

UNIT 3: Sermon CONSTRUCTION

I. The Outline

1. The outline is like the skeleton to the body. It provides structure and stability, keeping the message on track. It provides clarity and focus, and it makes it easier to remember.

2. Example:

Sermon Title: What Do You Know? (Ephesians 1:18–19)

I. The Hope of His Calling

II. The Riches of His Glorious Inheritance

III. The Greatness of His Power

The three main points are the divisions. Subpoints would be added under each of the main divisions. From this basic outline, a message can be developed. Notice that the wider context of the passage (Ephesians 1:16–21) should be brought into this message to provide background or further expository development.

3. Creating a coherent and harmonious sermon outline requires both analysis and synthesis.

- *Analysis*. Break the text or theme into its constituent parts.
- *Synthesis*. Deal with each division as a part of the whole, making sure the various parts, when put together, form one unified message.

4. Three elements help create continuity in the sermon outline:

- a. *Order*. Messages should follow a logical sequence. An orderly sermon shows hearers that we know where we are going and how we plan to get there. Order may be developed in more than one way.
 - i. Time—which event happened first, followed by the next.
 - ii. Intensity—moving from weaker to stronger points.
 - iii. Logic—first the problem, then the solution; or first the cause, then the results.
 - iv. Perspective—first the general background, then the particular details
- b. *Progression*. The argument is being developed, the case established, and the goal reached.
- c. *Proportion*. Proportion gives a sense of balance to the message. Avoid spending so much time on one point that other main points are neglected. When building to a climax, the last points may be longer than earlier ones.

II. The Introduction

1. The introduction captures the attention of the listener. You have about 3 minutes to grab their attention or they will often check out on you.
2. Three purposes of the sermon introduction:
 - a. **To Interest** the audience by capturing their attention.
 - b. **To Establish** the relevance of the message to the hearers.
 - c. **To Prepare** the listeners for what will follow in the message.
3. Elements of the introduction:
 - a. Title. A title, as part of the introduction, can be used to prepare the listener for what is to follow.
 - b. Topic. Listeners should be aware of your topic by the end of your introduction.
 - c. Text. When the climax (or high point) of your introduction is the announcement of your biblical text, you have the best possible moment to introduce the Word of God.
4. An introduction should be SIMPLE. CONGRUENT. BRIEF. And have VARIETY.

III. The Conclusion

1. We must land the plane well. If we take off well and fly well, we still must land the plane well or all is lost.
2. Purposes of the Sermon Conclusion:
 - a. To conclude. When the sermon ends, listeners should sense its completeness. It draws everything together, like a lawyer's closing argument.
 - b. To apply. No one should be able to leave after a service without a clear understanding of what to do with the message proclaimed.
 - c. To motivate. The goal is to stimulate listeners to give a wholehearted response to the message.
3. The Appeal (altar call, invitation, call to action):
 - a. The appeal must be based on a proclamation of truth from God's Word.
 - b. The appeal answers the basic question: "What shall we do?"
 - c. It then translates the response into positive action.

- d. Opportunity must be given for listeners to respond then and there.
4. In the conclusion, the preacher calls upon the audience to take immediate and appropriate action in response to the truth presented. He or she is preaching for a personal commitment.
5. The conclusion may take the form of a summary, application of the preceding material, or an appeal.
6. **Do not manipulate for a response.** It is the Holy Spirit's job to convict. We do not always know what the Lord is doing beneath the surface. Don't let your ego rest upon how many people come to the altar.
7. The conclusion often culminates in an altar call, which can be used to address various personal needs, such as salvation, baptism in the Holy Spirit, healing, etc. It is an important way to help the listener make an immediate decision.
8. Begin with the end in mind. The conclusion should be well-prepared.

IV. Sermon Delivery

1. An effective sermon requires effective speech.
 - a. The **character** of our speech has to do with mastery of the words used and with communicating in a way that is easily understood.
 - b. The **tone** of our speech, or our tone of voice, should match the subject matter of our sermon. Urgent matters require an urgent tone, and so forth.
 - c. The **emphasis** in your speech involves changes in volume, pitch, and pace; dramatic pauses; and effective repetition. These changes in emphases can help us avoid monotony and aid in driving home key points in the message.
2. Do not use speech designed to impress people with your eloquence, education, or even your spirituality. The goal is to communicate Christ as effectively and clearly as you can.
3. Rely on the Holy Spirit to guide, empower, and use your words. The success of Paul's preaching did not rest on "wise and persuasive words" but on the Spirit's power (1 Corinthians 2:4).
4. Your body language will either help or hurt your presentation. Get comfortable with your gestures. They should be:
 - a. Natural to the preacher and fitting for the point being made in the sermon content.
 - b. Intentional. Eliminate nervous mannerisms. Positive gestures that fit your personality and the content of the message increase the effectiveness of your communication.

- c. *Varied*. Repetition can produce boredom. A gesture repeated over and over can become distracting. Appropriate variety brings life to the message.
5. Let the size of your gestures fit the size of the room. Move large in a large room. It feels awkward, but it appears more natural yet expressive from a distance.
6. There are three basic methods of sermon delivery. You can preach from a fully written manuscript, from a basic outline, or extemporaneously without any notes at all. Each approach has advantages and disadvantages.
 - a. Preaching from a manuscript helps you be precise and organized, but it hinders eye contact and lacks flexibility.
 - b. Preaching without notes leads to good interaction but can lead to poor planning and long wandering sermons.
 - c. Preaching from an outline or an annotated outline allows good eye contact and rapport, but it also maintains structure and allows flexibility. It can be easy to miss points, however, if the outline is not well-written.