

Bryan Chapell, "Christ Centred Preaching" (chapter 2)

Unity of the Sermon

- The sermon is about one thing.
- Each feature of a well wrought message reflects, refines and/or develops ONE MAJOR IDEA (David Cook would call that the "big idea").
- The major idea glues the sermon together and makes it stick in the listener's minds.
- All the features of the sermon should support the concept that unifies the whole.
- In expository preaching, unity occurs when the preacher demonstrates that the elements of the passage support a single major idea, which serves as the theme of the sermon.

Process of Unity

- (i) Read and digest the passage and determine
 - a) the main idea communicated by the writer or,
 - b) An idea supported by sufficient material in the text and can be developed into the main subject of a message.
- (ii) Melt down this idea and develop it into one concise statement - the 3am test.

Purpose

- The **Fallen Condition Focus** (FCF) reveals the text's and the sermon's purpose.
- We must determine the purpose or burden of the passage before we really know the subject of a sermon.
- We need to understand that through His Word God is addressing the fact that we are in some sense incomplete; we lack the equipment to do every good work.

The FCF is the mutual human condition that we share with those to whom or about whom the text is written. It serves to show us the grace which is required for God's people (of all ages) to glorify and enjoy him.

- A sermon then is about how a text says we are to respond biblically to the FCF as it is experienced in our lives.
- *The sermon is about* - Identifying God's gracious means for us to deal with human brokenness that deprives us of full experience and expression of his glory.

Determining the FCF

- An FCF reveals the Spirit's own purpose for the passage.
- What is the FCF which required the writing of the passage?
- An FCF needs to be an aspect or problem of the human condition that requires the instruction, admonition and/or comfort of Scripture.
- An FCF is always phrased in the negative term.

Developing the FCF

- (i) What does the text say?
- (ii) What spiritual concerns did the text address (in the context)?
- (iii) What spiritual concerns do listeners share in common with those to (or about) whom the text is written?

God expects us to act on the problem his Spirit reveals.

Application

- Bible text is not simply a mutual commentary on the fallenness nor to simply communicate facts for information alone.
- 2 Timothy 3:16; 4:2
- SO WHAT !?!