failure.

We Are Created in the Image of God.

- As those created in the image of God we have:
- **A rational dimension:** We have the capacity to reason and understand the world in which we live.
- **A spiritual dimension:** We have the capacity to be in a relationship with God.
- **A moral dimension:** We are moral beings with a sense of morality and moral obligation.
- **A social dimension:** We are in relationship with others.
- As ones created in God's image we have great value before God. Because we were created to have fellowship with God; and we don't because of sin, followed by discipleship is the process of restoring the relationship and the reflection of God's image.

Original Sin

- Original sin changed the nature of man, and it also changed our relationship with God, resulting in dire consequences.
- The Fall of man is chronicled in Genesis 3.
- When Adam sinned, all humanity became tainted by sin. Sin is an act of rebellion against God and a rejection of His nature.
- Consider these results of the Fall:
- The total depravity of man. Everything we do is tainted by the pollution of sin (Is. 64:6). We no longer seek God, nor can we (Rom. 3:10-18).
- The loss of innocence. Instead of the innocence of freedom from guilt, we now become marred by the guilt and pain of sin. We are plagued by the shame of our guilt before a holy God.
- The loss of intimacy and fellowship with God. Instead of enjoying the fellowship with God we became fearful of God. Instead of being drawn to God in holy communion we became repelled. God in His holiness, instead of being the joy of our existence, became the object of our abhorrence. Consequently, we distance ourselves from God and even flee from Him.
- The loss of intimacy and fellowship with others. Broken relationships became part and parcel of human existence. The result was an emptiness that longed to be loved. The loss of intimacy placed within humanity a desire and need to experience love.

- The loss of identity. We were created in the image of God so that our identity and understanding of ourselves comes from our understanding of God and our relationship with Him. When our relationship with God was broken then we lost the understanding of who we are. It was not that the image of God was completely erased but it became marred and corrupted by sin. James 3:9 mentions that we are still made in the image of God. But, our capacity to reason has become corrupted so that we cannot properly understand (2 Cor. 4:4). Instead of being in a harmonious relationship with God we are now fearful of God (Genesis 3:8-11). Our moral obligation and understanding lead us to a sense of guilt and corrupted morality so that we now consider what is morally wrong in God's sight to be morally right (Prov. 14:12). Our relationships become marred by conflict and brokenness even in marriage. Life becomes a search for meaning and identity. The question: Who am I? becomes significant for people.
- Loss of life. First, there is spiritual death. Spiritual life is a life of relationship with God. Spiritual death is defined as separation from God (Rom. 6:23). Spiritual death leaves us with a sense of foreboding and pessimism. Life and existence became destructive rather than constructive. Sin seeks to destroy life. Then there is physical death. Spiritual death found reality in our physical death so that death became the ultimate tragedy of our human existence, something to be feared. Consequently, many deny the existence of death, because the pain of death is too hard to bear.
- The loss of dominion. We were created to govern the world and oversee the world to maintain order within the world and maintain the wellbeing of the earth. Sin entered and we abrogated (to do away with) our responsibility and bestowed it upon Satan so that he is now the prince of this world (Eph. 2:2). Satan and evil, rather than seeking to bring wellbeing to the world, seek to bring destruction.
- Finally, there is the reality of hell (See Matthew 10:28; 8:12). We learn from Revelation 14:10-11 that there is no annihilation after death, and no restoration from hell.

Review

- The Fall of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden not only changed man's relationship to God, but also his relationship to his fellow man and to creation.

In the Next Session

- We will discuss first the key terms that relate to the Scripture's teaching on salvation.
- We will explore the general process of an individual coming to faith in Jesus Christ.

ASSIGNMENT: CREATE SHORT PRESENTATION

Read and discuss the passages connected to anthropology and its impact upon evangelism.

Read Ch. 3 of "Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God."

Prepare a five-minute presentation on your favorite interest, activity, or hobby.

- What is it?
- How did they get involved in this activity?
- What is it about this interest that draws them and gives them delight?

Be ready to give this short presentation at the next session.

SESSION 1, PART 4 - EVANGELISM AND SOTERIOLOGY

After this session, you will:

- Understand the key terms that relate to the Scripture's teaching on salvation.
- Explore the general process of an individual coming to faith in Jesus Christ.

At the end of this session,

You will KNOW:

- The key words related to the believer's salvation.

You will BE ABLE TO:

- Gain an overview of the process of an individual's coming to Christ in salvation.

You will THINK ABOUT:

- The particulars of their own salvation experience and where they are right now in understanding the Bible's teaching on this subject.

In the Last Session

- We looked at the connection between anthropology and evangelism.
- Man, having been created in God's image, was intended to be in a vital relationship with God.
- The entrance of sin into the world broke that relationship and has led to disastrous consequences for mankind ever since.
- Essentially, at the Fall, man lost everything that God had intended for him, both in this present life and in eternity

Begin video.

Evangelism/Soteriology

- Evangelism is the outgrowth of soteriology.
- Soteriology is the study of salvation.
- In discussing salvation it's vital that we understand some key words.

Atonement

- The first of these key words is atonement.
- Atonement means that Christ fully satisfied the demands of God's justice for sin. Christ died in my place and for my benefit.
- His death was primarily directed towards God who is the offended party.
- It is to be noted that while Christ's death makes salvation available to all, it does not guarantee all will be saved.
- Atonement deals with the judicial aspect of substitution.
- Our forgiveness provided the removal of our sin.
- As our sin-bearer Christ secured forgiveness for the sinner.
- Thus, there is a subtraction of the judicial effects of sin.
- Atonement not only speaks to the removal of sin, but it also means that righteousness is imputed (credited to us). Christ, as our substitute, gave us the gift of eternal life together with imputation of the righteousness of God.

Atonement Includes

- **Substitution.** Christ becomes our substitute so that the demands of justice were satisfied (Mark 10:45).
- **Redemption.** Redemption is pictured in the Old Testament when the nation of Israel was redeemed from slavery to Egypt. Redemption is that work of God through the death of Christ whereby man is purchased from the slavery of sin and released unto the freedom of grace (Rom. 7:14, 1 Cor. 6:20). The book of Ruth presents a similar picture in its discussion of the kinsman redeemer. 1) The redeemer must be a kinsman. 2) He must be able to redeem having the resources (John 10:14-18). 3) The kinsman must be willing to redeem (Phil. 2:5-8). 4) He must be free of the predicament having befallen the one to be redeemed. A slave could not free a slave. 5) The kinsman must act to redeem by paying the price (1 Peter 1:18-19).
- **Reconciliation.** Reconciliation is that work of God through the death of Christ by which sinful man is brought into a relationship of spiritual harmony with God. Hostility and enmity are changed to peace and friendship (Col. 1:20-22).
- **Propitiation.** Propitiation is that work of God through the death of Christ whereby God's wrath is satisfied regarding the sins of man (1 John 2:2). Christ died for the world (John 3:16), with a view to their salvation. Evangelism is based on the realization that Christ died for the worst of sinners, even for those who will ultimately reject Him.

Salvation

- Salvation is a work of God in the lives of sinful men whereby God calls the sinner from death to life. While every believer has a unique story to tell of the outworking of God's grace in their life, there are still general trends that can be identified both from Scripture's teaching and our experience that show us some of the steps, if you will, in the process of salvation. The steps that will be discussed next are not necessarily hard and fast in the order they are presented here.
- **General call.** The gracious act of God whereby He invites all sinners to accept the salvation that is offered in Christ Jesus. This general call is universal in nature (Revelation 22:17).
- **Draw.** In John 6:44 Jesus states that "No one can come to Me, unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day." God takes the initiative to restore the relationship. The drawing of God is seen in the quest of man for identity (understanding of life's purpose); in man's quest for meaning (significance); and in man's quest for love (relationship).
- **Conviction.** The origin of conviction is the Holy Spirit (John 16: 7-11). The nature of conviction is in the areas of sin – man's problem; righteousness – God's provision; and judgment – the rejecter's punishment. The object of this conviction is the world, both universally and individually. The ground of conviction from John 16:9-11 is 1) the world's unbelief in Christ. This is the essence of sin for it is to judge God's Word regarding His son as false and to assert personal independence from God. 2) Christ's return to the Father. Christ is shown to be the one whom He claimed to be and has done what He claimed to do. A demonstration that all is done – shows that God the Father was fully satisfied. 3) Satan's judgment. To be identified with Satan is to be identified with a condemned master and ultimately to share in the same judgment as well.
- **Repentance.** As used in the Old Testament, (e.g., Jer. 8:6), the word "repent" carries the idea of deep sorrow often leading to a change of plan. "Repentance" in the New Testament (2 Timothy 2:25), means to change the mind, that is, to change one's mind or purpose. A definition of repentance would be: that conscious change of attitude, both spiritual and moral, regarding God, on the one hand, and sin, on the other. Repentance involves an intellectual element (2 Timothy 2:25), an emotional element (2 Cor. 7:9-10) and a volitional element (Acts 8:22).

- **Faith.** Faith is that persuasion, drawn forth from within by God through the truth of the Gospel, that God’s testimony regarding His son is true; and the resulting trust in Jesus Christ which leads one to submit to Him.
- **Regeneration.** Regeneration is that work of God the Holy Spirit whereby men and women are born again into the Kingdom of God through the implantation of new life. When we are given this new life, a spiritual transformation is affected. We receive a living hope (1 Peter 1:3). We receive an immutable and secure inheritance (1 Peter 1:4). We are enabled to practice righteousness rather than sin (1 John 2:29). We are enabled to demonstrate a pattern of love (1 John 4:7). We are provided with a life of faith and victory over the world (1 John 5:1, 4-5).
- **Justification.** To be justified is to be pronounced, accepted and treated as righteous. To be justified also entitles one to all the privileges of someone who has kept the law. Justification is a judicial declaration of the Almighty Judge who based on the propitiatory atonement of Christ pronounces acquittal to all who are united with Christ by faith (Rom. 3:24).
- **Sanctification.** Sanctification is the work of the Holy Spirit whereby God sets the believer apart from sin unto God and progressively conforms him to the image of Christ, enabling him to perform good works worthy of God’s approval (1 Peter 1:15-16). The primary means of sanctification is the Word of God (John 17:17). The secondary means is God’s sovereign providence, the circumstances around us (Heb. 12:10).
- **Security.** In speaking of the security of the believer in Jesus Christ there are several different terms to keep in mind. Eternal security speaks of the work of God where He keeps the believer from a total and final turning away and continues the work of divine grace begun in regeneration unto its completion in glory (Phil. 1:6, Rom. 8:28-30). Perseverance is that response of continuance in the way of faith and holiness on the part of the believer which is consistent with and demonstrative of that eternal salvation that is his in Christ. Our perseverance is an evidence of our faith (Phil. 2:12-13). Assurance is that confidence wrought in the believer’s heart by the witness of the Holy Spirit through the Scriptures that the finished work of Christ is his forever.
- **Glorification.** Glorification is the fulfillment of all that has been promised to the believer. It means that we shall be with Christ forever (John 14:3), and that we shall both see the glorified Christ and be like Him (1 John 3:2).

Review

- The Bible uses very specific terms when discussing the topic of salvation.
- An understanding of those key terms is important in sharing our faith with another.
- The Scriptures also give us a general roadmap of how salvation works in an individual's life. Understanding this process is helpful when talking about Christ with another.

In the Next Session

- We will look at the call to evangelism for the nation Israel in the Old Testament.
- We will also look at the same call to evangelism for the church in the New Testament.
- We will see that the call to be a witness for God was the same in both the Old and New Testaments.

ASSIGNMENTS: PRESENT SHORT PRESENTATION

Participate in the discussion of the concepts and associated Scripture passages that have been presented in this session.

Give a short presentation on your favorite interest or hobby.

Read Ch. 4 of "Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God."

Come prepared to discuss and critique Packer's arguments in the book at the next session.

SESSION 2, PART 1 - THE RESPONSIBILITY OF EVANGELISM

After this session, you will:

- Examine the responsibility of Israel to be a light to the world as outlined in the Old Testament.
- Discover that that same responsibility was entrusted to the church by Jesus Christ.

At the end of this session:

You will KNOW:

- God’s expectation of His people, both Old and New Testaments, when it comes to evangelism.

You will BE ABLE TO:

- Articulate the Lord’s call to evangelism from several New Testament passages.

You will THINK ABOUT:

- Your own personal stake in evangelism.
- Telling others about Christ has both a universal component and a component.

In the Last Session

- We looked at evangelism and the Scripture’s teaching on soteriology.
- We discussed key terms and concepts that relate to both the meaning of salvation and to the process of one’s salvation.

Begin video.

God Chose to Reach the World Through Israel

- God chose to reach the world through Israel.
- In any discussion of the responsibility of evangelism it is instructive to go back to the Old Testament and discover God’s intent for His chosen people of Israel. What we find is that the people of God were called to make Him known to all nations. 1 Chron. 16:8 says, “Oh give thanks to the Lord, call upon His name; Make known His deeds among the peoples.” God’s intent was to reach the world through the people of Israel.

Relationship Between Israel and Rest of Humanity

- There is a relationship between Israel and the rest of humanity.
- The problem is this: to what extent does the concern for peoples everywhere surface in the Old Testament when its primary subject matter is Israel? Or, put another way, what relationship is there between the particular (Israel) and the universal (all peoples)? Proceeding from a New Testament base the

situation is clearer. The church (a particular) has for its mission the spread of the knowledge of God to the nations (universal).

Original Witness

- Israel was the original witness to the truth of God’s salvation.
- There are 175 references in the Old Testament that point to God’s desire to save all people. Just as God desires to use the church to reach the world, so also, He desired Israel to be a witness for Him to all the world. Israel was to be a light to all nations. “Sing praises to the Lord, who dwells in Zion; Declare among the peoples His deeds” (Psalm 9:11).
- Isaiah 43:8-12 is a powerful passage that speaks to God’s purposes for Israel when it comes to declaring truth to the world. In this passage, God calls the nations together to hear truth. Twice (vs. 43:10, 12) God declares about Israel that “you are My witnesses!” The content of that witness required of Israel is that God had announced it ahead of time, had saved Israel, and now lets it be heard.

Church Witnesses to The World

- In the New Testament, the Church witnesses to the world.
- The phrase in a parallel passage in the New Testament from Acts 1:8 echoes almost the exact same words, “And you shall be My witnesses.” Like the word for witness in the New Testament, the Hebrew word refers to a person who has firsthand knowledge of an event or one who can testify based on a report which he has heard.
- Moving to the New Testament, the responsibility for evangelism is made clear in many striking and vivid statements. Matthew 5:14-16 states, “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do men light a lamp, and put it under the peck-measure, but on the lampstand; and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.”

Our Light Revealed

- Our light is revealed through good deeds.
- This passage from Matthew 5 speaks of good deeds as being a key part of our witness to others. How we reveal our light is through our good deeds. We aren't called to control the power structures of our culture; neither are we promised that we can change the political climate or the values of our society. But we must remain active preservative agents, no matter the cost, in calling the world to heed God's standards. In so doing, we must avoid the tendency to form isolated Christian enclaves to which the world pays little attention.

Cannot Control Outcome of Our Witness

- We cannot control the outcome of our witness, just our faithfulness.
- In Matthew 5:13 Christ declares, "You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has become tasteless, how will it be made salty again? It is good for nothing anymore, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men."
- We cannot control the results of our efforts to be witnesses to the world. The outcome is in the Lord's sovereign hands. Our responsibility is to be certain that we do not shrink away from this call of God to be visible and active in the world. Israel shirked their responsibility in this area. It is vital that the church of Jesus Christ not repeat their failure.

Evangelism Comes from Compassion

- Evangelism comes from compassion for the lost.
- The church is to have compassion for the lost.
- Matthew 9:36-38 states: "And seeing the multitudes, He felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and downcast like sheep without a shepherd. Then He said to His disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Therefore, beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest.'"
- Looking at Matthew 9:36, notice first the condition of the unsaved. They were "distressed" (harassed – NIV). The tense of the verb indicates a state of existence existing before the time of the principle verb. Distressed originally meant to flay or skin. Thus, we have a graphic picture of the plight of individuals apart from Christ. Distressed often connoted the ideas of being battered, bruised, mangled, ripped apart worn out and exhausted.
- The second word Christ uses to describe the unsaved is the word "downcast" (helpless – NIV). This describes one who has been thrown down and is utterly helpless as from a mortal wound. Metaphorically it refers to those who are confused. Downcast can also refer to one who is neglected, that is, those who were not taught.

- Christ goes on to describe those who are unsaved as “without a shepherd.” This means they were without leadership or anyone to guide them. He did not see the unsaved as the enemy, but as those who had been captured by the enemy.

Jesus Moved by Hopelessness of the Lost

- Jesus was deeply moved by the hopelessness of the lost.
- Continuing to look at Matthew 9:36 we discover something of Christ’s attitude toward the unsaved. “And seeing the multitudes” – Christ didn’t just take note of their outward circumstance, rather the verb “seeing” indicates that He perceived with understanding. Christ didn’t look at the outer being and culture, but at the heart condition.
- We tend to look at the outer – how a person looks, how they are dressed, their personality and sociability, their culture. Christ looked beyond that. He “felt compassion.” This is a strong emotional term. It means to be moved in the gut. It has the idea of being physically racked with emotion. What caused Christ’s deeply-felt compassion was not the many varieties of physical sickness that He has seen, but rather the great spiritual need of the people. The people were living aimless lives, having no center, living a daily experience of futility. Such a plight deeply moves Jesus.

Many Unbelievers in Need of the Word

- There are many unbelievers in need of hearing the Word.
- Moving on to Matthew 9:37 we gain a perspective on evangelism from Christ. First, He states that “the harvest is plentiful.” There are two views on what Christ means by this statement. The first view is that He is referring to the coming judgment that these people will face one day. Some commentators see this verse as a warning to Israel that judgment time is near. But the word “plentiful” stands in the way of this interpretation. This makes sense only if the Greek word “therismos” used here does not mean “harvest-time” but “harvest-crop.”
- The second view, and the one I’m convinced is the preferred view, parallels a similar passage in John 4:35 where the word “harvest” is used of the harvest of people who need the Gospel. The idea here is that there are many who need hearing about the salvation that is found only in Jesus Christ.

God's Plan is to Share His Word

- God's plan is for people to share His Word.
- Matthew 9:37 also informs us that "the workers are few." In contrast to the extensive nature of the harvest which is described as "plentiful," the number of workers for this potentially abundant harvest is "few."
- The Lord is telling us that there is a great need for Gospel witnesses. There is a great need for people who are willing to go and tell others about Christ. God, in His wisdom, chose to expand His kingdom through the efforts of people rather than through any other method. He could have chosen to simply line up the stars in the night sky to spell out "Jesus Saves."
- Instead, Plan A is to wrap the Gospel message around each of the followers of Jesus Christ and send them out to tell a hurting and helpless world that there is hope.
- Matthew 9:38 gives us Christ's specific instructions to the believer.

First Step, Prayer

- Prayer is the first step of evangelism.
- First, we are to pray. Because of an overwhelming need, prayer is the first response we are to have. The idea here, ("beseech the Lord of the harvest"), is that the believer would make an intense request of God; that he would beg and implore God. This is much more than a suggestion; it is a command.
- The focus of this intense prayer is that God would "send out workers into the harvest." God calls but man must respond. The question is not "is God calling people to serve as witnesses?" For we know from 2 Peter 3:9 that He desires that none would perish. The question is "are we willing to serve?"

Review

- We talked about a world that is distressed and downcast apart from a relationship with Jesus Christ calls for a clear response from Christ's followers.
- Just the like the Old Testament saints, the believer today has a responsibility to be light in a dark world. We have the responsibility to be a part of working in an abundant harvest of people who need the gospel.

In the Next Session

- Review key Scriptural passages that address our responsibility to be involved in evangelism.
- Discuss obstacles that make evangelism a challenge for the Christian in the modern era.

ASSIGNMENT: PRAY FOR PEOPLE

Using the passages your instructor has provided, be prepared to discuss the passages addressed in this session.

Do you agree or disagree with the conclusions drawn from these passages?

Discuss whatever message those in the church may have been receiving that would be different than that which has been outlined in this session.

Your instructor will lead you in a discussion on Packer’s book, “Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God” and will give you a list of passages.

You will be asked to comment on the passages that your instructor has underlined. What did you agree with, disagree with, or not fully understand?

Write the names of 10 individuals you know personally who do not know Christ.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

Commit to commit to praying for those 10 people each day for the next week.

Memorize Ephesians 2:8-9.

SESSION 2, PART 2 - THE RESPONSIBILITY OF EVANGELISM

In this session

- Review key Scriptural passages that address our responsibility to be involved in evangelism.
- Discuss obstacles that make evangelism a challenge for the Christian in the modern era.

At the end of this session:

You will KNOW:

- That the responsibility for evangelism rests upon each follower of Christ.

You will BE ABLE TO:

- Grasp the overall picture of how evangelism works.

You will THINK ABOUT:

- What obstacles they may struggle with in their efforts to share Christ with others.

Begin video.

The Church

- Christ commissioned the church to tell the world about Him.
- The church is to evangelize the world.
- Acts 1:8, "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."
- The empowerment for the commission to evangelize the world: The power of the Holy Spirit. The source of the commission: Christ. The nature of the commission: To be witnesses of the death and resurrection of Christ. The extent of the commission: To the ends of the world. The object of the commission: The whole church.

Our Responsibility

- Responsibility to evangelize falls to the individual and it is based in our personal response to Christ.
- Everyone is called to evangelism. Just one-third of all adults believe that they have a personal responsibility or obligation to share their religious views with other people. Christians and non-Christians alike opt for a nation in which people are free to practice their religion as long as it is done in secret (or quietly).
- John 4 tells the story of Christ's encounter with a woman at a well in Samaria. Following that life-changing conversation, we read in John 4:28-30, "So the woman left her water pot, and went into the city, and said to the men, 'Come, see a man who told me all the things that I have done; this is not the Christ, is it?' They went out of the city, and were coming to Him." In this woman's case, witnessing is the response of salvation. When we have experienced our salvation, and understand our salvation, then we desire to proclaim it, to tell somebody about it.
- In Acts 8:4 we learn that the response of the church to persecution was just the opposite of what we might have expected. Instead of hiding from their persecutors and keeping their mouths shut, "those who had been scattered went about preaching the Word." It's worth noting in this passage that it was the lay people who spread the Word, not the leadership.

God's People

- God's people are ambassadors to the world.
- A key understanding of the individual believer's call to evangelism is grasping what God's Word says about the position of the believer. 2 Cor. 5:20, "Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were entreating through us; we implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God." An ambassador needs to be *persona grata* (an acceptable person) with both countries (the one that he represents and the one to which he goes). God speaks through His designated representative. The ambassador's message is succinct and clear: "Be reconciled to God."
- An ambassador represents his government also in all its dignity. An ambassador speaks wholly for his ruler; he is his ruler's mouthpiece. He never utters his own thoughts, offers, promises or demands, but only those of his ruler. An ambassador's person lends no weight to what he says. They to whom he is sent see and hear only the ruler who sent him. As His ambassadors, God makes His appeal to others through us.

God Equips Us to Evangelize

- God equips us to evangelize.
- When it comes to evangelism, the source of our message is God. The empowerment for our message is the Holy Spirit. The time for giving our testimony is every opportunity the Lord brings our way. Eph. 5:15-16, “Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men, but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil.” The context of this passage indicates that believers are to glorify God by their life and conduct, by exposing evil, by abounding in good works, by strengthening the fellowship and by winning their neighbor. The basis for evangelism is the Christian’s character. The foundation for evangelism is prayer.

Reasons Why Christians Struggle

- There are reasons that many Christians struggle to evangelize.
- Since evangelism is commanded, empowered and modeled in Scripture, why is it such a struggle for the follower of Christ to jump right up and say to the Lord, “Here I am, send me!” The answer is that there are definite obstacles to evangelism. Here are a few of them with regards to the worldview of our culture.
- **Individualism:** A lack of community responsibility results in the perspective that I am not responsible for my neighbor.
- **Rights to privatization:** My faith is private and therefore I feel uncomfortable sharing my faith because I am sharing a very personal aspect of my life.
- **Post-modernism:** When truth becomes relative, then I do not feel that I should or need to share my own personal perspective.
- **The influence of modern psychology:** Several trends could be mentioned here. Even within the church there has been an emphasis to pursue meaning and happiness apart from Christ. People are told that sin is more of a psychological problem than a spiritual problem. Certain trends in therapy view the dynamics of sin and salvation as no longer relevant, instead there is an emphasis upon victimhood and self-expression.
- **Materialism:** The pursuit of happiness through material possessions.
- **Secularism:** Secularism is a process that profanes life, because it seeks to push the sacred into a distant corner, if not deny it all together.
- **Cultural pluralism:** This view that we must accept all people and all views results in the avoidance of the exclusiveness of the Gospel so as not to cause offense.
- **Consumerism:** The view that I measure all things by what I get out of it.

Some Church Cultures Can Work Against Evangelism

- Certain church cultures can work against evangelism.
- Not only is the worldview of our culture an obstacle to evangelism, but certain trends within Christianity work against evangelism.
- **The professionalization of the church:** Like Simon in Acts 8, some promote the Gospel message to enhance the preacher and increase their wealth.
- **Methodological reductionism:** Some in the church seek to reduce supernatural phenomena to psychological causes and economic motives.
- **Marketing:** Some would reduce evangelism to a marketing strategy rather than the supernatural work of grace.
- **Legalism:** Some attach evangelism to a list of works that are essential to salvation.
- **Misguided focus:** For some the focus is upon building “my” church. The result is a group of disciples of a person rather than disciples of Christ.
- **Misguided message:** As Gal. 1:6-12 makes clear, there are false Gospel messages out there. Further, there can be the tendency to preach the message of man rather than of Scripture, believing that we must argue people into the kingdom. Or we start changing the message of the Gospel to make it more appealing and palatable to be people.
- **Easy believism:** We give people fire insurance rather than confront them with the Gospel.

Individual Perspective Can Be an Obstacle

- Individual perspective can be an obstacle to evangelism.
- In addition to the worldview of our culture and different perspectives within Christianity, the individual’s own perspective can be an obstacle to evangelism.
- **Ignorance:** In some respect, this is the area that much of the material presented here is designed to address. Some do not feel adequate to share the Gospel because they do not fully understand theology. Some do not share the Gospel because they don’t know what they need to share. Some do not feel confident in their knowledge of their faith. Some are ignorant of the mandate in Scripture to share the Gospel.
- **Fear:** This is a big issue for many. The fear of rejection keeps some believers from even starting a conversation about the Gospel. Add to that the fear of failure for various reasons that we’ve already discussed and it’s not surprising that there is a real reluctance to witness for Christ.

- **Relational stress:** Somewhat connected to our fear of rejection is our reluctance to share our faith because we think that to do so might cause a break in our friendships/relationships with people. We must ask ourselves: Are we afraid that we'll risk losing a friend if we share the Gospel, or does our reluctance have more to do with our own personal comfort getting in the way of fulfilling God's command?
- **Comfort:** When it gets right down to the nitty gritty truth of the matter, we don't share the Gospel because we do not want to go outside our comfort zone! That means that our personal comfort is of more importance to us than the eternal destiny of the people around us. Ouch!

Review

- We've looked at some key Scriptural passages that addressed our responsibility to be involved in evangelism.
- We looked at some of the obstacles that make evangelism a challenge for the Christian in the modern era.
- Some of those obstacles have to do with the worldview of our culture, some have to do with different perspectives within the church and some have to do with the individual's personal perspective toward evangelism.

In the Next Session

- We will discover that the foundation for our witness to others is the life we live.
- We will also examine the example of Christ in evangelism.

ASSIGNMENTS: MEMORIZE ROMAN ROADS

Go through the worldview issues and discuss which of those issues you've encountered with people when it comes to the Gospel.

Answer the same question about different perspectives within Christianity, and then answer honestly addressing your own fears about sharing Christ with others.

Begin memorizing the Romans Road. For this course, the Romans Road is Rom. 3:23, Rom. 6:23, Rom. 5:8, Rom. 10-9-10 and Rom. 10:13.

The assignment for this session is to memorize Rom. 3:23; 6:23 and 5:8.

SESSION 2, PART 3 - CHRIST'S EXAMPLE IN EVANGELISM

In this session, you will:

- Discover that the foundation for our witness to others is the life we live.
- Examine the example of Christ in evangelism.

At the end of this session,

You will KNOW:

- That our most effective witness for Christ is more about how we live than it is about what we say.

You will BE ABLE TO:

- Discuss Christ's focus in evangelism.

You will THINK ABOUT:

- The different facets of Christ's strategy in evangelism.

Begin video.

Process to Evangelism

- There is a process to evangelism.
- Up to now we have laid much of the groundwork for why we do evangelism. Now we'll begin to get into the nuts and bolts of how to do evangelism.

Our Lives Main Witness to Others

- Our lives are our main witness to others.
- The first question we'll address is: What is the foundation for our witness to others? Our witness is first the life we live, more than it is a set of principles that we verbalize. Let's look at some passages from Scripture that speak to this issue.
- **A Godly life.** "But sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence." (1 Peter 3:15)
- **Christian love for the brethren.** "By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another." (John 13:35)
- **Christian unity.** "That they may all be one; even as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be in Us; that the world may believe that Thou didst send Me." (John 17:21)

- **Acts of love.** “Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may on account of your good deeds, as they observe them, glorify God in the day of visitation.” (1 Peter 2:12)

Jesus Set the Example

- Jesus set the example for how to evangelize through His focus and strategy.
- Next, let’s look at the process of evangelism. There is no better model for how to do evangelism than the example of Jesus Christ.
- Let’s look first at the focus of Christ:
 - Christ sought to develop disciples not just “converts.” The focus of Christ was not upon gaining great numbers, but gaining disciples who would follow Him.
 - Christ followed clear objectives. His goal was to bring the world to Himself. There was no distinction in Christ’s mind between home and foreign missions.
 - Christ lived His life in service. We must see ourselves primarily as ministers of Christ to bring people into a relationship with Christ regardless of our career or profession.
- The strategy of Christ:
- He sought to **reach individuals** to reach the world. His focus was not upon programs to reach the multitudes, but upon individuals who would influence the world. He focused upon a few. In that sense, Christ’s strategy to transform the world was one individual at a time. This does not mean that He overlooked the multitudes, for He did minister to them, but He did not play to the crowds. The Apostle Paul articulated this same strategy in 2 Timothy 2:2, “And the things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, these entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.”
- **Association.** Spending time with Christ. Christ spent time with the individuals to train them to be disciples. Knowledge was gained by association before it was understood by explanation. We find this invitation in John’s Gospel account, “Come, and you will see” (John 1:39). This means that some system must be found whereby every convert is given a Christian friend to follow until he or she can lead another. This “follow up” was key in Christ’s strategy of evangelism. So, it almost goes without saying, “To become an effective evangelist, we must spend time with Jesus!”

- **Consecration.** We are calling people not to just salvation from hell, but to a life of obedience to Christ. “Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart; and you shall find rest for your souls.” (Matthew 11:29) The disciples soon learned that being a disciple of Christ involved more than a joyful acceptance of the Messianic promise. It meant the surrender of one’s whole life in absolute submission to Christ’s sovereignty. To become an effective evangelist, we must be consecrated to God, living in obedience to Him.
- **Impartation.** Christ’s motive was love. Christ came and gave His life away because of His love for people. (John 3:16) The message of evangelism is not just a message of sin and punishment; it is inherently a message of God’s incredible love for us. It is a love that can only be understood in the context of our unworthiness and His sacrifice. That is why to cheapen sin and the cross is to cheapen the love God has for us. For some, evangelism is a duty, an onerous duty at that. Christ’s example is that love must be the compulsion for evangelism. But lest we think that we are to try to imitate the example of the Son of God out of our limited resources, Christ also gave us the Holy Spirit. “But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you” (Acts 1:8a). This truth informs us that evangelism was never intended to be solely a human undertaking. But rather we are to understand that evangelism is a divine project which has been going on from the beginning and will continue until God’s purpose is fulfilled. All that the disciples were asked to do was to let the Spirit have complete charge of their lives. To be an effective evangelist we must also be motivated by love and allow the Holy Spirit to work through us.

Review

- We saw that the foundation of our witness to others is less about our explanations and much more about the kind of life we live. People are attracted to a winsome life before they are persuaded by our words.
- We looked at the example of Jesus Christ in evangelism. Jesus focused on individuals. He intentionally spent time with them. His life was consecrated and submitted to His Father’s will. And Jesus was motivated by His love for people.

In the Next Session

- We will see how evangelism is centered in Christ’s mission and purpose for coming into our world.
- We will also look at the value of our personal testimony in sharing Christ, and just how to go about preparing our personal testimony.

ASSIGNMENT: EVANGELISM AND THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD

Be prepared to discuss the main points of this session.

Look up the verses mentioned and ask your students what they agree with and why, and what they don't agree with and their reasons.

Discuss Packer's book, *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God*.

- What did you learn from the book?
- What did you agree with or disagree with?
- Did you take away anything that will change their view or willingness to be involved in evangelism?

Memorize the second part of the Romans Road: Rom. 10:9-10 and Rom. 10:13.

SESSION 3 - THE CONTENT OF EVANGELISM

In this session, you will:

- Examine how evangelism is centered in Christ's mission and purpose for coming into our world.
- Realize the value of your personal testimony in sharing Christ, and how to prepare your personal testimony.

At the end of this session:

You will KNOW:

- That Christ's heart was to reach the lost with the message of entering the kingdom of God.

You will BE ABLE TO:

- Think through the four parts of your own personal testimony of how you came to Christ.

You will THINK ABOUT:

- How your personal story of their journey to faith in Christ could connect to someone who is searching right now.

In the Last Session

- We saw that the foundation of our witness to others is less about our explanations and much more about the kind of life we live. People are attracted to a winsome life before they are persuaded by our words.
- We looked at the example of Jesus Christ in evangelism. Jesus focused on individuals. He intentionally spent time with them. His life was consecrated and submitted to His Father's will. And Jesus was motivated by His love for people.

Begin video.

Evangelical Mission

- The evangelical mission is the mission of Christ.
- As followers of Jesus Christ, we not only seek to model our lives after His life, we also seek to model our mission after His mission.
- At the heart of evangelism is our Savior’s heart for the lost He came to save.
- From the time of Adam and Eve on, our sin has broken our relationship with God. Is. 59:2, “But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God.”
- God’s solution to this problem is that He took the initiative to bring us back to Himself. “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life” (John 3:16).
- So, what was Jesus’ life mission? “For the Son of Man has come to seek and save that which was lost” (Luke 19:10). “I have come as light into the world, that everyone who believes in Me may not remain in darkness” (John 12:46). “But He said to them, ‘I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also, for I was sent for this purpose.’” (Luke 4:43). Our motivation for personal evangelism is simply this: If I want to be like Jesus, my life mission must include His life mission. Jesus prayed to the Father in John 17:18, “As Thou did send Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world.”

Five Great Commissions

- Jesus has given five great commissions.
- At the conclusions of each of the four Gospels, and at the beginning of the Book of Acts we discover what someone has referred to as the five Great Commissions of Jesus:
 - “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age” (Matthew 28:19-20).
 - “And He said to them, ‘Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to all creation.’” (Mark 16:15).
 - “And He said to them. ‘Thus, it is written, that the Christ should suffer and rise again from the dead the third day; and that repentance for forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem’” (Luke 24:46-47).
 - “Jesus therefore said to them again, ‘Peace be with you; as the Father has sent Me, I also send you.’” (John 20:21).
 - “But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

- Sharing the good news is our responsibility. For some that may be motivation enough to tell others about the Savior. But there's more to evangelism than the notion of the believers' responsibility.
- Sharing the good news is a privilege. "Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ, and gave us the ministry of reconciliation" (2 Cor. 5:18).
- Christ's gift of salvation creates gratitude, which leads to evangelism.
- We are grateful for what Christ has done for us. There was a time in each of our lives when we did not know Christ as our Savior and Lord. "Remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world" (Eph. 2:12).
- Not only do we make Christ known to others out of gratitude for what He has done for us, but also out of loving concern for others who are as lost today as we once were; because all people are hopeless without Christ. "And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).
- God desires all to be saved before the end comes.
- Even more, God desires that all would be saved. "The Lord is . . . not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9).
- Furthermore, God's timetable for history involves our mission of evangelism. "And this Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a witness to all the nations, and then the end shall come" (Matthew 24:14).
- I hope that these various lines of reasoning have convinced you that sharing our faith in Christ is both a responsibility and a privilege. If you are like me, you don't need to be convinced of the call to evangelism so much as you are just uncertain of how to go about it. Let's address that issue.

Personal Testimony

- Your personal testimony is valuable for evangelism.
- The first place to start with evangelism may be the most natural place of all – our personal testimony. A personal testimony is the most persuasive form of communication. The Bible is full of testimonies:
- DAVID – "Come and hear, all who fear God, and I will tell of what He has done for my soul" (Psalm 66:16).
- THE MAN BORN BLIND – "He therefore answered, 'Whether He is a sinner, I do not know; one thing I do know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see'" (John 9:25).
- PETER AND JOHN – "For we cannot stop speaking what we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:20).
- PAUL – On several different occasions (Acts 22-26) Paul used his personal testimony to share the Good News with unbelievers.

- YOU AND I – “Oh give thanks to the Lord, call upon His name; Make known His deeds among the peoples.” (Psalm 105:1).
- Your testimony is very valuable. It is unique! There is no other just like it. It is personal and easy to understand. You are the authority on your testimony. It’s difficult to argue with. People love to hear personal stories and they remember them. People can relate to your testimony. It builds a relational bridge. In our postmodern world, your testimony may be your most effective witness to others.
- We have this clear mandate from God’s Word: “But sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence” (1 Peter 3:15).

Four Parts to Your Testimony

- There are four parts to your testimony.
- Your testimony has 4 parts:
 1. What my life was like before I met Christ?
 2. How I realized I needed Christ?
 3. How I committed my life to Christ?
 4. What difference has it made in my life?
- Let’s take a closer look at each of these 4 parts of our testimony.
 1. What my life was like before I met Christ. What common circumstances would an unbeliever identify with in your personal story? What were your attitudes that an unbeliever would identify with? What was most important to you? What substitute for God did you use to find meaning in your life? (sports/fitness, success at work, marriage, sex, making money, drugs/alcohol, having fun, entertainment, popularity, hobbies, etc.) What was going on in your life before you came to faith in Christ?
 2. How I realized I needed Christ. What significant steps led up to your conversion? What needs, hurts, or problems made you dissatisfied with the way you were living without God? How did God get your attention? What motivated you?
 3. How I committed my life to Christ. What specifically did you do? Where did it happen? What did you say in your prayer? Be specific.
 4. The difference it has made in my life. What benefits have you experienced or felt? What problems have been resolved? How has Jesus helped you change for the better? How has it helped your relationships? Give a current example.

Alternate Ways

- There are alternate ways to use these four testimony steps, depending on your personal narrative.
- If you became a Christian as a child but walked away or never grew until a deeper recommitment as an adult. Use the same 4 steps, but start with the time just prior to your recommitment. Give some examples of how you were trying to meet your own needs without Christ but it wasn't working. Describe what caused you to realize you needed Christ directing your life and how you made a full commitment to Him. Then explain how Jesus is currently meeting the deepest needs in your life.
- If you became a Christian at an early age and never strayed. Use the same 4 steps with this modification: Point out some deep need or common problem that you see other people trying to resolve. Point out how unsuccessful their attempts are to meet their own need. Then explain why you never experienced that problem by trusting Christ early in life. Don't say the exact age. Continue with steps 3 and 4.

Review

- We saw how evangelism is centered in Christ's mission and purpose for coming into our world.
- We also looked at the value of our personal testimony in sharing Christ, and just how to go about preparing our personal testimony.

In the Next Session

- We will look at the four key elements in sharing the Gospel.
- We will explore how people come to Christ
- Discuss strategies for how to share the Gospel with people at different stages of readiness.

ASSIGNMENTS: CREATE YOUR PERSONAL TESTIMONY

Look up and discuss the key Scripture texts from this session. Discuss and then begin writing down the key points of your own testimony.

Write your personal testimony using the four steps discussed in class.

1. What my life was like before I met Christ?
2. How I realized I needed Christ?
3. How I committed my life to Christ?
4. What difference has it made in my life?

Be prepared to share their prepared testimony with the class next time.

SESSION 4 - DEVELOPING YOUR PERSONAL EVANGELISM

In this session, we will:

- Examine the four key elements in sharing the Gospel.
- Explore how people come to Christ
- Discuss strategies for how to share the Gospel with people at different stages of readiness.

At the end of this session, you will KNOW:

- There are several different ways to share the Gospel message.

You will BE ABLE TO:

- Share a concise and complete Gospel presentation.

You will THINK ABOUT:

- How to approach evangelism by gauging the openness of their listener.

In the Last Session

- We saw how evangelism is centered in Christ's mission and in His purpose for coming into our world.
- We also discussed both the value and the approach of sharing our personal testimony in evangelism.

Begin video.

Universal Message of Evangelism

- The Gospel is the universal message of evangelism
- While it's true that each of us has a unique personal testimony to share about how we came to trust Christ as the Lord and Savior of our lives, the universal part of our message is the Gospel.
- The Gospel, a word that means "Good News," is the message of how we can be saved, forgiven, and begin a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.
- We've seen in previous sessions that the moment we trust in Christ, we are called and commissioned to be a messenger of the Good News to people who haven't heard or responded to it.

Many Ways to Share

- There are several ways to share the Gospel with others.
- There are many different methods for sharing the key elements of the Gospel message.
- Some years ago, Campus Crusade for Christ developed the “Four Spiritual Laws.” Part of your assignment in this course is to memorize several verses from the book of Romans that have come to be referred to as the “Romans Road.” In addition to these two approaches to sharing the Gospel message there are certainly others.
- The approach we are going to look at next is one that I have used for many years.
 1. God created us to be in a wonderful relationship with Him.
 2. We don’t have that relationship because of the sin in our lives.
 3. Jesus Christ made it possible through His death on the cross and resurrection three days later to have that relationship with God.
 4. This relationship with God is based on faith on our part. So, to have this relationship we must repent of our sins and confess belief in Jesus Christ.
- This four-step presentation of the Gospel message has the virtue of being simple, therefore easily remembered, while at the same time addressing both the why and how of becoming a follower of Jesus Christ.

Different Approaches

- Each person might have a slightly different approach.
- It’s important to recognize that God created each of us to be a one-of-a-kind individual.
- We are not all the same, therefore our individual styles of sharing our testimony and the Gospel message will reflect our different gifts and personalities.
- Some will focus heavily on the relational side of the Gospel message. Others will focus much more on facts and Scripture passages.
- It’s helpful in this regard to realize that Jesus never used the same approach twice!

Practical Advice

- Consider this practical advice while sharing the Gospel.
- There are several guidelines to keep in mind when it comes to sharing your testimony. Not every time will the telling of your personal story lead into an opportunity to share the Gospel message as I've just presented it. But that's what we are to be ready and prepared for.
- So, as you find yourself talking to someone, ask God's help in choosing the right words to say. Think through ahead of time what you might say.
- It's essential that our motive in this process be one of love and concern for the individual we're sharing with. So be positive and pleasant. Never use put-downs. Tell stories and give examples. People always relate to a story better. Jesus used stories and illustrations throughout His public ministry. All of us just seem to connect better through stories.
- Be yourself. Be who you are. Don't try to sound spiritual. If you don't know the answer to a question, just say so. A question that you will have to seek an answer for just gives you another opportunity to pick up the conversation again later. So, don't fear questions. Questions are your friends. Along these same lines, be vulnerable and authentic. No one expects us to know all the answers. That's why we have God's Word.
- And that's also why it's important to be familiar with a few key verses. The Romans Road that you will memorize during this course will give you a starting place in Scripture to anchor the key parts of the Gospel message as you share it. In general, keep it simple. The Bible is complex enough that the greatest minds can spend a lifetime studying and never fully comprehend its depths. But at the same time, it's simple enough that a child can grasp its core truth: "Jesus loves me, this I know; for the Bible tells me so."

The Holy Spirit is at Work

- The Holy Spirit will work through your obedience, even if your evangelism doesn't directly lead a person to salvation.
- Above all, remember that the Holy Spirit is using your words. It's the Holy Spirit's work to convict the world of sin and righteousness and judgment. That's not our job. We are to be faithful to the command given in 1 Peter 3:15, "But sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence."
- As we encounter different people we soon realize, that much like our own experience, people are at different stages or points of readiness to hear the Gospel message.

- Some are self-satisfied, skeptical, resistant or spiritually apathetic. We might call this the resistant stage. Such folks are not at all open to hearing about Jesus Christ and how to be restored to a relationship with the God who created us.
- From that point of resistance, we find varying stages of receptivity, honest seeking, and openness all the way until we get next to someone who is ready to receive Christ and just needs to hear the life-changing message of the Gospel.
- It's not too difficult to figure out where an individual might be on that continuum of readiness to receive the Gospel. We just need to listen to what they say. For example, someone who declares that they are an atheist, or makes a statement like, "I think religion is a crutch for weak people," is on the resistant end of the spectrum.
- Another example: A person who says they think everyone will go to heaven, but it is fuzzy as to just how that might work, is somewhere in the middle of that continuum. But a person who asks, "Why do Christians seem so happy," or "Please show me how I can become a Christian," is much closer to the readiness end of the continuum.
- Evangelism isn't always a matter of hitting a home run so-to-speak, but it is more of a process of moving people along the continuum from resistance to readiness.
- People move through the stages at different rates. Individuals often require multiple exposures to truth at each stage before moving on. So, every stage of the continuum that extends from Hard Resistance all the way to Open Readiness calls for us to make a somewhat different response to the person sitting in front of us. The apostle Paul refers to this dynamic when he said in 1 Cor. 3:6, "I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth."
- Apply different methods of evangelism to people at different stages of openness to the Gospel.
- There are three stages along the readiness continuum implied in that passage.
- So, let's discuss how to share with people at different stages of readiness to hear Gospel truth.
- What do you say when someone is at the resistant, perhaps even antagonistic, stage? Begin with praying for them.
- In John 6:44 Christ declares, "No one can come to Me, unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day." Seek to build a relationship with the resistant person through love and service. If your church holds fun events that would be perceived as non-threatening to the person, be sure to invite them. The one thing you want to avoid is arguing with the resistant person.

- If you sense that someone is more receptive, again, pray and begin building a relationship with them. As you learn more about their life, share your testimony about a similar need or experience you've had. Ask open-ended questions like, "Tell me about the spiritual side of your life." Evangelism is helping people discover how God is already at work in their lives.
- As you encounter people who seem ready to explore the claims of Jesus Christ, you might introduce them to some other Christians. Invite them to other events at your church. Discuss the different ways believers respond to life in contrast to those who don't know Christ.
- Eventually, you may have the opportunity to explain God's plan of salvation. Explain how you made your decision for Christ. And if the Lord opens the door, offer to lead them in a prayer of commitment to Jesus Christ.
- Remember, our call to be a part of the Great Commission of Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:19-20) is not over at this point, as exciting as that might be. We are called to make disciples, not just converts. So, encourage them to be baptized. Get them into a new believer's small group. Seek for opportunities to deepen the friendship that had begun however many years/months ago.
- Now that they have received new life through faith in Christ, it won't be too difficult to help them to see that they also are asked to be involved in evangelism.

Review

- We looked at the four key elements in sharing the Gospel.
- We explored how people come to Christ.
- We discussed strategies for how to share the Gospel with people at different stages of readiness.

In the Next Session

- We will look at the 4 "P's" of communicating God's Word.
- We will explore how to choose a passage of Scriptural text for teaching or preaching. We also discuss how to go about studying and preparing to teach the selected unit of study.

ASSIGNMENT: FOUR-PART PRESENTATION OF GOSPEL

Discuss the concepts and ideas presented in this session and share your perspective and experience with these concepts.

Take turns sharing your personal testimony in front of the class.

You may either read what you have prepared as an assignment from the previous session, or, better yet use your written testimony as notes as you share in a more conversational style.

Memorize the four-part presentation of the Gospel given in this session.

Come next time prepared to write these four parts of a Gospel presentation from memory in class.

SESSION 5, PART 1 - EXEGESIS AND LESSON PLANNING

In this session, you will:

- Select and study a passage of Scripture to either share by teaching or preaching.

At the end of this session:

You will KNOW:

- How to choose a passage of Scripture for teaching or preaching.

You will BE ABLE TO:

- Name the four “P’s” of communicating God’s Word.

You will THINK ABOUT:

- The various approaches to studying a Scriptural passage.

In the Last Session

- We looked at the four key elements in sharing the Gospel.
- We explored how people come to Christ.
- We discussed strategies for how to share the Gospel with people at different stages of readiness.

Begin video.

The Four “Ps”

- The 4 “P’s” of Communicating God’s Word.
- Anyone who hears enough sermons soon gets the idea that certain preachers like alliteration. I’m not necessarily a big fan of alliteration, but there are times when alliteration is helpful in remembering the key points of a concept. When it comes to communicating God’s Word in any format or setting, whether it be evangelism, teaching, or preaching, these 4 “P’s” are indispensable.

- **Prayer.** Prayer is not just an addition to what we do in communicating God's Word, it is the principle element among many that should mark us in attempting to be used by the Lord for another's benefit. Christ modeled this essential dynamic in His public ministry. Other effective spokesmen for God have been mighty in prayer. More than any other characteristic, prayer marks out God's long line of proclaimers in the Old Testament, New Testament, and in church history to the present day. Anyone who would follow the biblical model must take prayer very seriously. Before we ever open our mouths to communicate God's Word, we must steep ourselves in prayer.
- **Purpose.** What is our intent, our aim, our purpose in preaching or teaching the message before us? Have we thought out carefully and clearly just why we are standing before someone or a group and attempting to communicate God's Word? Is it to educate, to entertain, to convict, to exhort, to transform, to win friends, or to see people turn to Christ? It is very easy for selfish motives and unloving motives to get mixed into what, on the surface, should be simply done to honor God and bless His people. Further, an understanding of our purpose will give us the passion for preaching that we need. If the preacher/teacher is not purposeful and excited about what he is declaring, why should the listener be?
- **Preparation.** Here is where we will focus on the nuts and bolts of the lesson, sermon, or evangelistic message. Initially there is a steep learning curve here, but practice and diligence will pay off. There is no place for laziness or slipshod work when it comes to declaring God's Word. We must "be diligent to present ourselves approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15).
- **Presentation.** At some point, after much prayer, thought, and preparation we will have to stand up and open our mouths to say whatever it is the Lord is prompting us to speak. Some look ahead to the actual speaking for the Lord with dread and apprehension. We've all heard about the "fear of public speaking." For some, that fear is very real and can be paralyzing. It's also true that some people are naturally more gifted public speakers than others. But effective public speaking can be learned by anyone. Whatever fears we may have can be faced and given to the Lord for His glory. Here, again, just as with preparation, there is no substitute for practice and a willingness to learn and grow in this area.

Exegesis and Lesson Planning

- Now we turn to exegesis and lesson planning.
- First, there are some important words to define.
- **Exegesis:** Exegesis is the critical explanation and interpretation of a passage of Scripture.
- **Exposition:** Exposition is the content of the sermon which exposes what the Bible says in its context to the modern audience.
- While these two terms may appear similar on the surface, they are two necessary steps in preparation for communicating God’s Word. Exegesis, as we’ll see, is the diligent study of the text to determine just what the text says and what it means. In exposition, we take the results of our exegesis and craft a sermon around them. Perhaps most importantly, exposition adds the essential element of relevant application to our exegesis.
- So, let’s begin with choosing a passage of Scriptural text. How do we go about selecting a passage of the Bible for teaching or preaching purposes?
- The passage chosen for lesson planning is determined by several factors. If our intent is to address a topic of interest, then we would choose a text that opens that subject. Our choice of a passage of Scripture for teaching may be determined for us if we are working our way through a book of the Bible.
- In that case, our passage for teaching is the next chapter, paragraph, or unit of study in the book. Sometimes our passage will be connected to the season of the year, as for example a lesson at Christmas time or one for Resurrection Sunday.
- **Original audience.** To be faithful to the Scriptures we need to keep in mind the original audience to whom the passage was addressed.
 - Who were they?
 - What situations were they facing?
 - How did this passage speak to their concerns or problems?
- **Context.** In doing exegesis of any biblical text context is all important. Where does this passage fit in the author’s flow of argument? What preceded this section?
- What follows next?
- The key questions we are attempting to answer when studying any passage from Scripture are: What does the text say and what did this text mean to the original recipients? How did they understand these words from the original author? (Use Rom. 12:1 as an example)
- **Unit of study.** A moment ago, I referred to a unit of study, also called a unit of meaning.
- To determine the units of meaning or study in a particular book it is necessary to first have an outline of the entire book.
- That outline should show us the author’s flow of thought from one topic or subject to the next.

- Sometimes the units of study will nicely coincide with the chapter breaks. Sometimes the units of study will be determined by the paragraph breaks. And occasionally the units of study will be determined by the actual units of thought that may vary even within the paragraph itself.
- One reason that discovering the unit of study is important is that whatever size text we select for teaching; we need to be diligent in our treatment of every part of that text.
- *Time.* When it comes to teaching a lesson from the Bible, time will almost always be a consideration. Whether you have a ½ hour or 1½ hours, the unit of study that you choose will have to fit your time constraints.
- In addition, time is also an issue depending on your student audience. Younger students do better with shorter lessons, while an adult class can remain attentive for longer periods of time.

Reading the Passage.

- At this point let's assume you have chosen your text for study and lesson planning.
- How do we proceed from here? As noted earlier, prayer is essential throughout this process. Having sought the Lord's help, begin by reading the text you've selected.
- Read it multiple times. Read the same text from different versions and translations of the Bible. As you read through the selected text notice the key words that the author chooses to use.
- Notice also words that are repeated or those words that appear to be especially important in the flow of the author's message.

Structural Analysis

- Do a structural analysis of the main sentences in the passage. A structural analysis is like diagramming a sentence. Pick out the subject (with modifiers), the verb (with modifiers), and the object (with modifiers).
- (Use Romans 12:1 as an example. The apostle Paul tended to use run-on sentences. That means he often includes extended modifiers in his statements. It will take some practice to get proficient at this step. Try this exercise again using Rom. 15:1.)

Commentaries

- The next step is to check some commentaries for more in-depth analysis of your text. Commentaries generally fall into two broad categories: critical and devotional.
- **Critical commentaries** explore the meaning of the text, the meanings of specific words in the text, the relevant grammar of the passage, and pertinent background and literary issues. Critical commentaries also discuss the biblical theology of your target text. Biblical theology speaks to both the author's and the hearer's understanding of God. It also looks at important theological developments in the passage.
- **Devotional commentaries** are usually less substantial and tend to provide insight into the emotions and sensitivities of both the author and his audience.
- The writer of a devotional commentary sometimes puts us in the place of the biblical writer's audience so that we catch a glimpse of how they might have received what they were being told.
- This can be quite helpful in understanding the unique historical setting of the text.

Take Notes

- Having covered all the introductory material, it should be obvious that you could save preparation time by taking notes throughout the process just discussed.
- So, if you are called upon to present a Sunday School lesson next week, be sure you have your notebook in hand as you begin to work through the different steps just outlined.
- You'll want to have notes on the background of the book where your text is located.
- As you work with the critical commentaries, you'll want notes about specific word meanings, significant grammar issues in the text, and any cross references or devotional insights that you've come across.
- Develop your own system for taking and saving notes. They are certain to come in handy at another time.

Review

- We looked at the 4 "P's" of communicating God's Word.
- We explored how to choose a passage of Scriptural text for teaching or preaching.
- We also discussed how to go about studying and preparing to teach the selected unit of study.

In the Next Session

- We will talk about discovering the central point of a given passage from Scripture.
- We will also discuss and give an example of the five points of a Lesson Plan.

ASSIGNMENTS: STUDY 1 CORINTHIANS 4:15

Using 1 Cor. 4:1-5 as the selected unit of study, have your students begin developing notes regarding background, context, use of commentaries, and any grammar or word study considerations.

Begin with background: Ask someone with a study Bible to read the introductory comments for the Book of 1 Corinthians. You could also use a Bible Handbook, Commentary on 1 Corinthians, or any other source that gives an overview of the Book of 1 Corinthians. Remind the students that they should be taking written notes throughout this preparation process.

Context: For this exercise, read 1 Cor. 3:18 through 1 Cor. 4:13.

Read it at least twice. Then someone in your class should read the passage out loud to the group. With more time, they would be reading the Book of 1 Corinthians from the beginning through at least Ch. 4. You will be reading this passage multiple times and from different translations to get the best sense of the flow of Paul's thinking overall, and specifically in our target text, 1 Cor. 4:1-5.

Commentaries: For this phase of the exercise use the introductory notes from a study Bible. Whatever your commentary source, discuss what you think were the most pertinent comments made as they connect to our target passage. Again, have them write these notes down.

Grammar: Initially, this is an observation exercise.

- Who is speaking?
- Who is being spoken to?
- Go over the pronouns and get consensus on who they refer to.
For example, who does the "us" of 1 Cor. 4:1 refer to?

Word study: For this passage, there are some key words that need to be looked up and studied.

Go through the passage as a group and write on a board those words that you think need further study. In v. 1, words like servants, stewards, and mysteries.

Further along in the passage, words like examine, conscious, acquitted, and disclose.

Bring a resource for word study or borrow one from the instructor.

Good commentaries will discuss some of these key words. I would also suggest an online tool: blueletterbible.org. A free downloadable tool is available at esword.com. There are many other word study tools available as well. Come prepared for this portion of the exercise.

Summary: To close this exercise in preparing to teach a passage of Scripture, summarize what you've learned about 1 Cor. 4:1-5.

If you have not had time to finish this exercise, or the necessary tools were not available, you can continue the exercise at home and come with your results for next time.

SESSION 5, PART 2 - EXEGESIS AND LESSON PLANNING

In this session, you will:

- Learn how to develop the central point of a text.
- Learn the five parts of a lesson plan.

At the end of this session,

You will KNOW:

- How to discover the central point of any Scriptural passage.

You will BE ABLE TO:

- Discuss the five points of a lesson plan.

You will THINK ABOUT:

- How their preparation work on a passage of the Bible can be effectively communicated in a teaching setting.

In the Last Session

- We looked at the 4 “P’s” of communicating God’s Word.
- We explored how to choose a passage of Scriptural text for teaching or preaching.
- We also discussed how to go about studying and preparing to teach the selected unit of study.

Begin video.

The Central Point of a Text

- Developing the central point of the text, which is the next step in the lesson planning process, may be the most important step in this process.
- The reason I say that this may the most important step is that it is a necessary step in both lesson and sermon structure development. Presumably, the reason that you have selected the unit of meaning that you have is that it speaks of a central idea.
- That central point of your text may be stated explicitly or it may only be implied by the flow of the author’s arguments and the points that he makes.
- In either case, it is important that you as the teacher work with your text until you can confidently state its central point.

Discovering the Central Point of a Text

- How do we go about that? Begin with questioning your study to this point.
- Ask the questions: Who? What? When? Where? Why? How? Attempt to answer each question from the notes that you've put together up until now. The key words that you have noted earlier in your multiple readings may be very important at this point.
- Next, develop principle statements using key words found in the answers to your questions.
- Finally, pull together these principle statements into a statement of the central point of the text under study.

Practice This Now

- Let's practice this process using 1 Peter 3:13-17 as the text to be studied.
- Read the text at least three times.
- What key words did you notice? e.g., suffer (vs. 14,17), defense, sanctify, any others?
- What did you notice about the grammar? Notice "but" at the beginning of vs. 14 and 15.
- What do you know about the background? If we had the time we could discover some historical background by simply reading the introductory notes that are found in many study Bibles.
- For the purposes of this exercise, it should be noted that persecution was on the rise throughout the Roman Empire at the time Peter penned this letter. Christians, many of them Jewish believers who had fled persecution in Jerusalem, were being reviled and abused for their lifestyles and talk about another Kingdom.
- Develop your notes from what you have observed to this point.
- Developing the central point of the text.
- Ask these questions:
 - Who? Dispersed Christians, Jews and Gentiles.
 - What? Suffering for their faith in Christ.
 - When? In everyday activities of their lives.
 - Where? Roman Empire.
 - Why? See background notes. Also, for an opportunity to make a defense of their hope.
 - How? Some speculation here, but perhaps for doing good?
- Develop principle statements from these questions and answers:
- Dispersed Christians were suffering for their faith throughout the Roman Empire. This suffering was coming during their everyday lives. The reason for the suffering seemed to be because these believers were simply trying to live in a way that honored their Lord and Savior, Christ.

- This suffering did have the effect of occasionally opening doors to share the believer's hope in Christ.
- Statement of the Central Point: God does allow Christians to be persecuted for their faith, and those times of suffering are both a challenge and an opportunity.

Lesson Plan

- Let's move onto the lesson plan itself. The preparation we've done up to this point has been leading up to designing a lesson plan.
- A lesson plan is different than a sermon. Since this is the section of this course where we are focusing on teaching specifically, the lesson plan could be used in a variety of settings.
- Wherever God's Word is taught, whether in a group or one-on-one, this lesson plan approach would be effective. The lesson plan presents data about the Bible that is objective. As we'll see, there is an application component, but it is less important in the lesson plan than in the sermon. The sermon presumes God's call through the message.
- In the lesson plan our goal is to increase the student's knowledge of God's Word and help them to see its relevance for their own life.

Parts of the Lesson Plan

- **Approach:** The approach is our introduction to the lesson. Our intent in this phase is to engage the student's interest. We want to get the student's attention and hopefully get them involved in what we are about to study from God's Word.
- **Information:** It's necessary to give some background to every portion of Scripture from which we might be teaching. If this is a continuing series, then we recap the previous lesson's highlights. If we are just beginning a section of the Bible that has not been presented to this group of students, then we need to give some historical and situational perspective before we get into the heart of the lesson.
- **Focus:** Here is where we summarize the central point of the text we are about to study. It is always helpful to let the student know where the lesson is headed on the front end. Stating the central point several times during the lesson helps to reinforce its teaching.
- **Analysis:** At this point we are ready to get into the actual target text of our lesson. We may choose to proceed verse-by-verse or read the entire text and break down its meaning for the students. It's important when teaching from the Bible that we allow the actual text of Scripture to make our main points for us. If we've done our work on arriving at the central point of the passage adequately, then each of the sub-points of the passage will support and flow from the central idea.

- **Personal:** We cannot leave God’s Word without observing how this lesson is important for the student’s lives today. This part of the lesson is not to take up too much of our time, but it is helpful to the students to see that a truth taught to people thousands of years ago is still applicable to their life experiences today.

Work on a Lesson Plan Together

- **Approach:** Using the 1 Peter 3:13-17 passage as our text, we know we are going to be talking about Christians who are being persecuted for their faith. Perhaps some questions for the students about their experiences either at work, school, or in the home where they felt they were being treated differently simply because of their Christian lifestyle or witness would get some interest and conversation going.
- **Information:** Here is the place to share the historical situation of those 1st century Christians that Peter was addressing in his letter. Whatever background material you have gathered to this point will serve to enhance your central point and further draw your students into the lesson.
- **Focus:** State the central point of the lesson. You might expand a little on both the challenge part and the opportunity part of your statement.
- **Analysis:** Beginning with 1 Peter 3:13, go through the text, verse-by-verse, helping the students get the full meaning and understanding of the passage. Repeat the background material that you’ve already referenced. Ask questions of the students. Start with observation questions. What does the text say? Help them to think through the text, both from the author’s viewpoint and from the recipients of the letter’s viewpoints.
- **Personal:** Share an experience from your own life that connects to this idea of being persecuted for being a follower of Christ. You might share a time when you handled it well (giving thanks to God, or sharing your hope with someone), and a time when you didn’t handle it well (complained to God, got into an argument with someone). Give the students some ideas to think about the next time they face persecution for doing the right thing.

Review

- We talked about discovering the central point of a given passage from Scripture.
- We also discussed, and gave an example of, the five points of a lesson plan.

In the Next Session

- We will discuss why we need a standard for biblical exposition.

ASSIGNMENTS: CENTRAL POINT OF A PASSAGE

Go through the example of 1 Peter 3:13-17 given in the video. Reinforce and discuss the approach to discovering the central point of the text. Using the form in this guidebook, use the five-steps for developing a lesson plan.

Using a passage that was assigned to you from the Book of Ephesians. Discover the central point of that passage.

Turn in your notes along with your finished assignment.

The second part of the assignment is to prepare a lesson plan using the format provided in the video. Use the same passage in both parts of this assignment.

Here is a simple outline of Ephesians for assigning up to 10 different sections:

- 1:3-14
- 1:15-23
- 2:1-10
- 2:11-22
- 3:1-13
- 3:14-21
- 4:1-16
- 4:17-24
- 4:25-32
- 5:1-14

You will each be assigned a different section beginning with chapter 1:3-14.

LESSON PLANNER

Bible Verse:

Approach:

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Information:

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Focus:

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Analysis:

Personal:

SESSION 6 - EXPOSITION AND THE OLD TESTAMENT

In this session, you will:

- Understand the attacks both from the pew and from the pulpit coming against sound biblical exposition.
- Learn why we need a standard for biblical exposition.

At the end of this session,

You will KNOW:

- Why we need clear definitions for prophecy, preaching, teaching, and exposition.

You will BE ABLE TO:

- See why Moses is the Old Testament prototype of a preacher.

You will THINK ABOUT:

- The mindset of the world creeping into the church.

In the Last Session

- We talked about discovering the central point of a given passage from Scripture.
- We also discussed, and gave an example of, the five points of a lesson plan.

Begin video.

Preaching God's Word

- So far in this course we have looked at evangelism and teaching as two ways that we are called to communicate God's Word in our culture.
- Today we begin our study of preaching God's Word.
- We are at a critical point in history when it comes to the exposition of God's Word. There are attacks both from the pew and from the pulpit coming against sound biblical exposition.
- From the pew, we increasingly find the mindset of the world creeping into the church. Our politically correct culture is often hostile to biblical preaching. Post-modernist thought challenges the notion of objective truth, preferring instead the individual's personal narrative as a barometer of what is "true."
- Some recent trends in how we do worship stress programming over preaching. The mindset that asks the question, "How was church for you today?" would push biblical exposition aside, preferring a more personally pleasing experience on Sunday morning.

Biblical Exposition Abandoned

- In addition to attacks from the pew, biblical exposition is also being abandoned from the pulpit in many cases. The very trends cited above have some preachers questioning their role and purpose in their messages.
- Teaching is safer than biblical preaching, and some preachers are heeding that unspoken but clear message: "Just tell me what the Bible says, but don't step on my toes in the process." The proliferation of topical messages, addressing the felt needs of the congregation, indicates a tendency to repackage the Scriptures for greater appeal and acceptance, because therapy is popular these days.

Need a Standard for Biblical Exposition

- For these reasons, we need a standard for biblical exposition. We need clear definitions for prophecy, preaching, teaching, and exposition.
- When we ask the question, "Does God have a consistent intention for His people in this area," what do we discover as an answer in God's Word? As we'll see shortly, Moses is the Old Testament prototype of a preacher, but he wasn't the first one to speak for God in the Bible.
- Noah is known for being a boat builder in the middle of the desert, but 2 Peter 3:5 informs us that Noah was a "preacher of righteousness." We have no record of Noah's specific message, but one wonders what his reply was to those who ridiculed his efforts during the 100 years of ark construction.
- Melchizedek first appears in Genesis 14:18-20, and pronounces a brief blessing over the victorious Abram.
- Towards the end of Genesis, Jacob appears to pick up the mantle of the prophet as he becomes God's spokesmen addressing the futures of his 12 sons in Genesis 49.
- That brings us to Moses. As I said, Moses is the Old Testament prototype of a preacher. Moses was the original preacher upon whom all later preachers are, in a sense, patterned. In Moses, we see many of the features that will be present in the preachers that followed him, even down to the present day. For these reasons, it's important that we take a close look at those aspects of Moses' life that bear on his call as a messenger of God's Word.
- Ex. 3:4-12 recounts Moses' call from the burning bush. Note in Ex. 3:10 where God says to Moses, "I will send you to Pharaoh." It wasn't Moses' idea to become a preacher of God's Word. It was God who called him to that task. The content of what Moses was to say was also not left to Moses' determination, God told the prophet what he was to say in Ex. 3:14: "And God said to Moses, 'I AM WHO I AM'; and He said, 'Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'"

- As we continue in this Ex. 3 passage, we see that Moses was given authority in the message over the people (Ex. 3:15), over the elders (Ex. 3:16), and over Pharaoh (Ex. 3:18).
- Moses' message was to be an oral message. Again in Ex. 3:14, "Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel." Only secondarily did Moses' message come to be recorded in the Pentateuch.
- The content of Moses' message could be summarized this way: It was to be about God's person (Ex. 3:14, "I AM has sent me to you."), and about God's will (Ex. 3:18, "Let my people go."). In other words, the pattern that we discover in Moses' example is that the preacher is to reveal God and expound God's will.
- Moses is also the prototype prophet in Scripture. There are two distinct aspects to Moses' prophecy: revelation and exposition. In terms of revelation, Moses made known who God is. Those truths about God's character have not changed since the time of Moses. Preachers in the footsteps of Moses don't reveal new truth about who God is, but rather clarify what has already been revealed. Moses was also an expositor of God's message. He made known to the people what God said. Those preachers who follow in Moses' footsteps continue this same aspect of Moses ministry: they make known what God has said.
- Moving to Deuteronomy 18, we learn even more about those who would speak for God. Deuteronomy 18:15 foretells of a Prophet to come who would be like Moses. The Jewish people of Christ's day were waiting for this Prophet to appear, but failed to recognize that Christ.

Review

- We talked about the attacks both from the pew and from the pulpit coming against sound biblical exposition.
- We discussed why we need a standard for biblical exposition.
- See why Moses is the Old Testament prototype of a preacher.

In the Next Session

- We will look at how the preaching of God's Word needs to be brought to God's people. The model found in the New Testament is Jesus Christ.

ASSIGNMENT: TEACHING TO CHANGE LIVES

Read Chs. 1-4 of "Teaching to Change Lives" highlighting passages that make key points.

SESSION 7, PART 1 - EXPOSITION AND THE NEW TESTAMENT

In this session, you will:

- Understand Christ is our model for what a preacher says and does.

At the end of this session,

You will KNOW:

- That the call to preach God's Word has been consistent in both the Old Testament and New Testament.

You will BE ABLE TO:

- Explain how Christ fulfilled the prophecy in Deuteronomy 18:15

You will THINK ABOUT:

- The relationship between Jesus and New Testament preachers.

In the Last Session

- We talked about the attacks both from the pew and from the pulpit coming against sound biblical exposition.
- We discussed why we need a standard for biblical exposition.
- See why Moses is the Old Testament prototype of a preacher.

Begin video.

Deuteronomy

- Deuteronomy 18:15, "The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your countrymen, you shall listen to him."
- Deuteronomy 18:18 "I will raise up a prophet from among their countrymen like you, and I will put My words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him."
- At first look, these two verses appear to state the exact same thing. Both appear to speak of a single individual prophet, in the mold of Moses, who would speak God's message to God's people. Upon closer inspection, the immediate context points us to a difference in understanding between these two similar verses from Deuteronomy 18.
- Deuteronomy 18:15 speaks of a Prophet. He would be like Moses, a single individual from among the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.
- Deuteronomy 18:18 and following speak of the office or institution of the prophet. Verse 19 states that God's people would be held accountable for what the prophets spoke to the people in His name. Verse 20 states that prophets are limited in what they may say to God's people.

- Verse 22 gives God's people a test by which they can know whether someone who claims to be a prophet is sent by God or is a false prophet. For hundreds of years, following the death of Moses, different men and women appeared on the scene in Israel at different points in their history, claiming to be prophets in the vein of Deuteronomy 18:18 and the following verses. We have the inspired words of the most significant of these prophets recorded for us in the Old Testament. But not one of these Old Testament prophets claimed to be the Prophet, spoken of in Deuteronomy 18:15.

Subtle Difference

- This subtle difference becomes most significant when we jump to the New Testament. In chapter one of John's Gospel, the people are curious and speculating as to just who John the Baptist might be. The priests and Levites asked John the Baptist, "'What then? Are you Elijah?' And he said, 'I am not.' 'Are you the Prophet?' And he said, 'No'" (John 1:21).
- By the time of Christ's public ministry, the Prophet, spoken of in Deuteronomy 18:15, had come to be equated with the long-expected Messiah. See the Samaritan woman's statement to Jesus as they were conversing at the well. "I know that Messiah is coming (He who is called Christ); when that One comes, He will declare all things to us" (John 4:25). Later, the multitudes responded to Christ's teaching about the living water, saying: "This certainly is the Prophet" (John 7:40).
- We can see that by the time of Christ there was great expectation for the coming of the Prophet-Messiah.
- Jesus Himself made quite clear the connection between His ministry and what Moses foretold in Deuteronomy 18:15:
- "I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive Me; if another shall come in his own name, you will receive him. How can you believe, when you receive glory from one another, and you do not seek the glory that is from the one and only God? Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father; the one who accuses you is Moses; in whom you have set your hope. For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote of Me. But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words" (John 5:43-47)?
- In His Father's name, Jesus claims a unique place like Moses. In fact, Christ bears and communicates the likeness of God as Moses did and, no one after Moses had done that. Jesus attributes prophetic lineage to Moses. In that sense, Moses both prefigured and prophesied Jesus, but Jesus is superior. See Heb. 3:3.

- The bottom line is that Christ stands in relation to the New Testament in much the same way that Moses stood in relation to the Old Testament when it comes to “thus saith the Lord!” Therefore, Christ is our model for what a preacher both is and what He says. In John 12:48-49 Jesus said, “He who rejects me, and does not receive My sayings, has one who judges him; the word I spoke is what will judge him at the last day. For I did not speak on My own initiative, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me a commandment, what to say, and what to speak.”

Jesus is the Measure of Preaching

- Jesus’ words limit the preacher today. Jesus is the measure of preaching. Jesus is the manner of preaching.
- Jesus Christ institutes preaching under a New Covenant. Christ and His word are to be the substance of preaching, because Christ is the source of New Covenant revelation.
- The passages we’ve looked at help us to understand that there is a parallel between Moses and the Old Testament prophet, and Jesus and the New Testament preacher. The New Testament preacher is in the same relation to Jesus as the Old Testament prophet was to Moses. Just as Old Testament prophets were constituted, limited and judged by Moses’ words, so too are New Testament preachers constituted, limited and judged by Jesus’ words.
- The preacher of God’s Word preaches because of the historical Jesus. Preaching is both modeled and commanded in the New Testament church. The preacher’s subject is the revealed Christ. The preacher’s words are Jesus’ words. The New Testament writers were preachers first, then writers of the NT scriptures.

The Primacy of Preaching

- From Peter’s words in Acts 10:42 we see the primacy of preaching: “And He (Christ) ordered us to preach to the people, and solemnly to testify that this is the one who has been appointed by God as Judge of the living and the dead.”
- Steven was martyred for preaching. Jesus’ model regarding preaching is set forth in Mark 1:38: “And He said to them, ‘Let us go somewhere else to the towns nearby, in order that I may preach there also; for that is what I came out for.’” Jesus came first to preach!
- In Matthew 10:7 when Christ was giving instructions to His disciples as He first sent them out to share the Good News with the house of Israel, He said, “And as you go, preach, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand.’” Clearly, Jesus expected preaching from His disciples. At the end of Mark’s Gospel,

Jesus ordained preaching when He said, "Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to all nations." (Mark 16:15).

- Christ's teaching in the Gospels is that the kingdom was to be advanced in the world not so much by actions, as Moses tried, but by the preaching of God's Word. "And this Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a witness to all nations, and then the end shall come" (Matthew 24:14). The church is to advance in the world today not by being an army that marches toward the promised land, but rather by both living and proclaiming what it means to be a follower of Jesus Christ.

Review

- Just as we saw with the Old Testament, the preaching of God's Word, since Christ, is to go forth to God's people. In the New Testament, the model and example for preaching is Jesus Christ.

In the Next Session

- We will look at various models of exposition from the Scriptures.
- In addition to discussing Nehemiah 8, we will also talk about the rise of the synagogue during the intertestamental period, and finish with a couple of examples of exposition from the New Testament.

ASSIGNMENT: CENTRAL POINT AND LESSON PLAN

Continue with your oral presentations that started in the last session.

You are to share both the central point and the lesson plan from the passage in Ephesians that was assigned.

You should be sharing your notes as to the steps and process you took to arrive at your central point.

A note here: As this is a difficult, yet key skill to acquire, there will be another example of working through a text to discover its central point a little later in the course.

Read Chs. 5-7 of "Teaching to Change Lives" highlighting passages that make key points.

Be ready to share your insights and comments at the next class session.

SESSION 7, PART 2 - EXPOSITION AND THE NEW TESTAMENT

In this session, you will:

- Review various models of exposition from the Scriptures.
- Understand the rise of the synagogue during the intertestamental period.

At the end of this session,

You will KNOW:

- The primacy of the speaker/listener relationship in Scripture.

You will BE ABLE TO:

- Explain the relationship between exposition and Scripture.

You will THINK ABOUT:

- Various models of exposition, taken from both the Old Testament and the New Testament.

In the Last Session

- Just as we saw with the Old Testament, the preaching of God's Word, since Christ, is to go forth to God's people. In the New Testament, the model and example for preaching is Jesus Christ.

Begin video.

Exposition and the Judeo-Christian Tradition

- The Judeo-Christian tradition is a declarative tradition. That means that spoken words are the foundation of our Judeo-Christian tradition. It begins in the first few sentences of Genesis: "Then God said, 'Let there be light'; and there was light" (Genesis 1:3). In such a declarative tradition, there is a primacy placed on the speaker/listener relationship. The listeners in this relationship are not just accumulating information, but rather a moral accountability on the part of the hearer is implied.
- Further, in the biblical story at least, words are progenitive. That means that God's Word has the power to create. Psalm 33:6 declares that "By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, and by the breath of His mouth all their host."
- The writer of Hebrews begins his letter with this statement: "God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world." (Heb. 1:1-2). The declarative tradition in Christianity began with God's speaking through the prophets. With the advent of Christ this tradition focused more specifically on

the words of Jesus. This same tradition continues today through those who preach God's Word from the Bible.

- Exposition, for this course, is defined as: The content of the sermon which exposes what the Bible says in its context to the modern audience. Exposition best fits and best continues the declarative nature of the Judeo-Christian tradition.

Prescriptions for Exposition

- What guidelines do we find in the New Testament for biblical exposition?
- Someone might respond, "Why not just try to preach like Jesus?" Through Christ's words and actions, He initiated a new covenant. We cannot imitate Christ in that sense, but we can draw authority from Him for the message He calls us to proclaim.
- Regarding Christ's example, He gives us this priority in Matthew 4:23: "And Jesus was going about in all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and proclaiming the Gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness among the people." The order, according to Matthew 4:23, is first the proclamation of God's Word, and second, the healing of the people. In 1 Cor. 15:9-11 Paul discusses his ministry to the believers in Corinth and of first importance, Paul says, was his preaching the Word to them. When we come to the pastoral epistles, we find preaching mentioned 20 times. Most notable of those passages might be 2 Timothy 4:1-2: "I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: Preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction."
- Continuing the New Testament prescriptions for exposition, it is very instructive to read the Apostle Paul's directives to Timothy and Titus, the young pastors under his tutelage.
- In 1 Timothy 4:13, he sets forth preaching as Timothy's central duty: "Until I come, give attention to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation and teaching."
- As we saw a moment ago in 2 Timothy 4:2, Paul commanded Timothy to preach the word. Paul's instructions to Titus further set forth the priority of biblical exposition, and the authority that such preaching carries. Titus 2:1: "But as for you, speak the things which are fitting for sound doctrine. Titus 2:15: "These things speak and exhort and reprove with all authority. Let no one disregard you."

Models of Exposition

- In thinking about Models of Exposition let's begin with an Old Testament example from Nehemiah, consider the rise of the synagogue during the intertestamental period, and finish with a couple of New Testament examples of exposition.
- Let's read Nehemiah 8:1-8. The people are gathered to hear God's Word as proclaimed and taught by Ezra the scribe. Preaching is at the center of worship in this example.
- Nehemiah 8:8 is particularly instructive: "And they read from the book, from the law of God, translating to give the sense so that they understood the reading." That's as good a definition of expository preaching as you'll find in the Bible. It appears that the people were unfamiliar with God's Word. It was necessary for Ezra and the other scribes to explain the meaning of the text.
- The goal here was not just more information, but that the hearers would conform their lives to the instructions from God's Word. For that reason, explanation was at the heart of the sermon message that Ezra delivered to the people on that day.
- Implied in this passage from Nehemiah is the "ethos" of Ezra the scribe. Ethos refers to the integrity of model and example of the preacher. Ezra 7:10 states: "For Ezra had set his heart to study the law of the Lord, and to practice it, and to teach His statutes and ordinances in Israel." The expositional preacher must have ethos to be credible for God to be heard through him. Ezra's very character was an integral part of the reception of God's Word.
- Moving on to the intertestamental period, we come to the rise of the synagogue as a fixture in Jewish life. During this post-exile period, Levitical teachers became increasingly important for their ability to explain and give context to the Law and the Prophets, the books of the Old Testament. We know from history that the synagogue became prominent not only for biblical exposition, but also as a social and political center of community life. When Jesus Christ arrives on the scene He participates in the synagogue model.
- In Luke 4:16-30, Christ provides an interesting example of preaching in the 1st century synagogue. His text is taken from Isaiah 61:1-2. For illustrations, he recounts first the story of Elijah and the widow from Zarephath, and then the story of Elisha and the Syrian general, Naaman. And as for eliciting a response from His audience, they could have hardly been more engaged. At the first they commended Christ for "the gracious words falling from His lips." But as they began to grasp the point of His message, they attempted to kill Him for what He had implied about the hardness of their hearts.

- Moving further into the New Testament, we have the example of the Apostle Paul in Acts 20:18-35. Paul was a preacher who trained other preachers. In this passage from Acts 20, Paul is giving an exposition of a specific text. His text is found in Acts 20:35: "It is more blessed to give than to receive." Curiously, it's a text that can only be found here. His points of exposition include his understanding of his gift to both preach and protect the Gospel message.
- The doctrinal basis for his exhortation is found in Acts 20:28. His closing exhortation to the elders in Ephesus is that they would remember his example and give the same stewardship and guardianship of the Gospel as they had observed in Paul.
- We also have several sermon messages given by the Apostle Peter recorded in the Book of Acts. Peter was a simple fisherman by trade, yet the Lord used his preaching in a powerful way. We have looked at Acts 10:42 earlier where Peter testifies to the primacy and importance of preaching. And we know from 1 Peter 5:12, Peter's letters were first spoken, and then written down for transmission.

New Testament Words for "Preaching"

- In closing out this section on exposition and the New Testament, we are going to briefly look at the three principle Greek words used to describe preaching.
- The first is "kerusso." Kerusso is the main term used in the New Testament for preaching. It is used some 60 times in its verb form. It has the basic meaning of "to be a herald; to proclaim in the manner of a herald." This word speaks of a public proclaiming, always with the suggestion of formality, gravity, and an authority which must be listened to and obeyed.
- The understanding in the New Testament when this particular word is used is that the one proclaiming is acting as an authorized representative of a higher authority figure.
- Most of the time "kerusso" is translated by the English word "preach."
- The second Greek word used frequently to denote speaking for God is the word "didasko." This word is most often translated "to teach" in English. When used it is most often aimed at the saints, the followers of Christ. Teaching underwrites exposition. It is the exegesis part of sermon preparation. In Acts 4:2 we find "didasko" used along with the next word, "evangelizo," where both verbs are referring to the preaching of the Gospel message.

- As stated our third New Testament Greek word is “evangelizo.” Literally, it means to make the good announcement. It’s the word from which we get our English word, “Gospel.” The focus of this word when it is used is often upon unbelievers or new hearers. The announcement of “good news” is a key part of preaching. As Paul states in Rom. 1:16: “For I am not ashamed of the Gospel (“evangelizo”), for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.”
- Christ uses this important word in Matthew 11:4-5: “Go and report to John what you hear and see; the blind receive sight and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have the Gospel preached (“evangelizo”) to them.”

Review

- We looked at various models of exposition from the Scriptures.
- In addition to discussing Nehemiah 8, we also talked about the rise of the synagogue during the intertestamental period, and finished with a couple of examples of exposition from the New Testament.

In the Next Session

- We will begin the process of working toward constructing the sermon.
- These steps begin with prayer and studying the passage in its larger context.

ASSIGNMENT: TEACHING TO CHANGE LIVES

As assigned by your instructor, lead a discussion on the individual chapters in Hendricks' book, "Teaching to Change Lives." Since there are 7 chapters, you may have to lead a discussion on more than one chapter, depending on your total number of students.

Begin by giving a summary of the chapter you are discussing. Next, point out the five statements you highlighted and comment on what was noteworthy about that statement.

As the discussion leader, you are to function as a moderator for the rest of the class – much as a teacher would in the classroom setting.

Ideally, each chapter discussion would draw out the views of all the students so everyone benefits and learns from each other.

The goal here is to get the class to interact with Hendricks' ideas, to reflect on your own learning styles, your likes and dislikes about the teacher/student dynamic, and to practice public speaking.

Begin reading Wilkinson's book, "The Bible, Live." Read ppg. 1-78 by the next class session.

SESSION 8, PART 1 - STEPS TO A SERMON

In this session, you will:

- Examine the important steps involved in sermon preparation.

At the end of this session,

You will KNOW:

- The various steps that are important in sermon preparation.

You will BE ABLE TO:

- Study a given passage of Scripture and work toward understanding its meaning.

You will THINK ABOUT:

- The process of going from Scriptural text to sermon construction.

In the Last Session

- We looked at various models of exposition from the Scriptures.
- In addition to discussing Nehemiah 8, we also talked about the rise of the synagogue during the intertestamental period, and finished with a couple of examples of exposition from the New Testament.

Begin video.

Constructing a Sermon

- In the beginning stages, constructing a sermon is much like putting together a lesson for teaching in a Bible study or Sunday School class. These beginning steps are essential and set the tone for everything that follows in sermon preparation.

Study

- Read and pray. Pray for wisdom. Pray for discernment. Pray for the Holy Spirit's leading as you begin study on the passage. And pray for your audience. Read the passage and the surrounding context multiple times. Read it in various translations.

Introductory Notes

- Unless you are blessed with a photographic memory, jotting down your study notes is very important.
- Read background material on the book you are preaching from.
- Look at a couple of book outlines so that you can be sure that your sense of the flow of the author's argument is the same as others who have studied this book. It would be helpful to be familiar with the author's biography as well. Research the historical circumstances of the author's intended audience. It cannot be overstated how important it is that as Bible expositors we seek to understand the historical context of the passages we are preaching from.
- What would the author's audience have understood the author's words to mean? What historical circumstance are the author's words most likely addressing?

Passage Notes

- Focusing more specifically on the passage you'll be preaching from, begin with a structural diagram. Use dictionaries, encyclopedias, commentaries and your own observations to get a clearer sense of the passage's meaning. Write a set of notes for each verse or sentence in the passage.
- Note key words in the passage. Key words are those that are repeated or seem to be especially important in the author's flow of argument. Note any distinctive grammar features of the passage. Does the passage have a "therefore" or a "but" in it? Note any figures of speech that the author might have used.
- In the New Testament, epistles pay close attention to ordinary questions verses rhetorical questions. Does your background study reveal any specific phrases or word meanings that may have historical or cultural significance in the passage? Be sure to include your own responses to the text and any insights that may have occurred to you up to this point in your study.
- This would be a good time to work up your paraphrase or amplified version of the passage. Going back to what you learned in the Bibliology course, state this passage in your own words, adding any supplemental material that helps you get the complete sense of its intended meaning. Be sure to reference any systematic theological issues that may be a part of the passage's message.

Question the Text

- In the teaching section of this course, we looked at answering questions from the passage such as: Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?
- Using a similar approach, ask very pointed questions about the passage you're studying.
 - What is the author's view of God in this passage?
 - Is any specific attribute or truth about God especially prominent in this passage?
 - Who is the author writing to or about in this passage?
 - Why is the author writing to this group of people?
 - What is the problem, issue, solution or commendation?
 - What appear to be the circumstances for this issue, and do they arise anywhere else in life?
 - Where did this issue occur in the lives of its recipients?
 - Was this an issue in only one person's life, a group of people, or a whole nation?
 - Did this issue occur within or outside the church? Why?
 - What prompted or brought this issue to the forefront?
 - Was everyone involved, or just a few?
 - Was it because of sin, grace, persecution, false teaching, ignorance or...what?
 - How does this situation work out?
 - Does God act in a specific way?
 - How do men respond?
 - Does the author give a clear exhortation about the issue?
- The more questions you can ask and answer from the text, the clearer your understanding of the author's original intent and how that understanding can be applied to the lives of the hearers of the sermon you will preach. One more time, let me restate the definition of Exposition: The content of the sermon which exposes what the Bible says in its context to the modern audience.

Review

- We've begun the process of working toward constructing the sermon.
- These steps begin with prayer and studying the passage in its larger context.
- Early on it's important that we begin taking as many notes as necessary as we explore several lines of investigation into discovering the meaning of the text.
- We discussed different approaches that help us dig into the meaning of the passage we are preparing to preach.

- Throughout these beginning steps we are asking as many questions as we can think of to help us get at the author's intended meaning of our target text.

In the Next Session

- We will look at the different steps to preparing a sermon.
- We will work through a passage of Scripture and formulate its central idea.
- We will discuss sermon preparation from general overview to a series of individual steps.

ASSIGNMENT: 1 COR. 3:1-4

We will practice several of these steps using 1 Cor. 3:1-4 as our target text. If possible, try to read from the same translation for this exercise.

After reading this passage a couple of times (you will stand up and read the passage aloud), select what you think are the key words in this passage.

Your instructor will write the suggested key words on the white board.

Clearly, there is some historical context that is important for getting at the meaning of Paul's comments here.

Read 1 Cor. 1:10-17. What light, if any, does this passage from 1 Cor. 1:10-17 shed on the meaning of the key words selected? Your instructor will write these insights next to the words on the white board (This is modeling the note-taking process).

Are there any grammatical features in 1 Cor. 3:1-4? (Note that the passage begins with a conjunction, "and/but.")

This conjunction connects this section to the previous section in chapter 2. (This grammatical feature is only apparent in the word-for-word, more literal translations such as the KJV, NKJV, NASB, and ESV. Thought-for-thought translations like the NIV, or paraphrases such as the NLT and others will not display the conjunction at the beginning of 1 Cor. 3:1).

Pay attention to the questions in 1 Cor. 3:3-4.

What kind of questions are these (rhetorical)? What is the sense of a rhetorical question? (Not seeking an answer, but rather assuming an answer to make a point.)

Aside from the rhetorical questions in 1 Cor. 3:3-4, do you see any other figures of speech (men vs. babes in v. 1; milk vs. meat in v. 2)?

What point might the author be trying to make by using these contrasting metaphors?

Next, ask and answer penetrating questions of this text:

Who is speaking?

Who is being addressed?

What problem, situation or circumstance prompted this address?

Why is the speaker concerned about the situation?

Are there any solutions or conclusions given in this passage?

Collect the notes that you as a group have come up with, and write a paraphrase of 1 Cor. 3:1-4, giving the sense of its meaning in your own words.

Share your paraphrases with the class.

What have you learned and what is still unclear about this process?

You will be assigned a different New Testament epistle and using whatever resources available, prepare a presentation on the historical background of that New Testament epistle.

Come prepared to stand in front of the group and share the results of your study at the next session. These are to be short presentations, no more than 3 to 5 minutes.

Read ppg. 81-151 of "The Bible, Live."

SESSION 8, PART 2 – STEPS TO A SERMON

In this session, you will:

- Work through a passage of Scripture and formulate its central idea or point.

At the end of this session,

You will KNOW:

- The different steps to preparing a sermon.

You will BE ABLE TO:

- Work through a passage of Scripture and formulate its central idea.

You will THINK ABOUT:

- Sermon preparation both from a general overview and as a series of individual steps.

In the Last Session

- We began working through the steps to creating a sermon.
- Those initial steps included prayer, various readings of our target text, taking notes on our background study of the text, and approaching our particular passage from a number of directions.
- We concluded with asking and attempting to answer as many questions of the text as occurred to us.

Begin video.

Central Point

- We want to be able to state the central point of the text we are targeting. The questions we asked and answered in our last session are the key to arriving at the central point of the text. Each question asked and answered can be turned around and stated as a principle found in our target text.
- State these principles as positive statements. For the purpose of this exercise, avoid using proper names, and instead use third person pronouns. Use as many simple sentences as necessary to state the principle.
- For example, in our exercise looking at 1 Cor. 3:1-4, we asked "What problem, situation or circumstance prompted these words from the apostle Paul to the believers in Corinth?" The answer is that there were divisions in the church at Corinth. The principle here could be stated this way: The believers had allowed divisions to come into the church.

- Another question from the same text could be: Why is the apostle concerned about these divisions in the church? The answer is that divisions in the church are the kind of behavior we might expect to see among non-believers. In addition, division in the church calls into question the spiritual growth of the ones involved. The principles here could be stated this way: Divisions in the church are the opposite of how the followers of Christ should be behaving. Divisions in the church are an indication of spiritual immaturity.
- Another question from this text could be: Are there any solutions or conclusions given in this passage? The answer is not stated specifically, but certainly the apostle Paul implies through his use of pointed rhetorical questions that the believers in Corinth needed to stop their divisive behavior. The principle here could be stated this way: Divisions have no place in the church of Jesus Christ.
- The next step in developing the central point of the passage is to take the key words and phrases from the principle statements and make a concise statement of the central point of the passage. Using our principle statements from 1 Cor. 3:1-4, we could state the central point of the passage this way: Divisions in the church are harmful to both the individuals and to the church as a whole.
- Having determined the central point of the passage we can proceed to the next step in developing a sermon. In this step, we go back to our passage and write the sub-points that explain, define, clarify, or apply our central point. If we've done our work on the central point correctly, these sub-points will flow from the body of our target text.
- Following the central point and the sub-points, we write the conclusion of the sermon. It's a good idea to write the conclusion early on because it's important to have a firm grasp of where you're going with the sermon.
- After writing the conclusion, write the transitions between main points.
- We'll expand on each of these sermon steps in later sessions.
- The last part of the sermon that we write is the introduction and background. After finishing these steps, we review the conclusion one more time to include any connections to the introduction.

- This is what the sermon looks like in outline form:
Sermon Outline
 - a. Introduction
 - i. Welcome
 - ii. Illustration
 - iii. Connection
 - b. Central Point
 - c. Background
 - i. Read Text
 - ii. Restate Central Point
 - d. Body of the Sermon
 - i. Main points in numbered order
 - ii. Sub-points numbered under each main point
 - iii. Transitions
 - e. Conclusion

Review

- We completed our overview of the steps to a sermon.
- Following the asking and answering questions of our target text, we then stated the answers to those questions as principles.
- From these principles, we drew out the central point of the passage.
- Now that we have a grasp of the passage's main point we will proceed to construct the rest of the sermon.
- Our sub-points support the central point and are drawn from the target text.
- We wrote a conclusion, transitions and finally an introduction.
- Each of these sermon steps will be studied in greater detail in later sessions.

In the Next Session

- While there are a number of different approaches to constructing a sermon, in this course we are focusing principally on expository preaching. Exposition is defined as the content of the sermon which exposes what the Bible says in its context to the modern audience.
- Given the constraints of time and our format, we are going to look at just two approaches to expository preaching: The *big idea* approach and the *problem/question* approach.
- As will become evident, these two approaches to expository preaching are really just two sides of the same coin. The next session will focus on the dynamics of the *big idea* approach.

- We will look at how the expositor's job is to take a selected passage of Scripture and discover that single unifying thought (the *big idea*) that ties the whole text together.
- We will learn once we have discovered a text's *big idea*, the task of the expositor becomes much more straight-forward.

ASSIGNMENT: LUKE 13:1-9

To practice arriving at the central point of the text from a different genre of biblical literature, turn to Luke 13:1-9.

It's not uncommon to find the central point of a text plainly stated in the passage. That is the case with this passage. What makes this passage interesting is that it contains a report of current events (v. 1), two probing questions asked by Christ (vs. 2, 4), and a short parable (vs. 6-9).

Work through this text. Ask questions of the text. From the answers to the questions, state some principles and work toward the central point of this passage.

In the case of Luke 13:1-9, the central point is stated in both verse 3 and in verse 5.

Talk about how this central point of the passage helps us understand the parable of vs. 6-9.

In the parable, it appears that Christ equates repentance with bearing fruit. The parable has the added dimension of a defined time period connected to bearing fruit.

Talk about the implications of that teaching.

Following the class discussion of Luke 13:1-9, you will present your New Testament book backgrounds assigned in the previous sessions. Remember, these presentations should be short, about 3 to 5 minutes long.

You will be assigned passages from the Book of Ephesians, divided in this way: 1:3-14; 1:15-23; 2:1-10; 2:11-22; 3:1-13; 3:14-21; 4:1-16; 4:17-24; 4:25-32; 5:1-14.

The aim of this assignment is to discover the central point of your assigned text.

Write at least three questions and answers of their assigned text, the corresponding principle statements connected to those questions and answers, and a single sentence statement of the central point of their assigned text.

You are to identify the central point of the assigned text, as well as an indication of the process you used to arrive at that central point (questions, answers and corresponding principle statements). This will be discussed in the next session.

EPHESIANS WORKSHEET

Your Assigned Text in Ephesians:

Three questions and answers.

Corresponding principle statements connected to those questions and answers.

The central point.

SESSION 9 - THE BIG IDEA APPROACH

In this session, you will:

- Look at the *big idea* approach to expository preaching.

At the end of this session,

You will KNOW:

- How the *big idea* approach is used to construct a sermon.

You will BE ABLE TO:

- Take an overall view of a given text to determine its big idea.

You will THINK ABOUT:

- How the big idea of a given text naturally leads to applying the text to the lives of the modern audience.

In the Last Session

- Looked at an overview of the steps to a sermon.
- Began by discovering the central point of a targeted text, and then discussed other sermon elements that complete the sermon writing process.

Begin video.

A Variety of Styles

- If you have been attending a Christian church for any length of time, you have heard many sermons.
- Most followers of Christ have had opportunity to hear many different preachers.
- If your experience is like most Christians, with some sermons you were able to follow the preacher's line of thought, and with others you came away scratching your head, not completely certain just what the preacher was getting at.
- Some preachers approach a passage of Scripture as though the verses in the text were a series of doors to be opened, briefly looked into, and then move onto the next door.
- In the course of such a sermon, many different ideas are touched upon, and yes, they may all have been drawn from the biblical text, but the listener is often left with a collection of unrelated ideas, not certain which is the most important biblical idea for their life on that day.

God is a God of Order

- God is a God of order. Being made in the image of God, we humans seek order.
- The most effective expository preaching is the communication, explanation and application of a single biblical concept.
- We call this approach the *big idea* approach. Essentially, we've already been utilizing this approach as we have been seeking to discover the central point of a given text. So, we aren't introducing a new approach to formulating a sermon, but rather reinforcing the importance of doing the diligent work necessary to preach a single biblical concept that flows from the text we have selected.
- With most passages of Scripture, the expositor will have to do some work to arrive at the big idea of the text. The key to a text's big idea is to see the passage we've selected as a whole, and then seek to gain a sort of bird's eye view of that whole text to determine its big idea.

- Take Psalm 114 as an example:

*When Israel went forth from Egypt,
The house of Jacob from a people of strange language,
Judah became a sanctuary,
Israel, His dominion.
The sea looked and fled;
The Jordan turned back.
The mountains skipped like rams,
The hills, like lambs.
What ails you, O sea, that you flee?
Jordan, that you turn back?
mountains, that you skip like rams?
hills, like lambs?
Tremble, O earth, before the Lord,
Before the God of Jacob,
Who turned the rock into a pool of water,
The flint into a fountain of water.*

- From your Bibliology course, you will recognize the familiar use of Hebrew parallelism in the Psalms. In the case of Psalm 114, lines 1 & 2 repeat the same thought, lines 3 & 4 repeat the same thought, and so on. The point I'm making is that we need to be aware of such literary devices when approaching a text to determine its big idea.
- The specific details that are spoken of in Psalm 114 are familiar to us from the account of Israel's exodus from Egypt and subsequent wandering in the wilderness.

- But the approach of the psalmist is not merely a recital of historical facts, but rather a celebration of those historical details. As stated above, we need to pull back and get a bird's eye view of this text to discover its big idea. To dwell on any one detail from the text is to "not see the forest for the trees."
- Psalm 114 is a song of praise to God. The word "praise" does not occur in the text, but a quick look at the psalms that surround Psalm 114 shows us that all these psalms praise God for one reason or another. The big idea is found when we can state in a simple sentence exactly what the psalmist is praising God for in Psalm 114. Reference is made to the Red Sea, the Jordan River, the mountains and hills, and the rock that provided water in the wilderness.
- Tying all these details together, the big idea of Psalm 114 might be stated this way: Praise God for His supernatural provision for Israel following the exodus from Egypt.
- With the big idea of Psalm 114 simply stated, the task for the expositor becomes much more straight-forward. After showing how the psalmist develops this big idea from the text of Psalm 114, the question becomes "so what?" How does this truth from God's Word impact our lives today?
- Again, building on the principles learned in the Bibliology course, we are familiar with the concept of types in Scripture. We know that Israel's freedom from slavery in Egypt is a type of the Christian's release from slavery to sin through faith in Jesus Christ. As expositors, we take the big idea and turn it around as an application question for the modern audience we are preaching to. Does God still supernaturally provide for those who are freed from sin's bondage through faith in Christ? The answer is Yes! So, our response should be the same as that which the psalmist is calling forth: Praise to God!
- We can determine whether we've discovered the big idea of a text by asking and answering if the body of the text develops, explains, or applies that big idea we've formulated.
- In the example of Psalm 114, does the text of the psalm give examples of God's supernatural provision for Israel following their exodus from Egypt? The answer is yes. Does the psalmist construct the psalm in such a way that the response elicited would appear to be that of praise to God? Again, the answer is yes, because the poetic language used is very lyrical and celebratory.
- There are no easy shortcuts to discovering the big idea of a given text. The process will force us to think both in detail and in a bigger picture context. We may formulate and test half a dozen possible big ideas about a text before we finally discover the one that best fits the context, the author's intent, and the body of the text. The hard work is worth the effort. For once we've discovered the big idea, the rest of the sermon construction process flows much more easily.

Review

- The expositor's job is to take a selected passage of Scripture and discover that single unifying thought that ties the whole text together.
- That's the *big idea* approach.
- Once we have discovered a text's big idea, the task of the expositor becomes much more straight-forward.

In the Next Session

- Discuss the similarities and differences between the *big idea* approach and the *problem/question* approach.
- Discuss the advantages of the *problem/question* approach and work with this approach for a given text of Scripture.

ASSIGNMENT: BIG IDEA APPROACH

Turn to 1 Timothy 1:12-17.

Read the passage twice to yourself and then one person in the class will read it out loud.

Beginning with verse 12, determine the major ideas of each of the verses in this passage. The instructor will write these on the white board.

Think through the key idea of each verse in this section. Once you have the key ideas from the various verses up on the board, think through a unifying statement that puts all of what you have discovered together.

The final statement of the *big idea* should be a single simple sentence.

Review the assignment from the last session on discovering the central point of verses in Ephesians.

Next session, you will preach your first abbreviated sermon. It will be based on the work you've just done on the Ephesian passage assigned to you.

For this first sermon, refer to your notes from Session 8, Part 2 that listed the "Steps to a Sermon."

For this abbreviated sermon, you are to use these six steps:

1. State the *big idea*
2. Read the text.
3. Give a short background to the text.
4. Restate the *big idea* (using different words than #1.)
5. Share 2 or 3 main points from the text that develop or inform the *big idea*.
6. Answer the "so what?" question and apply it to the other students' lives.

This first sermon will be limited to 10-15 minutes. Practice at home before the class to be sure what you've prepared falls within that time frame.

SESSION 10 - THE PROBLEM/QUESTION APPROACH

In this session, you will:

- Discuss the similarities and differences between the *big idea* approach and the *problem/question* approach.
- Discuss the advantages of the *problem/question* approach and work with this approach for a given text of Scripture.

At the end of this session:

You will KNOW:

- Not every passage of Scripture lends itself to the *big idea* approach.

You will BE ABLE TO:

- See that the *problem/question* approach takes that same central point of the text and follows it to its logical conclusion.

You will THINK ABOUT:

- The difference between the *big idea* and *problem/question* approaches.

In the Last Session

- We looked at the *big idea* approach to constructing a sermon.
- We saw that the big idea brings together the various threads of a selected text into one unifying statement. This unifying statement of the passage makes the formulation of the sermon a much more straight-forward process.

Begin video.

Problem/Question Approach

- The *big idea* approach to constructing a sermon helps bring clarity and order to the preacher's presentation. But not every passage of Scripture lends itself to this approach. From the outset of preparing any sermon we must have in our minds both the content of the passage as well as the challenge to us that flows from that message. No sermon is complete if it doesn't both inform us as well as transform us.
- The *problem/question* approach raises awareness from the very start that the listener should be prepared to be challenged and to change if necessary on whatever subject the selected passage brings to our attention.
- It was stated in an earlier session that the *big idea* approach and the *problem/question* approach are really two sides of the same coin. We start with the central point of the selected text. The *big idea* approach states that central point as a single unifying statement that encompasses the major threads of the passage. The *problem/question* approach takes that same

central point of the text and follows it to its logical conclusion in terms of application or life change.

- The *problem/question* approach then states that application of the central point as a question to be answered by the text.

Difference Between Two Approaches

- As a general example of the difference between the *big idea* approach and the *problem/question* approach, let's suppose that the Apostle Paul is encouraging believers about what he sees as evidence of their growth in Christ. The *big idea* approach might summarize the passage with this *statement*: The true follower of Christ grows spiritually over time. The *problem/question* approach of this same passage might be stated this way: What are the tell-tale signs of someone who is growing spiritually in Jesus Christ?
- Both approaches start with the central point of the passage, in this example, that Paul is encouraging believers as he observes their growth in Christ. Both approaches are supported by the content of the text under study. Both approaches seek to expose that biblical content to the modern audience. The Big Idea Approach begins with a unifying statement of the text, and then supports that statement by the argument and substance of the given passage. The *problem/question* approach begins with a question or problem posed at the outset of the sermon. This approach then proceeds to answer that question/problem by unpacking the content of the passage.
- Hopefully you've read the assigned chapters from *The Bible, Live* by Vern Wilkinson on this topic of the *problem/question* approach. I'd like to reinforce a couple of the points he made in that discussion. First and foremost, it is always the text under study that dictates the content of the *problem/question* message. God's Word addresses every important question in life, but it does so under the inspiration and direction of the Holy Spirit. We must guard against the tendency of attempting to force a passage of Scripture to ask and answer questions that may be of interest to us, but that may not be addressed in that specific text of Scripture. We must do our due diligence in discovering the central point of the passage, and from that key idea then formulate the *problem/question* that best fits the context of that passage.
- Secondly, I agree wholeheartedly with Wilkinson that the *problem/question* approach best connects with our audience and invites them along on a journey of discovery together with us. We have questions. God's Word has answers.

- In modeling a consistent and honest-to-the-text approach to discovering answers in the pages of Scripture, we are modeling an approach that every follower of Christ can make a part of their own personal study time. Also, this approach connects the preacher and the audience together in a search for God's truth on a given question.
- Our enthusiasm as preachers for seeking the answer to the question posed at the outset of the sermon will infect our listeners with an equal curiosity to discover, along with us, just how the living Word of God reveals God's perspective on whatever the question/problem may be.
- Discovery is exciting. Discovering gems of God's truth together with our brothers and sisters in Christ as we delve into the eternal truth of God's Word is doubly rewarding.

John 15:1-11

- To gain a better sense of how the *problem/question* approach pivots around the central point of a passage and flows from its content let's consider John 15:1-11. This well-known text is very appealing in its use of the metaphor of a vine and its branches to symbolize the believer's relationship with Christ. The key words in this text are "abide" which occurs 11 times and "fruit" which occurs 6 times. In teaching us about these two major themes of abiding and fruit, Christ also touches on pruning, prayer, obedience and joy. Given all that's going on in this passage it would be easy to get lost in the details. Just as with the Big Idea Approach we need to gain a bird's-eye-view of the passage to formulate our problem/question to accurately reflect the central idea of the text.
- Given our two major themes of abiding and fruit, we could state the central idea of the passage this way: The follower of Christ must abide in Christ to produce fruit. In his book, *The Bible, Live*, Wilkinson gives a list of six questions to be used as a starting point for the *problem/question* approach: who, what, where, when, why, and how. While we would want to address the questions of what does abiding mean, and what exactly is fruit, neither of those questions, in themselves, summarizes the passage. This passage, speaks about the vital connection the believer is to have with Jesus Christ (abiding), and what flows out of that relationship (fruit). A better problem/question for John 15:1-11 would be: How do I know I'm on track in my Christian life? (repeat)

- It can be readily seen that such a problem/question addresses both the major themes of abiding and fruit, but also connects to the lesser themes of pruning, prayer, obedience and joy. Such a question places the preacher and his audience on the same team in search of answers to a question that every follower of Christ has pondered at one time or another. And what's most important, those answers will come directly from the text under study.
- "How do you know that you're on track in your Christian life?" Wouldn't you be interested in the answer to that question? We all would be, right? Even more, wouldn't we be more confident in that answer knowing that it came directly from Christ's teaching in this passage? That's the appeal and power of the *problem/question* approach to constructing a sermon.

Review

- Both the *big idea* and the *problem/question* approaches begin with the central point of the passage under study.
- The *problem/question* approach engages the audience at the outset, and gets them thinking about the challenge to respond in some way to God's Word that they know is coming before they leave.
- The *problem/question* approach also joins the preacher and the listeners together in a quest for answers from God's Word on a given question.

In the Next Session

- We will learn how to construct a good sermon introduction that connects you with your audience, addresses the central point of the passage, and gives the audience a "heads-up" as to where the sermon is going.

ASSIGNMENT: PREPARING A SERMON USING BOOK OF JAMES

Turn to 1 Cor. 10:23-33 for practice in using the *problem/question* approach to write a sermon.

Context is always important in determining the central idea of a passage. This passage is no different.

As with any text, the first step is to determine the central point of that text. Work through this text, thinking aloud, and on the white board recording the different themes and topics Paul brings up. 1 Cor. 10:31 is the climax statement in this passage, but it's not the central point. Work on getting the bird's-eye-view of this passage.

Work through what the application of this point might be as the sermon is wrapped up.

What "so what?" challenge will be given to the listeners of this sermon?

Where does the central point of the passage seem to lead us in terms of life transformation?

You will be assigned passages from the Book of James to prepare your second, and final, sermon.

The book will be divided this way: James 1:1-12; 1:13-18; 1:19-27. James 2:1-13; 2:14-26. James 3:1-12; 3:13-18; 4:1-12; 4:13-17; 5:1-6; 5:7-12; 5:13-20.

Refer to Session 8, Parts 1 & 2, for sermon preparation and how to discover the central point of the text.

At the next session, hand in a statement of the central point of your assigned text and their notes on how you arrived there.

You will be asked to preach this sermon during Sessions 12 and 13 of this course.

The sermons should be 15-25 minutes.

SESSION 11 - SERMON INTRODUCTIONS

In this session, you will:

- Construct a good sermon introduction that connects, you, the preacher with your audience.

At the end of this session,

You will KNOW:

- Why the introduction of the sermon is so important.

You will BE ABLE TO:

- State the different elements that make for a good sermon introduction.

You will THINK ABOUT:

- The introduction of the sermon and how it fits into the challenge from the sermon passage.

In the Last Session

- Looked at the *problem/question* approach to constructing a sermon.
- We saw that, like the *big idea* approach, the *problem/question* approach begins with discovering the central point of the passage.
- Thinking about the central point of the text, we ask “What application are we to draw from this main idea?” The answer to that question helps us to formulate the problem/question for the text at hand.
- The *problem/question* approach draws the listener into a search of God’s Word with the preacher to discover the answer to our question.

Begin video.

Importance of Sermon’s Introduction

- It’s been said that the first twenty-five words out of a speaker’s mouth can often determine whether the audience will listen or tune that speaker out. There is no doubt some truth to that statement. For that reason and others, we will discuss, the introduction to our sermon is of great importance.

Potential Relationship Barriers

- Assuming most of those taking this course are coming from a small church setting, when the preacher stands before the congregation there is already a relationship that exists between him and the people he is speaking to. They know one another. But the assumptions that the preacher and the people bring to the sermon can be very different.
- The preacher's perception of that event may be that the people understand that what they are about to hear falls under the heading of "Thus saith the Lord!" In other words, the preacher may assume that the people understand he speaks forth the authoritative Word of God.
- The audience may have a completely different perception of that same event. Some in the audience may see themselves in the role of critics, even skeptics, waiting to see whether the preacher says something that they can accept and agree with.
- Others in the audience may see themselves as learners, hungry to hear what God's Word says to them on this particular Sunday morning. The preacher may assume that most everyone in the audience is fully grasping whatever he is sharing from the Scriptures. While in fact, it may only be a small percentage that tracks with the preacher's message.
- As a preacher, there are times when you see the frowns on the faces of your listeners, or just notice their body language (crossed arms, staring off into the distance, and the like), and you realize that a certain percentage of your audience isn't even neutral in their willingness to hear what you've prepared to say.
- So how do we as preachers go about lowering such relationship barriers so that our message from God's Word will gain at least a fair hearing?

Prayer

- First and foremost, we pray. It goes without saying that we pray throughout the sermon preparation process. We pray both for our submission to the text and we pray for the listeners' submission to the Scriptures as well.
- Sometimes it is a good idea to open the sermon with prayer. Prayer at the outset of the sermon connects both the preacher and the audience with a higher purpose and person.
- If you are new or visiting a church, it is helpful to express appreciation to the listeners at the beginning of the message. A recognition that each person in the church is giving of their time and attention just to be there helps toward evening the power imbalance between the preacher and the audience.

Humor

- Humor is also very effective at closing the preacher/audience gap. Humor makes the preacher human and can be used as a means of introducing the main topic of the sermon.
- Humor also peaks the interest of the audience and makes them more disposed to hear what the preacher says. Either a humorous story or a funny personal story can be a very effective opening to a sermon.

The Central Point

- One of the important dynamics of the sermon introduction is to connect the central point of the passage to the listeners' life experience. This can be done through a story, through a real-life example, or even through current events if they apply. The intent at the opening of the message is to connect the audience's common struggles, fears, hopes and experiences with the central point of the passage under study. This can be done very effectively by posing a problem/question as we discussed in our last session.
- Our goal is to capture the audience's interest both in discovering the answer to the problem/question and to capture their interest in looking to God's Word as the source for that answer.

Background

- Because the Bible is tied to specific historical circumstances from Genesis to Revelation, we can use the historical background for a given text of Scripture to set up the introduction for our central point. As we'll see when we talk about the conclusion of a sermon, the preacher needs to have a clear idea of where he's going in terms of application from the passage so that he can begin to point his audience in that direction at the very outset of the sermon.
- If your audience is unfamiliar with you as a preacher, it is helpful to assure them of your familiarity with Scripture by going into the background of the text you've chosen to preach from.
- Pay attention to the pronouns you use when addressing the audience. A generation ago, preachers often addressed their listeners in the second person, using "you."
- Today, it's better to include yourself with the audience both in terms of application and in discovering what the Bible says about a given topic. So, it's "what can we learn from God's Word about _____?" Not, "what do you need to know about _____?"

- It's also important that we connect with our audience at a real level in terms of the central point of the passage. This gut level connection also flows out of where we think the text is taking us in its application to our lives. Let it be said again, expository preaching doesn't seek merely to inform the listener, but to transform both preacher and audience in line with the Spirit's leading from a given text of Scripture.
- The background information for our passage should be limited to what is necessary to connect with our modern audience. We are not teaching a Sunday School lesson from the pulpit.
- If we are preaching through a book of the Bible, it's important to connect with what has gone before and with the general flow of the author's thought throughout that book of Scripture. If we've done our preparation work correctly, the audience will see that we haven't just lifted a text out of Scripture and held it up for inspection, but rather that there is a cohesiveness and unifying movement to each passage of a given book and how it connects to the rest of that book in the Bible.
- By the end of our introduction our audience should be engaged with the *big idea* or problem/question that we've put forth. They should have both an intellectual interest in discovering how God's Word addresses the issue, but also an emotional connection because we've related that central point to where they live. All of that is a tall order. That is precisely why our introduction cannot be an afterthought or just a few opening sentences to get into the meat of the text we've chosen.

A Road Map

- Our introduction should also function as a map, informing our audience where we are headed and what they can expect from today's journey into God's Word. For this reason, we may choose to state at the outset not only our central point, but also the two to four supporting points that will be drawn from our text in the course of the sermon. Clearly, such an outline at the beginning of the message presupposes that we do know exactly where we are going before we ever get up to speak. Remember, the audience hasn't seen your outline of the text. So sometimes it is helpful to give them a "heads up" during the introduction by laying out a short road map of just where you're going with the passage at the beginning.

Summary

- In summary, here are the key points to include in your sermon introduction:
- **Pray:** Praying aloud before we preach is a matter of personal preference. For some preachers, they pray at the beginning of every sermon, so their audience comes to expect it. For others, prayer at the beginning of the message depends on the movement of the Holy Spirit as to whether they pray or not. Sometimes, quite honestly, we pray because the central point of the passage we're preaching from requires our humble dependence on God to even approach it.
- **Introduction/connection:** At the very beginning of the sermon we are seeking to connect with our audience. This may be done with humor, with an anecdote, with recalling some current event, or with identifying some felt need, question, or struggle that our audience could be experiencing.
- **State the big idea or problem/question:** Hopefully, our introduction will have led quite naturally into our statement of the *big idea*, or into our asking the problem/question. At this point we would want our audience fully engaged in God's Word to learn more about the central point that we are going to discuss this morning.
- **Background:** Now is when we turn to the historical setting that frames the passage of Scripture that we have chosen for our sermon. We don't need to spend too much time here, for we will have more opportunity to expand on the background as we get into our text.
- **Read the passage:** Most of us are not gifted readers. For that reason, it is important that we practice reading our Scriptural passage before we deliver the sermon on Sunday morning. We need to read with meaning and inflection. If at all possible, we should read as though the author of that particular text were himself reading it to our audience. Remember, if the text sounds boring when we read it, it will be heard the same way by our audience.
- **Restate the big idea or problem/question:** Restating the *big idea* or problem/question is very effective, for it refocuses our audience's attention on the central point we will be addressing in our chosen text. It is helpful to use different words to express the same statement. People hear words and ideas differently. Attempt to restate your central point several times, whether it's an idea or a problem/question, using a variety of words or phrases each time. This may take some forethought and practice.
- **Outline:** Finally, give your audience a short road map of where they can expect you to take them as you unpack the *big idea* from the text, or as you answer the problem/question from the passage.

Review

- The introduction to the sermon is very important. It helps to establish the preacher's connection to his audience. It also addresses just why the audience should pay close attention to what the preacher says.
- In the introduction, the preacher sets forth the *big idea* or problem/question. He does so in a way that draws the audience's interest in both the question raised, and in seeing how God's Word provides the answer to that question. In the introduction, the preacher prepares his listeners for the challenge that will be coming at the conclusion of the message.
- Finally, in the introduction the preacher provides a short road map of just where he is going in the sermon.

In the Next Session

- We will learn the importance of sermon transitions and the importance of a well-thought-out sermon conclusion.
- We will learn how to effectively challenge the audience to respond to God's Word in line with the passage that has been under study.

ASSIGNMENT: JAMES 3:13-18 INTRODUCTION

Work through James 3:13-18 to come up with an introduction.

In a group, come up with:

An introduction/connection.

State the *big idea* or *problem/question*.

Give the background that leads us into this passage.

Restate the central point in different words.

Give a brief outline of where the sermon is going to go.

SESSION 12 - SERMON TRANSITIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

In this session, you will:

- Learn the importance of sermon transitions and the importance of a well-thought-out sermon conclusion.
- Learn how to effectively challenge the audience to respond to God's Word in line with the passage that has been under study.

At the end of this session,

You will KNOW:

- The goal in preaching any text of Scripture is to inform and to transform.

You will BE ABLE TO

- Create verbal transitions that connects one part of a sermon to the next.

You will THINK ABOUT:

- The sermon is not complete until you clearly connect the truth of God's Word from a particular passage to a call for life change that flows from that passage.

In the Last Session

- We looked at the introduction to the sermon.
- We saw that the introduction is very important as it sets forth the main theme of the sermon and its connection to the audience. The introduction sets the stage for everything that is to follow, and invites the audience to join with the preacher on an adventure of discovery into God's Word.

Begin video.

Overview of Transitions and Conclusion

- One of the significant challenges for the preacher is to preach the sermon in such a way that each person in the pew is able to follow his line of thought. If the listener can't follow the preacher's journey through the biblical passage, it's likely that the challenge from God's Word at the conclusion will lose much of its force.
- Additionally, if the preacher fails to answer the "*so what?*" question that the passage poses, then he has only done half of his job. As stated before, our goal in preaching any text of Scripture is not only to inform but to transform. Each person, hearing the sermon that day, should leave the church knowing the answer to this question: In light of this passage from the Word of God, what must change in my life?

Transitions

- First, a look at sermon transitions. As a preacher, we've been praying for, thinking about, meditating on and wrestling with a certain passage of Scripture for the better part of a week. We've looked at that passage from any number of directions. We've asked questions of the passage, and answered questions that the passage has asked of us. By Sunday morning we ought to know our text pretty well. We've written an outline, at the least, and very possibly we've written out a full manuscript of our sermon. Hopefully we feel we are ready to go when we step behind the pulpit.
- That's all well and good, and just as it should be. But consider that our audience is often coming to this same passage from the Bible cold. With few exceptions, the text we know backwards and forwards is only vaguely known to our audience. While we are looking at our outline or our manuscript for direction, the listeners in our audience are looking at and listening to us. They can't see our outline. Unless we signal them in some way, our audience won't know when we move from point #1 to point #2 in our message.
- Transitions are the verbal bridge that connects one part of a sermon to the next. As humans, we seek for order. Transitions help provide that order for the listening mind to grab ahold of. In a typical sermon, there should be transitions between the main points and between the final point and the conclusion. If, as we discussed in our last session about the sermon introduction, we have given our audience a preview of where we are going with the passage before us, the transitions serve to reinforce and remind our audience that these are the main points of interest on our sermon journey through God's Word this morning.
- Transitions can be as simple as a summary of what we've just said.

Transition Example

- In the previous session, the student exercise was to work-up an introduction for James 3: 13-18.
- This passage contrasts two very different sources of wisdom: wisdom from below vs. wisdom from above. The transition between main point #1 and main point #2 for James 3:13-18 could be something like: "The first type of wisdom that James talks about in this passage is wisdom from below. This type of wisdom is characterized by _____, _____, and _____. Now we turn to the second type of wisdom: wisdom from above."
- Because of this simple transition statement, our audience knows that we've just concluded looking at one type of wisdom, and now we're moving forward to consider the second type. With a little more thought and creativity transitions can be made more memorable by constructing them as aphorisms

or even as proverbs. The transition statement for the James 3 passage could be stated: "That's hell's wisdom! Now for heaven's wisdom!"

- As stated before, it's important that we transition from our final main point to our conclusion. This last transition is best approached as a summary of the main points of the message. We gave the audience a preview of these main points in the introduction, but now that they've seen how these main points flow from our text and support and explain the *big idea* or problem/question, they carry even more impact heading into the conclusion of the sermon.

Conclusions

- That brings us to the conclusion of the sermon. To begin with, a couple of should and should notes about the conclusion of a sermon. The conclusion should be in mind from the beginning of sermon construction. The conclusion should be the destination we've been pointing to from the start. In the problem/question format, the conclusion should answer the problem or question posed by the preacher at the outset. (Pause) The conclusion should not be an afterthought. The conclusion should not be left vague. The conclusion should not be expecting the listener to fill in the blanks.
- It would be a mistake to assume that all our listeners have tracked with us from introducing the *big idea* or problem/question of the passage at the start of the sermon to how that should impact their lives now that we are nearing the finish. Just the opposite is often the case. The sermon is not complete until the preacher clearly connects the truth of God's Word from a specific passage to a call for life change that flows from that passage.
- Ideally, the listener should see that the introduction and the conclusion of the sermon function as bookends to the text we've been studying. By that I mean that the conclusion is a return to the *big idea* or problem/question that we introduced at the beginning. In the listener's mind, there ought to be a sort of "ah ha" as they see the parts of the sermon come full circle and come together.

Concluding Illustration

- It's right here at the conclusion that an appropriate illustration can have significant impact. But we must be careful in our choice of a closing illustration. This illustration could be an anecdote, Bible story, personal account, or even a poem or piece of classic literature. More important than what we choose is whether the illustration fits our *big idea* or problem/question principle. The right illustration can be powerful in impacting both the mind and the emotions of our audience. The wrong illustration, even if it's a good story, can leave our listeners confused as to whether they really grasped the central point of the passage.

- Answering the "so what?" question.
- The conclusion of the sermon should answer the question, "so what?"
- "Now that I understand the historical setting behind this passage from God's Word; and now that I see the flow of the author's thought through the passage and how it all fits together – so what?" "What am I as a follower of Christ supposed to think, do or stop doing?"
- Some passages of Scripture are straight-forward in applying their message to our lives. For example, in Luke 18:1-8 Christ tells a parable about a woman seeking justice from an unrighteous judge. We don't have to guess at the meaning and intended application of this parable, for the author tells us Christ's intent in telling the parable is that we ought to pray always and not lose heart. Luke 18:1, "Now He was telling them a parable to show that at all times they ought to pray and not to lose heart."
- Luke 18:1 gives us the answer to the "so what?" question. But just because the application of this text is clearly stated for us doesn't mean that our job of helping our audience think through their "life change" response is done.
- What does it mean "to pray at all times?" Give some real-life examples of when to pray that perhaps are not on many believers' radar. What circumstances do we encounter in life where we might tend to "lose heart?" in the face of prayers that appear to go unanswered? Pick out 3 different people in your audience with very different life situations and attempt to answer this question for them.
- This last suggestion is a good practice for thinking through the "so what?" applications for any message drawn from God's Word. We tend to think application from our perspective, so it's a good discipline to attempt to put yourself in the position of a retiree, or a stay-at-home mom, or a student, or someone who works in a negative or hostile environment, and suggest how a given principle might look in their world.

Conclusions and the Gospel

- The Gospel message runs like a thread through the entire fabric of the Bible. That being so, there will be many times when the "so what?" question must include a call to trust Jesus Christ as the Lord and Savior of our lives. It would be a false assumption to think that everyone in church on a given Sunday morning has repented of their sins and by faith has called on the Lord for salvation. When we share the Gospel message from the pulpit, those who have trusted Christ are reminded of the love and mercy extended to them, while those who may still be on the fence are challenged to consider their precarious position.

- Some of the most challenging texts to wrap-up with a clear call to change our lives are those passages that address matters of theology. For example, texts that speak of the love of God, or state the truth of Christ's bodily resurrection, or set forth any number of orthodox theological tenets are difficult to draw a clear "*so what?*" application from. But that is precisely the challenge the preacher of God's Word must wrestle through. Even more, the life change application for every passage of Scripture should be as specific as we can make it. Ask for action with time, location, completion and qualifiers. To end a sermon by saying something like, "We all need to love our neighbors more," is too vague, too abstract. Don't hesitate to nail down a clear, doable-today kind of application. Give several real-life examples that would connect to people in your audience as to just who their neighbors are, and how they can demonstrate God's love to them in concrete (I can do this!) ways.

Closing Prayer

- Finally, always close the sermon with prayer. For when the challenge is given, all of us, preacher included, must come before the throne of God to find grace and help if we are to have any hope of truly changing in the way God's Word has directed us.

Review

- We have considered both transitions and the conclusion of the sermon. Transitions help the listener track with the preacher during the course of the message, and also signal the main points of the passage.
- The conclusion is so important that it requires careful consideration and clear thinking.
- The sermon's conclusion should answer the "*so what?*" question raised by the text. Finally, give specific suggestions as to how to put legs on the central principle that's been taught. No sermon is complete without a clear call to action.

In the Next Session

- We will talk about how God doesn't call every follower of Christ to be a preacher of His Word.
- We will discuss that the call to preach is both a call to a disciplined process of sermon preparation and a call to live a life worthy of the privilege to proclaim God's Word to God's people.

ASSIGNMENT: SERMON FEEDBACK

Be prepared to present your sermon presentations assigned from the Book of James.

Everyone should be listening to each sermon with a Sermon Evaluation Form in front of you. You can find extra copies at:

https://vmcontenders.org/docs/etp_sermon_eval.pdf

As you listen to the sermon presentations, take notes.

At the end of each sermon presentation, while the presenter is still standing in front of the class, you will be asked for verbal constructive feedback.

This feedback is to consist of:

At least one affirmative statement ("I thought you did this really well, _____."),

One constructive statement ("I thought you could improve in this area of your sermon, _____.")

Fill out a form for each sermon.

The next class is the final session of this course.

There is no final exam for this course, but there will be an accountability statement required to be filled out at the final class session.

SERMON EVALUATION FORM

Your Name:

Date:

Student Preacher's Name:

Text:

1. Was the big idea or problem/question of this text stated in the introduction?
If so, state that big idea or problem/question in your own words?

2. What were the 2 or 3 main points of the sermon?

1)

2)

3)

3. Were these main points drawn from the biblical text? Circle your answer.
Yes No Mostly I'm not sure

4. What application – "life change challenge" – did you take away from this sermon?

5. What did you like best about this sermon?

6. What do you think could be improved upon in this sermon?

SESSION 13 - THE CALL AND WORTH OF A PREACHER

In this session, you will:

- See what God's Word says about the character of the preacher.
- See how that dynamic factors into effectively communicating God's Word.

At the end of this session,

You will KNOW:

- That the sermon's content and the preacher's character are both important in effectively communicating God's Word.

You will BE ABLE TO:

- Consider their call to be a preacher of God's Word.

You will THINK ABOUT:

- Both your calling and the task needed to preach God's Word.

In the Last Session

- We considered both transitions and the conclusion of the sermon.
- Transitions help the listener track with the preacher during the course of the message, and also signal the main points of the passage.
- The conclusion is so important that it requires careful consideration and clear thinking.
- The sermon's conclusion should answer the "so what?" question raised by the text.
- No sermon is complete without a clear call to action.

Begin video.

The Call

- The call to preach God's Word – Moses.
- Numbers 12:3 makes one of the most startling statements about a human in the Old Testament. Look at the two verses that precede Num. 12:3.
- "Then Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because of the Cushite woman whom he had married (for he had married a Cushite woman); and they said, "Has the Lord indeed spoken only through Moses? Has He not spoken through us as well?" And the Lord heard it." (Num. 12:1-2)
- As Numbers 12 begins, Moses' brother and sister, Aaron and Miriam, have just challenged Moses' authority to be the only person who speaks for God. It appears they also wanted part of that privilege for themselves. Having briefly set this scenario, Numbers 12:3 states:
- "Now the man Moses was very humble, more than any man who was on the face of the earth." (Num. 12:3)

- Wow! Humility by itself is rare enough, but to be declared the humblest man on earth – wouldn't we all love to meet such a man?
- But what aspect of this brief scenario between Moses and his siblings displays the humility of Moses? We see his authority challenged by two people who have known him all his life. It's as if they are saying to their brother Moses: "What gives you the authority to speak for God . . . and not us?" As the account in Num. 12 goes on, the Lord disciplines Aaron and Miriam because they have challenged the Lord's servant. In Numbers 12:7 the Lord states that Moses "alone is faithful in all My (the Lord's) household." In this instance, Moses' humility is seen in his complete submission to God's call on his life to proclaim the word of the Lord.
- We know from the earlier Exodus 3 account that it wasn't Moses' idea to speak for God. Just the opposite. Moses tried to get out of being the Lord's spokesman.
- Nevertheless, the Lord's call on Moses to speak forth His word was undeniable. Moses fully submitted to that call.

Paul's Call

- The apostle Paul, while traveling to Damascus, heard the call of God to preach Christ to the Gentiles. Like Moses, he too submitted to God's call on his life. Later in Paul's ministry he reminds a young preacher named Timothy of God's call on Timothy's life to preach the word:
- "I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: Preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction." (2 Timothy 4:1-2)
- The call of God to preach His word is not something the individual chooses, but rather it is something that chooses him. The apostle Paul makes a telling statement in 1 Cor. 9:16: "For if I preach the Gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for I am under compulsion; for woe is me if I do not preach the Gospel." (1 Cor. 9:16)

Hearing the Call

- How does a man know if the Lord has called him to preach God's Word? Several factors come into play here. At some point an individual recognizes that they have a desire to speak forth the Word of God. Other mature believers begin to recognize that same call and gifting in the person. Like Paul, Timothy and countless others through the centuries, that call on a person to preach God's Word becomes something undeniable – they must do it. It's that sense of inner compulsion that Paul spoke of. And if the Lord truly

has His call on a man's life, the Lord will lead him through those circumstances that eventually place him behind a pulpit.

- The Call to preach is also a Call to live.
- The call to preach God's Word is a call to live consistent with what we preach. As preachers, we are not just a voice box out of which comes Biblical truth. More than 25 times Paul admonished the young preachers that he mentored to live lives of moral character that befitted their Gospel message. What was true for Timothy and Titus in the 1st century is just as true for us today.
- "In all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds, with purity in doctrine, dignified, sound in speech which is above reproach, in order that the opponent may be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us" (Titus 2:7-8).
- The high character standards for elders and deacons in the church apply just as much to those who would stand in the pulpit and declare, "Thus saith the Lord!"
- The source of the preacher's authority.
- Having said that, the source of our authority does not come from within ourselves. Yes, we have the call of God to speak forth His Word. But the authority of our message is not personal, it is not from us, but from the Word of God which we preach. It is only the Bible that is authoritative in all matters of faith and practice. It is God who has spoken. Mankind responds to the spoken Word of God. It is for this reason that we have been focusing on expository preaching.
- Once again, exposition is "the content of the sermon which exposes what the Bible says in its context to the modern audience."
- The authority of the message we preach does not rely on our wit, our performance, our polish or our personality. The authority of the message we preach relies on the Word of God and our faithfulness to the text from which we preach.

How to Become an Effective Preacher

- I'll close with this essay from Floyd Doud Shafer on how to become an effective preacher:
- Fling him into his office. Tear the "Office" sign from the door and nail on the sign, "Study." Take him off the mailing list. Lock him up with his books and his typewriter and his Bible. Slam him down on his knees before texts and broken hearts and the flock of lives of a superficial flock and a holy God.
- Force him to be the one man in our surfeited communities who knows about God. Throw him into the ring to box with God until he learns how short his arms are. Engage him to wrestle with God all the night through. And let him come out only when he's bruised and beaten into being a blessing.

- Shut his mouth forever spouting remarks, and stop his tongue forever tripping lightly over every nonessential. Require him to have something to say before he dares break the silence. Bend his knees in the lonesome valley.
- Burn his eyes with weary study. Wreck his emotional poise with worry for God. And make him exchange his pious stance for a humble walk with God and man. Make him spend and be spent for the glory of God. Rip out his telephone. Burn up his ecclesiastical success sheets.
- Put water in his gas tank. Give him a Bible and tie him to the pulpit. And make him preach the Word of the living God!
- Test him. Quiz him. Examine him. Humiliate him for his ignorance of things divine. Shame him for his good comprehension of finances, batting averages, and political infighting. Laugh at his frustrated effort to play psychiatrist. Form a choir and raise a chant and haunt him with it night and day – “Sir, we would see Jesus.”
- When at long last he dares assay the pulpit, ask him if he has a word from God. If he does not, then dismiss him. Tell him you can read the morning paper and digest the television commentaries, and think through the day’s superficial problems, and manage the community’s weary drives, and bless the sordid baked potatoes and green beans, ad infinitum, better than he can.
- Command him not to come back until he’s read and reread, written and rewritten, until he can stand up, worn and forlorn, and say, “Thus saith the Lord.”
- Break him across the board of his ill-gotten popularity. Smack him hard with his own prestige. Corner him with questions about God. Cover him with demands for celestial wisdom. And give him no escape until he’s back against the wall of the Word.
- And sit down before him and listen to the only word he has left – God’s Word. Let him be totally ignorant of the down-street gossip, but give him a chapter and order him to walk around it, camp on it, sup with it, and come at last to speak it backward and forward, until all he says about it rings with the truth of eternity.
- And when he’s burned out by the flaming Word, when he’s consumed at last by fiery grace blazing through him, and when he’s privileged to translate the truth of God to man, finally transferred from earth to heaven, then bear him away gently and blow a muted trumpet and lay him down softly. Place a two-edged sword in his coffin, and raise the tomb triumphant. For he was a brave soldier of the Word. And e’re he died, he had become a man of God.

Review

- God doesn’t call every follower of Christ to be a preacher of His Word. The call to preach is both a call to a disciplined process of sermon preparation and a

call to live a life worthy of the privilege to proclaim God's Word to God's people.

ASSIGNMENT: FINISH SERMONS

Finish the sermons on James.

Fill out the Sermon Evaluation Forms for each sermon presentation.

Fill out the Student Accountability Statement.

Extra copies can be found on the website for printing.

https://vmcontenders.org/docs/etp_student_accountability.pdf

STUDENT ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT

Evangelism, Teaching & Preaching

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

Reading Assignments:

1. I have read all of Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God by J.I. Packer.

Yes _____ No _____

2. I have read all of Teaching to Change Lives by Howard G. Hendricks.

Yes _____ No _____

3. I have read all of The Bible, Live by Vernal Wilkinson.

Yes _____ No _____

Memory Assignments:

4. I have memorized the Romans Road: Rom. 3:23, 6:23, 5:8, 10:9-10, 10:13.

Yes _____ No _____

5. I have memorized Ephesians 2:8-9.

Yes _____ No _____

6. I have memorized the 4-part presentation of the Gospel as given in Session 4

Yes _____ No _____

GLOSSARY

Anointing - A biblical term to describe the application of oil (a symbol of the Holy Spirit) in an act of consecrating sacred objects or persons, such as a priest or King. It also refers to an endowment of God's Spirit, blessing, or approval upon a servant of God. The Messiah literally means "anointed one." "But the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and you do not need that anyone teach you..." (1 John 2:27).

Apostle - A person sent by God. One of five office gifts described in Ephesians 4:11.

Atonement - Literally, "a covering," as in covering our sins from God's sight. It is used in reference to a sinner's reconciliation with God through the sufferings of Christ. "Help us, O God of our salvation, For the glory of Your name; And deliver us, and provide atonement for our sins, For Your name's sake!" (Psa. 79:9).

Called - To be chosen of God for a particular purpose. "Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God..." (1 Cor. 1:1).

Convert - One who has been "converted" as a Christian by placing faith in Jesus Christ. "Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 18:3).

Covenant - A sacred, irrevocable promise between God and man. "You are sons of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying to Abraham, and in your seed, all the families of the earth shall be blessed" (Acts 3:25).

Creed - A statement of beliefs which include the fundamentals considered necessary to salvation.

Didasko - Most often translated "to teach" in English. When used, it is most often aimed at the saints, the followers of Christ. Teaching underwrites exposition. It is the exegesis part of sermon preparation.

Disciple - One who is taught or trained. "And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple" (Luke 14:27).

Epistles - Letters written under inspiration of the Holy Spirit, to be read as instruction to the churches. "I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read to all the holy brethren" (1 Thes. 5:27).

Evangelist - A proclaimer or preacher of the good news. One of five office gifts described in Ephesians 4:11.

Evangelizo - Preach/declare/proclaim (the Gospel); evangelize or win to the Gospel by preaching.

Gospel - Literally, "good news." The story of Christ's life, His death and resurrection, as described from different perspectives by eye-witness authors, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Their four individual records of Christ are each called a Gospel, entitled with each authors name - which comprise the first four books of the New Testament. "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek" (Rom. 1:16).

Intertestamental period - Term for the gap of time between the period covered by the Hebrew Bible and the period covered by the New Testament.

Kerusso - Term used in the New Testament for preaching. It is used some 60 times in its verb form. It has the basic meaning of "to be a herald; to proclaim in the manner of a herald."

Minister - One who serves in a ministerial role of a church, as to preach sermons or conduct religious services, or to perform some service to the spiritual benefit of others. It literally means to serve, help or encourage. "...I became a minister according to the gift of the grace of God given to me by the effective working of His power" (Eph. 3:7).

Naaman - A commander of the army of Syria. He was a good commander and was held in favor because of victory that God brought him, however Naaman was a leper. Naaman's wife had a servant girl from Israel who said that a prophet there would be able to heal him.

Pastor - A person who is a minister and spiritual overseer of a church congregation - an elder or bishop. A pastor literally means "a shepherd," a metaphoric description of one who cares for and leads a flock of God's sheep. One of five office gifts described in Ephesians 4:11.

Pews - The traditional bench-long seats in churches. The term originated from the French word, PUIE, "a raised place," which was used to describe the boxed, balcony seats in a theater. In precolonial days, the term became identified with the enclosed boxed seats in a church sanctuary, and later to all church bench seats.

Preacher - One who proclaims monologues, or brings forth sermons or messages in relationship to the Bible. "How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?" (Rom. 10:14).

Progenitive - God's Word has the power to create. Psalm 33:6 declares that "By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, and by the breath of His mouth all their host."

Protestant - Originated with regards to Martin Luther and his followers. Because they "protested" certain non-scriptural practices of the Roman Catholic Church, they were called "Protestants."

Prophecy - The act of speaking from the mind of God. To foretell. "...for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit" (2 Pet. 1:21).

Prophet - One who speaks in God's behalf, either to proclaim His written Word or to speak from His supernatural revelation. One of five office gifts described in Eph. 4:11.

Pulpit - The podium from which a minister preaches. The term was used in the King James Version, where a pulpit was something stood on for elevation when speaking to a crowd. "And Ezra the scribe stood upon a pulpit of wood..." (Nehemiah 8:4 KJV).

Rebuke - An expression of disapproval or reprimand. "Take heed to yourselves. If your brother sins against you, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him" (Luke 17:3).

Reconciliation — Means being brought back. "And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled" (Col. 1:21).

Redeemed - Means bought or purchased. "...knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Pet. 1:18-19).

Repent - To be remorseful for sin, and to turn around and go in a new direction. "Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19).

Saints - Persons who are separated unto God. A term which refers to all believers. "Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God" (Eph. 2:19).

Salvation - A term which describes the rescue of our soul from eternal death. "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast" (Eph. 2:8-9).

Sanctified - To be made separate for holy use. "For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor" (1 Thes. 4:3-4).

Sanctuary - Often used to describe the auditorium used for church gatherings. The term originates from reference to the temple or tabernacle, coming from the term "sanctify," to set apart for the Lord's use. "Lift up your hands in the sanctuary, and bless the LORD" (Psa. 134:2).

Secular — That which is not sacred or ecclesiastical. It pertains to things not Christian or church related, such as unbelieving society.

Soteriology - A theological term used to describe the doctrine of salvation. Taken from the Greek word for salvation, SOTERIA.

Teacher - One who seeks to instill knowledge in others by methods of instruction. One of five office gifts described in Ephesians 4:11.

Therismos - Harvest, the act of reaping. A gathering of men into the kingdom of God referring to the time of reaping, the final judgment, when the righteous are gathered into the kingdom of God and the wicked are cast into hell for ever.

Testament - A sacred covenant or promise, as in the Old or New Testaments. "But their minds were hardened. For until this day the same veil remains un-lifted in the reading of the Old Testament, because the veil is taken away in Christ" (2 Cor. 3:14).

Testimony - A solemn affirmation of some fact. This frequently describes a public testimonial of thanksgiving to God for an answered prayer. "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death" (Revelation 12:11).

Theology - The study of God (Greek, THEO).

Witness - To share the Gospel of Christ with others; to bear witness of His presence in our life. "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

Word - "The" Word, God's Word, the Bible. Jesus Christ is the Word who was made flesh. "Therefore, those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word" (Acts 8:4).

Zarephath - Alternative name for Ancient Phoenician city Sarepta, now Sarafand, Lebanon.

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