

The background of the entire page is a complex geometric pattern of overlapping triangles in various shades of teal and blue. A large, solid black circle is centered on the page, containing the main title and subtitle. A small teal square is positioned between the title and subtitle. A dark vertical bar runs along the left edge of the page, containing a small white icon of a church steeple in the bottom-left corner.

# Preaching for the Lay Leader

LEADERS & STAFF



# Practical Ministry Skills: Preaching for the Lay Leader

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**PREACHING FOR THE LAY LEADER****Leader's Guide**

*How to use "Practical Ministry Skills" by BUILDING CHURCH LEADERS in your regularly scheduled meetings.*

*Welcome to BUILDING CHURCH LEADERS: Your Complete Guide to Leadership Training. You've purchased an innovative resource that will help you develop leaders who can think strategically and biblically about the church. Selected by the editors of Leadership Resources and Christianity Today, the material comes from respected thinkers and church leaders.*

"Practical Ministry Skills" is completely flexible and designed to be easy to use. Each theme focuses on a practical area of church ministry and comprises brief handouts on specific aspects of that ministry. The handouts give a succinct and practical overview of the issues most relevant to your goals. You may use them at the beginning of a meeting to help launch a discussion, or you may hand them out as brief primers for someone new to a particular ministry.

This specific theme is designed to provide an introduction to preaching for lay leaders. You may use it either for a group training session or to give individually to people who would like to gain some experience preaching. Simply print the handouts you need and use them as necessary.

For example, to reflect on the importance of allowing your personality to shine through in your preaching, see "Your Preaching Is Unique" (p. 3). To learn the basics of sermon preparation, see "Preaching 101" (pp. 4–5). For advice on how to tell a great story, see "How to Tell Stories in a Sermon" (p. 8). For suggestions on how to obtain constructive feedback, read "Seeking Evaluation" (p. 11).

We hope your church and your leaders benefit from this theme as men and women are equipped to proclaim the Word of God.

Need more material, or something on a specific topic? See our website at [www.BuildingChurchLeaders.com](http://www.BuildingChurchLeaders.com).

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**PREACHING FOR THE LAY LEADER****Your Preaching Is Unique**

*A reminder to be yourself as you proclaim God's truth.*

Exodus 4: 10–12

**Personality in Preaching**

If God has called you to preach, then who you are, what you are, and where you are also must be a part of God's plan. You do not preach in spite of this but because of this.

But many preachers preach *in spite of* themselves rather than *because of* themselves. They either leave themselves out of their preaching or fight themselves during their preparation and delivery; this leaves them without energy or enthusiasm for the task. Instead of thanking God for what they do have, they complain about what they don't have; and this leaves them in no condition to herald the Word of God.

Phillips Brooks said it best: "Preaching is the communicating of divine truth through human personality." The divine truth never changes; the human personality constantly changes—this is what makes the message unique. No two preachers can preach the same message because no two preachers are the same. In fact, no *one* preacher can preach the same message twice if he is living and growing at all.

**Experience in Preaching**

Martin Luther said that prayer, meditation, and temptation make a preacher. Prayer and meditation will give you a sermon, but only temptation—the daily experiences of life—can transform a sermon into a message. It's the difference between a recipe and a meal.

The experiences preachers go through are not accidents; they are appointments. They do not interrupt our studies; they are an essential part of our studies. Our personalities, our bodies, and even our disabilities are all part of the kind of ministry God wants us to have. We must use what we are to bear witness to Christ. It is this that makes the message *our* message and not the echo of another's.

**Yourself in Preaching**

The essence of what I am saying is this: You must know yourself, accept yourself, and develop yourself—your best self—if preaching is to be a positive experience. Never imitate another preacher, but learn from him everything you can. Never complain about yourself or your circumstances, but find out why God made things that way and use what he has given you in a positive way.

If God has called you, then he has given you what you need to do the job. You may not have all that others have, or all you wish you had, but you have what God wants you to have. Accept it, be faithful to use it, and in due time God will give you more. Give yourself time to discover and develop your gifts. Accept nothing as a handicap. Turn it over to God and let him make a useful tool out of it. God knows us better than we know ourselves. He'd never put us into a ministry where he could not build us and use us.

—WARREN WIERSBE; *Copyright © 1986 Christianity Today. Originally appeared in Preaching to Convince*

**Discuss**

1. List five traits that characterize your personality.
2. List five traits that do not characterize your personality.
3. What have been some of the most formative experiences in your life? How can they work into your preaching?

# Preaching 101

*An introduction to the elements of sermon preparation.*

2 Timothy 4:1–2

*Building Church Leaders* asked Brian Larson to recommend a method of sermon preparation for lay preachers. Brian is well qualified to do so: he is executive editor of *PreachingToday.com*, author of several books on preaching, pastor of a church in Chicago, and he has preached more than 3,000 sermons. Here is the method he recommends.

*(Note: Brian uses 1 Peter 4:7–11 for examples. It will be helpful to review that passage.)*

C.S. Lewis wrote a book called *Mere Christianity*, and maybe we could call this mere preaching: trying to get it down to the essentials. Here are 11 simple steps.

**Step 1: Pray.** The first step in preaching is to bathe it in prayer. Every step that you take throughout the preparation process—as you’re reading, as you’re studying, as you’re writing notes—keep praying. Anytime you feel helpless or in over your head, ask God to guide you.

**Step 2: Understand Your Role.** It’s important to understand your responsibility when preaching. Think, *My job is to help people hear God’s voice in the Bible. What does he want us to believe and to do?* Simply try to place yourself in that position of being someone who is going to help people hear what the Bible says to them for their lives today. Try not to feel like you need to live up to what your pastor does every week. Your job is to be yourself and explain what the Bible says. Then call on hearers to believe it, to live it.

**Step 3: Choose a Passage.** Choose a section of the Bible to preach on, a paragraph, not just a verse. I would not recommend taking a subject such as the goodness of God and preaching across the breadth of the Bible—that’s going to be biting off way more than you’re ready for. It’s better to take four, five, six verses, in a paragraph, concentrated around one subject that you feel confident talking about, and you feel is clearly relevant for the hearers. Oftentimes, those who don’t preach regularly feel like they run out of things to say. If you take a large enough paragraph or section, you’ll have plenty to talk about.

**Step 4: Study the Passage.** Read through the passage at least 20 times slowly, praying continually. Go through until you understand why every word and phrase is in the text, so that you understand the flow of the ideas. It’s also helpful to read the whole book that you’re preaching from at least once, because you’ll want to know the general sense of the book and not take anything out of context. If the book is large, that will be difficult to do, so in that case you should read a summary of the book from a Bible handbook or study Bible.

One of the benefits of reading a preaching text 20 times or more is that not only will you come to the point where you understand the passage, but you’ll start to feel a sense of God’s heart in the text. In general, I would advise someone to take at least two weeks, and at least an hour every day, to read and meditate on the passage. If you try to do it all in one shot, then it’s going to be much more difficult.

**Step 5: Determine the Subject.** Determine in a word or a phrase the subject of that section. You’ll want to have one subject, because a section of the Bible usually talks about only one thing, but it makes several points about that one thing. For example, 1 Peter 4:7–11 is a section of the Bible with one subject. That section talks about a number of points, but it’s about one thing. Verse 7 reveals that the subject of this passage is how to live with the end in view. Then five ways to live with the end in view are listed, but, collectively, it’s all about how to live with the end in view.

**Step 6: What Does the Text Say About the Subject?** Next, identify what that section of the Bible says about the subject. In our example 1 Peter 4:7–11, there were five things that it says about how to live with the end in view:

1. We’re to be clear-minded and self-controlled so we can pray;
2. Love each other deeply;
3. Offer hospitality without grumbling;
4. Serve the church with our spiritual gifts;
5. And use our gifts in a way that brings glory to God.

The easiest way for someone to structure a message is to choose a Scripture passage that will lay out the points in clear way for you, so you can walk verse by verse in your message and talk about what they teach.

## PREACHING FOR THE LAY LEADER

**Step 7: Explain Each Point.** Explain each step in simple terms that people can relate to in their world. For example, in our 1 Peter text, the first point says, “Therefore, be clear-minded and self-controlled so that you can pray.” I would say something like this:

Isn't that the problem when we try to pray? We've got a lot of other things that we're thinking about. Life is busy. We sit down to pray and we think of 25 things we should be doing. It's hard to be clear-minded. It's hard to be self-controlled when we're praying.

This would be an example of a simple way to try to explain what the text means and how it applies to our hearers' lives.

**Step 8: Give Examples.** In addition to explaining what the text means, I would suggest giving a real-life example about what you're saying. In the verse about being clear-minded and self-controlled, I could use the example of how being overly consumed with television could make it hard for me to be clear-minded. During this process, simply consider yourself and the people you know, and ask, “How does this biblical idea intersect with life?”

**Step 9: Back to the Introduction.** After you have written out your ideas for the main points, circle back and write your introduction. In your introduction, tell what the message is going to be about. You will gain the audience's interest if they know the subject of your message and how it relates to their lives. One of the best ways to do this is to give a story or an illustration that shows how the text relates to daily life.

**Step 10: Prepare Your Conclusion.** Since you are going to be making real-life applications throughout the message, don't wait until the conclusion to apply it to daily life. Instead, in your conclusion you'll want to bring into focus again the main idea of your sermon and how this changes the way we live. Be clear and specific. “The end is near,” for example, in 1 Peter 4, is a great phrase that unifies the passage, and could be used in the conclusion to challenge others one final time. You want a conclusion to be brief—five minutes maximum. Most important, you want to call people to some response to the Word of God.

**Step 11: Include Others.** When we write a sermon, we need to connect with God on our own about what to say, but we also need to bring our ideas to others and make sure that we're being faithful to the true message of Scripture. So, after you've put all your thoughts together—and along the way as well—sit down with your pastor, or with some other mature Christians, and go through what you plan to say. Make sure your message expresses what the Scripture is actually saying.

—BRIAN LARSON; *Copyright © 2007 Christianity Today/BuildingChurchLeaders.com.*

### Discuss

1. What do you need to do to make sure you have enough time to pray and study?
2. Why is it important for a beginning, or inexperienced, preacher not to try to imitate his or her pastor?
3. How have you seen effective preachers put habits like the ones described above into practice?

**PREACHING FOR THE LAY LEADER****Preaching to Seekers, Converts, and Saints**

*Every sermon reaches three groups. Here's how one preacher keeps each group in mind.*

Colossians 1:28

I, like most preachers, face three different crowds every Sunday morning: mature believers who want meat, young believers who need milk, and seekers who are exploring the gospel. Each group has unique needs.

Most preachers feel sure-handed ministering to one or maybe two groups. Some preachers are naturally drawn to non-believers. Others take special delight in teaching young believers the basics of Christian life. Our biases, whatever they are, may cause us to neglect many of our listeners.

A few years ago, our church decided to address intentionally all three groups in our services. Our leaders hammered out a profile of each group's needs, wants, and defining characteristics. Then we set about the business of being an inclusive fellowship.

**Qualities of a Well-Rounded Sermon**

Even though I try to apply the message to each group in every sermon, I don't always succeed. So I asked my wife, Marina, if she would critique a dry run of my message each week. She is a teacher and an effective communicator.

Marina evaluates my sermon for four qualities important to people in all three groups:

- Is the sermon interesting?
- Does the sermon present significant content from the Bible?
- Does the sermon have practical application?
- Does the sermon have "heart"? (Does it go beyond mere facts to engage the emotions and the will?)

I've encouraged her to be brutally honest. I would rather hear a criticism from her on Friday than fail on Sunday.

Targeting three groups in one sermon is not easy, but it can be done. By speaking to all the people all the time, we demonstrate the sufficiency of the gospel in every stage of life. And we are ready to share that truth with whomever happens to be in our services.

—DAVID RIEMENSCHNEIDER; *Copyright © 2000 Christianity Today. Originally appeared in LEADERSHIP.*

**Discuss**

1. To which group are you most comfortable speaking—seekers, converts, or mature believers?
2. How many of your listeners belong to each group?
3. Why is it especially important to communicate application points to each group?

## PREACHING FOR THE LAY LEADER

# A Checkup for Sermon Illustrations

*You want to tell stories in your sermon; here are the questions you need to ask.*

Matthew 13:3–9

Because integrity is on the line when a preacher uses a sermon illustration, I have created a checkup to ensure my illustrations stay healthy. Here are the questions I ask myself:

*1. Am I inserting myself into someone else's illustration?*

To take someone else's personal experience and make it yours is theft. If you find someone else's personal illustration to be good, don't say that it happened to you. Attribute it accurately; it can still be effective.

*2. In the illustration, is someone described as "a member of my former church"?*

This phrase broadcasts the message: "I'm telling this story about something a former confidante told me. If you confide in me, I may tell your story at another church."

Just say, "I once knew someone who..."

*3. Should this illustration be checked for accuracy?*

Some illustrations are like investments: If they seem too good to be true, they probably are. Don't use illustrations that are not true.

*4. Will this illustration be sensitive to people in the congregation?*

It's simply good manners to be sensitive to gender, age, and ethnic group. For example, the phrase "little old lady" will turn off at least some older women; so will "girls" when talking about women.

*5. Will this particular congregation relate to the illustration?*

Relate to local people, events, and places whenever possible. For example, if a member of your church has overcome cancer and gives permission to use the story as a sermon illustration, then that will have great impact.

Do most of your listeners read *Vogue* or *People*? Do they watch professional wrestling or public television? Do they prefer jazz or country? Every church is different, so some illustrations will work better than others.

*6. Is this illustration too detailed?*

Early in my preaching ministry, I thought the only good illustration was a detailed illustration. But what adds impact are *relevant* details. Details do have an important place if they're the right ones and they aren't too numerous.

*7. Am I clearly differentiating between true and imaginative stories?*

Sometimes we add unsubstantiated details to true stories that can alter a story's substance. However, imagined details that don't change the substance of the story can help listeners. A little imagination—along with some discernment—can bring simple events to life by dramatically portraying important scenes.

—WAYNE HARVEY ; Copyright © 1997 *Christianity Today*. Originally appeared in *LEADERSHIP*.

## Discuss

1. Describe a sermon illustration that stuck in your memory. What elements from the list above did it possess?
2. Why is it important that sermon illustrations be true and accurate?
3. What are some characteristics of your congregation that can help you determine the appropriateness of a certain illustration?



**PREACHING FOR THE LAY LEADER****How to Tell Stories in a Sermon**

*Don't forget these essential ingredients of a great story.*

Luke 15:11–32

Listeners sit up when preachers tell a story. Ears open, minds focus, and hearts are often touched when a story hits home. With some careful attention, you can incorporate the impact of storytelling throughout your sermon, not just in your illustrations. Here are some suggestions:

*1. Any good story needs conflict.*

Storyteller Clifford Wame writes, “Conflict is the essence, the essential ingredient, of any story. If you don’t have conflict, you don’t have a story. If you don’t have conflict, you won’t have an audience, either.” When preaching on a biblical narrative or parable, ask where the conflict is in this story.

*2. A good story needs suspense.*

Good storytellers know how to create suspense. Sometimes preachers crash the suspense of their story just as it is leaving the runway. You hear in the introduction, for example, “This account of how Jesus calmed the storm is one of the most dramatic examples of Jesus’ authority.” Ho hum, suspense is dead. Good storytellers don’t tell the ending right away, even if it is familiar.

*3. Tell it in a new way.*

Somehow a preacher needs to find a way to give a biblical story what Eugene Lowry calls “a fresh hearing.” Some preachers do that by reading a story aloud from several different translations. Others try to imagine themselves in the story, and as they run the mental tape, they ask themselves. *What is surprising here? What would the first-century listeners not have expected to hear?*

*4. Flesh out the characters.*

To really get into a story, we have to like at least one character and care about what happens to him or her. Characters are vital, so master storytellers spend time understanding them and fleshing them out.

*5. Dialogue enlivens stories.*

With biblical stories, it’s often a good idea to contemporize the dialogue so that you build a bridge to today’s world. Try rephrasing dialogue as if it could be happening in your house.

*6. Excellent stories thrive on sensory description.*

Natural storytellers play on the imagination of their listeners. Great preachers have counseled us to mull over a story until we can see the scene, hear the background sounds and the voices, and even smell the smells.

If we want to be effective storytellers, we need to switch on our imaginations, lose our inhibitions, and talk to the senses. Once the picture has been painted, the conflict resolved, and the suspense relieved, don’t keep dabbling in it. It’s time to stop, put the brushes down, and let the story speak for itself.

—PETER FARTHING; Copyright © 2006 Christianity Today. Originally appeared in *The Church Leader’s Answer Book* (Tyndale).

**Discuss**

1. Describe a time you have heard storytelling used effectively in a sermon. What was the story and how did the preacher tell it?
2. What area will be hardest for you to develop? Why?
3. What would it take to use stories as more than just illustrations?

## PREACHING FOR THE LAY LEADER

# Keep Your Listeners' Attention

*Three ways you can help your message connect with your listeners.*

Luke 8:18

Of the thousands of sermons I've heard in my lifetime, I remember only a few, but those few glitter in my memory like diamonds scattered on a beach. One of the brightest did not shine with humor (though I recall laughing at points), nor did it have a showy delivery (though I distinctly remember the passion in the preacher's voice). That sermon riveted my attention because the preacher spoke about something vital to me.

Here are three ways to identify deep needs:

### 1. Listen to Your Neighbors.

Listen to people's prayer requests for help with broken health, wayward children, and lost jobs. Listen to your neighbors talk about money, relationships, recreation, death, and truth. Listen to the subtext of their attitudes.

I understand that Bill Hybels often does his sermon preparation in a coffee shop or locker room. He sits and thinks, *How would these people respond to my central idea? What objections would they raise? What misconceptions do they have?* A friend of mine opens his pictorial church directory and imagines what this person or that would say about his thesis.

### 2. Listen to Yourself.

What do you care about? Probably the same things all humans care about: security and significance. Although it is true that preachers find answers to these needs in places our listeners rarely venture into, all of us are trying to satisfy the same hunger. Apply the Word to yourself, and it will probably apply to your listeners in the same way.

For example, one thought that has crossed my mind more than once is, *Will I have the same standard of living when I retire as I do now?* I am confident that God will meet my needs when I'm old and gray, but frankly I hope he also meets my wants. When I include that concern in a sermon, I'm confident that others will identify with me.

### 3. Listen to Authors.

Read secular fiction and non-fiction, paying attention to the subtext of attitudes, values, and beliefs. Magazines sell because they address issues we care about. Fiction sells because it deals with universal themes.

I'm currently listening to *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* by Mark Twain, and I'm learning much about the American ethos. Democracy, equality, and achievement are our religious terms. Someday I know I'll talk about that in a sermon.

—JEFFREY ARTHURS *Copyright © 2006 Christianity Today. Originally appeared in The Church Leader's Answer Book (Tyndale).*

## Discuss

1. Describe a sermon that you remember well. What need did it speak to?
2. What are some popular books or magazines in your community? What kind of needs do they reveal?
3. What are some of your concerns that others could relate to?

**PREACHING FOR THE LAY LEADER****How to Drive a Point Home**

*Four things to consider when you want to create an application that sticks.*

James 1:22

Without making light of all the other aspects of preaching, I believe it's the applications that preachers most struggle with. When the application is missing or unclear, the preacher has lost an opportunity, and the congregation has most likely missed the point.

This problem can be solved quite easily if, early in message preparation, a preacher consistently answers four simple questions.

*1. What is my subject?* By the time pastors are ready to preach, most know the answer to this question. A few consistently share too many ideas with no basic thrust, but most are good at zeroing in on a recognizable theme. Congregations are generally just as adept at recognizing the basic topic of their pastor's sermon. So far, so good.

*2. What response is called for?* The 66 books of the Bible are not primarily informational. They expect people to do something—to live a life worthy of the Lord, to obey the commandments, to look after the poor and the powerless, to honor the covenant, or whatever. All too frequently, however, it is not clear what response a sermon is calling for. Because of this, listeners can seldom answer this question: In what way will I change as a result of hearing this message?

*3. What how-to's can I suggest?* Congregations need specific, practical steps to follow. Most preachers have rightly been taught to be textual, and the how-to's are almost never found in the text. But years of emphasizing practical how-to's have taught me that congregations are as interested in this how-to part of the sermon as they are in the unfolding of the text.

Most preachers have trouble coming up with effective how-to's. I encourage them to go to their congregations for help. A simple phone call asking whether the suggestion you're thinking about is a good one will usually start a discussion that produces an even better solution.

*4. How long will it take?* What is a reasonable amount of time to spend on this subject before moving on and preaching about something else? Preachers should consider this question.

Let's take Psalm 1 as an example. The subject of this short passage is the person who is blessed by God. The response being called for is to get counsel from the right source. In this passage, the right source is God's Word, and the way to go about it is to meditate on the words and wisdom of Scripture. In truth, however, most people don't know how to do this.

The average preacher will only put one sermon into Psalm 1. But learning the lessons of Psalm 1 requires more than one sermon, even if the preacher uses alternative texts over a period of time.

—DAVID MAINS; Copyright © 2006 Christianity Today. Originally appeared in *The Church Leader's Answer Book* (Tyndale).

**Discuss**

1. Describe a sermon application that you remember. Why did that application connect with you?
2. Why is it hard to create good applications? How can you overcome this hardship?
3. At what stage in the sermon preparation process can you start considering points of application?

**PREACHING FOR THE LAY LEADER****Seeking Evaluation**

*One pastor's method for obtaining valuable feedback.*

1 Peter 4:11

Sometimes I'm tempted to think: *It really would be so much nicer if I could just preach the way I want to preach and forget about anybody's evaluation.*

But then I realize why I have to take evaluation seriously. It's because I preach before a righteous and holy God, and I know he evaluates my work. If God has given you speaking gifts and called you into the pulpit, he expects your sermon to be a sacrifice to him.

**Inevitable Evaluation**

Every preacher is evaluated, one way or another, by every listener. I want to get evaluation that will help me be most effective in reaching people with God's truth. And constructive evaluation won't happen unless I'm asking the right people the right questions at the right time.

*By right people*, I mean people with great discernment whom I have learned to trust. It will only distract, confuse, or harm me to get input from everyone. Instead, I want to go to wise counselors.

*By right questions*, I mean that I want to find out how I'm communicating at a variety of levels:

- My illustrations—were they effective?
- My message—was it faithful to the Bible?
- My preaching as a whole—did it help further the vision of our church?

*By right time*, I mean I want to receive evaluation when it's most effective. Finding out after I deliver a message that it was off track is somewhat useful. But how much more productive it is to find out before I put 20 hours into something that wasn't well aimed! So increasingly, I ask "evaluation" questions during the planning stages before I preach.

To further gauge how I can improve, I have a team of elders evaluate every message that I preach, and they give me a written response to it within minutes after I complete the message. Here's how we work together:

- First, I freely admit to them I'm sensitive about having my preaching evaluated.
- Second, we filter all the evaluations through one person.
- Third, there's give and take on the evaluations (to separate errors of judgment from errors of taste).

After every message, I go back and think: *Did I really do my preparation effectively? Did I pray on my knees as I should have? Was it biblical? Did the elders say that it was approved?* If I can say yes to those questions, then I'm done with the message, and I can walk away from it knowing I did my best.

—BILL HYBELS; Copyright © 1989 *Christianity Today*. Originally appeared in *Mastering Contemporary Preaching*.

**Discuss**

1. To what extent are evaluations important?
2. Why is it wise to ask that all your evaluations come through one person?
3. Name three to five people you could ask to evaluate your sermon before and after you present it.

**PREACHING FOR THE LAY LEADER****Further Exploration**

*Books and resources to equip preachers.*

**BuildingChurchLeaders.com**. Leadership training resources from Christianity Today.

- “Becoming a Great Teacher” Practical Ministry Skills
- “New Teachers” Practical Ministry Skills
- “Preaching in Moments of Crisis” Survival Guide

**LeadershipJournal.net**. This website offers practical advice and articles for church leaders.

**PreachingToday.com**. One of the top-rated preaching websites, Preaching Today offers sermons, sermon outlines, illustrations, and preaching skills articles. This website is operated by Christianity Today, the same organization that operates BuildingChurchLeaders.com.

**Biblical Preaching** by *Haddon Robinson*. This book provides an introduction to creating and delivering sermons that expound the text of the Bible. (Baker, 200a; ISBN 978-0801022623)

**The Art & Craft of Biblical Preaching** by *Haddon Robinson and Craig Brian Larson, eds.* A comprehensive resource that covers virtually every aspect of sermon preparation. (Zondervan, 2005; ISBN 978-0310252481)

**Refining Your Style: Learning from Respected Communicators** by *Dave Stone*. This book explores 13 different speaking styles to help preachers develop the style that fits them best. (Group, 2004; ISBN 978-0764426827)

**Between Two Worlds: The Challenge of Preaching Today** by *John R. W. Stott*. This book presents some of the foundational reasons for preaching and provides practical advice for sermon preparation. (Eerdmans, 1994; ISBN 978-0802806277)

**The Big Idea of Biblical Preaching: Connecting the Bible to People** by *Keith Willhite and Scott M. Gibson, eds.* This book demonstrates how to preach the “big idea” of a scriptural passage in a variety of Biblical genres and preaching styles. (Baker, 2003; ISBN 978-0801091582)

**The Modern Preacher and the Ancient Text** by *Sidney Greidanus*. This book presents a hands-on method for preaching each of the main genres of the Bible. (Eerdmans, 1998; ISBN 978-0802803603)