

# MODULE 7: SESSION 9

## APPLIED THEOLOGY

### HOW TO STUDY THE BIBLE

#### Putting Your Bible Lesson Together

1. A Note about the Medium of the Spoken Lesson
  - a. Why talk to all of you about how to put a Bible lesson together? I want you to feel like you have an outlet for your study! We want to raise up capable teachers for our children, youth, adults, small groups – even just for your family!!
  - b. GENERALLY: Despite all the media we have access to, nothing is as powerful in changing the heart and life of a person as a LIVE, IN-PERSON well-placed spoken message
  - c. SPECIFICALLY: The singular most powerful application of the Word of God to the heart is the PREACHED WORD – LIVE and IN-PERSON
  - d. NOTE: God has not UPDATED the Bible to include an accompanying video series as well – the spoken message of God’s Word remains the method by which the Holy Spirit RADICALLY transforms hearts – transforms the LOST to the SAVED and the SAVED to maturity
  - e. The clarity, expertise, passion, and organization of the speaker can captivate a listener like nothing else – that will never change!
2. Elements of an Effective Bible Lesson
  - a. Singular purpose and Main Idea
  - b. Introduction
  - c. Observations (showing the text)
  - d. Interpretation (explaining the text in context) (explaining reasons for interpretation – in moderation – depends on trust you have)
  - e. Application
  - f. Illustration
  - g. Conclusion
3. Structure
  - a. Why is Structure Important?
    - i. It helps the listener organize data in the mind
    - ii. It helps create a feel of direction and purpose
    - iii. It helps the listener pace himself to stay attentive
    - iv. It gives the speaker opportunity to meaningfully organize information rather than just dump a lot of information that isn’t connected
  - b. A few basic structures that always work before you get creative
    - i. Basic Bible Lesson Structure

1. Introduction
  2. Say what you are going to do
  3. Do it
  4. Conclusion
  - ii. Sample Structure 1
    1. Introduction
    2. Main Idea
    3. Sub Points of Main idea
    4. Application
    5. Conclusion
  - iii. Sample Structure 2
    1. Introduction
    2. Main Idea
    3. Subpoint 1
      - a. Illustration
      - b. Application
    4. Subpoint 1
      - a. Illustration
      - b. Application
    5. Subpoint 3
      - a. Illustration
      - b. Application
    6. Conclusion
  - iv. Sample Structure 3
    1. Application as Introduction
    2. Introduce Text and Main Idea
    3. Subpoint 1 + illustration
    4. Subpoint 2 + illustration
    5. Subpoint 3 + illustration
    6. Conclusion
  - v. POINT: Have SOME SORT of organizational pegs that a listener's mind can hang information on
  - vi. EXERCISE: Sometime listen to a sermon and take notes on the STRUCTURE – what did he do for the introduction – what was his homiletical proposition? What were the main points? When did he apply and when did he illustrate? Etc etc
4. Homiletical Proposition –
- a. Difference between teaching and preaching
    - i. TEACHING = explanation of a text or theological concept as foundational to developing maturity
    - ii. PREACHING = the passionate explanation of a text for a specific identified purpose and with the expectation of application and action

- b. Homiletical Proposition is what takes the speaker beyond a “data dump” into the realm of interest and purpose
- c. Examples of Homiletical Propositions for Ephesians 4:31-32
  - i. “Nine Ways to Stop Hurting the Church”
  - ii. “Nine Signs of a Serious Christian”
  - iii. “Changing Spiritual Clothes: What to Put on and What to Put off”
  - iv. EVEN MORE SPECIFIC:
    - 1. Keys to Being a Leader People Trust
    - 2. Transforming Your Relationships in Nine Steps
    - 3. It’s Time to Repent – Nine Ways to Finally Take Your Walk Seriously

## 5. Introductions

- a. Purpose of Introduction
  - i. Prepare the heart/ mind of the listener
  - ii. People have a natural aversion to abruptness
  - iii. Answers the question, “Why should I listen to you?”
  - iv. Lets the listener know what need you are going to address or what itch you are going to scratch in their lives
    - 1. If you are a scared, inexperienced mediocre speaker/ teacher BUT you identify a NEED or PROBLEM or HURT that you are going to address, you will be thought a genius!
  - v. The passage needs an introduction and context set
  - vi. Need to close the familiarity gap of the text – get the listeners up to speed
  - vii. States the purpose of your lesson
  - viii. Helps create trust and favorable regard if this is needed
- b. Elements of a Useful Introduction
  - i. Directs the mind to a specific thought process and topic
  - ii. Funnels the thoughts in a specific direction
  - iii. Gets the listener engaged with all previous information on the topic or passage that is already stored away in the mind
  - iv. Use of a word picture or story that helps open the mind
  - v. Gives reasons WHY you should continue to listen
  - vi. Leads naturally to your Homiletical Proposition – your main idea and structure
- c. A Few Ingredients to Think About
  - i. Use of a related Bible text
  - ii. A specific occasion for speaking
  - iii. Personal experience
  - iv. Historical setting of your text
  - v. Life situation
  - vi. Problem/Need
  - vii. Theological issue

- viii. Humorous related incident (builds an emotional bridge)
- ix. Powerful or striking statement
- x. Relate it to your conclusion

## 6. Conclusions

### a. Necessity of a Conclusion

- i. Conclusion applies the information to the heart and life, compelling the listener to respond
- ii. Lands the plane rather than crashing it
- iii. It's your final opportunity to impact the heart
- iv. Gives a sense of closure and finality
- v. It is an opportunity to impact the will and emotions of the listeners. Emotions are the gateway to the mind and the mind is the gateway to action.
- vi. Opportunity to appeal to the unbeliever with the gospel

### b. Elements of a Useful Conclusion

- i. Your lesson has reached a verdict and proven it
- ii. Gospel appeal
- iii. Call to action
- iv. Encourage obedience
- v. Discourage disobedience
- vi. Lift the yearning heart
- vii. Except on rare occasions, it should be positive
- viii. It should retain the interest of the hearer until the final word
- ix. It should NOT be the sign to the listen to check out now

### c. A few ingredients to think about

- i. Illustration
- ii. Question
- iii. Specific instructions
- iv. Guidelines
- v. An appeal to the heart with artistic words (hymn, poem, etc)
- vi. Recap of what was learned

## 7. Illustrations

### a. Rationale

- i. A lesson filled with illustrations is not a bad lesson – a lesson filled with illustrations and no rich biblical content is a bad lesson
- ii. Jesus taught sometimes almost exclusively through illustrations
- iii. Much of Scripture is narrative – stories
- iv. We are made to relate to and understand truth through the medium of experience and story
- v. Illustrations captivate the heart and can hold an audience's attention (think about how much CHILDREN love a story – adults are no different)

### b. BAD ILLUSTRATIONS:

- i. Don't connect the mind with the topic at hand directly
  - ii. Just for the sake of getting attention (humor just for the sake of being funny)
  - iii. They don't help explain the text or the concept
  - iv. EXAMPLE: One time I was flying in an airplane and got stuck next to a horribly rude and overly talkative person. He was loud and obnoxious and wouldn't let me have a moment's rest. I thought that flight would never end. I'd like to talk to you about how to fly about life's troubles – POINT: Doesn't really ADD to our understanding of the topic at hand
- c. GOOD ILLUSTRATIONS:
  - i. Engages the heart and emotion
  - ii. Easy to picture
  - iii. Drawn from Scripture
  - iv. Drawn from familiar aspects of daily life
  - v. Relates directly to help the listener understand the concept or text being explained
  - vi. EXAMPLE: One time I was flying in an airplane and got stuck next to a horribly rude and overly talkative person. He was loud and obnoxious and wouldn't let me have a moment's rest. I thought that flight would never end. I was really disappointed with my internal reaction to this person before I had even had time to get to know him. I thought about myself more than about him. I'd like to talk to you about selfishness and that the cure is to see others as they WILL be, not as they are.
  - vii. SAME story, but now you are emotionally involved!
- 8. Transitions – THIS is what makes a lesson flow logically AND creates interest
  - a. What is a transition?
    - i. A statement or series of statements that links what you JUST said with what you are about to say
    - ii. Transitions help a lesson feel more like a story than a lecture
    - iii. Transitions put the life into a lesson by building interest and drama
  - b. Example of tying ideas together
    - i. ROUGH TRANSITIONS
      - 1. Example: Three points – The Color Red, Pride, Ice Water
      - 2. Point One: The Color Red – red is a color we associate with emotions such as anger and embarrassment. Blood runs to part of our body to make the skin appear more red than usual
      - 3. Point Two: Pride--Christians are prone to pride over anything and everything. We can be proud of how MUCH we have or proud of how little we have. Pride needs to be dealt with everyday.

4. Point Three: Ice water is often used as a metaphor for refreshment and renewal. A cool drink of water on a hot day just feels like new life.

ii. SMOOTH TRANSITIONS

1. Point One: The Color Red – red is a color we associate with emotions such as anger and embarrassment. Blood runs to part of our body to make the skin appear more red than usual. There is no such outward visual indicator when pride dominates our hearts, however. We can say the right words and appear to do the right things, but the motive of the heart is pride...
2. Point Two: Pride--Christians are prone to pride over anything and everything. We can be proud of how MUCH we have or proud of how little we have. Pride needs to be dealt with every day. Pride is a drain on our spiritual hydration. Instead of being hydrated with the humility associated with being a slave of Christ, we can become dry and parched in the arrogance of our own self-perceived importance. So the answer is to stay hydrated with the cool invigorating ice water from the Savior who gives the water of life.
3. Point Three: Ice water is often used as a metaphor for refreshment and renewal. A cool drink of water on a hot day just feels like new life. And a continual reminder that we are purchased – that we are bought – that we are owned – as slaves of Jesus Christ is to drink once again from the cool water of the Savior, so that we are not drained of our spiritual vitality and our hearts do not blush with the blood-red embarrassment of having acted in conceit, self-importance, and vanity.
4. POINT: Transitions connect ideas meaningfully to the listener

9. CONCLUSION

- a. Simply make a checklist for your lesson that these elements are included in as simple a fashion as you need to and your teaching and presentation will increase in quality and power and effectiveness
- b. These are all elements I process through for every single message I preach – because I am deeply concerned with communicating as effectively as possible to you and any who hear God’s Word.
- c. May God protect us from ever making His Word seem boring!!