

Delivery

Detailed Outline

Part 1 of 4

We want to look now at delivery. You've studied, you have your material, you have an outline, you have illustrations, application, and some practical helps. Now you have to deliver the message. That is what we are going to talk about in these next few sessions.

It was Erasmus who long ago wrote these words:

"If elephants can be trained to dance, lions to play, and leopards to hunt, surely preachers can be taught to preach." – Erasmus

And then, Craddock said these words:

"Concert pianists continue to run the scales. Tennis professionals who have already won Wimbledon still take lessons. Can anyone think of a reason why a preacher should not work regularly with his skill?" – Craddock

We should work regularly at our speaking. In fact, throughout all of life, even if you teach for 30 or 40 years, you can improve. Sometimes we fall into very bad habits, and we don't even know it.

I. Time and Message Material

A. Take control of the time.

This is where many teachers and preachers fail. They do not control their material or their time, and they let it get out of control. Let me illustrate this by the six points we gave in the introductory lecture on sermon structure.

Look at the first point, Lesson One: Always Be Creative in Your Prayer Life.

SIX LESSONS IN PRAYER (Ephesians 6:18–20)

Lesson One: Always Be Creative in Your Prayer Life—*"with all prayer and petition"*

Lesson Two: Always Be in a Spirit of Prayer—*"pray at all times"*

Lesson Three: Always Be Praying in the Power of the Spirit—*"in the Spirit"*

Lesson Four: Always Be Watching and Praying—*"Be on the alert with all perseverance and petition"*

Lesson Five: Always Be Praying for Others—*"for all the saints"*

Lesson Six: Always Be Praying for Missionaries and the Gospel

- Pray for clarity in the gospel
- Prayer for courage

1. Don't spend too much time on a single point.

There are six points total, but you could spend your entire sermon on the first point. Here's the problem: you look at the first point, and it has so many wonderful aspects to it.

But your main point is Lesson 5: Always Be Praying for Others. So if you spend 20 minutes on the first point, you won't be able to finish your sermon. Or you'll get to the heart of your sermon and only be able to say a few things about your main point. Of course, you could go over time, but you'd make everyone mad at you.

2. Don't let an illustration get out of control.

Controlling your material and your time is your job. It is not the listener's job. Be careful of an illustration going on and on, or the introduction going too far.

When you are doing public speaking, there is a lot of adrenaline running into your body. Consequently, you will register time differently. It seems to go so fast for you, but for the audience it can seem like an eternity.

If you don't control the time and your material, they will get out of control. Then you will be frustrated, and you will frustrate your audience terribly too. Learn to know your points and how to move through them and how much time to give to each one.

3. Don't over-talk, be too wordy, or repeat yourself.

Be careful of over-talking and wordiness, saying the same thing three or four times just with different words. It drains people. Don't repeat yourself.

Illustration: I once heard this preacher who was speaking to almost two hundred young people from the inner city. It was at night, and the young people were tired. After about 20 minutes, the speaker was wrapping up the sermon. But he didn't know how to "land the plane." So he basically preached the entire 20-minute sermon again! He used different words and different illustrations, but he basically said the same thing. Then when he came to the end of the next 20 minutes, I couldn't believe it—he taught the same thing for another 20 minutes! The poor young people were in agony. He'd lost his audience and he didn't even realize it. They were either sleeping or very frustrated. After the meeting, people didn't even want to go back the next day.

Don't repeat everything! People can get it the first time. Or they can get the recording later. If something takes 10 minutes to say, don't take 20 minutes.

B. How to manage your time

When you prepare a sermon, here is what I do and I find it very helpful in getting through all my points. In the sample sermon, I have six points. These are all important points to me. Every one of them is a sermon in itself. But I can't give six sermons on this one passage. I've got to cover these two verses in one sermon. So I have to know how to move through each point and time each one.

1. Identify the heart of your message.

The first thing I have to do is know where is the heart of the sermon. Where do I want the lightening to strike? Where do I want to come down hard on my application and drive the point home, convict the mind, move the heart, challenge people?

In our sample sermon, it is Lesson Five: Always Be Praying for Others—“praying for all the saints.” I want to hit that point hard. I want to challenge the church to always pray for one another in this great battle we are in against Satan and his whole demonic host. We need to be bearing up one another in prayer!

2. Decide how you want to move through your points.

After I identify the heart of my sermon, next I do is this: I take my message that is all done, with my outline, sub-points, illustration, application. I lay the whole thing out on a table. I identify where is my key point, where I want to spend the bulk of my time. Where do I move quickly through the sermon? Where do I slow down? Where do I really emphasize what I want to say? Where do I want to walk away from my notes and just speak to the congregation right from my heart?

3. Place time markers in your manuscript.

Mark on your notes where you should be at what time, and know where you want to spend the bulk of your time. That means there will be material you have to dump or that you can't use anymore. You have to be able to make that judgment while you're speaking. You need to be able to say, “I can't go into this now because I'm not at my main point.”

So I have a little conversation with myself, I lay the notes out and I put time indicators. For example, by 11:30, I have to be at this point. If I'm not at my main point by 11:30, I'm not going to get there. I want to have plenty of time to be controlled and relaxed and be able to focus. Very often, the Holy Spirit will bring even better ideas to you. He'll move you, the speaker. But I have to have time for that big point.

So, control the time, control the material, and do this by laying it out. Know your key points, and know how much time you can spend on each one. Learn how to move through your points and not get bogged down or let the material get out of control. Otherwise, you will not be able to accomplish what the Spirit wants you to do.

Delivery

Detailed Outline

Part 2 of 4

We are looking at the subject of delivery. We've looked at handling your material and watching your time. I want to remind you that you are the package. The message is the gospel and the teachings of Jesus Christ and his apostles. You are the clay jar. You have to present the content and it has to come through the grid of you – your hand motions, your eyes, and your face. That's just the way it is.

We want to be effective speakers. Therefore, we should understand how this process of delivering a message works. Being effective also includes having good illustrations, studying hard, knowing your material, having a good outline, and having a good application. But you have to deliver it in an interesting way.

II. Be Yourself

Never try to be someone else. You may watch great preachers or teachers, and you might be tempted to copy them. We all do to some extent. But remember God made you to be your own person. You are unique and God wants to use you with your personality and all your different features. We learn from other people, but we don't try to be other people. Be natural, be yourself. Use your natural voice.

Spurgeon, in speaking to his students, said this.

I return to my rule—use your natural voices. Do not be monkeys, but men; not parrots, but men of originality in all things . . . I would repeat this rule till I wearied you if I thought you would forget it: be natural, be natural, be natural evermore. – Spurgeon

I realize that what we are talking about can be manipulative. But we are looking at basic elements in delivery. We are not considering any kind of manipulation but improvement of the natural skills of good communication.

III. Simple and Clear

A. Be clear, direct, simple, and obvious.

Your intent is this: to take difficult, complex, in-depth material and to make it understandable and clear. It is not your intention to make the material even more complex. There was a preacher I knew, and every time he finished preaching, people would say, "I'm confused! I'm more confused than when I started. I thought I understood that subject. Now I'm confused." That is not your job! Most people are already confused. Your job is to take God's Word and make it clear and understandable and simple.

Let's take our example of Ephesians 6, the sermon about prayer. You can show the different Greek words for prayer. You can maybe comment on some of the complexities and mysteries of prayer. But don't make it more complex and confusing. The people should leave and say, "He

really opened my mind to understand these difficult doctrines,” such as persevering prayer (v. 18). If you can, in three simple points, give an explanation about preserving prayer, people will leave understanding that doctrine.

B. A good outline and illustrations help to make things clear.

In one book on preaching, the author says there are three rules for preaching: be clear, be clear, and be clear. It is not your job to confuse and to mystify people or spellbound them with your knowledge. Don't ever try to show off your knowledge. You aren't that smart anyway, and your audience will see right through it.

IV. Voice

Your voice is the tool God has given you to communicate. It is very complex in how God has created it. But it is a wonderful tool, and you have to use your voice to communicate the most wonderful message in the world—the gospel—and all the wonderful teachings of the Word of God.

Let's talk about the voice and how you can always improve it.

A. Inflection

You are to use pitch, loudness, and speed in the range of your voice. When you are teaching, don't be monotone. Don't just talk at the same pitch. Your voice has great deal of range. You can go up high if you need to, and you can come down very low. You can also use different speeds, which we will look at next.

If you naturally speak in monotone, you can work on this and you can change. Anyone can!

B. Speed

Sometimes, we should talk very slowly. It causes the audience to draw in. Other times, you're moving through your material and you need to pick up your speed. It is good to speak with different speeds.

In our Ephesians 6 message, you may want to speak about the Roman soldier or the ambassador as an illustration. You don't want to spend much time on that. So you move with more speed and get through that material. Also, you have six major points in our outline, so two of them you want to move through quite rapidly. You don't want to slow down. But when you get to that key point, you're going to slow down. You want people to really concentrate on what you are saying.

Do not speak at the same speed all the time.

C. Silence and pause

1. This is a powerful element in speech.

In our sample sermon, we want to emphasize prayer. You'll say something like this: "I want to speak now on my fifth point, and it is my most important point." And then pause for a moment, for about 5 seconds. Your audience will lean forward. This is really important and significant, and they are waiting now. Then you will say, "Pray for all the

saints. I really want to challenge you in this terrible warfare we are in, please pray for all the saints.”

Eric Alexander is considered one of the greatest preachers in the world, and no one uses pause and silence better than he does. It is very effective. Don't use it too much.

Particularly when you come to a close of a message and you're trying to communicate again the solemnity and importance of what you're saying, lower your voice way down. Make people work a little bit to hear you. And speak very slowly and softly and use pauses.

2. Know your audience.

You always have to read your audience. Are you talking to energetic junior high children? Are you talking to little tiny children? Are you talking to adults or scholars? Always identify your audience. For most audiences, when you get to an important point, you need to slow down so they track with you.

3. Use a proper tone for the circumstance.

- a) When you are at a funeral, you need to use the proper tone of voice. You have to use a slower pace and a lower voice.
- b) Illustration: I remember once going to a funeral. I was absolutely shocked that the entire funeral, the speaker was preaching and yelling at the audience and raising his voice. It was totally inappropriate for the audience. The poor people were there and their child had died. He needed to use a very somber, sober, quiet and gentle voice. That doesn't mean he couldn't pick up speed or use a little higher pitch or inflection or more intensity. But to yell and speak like you're in a coliseum, it was the wrong atmosphere and the wrong audience.

D. Normal, conversational speech

This is very effective. Sometimes when you are speaking, maybe you are very tied to your notes or using your notes heavily, walk away from the lectern. Walk away from your notes and come out to your audience. Maybe even put one hand in your pocket and just talk to the audience. Talk to them like you're talking to one person in front of you, in a conversational style. You are very serious about something. You want them to understand this particular point. Just talk like you would talk normally. It lets people know, this is something that is deeply moving to you and that you want them to get this.

E. Not loudness but intensity

1. It isn't about loudness. Some people think the presence of the Holy Spirit is obvious if you scream at the top of your voice and just keep yelling. Loudness hurts the ears and grates on the nerves. It shocks people.
2. Illustration: One time, I was with a camp director at a camp, and another staff member and I were sitting on his front porch in the middle of the summer. We could hear far away in the camp chapel, the preacher was screaming. We waited a little while, but he went on for twenty minutes! We decided to go down there and see what was happening. We were

actually concerned about the children that were listening. We got down there outside the auditorium, and this man was yelling and screaming. After the meeting, we talked to him a little bit and his voice was almost gone. He could hardly talk. You see, he thought the volume at which he spoke showed the power of the Holy Spirit. Well, if it was the Holy Spirit, why was his voice now gone? He was misusing his voice, and this would only damage his message with the children. He didn't use any pause or slow down at all. It was actually very ineffective and grating on the audience's nerves.

3. It isn't about loudness but about intensity. That's what you want to use. You want people to feel the intensity of your emotions and what you want to say to them. Sometimes it will be loud, but not loud to the point of annoying. Don't hurt people's ears.

F. Improve your voice

You can improve your voice and your use of it. You may never have thought about your voice, but it has a great deal of range and it can be improved. There are many books on this, and most preaching books will have something on the voice. You may want to study about the voice because it is the tool God has given you in order to do your preaching and teaching. All good teachers use their voices well. So study some about the voice.

G. Guard your voice

It is far more fragile than you realize. I have met a number of people who have lost their voice. Back in 1990, I lost my voice for one solid year. I had no voice. I had to write everything down. It was horrible, especially when you're a person that likes to talk! It took a year to be able to talk again, and another four years to get back any sort of normality. So I learned how important it is to care for your voice. Learn to use it properly.

Delivery

Detailed Outline *Part 3 of 4*

V. Animation

We want to look now at animation. When you speak, you are to be animated with your whole body – your hands, your eyes, your face, and your feet. You are talking to living people, so be alive!

When we communicate, we don't just use our voice, although that's the most important tool. We also communicate with our face. Let's look at animation and the different parts of our body.

A. Body language

We communicate through the whole of our body, by:

1. Walking around,
2. Leaning forward,
3. Sitting back,
4. Looking relaxed or
5. Looking intense.

Especially when speaking to children, you need to walk around a lot and get right in front of their faces.

B. Hand motions

1. Illustration: Luke records in the book of Acts, "And Paul spoke and he lifted his hands," or "he raised his hands." Paul must have spoken with his hands a lot.
2. Illustration: I have some very good Italian friends. I always tell the Italians they talk with their hands constantly. It is very exciting to watch them, and they are very animated and excitable as they talk to you. You have to concentrate on what they are saying.
3. As you speak about prayer in our sample sermon, put your hands in a posture of prayer. Put your head down like you are praying. Lift your hands in prayer as you explain to the audience that we have this incredible ministry of intercession for other people. We are to be praying for other people. We are believer-priests! What a wonderful ministry this is! As you're speaking to them about the ministry of intercession, raise your hands. Look up into the heavens. All of these movements visualize what you're saying with your mouth. Use your fingers. Use your fist, or your open palm. Use your hands to appeal to the people.
4. You must be careful what culture you're in. In some cultures, if you point your index finger, it's very offensive. In other cultures, though, it is a very strong hand movement pointing to something important. Therefore, you need to know the culture in which you are speaking and which hand movements are appropriate.

Hand movements can give you great power in speaking and they compel people to listen.

C. Facial movement

Your face can express all kinds of emotion. When you're speaking and you're excited about the Word of God, your face should express that. You shouldn't look like it's killing you to teach! You shouldn't, as an African American preacher I knew said, look like you've been baptized in lemon juice and weaned on a dill pickle!

Use your eyes and the direction of your head. If you're talking about prayer, you may want to put your head down or lift it up. You may want to smile or look really sad. Your face is a powerful instrument, animating you and communicating what you feel.

D. Smile

1. When you get up to speak, it is a good thing to start by smiling. When you get up and you smile at the audience, it tells the people you're happy and you're joyous. You can't wait to get into the sermon. People will respond to you in kind. But if it looks like it's going to kill you to preach, they're going to think, "That poor man, I really feel sorry for him. He has to do this for 45 minutes. I have a good book to read, though."
2. You can train yourself to smile more. Some people do not smile naturally, but you can train yourself. At first, it will almost be forced to smile, but after a while, the muscles involved will build and it will become more natural.
3. We don't do this to manipulate people. It is simply a fact of life that when you smile, you communicate joy and excitement.

E. Posture

Be very careful that you don't slouch over or bend over the pulpit unless you absolutely have to. I recently heard a 96-year-old man speak, and he had to hold onto that lectern so he would be able to stand. That's okay. When you're 96, you can do that.

Stand up straight! Have strength when you're speaking.

F. Be alive

You're talking to living people, so be alive when you speak. If, in your speaking, you can move around and walk around, come to the side of the lectern or stand behind it. In the right situation, you can even walk right out into the audience, particularly with young people. Even if you're in a seated position in a home Bible study, you can shift around or stand.

All of this is very, very important especially if you're speaking to children. With children, you must be animated. Use your voice, your face, your hands, and your feet. Move close to them or step back. Keep them with you! Look them straight in the eye. Then step back and look away. They will follow you much better.

VI. Humor

A. A great tool

The biological change that occurs in people's faces and bodies when they laugh is interesting. They are enjoying the message and they are able to express themselves through laughter. It certainly works very well, and it keeps the audience with you.

B. Great dangers in using humor

Don't try to be funny. Humor has to be natural. If you aren't a naturally funny or humorous kind of person, do not try to be that. It is very dangerous. But if you can naturally say something humorous, it can be very effective in keeping the audience awake and it puts a very positive tone to the entire message. People look forward to something that brings laughter because there's great medicine in laughter.

C. Preaching is serious business

Teaching the Word of God is very serious business. You're working with lives. You want transformation. You aren't just giving people a bunch of facts. You want to move their brain and their heart and cause change in their behavior. We don't want to just keep people laughing.

D. Keep humor under control

It must go along with the message and not be something totally unrelated. That's why you need to be very careful of jokes. A joke or humorous story needs to fit. So use humor cautiously.

Illustration: I heard about a preacher who started an Easter message with a very humorous joke or story, and it was totally appropriate to the message! It got the audience immediately to laugh hilariously and it gave a positive tone to the whole atmosphere. Then the preacher went into a very serious message on the resurrection. It was a very good message.

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VII. Passion and Energy

Be interested in your subject. Show excitement. Put yourself into your subject, and exhaust yourself with it. Let people know that this subject excites you.

God gave us a hormone called adrenaline. When you start to teach or preach, that adrenaline starts to rush inside of you. That is to give you energy and to pep you up and give you the excitement about your subject.

If we look at our sample sermon, what an interesting subject—Ephesians 6:18–20! Look at v. 12.

“For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.” (Eph. 6:12 ESV)

If that doesn’t get your energy up and your passion going, I don’t know what will. We are in cosmic warfare! This is real! This war is being fought on your TV, in movies, in magazines, and in advertising, and in universities. It is in the air we breathe. The prince of the power of the air is coming at us day and night. He wants to consume your children!

This passage speaks of these things. You need to show some passion about it. Don’t be dull—show some energy.

Let people know that this is really important, that it is real and relevant to them today.

If you don’t show some energy and passion, they aren’t going to think it is that vital. They will look at the passage and think, “Hmm, this is very interesting. Heavenly warfare . . . Ho-hum.”

No, you need to show the people that this is something that is going to change their lives. It could mean the loss of their children’s spiritual lives.

We need to take up the full armor of God and to be strong in the Lord. But people aren’t going to believe you when you say these things if you don’t have any passion or energy about the subject!

I personally find that this is a very energetic subject. It is not a boring one. It is a subject that affects you all day long.

So you need to have that passion when you are speaking about great subjects. It creates interest in your listeners. They sit up and perk up as they hear from you that this is important you and they hear and feel your energy.

VIII. Authority

This goes very closely with energy and passion. You are to speak with authority. Titus 2:15 says this, as Paul speaks to Titus:

“Declare these things [the teachings Paul has just given Titus]: exhort and rebuke with all authority. Let no one disregard you.” (Titus 2:15)

Notice, exhort and rebuke with all authority. In 1 Peter 4:11, speaking to all Christians, it says,

“Whoever speaks [in other words, if you have the spiritual gift of teaching, or any utterance gift], as one who speaks oracles of God.” (1 Peter 4:11)

A. Speak with conviction

1. We need to speak with conviction.
 - a) Conviction is a very important word in preaching and teaching.
 - b) People need to look at you and say, “That man believes what he teaches.”
 - c) They need to know that you have studied and done your homework, that you are credible and have knowledge.
 - d) Then they will believe you.
2. So you need to speak with authority.
 - a) Now, it’s not your authority.
 - b) The authority you’re speaking with is the Word of God. You’ve carefully studied it, you’ve sought to be accurate, you’re delivering it with power and energy, and you show conviction and strong belief.
 - c) People should be hearing from the Lord God through you. And they should be moved.
 - d) You are an ambassador relaying a message from the King of Kings and Lord of Lords! He has put that message in you to speak, even though you are a jar of clay. In that jar of clay is a message of eternal life, the promise of God to give us eternal life.

B. Don’t apologize for God’s truth

1. Illustration: I remember once a couple came to our church and I was talking to them for a while. I asked them what had happened at their church. They said, “Our pastor apologizes for just about everything. For anything that’s offensive to society in the Word of God, he has to apologize and excuse it. Sometimes he won’t even speak about certain subjects. We got tired of these constant apologies for what God says.”
2. You are to be apologists and defend the faith, but you shouldn’t be apologizing!
3. You are to come and speak the Word of God, just like the great prophets and the voice of God in the Old Testament. Be the voice and oracle of God – not you yourself, but on the authority of the truth of what you are proclaiming, that you have studied and you have knowledge and conviction of.
4. Illustration: I once asked a student at a certain seminary to tell me about his teachers and which teacher he really liked. He said the name of a certain teacher. I asked him why this teacher was so good and why so many students liked him. Here’s what the student said to me: “He’s got conviction. He knows what he’s talking about.”

5. I think that is very important, that we speak with authority based on the Word of God.
 - a) That doesn't mean you know everything, and there's nothing wrong with saying that you don't know a lot about a certain subject or that you're still studying.
 - b) But that's not apologizing. You're simply admitting that you don't know everything!
 - c) When we come to the basics of the Christian faith and what is clear, you should speak with authority as God's voice and God's ambassador.
6. When we come together to be taught or to hear the proclamation of the Word, there should be a sense in which people expect to meet with God.
 - a) We are hearing from God.
 - b) And you as the teacher need to take that very seriously.
 - c) God's voice. Don't be afraid to shake people and to command, direct and charge them. You're doing it based on what God has said, just like the great prophets of old, the apostles, the evangelists and the great teachers of God's word did in the past.

IX. Visual Aids

A. Introduction

1. We learn through the ears but we also learn through the eye.
2. It is interesting to see statistics that show us exactly how much people forget after hearing a message.
3. In fact, they forget so much that it is discouraging.
 - a) You'll wonder, "Why have I done all this work when they will leave here and within an hour they will have forgotten 80 percent of it?"
 - b) Have you ever talked to a child coming out of their Sunday school class? Ask them this: "What did you learn today?" They will almost all say the same thing: "I don't know..." I often feel sorry for their teachers. They are learning, but they just can't articulate it yet.
 - c) Adults forget, too! So if you can use visual aids, such as handouts, outlines, or PowerPoint, they are very helpful to your audience.

B. Keep People Awake

1. I like to use PowerPoint.
 - a) I have noticed that, in using PowerPoint, people that used to sleep come awake.
 - b) A lot of people have a hard time following complex material, and the Bible can be very difficult. Some parts of it are easy, but others are difficult.
2. So if we're teaching a passage like Ephesians 6, I'll put a picture of a Roman soldier and pictures of the pieces of armor on the PowerPoint. Or put key words on the slideshow, maybe a Greek word with its explanation.

3. You might even want to outline the grammar of the passage for them up on the screen.
4. All these things help to keep the people's attention.

C. Especially important with children

1. If this is important with adults, how much more important is this with children?
2. When speaking to children use visual aids.
 - a) They have a very hard time concentrating on some of the deep things we are teaching them.
 - b) But if you can illustrate it and give them a picture or a video or a slideshow in telling the story, you will see their eyes wide open, listening to you.
 - c) I have spoken to children for years. I knew right from the earliest days that using visual aids keeps the children awake and is very powerful and effective.

Whatever you have to do, do it to communicate the truth of God's Word.

X. Power of the Spirit of Prayer

A. Never speak without dependent prayer.

We can be very intelligent and have all the preparation in the world. But if the Holy Spirit isn't working, you're just speaking to the ceiling. You want the Holy Spirit to take your study, your outline, your sub-points, your illustrations, your application, your delivery and speak to the heart and mind and bring about life change. Unless the Lord works through your sermon, you labor in vain.

B. Ask God to work through you and to give you clarity of mind and fluency of speech.

1. When the Spirit of God is working through you, sometimes thoughts come to you and you never planned them.
2. You should plan and you should study, but you should also have a sense of freedom that the Spirit of God may work in ways that you didn't exactly plan.
3. So we have the human element and the divine element happening at the same time. I have my notes and my outline, but I must always allow the Spirit to move me and change my sermon. You have to allow that freedom!
4. That is one reason why you are doing yourself a great disservice if you just read your notes. I have good notes and I've done my study, but I want the liberty of the Spirit. As I'm speaking, I want the Spirit to lead me and to show me things that I haven't seen yet.
5. I have experienced this many times. I thought I was going to emphasize a certain point, but by the time I was done, it was a different point. It was the point that the audience had needed to hear. Do your homework, then allow the Spirit to work.

C. Confess any sin.

Before you teach or preach on any level, ask the Holy Spirit to work in you and through you, to give you that liberty of spirit, mind and heart. You want to sense the Holy Spirit working in you and through your words.

D. Illustration

One time, I was in Indonesia speaking at a church Sunday morning. Right next to the church was a mosque. Just to tease the Christians, the mosque would use their powerful speaker system and blast it just as the preacher was speaking. I was speaking on Ephesians 6 and spiritual warfare, when all of a sudden, these monstrous speakers come on! Everyone is looking around. I'm speaking and talking to the Lord at the same time, asking Him to shut down their speakers. All of a sudden, I realized my sermon was being illustrated in real-life! So I turned my sermon around and used that illustration.

Let the Spirit work through you. Be prayerful and dependent upon God. Never preach or teach in your own strength. Be humbled by your own inabilities and ineffectiveness, and cry out to God for help.

Use all of these tools that we've discussed. Do your best to be effective in teaching God's Word. Ask God for a passion to keep improving your teaching. Even if you've taught for 30 years, you can improve! Keep on asking for a passion to improve your teaching and to be most effective for God.