

# COHORT PREACHING GUIDES



**THE REPHIDIM Project**  
*Lifting up those who spread God's Word*

[www.rephidimproject.org](http://www.rephidimproject.org)

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## **PREACHING GUIDE #1**

### **STATE IT: Part One**

- Hermeneutics is the science of interpretation.
- Exegesis is reading God's ideas out of the text.
- Eisegesis is reading our ideas into the text.
- Our goal is to exegete the text accurately.
- Observing carefully is crucial to interpreting well.
- Sermon prep begins by asking the text questions. (Who? What? Why? Where? How?)
- We gather the information that will go into the sermon prep funnel by asking questions.
- As preachers, we examine the words of Scripture. We interrogate the text.
- Our goal is to exegete the text accurately so that we can preach sound theology.

#### **OBJECTIVE:**

To gather information by interrogating the text so that we have the content we need to develop a good sermon.

**PREACHING UNIT OF THOUGHT:** 2 Corinthians 4:16-18

#### **PRE-COHORT ASSIGNMENT**

1. Watch the instructional video: Interrogating the Text
2. What are the theologically significant words and ideas in the passage?
3. How do these verses fit with the verses before and after the target text?
4. What is (are) the main verb(s) in the passage?
5. Why did the original author write these verses?
6. Be prepared to discuss your answers at the cohort.
7. Read one of the books listed in the additional resources for discussion. Recommended: Edwards, *Deep Preaching: Creating Sermons that Go Beyond the Superficial*.

#### **ONLINE RESOURCE:**

Instructional Video: "Interrogating the Text" [www.rephidimproject.org](http://www.rephidimproject.org)

## **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

J. Kent Edwards, *Deep Preaching: Creating Sermons that Go Beyond the Superficial*, B&H Academic, 2009.

Grant Osborne, *The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Guide to Biblical Interpretation*, InterVarsity Press, 1991.

J. Scott Duvall and J. Daniel Hays, *Grasping God's Word: A Hands-On Approach to Reading, Interpreting and Applying the Bible*, Zondervan, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, 2012.

## **SERMON REVIEW**

One of the cohort members should present a sermon for review. The sermon can be live, by video or online. The rest of the members of the cohort will use the “Sermon Feedback Guide” to give constructive criticism about the sermon. The critiques should stress both positive and negative insights intended to help the preacher become more effective.

## **BOOK DISCUSSION**

The cohort will discuss the book that they read in preparation for the cohort meeting.

## **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. Where does 2 Cor. 4:16-18 fit in the context of the biblical book?
2. Why did the human author write these words?
3. When does the text take place? (Historical and cultural context)
4. Who wrote it and to whom was it written?
5. What are the theologically significant words and ideas in the passage?
6. What is the kingdom connection? (Story of the Bible or meta narrative)
7. What does the text teach us about God/Christ?
8. How do these verses fit with the verses before and after the target text?

## **PREACHING GUIDE #2**

### **STATE IT: Part Two**

- Every passage has big ideas and little ideas.
- There is one big idea in a unit of thought.
- There are many little ideas.
- The little ideas are connected by hinge points (connectives).
- We weave the little ideas together to form the big idea.
- The exegetical idea is the big idea of the unit of thought.
- The exegetical idea answers the question: What did this text mean to the original author and audience.

#### **OBJECTIVE:**

To identify the exegetical idea and the supporting ideas using a structural diagram.

**PREACHING UNIT OF THOUGHT:** 2 Corinthians 4:16-18

#### **PRE-COHORT ASSIGNMENT**

1. Download the PDF instructions: How to Create a Structural Diagram.
2. Watch the instructional video: Creating a Structural Diagram.
3. State the main idea of the passage according to the biblical author.
4. State the meaning of each hinge point in the passage.
5. Be prepared to discuss your conclusions at the cohort.
6. Read one of the books listed in the additional resources. Recommended: Pelton, *Preaching with Accuracy: Finding the Christ-Centered Big Ideas for Biblical Preaching*.

#### **ONLINE RESOURCES**

Instructional Video: “Creating a Structural Diagram”

PDF available for download: How to Create a Structural Diagram

[www.rephidimproject.org](http://www.rephidimproject.org)

## **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

Randal Pelton, *Preaching with Accuracy: Finding the Christ-Centered Big Ideas for Biblical Preaching*, Kregel Publications, 2014.

Dale Ralph Davis, *The Word Became Fresh: How To Preach From Old Testament Narrative Texts*, Christian Focus Publications Ltd., Scotland, 2012.

Abraham Kuruvilla, *Privilege the Text! A Theological Hermeneutic for Preaching*. Moody Publishers, 2013.

## **SERMON REVIEW**

One of the cohort members should present a sermon for review. The sermon can be live, by video or online. The rest of the members of the cohort will use the “Sermon Feedback Guide” to give constructive criticism about the sermon. The critiques should stress both positive and negative insights intended to help the preacher become more effective.

## **BOOK DISCUSSION**

The cohort will discuss the book that they read in preparation for the cohort meeting.

## **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. What is the main idea of the passage according to the biblical author?
2. What are the hinge points of the passage (connectives/conjunctions)?

## **PREACHING GUIDE #3**

### **AIM IT: Part One**

- Every sermon should have one main idea.
- The main idea of the sermon should follow the main idea of the passage.
- The text is the source of the sermon not a resource for the sermon.
- The exegetical idea informs the homiletical idea but is not identical to it.
- The preacher must transform the exegetical idea into the homiletical idea to get the big idea for the sermon.
- The central idea should be stated in a single sentence with a subject and predicate.
- The Central idea should be stated in contemporary language.

#### **OBJECTIVE:**

To state the main idea of the sermon in a clear, concise and contemporary sentence.

**PREACHING UNIT OF THOUGHT:** 2 Corinthians 4:16-18

#### **PRE-COHORT ASSIGNMENT**

1. Watch the instructional video: The Big Idea
2. State the main idea of your sermon in a single sentence.
3. Come prepared to discuss your idea at the cohort.
4. Read one of the books listed under additional resources. Recommended: Robinson, *Biblical Preaching: The Development and Delivery of Expository Messages*

#### **ONLINE RESOURCE:**

Instructional Video: “The Big Idea” [www.rephidimproject.org](http://www.rephidimproject.org)

#### **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

Haddon W. Robinson, *Biblical Preaching: The Development and Delivery of Expository Messages*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, Baker Academic, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 2014.

Keith Willhite and Scott M. Gibson, editors, *The Big Idea of Biblical Preaching: Connecting the Bible to People*, Baker Books, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1998.

**SERMON REVIEW**

One of the cohort members should present a sermon for review. The sermon can be live, by video or online. The rest of the members of the cohort will use the “Sermon Feedback Guide” to give constructive criticism about the sermon. The critiques should stress both positive and negative insights intended to help the preacher become more effective.

**BOOK DISCUSSION**

The cohort will discuss the book that they read in preparation for the cohort meeting.

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

- 1.. How can I restate the exegetical idea in contemporary terms?
2. How can I make the central idea memorable?

## **PREACHING GUIDE #4**

### **AIM IT: Part Two**

- The purpose of the sermon is focused on the needs of the people.
- The preacher must exegete the people as well as the passage.
- The preacher must understand the purpose of preaching this sermon to these people.
- Every sermon should be a rifle shot aimed at a target.
- The target is the people who are present to hear the sermon.
- So what? What difference does it make?

#### **OBJECTIVE:**

To clearly and succinctly identify your purpose for preaching the sermon.

**PREACHING UNIT OF THOUGHT:** 2 Corinthians 4:16-18

#### **PRE-COHORT ASSIGNMENT**

1. Watch the instructional video: Aiming the Sermon

2. Be able to answer the following questions:

- So what? What difference does it make?
- What are the needs of the people that this passage addresses?
- Do I want to inform, persuade or motivate the people?
- What do I want the sermon to do?

3. State the purpose of our sermon in the following format:

The purpose of my sermon is to \_\_\_\_\_.

4. Come to the cohort prepared to discuss your purpose.

5. Read one of the books listed under additional resources. Recommended: Phillip D. Jensen and Paul Grimond, *The Archer and the Arrow: Preaching the Very Words of God*.

#### **ONLINE RESOURCE:**

Instructional Video: “Aiming the Sermon” [www.rephidimproject.org](http://www.rephidimproject.org)

#### **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

Phillip D. Jensen and Paul Grimond, *The Archer and the Arrow: Preaching the Very Words of God*, Matthias Media, Australia, 2010.



Haddon W. Robinson, *Biblical Preaching: The Development and Delivery of Expository Messages*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, Baker Academic, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 2014.

### **SERMON REVIEW**

One of the cohort members should present a sermon for review. The sermon can be live, by video or online. The rest of the members of the cohort will use the “Sermon Feedback Guide” to give constructive criticism about the sermon. The critiques should stress both positive and negative insights intended to help the preacher become more effective.

### **BOOK DISCUSSION**

The cohort will discuss the book that they read in preparation for the cohort meeting.

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. So what? What difference does it make?
2. What are the needs of the people that this passage addresses?
3. Do I want to inform, persuade or motivate the people?
4. What do I want the sermon to do?

## PREACHING GUIDE #5

### FRAME IT

- Each point is a pointer pointing to the central idea (C.I.).
- Main points follow the hinge points in the unit of thought.
- Each point should express a universal truth in contemporary language.
- Look for the contemporary life parallels (CLPs) to the passage.
- State the points applicationally and parallel.
- Overly clever is not as important as biblically accurate.
- There are four general patterns to frame a sermon.
  - The C.I. is in the beginning, and the main points explain it.
  - The C.I. is at the end, and the main points lead to it.
  - The C.I. is in the middle with some points leading to it and some explaining it.
  - The C.I. is repeated frequently with the main points cycling back to it.

### **OBJECTIVE**

To write out the main points of the sermon in applicational terms.

**PREACHING UNIT OF THOUGHT:** 2 Corinthians 4:16-18

### **PRE-COHORT ASSIGNMENT**

1. Watch the instructional video “Framing the Message.”
2. Form an outline that follows the structural diagram.
3. Determine what shape the sermon will take.
4. Write your main points in applicational language.
5. Come prepared to discuss your work at the cohort.
6. Read one of the books listed under additional resources. Recommended: Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching: Redeeming the Expository Sermon*.

### **ONLINE RESOURCE:**

Instructional Video: “Framing the Message” [www.rephidimproject.org](http://www.rephidimproject.org)

### **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

Bryan Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching: Redeeming the Expository Sermon*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Baker Academic, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 2005.

David R. Helm, *Expositional Preaching: How We Speak God's Word Today*, Crossway, Wheaton, Illinois, 2014.

R. Albert Mohler, Jr. *He is Not Silent: Preaching in a Postmodern World*, Moody Publishers, Chicago, Illinois, 2008.

### **SERMON REVIEW**

One of the cohort members should present a sermon for review. The sermon can be live, by video or online. The rest of the members of the cohort will use the “Sermon Feedback Guide” to give constructive criticism about the sermon. The critiques should stress both positive and negative insights intended to help the preacher become more effective.

### **BOOK DISCUSSION**

The cohort will discuss the book that they read in preparation for the cohort meeting.

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. What are the contemporary life parallels I see in this passage? (CLPs)
2. What are the main points as demonstrated by the structural diagram?
3. How do these main ideas point back to the big idea?
- 4.. How can I state the main points in contemporary life terms?
5. How can I state the main points applicationally?
6. How can I say it so people remember it?
7. What shape will my sermon take?

## **PREACHING GUIDE #6**

### **NAIL IT**

- Biblical information without personal application makes a sermon irrelevant.
- Personal application without biblical information makes a sermon superficial.
- Marry the principles of the sermon to clear contemporary life parallels.
- Avoid vague generalities.
- Apply the principles to concrete, real-life situations.
- Show the listener how the application derives from the text, so the authority is in the Bible and not in you.
- Avoid moralism by preaching enabling grace.
- Make the applications when they come up in the sermon.
- Lead people to a point of decision (P.O.D.) for each application.

### **OBJECTIVE**

To compose three good applications or illustrations for the sermon.

**PREACHING UNIT OF THOUGHT:** 2 Corinthians 4:16-18

### **PRE-COHORT ASSIGNMENT**

1. Watch the instructional video “Application: The Heart of the Message.”
2. Identify three contemporary life parallels to your passage.
3. Compose three applications or illustrations that lead people to a point of decision.
4. Come prepared to discuss your work at the cohort.
5. Read one of the books listed in the additional resources. Recommended: Dale Ralph Davis, *The Word Became Fresh: How To Preach From Old Testament Narrative Texts*.

### **ONLINE RESOURCE:**

Instructional Video: “Application: The Heart of the Message” [www.rephidimproject.org](http://www.rephidimproject.org)

### **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:**

Dale Ralph Davis, *The Word Became Fresh: How To Preach From Old Testament Narrative Texts*, Christian Focus Publications Ltd., Scotland, 2012.

Calvin Miller, *Marketplace Preaching: How to Return the Sermon to Where it Belongs*, Baker Books, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1995.

Timothy Keller, *Preaching: Communicating Faith in an Age of Skepticism*, Viking, An Imprint of Penguin Random House LL.C. New York, 2015.

Wayne McDill, *12 Essential Skills for Great Preaching*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition revised and expanded, B&H Academic, Nashville, Tennessee, 2006.

## **SERMON REVIEW**

One of the cohort members should present a sermon for review. The sermon can be live, by video or online. The rest of the members of the cohort will use the “Sermon Feedback Guide” to give constructive criticism about the sermon. The critiques should stress both positive and negative insights intended to help the preacher become more effective.

## **BOOK DISCUSSION**

The cohort will discuss the book that they read in preparation for the cohort meeting.

## **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. How can I nail the biblical principles to real life situations?
2. How do I make abstract truths concrete? (Illustration)
3. How can I answer the questions people are asking?
4. How do I help people see and feel what I am saying? (Imagination)
5. How do I demonstrate that it applies to me first?
6. How do I flavor the message with grace? (Avoid mere moralism)
7. How do I show people that God will help them do it?
8. What are the contemporary life parallels (CLPs)?
9. How can I lead people to a point of decision for at least one of the CLPs?

## **PREACHING GUIDE #7**

### **SEAL IT: Conclusion**

- The conclusion is the emotional climax of the message.
- A good conclusion concludes. Don't introduce new ideas.
- Plan the conclusion to meet a need.
- Plan the conclusion to implement the purpose of the message.
- There are four general types of conclusions. They are not mutually exclusive.
  - Recap what you said.
  - Illustrate the central idea.
  - Encourage people with truth.
  - Appeal for belief or action.
- Keep the conclusion brief (generally 10% of the sermon).

#### **OBJECTIVE**

To plan an effective conclusion for the sermon.

**PREACHING UNIT OF THOUGHT:** 2 Corinthians 4:16-18

#### **PRE-COHORT ASSIGNMENT**

1. Watch the instructional video "Sealing the Deal."
2. Identify the purpose of your sermon and the need you intend to meet.
3. Determine how to move people to implement the purpose of the sermon.
4. Write out your closing words for the sermon.
5. Come prepared to discuss your work at the cohort.
6. Read one of the books listed in additional resources. Recommended: McDill, *The Moment of Truth: A Guide to Effective Sermon Delivery*.

#### **ONLINE RESOURCE FOR ADDITIONAL HELP:**

Instructional Video: "The Conclusion: Sealing the Deal" [www.rephidimproject.org](http://www.rephidimproject.org)

#### **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

Wayne V. McDill, *The Moment of Truth: A Guide to Effective Sermon Delivery*, B&H Academic, Nashville Tennessee, 1999.

John R.W. Stott, *Between Two Worlds: The Art of Preaching in the Twentieth Century*, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids Michigan, 1982.

Conrad Mbewe, *Pastoral Preaching: Building a People for God*, Langham Preaching Resources, Carlisle, England, 2017.

### **SERMON REVIEW**

One of the cohort members should present a sermon for review. The sermon can be live, by video or online. The rest of the members of the cohort will use the “Sermon Feedback Guide” to give constructive criticism about the sermon. The critiques should stress both positive and negative insights intended to help the preacher become more effective.

### **BOOK DISCUSSION**

The cohort will discuss the book that they read in preparation for the cohort meeting.

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. How will I call people to the point of decision (POD)?
2. How will I bring the sermon to a climax?
3. What do I want people to believe, be or do as a result of this sermon?
4. What is the need I am trying to meet with this sermon?
5. What is my purpose for preaching this sermon?
6. How do I “seal the deal” with my closing words?

## **PREACHING GUIDE #8**

### **SEAL IT: Introduction**

- The introduction is the final step in the process. (It requires something to introduce!)
- There are three purposes for an introduction:
  - To get attention
  - To awaken awareness of need
  - To prepare for the Central Idea
- Application begins in the introduction.
- Keep it short (10% of the sermon).
- Stimulate a need.
- Focus on the purpose of your sermon (see Aim It).

### **OBJECTIVE**

To prepare an introduction for your sermon.

**PREACHING UNIT OF THOUGHT:** 2 Corinthians 4:16-18

### **PRE-COHORT ASSIGNMENT**

1. Watch the instructional video “Awakening the Need.”
2. Identify the spiritual need the sermon will address.
3. Identify your purpose for preaching the sermon.
4. Determine the hook you will use to get the attention of the people.
5. Come prepared to discuss your work at the cohort.
6. Read one of the books listed in additional resources. Recommended: Conrad Mbewe, *Pastoral Preaching: Building a People for God*.

### **ONLINE RESOURCE FOR ADDITIONAL HELP:**

Instructional Video: “The Introduction: Awakening the Need” [www.rephidimproject.org](http://www.rephidimproject.org)

### **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

Wayne V. McDill, *The Moment of Truth: A Guide to Effective Sermon Delivery*, B&H Academic, Nashville Tennessee, 1999.



Conrad Mbewe, *Pastoral Preaching: Building a People for God*, Langham Preaching Resources, Carlisle, England, 2017.

R. Larry Overstreet, *Persuasive Preaching: A Biblical and Practical Guide to the Effective Use of Persuasion*, Weaver Book Company, 2014.

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### **BOOK DISCUSSION**

The cohort will discuss the book that they read in preparation for the cohort meeting.

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. What do I want people to believe, be or do as a result of this sermon?
2. What is the spiritual need my sermon will address?
3. How can I awaken an awareness of need to start the sermon?
4. What’s my hook? How can I get people’s attention?