

TheWordWorks

Expository Preaching Module 1: For the Preacher

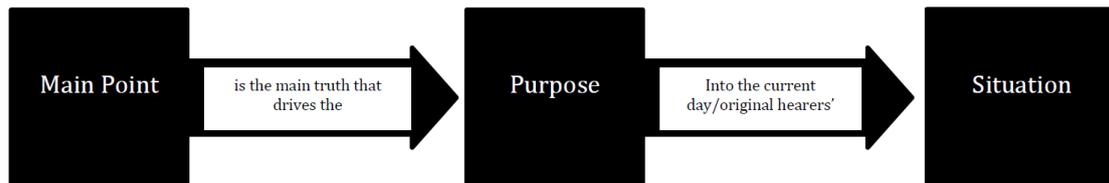
Giving a preacher sermon feedback

Aim of this module:

To learn how to critically evaluate any sermon and gently deliver the feedback to encourage expository preaching.

Recap

See Modules “What is expository preaching?”, “The Shape of an Expository Sermon?”, “How to make good applications” and “Delivery that gets the big idea across”.



Expository preaching is preaching which teaches the author’s **main point** in order to achieve the author’s **purpose** in a **current day situation** similar to the situation of the original hearers.

Expository preaching is important because it lets the **bible be in the driver’s seat** to **expose the gospel of Jesus Christ**. This type of preaching gives the congregation the confidence to **read the bible on their own**.

Evaluating a sermon

We need to listen attentively¹ to the preacher not just to give feedback but also because he is opening up the very words of God. It is the responsibility of every Christian to weigh what is taught and apply what is true and faithful to the text/ bible² boldly to our lives, with God’s help.

¹ Read “Listen Up! A practical guide to listening to sermons” by Christopher Ash for more reasons and practical tips to listen well to sermons.

² If you think the preaching isn’t very faithful to the passage in consideration, evaluate whether the truths are still true in the wider context of (i) the book and (ii) the Bible. We would be unwise not to apply these truths boldly to our lives.

Below is a template that will help you systemically evaluate a sermon.

Name of preacher:

Place and date of sermon:

Text used:

1. SERMON STRUCTURE

- a. Did the sermon have a clear purpose-driven application? What was it?
- b. Did the sermon have a clear main point?
- c. Could you follow a clear structure to the sermon? What shaped the structure?
(*Was it the text? Part of the text? An illustration? An idea? The sermon title?*)
- d. Did the sermon develop in a way that was clear and easy for the congregation to follow? What was its main point/subpoints?

2. SERMON CONTENT

- a. How well did the preacher handle the text? Was it properly understood and explained? Was the sermon grounded in the text throughout, or did it tend to wander off? Was it true to the text in emphasis as well as content?
- b. How well did the sermon set the text in its biblical and theological context?
- c. How well did the sermon explain any difficult verses?
- d. Was the introduction useful, or unrelated to the rest of the sermon? How well did it engage people?
- e. How effective was the conclusion? Did it clearly draw together/sum up the main theme(s) of the sermon? If so, how? If not, why not?
- f. Were there enough/too many illustrations? How useful were they, and how appropriate to the congregation? Do you remember the point they were illustrating?
- g. Was the vocabulary used free from jargon/terms people might not understand?
- h. Was there enough/too much application in this sermon? How well did it relate to the text and the purpose of the sermon? Was it applied to a current day situation that is close to the original situation? Was it appropriate for the congregation? Did it leave them convinced, rebuked, encouraged, challenged...?
- i. Was the sermon an appropriate length? Did it seem too long or too short?

3. SERMON DELIVERY

- a. Did the preacher hold your attention? Was the voice interesting, the eye contact good, the pace right, the manner appropriate? How effectively did the preacher use any notes or audio/visual aids? Were there any annoying mannerisms worth mentioning?
- b. Was the sermon delivered in a way that showed the preacher's personal conviction and passion about the truths being presented? Did it compel a response?

4. GENERAL

- a. What were the sermon's strengths and how might it be improved?
- b. Are there any additional comments not already covered?

Delivering the feedback

Start by praying. Pray for humility, gentleness and wisdom as you deliver the feedback.

Then summarize your feedback in your mind. Think about **2 big areas the preacher did well** and **1 big area he could do better**. We might want to cram as many points into our feedback to be comprehensive, but this compromises on clarity and retention of feedback (even if it is positive feedback). So, think about which big areas to affirm/ critique that will **best encourage expository preaching**.

Give the feedback respectfully but truthfully. Honour the preacher as appointed by God and God's people to speak. Treat him as a fellow brother in Christ. But truthfully and sincerely give him the 2+1 areas of feedback.

Be as specific as you can with examples. Example: "It was really helpful when you said" or "Could you show me again where you saw...? I might have missed your explanation." Specific examples make good feedback because both you and the preacher can have a concrete basis for agreement or disagreement.

Lastly, end the feedback with prayer, either praying with the preacher or on your own.