

TEACHING GOD'S WORD FOR LIFE CHANGE

How do you preach effectively, so that people are not just challenged but actually act on what you teach? How do you develop excellent sermon content as well as effective teaching methods?

Our actions are affected by what we believe. Our belief is shaped by, among other things, what we are taught. God's word must be at the center of teaching so that there is life change.

Here are some things that we need to bear in mind in order to be effective in teaching our generation.

Environment –

Jesus was aware of the environment of his audience. In the same way we need to be aware and discerning of the times in order to engage with the issues of our time. In terms of our disposition, we need to somehow fit the description of the men of Issachar as described in 1 Chron 12:32.

As Jesus prayed in John 17 we are in this world but not of it. We need to understand it but not be conformed to it. Rom 12:2. I find it helpful to keep myself aware of my world by reading widely, keeping abreast with the news, understanding our times through the internet and modern communication. It also helps a lot to talk with different sorts of people in my world.

The Listener

We need to understand the challenges, fears, shortcomings of the individuals in our audience as well as their desire to overcome. The key lies in submission to Christ and we have a role to understand them.

I have found it useful to understand the typical person in our congregation both the believer and the one who isn't that interested in church. I recommend building relationships with them and understand where they are at in life. Find out what they do, where they go, how they view life.

The Speaker

The speaker, any speaker, of God's word carries an important shepherding role. This role is modeled for us by Christ himself who passed it on to us when He invited, actually commanded, us to make disciples for Him.

What we say needs to be spoken with a heart of compassion as Jesus had for the people who are in need of Him. [Matt 9:36].

Bible centred –

What we say needs to be centered, guided, grounded and informed by God's Word as it is revealed to us, by His Spirit in the bible. I believe that the Bible is God's written Word to man, revealed to and recorded by His Apostles and Prophets without error. This Book of books is our final authority in all matters of our faith in God and practice of Christianity. As a speaker I must therefore look be thoroughly immersed in God's word in order to hear God's voice, first for myself, then for those I will speak to.

Other things – I have been taught over the years and that I find helpful

Illustrations: Use examples and illustrations that your average target audience will identify with and that they can understand. Know their world so that you can use from their world to teach them about God. I often use newspaper clips, advertisements, song lyrics, video clips, tweets, facebook status and so on.

Be vulnerable: In my speaking I try to open up to share my struggles and questions as well as the ways in which God has seen me through them. I am always surprised by how many people identify with me and are able to walk the same journey into God's truth that I did.

Live it: Several of my mentors have modeled this one thing they told me. They said that I must allow God's truth to affect me so much so that I become passionate about it enough to do everything I can to communicate it.

Here is a book I found useful.

[Communicating for a Change](#) by Andy Stanley.