

Preaching Clinic for Elders
First Reformed Presbyterian Church (PCA)
The Rev. Dr. Dennis J. Prutow
Reformed Presbyterian Theological Seminary

Session #6a – Introduction and Conclusion

1. What about your conclusion? A good conclusion should do three things.
 - a. Tie the sermon together – The conclusion summarizes and clinches your point.
 - b. Challenge the congregation – The conclusion challenges the congregation in some particular way with regard to the sermon point. You see a specific response to the teaching of the text.
 - c. Uses the Homiletical Point – The conclusion leaves the congregation with your sermon point, your major idea. You want the congregation to depart with a residual message that is the same as your Homiletical Point.
 - d. The Conclusion should not be in excess of 10% of your time. It should be full enough to summarize, challenge, and lay out your homiletical point for a last time. Recall the residual message. People remember what you leave them.
 - e. Make sure you state your homiletical point, at the end of the sermon, with some strength. Do not trail off in volume or intensity. Stand firmly, look directly at the congregation, and end strong. The conclusion should be the high point of the sermon, not an anti-climax. Pause. Then go to prayer.

2. What about the Introduction? Put together your conclusion and then construct your introduction. Construct your introduction last. Once you know where the sermon is going and you get there [have a conclusion], then you know how to best introduce your sermon. A good introduction has three characteristics.
 - a. An effective introduction commands attention. Why should I listen to this person?
 - b. An effective introduction uncovers need. Why should I listen to this sermon?
 - c. An effective introduction introduces the body of the sermon. What is this sermon about? There should be a statement of the homiletical point. This will set the tone and direction for you and the congregation. Begin with the congregation and bring people to the text.
 - d. The introduction is therefore not the best place for a review of context, bringing the congregation up to speed on a series, etc. Use a move in the sermon to do this if necessary. However, do it so that it contributes to *the point of the sermon*. The introduction sets the *idea of the sermon* before the people.
 - e. The introduction should be short, 10% of your time, and crisp. A good introduction will set you on the proper path and set the tone for your whole sermon. If you are disciplined here, you will likely move through your plan with discipline. You will then more likely accomplish your purpose and reach your goal with strength. See Chapell's "chain."

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Session #6b – Presentation

1. Professor Albert Mehrabian pioneered in an understanding of non-verbal messages in communications. See Albert Mehrabian, *Silent Messages*, 42-44. Mehrabian's breakdown is as follows: Total feeling or impact of a message = 7% verbal feeling + 38% vocal feeling + 55% facial feeling. Feeling refers to listener response. This means that in communications, we have the following.

- 7% of meaning is in the words that are spoken.
- 38% of meaning is paralinguistic (the way that the words are said).
- 55% of meaning is in facial expression.

In addition, we see that while the actual words communicate 7% of meaning, the non-verbal aspects of a presentation account for 93% of what we communicate. This is one of the reasons for our emphasis upon a process in sermon presentation fostering good oral communication.

2. We have spent our time on meaning and organization of the sermon in preparation for preaching. Both are important. Recall our definition of preaching. Preaching is God communicating . . . through human instruments. If Mehrabian is correct, only 7% of meaning communicated to the congregation comes through the words spoken in preaching. The words are important. How you present these words is also of great importance.

3. Non-verbal messages are of great importance. Non-verbal messages may contradict verbal messages. How you present yourself also becomes important. This includes dress. Note the percent breakdown.

4. Movement and gestures: Use your body in preaching.

5. Facial expression including eye contact is of the greatest importance.

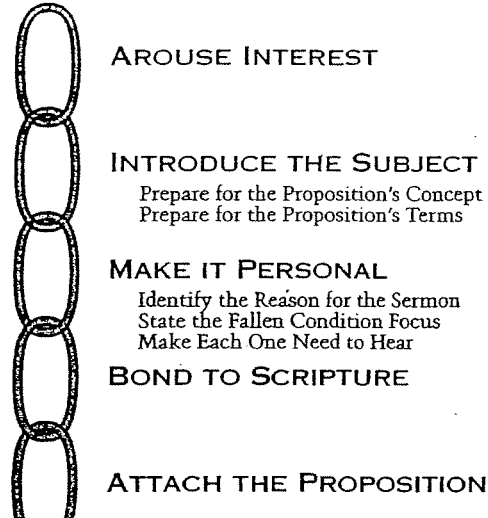
(a) Calvin Troup, Professor of Speech and Communications, says facial expression and tone of voice are 60-70% of the communications process

(b) You cannot connect with the congregation without eye contact. You cannot say, "I love you," without eye contact. If using a manuscript, maintain eye contact 80-85% of the time.

6. Watch how you use your voice. Haddon Robinson speaks of Pitch, Punch, Progress, Pause, and Practice.

7. A well planned outline will enable you to preach well with few notes. This is extemporaneous speaking, speaking out of time spent in preparation and study. Preparation includes practice. Preaching is oral communication at its finest. Clarence McCartney, *Preaching Without notes*, Chapter 5, is of great help. W. G. T. Shedd, *Homiletics and Pastoral Theology*, Chapters 9 and 10 are also of great help. Calvin sets a high standard in this regard.

FIGURE 9.1
The Introduction Chain



streets have been renamed. Therefore, the introduction should prepare for the proposition in concept and terminology. All *key* terms of the proposition should beacon in the introduction before they appear in the proposition.

Recognition that the introduction is an immediate preparation for the proposition warns preachers against separating the introduction from the body with a Scripture reading. Although occasionally there are good, creative reasons for such a sequence the preacher who separates the proposition from the sermon's introduction or body with a Bible reading ordinarily destroys the thought flow and cohesion that propositions are designed to facilitate.¹⁸ Preachers who regularly introduce the sermon before reading their Scripture text are probably confusing a sermon introduction with a Scripture introduction (see this chapter's section on Scripture introduction). Reference to the Scripture does have a place in the introduction—not through a reading of the text but by an indication of how the text will address the FCF. After stating the FCF, the preacher usually grounds the sermon in Scripture by indicating how (or, at least that) this text addresses the subject.¹⁹ This bonding of the

18. Broadus, *Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*, 102.

19. Hostetler, *Introducing the Sermon*, 50.

1 Peter 1:23-25

SUBJECT: GOSPEL PREACHING BEING THE IMPERISHABLE ENDURING WORD OF GOD

QUESTION: WHAT DOES THE TEXT TELL US ABOUT GOSPEL PREACHING BEING THE IMPERISHABLE ENDURING WORD OF GOD?

COMMENT: IF YOU ARE NOT BORN AGAIN THROUGH ^{IT'S} ~~THE~~ INSTRUMENTALITY, ~~OF GOSPEL PREACHING~~ YOU WILL PERISH LIKE GRASS & FLOWERS.

POSSIBLE E.P. SINCE GOSPEL PREACHING IS THE IMPERISHABLE ENDURING WORD OF GOD, YOU PERISH LIKE GRASS & FLOWERS IF NOT BORN ~~AGAIN~~ AGAIN THROUGH ITS INSTRUMENTALITY

EXPLAIN

PROVE

APPLY

BORN AGAIN

WORD OF GOD = WORD PREACHED

SEED

PREPARATION TO

PERISHABLE

PREACH

IMPERISHABLE

TEACH

LIVING WORD

LISTEN

ENDURING WORD

USING THE SCRIPTURES
IN PREACHING, TEACHING,
& LISTENING

WORD OF GOD

{ FLESH/GRASS

{ GLOBY/FLOWERS

{ GRASS/FLOWERS DIE

LEARN TO USE THE SCRIPTURES IN

WORD ENDURES

LIKE CHANGING PREACHING, TEACHING, AND LISTENING

= WORD PREACHED

ISAIAH 40 CONTEXT

1 PETER 1:23-25

LEARN TO ^{HANDLE} ~~USE~~ THE SCRIPTURES IN LIFE CHANGING PREACHING,
TEACHING, AND LISTENING.

- ① NATURAL SELF NATURAL LIFE IS PERISHABLE & DYING (23-24)
- ② WORD OF GOD ^{LIVING} WORD OF THE LORD IMPERISHABLE, ENDURING, (23-25)
- ③ INITIATED LIFE THE LIVING WORD IMPLANTED IN THE SOUL BRINGS
LIFE (VS 23)
- ④ PREACHED WORD THIS LIVING WORD IS THE PREACHER WORD,
GOSPEL PREACHING (23-25)
- ⑤ ISAIAH 40 THIS LIVING WORD CONTRASTED WITH DYING
FLESH IS GOOD NEWS PROCLAIMED (24 - IS 40)
- ⑥ H.P.

YOU ARE HERE TO LEARN TO HANDLE SCRIPTURE SO YOU
CAN PREACH, TEACH & LISTEN TO THE LIVING & ENDURING
WORD OF GOD

LEARN TO HANDLE THE SCRIPTURES SO YOU CAN LISTEN TO, TEACH,
AND PREACH THE LIVING WORD OF GOD

1. FRAIL-FALLEN HUMANITY IS PERISHABLE & DYING (1 PETER 1: 23-24)
2. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE WORD OF THE LORD IS IMPERISHABLE,
LIVING, AND ENDURING (23 & 25).
3. THIS LIVING WORD, IMPLANTED IN THE SOUL, BRINGS LIFE (VS 23).
4. IT DOES SO BECAUSE THIS LIVING WORD IS PREACHED WORD,
GOSPEL PREACHING (VERSES 22 & 25).
5. THIS CONTRAST COMES ^{FROM THE GOSPEL IN} ~~OUT OF~~ ISAIAH 40 (VS 24 & IS 40).
1
6. YOU ARE HERE TO LEARN TO HANDLE THE BIBLE SO
YOU CAN LISTEN TO, TEACH, AND PREACH THE LIVING WORD OF GOD

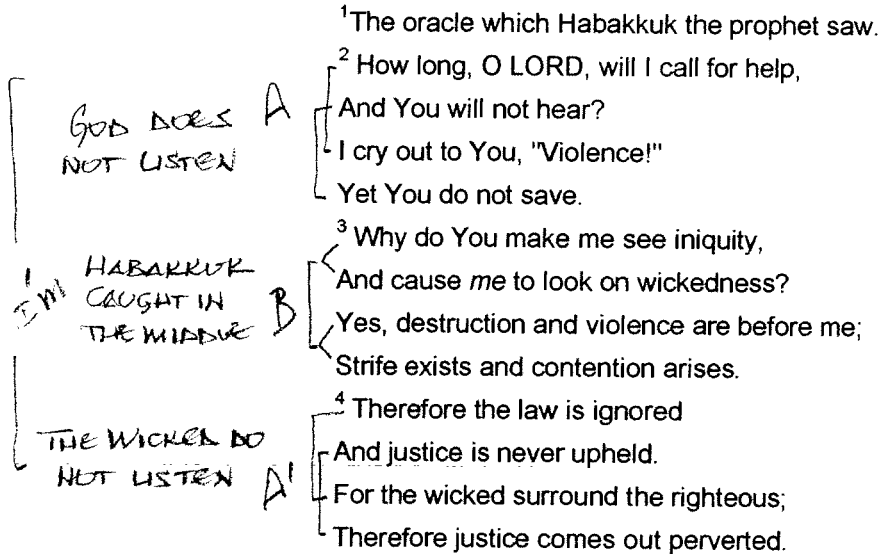
THE LIVING WORD OF GOD
(1 PETER 1: 23-25)

LEARN TO HANDLE THE BIBLE SO YOU CAN LISTEN TO, TEACH, AND
PREACH THE LIVING WORD OF GOD

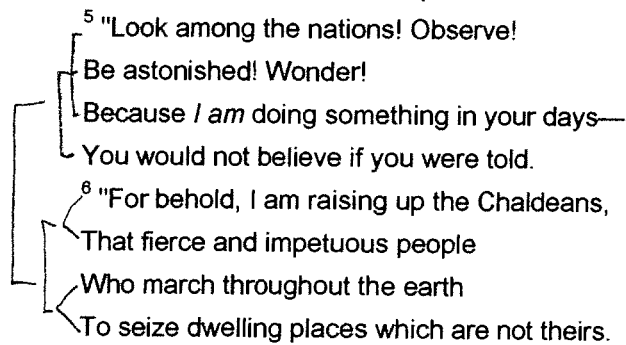
1. FRAIL FALLEN HUMANITY IS PERISHABLE AND DYING (1 PETER 1: 23-24).
2. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE WORD OF THE LORD IS IMPERISHABLE, LIVING, AND ENDURING (VERSES 23 AND 25).
3. THIS CONTRAST COMES FROM THE GOSPEL PREACHING IN ISAIAH 40 (VERSE 24 AND ISAIAH 40).
4. PETER THEREFORE MAINTAINS THE LIVING WORD IS THE PREACHED WORD; IT IS GOSPEL PREACHING (VERSES 22 & 25).
5. THIS LIVING WORD, IMPLANTED IN THE SOUL, BRINGS LIFE (VS 23).
6. YOU ARE HERE TO LEARN TO HANDLE THE BIBLE SO YOU CAN LISTEN TO, TEACH, AND PREACH THE LIVING WORD OF GOD.

Habakkuk 1-11
Possible Literary Structure

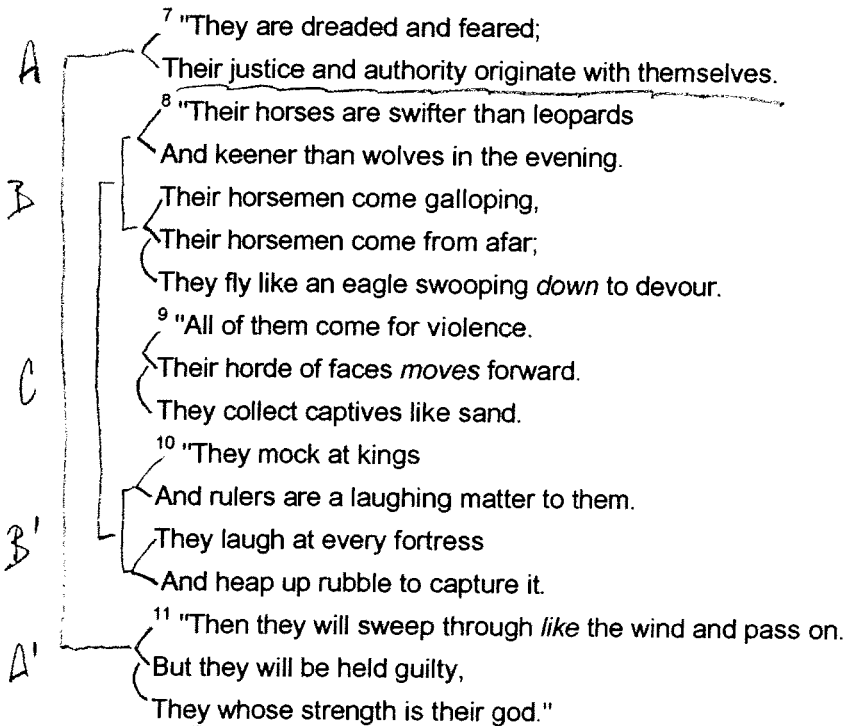
HABAKKUK'S
 COMPLAINT



GOD WILL SEND
 BABYLON AS HIS
 HAND OF JUSTICE



THE WICKEDNESS
 OF BABYLON



HABAKKUK 1:1-11

WHAT IS THE TEXT ABOUT?

HABAKKUK'S COMPLAINT AGAINST GOD'S INACTION IN THE FACE OF JUDAH'S EVIL & GOD'S RESPONSE.

HOW DOES GOD RESPOND TO HABAKKUK'S COMPLAINT AGAINST GOD'S SEEMING INACTION IN THE FACE OF JUDAH'S EVIL?

ANSWER: HE WILL USE MOST WICKED BABYLON AS HIS HAND OF JUSTICE.

POSSIBLE E.P.

GOD RESPONDS TO HABAKKUK'S COMPLAINT AGAINST HIS SEEMING INACTION IN THE FACE OF JUDAH'S EVIL BY SENDING WICKED BABYLON AS THE HAND OF HIS JUSTICE.

EXPLAIN

HABAKKUK'S COMPLAINT 1-4

GOD NOT LISTENING 2

WICKED DON'T LISTEN 4

HABAKKUK IN MIDDLE 3

BABYLON MOST WICKED 7-11

ASTONISHMENT 5

GOD WILL SEND THEM 5-6

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

APPLY

OUR OWN COMPLAINTS

GOD'S PATIENCE

HOW GOD JUDGES

JUDGMENT OF GOD'S HAND

USING WICKED?

BEWARE OF HOW YOU ASK!

OUR IMPATIENCE IN THE FACE OF EVIL

HABAKKUK 1:1-11

DON'T BE IMPATIENT; GOD WILL JUDGE EVIL IN HIS OWN TIME AND IN HIS OWN WAY

1. WICKED JUDAH & GOD'S SILENCE (4:1, 2)

① JUDAH IS VERY WICKED BUT GOD SEEMS TO BE SILENT (4:1, 2)

2. HABAKKUK COMPLAINS (3)

② IMPATIENT, HABAKKUK MAKES A PERSONAL COMPLAINT (3)

3. BABYLON ON HORIZON (CONTEXT)

③ AT THE SAME TIME, BABYLON HAS COME INTO POWER (CONTEXT)

4. BABYLON WICKED (7-11)

④ BABYLON IS A VERY WICKED NATION AND PEOPLE (7-11)

5. GOD JUDGES W/ BABYLON (5-6)

⑤ ASTONISHINGLY, GOD JUDGES JUDAH BY USING WICKED BABYLON (5-6)

6. H.A.

⑥ DON'T BE IMPATIENT; GOD JUDGES EVIL IN HIS OWN TIME IN HIS OWN WAY

"How long, O Lord?" [DON'T BE IMPATIENT; GOD WILL JUDGE EVIL
(HABAKKUK 1:6-11) IN HIS OWN TIME AND IN HIS OWN WAY]

1. JUDAH IS VERY WICKED BUT GOD SEEMS TO BE SILENT;
USA IS VERY WICKED BUT GOD SEEMS TO BE SILENT (VS 4 & 2)
2. IMPATIENT, HABAKKUK MAKES A PERSONAL COMPLAINT;
YOU MAY BE OF THE SAME MIND (VS. 3).
3. AT THE SAME TIME, BABYLON HAS COME TO POWER;
RADICAL ISLAM IS GROWING (CONTEXT)
4. BABYLON IS A VERY WICKED PEOPLE; RADICAL MUSLIMS
ARE EQUALLY WICKED (VS 7-11)
5. ASTONISHINGLY, GOD JUDGES JUDAH USING WICKED BABYLON;
GOD CAN USE AMERICA'S ENEMIES SIMILARLY
6. DON'T BE IMPATIENT; GOD JUDGES EVIL IN HIS OWN
TIME IN HIS OWN WAY