

Before the Sermon Starts

I prefer an outline when I give a sermon. I like to have the Bible verse at the top of the heading and I mentioned it at the beginning of the message right after I give a title to the sermon. I prefer going verse by verse if possible. For those taking notes they generally like to write down title sermons so that they can easily reference a particular sermon for studying it later. I mention the Bible book, chapter, and verse(s) a few minutes before I read out of that passage so that the members have time to find it and are prepared to read along with me. If a particular book is harder to find for the majority of the congregants, like the Book of Habakkuk, I give them the preceding or following books to give them a reference point as to where to find it in either the New or the Old Testament.

Also, I often use a real-life story, an example, or some recent news event that ties into the message so that people can have a visual analogy or image that allows them to relate to the upcoming message. This might be something that most of the church knows about. Jesus used parables in this way. He used the familiar or earthly to explain a heavenly concept about the kingdom that most people could identify with like the sheep and the goats, the parable of the sower, and the parable lost coin. These types of lead-ins can prepare the listener for the upcoming context of the message.

A Sermon Outline

Introduction: Give a simple introduction by using a real story of someone or something as I mentioned in the section before this. You can use a news event, an analogy, an example or anything that relates to the message...and then in the introduction, give the sermon title and maybe even the book or books that you'll be reading out of in the message.

A Specific Purpose Statement: This statement might be the title of your message or what the thought or idea of your message might be. This statement should follow the introduction. I like to use things like "I, II, and III" in the outline so that I don't get lost and naturally I separate them by a few spaces.

Main Body and Points

Here is an example of what I mean on developing or writing a sermon outline:

Introduction (Using an example or analogy of an actual event or a story that introduces the topic or main idea)

I. Is the Bible Really the Inspired Word of God?

- a. The phrase "Thus says the Lord" occurs at least 418 times in the Bible.
- b. Scripture claims that it is "God-breathed" (2 Tim 3:16).

II. Empirical Evidence