

Suggested Steps for Exegesis of Text and Preparation of Sermon

Brian T. Sutton

Spend time seeking God for a text. Devotional reading, study, and private prayer produce the greatest sermons. After prolonged prayer, select a central text for exegesis and presentation.

1. Translation

- a. What is the text & English translation?

- b. Compare at least 4 other English translations (note differences in text translation).

2. Lexical Data and Grammar

- a. Select key English words that may bring clarity.

- b. Do a traditional “word study” from the original language of the text.

- c. List range of meanings for word in as many scriptural references as possible. (What did the author mean by the word(s)?)

3. Historical Context

- a. What is the setting of this passage?

- b. What led up to this point in the passage?

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c. What comes after this passage?

d. What is the main thought of this book of the Bible?

e. How does this passage relate to that main flow of thought?

f. Are there parallel/similar passages elsewhere in the Bible? If so, list some or all of them.

g. How do they relate to your selected text?

h. Why do you think the author wrote this passage?

i. What did the text mean to the original audience?

j. What are the differences between the biblical audience and us?

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- k. What circumstances does the author address?

- l. What is the possible date of the passage (When was it written)? _____
Is the date relevant to the application? How?

- m. What are the most significant historical-cultural contexts?

4. Literary Context

- a. Where does the passage occur in the book?

- b. Does it complete, introduce or further describe a story? _____

- c. Why did God choose the author to write this text?

- d. Has this author written texts with similar meanings elsewhere in scripture? Where?

5. Biblical Context

- a. What is the meaning of this passage?

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b. Is this passage mentioned elsewhere in the Bible? Where?

c. Suppose this passage were not in the Bible at all. What would be lost?

6. Theology

a. How does this passage fit in with Christian Theology?

b. Is it an Old Testament message or a message for the Old and New Testament? _____

What theological issues are raised?

c. How are those issues resolved?

d. Is there direction on how to deal with a particular issue?

e. How does your text relate to loving God and loving you neighbor as yourself?

f. How does your selected passage relate to the mission of God (Missio Dei)?

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7. Secondary Literature

- a. What have others said about the passage?

8. Application for Sermon

- a. What is God's central message (the one point) of the passage?

- b. What does the text say?

- c. What does the passage say about their needs?

- d. To whom will it be preached?

- e. Why am I preaching this?

- f. What is the picture for the people?

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- g. How does this story fit into God's whole redemption story for mankind?

- h. What is the most encouraging way to say it?

- i. What is the simplest way to say it?

- j. What is the most personal way to say it?

- k. What is the most interesting way to say it?

- l. Who are the prominent people in the story?

(1) _____

(2) _____

(3) _____

(4) _____

(5) _____

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m. Who will the hearers most identify with in the story?

n. What is God's "action plan" for me relating to His words in the text?

o. What's in it for the hearers?

p. What do I want them (hearers) to do?

(a) _____

(b) _____

(c) _____

q. How will I invite them to respond?

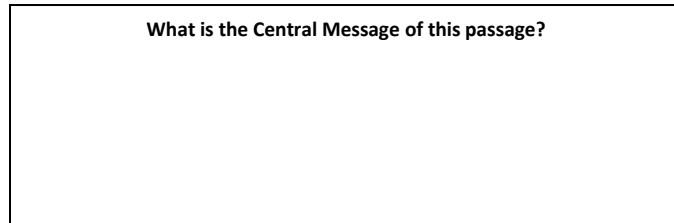
r. How will God help them to succeed?

s. Write the conclusion first, with the central message in mind.

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Write the central message in the box below and use the spider diagram to list as many observations as possible.

What is the Central Message of this passage?



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Categorize your observations from the preceding page and organize as major headings, and sub-headings:

Major Heading: _____

Sub-Headings:

- _____
- _____
- _____

Major Heading: _____

Sub-Headings:

- _____
- _____
- _____

Major Heading: _____

Sub-Headings:

- _____
- _____
- _____

Major Heading: _____

Sub-Headings:

- _____
- _____
- _____

Major Heading: _____

Sub-Headings:

- _____
- _____
- _____

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Write the sermon title and outline using complete sentences.

Title: _____

I. _____

A. _____

B. _____

II. _____

A. _____

B. _____

III. _____

A. _____

B. _____

IV. _____

A. _____

B. _____