

## From Text to Sermon Part 1

Too often, people lift what they read in the Bible and apply it straight to the modern day, without actually taking seriously the details of the text in question, its historical context or its place within the overarching sweep of God's purposes and revelation. These two sessions will equip participants with some simple but helpful tools for handling and teaching the Bible well, working through the process required to bring about faithful, clear and relevant Bible studies and sermons.

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### A. Defining our purpose (Nehemiah 8)

1. The Word: the heart of preaching (8:5)
2. The Teacher: the task of preaching (8:8)
3. The Congregation: the purpose of preaching
4. The Christ: the goal of preaching (cf Luke 24:)

### Defining preaching

David Jackman: *'This is what preaching is all about; it is not just simply laying out the truth of the message, but it is the invasion of the living God through his word into the mind, heart and will of the hearer.'*

Jim Packer: *Christian preaching is the event of God bringing to an audience a Bible-based, Christ-related, life-impacting message of instruction and direction from himself through the words of a spokesperson.*

John Stott: *To preach is to open up the inspired text with such faithfulness and sensitivity that God's voice is heard and God's people obey him.*

### 3-fold Preacher's Task:

1. Faithfulness - Can We See Where the Talk Comes from? (cf 2 Tim 2:15)
2. Relevance - Can We See Who The Talk is For? (cf Col 4:3-4)
3. Clarity - Can We See Where the Talk Is Going? (cf Eph 6:19)

## B. Understanding the text

The journey from the Bible passage to the sermon  
See PAPER 1 'From text to sermon'

### **TEXT**

The **meat** of the text

The **bones** of the text

The **heart** of the text

The **bridge** to the

### **SERMON**

**Heartbeat**

**Skeleton**

**Flesh**

**Understanding the text**

**GOD SPOKE ... TO THEM ... FOR US**

## 1. Where the text fits

- a. **The Bible is a library**
  
- b. **The Bible is history**
  
- c. **The Bible is a unity**

## **2. What the text says**

*See PAPER 2 'Studying a Bible passage'*

- **Exegesis**
  - **NOT Eisegesis**
- 
- a.           **Understanding the passage in context**  
What type of literature is it?  
What is the context?
  
  - b.           **Understanding the passage in detail (exegesis)**  
Significant words or ideas to check?  
Images and metaphors?  
Using our senses!  
Units of thought?  
Structure or flow of thought?  
Main theme or point?  
Original meaning of this passage?
  
  - c.           **Understanding the passage in relation to the whole Bible**

### **1. A worked example: Habakkuk 3:16-19**

- a. Type of literature
-

b. Context for Habakkuk's doxology

c. Words, images...

d. Flow of thought

e. Main theme

f. Other parts of the Bible?

**Passage Summary:**

## **C. Building a bridge from the text to sermon**

See PAPER 1 'From text to sermon'

### **Crafting the message**

#### **1. The heart – purpose, theme, intention**

#### **2. The bones – the structure or framework**

##### **a) Helping the listeners**

1. significance of the text
2. concentration
3. memory

##### **b) Helping the preacher**

1. careful preparation
2. Preaching guide

**Worked example: Habakkuk 3:16-19**

#### **3. Putting flesh on the bones**

*See PAPER 3 Working on a sermon outline*

##### **a) The importance of application**

1. Direct
  2. Personal
  3. Sustained
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**b) The purpose of the introduction**

1. Gaining a hearing
2. Bridges the Bible and the world of the listeners
3. Bridges to the main theme

**c) The discipline of the conclusion**

1. Summarise the theme
2. Bring it home
3. Keep it short!

**A final check-list!**

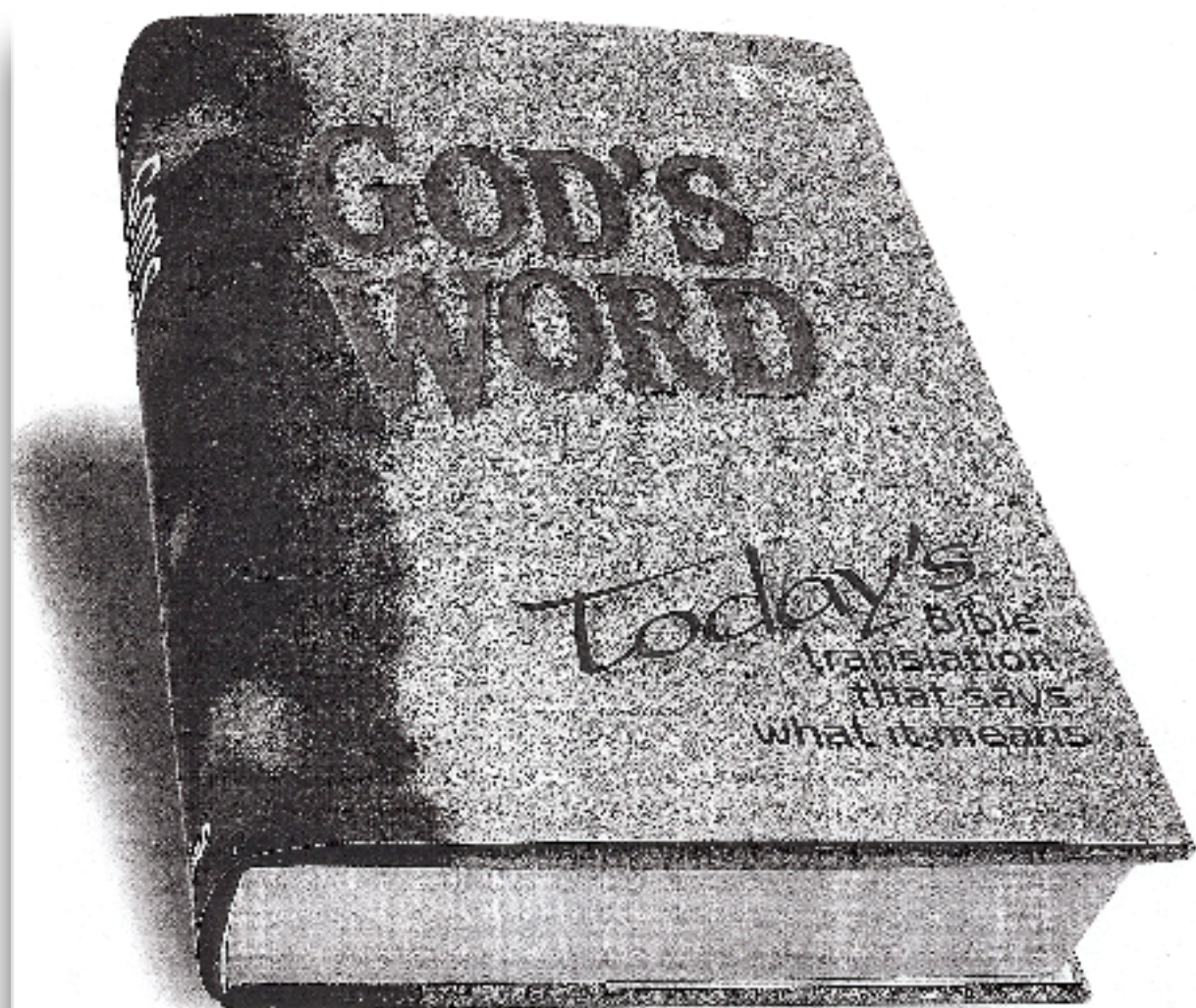
**Introduction:** interesting, relevant, leading to the theme?

**Main body:** clear structure, main points true to the theme, explanation and application?

**Conclusion:** forceful summary and application?

**Generally:** length OK? Notes clear? Words, examples, application interesting and relevant?

**Remembering our purpose:** *Christian preaching is the event of God bringing to an audience a Bible-based, Christ-related, life-impacting message of instruction and direction from himself through the words of a spokesperson. (Jim Packer)*



NOW

# No Interpretation Needed.

**The Bible: the all-time bestseller — but hardly the best understood.**  
**God's Word: the revolutionary new translation that allows you to immediately understand exactly what the original writers meant.**

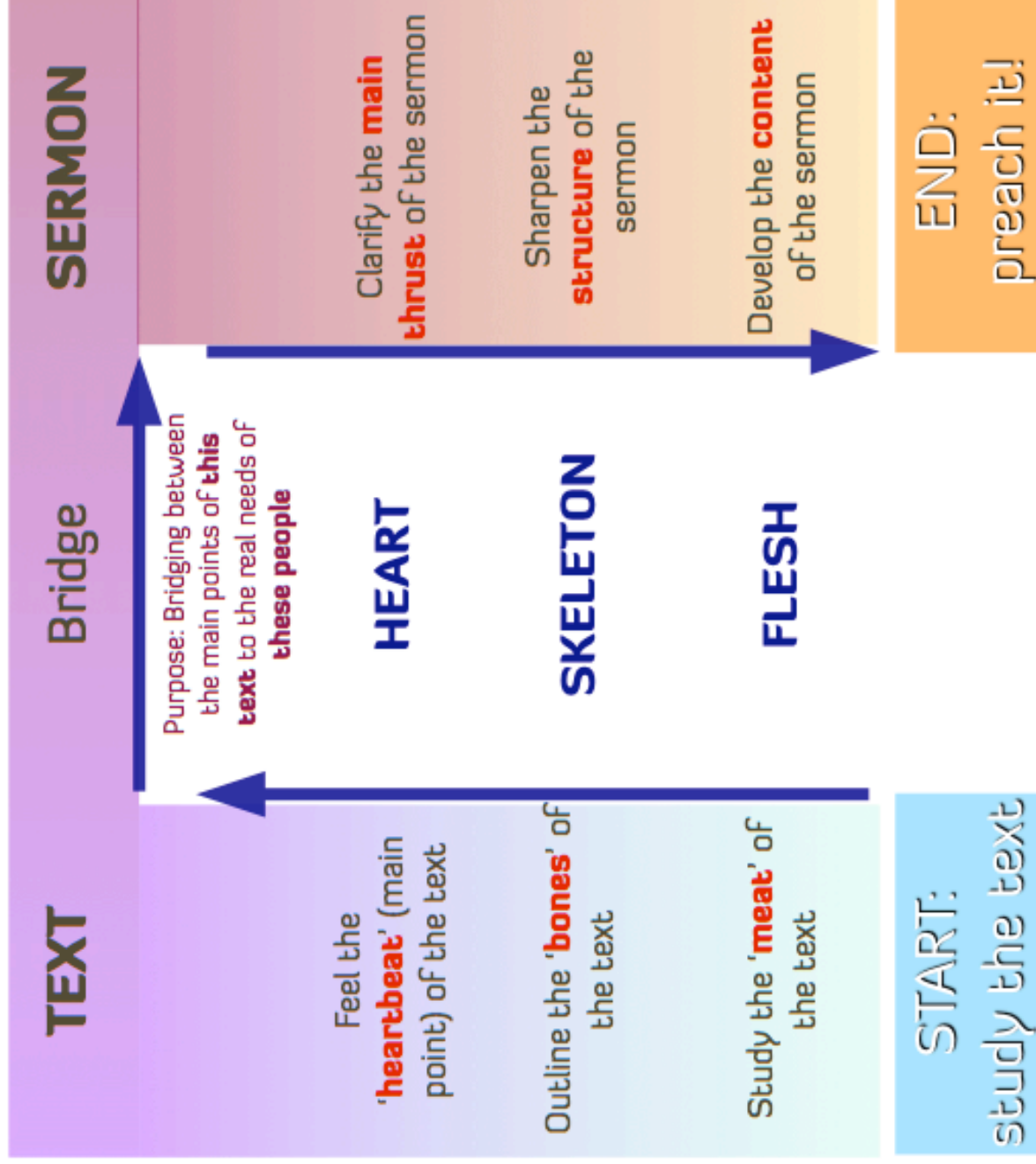
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# THE PREACHER'S TASK



**Purpose:** To understand **this passage** as well as possible  
**FIRST:** Study Yourself (ask questions, find oddities, highlight problems)  
**ONLY THEN:** Study Others with YOUR agenda (commentaries, dictionaries, concordances, sermons)

**Purpose:** To communicate the message of **this passage** and apply this to **your audience** through your sermon



# Checklist for Biblical Sermon Evaluation

## FAITHFULNESS

*Did the sermon express the main point(s) of the passage of the Bible that was preached from? If so, how?*

*Did the sermon stay close to the text that was being preached from and explain what the original author meant? If so, how?*

*If other Bible texts were referred to, did they throw helpful light on the main text of the sermon, or did they distract from it and confuse people? If so, how?*

*Was the sermon faithful to the overall message of the biblical faith? That is, was it balanced and true to the whole of Scripture, or did the preacher misuse the text to push a narrow or unbalanced message that would not be supported by the rest of the Bible?*

## CLARITY

*Was the message clear?*

*If so, what methods did the speaker use to make the structure of the sermon clear?*

*If not, how could the speaker have made it more clear?*

*How did the speaker help you to follow and remember what was said?*

## RELEVANCE

*How did the preacher build bridges from the world of the biblical text preached from, to the world of today?*

*Were any illustrations that were used appropriate to your own context and helpful in explaining the relevance of the text? (or inappropriate and irrelevant!?)*

*In what other ways would you have applied this text if you had been preaching it?*

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