

I. Introduction Are There Things You Can be Doing to Make Yourself a Better Servant of God?

"All of Life is Preparation for Ministry"

"Our Oversight of Others Begins with Oversight of Ourselves"

II. In Addition to Preparing Messages, the Preacher Must Continually Work at Preparing Himself!

"We are in a certain sense our own tools, and therefore must keep ourselves in order." (Spurgeon)

A. Pray - Daily Private Prayer is Foundational I Thess. 5:17

1. Subjects

- a. Praise and Thanksgiving to God (Paul's Example in the Epistles)
- b. Self Examination and Confession
- c. Petition - Personal Growth, Family, Mission, Other Kingdom Work, Political Leaders, Flock, etc.

"Before you speak to people about God, you must speak to God about people"

2. Procedure

- a. The need for quiet seclusion Matt. 6:6
- b. The advantage of prayer lists

B. Read (Beyond Sermon Preparation)

*Don't Merely Study to Preach, Study to Live!*

*In Order to be a Teacher, You Must First be a Student*

1. Daily Systematic Bible Reading (At Least Once a Year)

- a. Why is this necessary?
- b. How long does it take?

2. Practical and Devotional Reading

(i.e. Ryle, Colson, Spurgeon, Adams, Bridges)

3. Theological and Apologetic Reading

(i.e. Sproul, Packer, Berkhof, Schaeffer)

4. Church History and Biography

(i.e. Dallimore, I. Murray, Cairns, Bainton)

5. "Secular" Reading. Why?

- a. Newspaper and News Magazines
  - b. Popular Novels (movies, TV)
  - c. Great Literature, History, Philosophy, Science
- Be careful as to the amount of time spent, and the content of what you expose yourself to.

C. Listen to Preaching and Teaching of Others

1. It is Essential that a Preacher be a Good Listener, and Remain Teachable.

2. Why is This Necessary if One is Reading as He Ought?
- D. Spend Time with Your Family  
 "A husband first, a father second, and a pastor third" (Adams)
1. Minister to Your Spouse and Children.
  2. Enjoy Your Family.
- E. Make and Develop Friendships
1. Regular Interaction with Flock
    - a. Assimilation
    - b. Listen! (and Learn)
  2. The Need for Close Friendships Prov. 18:24 27:17  
 Why Don't Some Pastors have Close Friends?
  3. Discipleship
  4. Evangelism
- F. Take Care of Your Body - Exercise, Diet, Rest I Cor. 6:20 I Tim. 4:8
- G. Enjoy Recreation - The Need for Balance
- You never take a spiritual vacation
- H. How Can Anyone Possibly Get All These Things Done?
1. Set Goals and Plan How You Will Implement them. Luke 14:28-32  
 Prov. 21:5  
 Humbly Recognize that Only God Can Enable You to Succeed.  
 James 4:13-17 Prov. 16:9 27:1
  2. Carefully Budget and Structure Your Time.

III. Sermon Preparation is not a Mere Academic Exercise, but a Spiritual Task

- A. Prayerfully Express Your Total Dependence Upon God. John 15:5  
 Phil. 4:13
1. For Personal Enlightenment and Transformation Through the Study of God's Word.
  2. For God's Blessing Upon the Message Through Every Stage  
 (Preparation, Delivery, Use)
- B. First Apply Your Message to Yourself!  
 The Difference Between a Sermon and a Lecture
1. You Must be Personally Involved with and Affected by Your Subject.  
  
 "No man preaches his sermon well to others if he doth not first  
 preach it to his own heart" (John Owen)
  2. What About Preaching "Old" Sermons?

IV. Do You Feel Overwhelmed? Good! Phil. 4:13 John 15:5 I Cor. 1:26-31

Assignment for Section 1, Chapter 3

1. Analyze Two Sermons this Week (answering the usual questions)
2. Write a Paragraph Outlining Changes You Plan to Implement in Your Life in Order to Prepare Yourself for Ministry.
3. With Whom Do You have an "Iron Sharpening Iron" Relationship of Love and Accountability?
4. Write Out Your Goals for: (James 4:13-17)
  - a. The Next Year
  - b. The Next Two to Five Years
  - c. Beyond Five Years.
5. Optional: Read the Biography of a godly Christian Leader.  
How did this person exhibit the qualifications and call to ministry?