

'ANYBODY CAN PREACH'

Excerpts

WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME?

That is the question every sermon has to answer. Each pericope -commonly referred to as a passage of scripture- will be the source of the question that must be answered by the sermon. The hearer comes to get the answer to the sermon interrogative—the question, what's in it for me? That question is posed in every walk of life and is inherently part of human nature. No amount of humility expels the innate desire to know how a person will benefit from a personal action or commitment. From birth, children want to know how they will satisfy their own desires. Human nature has built into its developmental process the ego, id, and superego. Without going too deeply into their meaning, suffice it to say it is the way in which the rational thought process resolves internal conflicts and develops a mature capacity for rational thought and action. That explains the natural man, but there is a process of becoming spiritual. A process of learning how to trust God and know His mind.

WHO IS JESUS?

Christology is a field of study within Christian theology that is concerned with the nature of Jesus the Christ. In particular, it involves how the divine and human are related in His person. Christology is generally less concerned with the details of Jesus's life than it is with how the human and divine coexist in one person. Although this study of the relationship of these two natures is the foundation of Christology, some essential subtopics within the field of Christology include the Incarnation, the resurrection, and the work of Jesus (known as soteriology).

Christology is related to questions concerning the nature of God like the Trinity, Unitarianism, or Binitarianism. However, from a Christian perspective, these questions are concerned with how the divine persons relate to one another, whereas Christology is concerned with the meeting of the human and divine in the person of Jesus.

LOCATING THE PERICOPE KEY VERSES

The *pericope*, commonly referred to as a passage of scripture, where the theme flows throughout the passage. The key verse in a passage or pericope may be tricky to locate but is very important to identify. This section provides steps to simplify the process of locating the key

verse. Locating this verse will make developing the theme statement or statement of purpose much simpler.

BUILDING THE MAIN AND SUBPOINTS

(Points, Subpoints, Illustrations, and Transitions)

The main points are the skeleton of the sermon. If you think of a sermon as you would the human body, the brain would be the theme statement, the heart would be the pericope key verse, and the body would be the whole pericope text or the passage. The brain is the seat of logic and the control center of the body, that is, the theme statement. If the theme or statement of purpose is correctly structured, the sermon will flow from it and maintain its message throughout the sermon. The heart of the sermon is the message, the voice of God, the pericope key verse. The key verse does not change, no matter who preaches the passage. The passage or pericope is the source of the sermon parts. Finally the skeleton gives the body form and stature, or the main points. Without main points, the sermon will not flow and will not be relevant to the hearer. The main points are the source of the introduction, the interrogative, and the conclusion. When the main points are well constructed, the hearer's question, what's in it for me?, is answered.

THE HOLY TRINITY

The Perichoretic Union

There is absolutely no question that we worship the triune God. God in three Persons is the wonder of our relationship with Him: God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The Father is our Creator; the Son of God, our Savior; and the Holy Spirit, our comforter and teacher. There is no question about the perfect union of the Trinity. Jesus said in John 10:30, "I and the Father are One." Their perfect unity does not include humanity in the traditional sense; however, Jesus revealed a revelation in the relationship of the triune God in John 17:20–24:

I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.

As Jesus included His disciples in the perfect unity of His Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, He also includes in the same unity all who believe the Gospel through the apostles'

preaching. This relationship is not triangular; it is circular. *Perichoretic* means “circular,” and the implementation in a circular relationship is a continuous never-ending connection. In the circular relationship of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit, you cannot tell where one ends and the other begins, and since we are included in the perichoretic union, we are included in the perfect relationship.

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SERMON DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

There are two parts to preaching, sermon development and sermon delivery. There will be much to learn about preaching after these articles, which is why it is necessary to write sermons regularly.

The sermon development process begins with the selection of a text. This is a process that is ongoing, as good preaching is heard and noted. Study on a regular basis will produce familiarity with the Word of God. Next, determine the limits of the passage and locate the key verse in the text. It is very important to understand the function of each verse in the text before and after the pericope key verse in the passage. Read the chapter before, the chapter, and the one after, and pay close attention to the overall context leading up to and following the pericope itself.