

How to Construct a Message

The passage for this HomeGrown is Luke 12:1-12. This is potentially a slightly more challenging passage of Scripture but do not be put off by that. There is gold in this passage and definitely worth the effort of mining and refining to make it seen. Hopefully what follows will be of assistance in that process. Remember the aim is for a 15-20 minute message.

PRAY

- Ask the Holy Spirit to illuminate the Word to you and to help you understand the passage.

REMEMBER

- All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. (2 Tim 3:16-17)
- For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. (Hebrews 4:12)

READ

- Read the text over a couple of times, noting anything that strikes you.
- Read it over again looking for repetition of words, ideas or grammatical forms (ie. therefore, because, for, since, if, then) and ask questions like, why did the author use this, how would the meaning of the passage change if this wasn't here?
- Read it through again using commentaries and also looking at the original language (see below for some links)
- Now ask context questions like
 - How does this passage fit with the rest of the book?
 - What is the message of the whole book and how does this particular passage contribute to it?
 - How does this fit with the rest of the Bible?
 - How do the Biblical themes running through your text point to or find their fulfilment in Jesus?
 - Finally conclude: What is the central thing the author wanted his original listeners to learn, feel, and/or do?

CHOOSE A MAIN THEME

- Choose a main theme for the sermon that presents the central ideas of the text while also addressing your listeners in particular.
- Our first responsibility is to determine the main idea of the text
- Our second responsibility is to determine the needs and capacities of the listeners
- Main text idea question: What is this text talking about, and what is it saying about what it is talking about?

- Pastoral aim question: What practical difference did this teaching make to the author's readers, and what difference should it make to us?
- Christ question: How does the text point us to Christ, and how does his salvation help us change in line with the pastoral aim?

DEVELOP AN OUTLINE (a suggested outline is as follows)

- Intro - What the problem is; our contemporary cultural context: Here's what we face.
- Early Points - What the Bible says; the original readers' cultural context: Here's what we must do.
- Middle Points - What prevents us; current listeners' inward heart context: Why we can't do it.
- Later Points - How Jesus fulfils the biblical theme and solves the heart issue: How Jesus did it.
- Application - How you should live now.

FLESH OUT EACH POINT

- Flesh out each of your outline's points with a variety of arguments, illustrations, examples, images and other supportive biblical texts.
- How do we call people to obey on the basis of the text without being moralistic? How do we change their hearts, so they want to obey rather than beat on their wills just to get compliance?
- It is at this stage we must practice the crucial art of knowing what to leave out.

HELPFUL LINKS

- <https://enduringword.com/bible-commentary/luke-12/>
- https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/luk/12/1/t_comms_985001
(this link **TOOLS** which appears to the left of the scripture reference will take you to the commentaries)
- <https://bible.org/seriespage/41-hazard-hypocrisy-heralds-gospel-luke-121-12>

