

DIG & DISCOVER PRINCIPLES

WordPartners Training



WORD
PARTNERS



WordPartners, 2023

Dig & Discover Principles

Edition 5.0

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Welcome!

You are holding a booklet that contains the “Dig & Discover” principles taught by WordPartners as we seek to elevate God’s life-giving Word in the hearts, lives, and ministries of pastors and their people.

Why this booklet?

We believe God’s Word gives life.

Man shall not live by bread alone,
but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.

– Matthew 4:4

The law of the LORD is perfect,
reviving the soul;
the testimony of the LORD is sure,
making wise the simple;
the precepts of the LORD are right,
rejoicing the heart;
the commandment of the LORD is pure,
enlightening the eyes;
the fear of the LORD is clean,
enduring forever;
the rules of the LORD are true,
and righteous altogether.
More to be desired are they than gold,
even much fine gold;
sweeter also than honey
and drippings of the honeycomb.
Moreover, by them is your servant warned;
in keeping them there is great reward.

– Psalm 19:7-11

When God’s living Word is faithfully proclaimed, its life goes deep and spreads wide. Our vision is **“to see the Word of God flowing powerfully through every church to every nation.”**

The principles in this booklet are key to that desire. They are designed to help us understand and be transformed by the living Word of God and to bring that transformation to others. They are integral in developing leaders to advance the movement of God's Word.

What will this booklet do?

These principles will help us

- become better readers of God's Word;
- be transformed by God's Word;
- grow in confidence and skill in proclaiming God's Word; and
- shepherd others with the transformation God is seeking.

The goal is to become better at preaching God's Word in an expository way.

What is expository preaching? Put simply, expository preaching means that the transformational message of the text of Scripture is the point of the sermon.

How is this booklet designed?

It begins with a conviction, "The Line." The task of the preacher or teacher is to stay on the line of God's Word. The principles that follow discipline us to live out that conviction and lead us to the author's main idea and transformational intent which we will proclaim.

Reflecting on the principles of Biblical Theology and Text and Framework in relation to the intent will increase our ability to proclaim the glories of Christ in a way that challenges our culture.

Taken as a whole, these principles help us to construct a sermon that proclaims the author's message and shepherds the listeners with the transformation God intends.

A Benefit and a Caution

The benefit of a booklet like this is that it lifts the burden from the preacher. He no longer needs to depend upon his own ingenuity but instead has the necessary tools to confidently and faithfully proclaim the living Word of God.

However, this booklet also comes with a caution. Preaching God's Word can never be reduced to just a set of principles. We must use these, or any others, as servants to the process of transformation. The preacher who proclaims God's Word in humble and profound dependence on God's Spirit will be God's instrument of life and will bring glory to his name.

The Line¹

What does this mean?

The line represents God's Word. The task of the preacher or teacher is to stay on the line. He is not to go above it, saying more than what God says, or go below it, saying less than what God says. He is to stay on the line by saying what God says.

How does this work?



- In many countries, before one can testify in a court of law, he must take an oath: “Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth so help you God?” A faithful witness will not say more than the truth or less than the truth. He will say the truth.
- To go above the line and say more is to add to what God has said. This is the error of legalism.
- To go below the line and say less is to subtract from what God has said. This is the error of liberalism and license.
- Adding to or subtracting from the line can sound different, but they share the same fundamental problem: they are off the line and distort what God has said.
- Preaching and teaching God's Word require that we carefully listen to what God has said. (See especially Deuteronomy 4:1-2; Proverbs 30:5-6; Revelation 22:18-19.)

Why is this important?²

- God has spoken. God is a speaking God. From the beginning of time, his sovereign words have proved powerful to bring life.³
- It is written. God recorded his Word. In time God worked through men to preserve his words for every generation.⁴

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² We are indebted to Peter Adam (*Speaking God's Words: A Practical Theology of Preaching*) for the expression “God has spoken. It is written. Preach the Word.” Taking our cue from Deuteronomy 32:45-47, we have added the phrase *This Word is your life*.

³ Genesis 1:1-2:3; Psalm 19:7-11; Isaiah 55:9-11; John 1:1-5.

⁴ Exodus 34:27-33; Deuteronomy 29:29; 31:9-13; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:16-21.

-
- Preach the Word. God commands that his Word be proclaimed. God made it clear that his spokesmen are to say what he has said – nothing more and nothing less.⁵
 - This Word is your life. God gives life through his Word. Our words, opinions, and thoughts have no power to transform lives. God’s Spirit works through God’s Word to spread his peace and joy and the hope of eternal life to his people.⁶

⁵ Exodus 4:10-16; Deuteronomy 4:1-2; 1 Samuel 3:1-21; Joshua 1:7-8; 2 Timothy 2:14-19; 4:1-8; Revelation 22:18-19.

⁶ Genesis 1:1-3; Deuteronomy 32:45-47; Ezekiel 36:1-38; John 3:1-17; Acts 1:8; Acts 2:1-48; 2 Corinthians 3:1-18; 2 Peter 1:21.

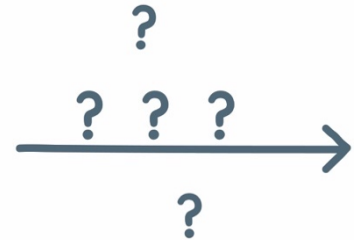
Good Questions

What does this mean?

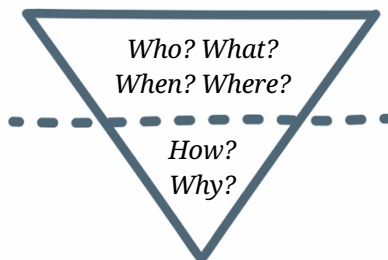
A good question leads us down the path of the author's thought and helps us discover his intent.

How does this work?

- The author is leading us down a path to a destination (his intent). Good questions lead us down that path. Other questions may be interesting but will take us off course. We must be careful to answer good questions and let misleading ones go.
- Good questions are imperative for making good observations about the text.
- There are two types of good questions: basic and powerful.
 - Basic questions form an essential foundation and starting point. They help us identify information and ideas in the text. These questions are about who, what, when, and where.
 - Powerful questions go beyond basic ones. They help us understand the reasoning and intent of the text. These questions are about why and how.
 - Begin by asking basic questions; then be sure to move to more powerful ones.



*From **basic questions** about
information and ideas . . .*



*. . . to **powerful questions**
about reasoning and intent*

- Powerful questions require more curiosity, discernment, and perseverance than basic questions.

Why is this important?

- This is the starting point for staying on the line and is a skill used in all the principles that follow.
- It leads to astute, sharp observations that get to the main idea and transformational intent of the author.
- It helps our preaching move beyond ideas and information *about* the text to the precise message and change that God desires *from* the text.

Genre

What does this mean?

In literature, genre is a specific kind, or type, of writing.

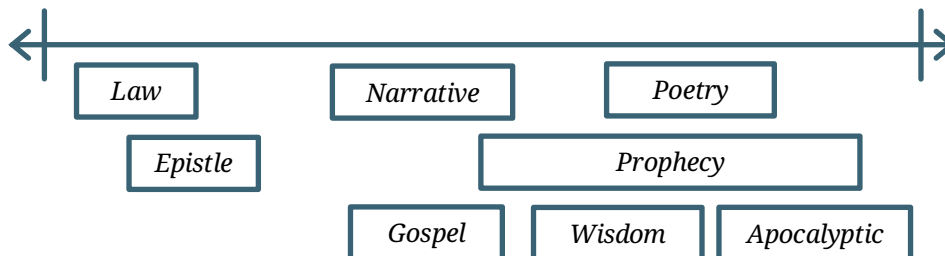
How does this work?

- Different types of fruit have distinct characteristics, and we approach each one differently to eat it. Different genres have distinct characteristics, and we approach each one differently as we study.
- Different genres include, story (narrative), poetry, letter, etc.
- We recognize and approach them on their terms by their nature and design.
- The Bible includes many types of genres. We can classify each book by a primary genre (narrative, prophecy, epistle, etc.). Many include subgenres (for example, the genealogies of Genesis are part of narrative) or other genres (for example, the poetry in Jonah 2).
- Below is a spectrum that compares the way language is used in several types of genre. While genre tends to lean in one direction or the other, it may also include characteristics on the other side of the spectrum.



Use of language:

- *Direct*
- *Concrete*
- *Propositional*



- The author intentionally chose the genre to suit his message and purpose.

Tone and Mood

- Embedded in every message is the author's tone; his attitude toward his topic. He may write with joy, encouragement, rebuke, sorrow, or other attitudes. Tone is expressed in writing through the descriptions, verbs, and expressions the author uses.
- The author intentionally uses tone through the genre to create a mood in the reader. This mood is the attitude the author intended for the reader to respond with. For example, the author may use a tone of rebuke intending a response of repentance from the reader, or he may use a tone of

joy to create thanksgiving or encouragement in the reader. The intended transformation is not just our actions but our attitudes, also.

- Why is tone and mood important? Preaching from any genre must be done with the author's tone and aimed at creating the intended mood in the hearer in order to shepherd the transformation God intends.

Why is this important?

- It is one of the first questions that must be asked, because it leads to a natural and correct understanding of the author's message, purpose, and tone.
- It guides us to see the structure inherent in the text.
- It builds our skill to proclaim God's Word in a way that captures and clarifies the author's message, purpose, and tone.

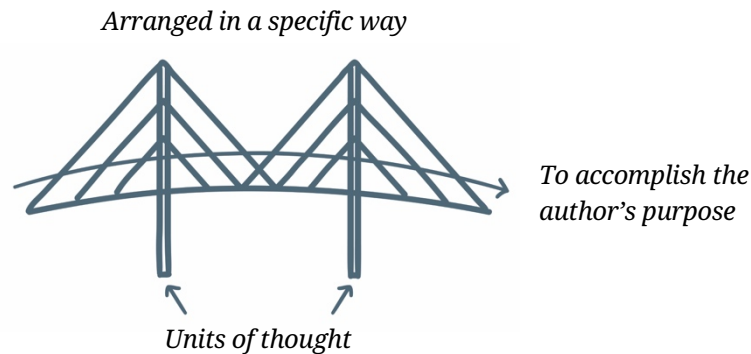
Primary Characteristics of Different Genres

<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Law</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Covenant relationship - The parts of a covenant: history, stipulations, promises (blessings and curses) - Instruction - To reflect God's character, purposes - For tone, look for threats, promises, motivations 	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Poetry</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parallelism - Images and metaphor - Emotion - Expression of the human heart - Easily remembered - Songs and prayers - For tone, look for extended imagery, emotional expressions, questions 	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Prophecy</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Covenant relationship - Judgment with promises of hope - Layers of fulfillment - Emotive - Images - God's greatness and holiness - God's activity in the world - For tone, look for intense imagery, indictments, warnings, promises 	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Gospel</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Biographical with distinct perspectives of Biblical theology - Arrival of the promised king - Proclamation and a call for response - Storyline - For tone, look for actions, responses, questions, pace
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Historical Narrative</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The parts of a story, including the climax and resolution - Smaller stories unfold a larger story - Major and minor characters - God, the ultimate character - Dialogue - Scenes - The narrator framing the story - For tone, look for descriptions of characters and settings, actions, responses 	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Wisdom Literature</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Poetic, figurative, and memorable rather than literal and precise - General principles rather than absolute promises - Concerned with practical living and reality rather than purely theological ideas - Founded on the fear of the Lord - For tone, look for descriptions, contrasts, outcomes 	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Parable</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Illustration of spiritual truth designed to surprise and challenge - Judgment for some; encouragement, clarity for others - Details that support an overall main point - May illustrate a teaching that comes before or after - For tone, look for surprises, descriptions of characters and settings 	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Epistle</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Situation - Theological truths connected to the occasion - Propositional truth with a logical flow of thought - Truth leading to application - For tone, look for descriptions of the audience and setting, powerful verbs
			<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Apocalyptic</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Symbolic imagery - End of time - God's coming judgment and salvation - A call to endure, believe - For tone, look for intense imagery, dramatic action, threats, promises

Structure

What does this mean?

Structure refers to units of thought arranged in a specific way to accomplish the author's purpose.



How does this work?

The writer uses a structure that fits the genre. While genre influences the way we approach structure, some elements of structure are common in all genres. As in the bridge illustration, we find

- Units of Thought
 - A unit is a portion of material held together by a unity of thought. You recognize a new unit in two ways:
 - There is a change of subject or development of thought.
 - This change is often signaled by key words or phrases (i.e., *however*, *but*, *therefore*, *in addition*, *finally*, etc.)
- Arranged in a Specific Way
 - In good writing, these units bear a relationship to one another. Design and development are at work here.
 - You recognize this design and development by looking for patterns, such as repetitions, progressions, contrasts/comparisons, transitions/summary statements, climax and resolutions, commands, questions asked and answered, or a change of speaker, time, or location.
 - Ask: How does the passage begin? How does it end? How does one unit of thought connect to the next? How do all of them connect together and develop the author's thoughts? What is the overall shape of the structure?
- To Accomplish the Author's Purpose
 - The author intentionally chose the structure.
 - The structure supports and reveals the main idea and transformational intent of the author.

Steps to finding structure:

1. Identify the genre and how it shapes the structure. (For example, a narrative genre will be structured according to the introduction, rise in tension, climax, and resolution.)
2. Compare the end with the beginning. First, read until you find the natural ending of the passage to make sure you have the right beginning and end of the author's thought. Then, look at the ending in light of the beginning. What's the significance of the conclusion in light of how the author's thoughts began?
3. Look for patterns and shifts in thought. As you read the passage, what kind of patterns do you see that point to the major ideas the author is trying to convey? Also as you read, look for shifts in thought or a change in direction. These can be detected by a change in patterns.

Look especially for:

- Repetitions
- Progressions
- Contrasts and comparisons
- Key transitions or summary statements

Also look for:

- Commands (especially in epistles)
 - A story's climax and resolution (especially in narrative)
 - Questions asked and answered
4. Identify the units of thought. After seeing the patterns and shifts in thought, identify the sections that reflect the development of the author's thoughts.
 5. Describe the major ideas. State the major idea of each unit of thought of the passage.
 6. Find the connections of thought between the major ideas. How does one major idea connect or lead to the next? How do all of them connect together and reveal the emphasis of the author's thoughts?

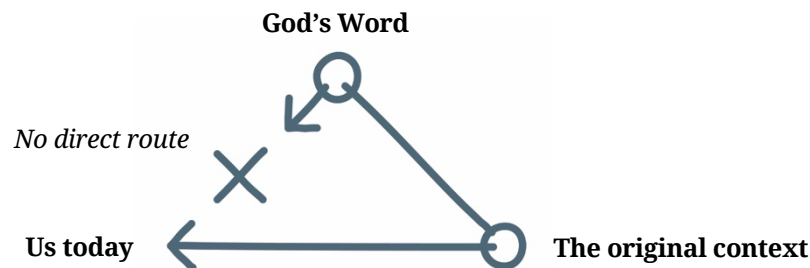
Why is this important?

- It is embedded in the genre and leads us down the path of the author's message.
- It helps us distinguish the parts from the whole and emphasize the main idea.
- It ensures that the shape of the sermon reflects the shape of the author's message.
- It brings confidence to the preacher, and clarity, purpose, and power to what he proclaims.

Traveling Instructions¹

What does it mean?

This principle is about the relationship between context and application. Before we can apply the text, we must carefully observe it in its context. This will help us discover the author's main idea and transformational intent. Then we can make precise and compelling applications aligned with the author's intent.



How does this work?

- No direct route: Often we are tempted to read God's Word and immediately apply it to our lives. This is a shortcut we must not take.
- The original context: Instead, we must do the hard work to understand the text in its original biblical context in order to understand the author's transformational intent for them.
 - The original context includes:
 - The original audience's situation and relationship to the author which can be gleaned from within the book and from elsewhere in the Bible. (For example, Ephesians directs us to travel back to Acts.) Ask, "What was the intent of this message for them?"
 - The units of thought immediately before and after the passage. Ask, "Why does the author say this here?" How does what he says before and after this passage connect to this passage? How does it develop his larger main idea?
 - The use of literary connections with other Scriptures. (For example, Paul uses a reference to Numbers 16 in order to make a point in 2 Timothy 2:14-19.) Ask, "How does the point in the referenced passage connect with the point being made in the later passage?"
 - The key is to understand the right pieces of the context. This involves wrestling with questions like, *What does the author say? Why does he say it in this way? Why does he say it here? What is surprising about it?* These questions lead us to the right information and help us discover the author's main idea and transformational intent.

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- Us today: Now our application of the text will be precise and compelling, shaped by the author's intent. Ask, "In light of the author's transformational intent for his original audience, how should we respond?" What would it actually look like for the authors' transformational intent to be at work in our lives?

Why is this important?

- The goal of preaching is the transformation the author is seeking.
- If we take the shortcut, we will likely misinterpret and misapply the text.
- When we go the long route through the original context,
 - We will be confident that we have understood what the author actually said and the purpose for which he said it, and
 - We will make precise and compelling applications, shaped by the author's transformational intent.

The Main Idea & Transformational Intent

What does this mean?

God has purpose in every book and passage of the Bible. The preacher's task is to proclaim God's message, shepherding people with his purpose.¹ This principle is about the alignment of the author's message in the text (the line) and the preacher's sermon. Both are aimed at transformation in the hearts of the listeners. In other words, the line of the text is the line of the sermon aimed at the heart.



How does this work?

All the previous principles in this booklet help us get to the main idea and transformational intent. This principle is teaching us that God has purpose in his message and that we should proclaim the message with his purpose.

- God has purpose in his message.
 - What are the elements of this message?
 - Main Idea: A summary statement of the author's message stated with his tone (the attitude of the author toward his message)
 - Transformational Intent: The change God is seeking through the author's message with the mood he intended (the attitude of the reader in response to the author's message)
 - How do they work?
 - Main Idea: Ask, "What is the author saying?"
 - In other words: What is the author saying as a whole? What is the author's general idea, and what is he saying specifically about that idea?
 - Write a sentence that is concise yet complete.
 - Tone and Mood: Ask, "How does the author say it?"
 - What perspective, conviction, feelings, etc. does the author express? Write down some words or ideas that express this.
 - What perspective, conviction, feelings, etc. does the author intend to create in the reader? Write down some words or ideas that express this.
 - Restate your main idea in a way that expresses this tone and mood.
 - Transformational Intent: Ask, "Why does the author say it?"
 - What change or response is God seeking in the listener (thoughts, attitudes, behavior, etc.). Write down some words or ideas that express this.

¹ A genuine grasp of the inspiration, authority, inerrancy, and sufficiency of the Scriptures will drive us to utilize the main idea and transformational intent.

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- Restate your main idea in a way that aims it at the transformation intended.
 - Each of these is integrally connected. Tone informs the main idea. Tone and main idea shape the transformational intent.
 - The main idea and transformational intent statement should be general enough to express the whole of the author's thought yet specific enough to differentiate it from other books or passages.
 - We should proclaim his message with his purpose.
 - Make the main idea and transformational intent clear, and organize your sermon around it.
 - State it (along with your main points) in a way that is more didactic (instructive) and less descriptive (informational).
 - Preach with the author's tone.
 - Shepherd people with precise and compelling applications that flow from the transformational intent.

Why is this important?

- It is the culminating point of all the previous principles and helps us express the author's message with his purpose and tone.
- It helps us hear God's intended message and be changed by it.
- It helps us preach God's intended message and bring his transforming power to others.

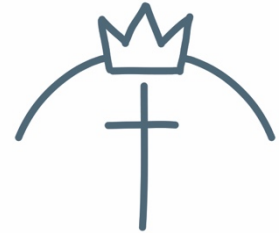
Biblical Theology

What does this mean?

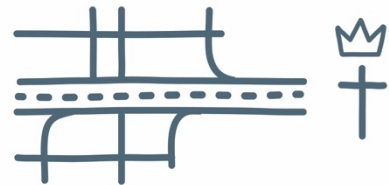
Biblical theology sees the Bible as one story that finds its focus and fulfillment in Jesus. This way of reading the Bible is true to its nature and to God's purpose.

How does this work?

- Three Parts to the Definition
 - One story: The Bible is a library of sixty-six books written by some forty authors over a period of fourteen hundred years. While each book serves a unique purpose, it also adds to the cohesive and progressive story. What is the grand theme of that story? We find it in the final resolution: God will dwell with man; he will be their God and they will be his people (Revelation 21:1-3). When we go back to Genesis 1 and read through the rest of the Bible, we see this was the goal all along.
 - Focus and fulfillment in Jesus: Every part of the story reveals God's work to bring about this grand theme through his Son, Jesus.
 - True to the nature of Scripture and God's purpose in it:
 - This way of reading the Bible is true to its nature (the way it is put together) and to God's purpose (his intention) in it.
 - This is the way Jesus read and taught the Bible (Luke 24:25-27, 44-49 and John 5:39-40).
 - This is the way the disciples came to read and teach it. (For example, consider the apostolic preaching in Acts or the way each Gospel begins).



- Main Highways on a Map
 - We may think about the Bible as a map, and on that map, we see that all roads in the Old Testament lead to Christ. Not all roads are the main highways. The main highways are those passages from which a direct connection to Christ can be clearly seen. But all of the smaller roads, side streets, and alleys eventually connect to the main highways.
 - We may be studying a passage that is on a side road. The important question to ask is: How does this passage get me to the main highway? Or, How does this passage connect with a main theme or passage that points me towards Christ?



- Four Questions for Doing Biblical Theology
 - What is the main idea and transformational intent of this passage or book?
 - How have the key themes in the main idea and transformational intent developed through the Bible's story to this point?
 - What does this tell us about how God works?
 - How has God accomplished these things through Jesus?

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- Six Ways a Passage Could Connect to the Story of the Whole Bible, Finding its Focus and Fulfillment in Christ
 - Prophecies and promises which Jesus brings to pass – often found in the text's quotations and references from elsewhere in the Bible, or direct statements of fulfillment
 - Themes and imagery that Jesus fulfills – biblical themes and shadow-to-reality imagery such as the sacrificial system, rest, covenant, temple/dwelling, kingship, hope, etc.
 - Patterns in how God works which Jesus accomplishes – such as using the weak/unexpected, accomplishing good through suffering, sovereign reversals, etc.
 - Tensions that only get resolved in Jesus – such as judgment/salvation, failing leaders/characters, Gentile inclusion, etc.
 - God's character being given full expression in Jesus
 - Explanations and applications of Jesus' work that empower us in the New Covenant
-

- The Distinctive Nature of Each Testament
 - The Old Testament
 - Many themes: We are introduced to many themes in the story. Like strands of a rope, they come together to reveal God's work in Jesus.
 - Progression: God works through time and the development of Israel's story to lead us to Christ.
 - Expectation: There is increasing failure, judgment and sorrow, but God also gives hope through his promises.
 - Incompleteness: The story is unfinished and looking for resolution. At the close of the Old Testament, the thoughtful reader will exclaim, "Surely, there must be more!"
 - A good place to begin: Ask, "What difference will Jesus' coming make?"
 - The New Testament
 - Fulfillment: Jesus has come. This extraordinary event turns our look from the expectation of a redeemer to the identification and explanation of him. Thus the New Testament reveals how Jesus has fulfilled and will fulfill all the promises of God.
 - New covenant: The New Testament reveals how Jesus fulfills the old covenant and ushers in the new. He defines and shapes the way we think about God's work "in these last days."¹

¹ Hebrews 1:1-2; Acts 2:1-42.

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- Already–not yet: Although fulfillment has already come in Jesus, the full reality awaits the day of his return. We must carefully think through how Jesus fulfills God’s promises through his incarnation, death, resurrection, ascension, reign, and return in glory.
 - A good place to begin: Ask, “What difference has Jesus’ coming made?”

Why is this important?

- It helps us see the text and the main idea and transformational intent in light of the whole Bible.
- It is the way Jesus and the disciples understood the Bible.
- It helps us to proclaim the glories of Christ and his gospel as the focus and fulfillment of the Scriptures.
- It ensures that we serve as ministers of the new covenant in a grace-oriented way.

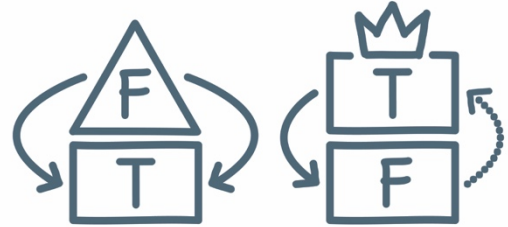
Text and Framework¹

What does this mean?

The text is a passage from the Bible. The framework is our understanding of the way things are and how they work. We must allow the text to challenge and shape our frameworks. Then in our preaching, we apply the text to the frameworks of our audience. Text is king.

How does this work?

- Everyone has a framework. Frameworks are necessary for organizing and expressing our thoughts. They develop over time through what we are taught, what we experience, and through our place in history. As new information comes to us, we decide to reject it or allow it to reshape our frameworks. Some frameworks are thought out and consistent with God's Word. Others are not. If we desire, over a lifetime, our frameworks can be shaped by God's Word. (Note: This change in framework is represented by the shift from the triangle in the first part of the illustration to the rectangle in the second part.)
- Frameworks affect how we read the Bible. When we sit down to study a text, frameworks influence the way we think about God, man, sin, suffering, salvation, and many other things. Some frameworks accurately reflect the biblical text; others do not. We must recognize the distinction between text and framework as well as the influence our frameworks exercise over us.
- The Bible confronts our frameworks. Text is king! God's words must rule over and shape our frameworks. How does this happen?
 - Work to understand our frameworks.
 - Ask God to reveal where our frameworks differ from the text.
 - Ask God to change us and bring our mind, emotion, and will into alignment with his.
- Preaching applies the text to our audience's frameworks. The transformation God intends is at the heart level of our frameworks. Specific and compelling application in our sermons is made by addressing the text to our audience's frameworks.



Why is this important?

- The nature of Scripture: There is a uniqueness to God's words. They alone can produce life and accomplish his purposes.²
- The call on our lives: God commands us to listen to his Word and to serve and proclaim it.³

¹ Based on original material © The Proclamation Trust with kind permission. www.proctrust.org.uk.

² Psalm 19:7-11; Isaiah 55:9-11; 2 Timothy 3:16-17.

³ Psalm 34:11; Isaiah 55:1-3; Mark 4:3-25; 2 Timothy 2:14-19 (especially verse 15).

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- The result that is produced: Where frameworks rule, God's Word is made void.⁴ Where the text is king, God's Word brings life.
 - The task at hand: It helps us think through our frameworks, apply the main idea and transformational intent, and align mind, emotion, and will with God's own heart.

⁴ Mark 7:1-13.

Other Helps

Study to Sermon

What does this mean?

This process helps us move from understanding the text to proclaiming it for the transformation God intends.

How does this work?

- Definition of *expository preaching*: Put simply, expository preaching means that the transformational message of the text of Scripture is the point of the sermon.
- Convictions about Preaching for Transformation
 - The Word: The line of God's Word drives us to preach and shepherd people with the main idea and transformational intent of the author.
 - The Spirit: God's Spirit works through his Word to bring about the transformation he intends.
 - The preacher: The preacher must prayerfully depend on God's Spirit to work through his Word.
- Putting the Sermon Together¹
 - The target illustration: Like a target, every sermon has a bull's-eye. The goal is to hit it.
 - Bull's-eye (goal): The transformation God intends from the text.
 - Aim: Proclaim and shepherd the listeners with the main idea and transformational intent of the author.
 - Approach
 - Timing: We must work through the text, utilizing every principle in this booklet, before we can write the sermon.
 - Flow: The sermon should flow naturally out of the structure and main idea and transformational intent of the text. Make the author's point your point.
 - Process²
 - Clearly state the main idea and transformational intent. What is God seeking to accomplish in the life of the listener? The answer to this question should guide the sermon from beginning to end.
 - Show the structure of the author.



¹ For further help, refer to Bob Thune, "How to Write a Sermon: A Template," <https://bobthune.com/2016/06/how-to-write-a-sermon-a-template/>

² These are key elements of preparing an expository message. When we are preaching, we should not use them in a mechanical way. Good communication will incorporate creativity and variety of style.

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- Carefully select material that will help you to state, explain, and apply the main idea and transformational intent and structure of the text.
 - Consider how the main idea and transformational intent of the text relates to biblical theology and leads us to proclaim Christ.
 - Consider how the main idea and transformational intent of the text challenges existing frameworks.
 - Write your introduction and conclusion last. The introduction opens the door to the main idea and transformational intent, and the conclusion provides a summary and final challenge.
 - Further Thoughts about Application and Shepherding
 - Transformation takes time and must be sought through prayerful dependence on God.
 - Precise and compelling application flows from and is shaped by the main idea and transformational intent. Ask, “In light of this, how should we respond? What would it actually look like for the author’s tone, main idea, and transformational intent to be at work in our lives?”
 - Good application shepherds people with the grace of God found in the new covenant, ultimately leading to repentance, faith, and worship of the living God.
 - Application can take many forms. A few examples are
 - Questions
 - Instructions
 - Imperatives
 - Examples or illustrations
 - Good application considers existing frameworks, current issues, personal circumstances, different age groups, and personality types.
 - Application should flow into the closing prayer, asking God to bring about the change he desires.

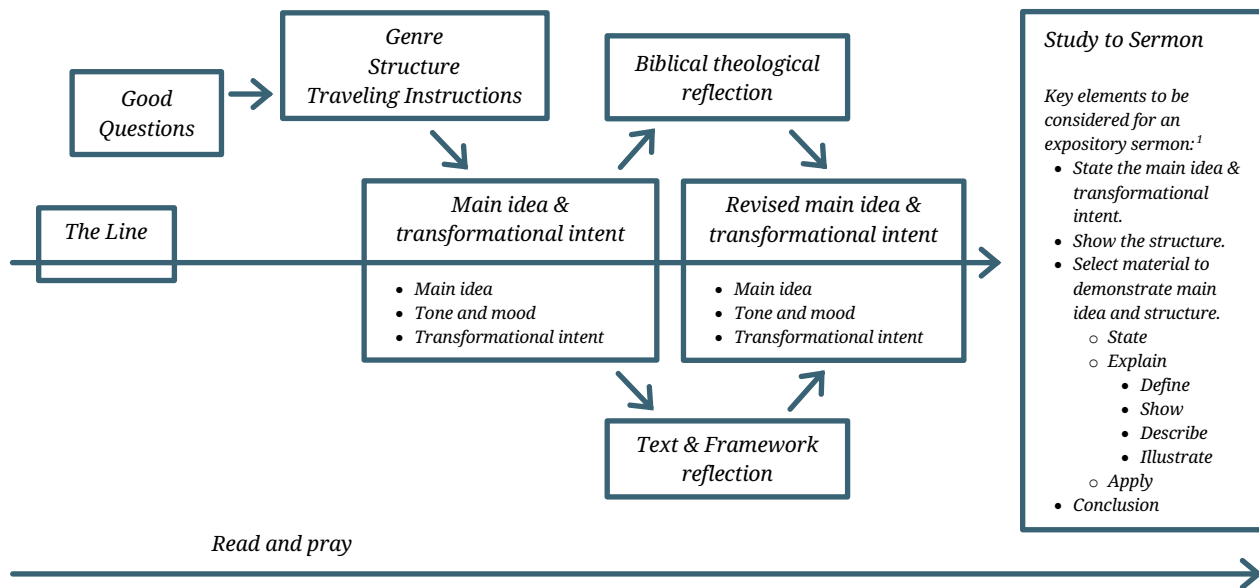
Why is this important?

- It clarifies the task of the preacher or teacher of God’s Word.
- Drawing on the previous principles, it helps us align the message to communicate and shepherd the change God intends.
- It brings confidence to the preacher and the listener that God’s Word has been proclaimed correctly and applied in a compelling manner.

Principles Flow Chart

This chart shows how the principles are connected and lead to an expository sermon.

Expository preaching means that the transformational message of the text of Scripture is the point of the sermon.



¹ We should not use these key elements in a mechanical way. Good communication will incorporate creativity and variety of style.