

The Basic Rules of Preaching

Dr Nick Hawkes (July, 2007)

- 1) Find the most most prominent sin in your community - and preach on it.
- 2) Find the scriptural passage the speaks about this issue and from it, identify three key ACTIONS we must do to address the issue.¹ Turn these three actions into simple and memorable headings.²
- 3) Let your first sentence compel people's attention.
- 4) Let your first paragraph illicit commitment from people to stay listening because of relevance and impact.
- 5) Teach your three key action points
- 6) Finish with a concrete challenge and commitment to action, "Will you....?" (This is the end point you are preaching for. Preaching only works if you transform people and change what they do.)

Be creative if you can but remember that it is better to be clear than cute.

Remember:

- The aim is transformation, not information.
- The aim is relevance, not entertainment.

How to speak well

- Speak clearly and slowly. Avoid rushing. (People need time to process what they hear.)
- Take time to look at people. Haul them “on board” with your eyes and your smile.
- Be natural with your gestures and engaging in your manner.
- Use pauses and good natural voice colour. Avoid the deadly monotone.

Make good use of appropriate stories. People listen to them and remember them.

Have your key points only on a piece of paper.

Remember the three essential Ps: Prayer³; Passion; Practice

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- 1 I recommend three points as a beginning point only, not to be legalistic. Having said this, experience has shown that people struggle to remember more than three points, therefore it is good practice to stick with three.
 - 2 An example might be for a sermon entitled: “AIM HIGH”
A = Accept Christ
I = Imitate Christ
M = Minister in Christ's power
Try and be a bit more memorable and dynamic than this example if you can!
 - 3 Prayer is not simply an expected, routine, pious statement, it is foundational. Discover what issues God wants your people to address. Don't be surprised if it is linked with issues you have been recently thinking about yourself.