

The Sermon Worksheet

A sermon is much more than a talk on a religious subject. A sermon is a word, a message, from our Lord Jesus Christ. A sermon is Christ's message. The preacher is Christ's messenger. The preacher is responsible to accurately discern and faithfully communicate a word from Jesus. In order to hear a word from Jesus, the preacher must learn to recognize the Lord's voice in the life of the church, in study of the Scriptures, and in times of prayer. *The Sermon Worksheet* will help you discern Christ's word for his people. It will help you prepare to preach the word.

The Sermon Worksheet provides a table which illustrates how the need of the people determines a sermon's purpose, form, and objective. Use the table to help you discern a word from Jesus. As you reflect on the many needs of your people, ask Jesus to bring one need clearly into focus. Other needs will still be a part of your peripheral vision, but when you bring one need clearly into focus, you bring clarity to your purpose and objective. You will know what to emphasize and what to leave out. You will also know where to begin, how to develop your main points, and how to conclude.

The Sermon Worksheet does not take the place of your manuscript or your outline, your note cards or your other aids to preaching. It is a new tool for your tool kit. It requires as little as fifteen minutes to complete. It will save you many hours of frustrating, unproductive work. It will get you started sooner. It will get you through writer's block. It will keep you focused. It will help you communicate more clearly and more effectively.

The Sermon Worksheet is an adaptation of principles taught by Grady Davis in his book *Design for Preaching* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, First Printed in 1958); and by Myron Taylor in his course in homiletics at Westwood Christian Foundation, Los Angeles, California.

INSTRUCTIONS

PREACHER - You may be tempted to leave blank the space provided for your name, the occasion, date, congregation, and location. Do take the time to complete that portion of the worksheet. It will be useful information for the future. It is also the important first step in the process of identifying the need of your people. The task of writing down that information is well worth the effort. It will start you writing. It will start you thinking. It will start you praying. It will help you focus.

THE NEED OF THE PEOPLE - With respect to hearing a word from Jesus, every congregation has five general needs. Refer to the table. Focus on one of the five general needs. The questions in italic will help you move from a general need identified to a specific need defined. In the space provided, write out the specific need of your people.

PURPOSE - When you identify the need of the people, you identify your purpose. Simply refer to the table. In the space provided, copy down the purpose which corresponds to the need you have identified.

FORM - The form of your sermon is the way you present your main points. There is a form appropriate to each of the five purposes. Let your purpose determine the form of your sermon. Refer to the table. In the space provided, identify the form which corresponds to the purpose you have identified. Bear in mind, even a junk pile has form!

OBJECTIVE - The objective is determined by the need. The table lists each objective in an abbreviated form. The full form of an objective begins with the words, "By the end of the sermon, each member of the congregation will be . . ." Finish the sentence by referring to the table, and to the specific need you have identified.

SUBJECT - Your subject is what you are talking about.

MAIN POINTS - Think of your sermon as subject and predicate. Subject: what you are talking about. Predicate: what you are saying about it. Your main points should all be predicated on the need of the people. To develop your main points, refer back to the form you have chosen. Space is provided for three main points. A sermon doesn't always have three points, but it should at least have one!

CONCLUSION - A sermon shouldn't just end. It should conclude. If you don't take time to conclude, you will have wasted your time and the congregation's. The people have a right to clearly understand what you are expecting of them. In the space provided, write out the first sentence of your conclusion.

INTRODUCTION - An introduction says, "Audience, this is my sermon. Sermon, this is my audience." During your opening words the people will decide whether to give you their full attention. In the space provided, write out the first sentence of your introduction.

TEXT - Cite the passage from the Bible which demonstrates most clearly and most concisely that your sermon is consistent with the word of God as revealed in Scripture. Even if you are preaching from a lectionary, or from a series of Bible passages, take the opportunity at this point to check your use of the text. Your sermon is a Biblical sermon only if it is entirely consistent with the entire Bible.

TITLE - Choose a title that will help the congregation understand your purpose and objective.

SAMPLE - A sample worksheet has been included to show you how to follow these instructions.

BILL OF RIGHTS - Also included is a copy of *The Congregation's Bill of Rights*. You may want to post it in your study as a reminder of your responsibilities as a preacher. You may want to share it with your people to raise their level of appreciation for the gift of preaching.

SAMPLE SERMON WORKSHEET

PREACHER Yeshua ha-Natzri	OCCASION Follow-up to a regional preaching tour	DATE 21 Nissan 3788
CONGREGATION A large gathering from all of Eretz Yisrael	LOCATION A hillside near K'far Nachum	

THE NEED OF THE PEOPLE DETERMINES PURPOSE, FORM & OBJECTIVE

NEED OF THE PEOPLE	PURPOSE	FORM	OBJECTIVE
<input type="checkbox"/> To know <i>what?</i>	TO INFORM	Facts to Remember	able to report
<input type="checkbox"/> To learn <i>what?</i>	TO INSTRUCT	Skills to Learn	able to do
<input type="checkbox"/> To agree <i>that what?</i>	TO PERSUADE	Reasons to Agree	ready to agree
<input type="checkbox"/> To commit <i>to what?</i>	TO MOTIVATE	Reasons to Commit	read to commit
<input type="checkbox"/> To trust <i>God for what?</i>	TO INSPIRE	Reasons to Trust	ready to trust

NEED
To learn how to live as loyal subjects of God

PURPOSE
To instruct

FORM
Skills to Learn

OBJECTIVE
By the end of this sermon, each member of the congregation will be able to live as a loyal subject of God.

SUBJECT
A loyal subject of God

- MAIN POINTS
- 1) does righteousness God's way

 - 2) has complete confidence in God

 - 3) avoids the Devil's traps

CONCLUSION
Whoever hears these words of mine, and does them, I will compare him to a wise man.

INTRODUCTION
Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.

TEXT
Micah 6:8

TITLE
The Good Life

The Congregation's
Bill of Rights

*WHEN A PEOPLE, gathered in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ,
shall be addressed by a preacher, a messenger of Christ,
that people is endowed by their Lord with certain unalienable rights:*

The right to a message that speaks to the need of the people.

The right to a message worth their full attention.

The right to hear the message in plain talk.

The right to know what the preacher is talking about.

The right to know what the preacher expects them to do about it.

The right to hear good news.

The right to a Biblical message.

The right to a message that honors the Lord Jesus Christ.

The right to a message from God.

The right to sound the "Amen!"