



Moving from Message to Proclamation



BACKSTORY PREACHING

HOMILETICS V

PRE-WORK GUIDE

Complete Heart of the Message Grid (bring this)	10 minutes
Free write for 4 minutes on each quadrant (bring this)	20 Minutes
Total Preparation Before Class	30 Minutes

Recommended, but not required

- Review Homiletical Sequence & Your Notes
- Review Definition of an Effective Sermon
- Learn about your instructor

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COMPLETE & BRING TO CLASS

THE HEART OF THE MESSAGE

for Epiphany 2B: John 1:43-51

Belief Statement (Good News)

What is the Good News I believe?

Hope Statement (Prayer)

Why does it matter that listeners believe this Good News, too?
What is my prayer for them?

What makes the message "stick?"

The Human Condition (Problem)

What keeps us from believing the Good News?

Invitation to Transformation (Vision)

What does God want us to say "yes" to?

The Latch

The Sermon "Bumper Sticker" (Sermon in a Sentence)

NAME OF PREACHER:

COMPLETE & BRING TO CLASS

Free Writing on each section of THE HEART OF THE MESSAGE

(note: you may bring your typed writing, if you choose)

Belief Statement (Good News)

BUMPER STICKER:

COMPLETE & BRING TO CLASS

Free Writing on each section of THE HEART OF THE MESSAGE

(note: you may bring your typed writing, if you choose)

Hope Statement (Prayer)

BUMPER STICKER:

COMPLETE & BRING TO CLASS

Free Writing on each section of THE HEART OF THE MESSAGE

(note: you may bring your typed writing, if you choose)

The Human Condition (Problem)

BUMPER STICKER:

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Free Writing on each section of THE HEART OF THE MESSAGE

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Invitation to Transformation (Vision)

BUMPER STICKER:

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Free Writing on each section of THE HEART OF THE MESSAGE

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The Latch

BUMPER STICKER:

IONA 2023 - 2024

HOMILETICAL SEQUENCE

01

Homiletics I *Bishop Fisher: Practical Preaching*

Focus:

- Introduce preachers to practical questions, pointers, tips and practices.

Objectives:

- Take away practical tips in order to start preaching today
- Recognize themselves as a preacher.

02

Homiletics 2 *Lectio: Praying the Text*

Focus:

- The preachers will practice Lectio with the text to see Scripture with a "beginner's mind," so that they discern the theology of the sermon; that is, who God is in the text.

Objectives:

- Apply various ways to pray Lectio with the text to hear fresh insights and perspectives from the Spirit.
- Discern which aspects of the text to study by forming leading questions—which also creates the boundaries needed for spending a realistic amount of time on sermon prep.

03

Homiletics 3 *Meditatio: Studying the Text*

Focus:

- Preachers will apply the practice of praying Meditatio on the text by answering their post- Lectio questions through formative, biblical exegesis.

Objectives:

- The preacher will learn exegetical skills and discover exegetical tools to practice Meditatio so that they are able to connect the world of the text to the world of their listeners.
- Preachers will develop confidence that they can find answers within their limited time for prep by narrowing the scope of their exegesis, knowing what type of exegesis is highest priority, and knowing where to find credible, diverse, and reliable resources.
- Preachers will be able to explain in one clear sentence "what is formative exegesis?"

04

Homiletics 4 *Oratio: Discerning the Heart of the Message*

Focus:

- Understand and apply Heart of the Message worksheet as an organizing tool for sharing Good News!

Objectives:

- See sermons as vehicles for sharing genuine enthusiasm about God.
- Understand components of the Heart of the Message worksheet sufficiently to apply to a practice text.



You
are a
Preacher!

05

Homiletics V *Preaching: Moving from Message to Proclamation*

Focus:

The preacher will continue to practice Oratio and apply sermon forms and revisions to their Heart of the Message to craft one clear message of Good News.

Objectives:

1. Apply the components of the Heart of the Message to sermon forms
2. Understand the components of an effective sermon

Meet Your Instructor

MEREDITH H. CRIGLER

Wonder Seeker. Spouse. Priest. Preacher.

Mentor. Explorer. Cook. Reader. DIY Enthusiast



*Core values are:
wholeness, wonder,
authenticity and grace*

Meredith is the Rector of Trinity Episcopal Church Baytown, co-chair of the Diocese of Texas Global Partnerships in Mission, Board Member for the Global Episcopal Mission Network, Co-Founder of Unfurling Embodiment, certified Certified Daring Way Facilitator™ and Certified Dare to Lead Facilitator™, and a frequent instructor, facilitator, and mentor. She graduated with honors from Claremont McKenna College (neuroscience & comparative religion) and Virginia Theological Seminary. She will defend her doctorate in homiletics this March through the Association of Chicago Theological Schools (ACTs). With her spouse, Tim, and their dog Thurgood and cat Pangur, she lives in Baytown and frequently visits her hometown/parents in College Station.

"Let us therefore approach the throne of grace with boldness..." ~Hebrews 4:16a

Current Homiletical Pursuits

Steward for Formation and Education with Backstory Preaching®:

- Instructor & facilitator
- Co-creator of the Preacher's Planner
- Trains new preaching mentors
- Mentors preachers in spirituality, process & craft

Current preaching projects include:

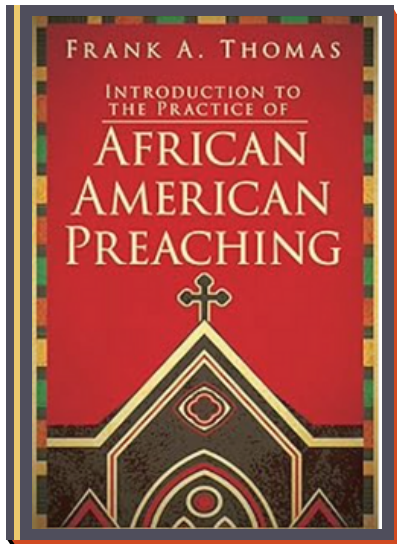
- Working toward a Doctorate in Preaching with a focus on Preaching Holy Saturday: Proclaiming a Liberative Word out the Preacher's Depths
- Enneagram & preaching
- Embodiment (particular attention to preaching while disabled)
- Preaching through transitions

(Optional) Examples of Meredith's Sermons (Trinity, Baytown):

- Particularly relevant to the listener: Jesus Does Math Differently (9/11/22).
- Particularly authentic to the preacher: Build & Plant (10/9/22).

ADDITIONAL BOOKS ABOUT AND FOR PREACHING

Here are a few more suggested additions for your preaching library:



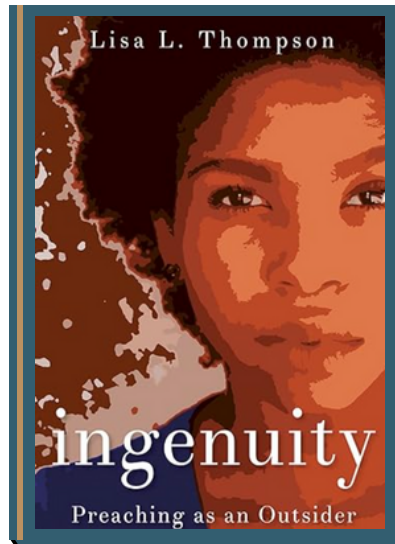
Thomas, Franky

Introduction to the Practice of African American Preaching

From the publisher:
The Introduction to African American Preaching is an important, groundbreaking book. This book acknowledges African American preaching as an academic discipline, and invites all students and preachers into a scholarly, dynamic, and useful exploration of the topic.

TFrank Thomas opens with a “bus tour” study of African American preaching. He shows how African American preaching has gradually moved from an almost exclusively oral to an oral/written tradition. Readers will gain insight into the history of the study of the African American preaching tradition, and catch the author’s enthusiasm for it.

BACKSTORY PREACHING

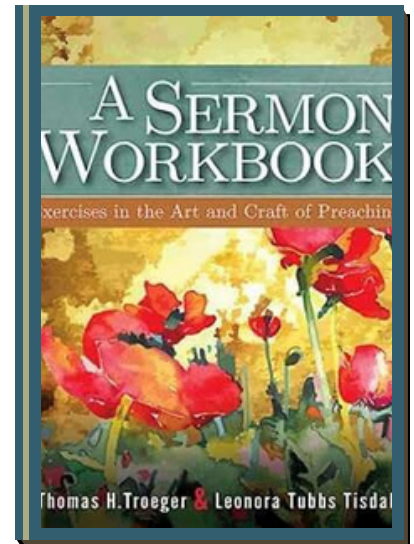


Thompson, Lisa

Ingenuity: Preaching as an Outsider

From the publisher:
Ingenuity introduces a theology and practice of preaching that emerges from the faith and wisdom of black women. Preaching has been resourced and taught from a narrow field of cultural or gendered experiences, historically. Without much support from established channels, black women are left to “figure it out” on their own, and others discern how to preach from a limiting scope.

The best preachers understand their own voices and the voices of others. They stretch and grow, and this enables them to preach more effectively. Ingenuity equips readers to negotiate tradition, life experiences, and theological conviction in the creative work that makes way for sacred speech.



Troeger, Thomas &
Tubbs Tisdale, Leonora

A Sermon Workbook: Exercises in the Art and Craft of Preaching

From the publisher:

A Sermon Workbook addresses the essentials for effective preaching in our multi-tasking, multi-ethnic, sound-bite society. It offers theological clarity about why we preach, and what matters most. The esteemed teaching team of Tom Troeger and Nora Tisdale invite the reader into their Yale Divinity School classroom, guiding the reader to build skill upon skill, working through inventive and engaging exercises. The workbook format can be used in a linear fashion, beginning to end. Or readers can pick and choose the chapters to tailor-fit their own needs. In either case, this is a remarkable and flexible resource, instantly accessible and useful for anyone tasked with the proclamation of the Word.



THE HEART OF THE MESSAGE

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BE GOOD NEWS TO PREACH GOOD NEWS.

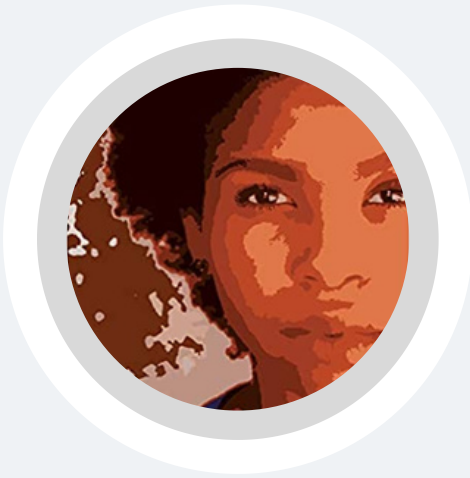
An Effective Sermon





CONTEXTUAL PREACHING RESOURCES

AUTHENTIC TO THE PREACHER: EMBODYING A SERMON



Preaching is carried out by flesh and lands upon flesh. Therefore, we cannot discard the body as a vehicle, nor its influence, in carrying forth the memory of preaching in a community. The boundaries and expectation of preaching within a community are very much dictated, formed, and understood by the way preaching is carried forth through the body and how preaching encounters the body.

Lisa Thompson, pg 25, *Ingenuity: Preaching as an Outsider*

1

How is preaching carried forth through your body?

2

How does your embodiment in the preaching space meet, fit, or challenge the expectation of preaching in your community?

3

Explicitly or implicitly, what bodies might not be welcomed in the preaching space in your community?

RELEVANT TO THE LISTENER: EXEGETING YOUR CONTEXT



Effective preaching... also requires us to exegete congregations and their contexts. As Teresa Fry Brown reminds us, "The preacher is the oral interpreter of the written text in the life of a particular context at a particular time, for a particular purpose... we do not preach in isolation; [preaching] is a communal event."

Thomas H. Troeger & Leonora Tubbs Tisdale, p. 56, *A Sermon Workbook: Exercises in the Art and Craft of Preaching*

What are some unique features of your congregation? What/How is your relationship to the congregation? What are some of the dominant narratives or persons or events that shape the congregation and their understanding of themselves?

How would you describe your congregation's view of God, humanity, and mission? What metaphors are emphasized? What topics might be challenging to preach, and why?

HEART OF THE MESSAGE : *relevant to the* CONTEXT

B^{*elief*}

What is the Good News I believe
for my context in this season.

H^{*ope*}

Why does it matter that my context believe this
Good News? What is my prayer for my context?

Season:

H^{*uman*}
C^{*ondition*}

What keeps us from
living the Good News?

I^{*nvitation*}
T^{*ransformation*}

What might God want us to say
"yes" to?



SERMON FORM RESOURCES

From the Heart of the Message to Sermon



The Heart of the Message = CONTENT

Structuring the Content = FORM

Once you have figured out the parts of the Heart of the Message, you can rearrange them into many different forms—but how will you choose the one that best serves your message?

After you have spent time in Lectio and study, you might fill out the Heart of the Message and then write, or you might write and then fill out the Heart of the Message. Either way, you have the elements of the CONTENT.

To determine SERMON FORM, you can play around with the arrangement of the CONTENT. You might begin with the HUMAN CONDITION and move to BELIEF, return to HUMAN CONDITION and lay out the LATCH. The one thing you want to do is land in a place of good news. That could be the BELIEF or INVITATION TO TRANSFORMATION or the BUMPER STICKER. How you get there will be determined and directed by what builds up to that good news.

Your goal is to preach good news. Talking off the cuff or engaging in stream-of-consciousness can be easiest; however, a deliberate structure is often the most effective.

EXPLORE

some of the sermon forms and sermon examples offered on the next pages,

THEN

REFLECT:

Take one of your past sermons or your upcoming sermon.

Identify the HEART OF THE MESSAGE in that sermon:

BELIEF:

HOPE:

HUMAN CONDITION:

INVITATION TO TRANS.:

LATCH:

BUMPER STICKER:

Identify the SERMON FORM used. Describe how you chose that sermon form. Consider what you might do differently. How would that look or work?

SERMON FORMS

NOT ALL SERMON FORMS MAY FIT YOUR
PREACHING STYLE,
CONTEXT, OR TEXT.

WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO EXPLORE
OR EVEN CREATE, YOUR OPTIONS.

HERE ARE SOME FORMS YOU MAY
RECOGNIZE FROM PREVIOUS STUDIES.

DEDUCTIVE PREACHING

Lays out a thesis

The sermon is intended to persuade the listeners to a way of thinking or living by turning over in new ways the theme that is being pursued.

PROPOSITIONAL: thesis (broad assertion) followed by specifics that affirm it —

The preacher who uses this form will state a conclusion at the beginning and then support it with examples that might be stories or experiences or illustrations.

DIDATIC — teaching vis exegesis/ interpretation/ application — A preacher aims to explain something about faith. It is a lecture with an opening statement meant to be heard and learned by the listeners who are drawn into considering different angles of the thesis as the preacher unpacks various interpretations. Finally, the listeners are exhorted to apply the teaching to their own lives.

SERMON FORMS

CONTINUED

EXPOSITORY PREACHING

Unpacks the text

An expository sermon will move from one part of the biblical story to another, filling in the details that help the story come alive. Although this sermon stays in the world of the biblical story, it is repeatedly brought into our world by digressions or comparisons between what is happening in the text and what analogously is happening in our world.

EXHORTATORY/ PROPHETIC PREACHING

Urges change

This sermon aims to urge lives of Christ-like love. The preacher starts from an immediate need in the community, and whether using a lectionary or choosing the text for that occasion, will use the scripture reading to unveil the community situation. Showing not only the problem that needs attention (the Human Condition) but also the ways in which God is at work (the Belief), the sermon will make strong statements about how it is possible that God enables us to address what is wrong in the world in order to move toward justice and peace. This sermon form needs to avoid scolding. Its job is to make a strong Invitation to Transformation but without mincing words.

SERMON FORMS CONTINUED

EMBODIED PREACHING

Emotive
performance

The preacher's starting point is context. The preacher's and listener's context in their bodies and social orientation. Voice, emotion, and use of one's own body are just as important, if not more, than the words said. Embodied Preaching could be a genre of its own or a form of Deductive, Expository, or Inductive Preaching. This performative preaching style is commonly utilized by those preaching from the margins. The most familiar of which is what LaRue calls Black Preaching.

Among Black homileticians, we find a range of answers to the question of whether there is such a thing as "Black preaching" and what it looks like. The characteristics may be, among other things, focus on the context with special concern for social justice, a certain pacing that generates emotional responses on the part of the listener (start slow, go low, rise higher, strike fire, sit down in a storm), accentuation at the end with the help of the organ, focus on immediate needs in the community, insistence that God's power is at work in healing and strengthening, and careful dissection of a single biblical passage or a short segment.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

SERMON FORMS

CONTINUED

EMBODIED PREACHING (CONT'D)

Emotive
performance

HENRY MITCHELL: celebration preaching — “Black worship must have joy in its highest and purest form. At their best, Black preachers must not only be teachers and mobilizers, parent figures and enablers, but they also must be celebrants. They must have a little of the joy themselves. . . the goodness of God must not be a distant theory; it must be a present fact, which to experience is to celebrate.” (*Black Preaching*, 132.)

CLEOPHUS LaRUE: connecting scripture with life experience — LaRue outlines three interpretive dynamics in African American sermon preparation: 1) “An understanding of what blacks believe about power and the sovereign God... 2) Sensitivity to the history and culture of black life in America. . . 3) Competence in describing and addressing the. . . situations. . . blacks experience daily. . . and an ability to wed the scriptures to those experiences. “ Speaking to what listeners needs, he writes, “A sermon is best heard when an insightful perspective on lived experiences takes the lead in creating and organizing the sermon and not the specific enunciation of a theological formulation.” (*The Heart of Black Preaching*, 114 and 123).

FRANK THOMAS: celebration by embodying the assertion of God’s care — in the midst of the suffering of African American people, the preacher “sought not to give answers to the problem of suffering and evil in life, but to help people experience the assurance . . . that

SERMON FORMS

EMBODIED PREACHING (CONT'D)

Emotive
performance

CONTINUED

God was with them, in and through the suffering, and would ultimately liberate them . . . “ More specifically, “Celebration is both the goal of the emotional process of the sermon and the final stage of the sermon through which the goal is achieved.” (*They Like to Never Quit Praising God*, 3 and 106). In terms of sermon form, the preacher’s use of the voice is deliberate.

OTIS MOSS III: Blue Note — lament with assurance — daring to speak of tragedy — “I contend that if we are to reclaim the best of the preaching tradition then we must learn what I call the Blue Note gospel. Before you get to your resurrection shout you must pass by the challenge and pain called Calvary.” And speaking to what Blue Note is not: “A Blues aesthetic frees the preacher and preaching from both personal-piety sermons and the ever-present prosperity mode now popular on television.” (*Blue Note Preaching in a Post-Soul World: Finding Hope in an Age of Despair*, 2 and xiii)

HOLY SATURDAY PREACHING: embodied liberation from the depths — “The preacher remains grounded in their own (and/or their context's) wounded and gifted body. Good news need not only be a celebration of the resurrection, as the powerful love of God is found in the very depths inviting liberation. This sermon starts with recognition and wrestling, then descends lingering in the deep” (from Meredith Crigler's doctoral work in progress).

SERMON FORMS CONTINUED

INDUCTIVE PREACHING

Leads listeners
on a journey

In contrast to the Deductive Preaching Form, Inductive does not set out to lay out a thesis. It is not going to tell the listener what to believe. It will lead listeners through a story, a journey, a description of life that ends up at a realization the listeners attain themselves. Think of it as making a proposition about what could happen to someone in a tough situation and then successively offering optional worse outcomes until just the right “re-orientation” becomes obvious.

“A sermon is not a doctrinal lecture. It is an event-in-time, a narrative art form more akin to a play or novel in shape than to a book. Hence we are not engineering scientists; we are narrative artists by professional function...I propose that we begin by regarding the sermon as a homiletical plot, a narrative art form, a sacred story” (Eugene Lowry, *Homiletical Plot*, p. xx-xxi).

CRADDOCK: orientation/ disorientation/ re-orientation- starts with a description of the status quo, disrupts that view of the world (the trouble with humans, for example), and then shows how God’s work through the Spirit brings us to a new place

LOWRY’s LOOP: akin to a short story form that takes a journey — disorientation/ analysis/ experiencing the gospel/ re-orientation/ consequences — this is a stretched-out, maybe even more detailed form of Craddock’s sermon form

SERMON FORMS CONTINUED

PROPHETIC OR EXHORTATORY

Urges change

PROPHETIC or EXHORTATORY - urging changing lives

FOUR PAGES - Trouble in Text and World/ Grace in Text and World (TT and TW/ GT and GW) One of the benefits of this sermon structure is that it asks the preacher to find in the readings what God is doing and what human beings are doing. Trouble in the Text is what the reading tells about the human problem or simply the human situation. Knowing, then, what the biblical text is about, the preacher looks for an analogous problem or situation in our present world. The same is true with Grace in the Text: What is God's action? What is God's blessing? And what, then, is God doing analogously in our world. The four pages are: TT, TW, GT, and GW. They can be conceived of as equals. Caution: It is relatively easy to find Trouble (in text and world). It is relatively easy to locate God's grace in the text. It is hard to find Grace in the World, and that is, like the Invitation to Transformation, the crucial message the listeners needs to hear.

WONDERING WHICH FORM TO FOLLOW?

Consider taking your lead from the form of the biblical text itself. They way they are presented also follows FORM patterns.

DEDUCTIVE Didactic

teaching



"MODELS OF FORGIVENESS"

PREACHER: The Rev. Tony Campolo
DATE: 2013
TEXT: Luke 11:4 (Lord's Prayer on forgiveness)
WATCH: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gl0nI2_LgpI

HEART OF THE MESSAGE

BELIEF: God forgives without strings
HOPE: you will forgive as God does
HC: we are reluctant to forgive
IT: forgiveness in Northern Ireland
LATCH: twin sisters who won't forgive ; peace rally in Northern Ireland; cop who pulls you over for speeding
BStick: God's forgiveness is ultimate mercy

SERMON FORM

BELIEF: Jesus takes the initiative about forgiveness; God doesn't wait for us to ask for forgiveness
LATCH/HC: twin sisters; we wait for the other to take the initiative to forgive
BELIEF: Jesus takes the initiative about forgiveness
HC: we wait for the other to take the initiative to forgive; only the innocent take responsibility
LATCH/ peace rally in Northern Ireland; image of taking the initiative because of God's
HOPE: forgiveness
cop who pulls you over for speeding (justice, mercy, grace)
BELIEF: God gives grace

Notice that Campolo states his thesis at the outset that God is the one who initiates forgiveness by forgiving us before we even ask for it. Then he uses several examples of how human beings fail to take the initiative to forgive, ending with a moving story about forgiveness between Protestants and Roman Catholics in Northern Ireland that goes beyond forgiving to an act of grace between individuals who had good reason to hate each other. Finally he wraps his focus on forgiveness by defining grace.

Human Condition (HC) Invitation to Transformation (IT) Bumper Sticker (BStick)

Expository

unpacking the text
verse by verse



"GETTING INSIDE THE STORY"

PREACHER: The Rev. Barbara Lundblad
DATE: 2021
TEXT: Luke 19:1-10 (Zaccheus)
WATCH: <https://youtu.be/l6n-NfdfJel>

HEART OF THE MESSAGE

BELIEF: Jesus transforms the baptized into one body
HOPE: I hope that you are drawn to look at Jesus
HC: our lives aren't flawless
IT: Christ empowers us to seek the good
LATCH: Zacchaeus's tarnished livelihood
BStick: making a living is not the same as finding your life

SERMON FORM

HC: many of us, just like Zacchaeus, make a living but not a life
LATCH: even unpleasant work is better than nothing
BELIEF: Zacchaeus heard Jesus was coming and was a friend of people like him
IT: because he was short, he had to climb a tree just to see this man who might accept him
BELIEF: Jesus calls us to "Come down" so he can surprise us and help us find our lives
Jesus comes to us to help us find our lives
BStick:

The preacher moves back and forth between the story of Zacchaeus—his personal struggles and his curiosity about Jesus the healer people have told him about—and the same struggles and same curiosity we may have in our lives. By juxtaposing these time frames, the sermon links us with Jesus' gracious response to Zacchaeus.

Human Condition (HC) Invitation to Transformation (IT) Bumper Sticker (BStick)

BACKSTORY PREACHING

Exhortatory Prophetic

urge change



"BECOME REPAIRERS OF THE BREACH"

PREACHER: The Rev. William Barber II (Sermon is addressed to Pres. Biden and Vice-Pres.
DATE: Harris)
TEXT: 1-21-2022 (two weeks after the assault on the U.S. Capitol on January 6, 2021)
Isaiah 58 (Repairers of the breach)
WATCH: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AX7vii7H9XM>

HEART OF THE MESSAGE

God's power making us repairers of breach means we can contradict the breach

BELIEF: I hope you are moved to care about repair of our world on behalf of others.

HOPE: We raise up prayers while tolerating racism, poverty, environmental destruction,
HC: denial of health care, and religious nationalism
IT: The vision of love and justice is to have the wisdom and courage to be repairers
LATCH: breach/ strawberry jam
BStick: The Way Forward is to repent the breach in order to repair it

SERMON FORM

LATCH: we are in a jam that creates the breaches in our society needing repair
HOPE: a great nation is compassionate
HC: that we live with two Americas is evidence of the breach that needs repair
BELIEF: God gives us the power to contradict the breach—to heal racism, poverty,
environmental devastation, denial of health care, and religious nationalism
HOPE: justice can be established to repair the breach
IT: God gives us the power to contradict the breach with policies, sermons, calls to the
people, and prayer
LATCH: Fosdick's hymn "God of grace and God of glory... cure your children's warring
madness..."
BStick: peace and justice = the only path to domestic tranquility and healing

Rev. Barber has a particular audience for this sermon, a particular HC to unpack, and comes at it by roaring against all the forces that are obstacles to repairing the breach. This sermon has a teaching element in the way it defines the breach and explains what is involved in being a repairer. He returns twice to the LATCH (at the beginning and end of the sermon) and to HOPE to be sure the need is clear and the way forward is something the listener can imagine.

Human Condition (HC) Invitation to Transformation (IT) Bumper Sticker (BStick)

EMBODIED Blue Note

Lament with assurance



"BEHIND CLOSED DOORS"

PREACHER: The Rev. OTIS MOSS III

DATE: April 24, 2022

TEXT: John 20: 18-23

WATCH: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7IIKECvEXg8>

HEART OF THE MESSAGE

BELIEF: Jesus comes through every closed door

HOPE: I hope you forgive yourself for being afraid

HC: We hide out of fear, bad doctrine, and foolishness

IT: Embracing forgiveness transforms the world

LATCH: Union organizer at Amazon doing God's work

BStick: Jesus opens locked doors

SERMON FORM

HC: We hide behind closed doors out of fear, bad doctrine, and foolishness

IT: The Black church doesn't close doors.

LATCH: Union organizer at Amazon says it is God's work he's doing

BELIEF: Jesus comes through every closed door

IT: We are called to find money for good work: housing the homeless, feeding the hungry, sending our children to Africa so they know who they are

HOPE: I hope you forgive yourself for hiding from God's work

BStick: You can't shut Jesus out. Jesus will make his way in.

Rev. Moss brings to the story of the grieving disciples a portrait of the church then and now: afraid, locked in on itself, and in need of the kind of courage Jesus gives to open the door. Just as Jesus breathes on the disciples to give them peace, Jesus breathes on us. We are called as church to embrace forgiveness of ourselves in order to forgive others and begin to heal the world.

Human Condition (HC) Invitation to Transformation (IT) Bumper Sticker (BStick)

BACKSTORY PREACHING

INDUCTIVE

Craddock

orientation
disorientation
re-orientation



"THE GOD OF HOPE"

PREACHER: The Rev. Fred Craddock
DATE: 2013
TEXT: Romans 4:41-13 (Abraham hoped against hope)
WATCH: <https://vimeo.com/70325537>

BELIEF: God gives life to the dead
HOPE: I hope you believe God is a God of hope
HC: we easily lose hope
IT: Hope causes all kinds of good to happen
LATCH: manilla folder labeled HOPE
BStick: Do you believe?

SERMON FORM

BELIEF: God gives life to the dead
LATCH: many stories of hopelessness
HCL It is painful to hope.
IT: Jesus announced hope.
HOPE: Nothing is impossible with God.
BStick: Do you believe in hope?

Human Condition (HC) Invitation to Transformation (IT) Bumper Sticker (BStick)

INDUCTIVE

Lowry's Loop

Homiletical Plot:

OOPS — upset equilibrium

UGH — analyze discrepancy

AHA — clue to resolution

WHEE — experience gospel

YEAH — anticipate consequences



"WHO COULD ASK FOR ANYTHING MORE?"

PREACHER: The Rev. Eugene Lowry

DATE: November 29, 1987

TEXT: Matthew 20:1-16 (workers in the vineyard)

WATCH: <https://repository.duke.edu/dc/dukechapel/dcrmv001059>

24:30 scripture reading 27:26 sermon begins 42:52 sermon ends

HEART OF THE MESSAGE

BELIEF: God is inviting us home

HOPE: I hope you live by God's covenant not by human contract

HC: we rely on contractual agreements

IT: God's covenant is all mercy

LATCH: three children ages 5, 10, and 15

BStick: God invites you home

SERMON FORM

HC: we live according to contractual agreements

BELIEF: God is inviting us home

HOPE: hope you live by God's covenant not contract

LATCH: three children ages 5, 10, and 15

IT: God's covenant is all mercy

BStick: we are being invited home

OPPS: workers are angry

UGH: owner says: didn't you agree?

AHA: nothing is impossible with God

you love your children equally

WHEE: the owner is still looking for workers

YEAH: God is inviting us home

In this sermon, Rev. Lowry enacts the story-line he lays out in The Homiletical Plot. It is an expanded version of Fred Craddock's sermon form (orientation, disorientation, reorientation), beginning with what is amiss in our world, going deeper into the causes for what is wrong, and then suggesting in different ways how God's desire for our healing and wholeness addresses the difficult realities

Human Condition (HC) Invitation to Transformation (IT) Bumper Sticker (BStick)

INDUCTIVE

Four Pages

Balancing Trouble and Grace
in Text and World:

TT-Trouble in the text

TW- Trouble in the world

GT - Grace in the text

GW - Grace in the world



"BELIEVING IN THE FACE OF DOUBT"

PREACHER: The Rev. Frederick Buechner

DATE: July 22, 2013

TEXT: John 20: 19-31 (Thomas

WATCH: <https://youtu.be/LkZ3PHxWh6A>

HEART OF THE MESSAGE

BELIEF: Christ dwells deep in everybody

HOPE: that you will grow brave hearts

HC: we see facts but not truth

IT: Christ gives us many ways to see truth that changes everything

LATCH(es): what we see with our eyes; what we see with the eyes of the heart; the church is full of holiness

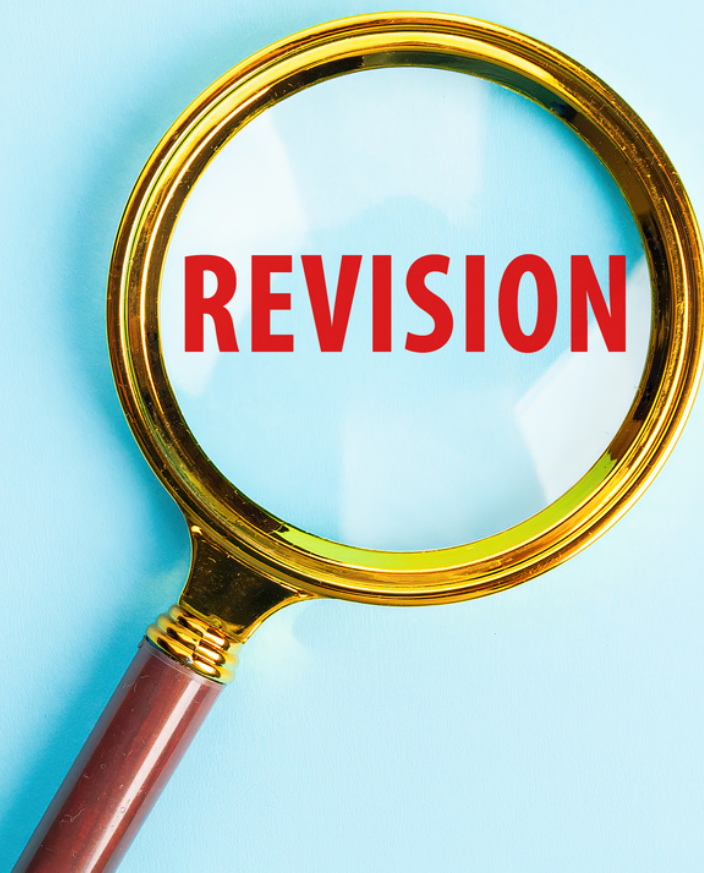
BStick: you too can see with the eyes of the heart

SERMON FORM

TT:	HC:	we can't readily see that Bible stories are about us
GT:	BELIEF:	Christ dwells deep in everybody
TW:	HC:	our eyes aren't the best for seeing
GW:	LATCH(es):	mountains, a nose, Lincoln, the little church
GT:	BStick:	Thomas saw with the eyes of the heart
GW:	IT:	we see the truth of Christ in all the ways he is present to us
GW:	HOPE:	GW HOPE: to see with the heart is to take heart, to grow brave hearts

Note how much time is given to Grace in both the Text and the World. The entire ending of the sermon is image after image of how we can see with the eyes of the heart to know what God is doing in our midst. This is an exemplary Invitation to Transformation, building up a portrait of God's.

Human Condition (HC) Invitation to Transformation (IT) Bumper Sticker (BStick)



SERMON REVISION RESOURCES

Revising the Sermon



“

The only kind of writing is rewriting.

—Ernest Hemingway

Once you have defined your Heart of the Message statements, organized them into a form, and crafted your sermon—what is next?

Rest and revision.

Throughout the process of crafting your sermon, *contemplatio* invites us to rest, allowing ideas to percolate and the Spirit to simmer. **After we finish a sermon draft, *contemplatio* invites us to rest from our sermon until we can revisit our craft with fresh eyes.**

Revision may occur in these ways:

- Revise your words
- Ready your page
- Ready your body to preach

Revising Your *Words*



CHECK YOUR SERMON

A few ideas to start you off

- ☐ **Color code your Heart of the Message.** Make references to your various statements different colors and observe. Do you skip around? Does your human condition land too close to the end? Does it flow?
- ☐ **Rhetorical Devices.** Use them! (See blog posts below for ideas.)
- ☐ **Verb Tense.** Whichever tense you choose to retell the story of Scripture, be consistent. The present tense brings the listener right into the action and may be preferred in most cases.
- ☐ **Pronouns.** Define most "they/it" pronouns with the actual noun referenced. This precision ensures clarity and is especially important in auditory contexts.
- ☐ **Verbs.** Avoid weak, generic, or passive verbs. Use the most precise verb you can with a connotation that supports your tone and point (e.g., walk vs. amble, stride, strut, stroll, meander, etc.)
- ☐ **Examples.** Whenever possible, use the particular to represent the general.
- ☐ **Introductions.** Take us straight to the action. (Avoid "In today's reading....")
- ☐ **Transitions.** Circle them. Do they work? Give us the breadcrumbs to follow.
- ☐ **Invite another to review your draft.** Does the message they identify match the one you intend? (Sometimes this discrepancy reveals the presence of multiple messages vs. a single message of Good News.)

HELPFUL BSP POSTS:

- [Monday Reflection: "The Hill We Climb" \(another master class in craft\)](#)
- [YOUR PERSONAL EDITOR: THIS ONE QUESTION WILL KEEP YOUR SERMON ON MESSAGE](#)
- [PREACH SPECIFICALLY: DIGNITY IS IN THE DETAILS](#)

SERMON PAGE LAYOUT

Craft manuscripts that aid the act of preaching

1

COMMON

Though written for the ear, manuscript remains as it was first typed. Page layout meant to be read, not preached.

2

BETTER

Same words are now in larger font, spaced on the page, and divided into beats (small unit of action).

3

MOST EFFECTIVE

Same large, spaced words in their beats, now indented to aid the eye, spaced to indicate pauses, capitalized (or bolded) to show emphasis.

Give me something that says it is 99%— And I'll tell you that is statistically significant—the odds are good— I'm going to call that full. 99 is a beautiful grade in a class. My gas tank full at 99%. If a treatment plan is 99% effective, I'm feeling rather hopeful and sleeping well at night. — to live to be 99 — what a full life. So often, 99 sounds good enough to me. But then I look at our gospel text, and I look a bit closer, and I realize that Jesus does math differently. For Jesus 99 ain't enough, is it? Because 99 out of 100 means that one is lost, alone, and left out. One is out there on their own — and not reunited with God's fold of love.

And so Jesus leaves the safe and secure. Jesus leaves the in crowd who is comfortable. Jesus leaves the righteous who the world has done right by Jesus leaves the 99 and goes after the one who is lost until he finds them.* Found— The feeling of walking out of a lunch with a search committee and saying to your loved one: "These are my people." The feeling of rolling up to your home after a long journey, and the lawn has been cut, and the cat box cleaned, and the mail stacked, and dinner in the fridge

sermon continues...

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sermon continues...

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One is out there on their own
and not reunited with God's fold of love.
And so Jesus leaves the safe and secure
Jesus leaves the in-crowd who is comfortable
Jesus leaves the righteous, who the world has done right by
Jesus leaves the 99 and goes after the one who is lost
until he finds them.*

OTHER TIPS

- Reduce the distance your eye looks down to your notes by raising the platform (if you can) or only putting text at the top one-half of your page.
- If using paper, number your pages and consider putting them in a folder/binder to flip.
- Consider using a small surface/iPad/electronic notebook as it allows you to scroll, enlarge the font, and hold it in your hand This reduces eye distance, allowing the eye to travel quickly down and across the text.
- If preaching an embodied sermon (remembering a sermon is more than words on a page), consider using emojis (or other cues) to remind you of your intentions for your body.

Give me something that says it is 99%
And I'll tell you that is statistically significant
the odds are good
I'm going to call that full.
99 is a beautiful grade in a class.
My gas tank full at 99%
If a treatment plan is 99% effective,
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and saying to your loved one: "These are my people."
The feeling of rolling up to your home after a long journey
and the lawn has been cut,
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and the mail stacked
and dinner in the fridge

3

Ready Your *Body* & *Voice* to Preach

FROM DR. PETER CIVETTA, NORTHWESTERN



PHYSICAL WARM-UP

- **Shake & Wiggle** - Shake your body all over to loosen up.
- **Neck rolls** – Gently roll your neck from side to side (do not go all the way around).
- **Shoulder rolls** – With your arms at your side, make big circles with your shoulders going in both directions.
- **Shoulder stretch** – Straighten one arm in front of you, and then use your other arm to pull gently. Repeat.
- **Tricep stretch** – Bend your elbow and point it toward the sky with your arm behind your head. Repeat
- **Wrist stretch** – Holding the rest of your arm still in front of you, rotate your wrists.
- **Waist stretch** – Holding your hands together in front of you, gently swing your torso to the left and right.
- **Back stretch** – Bend at the waist, let yourself hang down, making sure you are loose and relaxed, and take a few deep breaths while hanging. Don't rush. Don't focus on reaching; focus on breathing.
- **Side stretch** – Stretch one arm over your head tilting towards the opposite side. Repeat.
- **Leg & Ankle Stretch** – As able, rotate ankles and flex feet. Repeat.



VOCAL WARM-UP

(20 seconds each)

- **Face rub** – Massage your face, paying particular attention to your jaw.
- **Pretend gum** – Pretend like you are chewing a large wad of gum. Exaggerate & smack.
- **Blow** – Blow through your lips, adding sound behind it and moving up and down your register (high & low).
- **Tongue slobber** – Stick out your tongue and move the tip of it up, down, and side to side in clear, intentional movements, and make circles in all directions.
- **Vocal exercises**- Say the following 5-10 times making sure sounds are distinct & your jaw goes up and down. Start slow & increase speed:
 - Ma-ma-ma-ma-maaaaa,
 - Pa-Pee-Pa-Pay-Pa-Paw-Pa-Paper
 - Ba-Bee-Ba-Bay-Ba-Baw-Ba-Baber
 - Ta-Tee-Ta-Tay-Ta-Taw-Ta-Tater (no ssss should escape)
 - Say Da-Dee-Da-Day-Da-Daw-Da-Dade
 - Ka-Kee-Ka-Kay-Ka-Kaw-Ka-Kaker
 - Ga-Gee-Ga-Gay-Ga-Gaw-Ga-Gager (Won't be able to go as fast!)
- **Tongue Twister**:- Say "A critical cricket critic." Start slowly and pay particular emphasis on having clear T sounds). Add other fav. tongue twisters.



SERMON APPRAISAL RESOURCES

A Basic Backstory Preaching SERMON APPRAISAL

Instructions

- Listen to the sermon.
- Add your answers to each question. Share only when invited by preacher.
- You are encouraged to appraise every sermon you preach.

Preacher's Name:

Appraiser's Name:



Name the six parts of the Heart of the Message that you heard in this sermon: Belief, Hope, Human Condition, Invitation to Transformation, Latch, and Bumper Sticker.

Ideally you will be able to offer the Belief, Hope, Invitation, and Bumper Sticker in one complete sentence each because they were so clear. If you can't, offer phrases.

A Basic Backstory Preaching SERMON APPRAISAL

2

What worked for you about this sermon?

3

What surprised or made you curious about how this sermon was constructed?

A Basic Backstory Preaching SERMON APPRAISAL

4

What might the preacher have done differently to make this a stronger sermon?

5

Offer a prayer for this preacher as they conclude this course.