

LESSON 8

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SERMON

After learning how to lay the foundation for a sermon and to outline the message, the preacher should know the various types of plans or patterns that can be used to develop the sermon. He should then understand how to develop the message of the sermon by learning how to explain the Scriptures and subject matter and to use argument in the message.

The Patterns of Development

Various types of patterns or plans have been used by preachers to develop the text or the subject of the sermon in an effective way and to provide variety in preaching. A number of patterns are used effectively with topical sermons as the first half of those suggested below, and other patterns are more adaptable to textual or expository sermons as the last half given below, though some patterns can be used for any type of sermon.

The key word pattern is a plan in which certain words or phrases used in the Bible are utilized as the basis for the major points of the outline. These words could be nouns, such as "heart", "leaven", or "rock"; or verbs, such as "walk", "redeem", or "repent"; or phrases such as "faithful saying", "in Christ", or "the kingdom of heaven". The following pattern is constructed around the word "shepherd":

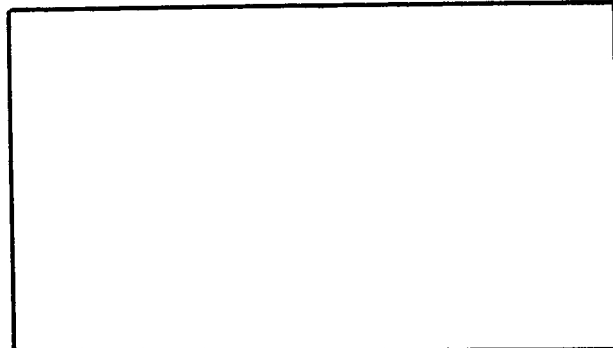
Text: 1 Peter 2:25

Subject: Three Ways Jesus Christ Is Shepherd of Believers.

- I. Jesus Christ Is the Good Shepherd. (John 10:14)
- II. Jesus Christ Is the Great Shepherd. (Heb. 13:20)
- III. Jesus Christ Is the Chief Shepherd. (1 Peter 5:4)

The plan could also be constructed around certain places or objects in the Bible, such as mountains, rivers, trees, or seals, or certain actions or habits of Biblical characters, such as prophesying, or remembering, or rebelling.

The theme pattern is constructed around certain themes or teachings of the Bible. This might include the love of God, the sinfulness of men, the need to worship, the blessings of service, or

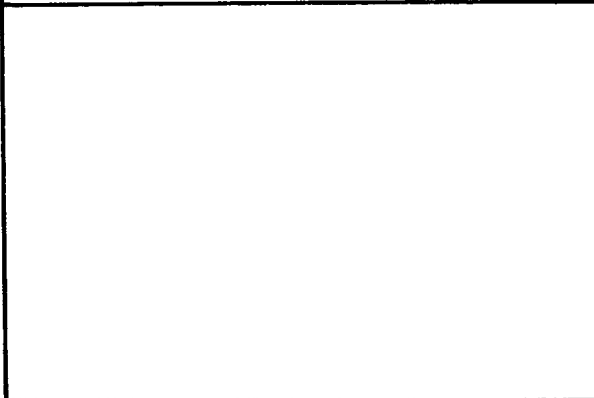


Different patterns or plans of the sermon can be used in an effective way to provide _____ in preaching.

(variety)

The arrangement of certain words or phrases from the Bible as the basis for the major points of the sermon outline is called the _____ pattern.

(key word)



A sermon which is constructed around certain themes or teachings of the Bible is said to follow the _____ pattern.

(Compare your answer with the text.)

the reasons for suffering. The following pattern could be used to proclaim why Christ came into the world:

Text: 1 John 3-4

Subject: Six Reasons for Christ's Coming.

- I. Christ Came to Take Away Our Sins. (3:5)
- II. Christ Came to Destroy the Works of the Devil. (3:8)
- III. Christ Came to Lay Down His Life for Us. (3:16)
- IV. Christ Came to Provide Life for Us. (4:9)
- V. Christ Came to Be a Propitiation for Our Sins. (4:10)
- VI. Christ Came to Be the Savior of the World. (4:14)

The refrain pattern is similar to the above plan in which a phrase or verse is used throughout the message, such as "Praise Ye the Lord", "Thus saith the Lord", "I beseech ...", or "But whosoever...".

The question-answer pattern or interrogative pattern is a plan in which the main points are the answers to questions asked about the text or subject. The words used in questions as who, where, when, why, how, and what are applied to the text or subject. The questions formulated out of the words may be used as transitional statements, but the answers to the questions are the points of outline, as illustrated below:

Text: Isaiah 55:6

Subject: Five Aspects of Seeking the Lord.

- I. Why Should Men Seek the Lord? He Should Be Sought for Help in Need.
- II. How Should Men Seek the Lord? He Should Be Sought by Faith.
- III. Who Should Seek the Lord? He Should Be Sought by All People.
- IV. Where Should Men Seek the Lord? He Should Be Sought in Every Place.
- V. When Should Men Seek the Lord? He Should Be Sought at All Times.

The problem-solution pattern is derived from a current problem expressed by a text or subject and from the solution to that problem. The text could indicate the problem as in this plan:

Text: John 14:1

Subject: Faith the Answer to Troubled Hearts.

- I. Men Are Troubled of Heart in a Troubled World.
- II. Men Need Faith in Christ to Calm Their Troubled Hearts.

The refrain pattern is similar to the _____ pattern.

(theme)

The plan in which main points are answers to questions asked about the text or subject is known as the _____ pattern.

(question-answer)

The pattern derived from a current problem expressed by a text or subject and from the solution to that problem is called the _____ pattern.

(problem-solution)

The diagnosis-remedy pattern is similar to the above plan. For example, a plan of this type is suggested by the Lord's diagnosis of Cain's problem in Genesis 4. Cain was displeased with the rejection of his offering. The Lord replied, "And if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door":

Text: Genesis 4:6-7

Subject: The Cause and Cure of Displeasure.

- I. Sin Is the Cause of Man's Displeasure.
- II. Obedience Is the Cure of Man's Displeasure.

The biographical pattern is based on the life of a person depicted in the Bible. Much of the Old Testament, the Gospels, and the Acts provide numerous passages pertaining to the experiences of men that could be used for a sermon plan. The text could be a passage of Scripture, several passages pertaining to the same person, a chapter of the Bible, or a whole book of the Bible, such as Jonah, Philemon, or 1 John. The following outline illustrates this pattern:

Text: John 1:40-42

Subject: Four Ways Andrew Related to Christ.

- I. Andrew Decided to Follow Christ. (John 1:40)
- II. Andrew Brought His Brother to Christ.
(John 1:41-42)
- III. Andrew Sought to Serve Others for Christ.
(John 6:8-9)
- IV. Andrew Took the Concern of Others to Christ.
(John 12:21-22)

The character pattern is similar to the above in that certain characteristics of Biblical characters serve as the basis of the outline points.

The analytical pattern is a plan derived from a close analysis of the words or phrases of a passage of Scripture. A knowledge of the Biblical languages or the availability of several translations of the text is most helpful in the use of this plan. An analysis of the passage "but prayer was made without ceasing by the Church unto God for him" regarding the prayer of the Church for Peter's release from prison provides this plan:

Text: Acts 12:5b

Subject: Four Essentials of Effective Prayer.

- I. Prayer Should Be Directed to God. ("unto God")
- II. Prayer Should Be Conducted by the Church.
("by the church")

The diagnosis-remedy pattern is similar to the _____ pattern.

(problem-solution)

The biographical pattern is based on the _____ of a person depicted in the _____.

(life, Bible)

The character pattern is similar to the _____ pattern.

(Compare your answer with the text.)

The plan derived from a close analysis of the words or phrases of a passage of Scripture is the _____ pattern.

(analytical)

- III. Prayer Should Be Done with Persistence.
("without ceasing")
- IV. Prayer Should Be Made for Specific Matters.
("for him")

The deductive pattern utilizes the deductions, inferences, or implications derived from the text of the sermon. For example, the subject of a sermon is derived from the phrase "holy (dedicated) ... unto God" in the text Romans 12:1 and the main points from the rest of the text as follows:

Text: Romans 12:1

Subject: Three Aspects of Dedication to God.

- I. Dedication Is a Calling for All Christians.
("I beseech ... brethren")
- II. Dedication Is a Decision of the Whole Man.
("ye present your bodies")
- III. Dedication Is a Service to all Men. ("your reasonable service")

The interpretation-application pattern is a plan in which the points of the outline are derived from interpretations of the text and its applications to the lives of the hearers, as the following plan:

Text: Philippians 2:5-8

Subject: Three Ways Men Should Act like Christ.

- I. Christ Humbled Himself as Men Should Humble Themselves.
- II. Christ Became a Servant as Men Should Serve.
- III. Christ Was Obedient unto Death as Men Should Be Obedient.

The lesson pattern is similar in nature in that lessons or teachings are drawn from the passage of Scripture used as a text.

The ladder pattern is constructed on ideas drawn from the text, the main points following logically from the previous points as in this example:

Text: Psalm 1:1

Subject: Man's Threefold Progression in Sin.

- I. A Man First Walks in the Counsel of the Ungodly. (v. 1a)
- II. A Man Then Stands in the Way of Sinners. (v. 1b)
- III. A Man Finally Sits in the Seat of the Scornful. (v. 1c)

What pattern utilizes the deductions, inferences, or implications derived from the text of the sermon? _____

(deductive)

The interpretation-application pattern is a plan in which the points of the outline are derived from _____ of the _____ and its _____ to the _____ of the hearers.

(interpretations, text, applications, lives)

The lesson pattern is similar to the _____ - _____ pattern.

(interpretation-application)

A sermon which is constructed on ideas drawn from the text, the main points following logically from the previous points, is said to follow the _____ pattern.

(ladder)

The contrast pattern is built on contrasting or opposing concepts indicated in the text as in the following plan:

Text: Matthew 7:13-14

Subject: Man's Way Versus God's Way.

- I. The Broad Way of Man Leads to Death. (v. 13)
- II. The Narrow Way of God Leads to Life. (v. 14)

A number of other patterns might be useful in the development of the sermon. The argumentative patterns include proofs or reasons for or against certain doctrines, theories, or assertions; evidences to support or to refute certain teachings or arguments; rebuttals against certain issues or principles by offering evidences or arguments; or the use of the syllogism, that is, the major premise, the minor premises, and the conclusion. The one idea pattern or jewel pattern is a plan in which one concept or issue is looked at from different ways, or in which a number of facets of one idea are observed or analyzed. The classification pattern is a plan in which people, or concepts, or things are divided into classes or categories, such as types of Christians, classes of churches, or kinds of excuses. For example, the Parable of the Sower and the Soils (Matt. 13:1-9) provides the types of responses to the Word of God. In the analogy pattern some type of comparison, allegory, or analogy is utilized to present a truth, such as Jesus' Parable of the Talents (Matt. 25:14-30) or His Allegory of the Vine and the Branches (John 15:1-8).

The Explanation of Material

After a sermon pattern has been selected and sermon material gathered, the material needs to be developed properly. Most frequently there is need of explanation; the Scriptures or the subject matter needs to be explained or described in order to be understood or to avoid misunderstanding. The sermon material must be made plain and clear to the hearers. This is a prime essential in preaching. It is accomplished by exposition, narration, description, and explanation of Scripture and subject matter.

The exposition of Scripture is the process of explaining Biblical passages so that people are able to understand. It is the outcome of the preacher's exegesis of Scripture, that is, his careful and detailed interpretation of verses of Scripture in which he studies and analyzes words, phrases, and sentence structure. He must then interpret and expound the Scriptures clearly, setting forth the meaning so that everyone is able to comprehend. He must disclose

Five patterns that can be used for topical sermons are:

*key word
theme
question-answer
problem-solution
diagnosis-remedy*

Five patterns that can be used for textual sermons are:

*analytical
deductive
interpretation-application
contrast
ladder*

Five patterns that can be used for expository sermons are:

*analytical
biographical
character
lesson
ladder*

Some of the patterns for textual and expository sermons are interchangeable.

IS THIS STATEMENT TRUE OR FALSE?

The prime essential in preaching is that the sermon material is plain and clear to those who hear. _____

(true)

One way to explain sermon material is by _____ of Scripture, which is the process of explaining Biblical passages so that people are able to _____.

(exposition, understand)

what the Scripture indicates and what it means in words, expressions, and sentences readily understood, and with figures of speech and illustrations if necessary to accomplish this end. Quoting or reading Scripture from modern translations of the Bible is particularly helpful in Biblical exposition.

The narration of Scripture is the relating or telling the events or incidents of the Bible as they are depicted. It is simply telling the story or giving an account of the experiences recorded in the Bible in language that is understandable to the people without enlarging or elaborating on what the writer has said. Narration is necessary when preaching from long historical passages, especially from much of the Old Testament, the Gospels, and the Acts. Narration of Scripture should be adapted to the particular audience so that ancient and unfamiliar events are understandable. It should not be presented to the people in a declamatory manner, that is, preached with undue shouting, affectation, dramatics, or gestures, but rather by relating the facts in every-day language with a conversational voice.

The description of events is the portrayal of Biblical scenes, other historical events, or contemporary life by means of pictorial language. The recorded facts available provide the basis of the description, and the preacher supplies the missing facts necessary to enlarge and elaborate the portrayal through a study of the life and times of the events, through reflection on the facts available, and through the use of imagination. The preacher attempts to paint a verbal picture of the events in the language of the people in order to make the scenes clear and vivid, to gain and hold their interest, and to set forth the truths that need to be understood. The preacher needs to guard against unduly long descriptions and overly elaborate portrayals which call attention to the description rather than to the message to be taught.

The explanation of subject matter is the process of making doctrines and duties plain to the hearers. The Biblical truths, the Christian life, and the world with all its problems and needs should be explained clearly so that people can understand. Subject matter can be explained by defining words and concepts; by relating one idea with another by comparison or contrast; by using an analogy such as a parable or allegory; by dividing a subject into various parts and examining each of them; and by giving examples to illustrate the truths to be comprehended. In explanation concrete terms rather than abstract statements should be used and familiar terms rather than unfamiliar ones. The preacher should only attempt to explain what he understands and what can be explained. Some truths, such as the Trinity and the paradox of free

Another way to explain sermon material is by _____ of Scripture, which is the relating or telling the _____ or incidents of the Bible as they are _____.

(narration, events, depicted)

Another way to explain sermon material is by _____ of _____, which is the portrayal of Biblical scenes, other historical events, or contemporary life by means of _____ language.

(description, events, pictorial)

Another way to explain sermon material is by _____ of _____ matter, which is the process of making _____ and _____ plain to the readers.

(explanation, subject, doctrines, duties)

YOU HAVE JUST STUDIED FOUR WAYS THAT SERMON MATERIAL CAN BE EXPLAINED. CAN YOU NAME THEM ORALLY? TRY IT.

will and predestination, cannot be explained but simply proclaimed and believed.

The Use of Argument

The statement of facts and the explanation of ideas are often insufficient to establish matters as true or important. Thus, the use of argument is needed to convince people of truth and to get their approval, especially those who are troubled with doubt, who are indifferent to truth, or who are being led astray. Argument is the offering of reasons or proofs to establish or support beliefs and declarations. For the preacher, the primary source of authority in argument is the Bible, for it must be accepted as the very Word of God and thus the ultimate authority and the final ground of appeal in preaching. The authority of men, common sense, and reason may also be used as the basis of arguments, but must be used guardedly and tested against the Bible.

The argument from testimony is used quite frequently with effectiveness. The preacher's personal experiences, his observations of the experiences of others, and the testimony of outstanding men may be used to substantiate truth and convince hearers. The deductive argument in which the line of reasoning is from general truth to particular instances of truth has proved most effective. The general truths should most often come from the Bible, but may also come from truths commonly accepted by men, such as the orderliness of the universe or the reality of human existence. In 1 Corinthians 15:12-23, the Apostle Paul declared the truth of the Resurrection, reasoning that since Christ was resurrected (general truth established), all believers will be resurrected (specific instances). The inductive argument in which the line of reasoning is from specific instances of truth to general truth is particularly convincing in this scientific age which depends primarily on this type of reasoning. For example, the convergence of evidence (specific instance) from scientific, historical, moral, and religious experience may be used to prove the existence of God (general truth). Argument from analogy is based on some similarity of relations between things, that is, some likeness or resemblance exists. Actually, an analogy is not absolute proof, but adds force to proofs, especially in refutation. For example, since there can be no watch without a watchmaker, there can be no creation without a creator. The preacher should use argument when things need to be proved, but he should not attempt to prove matters that cannot be proved or matters that have been proved sufficiently already.

Argument is necessary to convince people of truth and to get their approval. For the preacher, the primary source of authority in argument is the _____ .

(Compare your answer with the text.)

*Four types of arguments are: _____,
_____, _____,
_____.*

Compare your answers with the text.)

The Development of Sermon Series

The preacher who has regular preaching assignments should carefully plan ahead for his opportunities and responsibilities. He ought to plan his preaching at least several weeks in advance, possibly by developing a sermon series. He would do well even to plan a whole year's preaching if he has a pastorate or a regular preaching responsibility. The Spirit of God can guide in the preparation of a series of sermons as well as He can one message. Careful planning in the light of the Word of God and the needs of people will give the preacher a sense of direction, save him time and effort, and provide his listeners with well-balanced instruction and exhortation. The preacher may plan his preaching according to the time of the year, the occasions for preaching, the Bible, the subject matter, or the felt needs of the people. Accordingly, the following list provides suggestions for developing sermon series:

- Christian Year
- Denominational Calendar
- Church Calendar
- Special Days
- Advent Season
- Lenten Series
- Consecutive Exposition of Scripture
- Great Texts of the Bible
- Bible Study Series
- Bible Characters
- Sermons from a Book of the Bible
- Sermons from the Parables
- Doctrinal Series
- Christian Life Series
- Spiritual Emphasis Series
- Stewardship Series
- Revival Series
- Evangelism Series
- Missions Series
- Children's Sermons
- Messages for Youth
- Home Life Series

The series should be developed according to some theme or pattern. The length may vary from two to as much as fifty-two according to the occasions, the theme, or the need. The following series of four messages is built around the theme of the new birth:

- The Necessity of the New Birth John 3:3, 5
- The Nature of the New Birth John 1:12-13
- The Method of the New Birth 1 Peter 1:22-23
- The Nurture after the New Birth 1 Peter 2:2

Careful planning will give the preacher a sense of _____, will save him _____ and _____, and will provide well-balanced _____ and _____ for the listeners.

(direction, time, effort, instruction, exhortation)

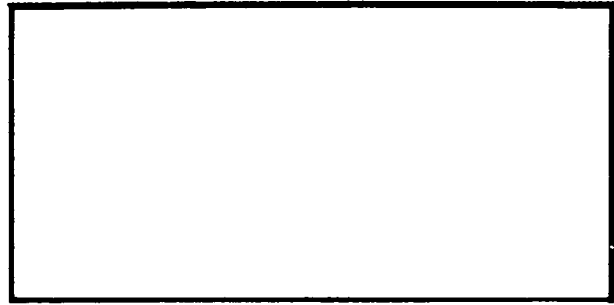
The preacher can plan his sermons according to the _____ of _____, the occasion of each sermon, the _____, the _____, or the _____ of the people.

(Compare your answers with the text.)

A sermon series should be developed according to some _____ or _____. The length of the series may vary according to the _____, the _____, or the _____.

(theme, pattern, occasion, theme, need)

The preacher should plan his preaching by careful study of the Bible and other literature, by taking detailed notes in his study, by gathering material from a variety of sources, and by filing and indexing what he has found. He should vary his planning and his development of series from year to year, reviewing periodically the effectiveness of his planning. He should especially be open to change in plans on occasion as the Lord leads.



Home Study Exercise

Basic activity (Levels 1, 2, and 3):

1. What is the purpose of the various patterns or plans of the sermon? _____

2. Name five patterns that can be used for topical sermons. _____

3. Name five patterns that can be used for textual sermons. _____

4. Name five patterns that can be used for expository sermons. _____

5. How is the key word pattern arranged? _____

6. How is the question-answer pattern arranged? _____

7. From where is the problem-solution pattern derived? _____

8. Upon what is the biographical pattern based? _____

9. From where is the analytical pattern derived? _____

10. From where is the interpretation-application pattern derived? _____

11. Develop a sermon plan according to one of the patterns suggested.
Text: _____
Subject: _____
Outline: _____

12. In explanation of sermon material, what is the prime essential? _____

13. Name four ways that sermon material can be explained. _____

14. What is meant by exposition of Scripture? _____

15. What is the purpose of argument? _____

16. Name four types of argument. _____

17. What are the purposes in planning for preaching? _____

18. The preacher can plan his preaching according to what? _____

19. Plan a series of four messages around a theme giving the subject and text of each sermon.
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Supplementary activity (Levels 2 and 3):

Read pages 105-121 of the textbook.

1. Explain what the authors mean by the two kinds of orders in sermon organization.
2. Explain the difference between the logical orders of general to specific and specific to general.

Read Chapter V, pages 82-94 of the textbook.

3. Explain what the authors mean by maturing the order through divine leadership.
4. In what ways may the sermon grow through the creative use of time?

Read pages 37-42 of the textbook.

5. Why is there a need for a planned program of preaching?
6. How can a program of preaching be planned?
7. Develop a sermon plan around one of the topical patterns.

Advanced activity (Level 3):

1. Develop a sermon plan from either the cause to effect or effect to cause order. What is the difference between the two orders?
2. Explain the four ways the preacher may obtain assurance of divine leadership according to the textbook.
3. Outline a program of preaching for a period of time according to one of the particular factors of your ministry (the season, church program, emphasis, etc.).

Seminar Discussion

1. Discuss the value of the various plans of development.
2. Let each student present his pattern of development, using a chalkboard if available. Allow others to comment on the pattern.
3. Let each student present his plan for a sermon series and allow for comment on the plan.