

A Heart to Share God's Word

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A Heart to Share God's Word

Some thoughts . . .

A Heart That Follows God Through His Word

The Bible is the story of God and man, a love story in which you and I must write our own ending, our unfinished autobiography of the creature and the creator. We must decide if God's words will become our nourishment, if they will become the lamp which lights our path, if we are willing to take the time to hide His words deep within our hearts. Finally, are we willing to allow the Spirit of God to use His words to conform us into His image?

1. Do you believe God's Word is powerful? Look up the following verses! Isaiah 55:9-11 Heb.1:3

2. Do you believe lives will be changed if you share God's Word with others? Do you expect people to learn? Are you more interested in their learning than in your ability to teach? ... Learning Takes Place in the Learner ...

3. When was the last time you gave a devotion? What did you use? (Christianity Today article, Reader's Digest article, a poem, something from a popular devotional book?)

4. Have you ever been asked to share from God's Word? You said, "yes," and picked a favorite verse from a passage, but because you were in a hurry, you neglected to read and understand the verses which came before and after your favorite verse. Have you ever picked your own theme and used God's Word merely to emphasize a point you wanted to make rather than looking at a text to discover what God says? As a result you failed to fully understand that verse in the context of the chapter or book. Jer. 23:28

Example: Zephaniah 3:17 Wonderful promise, what does it mean?

Why is God's Word so important?

It is His heart shared with mankind.

The Bible claims to be God's own words to His created ones.

11 Tim 3:16

Every Scripture is God breathed and is inerrant in it's original form.

11 Sam 22:31a

The Bible sets forth God as Creator and Lord of all.

Gen. 1:1 Deut. 10:14

The Bible reveals the record of what God has done and will do.

Luke 24:44 Rev. 1:1-3

The Bible discloses the fact that all created things are subject to God, and all created beings discover their highest destiny only as they are conformed to His will.

Joshua 1:8 Matt. 7

There is continuity in the Bible. It is a homogeneous, uninterrupted, harmonious and orderly account of the history of God's dealings with man.

Isaiah 6:9-10 Matt. 13:14

The Bible reveals God's amazing plan of redemption for His fallen creation as He promises the glorious redeemer who will restore all things.

Rom. 8:18-23

We love the Bible because we love the One of whom it speaks.

"God's book does not yield up it's secrets to those who will not be taught of the spirit." J.I.Packer

Keep God's Word Central in Your Ministry

The Word is very near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart so you may obey it. Deut. 30:14

Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Joshua 1:8

Princes have persecuted me without cause, but my heart standeth in awe of your word. Psalm 119:161

The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God stands forever. Isaiah 40:8

What you heard from me, keep as the pattern of sound teaching, with faith and love in Christ Jesus. Guard the good deposit that was entrusted to you --- guard it with the help of the Holy Spirit who lives in us. 11 Tim. 1:13-14

Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth. 11 Tim. 2:15

And the Lord's servant must not quarrel; instead, he must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful. 11 Tim. 2:24

*"The Sovereign Lord has given me an instructed tongue, to know the word that sustains the weary. he wakens me morning by morning, wakens my ear to listen like one being taught.
Isaiah 50:4*

Some Things to Remember Before You Begin

The most common type of writing in the Bible is narrative. Over one third of the Bible is in this form. It is the main supporting network of the Bible. It has characters, and plots, and messages to the contemporary church; and there is always a balance between these three elements in a narrative.

One third of the old testament is written in poetry which is divided into stanzas. Poetry is rich in imagery and symbolism.

The Gospels are made up of narrative, history and theology.

The Letters in the new testament are letters!!!! Read through a whole letter just as you would read any personal letter. Read the letters and the Book of Acts historically otherwise you may be inclined to apply them wrongly.

Is there any section of scripture you like to avoid because it seems too hard to understand?

When reading the text one should read and re-read the words in the whole chapter and the whole book in which it is found in order to discover the content and the context in which it was written.

Don't be like Humpty Dumpty who said in a rather scornful tone, "When I use a word, it means just what I choose it to mean --- neither more nor less".

(Humpty Dumpty in Alice in Wonderland)

Not everyone is an expert in the Greek and Hebrew languages, but new ideas shouldn't be adopted if they haven't been checked against the original text.

Words are important!!!

"A man must learn to read the lines before he can read between the lines." *C.S. Lewis*

How to Decide on a Passage

One time I was trying to decide what passage I would teach next. In one week I heard two sermons on John 1:35-42, began a Bible study in John, and went to a retreat where I was given John 1:35-42 to study. The light finally went on, and I decided John 1:35-42 might be a good passage to explore!

That's the hard way!

Most of the time, what you choose will come out of your own personal study and ultimately what you share will first be offered by God to you to try out in your own life. James 1:22

But how can I be sure that what interests me in my own personal study will be a blessing to others? A movie maker who was asked why he chose a certain subject for a movie replied that the subject interested him and therefore he felt it would interest others. His topic had so impacted him he wanted to share it with others.

And that's the way it is with the words of God. If the passage blesses you it will bless someone else. Don't ever try to share something that hasn't blessed you first, and stay in the passage until you are blessed. Try to understand something new, but never try to share something you don't yet understand.

If someone invited you to go out with them to the finest gourmet restaurant in your area and you said, "Oh, no thanks, I'm going to have a little strained spinach with pabulum on the side." It would be evident that your palate needed to be developed. There is fine dining in God's word and subjects

relating to every condition known to man. If you find parts of the Bible difficult to understand and enjoy, your spiritual palate needs developing.

There are just a few people today who will take the time to let the words, thoughts and feelings of God unfold and reveal themselves. There are fewer and fewer of those who show an interest in the things that are important to Him. I hope you will join their ranks.

Matthew 24:35 "Heaven and earth will pass away but my words will never pass away."

Ask Him what He would like you to study and share.

That doesn't mean that you can't choose a topic and develop it, or study the life of someone in the Bible, or do a word study, etc.

I just hope that you will no longer treat the Bible as one of your many handy resources, but see it as the place to go to hear from the Spirit who inspired it and now dwells within us. The things which our Holy God wants us to know He is telling us Himself. He tells us when we hurt His feelings and grieve Him, when He is disappointed, what angers Him, when He is pleased, when it's time for our relationship to deepen, when He is calling us to go with Him on a new journey of faith and much more. We are called to tell others. 11 Tim. 2:24

The Art of Observation

It is an art, but it can be learned!

Learning to Observe

To Observe:

Attentively watch, pay attention to, consider well,
ponder, meditate

Your word, O Lord, is eternal; it stands firm in the heavens.

*Your faithfulness continues through all generations; you established the earth,
and it endures.*

Your laws endure to this day, for all things serve you.

If your law had not been my delight, I would have perished in my affliction.

I will never forget your precepts, for by them you have renewed my life.

Save me, for I am yours;

I have sought out your precepts.

The wicked are waiting to destroy me, but I will ponder your statutes.

To all perfection I see a limit; but your commands are boundless.

Psalms 119:89-96

Once you have chosen a passage, read it through slowly and thoughtfully.

Read it through again and underline key words or phrases which impress you.

Ask yourself why this passage is in the Bible.

Read the passage again and write down questions you have, things you wonder about.

Think about the people in the passage and their responses to what is going on.

Read through the passage again slowly.

Now you are beginning to learn to observe!

Principles of Observation

The more time you spend in observation the less time you will have to spend trying to organize your talk. You cannot apply what you do not understand. There are no shortcuts!

Four obstacles to overcome:

1. Poor concentration . . .

A sign at a local gym proclaims: "Laziness is simply the habit of stopping before you are tired." Our Christian society is crying out for new methods of Bible study so they can get the most out of the Bible without work!!!

How do we study? We think! Proverbs 2:1-5

We meditate! Psalm 1:2 The early Christians out thought their world so they conquered their world.

What should we think about? All that God has done, all that God has said, all that God has commanded.

2. An undisciplined approach . . .

A farmer went to the barn to get some eggs. On his way he noticed the pump was leaking so he went to the barn to get a new washer for the pump but while in the barn he saw the hayloft needed straightening and went to get a pitchfork. Hanging next to the pitchfork was a broom with a broken handle. He went back to the kitchen to make a note to buy a new broom handle and when he opened it, it squeaked and so he was off again to get some oil for the door and so on and on he went all day never getting anything accomplished . . . Are you, like the farmer, a prisoner of your unbridled spontaneity?

Someone asked a famous Bible teacher what made him such a good teacher and he replied, "I have learned to keep my seat stuck to the chair until I'm done!"

To overcome laziness, to overcome a desire to stop before we're tired, we must be willing to think hard, stay focused and stay in the chair.

3. An unprepared heart . . .

Three helps which begin with "S:"

a) Surrender

Surrender your heart to the study. A study of God's word stimulates a love for the word. It's like peanuts! The more you eat the more you want.

Indulge yourself with delight in the Lord. Psalm 37:4

b) Search

Search for the treasure that is there. If you don't understand the passage look for another passage that might shed some light on it. Cross reference to your hearts content!

c) Stay

Stay with the passage until it blesses you. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you, and read it again and again and again and again. Secret: Until you have acted on what you have already been given, God may not entrust you with any more!

4. Satanic Opposition . . .

*There are three things to remember about Satan:
First he is called the usurper.*

He tries to take what is not his. Secondly he is a liar, and thirdly he is an accuser. In the context of these three things he will first of all try to take away your time of study and the things of God knowing your time does not belong to him. Then he will lie and accuse you of not being wise enough to understand God's Word the same way he accused Eve in the garden.

***But he is defeated and humiliated and impotent!
So these obstacles can be overcome and will be!***

Farewell to Obstacles!

1. Read . . . Record . . . Reflect!

Read . . . Record . . . Reflect!

Read . . . Record . . . Reflect!

Now do it again!

2. Bombard the text with questions. The Bible is never embarrassed to be asked questions.

3. Seek a blessing for yourself. Ask the Lord, who inspired the Bible, to enable you to understand it and to LIVE it!

Stay in the passage until you are blessed by it.

4. Be unstriving, receptive, expectant. Do not try to think the text out but rather develop the sense of waiting for the disclosure of something which is already there: If the passage seems dry - sit longer!

Sit. Do sit!

5. Understand that it takes much more energy to wrestle with the text than it does to receive an image from your T.V.

"My daughter, if you accept my words and store up my commands within you, turning your ear to wisdom and applying your heart to understanding, and if you call out for insight and cry aloud for understanding, and if you look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure, then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God."

Proverbs 2:1-5

More Methods of Observation

Be a photographer . . . Focus the camera of your eye and your mind on the passage and snap a picture of the text! Observe the words. Zoom in on them. Set your wide angle lens to enjoy the whole structure of the passage. Is it a narrative? Is it filled with symbolism? Is it filled with people. Does it contain a strong doctrinal statement? What is its setting?

Or

Be an artist . . . Paint a visual picture! Who is the central character? What colors would you use to paint him or her? Where is the central character in relation to any others in the picture? Who do you think is next in importance? Who or what is in the background? What are the expressions on their faces? What colors would you use to paint this picture? What type of brushstrokes and paint would you use?

Or

Be a detective . . . Look for clues! What does this text have to do with the verses before it and after it? Why is this particular text included in the Bible? Is there a mystery to be solved here? What do you notice about God in this text? What do you notice about any people who are included in the text?

Or

Be a dramatist . . . Divide the passage into scenes! Who is the star of this passage? What is his or her point of view? Think about the motivation and emotions behind the words spoken. Design a set and costumes for each scene keeping in mind culture, history and geography. Choose a title for this short play.

Or

Be an explorer . . . Look for hidden treasure! Look for X marks the spot words . . . words you don't understand or words you feel will lead you to deeper treasure. Turn the words over in your mind and ponder them. Ask questions! Dig for treasure in the verses surrounding the passage. Write down any surprise nuggets you find.

Now try method #5 with the following passage: 11 Corin. 4:1-12

Sample Observation Sheet

Observe

Ponder

Ask Questions

Meditate

11 Corin. 4:1-12

is it before?

pity?

what is our ministry?

Therefore, since through God's mercy we have this ministry, we do not lose heart. Rather, we have renounced secret and shameful ways; we do not use deception, nor do we distort the word of God. On the contrary, by setting forth the truth plainly we commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. For we do not preach ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.

observe
it

But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-

surpassing power is from God and not from us. We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be

(handicapped)

(helpless) (puzzled?) (desperate) (wronged)

(never alone) (knocked down but not knocked out)

meditation on Principle The Cross

revealed in our body. For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that his life may be revealed in our mortal body.

So then, death is at work in us, but life is at work in you.

(no vindication, Recognition, on approval.)

-16-

describe life in another person!

How does He do that?

The Order in Organization

Every Building Needs a Foundation . . .

What to Do with your Observations

You now have 101 Dalmations (observations) heading off in all directions. You must herd them into the kennel or put some up for adoption! A higher degree of learning is possible when your material is logical and structured.

The following are five different ways you might divide the passage so your observations are manageable:

- 1. Look for the paragraphs. You may be able to divide the passage by the paragraphs the Bible has already provided.*
- 2. Divide the passage by change of location.*
- 3. Divide the passage by the scene changes.*
- 4. Divide the passage by time.*
- 5. Divide the passage by doctrinal thoughts.*

Stop!!!!!! Don't give up yet and run to the nearest commentary!

Now that you have organized your Dalmations a little, and they are more contained, see if you can get them herded into two or three divisions.

You are now exhausted, but before you lose consciousness see if you can give each of your two or three divisions a little title... one short sentence. Now you can have a little commentary and read extra passages which help to shed light on your text.

Building a Talk

*Every talk is different.
Every talk has it's own personality.*

*A testimony
A devotion
A Bible study wrap-up
Teaching the Junior High Girls
A workshop
A mother-daughter tea
A talk to the missionary circle
Teaching a Sunday school lesson
Speaking to a group of inner city youth
Witnessing at a women's prison
Speaking to those with various cultural backgrounds*

No matter who you are speaking to, all talks need a framework, some type of structure in which you can move around comfortably.

*Take 5 sheets of paper:
Page one = Introduction
Page two = First division
Page three = Second division
Page four = Third division if needed
Page five = Conclusion*

Building A Talk

The Structure

Introduction: _____

Div. 1 Title

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

Illustration if needed: _____

Application: _____

Transition: _____

Div. 2 Title

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

Illustration if needed: _____

Application: _____

Transition: _____

Div. 3 (if needed): _____

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

Illustration if needed: _____

Application: _____

Conclusion: _____

The Subject Sentence

(For your eyes only)
The Umbrella under which Everything Fits

1. Based on your observations and your grouping of them, decide on a point of view.

example:

In the feeding of the five thousand, who or what is the subject? (the central character, place or thing)

*Is it... Jesus? the disciples? the crowd?
the Galilee? the little boy? Philip?
or the bread and fish?*

2. Once you decide who or what your subject is, you can then ask yourself what the subject is doing or what is happening to the subject.

Example:

1. Jesus feeds the five thousand. Mark 6:30-44
2. Faith is vindicated through patience and prayer.

James 5:7-20

3. Now write out a short simple sentence containing your subject and a verb which tells what the subject is doing.
4. If your subject sentence is broad enough, everything in the passage will fit under it and stay dry!
5. Try to remember that this passage is different from any other passage in the Bible. Try to think why God included this particular passage in His Word.

The Aim

(The Action Figure of your Talk)

Now that I've spent all this prayer and time and energy trying to decide what this passage is all about . . . am I the only person who is working hard here? What do I want my audience to do with what I'm going to say? My goal is to equip them in some way to effectively minister in works of service.

You want to cause your audience to do something!

You want your audience to become "Power Rangers."

Action . . . Action . . . Action!

You want to cause them to do more than believe, more than see, more than wonder, more than know.

So your aim should have an active verb in it.

I want to cause my audience to . . .

examples:

Ask Jesus to give them something to give to others.

Offer Jesus something material to help others (their lunch so to speak.)

Go to their neighbor and share the gospel and their love.

Thank their heavenly Father for what He has provided for them.

Set aside time each day to be fed by Jesus.

An active aim always hits the target!

The Introduction

Some introductions are too small for the person!

"This is Harry Fulbright"

(I don't know enough to get interested.)

Some introductions are too big for the person!

"This is my esteemed colleague Dr. Harold Fulbright. One of his degrees is in quantum physics and the other three I can't pronounce. He's written fifteen books on the ozone layer, and he has won the Nobel prize six times."

(I'm told too much. I'm overwhelmed. He, as a person, will never live up to this overblown introduction.)

What an introduction is not!

- 1. It is not telling the audience how nervous you are!*
- 2. It is not a personal story!*
- 3. It is not longer than your first division!*

What an introduction is!

An introduction is just that. It's only an introduction. It shouldn't be too big for your talk, and it shouldn't be too small. It has to be just right!!!! It is just a beginning. It's the way to get the audience interested in hearing what else you have to say! It's the hook!!!

"This is Harry Fulbright. He has just written a very interesting book! Can you guess what he does for a living?"

Different Types of Introductions

1. A short story:

Jesus used stories. Use a short story from Scripture when you can.

Luke 7:41-42 (Money owed to a moneylender)

Luke 8:5-8 (The parable of the farmer)

2. A question:

Jesus used questions.

"John's baptism---where did it come from? Was it from heaven or from men?" Matt. 21:25

"Why is the divorce rate so high among Christians?"

3. A statement:

"The mathematical symbols of subtraction and addition form a cross and can represent the crucifixion and the resurrection."

4. A principle:

"I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the Lord."

Jeremiah 1:8

5. A concern:

The state of the union, morality, Aids, working women, pressures. . .

6. A short pithy statement that says something profound:

Arthur Rubenstein: "If I omit practicing one day I notice it. If I omit practicing two days the critics notice it. If I omit practicing three days the public notices it."

J. Heinrich Arnold:

"Discipleship is not a question of our own doing, it is a matter of making room for God so that He can live in us."

- 7. A mystery which you want to unravel with your audience: You begin by giving them a clue.
What was Bathsheba like as she reached middle age?
Why did the disciples follow Jesus as soon as they heard Him referred to as "the Lamb of God?"*
- 8. An icebreaker, joke or funny saying that relates to your theme:*

Raising teenagers is like nailing Jell-O to a tree!

A kindergarten teacher was observing a classroom of children while they drew. As she walked over to one little girl who was working diligently, she asked what the drawing was? The girl replied, "I'm drawing God." The teacher paused and said, "But no one knows what God looks like." Without missing a beat, or looking up from her drawing, the little girl replied, "They will in a minute!"

The Transitions

(The Train Station)

A train station is a place where you catch trains and the place where you change trains. When you buy a ticket the ticket seller will want to know where you are going and when you want to leave. If you have to change trains in the middle of your journey he'll want to know what time you will need to arrive in order to catch the next train so you will not get left behind. He'll want to know your final destination and what time you want to arrive.

So it is with transitions. Transitions tell us where we are going. They show us how to get off one thought and hop on to another so as not to be left behind. They help us to remember where we got on, and they help us to arrive safely at our destination. They are the train stations of our talk.

Transitions are usually limited to one sentence.

Some examples:

And now the sky darkened. (using a change in the weather)

It was now four o'clock. (using a change in the time of day)

They left Jerusalem and journeyed to Bethel. (change of location)

What do you think those disciples thought when all those people kept staying past the dinner hour? (a question)

Here is a great crowd and a tiny group of disciples, and Jesus singles out lucky Philip! (transitioning from the many to one person)

When Jesus looked out over that great crowd what do you think he saw? (using a person's reaction!)

And so the whole crowd ate, and all were satisfied. A nap would be nice! (a summary with a twist!)

The most amazing thing about this miracle was that no one really understood what it meant! (bringing up something to ponder)

And so Jesus was arrested and led away, and the trials would soon begin! (a summary and an introduction)

And so Jesus was victorious through prayer. (introducing a principle)

The transition helps your audience to move from one thought to another so they don't get left behind.

A transition should always be used between divisions and can be used between sub-divisions where needed.

Illustrations

(Drawings in the Mind)

Children like story books with lots of pictures. In that respect we never grow up. One picture really is worth more than 1000 words. When Jesus taught He drew pictures in the minds of his listeners. He used word pictures that were familiar to them ... things that they saw every day ... things that were part of their every day lives.

Jesus talked about the kernel of wheat, the bread of life, the new birth, streams of living water, the good shepherd, the stumbling stone, the rock. These were all words which evoked an immediate picture in the minds of the people who heard Him, and they understood and remembered what He said.

- 1. An illustration should only be used to emphasize a key point.*
- 2. Use them sparingly or you won't have time to develop the content of the passage!!!!!!*
- 3. Where do illustrations come from?*
 - a) They can come from the newspaper. Read the newspaper with one hand and the Bible with the other. Be up on current events. Make a point of reading good books which stimulate your thinking.*
 - b) Illustrations can also come from other Scriptures. Use Scripture to illustrate Scripture!*
 - c) Illustrations can come from stories about modern day people.*
 - d) You can illustrate your talk by telling your own personal story. Use sparingly and don't just share the stories that have a glorious ending!*
 - e) You can also use stories about your family. Be sure the story is consistent with family loyalties and you have your family's permission.*

Applications

(Sewing the Message to their Hearts)

An applique changes the appearance of a piece of fabric. So an application is designed to change the appearance of the hearts of your listeners. It literally sews the message to their hearts!

In every audience there are those with broken hearts, those who are feeling guilty, those with no hope, those who have tried and tried and failed again and again. There are those who don't trust Christians, those who don't understand the Bible, those who don't feel anything for God or for others, those who won't forgive an injustice, those who won't give up a certain sin.

Your job is to think of the many human conditions represented in the audience and to try to put yourself in their place . . . the young mom, those in the workplace, those in a difficult marriage, those struggling in ministry and church relationships. There are those with health issues, those with old age issues, those with financial issues and those with issues of morality. There are some varied religious backgrounds and some with colorful pasts. Some have been persecuted, some are depressed or despondant, some are worldly, some are trying to earn points by being good. There are many who think the Bible is boring!!!!!!!!!!

An application is a sentence in the form of a question or a principle in the form of a question.

An application is never a question that can be answered by a simple "yes" or "no."

The sentence should be in the present tense and have an active verb.

Howard Hendricks, in his book "Living By the Book," says, "We can get mentally excited by the truth yet fail to be morally changed by it." So when we get into God's Word we must let God's Word get into us.

Application is not simply interpretation or a gimmick to get an emotional response. It is designed to work on the will and to promote obedience in the listener.

Some general examples:

How much do you love this world?

When was the last time you praised your husband?

Why don't you have joy today?

When pushed, do you panic or pray?

What does Jesus' death on the cross have to do with you?

Who in your family has seen the character of Jesus in you?

When you think of Jesus what comes to your mind?

How well do you know yourself?

What makes you feel religious?

How long are you willing to expose yourself to God's Word daily?

Where is there potential ministry among your neighbors?

What is holding you back from being all you are meant to be?

How safe do you think it is to trust Jesus?

How far are you willing to go if Jesus says, "Follow me"?

What evidence do you have that God is merciful?

Think about applications that apply to a variety of life situations:

Those who are single and worried that they won't find the right mate

*The newly married
Parents of young children with a dizzy busy schedule
Those in their 40's who are still struggling financially
The divorced
The widows
The retired
Those in poor health
Single parents
Those out of work*

Try taking your division titles and turning them into questions! Write out a few of your own below.

The Word of God is a two edged sword, but we can blunt the blade with poor applications!

The Conclusion

(The Clasp which holds it all together!)

If your talk is a string of pearls then your conclusion is the clasp which when clicked in place holds all the content together.

The conclusion is the last part of anything.

The conclusion is the final summing up of all you have said. It is the final deduction you reach from the facts which you have presented. It is a final reminder of the principle you want your audience to remember when they walk out the door.

- 1. Go back and pick up the beginning strands from your introduction.*
- 2. Now draw it all together as you remember your aim, and your divisions.*
- 3. Finally, come to a closing conclusion.*

Ex.:

And so there is no revival without reformation.

The deeper life, what is it? (Then say it in one or two sentences.)

The cure for heart trouble is

Is it safe to follow Jesus? Tell them why it is safe!

A conclusion is nothing more than getting in the last word!

Now You Have to Share It!

Some things that may help ...

Remember ...

There is a certain excitement which comes with knowledge and it is easy to be stimulated by the new information you have learned. We are called to do more than just share knowledge. We are called to share Christ himself; His viewpoint, His principles eaten by you first and then passed on to those who are listening.

Review ...

- 1. Your Outline (keep it as short and simple as possible.)*
- 2. Your Speech Patterns ... grammar, pronunciation, pace. Have someone you trust listen to you and check these areas.*
- 3. Make a tape of yourself and listen critically. Are you too assertive or preachy? Are you too timid? Do you sound boring?*
- 4. Evaluate the quality of your voice. Is it too high or too low? Do you talk too fast or too slow? Do you finish the thoughts you begin? Is your voice a monotone?*

Relate ...

to the Lord. Lean back in His arms and expect Him to do some wonderful things as you are obedient to stand and share Him.

Look right at your audience. Pick a friendly face to start with. Make eye contact. Turn to include people on the left and on the right. Believe that what you have to say is important for them all to hear.

Sample Outline
Esther

Subject: God Providentially Preserves Captive Jews Through the Courage of Esther.

Aim: Cause audience to take a courageous step in order to help someone

Divisions:

- 1. The providence of God Chapter 1-3*
 - a. The main characters in the story*
 - b. The coincidences in events*

Transition:

- 2. The patience of Esther Chapter 4-5*
 - a. Esther's concern*
 - b. Esther's response*

Transition:

- 3. The Protection of God Chapter 6-10*
 - a. Pride dealt with*
 - b. Purim celebrated*
 - c. Jews preserved*

Applications:

- 1. What are you willing to do in order to preserve your marriage with a partner who has a lifestyle which conforms to this world?*
- 2. Who could you introduce to Jesus Christ even though it might make you feel uncomfortable?*

Conclusion:

Sample Outline
Jonah

Subject: A Compassionate God Gives Jonah a Second Chance to Save Ninevah.

Aim: Cause audience to thank God for His compassion and take His offer of a second chance to make good on the vow they have made.

Divisions:

- 1. God commands Jonah to go to Ninevah. Chapter 1*
 - a. Rebellion*
 - b. Regret*

Application: To whom is God asking you to speak about Him? Is it someone you don't like?

Transition:

- 2. God delivers Jonah in answer to his cry. Chapter 2*
 - a. Remembrance*
 - b. Realization of sin*
 - c. Repentance*

Application: What story of deliverance do you have to tell?

Transition:

- 3. God gives Jonah a second chance to go to Ninevah. Chapter 3*
 - a. Rededication and revival*
 - b. Resentment*

Application:

Are you angry with God's purposes? Why do you think you have a right to be?

Conclusion:

Sample Outline
John 11:1-16

Subject: Jesus Trains Disciples to Believe before Lazarus is raised.

Aim: Cause audience to trust Jesus before they see any evidence of a miracle.

Divisions:

- 1. A Cry Comes From Bethany 11:1-6*
 - a. The man Lazarus*
 - b. The message*
 - c. The reply*

Application:

- 1. How do God's promises affect you when you've asked for a miracle but see no evidence of one yet?*

Trans.: Are you curious as to what those disciples might have been thinking for two days?

- 2. Jesus and His Disciples Have a Dialogue About Danger and Death 11:7-16*
 - a. The problem of the disciples' logic*
 - b. The principle of light versus darkness*
 - c. Pessimistic Thomas*

Applications:

- 1. How many conversations do you begin with "But Lord"?*
- 2. How long are you willing to follow Jesus when you still haven't seen a miracle?*

Conclusion: Jesus desires that you mature. He has made certain promises to you. But he will keep them in his own perfect time. Are you acting like a bratty child while you wait?

The most comforting thought is that while you are waiting He is thinking about you.

Sample Outline
John 12:20-33

Subject: Jesus Predicts His Death When Some Greeks Come to See Him.

Aim: Cause audience to remember they are crucified in Christ and alive in Him and act accordingly.

Divisions:

- 1. The people who come to see Jesus usher in "The Hour." 12: 20-23*
 - a. Who they were*
 - b. What they wanted*
 - c. What they represented*

Application: What would you say is your greatest desire as a Christian?

Transition: The people who came revealed the timing of his death and now with the words, "I tell you the truth," Jesus reveals the principle behind his death.

- 2. Jesus explains the principle of the kernel of wheat. 12:24-26*
 - a. The illustration*
 - b. The application*

Transition: This is the true meaning of what the cross means to every Christian, and it solves three major problems that face us.

- 3. The Cross solves three problems. 12:27-33*
 - a. Personality development*
 - b. Problem of sin*
 - c. Problem of evangelism*

Application: How do you see the cross being worked out in your life this week?

Conclusion:

Sample Outline
Acts 1

Subject: Jesus Prepares Disciples for Pentecost and a Powerful Ministry.

Aim: Cause audience to live a power filled life.

Divisions:

- 1. Jesus prepares disciples with His presence. 1:1-12*
 - a. Jesus proves His resurrection.*
 - b. Jesus promises the Holy Spirit.*
 - c. Jesus parts from them.*

Application: How do you personally know that Jesus is alive?

Transition:

- 2. Jesus prepares disciples through His Spirit. 1:13-26*
 - a. The disciples pray together.*
 - b. The disciples learn problem solving.*

Application: How much time and enjoyment did you give this week to opening your mind to understand the Scriptures?

Conclusion:

Opportunities For Small Talks

Devotionals that Promote Devotion . . .

Small Talks

What is a Devotional anyway?

First of all what is devotion?

1. Devotion is an act of reverence or worship.
2. Devotion is waiting on the Lord without distraction.

1 Corin. 7:35 1 Chron. 28:9 Ezk. 33:31 11 Corin. 11:3

So _____

A devotional is a small talk which should create in each listener a greater devotion to the Lord.

So _____

Create a Devotion using God's Word as your resource!

Why? _____

There is no finer resource material available anywhere!

You will be in the word yourself!

Need I remind you again that His Word is the sword of the Spirit. Eph. 6:17. When you minister using God's Word you put a weapon in the hands of the Spirit which cuts through people's defenses, pricks consciences and stabs people spiritually awake.

The following are three ways to use God's Word in the preparing of a devotion.

1. Choose one verse and develop the truths contained in that one verse.

2. Choose a key verse, one that everyone is familiar with, and try to see it as it relates to the verses which come before it and follow after it. Now develop the key verse using the verses surrounding it to enrich it's meaning.
3. Choose a short passage of scripture (10 to 15 verses) and develop it.

So _____

What should be the result of a devotional given?

What do you want to happen after you give it?

You want them to do more than just think about what you've said.

You want your listeners to take an **action!**

So _____

You need an aim!

You want them to do something like:

Devote their heart to Him . . .

Devote themselves to prayer . . .

Devote themselves to forgive their husband . . .

Devote themselves to seeking the Lord's wisdom in their financial situation . . .

Devote themselves to loving their neighbor . . .

Devote themselves to encouraging their children, etc!!!

So _____ **Don't be afraid! Go ahead and try it!**

Devotion doesn't just mean emotion!

- 1. We teach to the WILL because the will is the key to life actions. Don't get caught up with trying to get your listeners to just feel something. You haven't given a productive devotion just because they cry!!!*
- 2. The will is the essential element in God's creation of man.*
- 3. Our wills were created to agree with God's gracious design. The Christian's will and conscience will always agree with God.*

However . . .

- 4. Sin is a perverse disposition inherited from the fall.*
- 5. "Obstinacy is an unintelligent wedge which refuses to be enlightened." Oswald Chambers*

Remember . . .

- 6. In Christ the new believer's will has been freed to obey God!!!!!!*

Suggested Themes For Devotions

Anxiety: Phil. 4:1-9

Contentment: 1 Tim. 6:6-16

Faithfulness of God: Psalm 89:1-8

Faithfulness of Christ: Heb. 2:14-18

Faith: James 2:14-26

Family Provisions: 1 Tim. 5:1-21

Forgiveness: Col. 3:12-17

Fruitfulness: Rom. 7:1-6

Heaven: 11 Corin. 5:1-10

Husbands and Wives: 1 Peter 3:1-7

Prayer: Matt. 6:9-13, Psalm 91:9-16, Rev. 5:6-14

Suffering: 1 Peter 4:12-19, Heb. 5:1-10

Wisdom: James 3:13-18

Worship: Deut. 26:1-11, Psalm 23

Suggestions for Devotions

Using a passage:

1st Chron. 29:10-13

Luke 11:1-4

John 11:1-16

Phil. 2:1-11

Heb. 12:1-13

Using a familiar verse and explaining it's context within the passage:

Isaiah 30:18 (Isaiah 30:15-18)

Isaiah 58:11 (Isaiah 58:1-14)

Zeph. 3:17 (Zeph. 3:8-20)

John 15:5 (John 15:1-10)

Rom. 8:28 (Rom. 8:28-39)

Using just one verse:

Isaiah 45:3

Zech. 3:6-7

11 Peter 1:3

Now That You've Chosen A Passage . . .

After you have chosen a passage, read it through slowly and thoughtfully.

Read it through again and underline key words or phrases which impress you.

Ask yourself why this passage is in the Bible.

Read the passage again and write down questions you have, things you wonder about. You're observing now!

Think about the people in the passage and their responses to what is going on.

Read through the passage again slowly.

Divide the passage so your observations are manageable.

*Look for the paragraphs the Bible has already provided.
Divide the passage by change of location; or
Divide the passage by scene change; or
Divide the passage by time; or
Divide the passage by doctrinal thoughts; or
Divide the passage as the central figure in the passage changes.*

Verse _____ thru verse _____ is about _____
Verse _____ thru verse _____ is about _____
Verse _____ thru verse _____ is about _____

Verse _____ thru verse _____ is about _____

Verse _____ thru verse _____ is about _____

Narrow these thoughts down to 2 or 3 divisions.

Now title each division using a short sentence.

Every devotional should have a beginning, a middle and an end!

- 1. The beginning: an Introduction (short and relevant)*
- 2. The middle: Content (one or two points you will develop, an illustration if needed, transitions and an application)*
- 3. The end: a Conclusion (This ties back up to the introduction which could be repeated with a variation or two.)*

Always remember George Muller

When George Muller taught he would read a whole chapter, or part of one, and then proceed to draw out rich treasures that made it worth crossing the ocean to hear. His method of teaching caused the members of his congregation to become mighty in the Scriptures. They were better qualified to guide inquiring souls to Christ than many young ministers who had spent three years in a theological seminary.

Most men would consider such an extensive ministry as his to be a reasonable excuse for cutting short their prayer and study time. Not so with Mr. Muller. In his prayer closet, alone with God and the Bible, he would gird up the loins of his mind and burnish his armor for the battles of the day. With absolute confidence and childlike simplicity, he believed every word that God had spoken. He eagerly returned to God's Word several times each day as though he was in constant communication with heaven, receiving fresh letters of instructions and precious promises from his heavenly Father.

When he spoke of God, his listeners would be reminded of the words of our Savior in John 7:38, for from him seemed to flow "rivers of living water."

Taken from "The Autobiography of George Muller"

SUGGESTED READING

Commentaries and Study Helps

NAVE'S TOPICAL BIBLE : Orville J. Nave, Moody Press
EXPOSITORY DICTIONARY OF NEW TESTAMENT WORDS: W.E. Vine, M.A., Fleming H. Revell
STRONGS EXHAUSTIVE CONCORDANCE OF THE BIBLE:
James Strong, S.T.D., L.L.D., Thomas Nelson Pub.
BIBLE MAP BOOK: Simon Jenkins, Lion Publishing
UNGERS BIBLE HANDBOOK: M.F. Unger, Moody Press
WHAT THE BIBLE IS ALL ABOUT: Henrietta Mears, G.L. Regal
EXPLORE THE BOOK: J. Sidlow Baxter, Baker
WYCLIFFE BIBLE COMMENTARY: Publisher, Moody Press
TYNDALE NEW TESTAMENT COMMENTARIES: Alan M. Stibbs, Erdmans
ENCYCLOPEDIA OF BIBLE DIFFICULTIES: Gleason Archer, Zondervan
ROGET'S THESAURUS OF THE BIBLE: A. Colin Day, Harper
THRU THE BIBLE COMMENTARY SERIES: J. Vernon McGee, Thomas Nelson Pub.
BAKER'S POCKET HARMONY OF THE GOSPELS: Benjamin Davies, Editor, Baker Book House
PRONOUNCING BIBLE NAMES: W. Murray Severance, Holman Bible Publishers

Devotionals

A CHANCE TO DIE (The life and legacy of Amy Carmichael): Elliott, Revell
A GUIDE TO PRAYER FOR ALL GOD'S PEOPLE: Job & Shawchuck, Upper Room Books
A HEART FOR GOD: Sinclair Ferguson, Nav. Press
A LONG OBEDIENCE IN THE SAME DIRECTION: Eugene Peterson, InterVarsity Press
ANTHOLOGY OF JESUS: Sir James Marchant & Warren Wiersbe, Kregel
AT THE NAME OF JESUS: Sarah Hornsby, Revell
BEYOND HUMILIATION (The Way of the Cross): F. Gregory Mantle, Dimension Books, Bethany Fellowship Pub.
CHRISTIAN'S SECRET OF A HAPPY LIFE: Hannah Whitall Smith, Moody Press
CREATED FOR COMMITMENT: A Wetherell Johnson, Tyndale
DAILY WITH THE KING: W. Glyn Evans, Moody Press
FEARFULLY AND WONDERFULLY MADE: Dr. Paul Brand & Philip Yancey, Zondervan
GOD IS ENOUGH: Hannah Whitall Smith, Francis Asbury Press
GOD'S WORDS: J.I. Packer, InterVarsity Press
GOOD GRIEF: Granger E. Westberg, Fortress Press

GRACE GROWS BEST IN WINTER: Margaret Clarkson, Eerdmans
Pub. (out of print. See if you can find a used one!)

GREAT VERSES THROUGH THE BIBLE: F.B. Meyer, Zondervan

HIS THOUGHTS SAID, HIS FATHER SAID: Amy Carmichael,
Christian Lit. Crusade

HOW TO PRAY: R.A.Torrey, Moody Press

HUDSON TAYLOR'S SPIRITUAL SECRET: Dr. & Mrs. H. Taylor,
Moody Press

IF YE SHALL ASK: Oswald Chambers, Chosen Books, Zondervan

IN HIS IMAGE: Dr. Paul Brand & Philip Yancey, Zondervan

IN THE NAME OF JESUS: Henri Nouwen, Harper, San Francisco

KEEP IN STEP WITH THE SPIRIT: J.I.Packer, Revell

KEYS TO THE DEEPER LIFE: A.W. Tozer, Zondervan

KNOWING SCRIPTURE: R.C. Sproul, InterVarsity Press

KNOWLEDGE OF THE HOLY: A.W. Tozer, Christian Pub.

MERE CHRISTIANITY: C.S. Lewis, Macmillan Pub.

MORNING AND EVENING: Charles Spurgeon, Hendrickson Pub.

MY UTMOST FOR HIS HIGHEST: Oswald Chambers, Dodd, Mead
& Co.

NO LITTLE PEOPLE: Frances A. Schaeffer, InterVarsity Press

OSWALD CHAMBERS, ABANDONED TO GOD: David McCasland,
Discovery House Pub.

OUR LORD PRAYS FOR HIS OWN: Marcus Rainsford, Kregel Pub.

PAIN, THE GIFT NOBODY WANTS: Dr. Paul Brand & Philip
Yancey, Zondervan

POWER THROUGH PRAYER: E.M. Bounds, Christian Library

PSALMS (The Message), Eugene Peterson, Nav. press

PURSUIT OF GOD: A.W. Tozer, Revell

SENSE AND NONSENSE ABOUT PRAYER: Lehman Strauss,
Moody Bible Institute

SOUL MAKING (The Desert Way of Spirituality): Alan Jones, Harper

STREAMS IN THE DESERT: Mrs.Charles Cowman, Zondervan

THE CALVARY ROAD: Roy Hession, Christian Literature Crusade

THE GOD OF ALL COMFORT: Hannah Whitall Smith, Moody Press

THE MAKING OF A MAN OF GOD (Studies in the life of David):
Alan Redpath, Revell

THE PRACTICE OF THE PRESENCE OF GOD: Brother Andrew,
Revell

THE SIZE OF THE SOUL: A.W. Tozer, Christian Pub.

THE WAY INTO THE HOLIEST: F.B. Meyer, Zondervan

THE WAY OF THE HEART: Henri Nouwen, Harper, San Francisco

TOWARD JERUSALEM (Poetry): Amy Carmichael, Zondervan

TRUE SPIRITUALITY: Frances A. Schaeffer, Tyndale House Pub.

WHEN THE HEART WAITS: Sue Monk Kidd, Harper, San
Francisco

WHISPERS OF HIS POWER: Amy Carmichael, Revell

YET WILL I TRUST HIM: Peg Rankin, Regal Books

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Kaiser, Walter C. & Silva, Moises. An Introduction to Biblical Hermeneutics. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan Publishing House, 1994.

Muller, George. The Autobiography of George Muller. New Kensington, Pennsylvania: Whitaker House, 1984.

Torrey, R.A. How to Study the Bible. Pennsylvania: Whitaker House, 1985.

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