

Preaching Practicum

Dr. Steve Schell | October, 2020 | Week 5 Class Notes

Delivering a Sermon

- Prepare yourself spiritually.
- People are evaluating you while you speak: Do you personally believe what you are saying? Do you say this because you love us or for another reason? Does your message make sense? Am I learning something valuable?
- Adrenaline: anxiety before speaking does not mean that you are not called or gifted to do this. Nervousness can help to focus the mind.
- Faithful preachers pay a heavy price. G. Campbell Morgan said: "Every week I feel like a sheep led to the slaughter."
- Learn to slow down the rate at which you speak. Enunciate your words carefully (this doesn't sound silly to us).
- Speak to the back of the room.
- Train your voice, use your diaphragm.
- Both men and women: lower your voice as much as possible. A lower voice has more authority.
- Practice singing alone: Deep, full voice.
- Take charge of the service: sound, lights, seating, oxygen, temperature.
- "Read" the room while you preach. Are people tired, unable to hear you, distracted, suffocating in heat and CO2?
- Dress modestly and respectfully.
- Stand up straight, but appear relaxed.
- Make eye contact, keep shifting your gaze to all areas of the congregation.
- Don't point at the congregation.
- Open with prayer and announce your text, not jokes, rambling thoughts greeting friends, announcements.
- Hopefully the worship beforehand will "warm" the room before you preach.
- As you speak, concentrate on your message, not what your listeners think of you.
- Don't yell. Keep your voice gentle but loud enough to be heard.
- Vary the volume based on what you are saying. Vary the range: high to low. Vary the pace: fast to slow. Give place to reflective pauses. Never monotone.
- Don't try to be funny, but let humor naturally emerge.
- Never use vulgar language. It undermines you.
- Don't scold. Never preach something until you can preach it kindly.
- Never preach at the whole congregation because you want to correct one person or a particular group. Talk to them privately.
- Always leave people with hope. Discouragement is the greatest obstacle.
- Always think yourself as the primary recipient of each message. This is God's Word to us, it's not me telling you what to do.

- Don't be afraid to preach something you personally need to hear. Many likely need to hear the same thing.
- Be careful in sharing your personal struggles. Don't talk publicly about your sexual life or troubles in your marriage.
- Roy Hicks Jr: "After the resurrection Jesus showed the disciples His scars, not His bleeding wounds."
- Don't avoid the hard topics that the Bible brings up. Pray for God to show you how to deliver it and to apply it to our lives. These will become some of your most life-changing messages.
- Every sermon is personally costly. We must break the alabaster vial to release the perfume (Lk 7:37, 38).
- There is often a physical let down afterward. Mondays may experience a mood swing. Embrace it, and don't make any decisions or text anybody.