

Hello. /We will begin the seventh lecture on homiletics. /We previously studied the importance of expository sermons. /Please note that the “sermons” we discuss today all refer to “expository sermons.”

/At this time, we will study chapter 4, preparation of sermons. /Pastors are preachers, and their entire lives are connected to sermons. /Even if pastors spend free time or spend personal time, all that must be connected to preparation of sermons.

/As preachers, pastors must fundamentally and diligently read the Bible and must be well-informed in biblical knowledge. /Pastors must also receive inspiration and illumination of the Holy Spirit through prayer. /This is to say without question.

/This is because sermons must come from the Bible. /Sermons are given with man’s lips, but they deliver God’s word through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. /Thus, the preacher’s entire life and character are in relation to his sermons.

/Even if he is a good preacher, he cannot deliver grace if he does not have good character. /The preacher must also look after believers.

/Preachers must always look after the believers’ spiritual conditions, just as a mother would look after her child, so that they could know what spiritual food believers need at the time.

/Thus, preachers need different direct and indirect experiences in order to give rich sermons. /They must read many books on different genres, and they must also have good knowledge of current events.

/However, these everyday preparations are not what we are here to study today. /It is without question that preachers must diligently read the Bible, pray diligently, and gain knowledge of different topics. Hence, there is no need for us to further emphasize these things.

/In chapter 4, we will discuss what special preparations a preacher must make for his sermons, and also what he must focus on. /There are many books on homiletics in the market.

/Many scholars have given their opinions on the preparation of sermons. /However, their points of view are pretty much similar. /This is because we all want to give expository sermons.

/Because sermons witness to the Bible, there are without a doubt different main topics as well as titles and subjects from the Bible. /Therefore, there can be some differences in what scholars who study homiletics assert. However, the scholars share the same goal in preaching the Bible.

/In this lecture, we will base our studies on Ramesh Richard’s “Preparing Expository

Sermons: A Seven-Step Method for Biblical Preaching.” /Each preacher has his own methods in preparing for sermons. Richard separates this into seven methods of preparing for sermons.

/His first three methods concern the biblical text. /The fifth, sixth, and seventh methods then speak of preparations for sermons. /In the middle is the purpose of preaching.

/Again, the first three methods of preparing for sermons concern the biblical text, the fourth concern the purpose of preaching, and the last three methods focus on sermons. /This is the layout of his book. /This is how the seven methods are laid out.

/On your left is the contents of the biblical text. /The fourth method speaks of the purpose of preaching. /Then once we understand the purpose of preaching, we can then continue studying biblical preaching.

/Again, the first three methods concern the biblical text. /The last three methods are about sermons. /What does this mean? /It means that sermons must fundamentally begin from the biblical text.

/Preachers must study the biblical text of their sermons and they must establish a purpose for preaching. /Then once there is a set purpose for preaching, preachers can then shape their sermons and complete them. /If the fourth method was compared to a part of the human body, it would be the brain.

/The first method would be the “flesh.” /Then the second methods would be the “skeleton.”

/The third method would be the “heart.” /All information is sent to our brains through the flesh, skeleton, and the heart. /Then, when we preach, the subject, the structure, and the form of the sermon become the heart, skeleton, and body.

/In this way, we must study the biblical text so that there is a structure for the biblical text, and from there we can thoroughly focus on the text. /Furthermore, there must be a purpose of preaching that we hope to accomplish through our sermons.

/In order to achieve the purpose, there must be a subject and structure of sermons. /Then there must be a final sermon that the preacher wishes to deliver to the believers.

/Thus, preaching is the deliverance of the biblical text through sermons to believers. /The purpose of preaching must come from the biblical text.

/Then the biblical text is preached to the believers so that they would apply it to their lives. /Then ultimately, the biblical text works in the lives of believers today. /I hope that you will keep these seven methods in mind.

/Yet, we cannot go from one method to the next. /Our minds are extremely complex. /We

sometimes think of what sermons to give when we read certain biblical passages.

/As we study homiletics, we must remember that the preparation of sermons must be in this logical order. /In chapter 4, we will study the first through fifth methods of the seven methods of biblical preaching.

/We will study the sixth and seventh methods in the next lecture. /Now, regarding the preparation of sermons, 1. study of the biblical text. /This is the first method. /The study of the text can be separated into two, (1) choosing the text, and (2) interpretation of the text.

/When studying the text, we must (1) choose the text. /The definition of “text” is “a passage from the Bible when used as the subject of a sermon.” /In order for the preacher to proclaim God’s word, he must choose a passage from the Bible as the subject of his sermon.

/Sermons are not lectures or a time to speak one’s thoughts. Therefore, sermons absolutely must include a text from God’s word. /If a preacher does not speak about a biblical text, then he would be giving a speech on his own subjective thoughts.

/If the preacher does not preach on a biblical text, he will speak about his own experiences or life. /Then it would be wrong to call the preacher a servant of God’s word. /Such preachers will attempt to conquer the hearts of his audience through his sermons.

/Therefore, it is absolutely necessary for preachers to choose a biblical text. /Then how must preachers choose the text? /Each preacher has the freedom to choose the biblical text for his sermon.

/This is normal. /However, there was a time in history when preachers were not allowed to choose their own biblical passages to preach on. /The history of preaching is a long history. /In the past, preachers preached in synagogues.

/They preached in churches during the Middle Ages. /However, preachers in those times did not retrieve their sermons from the Bible. They also lacked ability to preach well.

/Thus, some preachers made collections of sermons for preachers who could not preach through their own efforts. /This certainly would have made preaching easy, wouldn’t it?

/Yet, the same thing is happening today. /There are collections of sermons available in bookstores. /Many preachers’ sermons are also available on the Internet.

/It is advisable to refer to their sermons. /However, when we take others’ sermons and say that they are ours, we are plagiarizing. /We are stealing others’ work.

/Today, preachers attempt to choose texts easily without any effort. /Yet, these situations make preachers lazy. /They do not make any effort, they do not grow, and they lose

creativity.

/As servants of God's word, preachers were given the freedom to choose biblical passages. /Therefore, preachers must diligently read the Bible, receive the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and seek what the believers need to hear from God's word.

/Then let's now look at what things a preacher must be careful of when he chooses the biblical text. /Choosing the text is the first method of preaching. /I'm sure you have all experienced this, but when we choose a certain passage, we are already half-way done with our preparation for sermons.

/This means that choosing a passage is difficult and important. /Then what is the first thing we must be careful of when choosing a passage. /① The passage must not be too long or too short. /When the passage is too short, the preacher's mind will wander.

/When the preacher gets absorbed in his own thoughts, there is the chance that he will give a topical sermon. /If the passage is too long, there will be a limit to how much the audience will understand or remember. /The audience may also lose focus.

/If the passage is long, it would be suitable to focus on one part of the passage. /It is necessary to focus on one important part of the passage. /Next, the second thing we must be careful of. /② It is not good to choose several passages for one sermon.

/Preachers who give topical sermons usually choose many passages from the Bible to support their topics. /Some preachers choose passages from three or four places in the Bible.

/It is not right to choose many passages when giving expository sermons. /However, this does not mean that this is entirely wrong. /We can certainly choose two or three passages from the Bible when we need to.

/For example, let's look at a case in which an Old Testament prophecy is fulfilled in the New Testament. /Because the two are closely connected, it would be acceptable to choose two passages as the biblical text of the sermon.

/Sometimes, there are cases in which two passages seem to contradict each other. /For example, there are passages that say that one is saved by faith, and faith is made complete by works.

/The two passages may appear to contradict each other, but we can choose both passages to make the two come together in harmony. /Other than these special cases, it is not right to choose many passages when giving expository sermons.

/Next, the third thing we must be careful of when choosing a passage. /③ We must evenly choose a variety of passages. /Many passages in the Bible speak of the salvation work of the Trinity. /The Bible is also made up of the Old Testament and the New

Testament.

/Therefore, we must choose passages well, and we must make them food for the believers. /Yet, this does not mean that we must take go back and forth between the Old Testament and New Testament each week. /It means that we must not focus on just one part of the Bible.

/If the preacher chooses a passages because it's his favorite passage, he will be seen as narrow-minded. /For example, there is a problem is a preacher only preaches about "problems in the family" or "problems in education."

/Some preachers only preach about passages that "rebuke" believers. /Some preachers only preach about comfort or blessings. /We preachers must seek spiritual benefits of the entire church.

/Preachers must teach the Bible well to believers, and they must help believers be well balanced in faith. /④ We must take into consideration the subjects of preaching. /Preachers must always look carefully at the circumstances of believers.

/They must also know what is going on in their time. /They must also know the levels of knowledge of believers. /Preachers must carefully observe believers and choose passages that believers will be able to digest.

/It is necessary to choose passages that will nurture children or those who are weak in faith. /It is also necessary to choose passages that are more difficult for those who are stronger in faith.

/Preachers must prepare a variety and a broad range of sermons. /Next, the fifth thing we must be careful of when choosing a passage. /⑤ We must take into consideration special opportunities. /There are many seasons in Christianity.

/Hence, we must choose biblical passages that fit each season. /Believers will be confused if we do not choose passages that are not related in any way to the seasons. /There are also times when there are important events in this world.

/We must guide the believers' standpoints through the Bible. /We must choose biblical passages according to every situation. /We will wrap up the discussion here on choosing the biblical text.

/Let's move on to (2) interpretation of the text. /After we have chosen the text, we must then interpret the text. /We sometimes refer to interpretation of the text as an exegesis of a text. /After we choose the text, we must then properly interpret the text.

/A proper sermon is the result of a proper interpretation of the biblical text. /We can give proper sermons only when we clearly understand the meaning of the text. /There are many principles in interpretation of the text. /Let's look at the five principles.

/There are parts that we studied in the previous lectures. /The first thing we must be careful of when interpreting the text is that we must understand that the Bible is the infallible and inerrant word of God.

/When we understand that the biblical text is the infallible and inerrant word of God, we will gain power from it. /On the other hand, whoever believes that the Bible is a history of past events, his sermons will only tell stories of people who lived with faith.

/Next, the second principle of interpretation of the text. /When interpreting the Bible, we must interpret it literally and grammatically. /The Bible was recorded through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. /Thus, Jesus said, "Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away."

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/Next, the third principle. /The Bible must be interpreted with the Bible. /The many important passages in the Bible are connected to one another. /Therefore, if we have trouble understanding one passage, we must look to other parts of the Bible for reference.

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/Preachers must thoroughly understand the passages they preach on, but they must also know all parts of the Bible. /Next, the fourth principle. /Fourth, we must know the nature of each biblical passages, and we must also know the literal features of the Bible.

/Each book of the Bible has its own features. /Paul's writings have their own features, and Peter's writings have their own features. /The Bible consists of poetry and historical records. /The Bible also consist of parables, visions, and revelations.

/Each of these have different literal features. /Therefore, when interpreting these passages, we must make sure that they are congruent with the features of the books. /We must discover exactly what it is that parables and revelations point to.

/Sometimes, it is necessary to interpret the Bible exactly as it is written. /Sometimes we must interpret the Bible with symbols and comparisons. /Next, the fifth principle of interpreting the text. /Our interpretations of the text must be congruent with the confession of faith of the traditional church.

/The exegesis of the text must agree with the confession of faith of the church and also with traditional Christianity. /Yet, the confession of faith must not be considered more important than the Bible. /The absolute standard of our faith is the Bible.

/While studying the Bible, our fathers of faith got the confession of faith from the Bible. / We must refer to the confession of faith that we received from traditional Christianity.

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/Now, we must study what we must know in order for the exegesis of a text. /In order to properly interpret biblical passages, preachers must ① read the passages many times.

/Some pastors encourage preachers to read the passages ten times, and others encourage preachers to read the passages thirty times. /After preachers read the passages many times, they must then ② recognize the context of the passages. /In order to know the meanings of passages, they must read the preceding and following parts many times.

/We can be in error when we leave out the preceding and following parts of passages and read only the main passage. /Next, for proper exegesis of the text, we must ③ refer to many commentaries.

/However, it is not right for the preacher to read the passage, fail to recognize the context, and only rely on commentaries. /The preacher must first read the biblical passage many times and fully understand the passage. After that, we can refer to commentaries to see if our understanding of the passage is correct.

/It is also not right to fail to refer to commentaries but only preach with the Bible.

/Next, ④ we must refer to other books. /For proper exegesis of the Bible, we must refer to Bible concordances, original language dictionaries, or archaeological data, and other books.

/We will conclude the seventh lecture on homiletics. /Thank you.