

# HOW TO PREPARE AND PRESENT AN EFFECTIVE BIBLE STUDY OR MESSAGE

(A Publication Of "The Inner-city Church Planting Mission")

## INTRODUCTION

There are many aspects to the CHRISTian ministry. Prayer, fasting, counseling, listening, serving, loving, etc. All are important and all are needed. This study is dedicated to that very important aspect of communicating GOD's Word to others. Not only communicating GOD's Word however, but also how to prepare to do so.

The LORD has given us a wonderful promise as we learn to share HIS Word with a very needy world . . .



*“For as the rain cometh down and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater. So shall MY Word be that goeth forth out of MY mouth, it shall not return unto ME void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.”* Isaiah 55:10-11

May this study be a means in helping us to become better communicators of GOD's precious Scriptures.

## I. How To Prepare An Effective Bible Study Or Sermon

### A. The Importance Of Prayer

Whenever we pray, we are acknowledging that we need GOD. As we prepare to communicate the Word of GOD to others, we certainly need HIM to give us the Scriptures, the interpretation of those Scriptures, the applications and the illustrations to use for us to be effective. The LORD promises us that . . .

*“If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of GOD, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him.”* James 1:5 (see also Matthew 7:7-8)

## B. Get To Know Your Students

As we get to know the people we are ministering to, we will be able to discern their needs, their desires, their struggles, etc., and thus prepare relevant studies and messages. The Apostle Paul knew the Thessalonian CHRISTians, “. . . *as a father doth his children . . .*” (see I Thessalonians 2:11b). Because of this, he could later say . . .



*“. . . we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the LORD JESUS, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please GOD, so ye would abound more and more.”* I Thessalonians 4:1

## C. Use The Resources Available

Obviously, the Scriptures are to be our main resource as we seek to minister GOD’s Word to others. However, GOD has raised up GODly men throughout Church history, who have been especially gifted by the HOLY SPIRIT to compile valuable insights that can help us understand the Scriptures in a more thorough way. Listed below are some of these resources . . .

- Concordance
- Word study books
- Bible dictionary/maps
- Different Bible translations
- Websters dictionary
- Biographies
- Study books
- Commentaries



Coal Miners

*“Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding, if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures. Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of GOD. For the LORD giveth wisdom, out of HIS mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.”*

Proverbs

2:3-6

## D. The Value Of Outlining

Because “. . . *GOD is not the author of confusion, but of peace . . .*” (I Corinthians 14:33a), there is an order and a pattern to everything HE does. GOD desires that we have a “*peace*” and order in our lives and ministries as well, including the way we prepare and present the truths of HIS Word. As we learn to outline a particular portion of Scripture, or a particular Biblical subject we are burdened to share with others, it not only helps us organize the information in our own minds, but helps us to present that information to our listeners in an orderly way as well. Following is an example of an outline used to present a particular Biblical subject to a group of people. It is just the outline itself, with the commentary, applications, and illustrations removed.

## THE DANGER OF LEAVING OUR FIRST LOVE (Title)

### Introduction

- I. Who Or What Is Our “First Love”?
- II. How We Leave Our “First Love”
- III. How We Keep Our “First Love”
  - A. Remember WHO Our “First Love” Is.
    1. Review WHO the LORD is.
    2. Review what HE has done for us.
  - B. Repent If We Are Starting To Leave Our “First Love”
  - C. Demonstrate Our Devotion To Our “First Love”
    1. A daily time alone with the LORD.
      - a. Bible study, memorization, and meditation in GOD’s Word
      - b. Prayer
    2. Times of periodic fasting.
    3. Having a “Sabbath Day” one day each week.

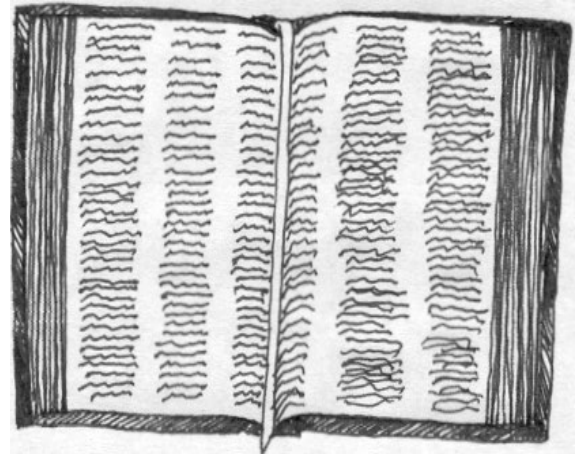
### Conclusion

*“Let all things be done decently and in order.”* I Corinthians 14:40

## II. How To Present An Effective Bible Study Or Sermon

## A. The Power Of Scripture

We should never forget that it is GOD's Word that is the most important thing we can communicate to others. *"All Scripture is given by inspiration of GOD, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. That the man of GOD may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."* (II Timothy 3:16-17). As we share the Word of GOD with others, the HOLY SPIRIT is able to bring *"doctrine . . . reproof . . . correction . . . (and) instruction . . ."* to our listeners.



*"For the Word of GOD is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."* Hebrews 4:12

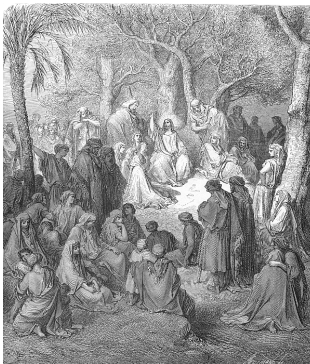
## B. The Value of Illustrations And Analogies

Next to Scripture, the most powerful tools we have to communicate truth to our listeners are illustrations and analogies.

"illustration" (Webster) = to make clear, explain by examples.

"analogy" (Webster) = agreement, resemblance or correspondence in relations between different objects.

These illustrations and analogies can be directly from the Scriptures, everyday life around us, or our own personal experiences. This is why we should be especially recording incidents in our own lives, but also collecting articles from newspapers, magazines and other publications that might prove helpful to our listeners. Just notice sometime how your listeners grow quiet and really listen whenever you use these!



JESUS of course was the greatest communicator in all of history. Just notice how many times during HIS teaching ministry HE used illustrations and /or analogies (the Bible calls them *"parables"*). Following is but one example . . .

The Sermon On The Mount

*“Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of MINE, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock. And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house, and it fell not, for it was founded upon a rock. And everyone that heareth these sayings of MINE, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand. And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it. And it came to pass, when JESUS had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at HIS Doctrine, for HE taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.” Matthew 7:24-29*

### C. The Importance Of Making Applications To Your Students

A very important aspect of communicating truth to our listeners is helping them to apply that truth to their lives! We must communicate truth in such a way so that our students will be compelled to do this. Following are some powerful principles to implement so as to accomplish this end . . .

- \* Do not just teach or preach facts, but teach or preach messages that will change lives. Give the steps of action for them to accomplish this.
- \* Teach and preach messages that bring conviction and repentance to your students. That is, a change of thinking, desires and actions (see II Corinthians 7:8-10). “The calling of a New Testament worker is to uncover sin and to reveal JESUS CHRIST as SAVIOUR, consequently he cannot be practical, he must be sternly surgical.” Oswald Chambers.



Oswald Chambers

- \* Teach and preach messages that show GOD is alive and working in your life, so as to encourage them to let HIM do the same in theirs. (see I Corinthians 2:4-5) “A message prepared in your mind will only reach another mind. A message prepared in your life will reach another life.” Bill Gothard
- \* Regularly ask your students to make commitments in response to your messages. (see Psalm 66:13-14)

JESUS once said, *“And why call ye ME LORD, LORD, and do not the things which I say? Whosoever cometh to ME and heareth MY sayings and doeth them . . .”* Luke 6:46-47a

## III. Other Ingredients Of An Effective Bible Study Or Sermon

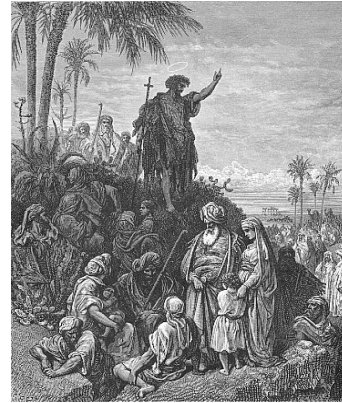
**A. Speak The Truth With “love”** (see Ephesians 4:15)

If our motivation to communicate GOD’s Word is not based on genuine “love”, it will be in vain. (see I Corinthians 13:1)

**B. Speak The Truth With *boldness*”**

(see Ephesians 6:19-20)

The more we learn and understand GOD’s will and ways through HIS Word, the more confident we will be that what we are teaching others is truth.



John The Baptist

**C. Speak The Truth With “*a good conscience*”** (see I Timothy 1:19)

To have “*a good conscience*” means that though we offend either GOD or man, we quickly make it right by asking for forgiveness and making restitution if needed. (see Acts 24:16)

**D. Speak The Truth With “*grace, seasoned with salt*”** (see Colossians 4:6)

“*Grace*” motivates your listeners to do GOD’s will, while “*salt*” creates curiosity for them to know GOD’s Word. Making wisdom “attractive” will motivate your listeners to do GOD’s will, while asking questions will create curiosity in them to know GOD’s Word.

## IV. Some Concluding Thoughts

**A. Use Visuals As Much As Possible**

Studies have shown that people remember 10% of what they read, 20% of what they hear, 30% of what they see, but 50% of what they see and hear.

**B. Learn From The Great Communicators Throughout Church History**

- Apostle Paul
- George Whitefield
- Charles Spurgeon
- George Muller
- Hudson Taylor
- John McArthur
- Charles Stanley
- Bill Gothard



Charles Spurgeon

### C. Use Humor Occasionally

Do not do this in excess, but well placed anecdotes, especially from our own lives, really adds “flavor” to our teachings.

## CONCLUSION

If the LORD calls and commissions us to communicate HIS holy Word to others, we are entrusted with a most glorious privilege. GOD gives us HIS HOLY SPIRIT and HIS grace for this great task, but also expects us to do our part by spending the needed time and energy in preparation and presentation to accomplish this. May we desire to become the most effective communicators possible!

*“I will delight myself in THY STATUTES, I will not forget THY Word.”*

*“Open THOU mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of THY Law.”*

*“Make me to understand the way of THY Precepts, so shall I talk of THY wondrous works.”* Psalm 119: 16, 18, 27