Sermon Divisions and Development

[This lecture corresponds to assigned Reading # 9:
Christ-centered Preaching, pp. 120-121; 156-162; and, Appendix 5.]

For mid-term review:
What are three major components of exposition evident in Old Testament models that were systematized in synagogue worship patterns reflected in the New Testament?
What are the three essential elements of exposition that are to be included in every main point?
What is the proportion of these expositional elements for a general audience?
How may a double helix represent the expositional structure of a sermon's main points and how may this structure vary depending on target audience?

Goal for this lesson: To understand the basic subdivisions of a sermon in standard expository development.

Introduction: We are zooming in from the larger perspective of seeing what Exposition is in general to seeing what the specific members of the sermon's body look like in standard development.

I. Divisions of a Sermon Reviewed:

Thus far, we have discussed these divisions:

A. The Divisions of Biblical Exposition:
   1. Word Presentation
   2. Explanation
   3. Exhortation

B. The Divisions of Sermons:

   1. Scripture Introduction
   2. Scripture Reading
   3. Prayer for Illumination (typically there is also a prayer for application in closing)
   4. Sermon Introduction
   5. Proposition *(statement of sermon's subject as preacher proposes to develop it, in light of a F.C.F.):*
       Divided into:
         -principle
         -application
   6. Main Point Statements*(statements of supporting arguments or proofs of the proposition)*
       Divided into:
         -principle
         -application

7. Main Point Exposition *(unfolding the meaning of the text)*
        Divided into:
           -explanation
           -illustration
           -application

<>We are ready now to begin analyzing the divisions of explanation within Main Points.

II. Guidelines for Main Point Divisions:
(The Number and Nature of Main Points)

III. Guidelines for Subpoint Divisions: "Key Characteristics"
[REFER TO OVERHEADS]

A. Subpoints _____ (support or prove) their specific Main Point.

B. Subpoints relate to their Main Point _____;
i.e., can answer a similar diagnostic question or support the main point in the
same way.

C. Subpoints are about the <u>one</u> thing the Main Point is about (not _____ subjects).

D. Subpoints "ordinarily" support or develop the _____ clause
(i.e., the Magnet Clause) of the Main Point.

E. Subpoints are "_____" statements of principle <u>or</u> application (NOT BOTH)
    — subpoints are generally not weddings of principle and application, because
    only the "_____" of the Main Point is being proven
which is either principle <u>or</u> application
    — subpoints are usually _____ sentences or sentence _____.
        ••Hammer strokes statements make the best subpoints because
    subpoints act as concise thought pegs upon which much additional
thought can be hung by listeners. (Note: This means subpoints are to be
<u>stated</u> by the preacher not merely kept in mind by him to organize his
thought.)

F. Subpoints exhibit _____ (about one thing), _____
    (not co-existent), _____ (reflect one another in wording),
    and _____ (consistently lead to the larger concept).

G. Subpoints are not required, but, if they are given, they must be _____
    (remember to number rather than alphabetize subpoints).

H. Subpoints usually point to a _____ portion of the text.
    (show the verse after the subpoint in your outline)

I. Subpoints usually are _____ and _____.

J. Subpoints develop the _____ rather than outline (i.e.,
    merely describe) the text.

<>Subpoints generally are road signs through the explanation component of
exposition (i.e., illustration and application are not subpoints of explanation).
Without clear road signs people get lost even if they are on good highway;
without clear subpoints listeners get lost even if you are presenting true and
scholarly explanations.

IV. **Three Basic Types of Subpoints:**

        [REFER TO OVERHEADS]

A. Analytical _____ Answers
        For all subpoints in a main point ask an overarching question (e.g. How do
    we know this is true? or When should this apply in our lives?), then answer
    the question with short statements that introduce further explanations.

B. _____*
        For each subpoint ask a new question (e.g., who, what ,when, where,
    why, how, etc.), answer it immediately with a concise statement, then show
    where the statement was derived, and give the explanation that supports the
    that statement. [Do not delay the answer until after the explanation -- the ear
    does not have the patience of the eye.]

C. _____Statements**
        Short, parallel statements that encapsulate divisions in the explanation of the
    main point (i.e., thought pegs on which much information can be hung).
            e.g.,   1. Man's Failure
                                2. Sin's Consequences
                                3. God's Response

*Easiest to learn from
**Most used by professionals

V. The Standard Order of the Major Divisions of a Message:

Announce Text
Scripture Introduction
Scripture Reading
Prayer for Illumination
Introduction
Proposition

I. Main Point Statement (followed by standard order of subpoints with the illustration
developing the concept of the overall Main Point)
      —subpoint
      —subpoint
      —subpoint
    [Illustration]
    <> Application

II. Main Point #2 (followed by a mixed order due to illustration developing a single
subpoint rather than the concept of the overall Main Point)
      —subpoint
    [Illustration]
      —subpoint
      —subpoint
    <> Application

VI. The Standard Lengths of the Major Divisions:

A. Average Time & Page Lengths for Matter <u>Surrounding</u> the Body of 30-minute Message:

Sermon Component	Average Time	Typed Pages
Text Announcement & Scripture Introduction....	1 minute	1/3
Scripture Reading..	1-2 minutes	1/2
Prayer for Illumination	1 minute	1/3
Sermon Introduction.....	2-3 minutes	1/2-2/3
Sermon Conclusion	2 minutes	1/2-2/3
Closing Prayer............................	<u>1 minutes</u>	<u>1/3</u>
Approximate Totals:	8-10 minutes	2 1/2-3

B. Average Time and Page Lengths <u>for the Body</u> of a 30-Minute Message:
    (Note: 20 minutes remain for the sermon body)

Each Main Point in a 3-point Message................	6 minutes	2
(assuming equal proportions)		
Each Main Point Component:		
(assuming 1/3, 1/3, 1/3 proportion)		
explanation	2 minutes	2/3 (2-3paragraphs)
illustration..	2 minutes	2/3 (" ")
application	2 minutes	2/3 (" ")
Each Subpoint .(see note below).............	2/3-1 minute	1/3 (1 paragraph)
(assuming 2-3 subpoints per main point)		
All Extemporized Comments	2 minutes	2/3

Conclusion: The written content of a 30-minute sermon that includes <u>only</u> the Scripture introduction, sermon introduction, sermon body, and sermon conclusion will run 7.5 - 8 pages (this standard may lengthen somewhat with healthy spacing between components).

Subpoint Note: In order to accomplish the 1/3, 1/3, 1/3 exposition symmetry of a main point the subpoints of explanation are usually _____ paragraph apiece. As a **rule of thumb**, <u>explanations longer than one paragraph need subpoint divisions.</u>
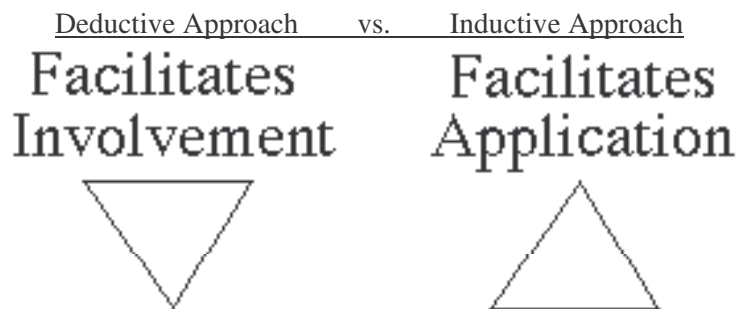

VII. Standard Conceptual Progression of a Point:
Melting all these rules down to the basics **...**

1. _____ the Truth (make the main point or subpoint statement)

2. _____ the Truth (point to the text where the statement is proven)

3. _____ the Truth (prove the statement with the text)

4. **Illustrate** the Truth

5. **Apply** the Truth (main thing to be done)

VIII. Variables for <u>Main Point</u> Progression:
The components can come in varying orders.

<u>Deductive Approach</u>   vs.   <u>Inductive Approach</u>

Facilitates Involvement

Facilitates Application

Deductive: Principle------->Particular *(Pauline)*

Inductive: Particular------->Principle *(Jesus in Parables)*

<u>Therefore</u>, concentrate on what best serves concept and attention goals.

<u>Hint</u>:   Inductive often works better in third Main Point in that it separates Main Point illustration from conclusion.

<u>Caution</u>:   You can start a Main Point with principle statement, illustration, or a particular application—<u>but never with "_____" explanation.</u> Explanatory thought without cause, reason, or particulars to anchor it, floats off into abstraction. Listeners ask, "Why am I getting this information?"

<u>For Now</u>:   Work on basic deductive statement of Main Points with variation in subpoints.

IX. Variables for <u>Sermon</u> Division Progression:

  A. The Variables
    1. Scripture reading
    2. Scripture introduction
        • Slices out the territory (if you are narrowing your focus)
        • Contextualizes for understanding
        • Creates interest in and longing for the Word
    3. Prayer for Illumination
    4. Historical or logical recap (Scripture Introduction, just before or after the proposition, first Main Point, explanation of other Main Points).
    5. Establishment of the truth of the anchor clause

  B. Possible Insertion Points for the Variables

    (1) Sometimes earlier in service

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    (2)
    (1) & (4) & (5)
    (3)
    Intro
    (4) & (5)
    Proposition
    (4) & (5)
    Main point #1
    (4) & (5, rarely)
    Main point #2
    (4)
    Main point #3

    Conclusion

Key Caution: Do <u>not</u> separate the sermon introduction from the sermon with the scripture reading

Assignment for Next Class:
        Reading Assignment #10: *Christ-centered Preaching*, pp. 253-260.

3 Basic Types of Subpoints

1. Analytical-question Answers:

III. <u>Because Jesus is the only hope of salvation,</u>
        we must present Christ despite our difficulties.

In what types of difficulties must Christ be presented?

    1. In Circumstantial difficulties
    2. In Relational difficulties
    3. In Spiritual difficulties

2. Interrogatives:

III. <u>Because Jesus is the only hope of salvation,</u>
        we must present Christ despite our difficulties.

    1. What types of difficulty may we face? Christ's enemies
    2. What helps us face these difficulties? Christ's armies

3. Bullet Statements:

III. <u>Because Jesus is the only hope of salvation,</u>
        we must present Christ despite our difficulties.

    1. In the midst of busy-ness
    2. In the face of fear
    3. In the storm of anger

Prop: <u>**Because Jesus is the only hope of salvation,**</u>
        we must preach Christ at every opportunity.

I. <u>Because Jesus is the only hope of salvation,</u>
        we must preach Christ in difficult situations.
        1. Facing circumstantial obstacles. (vs. 12)
        2. Facing spiritual obstacles. (vss. 13-14)

(Note: "Bullet" Subpoints will answer similar
diagnostic question; i.e., ***when*** or **what are**...)

II. <u>Because Jesus is the only hope of salvation,</u>
        we must preach Christ to difficult people.
        1. Who are these people?
            • Those without mercy. (vs. 16)
        2. How must we deal with them?
            • As those with mercy. (vs. 17 & 20)

(Note : "Interrogative" Subpoints ask <u>similar</u> diagnostic
questions; e.g., ***who*** or ***how.*** The speaker then immediately
answers his own question with a "bullet" statement, text
citation and proof.)

III. <u>Because Jesus is the only hope of salvation,</u>
        we must preach Christ despite our difficulties.
            What sorts of difficulties?
        1. In the face of present frustration. (vs. 15)
        2. In the face of past failure. (vs. 18-19)

(Note: An "Analytical Question" prepares for subpoint
answers.)

IMPROPER SUBPOINTING

**Prop: <u>Because Jesus is the only hope of salvation,</u>
   we must preach Christ at every opportunity.**

   I. <u>Because Jesus is the only hope of salvation,</u>
        we must preach Christ in difficult situations.

        1. Peter ignored the authorities. (vs. 12)
        2. Peter spoke from jail. (vss. 13)

        (Note: Outlining the text rather than outlining the
        message.
        Describing the text rather than conveying its truths. An
        outline should say what a text "means" not merely what
        "says.")

  II. <u>Because Jesus is the only hope of salvation,</u>
        we must preach Christ to difficult people.

        1. Jesus died to save the ungodly. (vs. 16 & 20)
        2. Jesus alone can save. (vss. 17 & 21)

        (Note : Subpoints are developing the "Anchor Clause"
        rather than the "Magnet Clause."

 III. <u>Because Jesus is the only hope of salvation,</u>
        we must preach Christ despite our difficulties.

        1. Our preaching will bring hate. (vs. 15)
        2. Prayer overcomes opposition. (vs. 18)

        (Note: Subpoints are not parallel and do not develop the
main
        point "in the same way."

(Note also: Entire outline ignores vss. 14 & 19