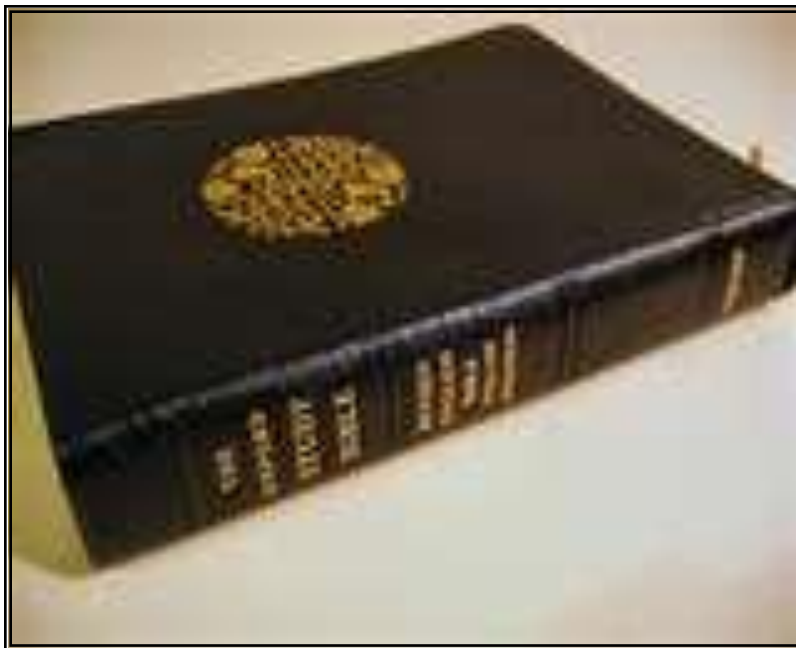


CLASS NOTES - HOMILETICS III

Taught by Robert Stapleton



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HOMILETICS III

Robert Stapleton

CLASS DESCRIPTION:

1. This class will seek to set forth a detailed treatment of the steps involved in the preparation and delivery of an expository sermon.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS:

1. One of the following books is to be read during the quarter and a reading log kept:
 - A. Biblical Preaching, The Development and Delivery of Expository Messages, Haddon W. Robinson.
 - B. Preaching To Preachers About Preaching, John Waddey.
 - C. God Demands Doctrinal Preaching, Thomas B. Warren, Garland Elkins.
2. Instructions concerning reading log.
 - A. Keep a typewritten log of your reading, with dates and chapters read.
 1. Your log should be turned in to instructor no later than the beginning of class day during the finals week – late papers count one grade per day off.
3. Each student is to turn in two expository sermon outlines (see appendix # 1, p. 17).
 - A. You are at liberty to choose which text you wish to develop.
 - B. Outlines should be three to five pages in length, Times New Romans 12 Font.
 - C. Outlines will count for 30% of your total course grade.
 - D. Your outlines should be turned in to instructor no later than the beginning of class day during the finals week – late papers count one grade per day off.
4. Tests:
 - A. Two scheduled tests will be administered.
 1. Each will account for 35% of your total score.
 2. Any additional credit will be at the instructor's discretion.
5. Memory Verses:
 - A. The following verses are to be committed to memory:

Romans 1:16, 17
1 Corinthians 9:16
2 Timothy 4:2

- B. Memory work should be done in the ASV, ESV, KJV, or NKJV unless the instructor grants permission to use another version.

RECOMMENDED READING:

1. How To Speak So People Will Listen, Ronald L. Willingham.
2. Speaking For The Master, Batsell Barrett Baxter.
3. Biblical Preaching, The Development and Delivery of Expository Messages, Haddon W. Robinson.

HOMILETICS III CLASS OUTLINE

Robert Stapleton

INTRODUCTION:

1. **Homiletics** is the art of preaching; that branch of theology which relates to homilies or sermons, and the best method of preparing and delivering them.
 - A. The word homiletics comes from the Greek homilia, and refers to a mutual talk, conversation, or a set discourse.
 1. It deals with that which pertains to the preparation and delivery of sermons.
 2. Thus, it can be said that homiletics is the art and science of preaching.
2. **Preaching** comes from the Greek word kerusso, which is defined by Thayer as "...public proclamation of the gospel and matters pertaining to it..." Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, p. 346.
 - A. "Christ did not send His disciples into the world to persuade men-by some sort of 'give-away gimmickry' (bubble-gum, Kool-aid, et al.)- to join some social club (John 6:26). He sent them to preach *the* word of God..." God Demands Doctrinal Preaching, Edited by Thomas B. Warren and Garland Elkins, p. 4, emphasis theirs.
3. The word **sermon** comes from the Latin word "sermo" meaning a discourse.
4. **Audience** is defined as "those gathered to hear and see something..."
 - A. I am a little uncomfortable with the use of the word audience, in this setting, as it conveys the idea of non-participation.
 1. Such as an audience, which attends a social or sports activity.
 - B. In the assembly of the church there are no spectators.
 1. "Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God." – Acts 10:33.
5. The word **preacher** comes from the Greek word kerux, which is defined thusly, "In the N.T. God's ambassador, as the divine messengers of the salvation procured by Christ and to be embraced through him," Thayer, p. 346.
6. The word evangelist comes from the Greek word euaggelistes, and is defined as "A messenger of good, denotes a preacher of the Gospel, Acts 21:8; Eph. 4:11...", Vines Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, p. 384.
7. Putting all of this together, we see that what we are dealing with is the science of preaching.

BODY:

1. WHY STUDY HOMILETICS?

- A. Preaching the gospel is more serious than a heart attack!
 1. "My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation." – James 3:1, KJV.
 2. "My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment." – James 3:1, NKJV.
 3. "Be not many of you teachers, my brethren, knowing that we shall receive heavier judgment." – James 3:1, ASV.

- B. Preaching the gospel is the proclamation of the good news and the power of God unto salvation – Romans 1:16.
 - 1. With that in mind, each one who stands before an “audience,” and preaches, should seek to do the very best he can.
 - 2. To do so, one needs to be prepared.
 - A. “Failing to prepare is preparing to fail!”
 - C. As you study the Scriptures, in order to preach, it is important to understand that vast knowledge in the “hands” of an incapable speaker will not bring forth the same results of such knowledge in a prepared and capable speaker.
 - 1. As men who will mount pulpits on a regular basis it is important to realize that we “owe” our hearers something.
 - A. We must know the truth – John 8:32.
 - B. We must speak so they can understand – Acts 8:30, 31.
 - 1. Keep in mind; the power is in the gospel.
 - 2. Not in the “wisdom” of the one who proclaims it – 1 Corinthians 1:17-28.
 - C. We need to speak in such a way so as to “persuade” those who listen to pay heed to what is said – Acts 17:2, 3; 18:4; 19:8; 2 Corinthians 5:11.
 - 1. All the seed in the world, if not properly planted, will not bring forth proper fruit – Luke 8:4-8.
 - A. As the “soil” has a responsibility, so does the “sower.”
 - 1. Remember, this parable is referred to as the “parable of the sower.”
 - D. We need to recall that in our preaching we both save ourselves and those that hear us – 1 Timothy 4:16.
 - E. We need to be cautious with our time – Ephesians 5:16.
 - 1. It is better to leave your “audience” wishing you had said more than to leave them asleep.
 - 2. Whether we like it or not, the days gone by where people would listen to sermons hours upon hours are gone by.
 - 3. I am not advocating fifteen-minute “sermons,” but I am advocating a good use of time.
 - A. Ask yourself, at what point in time do you “grow tired” of listening?
 - B. Since you are probably more interested than most, then consider how they will “grow tired” quicker.
- D. As we preach we must be aware that we are in competition.
 - 1. Whether we like it or not, that is the case.
 - 2. Television broadcasters, TV stars, etc. are eloquent speakers.
 - A. If we get into the pulpit and sound illiterate we will not be successful.
 - 1. This is not to say that we must use “\$1,000.00” words in our speech.
 - 2. But it is to say; we need to speak in such a way to get the truth across so those who hear will be benefited from their time.
 - 3. Many within the church are less than desirous to hear the Word.

- A. That is one of the reasons we do not have the same number of people attending on Sunday night as Sunday morning.
- 4. Those outside the church are even fewer who wish to sit through one boring sermon after another.
- 5. You will be compared to the past preacher, well-known preachers, and each preacher who holds a gospel meeting where you preach.
- E. You need to be prepared for criticism.
 - 1. Many consider preaching boring.
 - 2. Others consider preaching irrelevant in modern times.
 - 3. You will either....
 - A. Be too strong, or too weak, in your presentation.
 - B. Use too much, or too few, Scriptures.
 - C. Be too loud, or too soft.
 - D. Preach sermons that are too long, or not long enough.
 - E. Etc., etc., etc.
 - 1. Get ready for it.
 - 2. You will get opposite opinions from the same “audience.”
 - 4. By the way, be prepared for the person who compliments you no matter what.
 - A. Although they may be serious, there is little or no value in what they say.
- F. The public proclamation of the Word of God is not as easy of a task as most in the pew believe it is.
 - 1. Trying to come up with something “new” two times a week, in addition to one or more Bible classes, is not that easy of a task.
 - 2. One study, that I read some years ago, suggested that one thirty minute sermon is the equivalent of eight hours of work in regard to the mental stress associated with it.
 - 3. Preaching, if done correctly, is work – 2 Timothy 4:5.
 - A. There is work in preparation of sermons.
 - 1. Many preachers wait until Saturday night to get their Sunday morning lesson.
 - A. If anything comes up they find themselves unprepared come Sunday morning.
 - B. There is work in presentation of sermons.
 - 1. If you appear bored in your presentation can you expect those who hear you to be excited about your lesson?
 - 2. If you are asleep in the pulpit don’t blame those in the pew who follow your example!
- G. If you want to be successful as a preacher, then you must work to earn the respect of those you preach to.
 - 1. Half-hearted and unprepared lessons will result in your constantly looking for another “pulpit to fill.”
 - 2. If you are not willing to work, then purchase a RV so it doesn’t take you long to move.

2. PREACHING DO'S AND DON'TS:

A. DO'S:

1. In every teaching occasion, you should speak both as a fellow-student of the Word and as the teacher.
2. Be sensitive to non-Christians and new people.
 - A. Caution should be used when naming denominational groups from the pulpit.
 1. I did not say, don't do it, all I said was caution should be used.
 - B. The object of preaching is to get people to listen to what you say.
 1. If you turn denominational people off with crude or rude remarks about their denominational affiliation then you have lost your "audience."
 2. You need to ask yourself, if we were critiqued, how would we want it done?
3. If you lose your train of thought during a teaching, it is usually better to go on to the next point instead of backtracking.
4. Anticipate common secular objections, verbalize them and respond to them.
5. Use personal applications.
6. Use good illustrations.
7. If you use technical terms be sure to define them so your listeners know what you are talking about.
 - A. Get in the pulpit and indicate that you are going to demythologize eschatology and watch for the "dumb" looks.
 - B. One preacher, on a three-week missionary trip, preached on the cosmos.
 1. Even his translator had no idea what the lesson was about.
8. Be yourself!
9. Have good, clear thought development.
10. When preaching, before you close, explain how to become a Christian.
11. Smile.
 - A. If you are going to preach on joy, show some!
12. If dealing with a complex issue, explain the subject early within your lesson.
13. Remember, the power comes from the Word.
 - A. Be as powerful as you can in your presentation, but don't forget that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation.
14. Make use of vivid imagery and graphic description.
15. Throughout your preparation and preaching remind yourself what the goal of your lesson is.
 - A. Your lesson does have a goal, doesn't it?
16. Have a brief and to the point introduction, and get into your text quickly.
17. Following important statements pause briefly for effect and to give time for your listeners to consider what you have said.
18. Be sure to work from the text.
 - A. If you are going to have a text, use it.

B. DON'TS:

1. Don't wait for the last minute to prepare your sermon.
2. Don't bore people - be excited!
 - A. You have good news to share.
3. Don't have nebulous applications.
 - A. Be specific so your hearers will leave knowing what you said.
4. Don't have too much material.
 - A. Resist the urge to tell everything you know about the subject.
 - B. It is better to develop a series of sermons on a given subject than to either wear your "audience" out, with a sermon that is too long, or not cover the subject properly.
5. Don't over use hand gestures.
6. Avoid using too many biblical references.
 - A. One or two well-chosen passages will suffice.
 - B. Also, give the people time to get to the Scripture.
7. Avoid overuse of application points.
8. Don't express what God says in the Word as a personal opinion.
 - A. Many "sermons" that I hear have more "I believe" and "I think" than any other points.
9. Don't be afraid to deal with touchy subjects.
 - A. If God's Word condemns it, don't be afraid to do the same.
 - B. Ethical and moral issues need to be dealt with.
 1. If they are not dealt with in sermons, then in many situations they will not ever be dealt with.
 - C. It is good to have an upfront understanding with the eldership (leadership) of the congregation that you are interviewing with on these matters.
 1. If you preach on a moral issue, and the elders (leaders) refuse to back you, your labor will be in vain the first time someone goes to them whining about your lesson.
 - D. Personally, I believe the best time to publicly lay the foundation on ethical and moral issues is shortly after you have located with a congregation.
 1. Once you get to know the congregation you will know their shortcomings in these areas and they will know you know it.
 - A. Preaching on them before you get to know them eliminates someone complaining to you, or about you, about you having "picked on them" since you know they participate in that activity.
10. Don't end declarative statements with a questioning tone in your voice.
11. Don't become a comic.
 - A. Comic relief may be used after making a serious point to give people a breather, but if you get corny while making a serious point, you dilute impact.
12. Don't always address the non-Christian at the end.
13. Don't assume that everyone is familiar with a specific Scripture.
 - A. Visitors are usually unfamiliar with the Bible.

14. Don't apologize for your inexperience or lack of full knowledge on a subject.
 - A. That weakens your influence.
 - B. People need to see and hear confidence in their preacher.
 1. If you constantly indicate that you do not know much on this subject and that subject, they will lose that confidence.
 2. They will also wonder what you are doing with your study time.
- 3. DANGERS OF HOMILETICS:**
 - A. One's ego, which fails to give God the glory – Acts 12:23.
 1. When a preacher is successful a problem can arise here.
 - B. Discouragement.
 1. Such is going to come.
 2. What you do with it will determine how long you remain a preacher.
 - A. More preachers quit on Monday than any other day of the week.
 3. You need to learn to be content – Philippians 4:11, 12.
 - A. Doesn't mean you have to like everything that is going on, but resign yourself to be content as you work to improve the situation.
 - C. Overemphasis on how the Word is preached instead of what is preached.
 1. Many Christians, and most preachers, pay more attention to the how rather than the what of preaching.
- 4. BEFORE THE "AUDIENCE":**
 - A. Much confusion on public speaking.
 1. More people are afraid to stand before a group and speak than to die.
 - B. The problem of "stage fright."
 1. To overcome it you must ...
 - A. Be prepared.
 - B. Understand that nervousness is natural.
 1. Many accomplished speakers say that if they do not feel nervous before speaking something is wrong.
 - C. Rely upon a few friendly faces in the "audience."
 - D. Concentrate on your lesson, not your appearance.
 - E. Find a way to release tension.
 - F. Do all you can to do as good of a job as you can.
 - G. Remember, in most cases, there will be another time.
- 5. ATTRIBUTES OF A GOOD SPEAKER:**
 - A. Be lively, interesting, and enthusiastic.
 1. If you are asleep in the pulpit do not expect your listeners to be awake.
 - B. Be interested in your subject matter and understand its importance.
 - C. Be serious.
 - D. Realize your responsibility and those to whom you are responsible.
 - E. Use your head.
 1. Balance in your preaching is a good thing – "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine." 2 Timothy 4:2.
 - F. Be able to accept criticism.

1. Some will complement you and others will condemn you for the same sermon.
 - A. Always consider the source when it comes to both.
- G. Be yourself instead of trying to be someone else.
- H. Work on your speech habits.
 1. Listen to yourself on audiotapes.
 2. View yourself on video.
- I. Avoid being monotone in your speech.
 1. Actually, avoid all extremes here.
 - A. Not always loud, and not always soft.
- 6. KEYS TO HOLDING AUDIENCE ATTENTION:**
 - A. Stick to your theme.
 - B. Develop proper spacing of points to allow listeners time to consider each point.
 - C. Do not “waste” time telling the “audience” what they already know.
 - D. Be specific.
 1. Get to the point.
- 7. PARTS THAT MAKE UP THE SERMON:**
 - A. Introduction:
 1. Purpose of:
 - A. Develop interest in the sermon.
 - B. Prepare your listeners to what will follow.
 2. Contents of:
 - A. Context or text.
 - B. Geographical or historical setting.
 - C. The occasion being studied.
 - D. The circumstances surrounding the text.
 3. Positive attributes:
 - A. Relation to the theme of the sermon.
 - B. Single theme.
 - C. Sets specific goal of lesson.
 - D. Smooth transition from introduction to body.
 4. Negative qualities:
 - A. Should not be too long.
 - B. Should not be overly emotional or sensational.
 - B. Body:
 1. Number of divisions determined by the needs of the sermon.
 - A. These should be of such a nature that they easily transition from one point to the next.
 2. Divisions or points should cover:
 - A. What?
 - B. Why?
 - C. How?
 - D. Where?

- E. When?
- C. Conclusion:
 1. Can take several forms:
 - A. A recap of what has been said.
 - B. A challenge to do what has been said.
 2. Should be brief.
 - A. Not the place to introduce more information, or last minute thoughts.

8. TYPES OF SERMON DELIVERY:

- A. Impromptu:
 1. Little or no preparation involved.
 2. Leaves one in a position where they may ramble from point to point.
- B. Memory and brief outline:
 1. Much preparation needed for this type.
- C. Memorized sermon:
 1. One must write out and memorize the entire sermon.
 2. Easy to get lost if one forgets what comes next.
- D. Reading:
 1. Removes possible mistakes due to forgetting your points.
 2. If one is not a good reader it will soon show.
 3. Speaker must be “chained” to the pulpit.
 4. Is not always accepted by listeners as preaching.

9. TYPES OF SERMONS:

- A. Biographical.
 1. A study of the life of a biblical character with application made to the listener.
- B. Book.
 1. Often times this type of sermon lends itself to a presentation of a series of sermons.
 2. Or one can do an overview type of sermon.
- C. Chapter.
 1. Background and context are brought out.
 2. Various chapters are good for this type of preaching, i.e., John 17; 1 Corinthians 13, Hebrews 11.
- D. Expository (We will spend more time on this type of sermon as per the course description.).
 1. This type of preaching is a textual study of a fairly long text.
 - A. The purpose of such is to explain the text and apply the principles to the “audience.”
 1. An expository sermon will have a basic thesis.
 2. The textual sermon gives the outline while the expository sermon gives the outline and the thought content from the immediate text.
 3. Advantages of the expository sermon are:
 - A. A complete and systematic study of the Bible.
 - B. There is a better communication of the Truth.
 4. Disadvantages of the expository sermon are:

- A. The difficulty of this type of preaching lends itself to many preachers doing a poor job in preaching expository sermons.
 - B. A lack of unity is seen if a larger text is chosen.
 - 1. The preacher needs to use caution to make sure that he ties the text together in such a way that those who hear will be benefited.
 - C. Often times a larger text is chosen than can be properly covered.
- 5. Suggestions for expository sermons:
 - A. Be well prepared.
 - B. Use care in choosing your text.
 - 1. Until you are experienced at using this type of sermon choose texts with few difficulties.
 - C. Know your text.
 - D. Use parallel texts cautiously.
 - 1. Too much of a good thing become problematic.
 - E. Be sure to choose a text that you can make application to the “audience.”
- 6. Benefit to the preacher and those who hear him.
 - A. A deeper study of the Bible.
 - B. Variety.
- E. Textual.
 - 1. A specific text is analyzed or the implications of the specific text are brought out.
 - 2. A textual sermon is relatively easy to prepare.
 - 3. This type of sermon is easy to follow by the “audience” so long as you stay close to the text.
 - 4. Unless you carefully choose your text you may find yourself lacking a unity of thought as a larger text may involve several themes.
- F. Topical.
 - 1. A specific topic is dealt with.
 - A. This is the type of sermon that I prefer.
 - 2. This type of preaching allows the preacher to specifically deal with topics that the local congregation may need to study
 - A. Topical preaching can be divided into various classifications:
 - 1. Apologetical.
 - A. Sermons that deal with evidences.
 - 2. Contrast.
 - A. This type of sermon is designed to draw a contrast between two points.
 - 3. Devotional.
 - A. Sermons designed to encourage.
 - 4. Doctrinal.
 - A. Such sermons can deal with the many doctrines of the Bible.
 - 3. Historical.
 - A. Historical sermons can be of much benefit if properly prepared and delivered.

4. Moral Issues.

- A. With the world in the moral state it is in there is a great need for the church to be made aware of these matters.

10. THE PROBLEM OF PLAGIARISM:

- A. Plagiarize – “To use and pass off (the ideas or writings of another) as one's own. To appropriate for use as one's own passages or ideas from (another). v. intr. To put forth as original to oneself the ideas or words of another.” Your Dictionary.com.
- B. With the Internet being as it is today many preachers find it easier to get their sermons from it.
1. In times past it used to be the Sermon Outline books prepared by others.
- C. Some have suggested that the preacher should never use such means of assistance in preparation of their sermons.
1. I would not go quite that far.
- D. However, caution needs to be used.
1. Never use a complete sermon or outline, which belongs to another.
2. If you use the Internet or Sermon Outline books make the sermon yours.
- A. People know your style.
- B. When they see it change radically they will know you spent little or no time working on your lesson.
- C. Soon, they will begin to see you as being lazy.
3. Be sure to acknowledge borrowed material.
- A. Doing such does not indicate you are lazy, only studious.

11. WHEN A SERMON IS SUCCESSFUL:

- A. Criticism of preaching and preachers has been around a long time.
1. After Paul preached to the Athenians the Epicureans and Stoics called him a babbler - Acts 17:18.
- B. Today, attack after attack is still being hurled against preaching, and especially pulpit preaching.
1. Granted those who care very little for God or anything good are doing the majority of this.
2. However, some of those who claim to be Christians are caught up in the habit of having boiled sermon and fried preacher for their Sunday meal.
- C. Now to those of us who have adopted this practice the question arises, "When is a sermon successful?"
1. A proper Biblical answer will help eliminate some of the criticism for you see some are not aware of what it takes to make a sermon successful.
2. Part of the reason for this is that we are too wrapped up in the rhetorical ability of the speaker, rather than in the Bible principles being set forth.
- A. It is time that we judged sermons on a biblical basis rather than on the ability or lack of ability of the speaker.
- D. A Sermon Is Successful If It Is True To The Word Of God.
1. No matter how good of a job a speaker does in proclaiming his sermon, if it is not in agreement with the Word his sermon is a failure - 2 Timothy 4:2;

- 1 Peter 4:11.
2. If an evangelist preaches God's word; how can a person who loves it criticize and not consider its presentation a success?
- E. A Sermon Is Successful If It Is Preached In Love.
1. The gospel preacher must "reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" - 2 Timothy 4:2.
 - A. There are many sermons that are not popular, but if they are spoken in love they should be considered a success.
 2. We quite often joke about "toe-stomping" sermons, but if they are preached with the concern of the audience in mind then they should be considered successful
 3. The preacher must preach the whole council of God - Acts 20:27.
 - A. Part of preaching the whole council quite often is the condemnation of error.
 1. If this is done with love, then the lesson is a success.
- F. A Sermon Is Successful If It Has Been Prepared To Meet A Need.
1. Every member of the local church may not have the same need.
 - A. Thus lessons may be directed to the lost, weak, and indifferent, even to the strong.
 - B. This is where the audience comes in as they apply what is applicable to them.
 2. Every sermon that is preached has a purpose.
 - A. Thus simply because the lesson does not meet a personal need is no grounds to become critical.
 1. We should be happy that it has been presented to help others.
 3. If only one person has been helped by a sermon is it not a success?
- G. A Sermon Is Successful If It Is Spoken So All Can Understand.
1. It was said of Jesus that the common people heard him gladly – Mark 12:37.
 2. Paul said that he did not put emphasis on excellency of speech – 1 Corinthians 2:1-6.
 3. This is not to emphasize poor grammar, but to emphasize the usage of words understandable by all.
 - A. How can a sermon possibly be a success if it cannot be understood?
- H. A Sermon Is Successful If It Glorifies God.
1. Moments before Christ ascended into heaven he gave the command to preach the gospel - Mark 16: 15, 16.
 2. Consider Paul's words found in 1 Corinthians 1:21.
 - A. Therefore when the word is preached it brings glory to God and demonstrates his wisdom.
 3. If a sermon is preached to draw attention or glory to anyone other than God or Christ it is a failure.
- I. A Sermon Is Successful If It Challenges People To Think.
1. The Sermon on the Mount found in Matthew chapters 5-7 is a good example of the Master doing just this

2. In order to get a person to move into action you must get him to think.
 - A. If a sermon does this, is it a success.
3. Quite often people will make changes in their lives during the week following a sermon heard on Sunday.
4. After admonishing the brethren at Philippi to grow in various virtues Paul concluded by saying, "Think on these things" - Philippians 4:8.

12. DETERMINING THE CENTRAL PROPOSITION OR THE "HEART" OF THE TEXT

- A. Many preachers want to "vault" from the text to the sermon like a "pole vaulter" and not really capture the "heart" of the text.
 1. They have three points to their sermons:
 - A. Begin in the text
 - B. Depart from the text
 - C. And never return to the text
- B. One of the major temptations for preachers in going from text to sermon is failing to properly prepare - 1 Timothy 4:11-16.
 1. To properly prepare one must:
 - A. Study the text.
 1. Accuracy in exegesis is a must, but it is not the prize in itself.
 2. There's more than just being accurate involved.
 3. A great sermon must be more than accurate, but it can never be less.
 - B. Look for Grammatical "Keys".
 1. Look for Content/Subject Keys
- C. Central Proposition of the Text – CPT.
 1. Translators have divided Scripture into paragraphs
 - A. A paragraph, by definition is a group of sentences with one central thought.
 - B. This thought is what is referred to as the Central Proposition of the text or the CPT.
 2. Other names for the CPT:
 - A. The Textual Thrust
 - B. The Sermonic Screw
 - C. The Big Idea
 - D. The Textual Idea
 - E. The Exclusive Emphasis
 3. Involved in the Central Proposition is:
 - A. Theme or Subject
 - B. Thrust, Complement or Assertion
 4. Expository Preaching is distinctive because of the fact that it has a Central Proposition of the Text. Since this is the case, we must be able to distinguish the Main Point (CPT) or the heart of the passage.
 5. The central proposition of the text (CPT) is the singular theme and thrust around which all of the details of the text revolve!
- D. Identifying the Central Proposition of the Text

1. The CPT is a single unit of thought that binds together all of the particulars.
2. Four questions about the CPT:
 - A. What, does the CPT look like?
 1. Its always in the form of a full grammatical sentence.
 - A. If shorter it is not a proposition.
 - B. What does the CPT contain?
 1. The Theme or Subject of the text.
 - A. What is the author really talking about?
 2. The Thrust or Complement.
 - A. I.e. the Assertion of the author.
 - B. What is the author really saying about what he is talking about?
 - C. Why is the CPT so important?
 1. It makes sure that our preaching and teaching reflects what the author is really saying.
 2. It helps us as preachers and teachers to define precisely in our minds what the text is saying.
 3. It helps us to accurately see that the textual idea is necessary.
 - D. Where does one get the CPT?
 1. It is derived from studying and structuring the Text..
- E. Guidelines for Determining the Central Proposition of the Text:
 1. Carefully identify keywords or theological themes in the text for insight.
 2. Consider the plain and obvious meaning of the text for indications of the CPT.
 3. Carefully examine the intention of the writer for insight.
 - A. Ask yourself:
 1. Why is this text here?
 2. Why does the author say what he has said?
 - B. Example - Luke 18:1-8
 1. Theme - Prayer
 2. Thrust - Persistence in Prayer
 - A. Luke indicates this in verse 1.
 4. Examine the context of the text to help identify the writers central proposition.
 - A. Consider James 1:1-4
 1. Theme - Trials
 2. Thrust - Response to Trials
 - A. Joy and patience.
 5. Discern the meaning of figurative language to gain insight into the central proposition of the text
 - A. Consider Matthew 5:13-16
 1. Theme - Influence
 2. Thrust - Influencing your world.
 - A. Salt and light in relation to influence.
 6. Look for a pivotal verse in the text which may contain the main theme.
 - A. Consider 1 Timothy 4:6-16
 1. Theme - Servitude

2. Thrust - Qualities of Excellence as contained in 1 Timothy 4:6.
3. The Full Proposition - "In 1 Timothy 4:6-16, Paul deals with several qualities of an excellent servant."
- A. Consider Revelation 3:14-22
 1. Theme – Repentance.
 2. Thrust - Lukewarm Christianity
 - A. Pivotal verse is verse 19.
 3. The Full Proposition – "In Revelation 3:14-22, God's Word calls for repentance as part of the disciplinary procedure for lukewarm Christians."
- F. Some words NOT to use as your theme or thrust.
 1. "Instructions" or "Commands" as they identify something but explain nothing about the passage as they are often too vague for this.
 2. "God" or "Godliness" should only be used when the text says so explicitly as they are also too vague for use as the theme.
 3. Avoid words like "true," "real", and "appropriate" as they don't really limit the subject, they slightly describe it.
 4. Avoid using figurative language – "salt" and "light" as per Matthew chapter 5.
- G. Summarizing the Lesson:
 1. Look at the passage for the plain and obvious meaning.
 - A. Perhaps think of telling a child in one word about the CPT.
 2. Focus on the writer's intended meaning.
 - A. The text cannot mean what it never meant before.
 3. Look at the larger context of the chapter and book.
 4. Discern the meaning of figurative language and properly translate.
 5. Does the text have a pivotal verse which captures the meaning?

CONCLUSION:

1. As you study to better serve as preachers it is imperative that you seek to do the very best that you can.
 - A. Hopefully, this lesson will assist you in doing so.

APPENDIX # 1

WHAT IS EXPOSITORY PREACHING?

INTRODUCTION:

1. An expository sermon takes its main points, and sub-points from the text.
 - A. There is a commitment to what the text says and what it means.
 1. References to other passages occur to confirm, corroborate or elaborate on the immediate context.
 - B. A sermon that explores any biblical concept is “expository” in a broad sense.
 1. But, it is not truly expository unless the main points and sub-points are extracted from the text and properly applied to the listeners.
 - C. Textual/Topical Expository
 - A. Preacher is filter Text is filter
 - B. The text is at mercy of the preacher The preacher is at the mercy of the text
 - D. The number of verses does not have anything to do with the sermon being expository rather; it’s the treatment, of it “Transferring truth to life.”

BODY:

1. The Nuts and Bolts of Expository Preaching.
 - A. It finds its sole source in Scripture.
 - B. The message is extracted from Scripture through thoughtful exegesis.
 - C. The message properly interprets Scripture.
 - D. The message properly explains the meaning.
 - E. The message properly applies the text to today.
2. What Expository Preaching is Not.
 - A. A running commentary from verse to verse without unity, outline, or structure.
 - B. Rambling comments or offhand remarks about a passage.
 - C. A mass of disconnected statements based on a superficial look at the text.
 - D. It is not pure exegesis.
 1. I.e. not the presentation of cold, dry facts.
 - E. A Sunday school lesson with no application to today
3. Three questions to ask yourself about Expository Preaching.
 - A. Have I given the meaning of the text?
 - B. Have I expressed the central proposition?
 - C. Have I exposed to the audience the proper application of this passage?
4. The Why of Expository
 - A. To inform the mind to whom you are preaching.
 - B. To instruct the heart of all who hear.
 - C. To influence greater godliness in the lives of yourself and your listeners.

HOMILETICS WORKSHEET

TEXT/THEME/SUBJECT

DATE

STRUCTURAL CONTEXT:

PASSAGE OUTLINE:

THESES/ANTITHESIS:

GOAL:

ILLUSTRATIONS/APPLICATIONS:

INTRODUCTION:

BODY/MAIN POINTS:

CONCLUSION:

HOMILETICS WORKSHEET

TEXT/THEME/SUBJECT

DATE

STRUCTURAL CONTEXT:

Reference to the strategic question in an inductive study. Purpose is to keep the immediate and book context in mind in order to develop the proper interpretation. This can be for your benefit. Does not need to be presented to the audience.

PASSAGE OUTLINE:

(Basic diagram of the thought development of the sermon.)

THESES/ANTITHESIS:

Section for summarization of the points in the passage's overall context. Can be used to identify and refute arguments against any truths set forth from the text.

GOAL:

Your sermon outline should develop a clear goal. If you do not state this goal, in one or two concise phrases, your lesson will probably lack the clarity and focus needed for it to be effective. Your goal should represent your audience's needs. You do not need to include everything you know.

ILLUSTRATIONS/APPLICATIONS:

Illustrations help to explain your lesson. They, also, stimulate interest in and bring home the significance of the point you have made. Be careful to recognize the limitations of the illustration. They illustrate. They do not prove your point.

Proper application is the most important part of your preaching. The purpose is to convince

the audience of the need to do something with what you have just taught. When we preach, we need to ask ourselves, "What are those who I have just taught going to leave convinced of, motivated, and determined to do?"

INTRODUCTION:

Once you have constructed the main outline, you should be able to create the introduction without too much difficulty. The Introduction points to the direction the lesson is going. It provides a mandate for listening to the main points. Avoid long introductions. Get into your text as quickly as possible. If you begin by reading a text, do not make a lengthy one as the audience will begin to read ahead of you and lose interest in what you are saying.

BODY/MAIN POINTS:

The main points are just that, the primary points of the sermon. They will be followed by sub points, the number of which will be determined by necessity. The main points should be clear, and easily understood.

CONCLUSION:

The conclusion is just that, the conclusion. It is a call for a response from the audience. It may also summarize the content of the outline. Avoid ending your lesson without a conclusion. As part of the conclusion, you may reiterate the main points. It should include the invitation. No sermon should end without an invitation!

A FEW GOOD MEN

1 Timothy 3:1-7

I. INTRODUCTION.

- A. The Marines say that they want a few good men. We need a few good men to be elders.
- B. One day, I want to be an elder.
 - 1. Because there is no greater work on earth.
 - 2. Because established that office to lead his church.
- C. This morning we will examine what the Scriptures teach concerning the office of an elder.

II. GOOD WORK, v 1.

- A. We need men who desire to be elders.
 - 1. "Desire" means "to seek after with a strong desire; to set one's heart upon."
 - 2. This is an office that is to be desired.
 - a. We need men who say, "I want to be an elder."
 - b. We need teens who say, "I want to be an elder."
- B. He who wants to be an elder desires a good work.
 - 1. "Good" means "noble," "honorable," "excellent," "beneficial," or "productive."
 - 2. So many have the idea that being an elder is not a good thing.
 - a. They say, "No one appreciates what the elders do. No one respects the elders. Elders have to spend many hours away from their families."
 - b. All that may be true, God's Word says that being a bishop is a good work.
 - 3. The work of an elder is good because:
 - a. Elders are God's idea.
 - b. The Holy Spirit sets men as elders (Acts 20:28).
 - c. Elders watch over God's church (Acts 20:28); they have an important work.

III. GOOD LIFE, vv 2-3.

- A. Paul talks about the type of lives elders need to live.
- B. Elders are to be blameless, v 2.
 - 1. An elder is to be irreproachable, not open to attack.
 - 2. In a political campaign, candidates look for their opponents' possible wrongdoings & then exploit those.
 - 3. Elders shouldn't have "skeletons in the closet"-there shouldn't be anything about an elder that can be attacked.
 - 4. This doesn't mean that elders have to be perfect-it means that they are to be good men who live good lives.
- C. Husband of one wife, v 2.
 - 1. Elders are to be married only once.
 - a. This doesn't mean that a man who has lost his wife through death or a biblical divorce & remarried cannot be an elder.
 - b. Rather, this means that an elder needs to have one wife at a time.

2. This means that elders need to be men who have kept their wedding vows.
 3. Divorce is too easy, and we need leadership in Christian marriage. Elders need to provide that leadership.
- D. Elders are to have good thinking, v 2.
1. They are to be temperate.
 - a. This means to be self-controlled.
 - b. Elders need to control their appetites-they don't need to give into everything they want.
 2. They are to be sober-minded.
 - a. Elders need to be thoughtful, prudent.
 - b. They do not need to make quick decisions; they need to think things through so they can arrive at sound judgment.
- E. Elders are to be of good behavior, v 2.
1. This term literally means to be respectable, honorable.
 2. Elders should live in such a way as to earn respect.
 3. Elders should be role models.
 - a. We don't have many good role models today-our political leaders are laden with moral failures, sports figures contract diseases through improper sexual contact, entertainers are often addicted to drugs & alcohol.
 - b. We need elders to fill this void, & to be solid role models.
- F. Elders are to be hospitable, v 2.
1. In the first century, Christians avoided inns with their pagan atmosphere & food that had already been offered to idols.
 2. Missionaries would travel from city to city not knowing where they'd stay, and elders needed to be willing to keep someone like that.
 3. The point is that elders should be willing to help.
 - a. Elders should be willing to keep those who need a place to stay.
 - b. Elders should also be willing to help in other ways-to make sure those around them aren't going without, to help the elderly lady how needs help mowing her yard. Elders should be willing to help however they can.
- G. Elders are to be able to teach, v 2.
1. Elders need to know Scripture so that they can refute error.
 2. Acts 20:28.
- H. Elders are not to be given to win, v 3.
1. Elders need to have good judgment & alcohol takes that away.
 2. Nadab & Abihu were probably drunk when they offered profane fire (Lev 10:8-10).
 3. Drunkenness will keep one from heaven (1 Cor 6:10).
 4. Illustration about Sandy McIntyre selling a mine for \$25 so he could buy some liquor, *Encyclopedia of 15,000 Illustrations*, #148.
- I. Elders are to have a good temper, v 3.
1. An elder is not to be violent, but gentle.
 - a. He is not to have a bad temper where he's ready to hit-so many are ready

- to hit at the slightest aggravation.
 - b. An elder is rather to be gentle & kind.
 - 2. An elder is not to be quarrelsome.
 - a. The idea is that an elder should not be ready to argue.
 - b. Some people just enjoy a good argument.
 - c. Elders should strive to get along with people.
 - J. Elders are not to be covetous, v 3.
 - 1. An elder cannot be greedy for money.
 - 2. Remember that in the New Testament era elders were often paid (1 Tm 5:17-18).
 - 3. An elder should not become an elder just to be paid.
 - K. These really are good standards for all of us.
- IV. GOOD FAMILY, vv 4-5.
- A. An elder is to rule his family well.
 - 1. He is to teach his children to submit. He is to teach them to submit to him & to God.
 - 2. This is to be done with all reverence, respect.
 - a. An elder is to teach his children respect.
 - b. Respect is a lost art in today's culture, and elders' children should be an example of respect.
 - B. If a man cannot rule his own household, he is unfit to care for God's church.
 - 1. The home is a "proving ground" for elders.
 - 2. It's in the home that elders learn how to lead.
 - 3. If men can't instill Christian values in their own families, how can they do so in the church?
- V. GOOD EXPERIENCE, v 6.
- A. An elder must be a man with experience in the church-he cannot be a novice.
 - 1. A novice wouldn't know enough about the church to lead-he wouldn't know enough of what the church stands for to protect her.
 - 2. He wouldn't have the wisdom & insight necessary.
 - B. If a novice becomes an elder,
 - 1. He might be puffed up.
 - a. He might really think he's something.
 - b. After all, he comes into a group & they make him their leader.
 - 2. he might fall into the same condemnation as the devil.
 - a. The devil's chief sin seems to be pride.
 - 1) Apparently, the devil is a fallen angel.
 - 2) Apparently, he wanted to supplant God's authority-he wanted God's power & glory.
 - b. These men would, therefore, fall into his condemnation.
- VI. GOOD REPUTATION, v 7.
- A. He needs to have a good reputation among non-Christians.
 - 1. There's nothing like the Jimmy Swaggert's and Jim Bakker's to give the church a bad name.

2. After all, if the leaders can't behave, why should anyone else?
 3. A Malay proverb says, "It is better to die with a good name, than to lie with a bad one."
- B. If he doesn't have a good reputation,
1. He might fall into reproach-embarrassment.
 2. He might fall into the snare of the devil-the trap the devil set.
- VII. CONCLUSION.
- A. Elders must be good men & we need good men to be elders.
- B. But, these qualifications for elders should be something we all work toward, because we'll be better people for it.
1. Are you working toward meeting these qualifications?
 2. Are you a good person?

<http://www.justinimel.com/expositorysermons.html>

<http://www.justinimel.com/afewgoodmen.html>

POWERFUL PRAYER

James 5:15-18

INTRODUCTION

- A. In the fall of 2005, 9-year-old Austin Blessit had to have his tonsils removed.
1. Before the surgery, an anesthesiologist came in to start an IV. He was wearing a cool surgical cap covered in colorful frogs.
 2. When the doctor started to leave, Austin called out, "Hey, wait."
 - a. The doctor turned. "Yeah, buddy, what do you need?"
 - b. "Do you go to church?"
 - c. "No," the doctor admitted. "I know I probably should, but I don't."
 - d. "Well, you should," Austin said, "because Jesus is great!"
 3. After the surgery was finished, the anesthesiologist came into the waiting room to talk to Austin's mother.
 - a. He said the surgery went well and then he added, "Mrs. Blessit, I don't usually come down and talk to the parents after a surgery, but I just have to tell you what your son did."
 - b. His mother thought-Oh boy. What did that little rascal do now?
 - 1) The doctor explained that he'd just put the mask on Austin when he signaled that he needed to say something.
 - 2) When the doctor removed the mask, Austin blurted out, "Wait a minute, we have to pray!"
 - 3) The doctor told him to go ahead, and Austin prayed: "Dear Lord, please let all the doctors and nurses have a good day. And Lord, please help that doctor with the frog hat start going to church. Amen."
- B. Why did little Austin want to pray before he had surgery? Because he understood the power of prayer!
1. Prayer is indeed a most powerful force.
 - a. "You shall call, and the LORD will answer; you shall cry, and he will say, 'Here I am'" (Is 58:9).
 - b. "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened" (Lk 11:9-10).
 2. The Christians to whom James wrote needed to understand the power of prayer.
 - a. They certainly appear to have been Christians who were struggling greatly.
 - 1) "Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness" (1:2-3).
 - 2) "As an example of suffering and patience, brothers, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. Behold, we consider those blessed who remained steadfast. You have heard of the steadfastness of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful" (5:10-11). Why mention an example of patient in suffering unless these Christians were suffering?
 - b. We all know that suffering is a part of our human existence.

- 1) In his suffering, Job declares, "Man who is born of a woman is few of days and full of trouble" (Job 14:1).
 - 2) But, you don't need those words of Scripture to know our prevalent suffering is in this world.
 - a) Many here this morning struggle with health concerns; others struggle with private sin; others worry over their finances.
 - b) All of us, in one way or another, suffer & we often suffer greatly.
 - c. In our suffering, we have the resource of prayer.
 - 1) James writes, "Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray" (5:13).
 - 2) I don't know about you, but when I'm suffering, I don't just want to pray. I want to know that God hears my prayer & that God will answer my prayer.
 - a) How can we know that God will hear & answer our prayers?
 - b) Our prayer need to be: A PERSUADED PRAYER, A PURE PRAYER, A PRACTICAL PRAYER, & A PASSIONATE PRAYER.
- POWERFUL PRAYER IS A PERSUADED PRAYER, vv 14-15
- A. Powerful prayer is a persuaded prayer-one that we pray in faith. James says, "Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven."
 - B. In Greek, the term for "sick" is used for both spiritual & physical illnesses.
 1. The word for "sick" is often used for weakness of faith: "As for the one who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not to quarrel over opinions" (Rom 14:1).
 2. Because of the connection between illness & sin, I personally believe that the illness here is spiritual & not physical.
 - C. But, that doesn't really matter, for God has all power & it is the "prayer of faith" that saves.
 1. If we desire our prayers to be powerful, they must be prayed in faith.
 - a. Js 1:5-8.
 - b. "I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours" (Mk 11:24).
 - c. When the disciples failed to heal a demon possessed boy, he says to them, "I say to you, if you have faith like a grain of mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move, and nothing will be impossible for you" (Mt 17:20).
 - 1) The apostles who had been baptized in the Holy Spirit needed to have faith to carry out their miracles.
 - 2) If they needed faith to carry out miracles, how much faith do you suppose we need for God to hear our prayers?
 2. God doesn't always answer prayers the way we'd like.
 - a. How many times have we prayed for a sick person to get well when he didn't? How many times have we prayed for a loved one to come to Christ, but he never did?

- b. We understand, I trust, that God always answers our prayers in accordance with his will.
 - 1) "This is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us" (1 Jn 5:14).
 - 2) We know that when what we pray doesn't come to pass, God's will is different from what we asked.
 - 3) Of course, we never know whether or not we are praying according to the will of God.
 - 3. If I don't know whether if God will do what I ask or not, how can I pray in faith?
 - a. I can pray with the persuasion that God will answer me according to his will.
 - b. I can pray with the persuasion that God will do what is right.
 - c. I can pray with the persuasion that God sits upon his throne & reigns over all.
 - D. Shall we pray with such faith?
- POWERFUL PRAYER IS A PURE PRAYER, v 16b
- A. Powerful prayer is pure prayer; it comes from a pure heart: "The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working."
 - B. Prayer itself does not have great power as it is working; it is the prayer of the righteous that works great power.
 - 1. "If I had cherished iniquity in my heart, the Lord would not have listened" (Ps 66:18).
 - 2. "Then they will cry to the LORD, but he will not answer them; he will hide his face from them at that time, because they have made their deeds evil" (Micah 3:4).
 - 3. "Whatever we ask we receive from him, because we keep his commandments and do what pleases him" (1 Jn 3:22).
 - C. If we want God to hear our prayers, we must be pure people-we need to be a righteous people.
 - 1. God mightily answers the prayers of the righteous.
 - a. When Abraham lied to Abimelech about Sarah's true identity, God appeared to Abimelech & promised to kill him.
 - 1) God said that the only thing that could save Abimelech was returning Sarah & asking Abraham to pray for him.
 - 2) We then read: "Abraham prayed to God, and God healed Abimelech, and also healed his wife and female slaves so that they bore children. For the LORD had closed all the wombs of the house of Abimelech because of Sarah, Abraham's wife" (Gen 20:17-18).
 - b. A man of God came out of Judah to Bethel & confronted Jeroboam while the king made improper sacrifices.
 - 1) Jeroboam pointed at the man of God & commanded that he be seized. Jeroboam's hand "dried up, so that he could not draw it back to himself" (1 Ki 13:4).
 - 2) Jeroboam then "said to the man of God, 'Entreat now the favor of the LORD your God, and pray for me, that my hand may be restored to me.' And the man of God entreated the LORD, and the king's hand was

- restored to him and became as it was before" (1 Ki 13:6).
- c. Why did God hear Abraham when he prayed for Abimelech?
 - 1) God told Abimelech that Abraham was a prophet (Gen 20:7).
 - 2) Moses also records that Abraham "believed the LORD, and he counted it to him as righteousness" (Gen 15:6).
 - 3) Abraham was righteous & God heard his prayer!
 - d. Notice also that it was a "man of God" who prayed for Jeroboam. Again, God heard his prayer because of his righteousness.
2. Do you want to know this morning that God hears every prayer that you pray?
- a. There is only one way to have such an assurance-to pray pure prayers, to pray from a righteous heart.
 - b. Are you praying from a righteous heart this morning?

PRACTICAL PRAYER, v 17

- A. Powerful prayer is a practical prayer-it can be prayed by anyone. "Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed fervently that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain on the earth."
- B. Elijah was a man just like we are.
 - 1. The Greek word means to suffer like someone else; the idea is that Elijah was no different from you & me.
 - 2. We might be tempted to think that Elijah's prayers had more power because he was a prophet of God.
 - a. It is true that he was God's spokesman; it is true that God had chosen him; it is true that he had miraculous gifts.
 - b. Yet, none of that gave his prayer more efficacy than we can find today in prayer.
 - 3. Elijah prayed and brought on a 3 ½ year drought during the reign of Ahab.
 - a. King Ahab, of course, was an evil man & a horrible king.
 - b. As judgment against Ahab, Elijah says, "As the LORD, the God of Israel, lives, before whom I stand, there shall be neither dew nor rain these years, except by my word" (1 Ki 17:1).
 - 1) Notice carefully that Elijah does not at all deny the possibility of dew & rain.
 - 2) However, dew or rain would only come about through his word-when Elijah prayed for the rain to stop, it stopped; when Elijah prayed for the rain to come, it came.
- C. Nothing at all separates us from Elijah.
 - 1. We can pray just as practically as did he.
 - 2. There are only two requirements for our prayers to be just as powerful as Elijah's:
 - a. We must be in Christ: "Through [Jesus] we both have access in one Spirit to the Father" (Eph 2:18).
 - b. We must also, as James writes in this morning's text, live righteously before God.
 - 3. As long as we are in Christ & living righteously our prayers are as powerful as Elijah's.

- a. Think about that! We have access to the same God who stopped rain for 3 ½ years because Elijah asked!
- b. Shall we be those who pray practically? Shall we go before God knowing that he shall hear our prayers?

PASSIONATE PRAYER, v 17

- A. Powerful prayer is passionate prayer: "Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed fervently that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain on the earth."
- B. The Greek here is most intriguing.
 1. This literally reads: "Elijah was a man with the same affections as we, and he prayed in prayer that it might not rain."
 2. Elijah did just pray, but he prayed in prayer.
 - a. This idiom has been borrowed from Hebrew where it means to pray fervently.
 - b. The idea is that Elijah didn't just say a prayer before he went to bed, but he begged God not to send rain.
- C. There is a great need for passionate prayer.
 1. Jesus "told them a parable to the effect that they ought always to pray and not lose heart" (Lk 18:1).
 2. "Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer" (Rom 12:12).
- D. How is your prayer life this morning?
 1. Is your prayer life passionate?
 - a. Do you go before God to lay out your heartaches & your struggles and to beg God to help?
 - b. Do you take those troubles to God with passion because you know he'll hear & he'll respond?
 2. Why is it that prayers need to be passionate?
 - a. God doesn't always answer my prayers the way I want, so why bother with fervent prayer? God knows what he's going to do, so why bother with fervent prayer?
 - b. Fervent prayer demonstrates our trust in God.
 - 1) Fervent prayer is a demonstration that I don't have all the answers myself.
 - 2) Fervent prayer says that I can't solve all of my problems on my own.
 - 3) Fervent prayer says that God is far wiser than are we.
 3. Are your prayers fervent?

CONCLUSION

- A. This past week I met with a doctor in Morgantown.
 1. Tammy & I both went back to meet with her and so that we could both know what was going on and could both offer insights.
 2. The doctor asked many questions about depression, hopelessness, and suicidal thoughts in relation to my illness.
 - a. She was flabbergasted that I quickly answered all questions negatively without any thought.
 - b. I had to step out to use the restroom. While I was gone, she looked at Tammy and said, "Is he really doing this well? Is he really not depressed or hopeless

- or made you afraid that he might commit suicide?" Tammy said, "He's fine."
3. It came time for all the paper & pencil tests.
 - a. I told Tammy to go back to the hotel & rest some.
 - b. The doctor showed Tammy back out of the hospital, but before she would allow the tester to come back in, she reappeared and said, "Now that your wife isn't here, tell me how depressed you really are."
 4. I simply replied, "I understand you need to ask, but my wife & I have an open relationship. I have no need to change a word I've said."
 5. With a look of disbelief on her face, she said, "Okay" and left.
- B. What that doctor failed to know is that I have God on my side.
1. I can pray to the God who caused it to stop raining for 3 ½ years. My prayers can be heard just as Elijah's were.
 2. I have no reason to despair. I have no reason to give up. I have a God who answers prayers!
- C. Does he answer your prayers this morning?
1. Do you have access to the Father through Christ? Are you living righteously?
 2. Do you need to come & ask for this church's prayers?

<http://www.justinimel.com/expositorysermons.html>

<http://www.justinimel.com/james/powerfulprayer.html>