

# How I Prepare a Sermon

Alvin Yoder

**Lesson Purpose:** To equip preachers to speak effectively

**Overview:** Teaching is highly responsible work, according to James 3. And, Alvin Yoder adds, teaching is a God-given opportunity. This mini lecture gives help in fulfilling this work with excellence.

**Opening:** When Jesus preached, he engaged his listeners. In addition to powerful words, how did he use visuals? What about rhythm? Logic? Emotions? Social stories? The human body?

**Scripture Reading:** Mark 16:14-19

**Mini Lecture:** How I Prepare a Sermon—Distribute the note taking sheet and show the mini lecture: How I Prepare a Sermon by Alvin Yoder

## Exercises:

### Exercise 1: Sermon Structure

- Alvin Yoder recommends Lawrence Richards' book, *Creative Bible Teaching* as a resource for structuring a sermon. Richards suggests four basic parts to the message:
  - 1) HOOK – introduction line, story, to grab the attention.
  - 2) BOOK – creative arrangement of the Biblical message/content.
  - 3) LOOK – application related to life.
  - 4) TOOK – having the message actually make a difference, owned by the listeners.(Numbers 1-3 the teacher controls. Number 4 is shaped by the teacher but ultimately the choice of the listener.)
- Think of a recent sermon you have heard or have given.
- Which of these elements were present in the sermon?
- Which of these elements was especially effective?
- Which element could have been improved?
- Discuss your responses to these questions with the group.

### Exercise 2: Linear Development



- With a partner, chart the linear development of Paul's prayer in Ephesians chapter 1.
- Share your chart with the group.

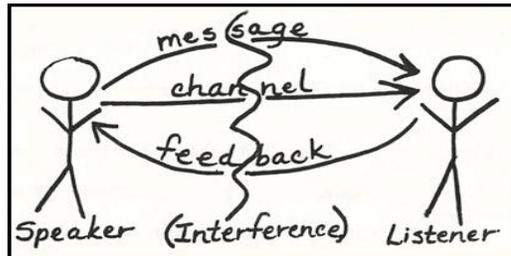


### Exercise 3: Circular Development

- With a partner, chart the circular development of James 3:1-12. (As Alvin Yoder described in the mini lecture, visualize going on a field trip with James.)
- Share your chart with the group.

### Exercise 4: Listener Engagement

- In his mini lecture, Alvin reminds you that listeners remember only 10 % of what they hear.
- Look at this visual.



- List ways listeners give nonverbal feedback to a speaker.
- List interferences that distract listeners from the message of a speaker.
- Talk about these two lists with your group.

### Exercise 5: SAVER Strategies

- Memorize the following list of memory saving techniques that Alvin Yoder recommends to increase retention:
  - S – stories
  - A – analogies
  - V – visuals
  - E – examples
  - R – repetition
- Circle the strategy you use most.
- Check a strategy you would like to develop.
- Underline a strategy you have seen someone use effectively.
- Talk about your markings with the group.

### Exercise 6: How Scripted?

- Review the strengths and challenges of preaching from a manuscript and the strengths and challenges of preaching from prompted notes.
- Which style seems to fit you better? Why?
- Share your thoughts with the group.