

The Scope of Preaching (prepared by Dr. Ray Reynolds)

(1) Topical = Stethoscope (used for hearing sounds within the body; i.e. heartbeats and murmurs)

"In this type of sermon, a certain subject is named the subject is usually the genesis of the discourse, and the text is of secondary consideration." – Claude A. Guild, Training Men To Preach And Serve

"Sermons whose subject (topic) is based on given Scripture text while the main points and the subpoints are not based on that text." - Donald L. Hamilton, Homiletical Handbook

"The text provides only the subject – the central theme or idea." – Tom Holland, Sermon Design And Delivery (via Dr. Fred Barton's class notes from ACU)

"Subject-based sermons, unlike those which are passage-based, do not begin with a single verse or passage in view; rather, they begin with a topic or theme." – Stafford North, Preaching: Man & Method



(2) Textual = Microscope (used for seeing things too small that might be overlooked by the naked eye)

"Sermons based on one or two verses of Scripture with the main points of the message coming from the text itself." - Donald L. Hamilton, Homiletical Handbook

"Sermons are biblical in concept . . .relying on the Scriptures for the foundation and the framework of the superstructure of the discourse." – Tom Holland, Sermon Design And Delivery

"A textual sermon has two fundamental characteristics: (1) it typically treats only one or two verses of Scripture, usually taking some portion of them as its subject sentence, and (2) it takes exact words or phrases from those verses as the main headings of the sermon." – Stafford North, Preaching: Man & Method



(3) Expository = Telescope (used for viewing things at a great distance; i.e. more depth is needed)

"Expository preaching is more than a mere synonym for preaching biblically; it describes what is involved in biblical preaching, namely the exposition of a biblical passage (or passages)." – Sidney Greidanus, The Modern Preacher And The Ancient Text

"The setting forth of a certain text with the central idea to explain the passage." – Claude A. Guild, Training Men To Preach And Serve



“Sermons based on texts longer than two verses or so. Some see it as a verse-by-verse treatment (running commentary). Others see it as a thematic approach in that the main points and subpoints (based on parts of the text) should support the theme. It is unnecessary, however, to use every textual detail in the sermon.” - Donald L. Hamilton, Homiletical Handbook

“An expository sermon is not a running commentary of a passage devoid of organization and forceful application to life. . . . few supporting comments or Bible reading.” It should be: (1) biblical in concept, (2) develop people who are rooted and grounded in the Word of God, (3) insure variety and the coverage of a wide range of Biblical truth, and (4) discuss a subject that might be too delicate to be discussed topically. – Tom Holland, Sermon Design And Delivery

“This form of preaching, as the name implies, consists of giving exposition or running commentary on the biblical text.” – John Killinger, Fundamentals of Preaching

“A sermon developed from three essential steps: (1) choose a section of Scripture, usually a paragraph, which appears to be a unit; (2) study the passage carefully to find its basic theme, message, lesson, or proposition to use as a subject sentence, and (3) find the main points that this passage teaches about the theme.” – Stafford North, Preaching: Man & Method

“Expository preaching is the communication of a biblical concept, derived from and transmitted through a historical, grammatical, and literary study of a passage in its context, which the Holy Spirit first applies to the personality and experience of the preacher, then through him to his hearers.” – Haddon W. Robinson, Biblical Preaching

“Handling the text in such a way that its real and essential meaning as it existed in the mind of the particular Biblical writer and as it exists in the light of the over-all context of Scripture is made plain and applied to the present-day needs of the hearers.” – Merrill Unger, Principles of Expository Preaching

“An expository sermon is based on a Biblical passage, usually longer than a verse or two.” – Faris D. Whitesell, Power In Expository Preaching

(4) Narrative = Bioscope (used for viewing several slides very quickly; i.e. movie projector)

“A proper narrative event occurs when the narrative tempo slows down enough for us to discriminate a particular scene; to be able to imagine the interaction of personages or sometimes personages and groups, together with the freight of motivations, ulterior aims, character traits, political, social, or religious constraints, moral and theological meanings, borne by their speech, gestures and acts.” – Robert Alter, The Art of Biblical Narrative

“A story tells us of something that happened, beginning with a point of tension and finally leading to a resolution of that tension.” – David L. Larson, The Anatomy of Preaching

“A very simple yet effective type of sermon in which the preacher chooses some Bible story as the subject of his discourse and relates the story in considerable detail.” – Stafford North, Preaching: Man & Method

Dramatic lessons known as “story preaching” or “story sermons.” – David Roper





(5) Topical/Expository = Periscope (used for viewing all sides; usually viewing from the bottom up)

This style of sermon combines the techniques and characteristics of both "topical and expository" sermons, so as to use the text to develop a topical lesson. - David Lane

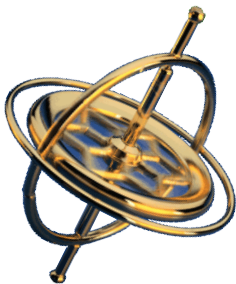
This particular method will allow the speaker to use a text to highlight a particular topic of interest. Instead of searching multiple texts, this method allows the hearer to immerse themselves in the context and learn the specific lesson without haphazardly taking verses out of context.

(6) Evangelistic = Endoscope (used for viewing internal organs)

"Every evangelistic sermon must explain the seriousness on sin, the significance of the cross, and the nature of faith."

- Bryan Chappell, Christ Centered Preaching

Evangelistic sermons consist of three basic presuppositions: (1) Preaching represents a great opportunity; (2) Preaching seeks to persuade; and (3) Preaching anticipates action. – Jerry Jones, "Evangelistic Preaching," Pepperdine Lectures, February 1980.



(7) Historical = Gyroscope (used for measuring time)

"Congregations of peoples are encouraged for the present and enlightened for the future if they have some knowledge of the past. It is exciting but difficult to preach this type sermons, but it is effective. Stephen used this method in the sermon recorded in Act chapter seven." –

Claude A. Guild, Training Men To Preach And Serve

(8) Acrostic = Kaleidoscope (used for viewing objects with more color and uniqueness)

An acrostic sermon is formed from the first letters of a key word. The object is to "take a word from the Bible and learn a lasting biblical truth that is difficult to forget once we learn it." - Joseph J. Thompson, Acrostic Preaching for Effective Teaching

