

Transitions and Dialogical Method

[This lecture to Reading # 16: *Christ-centered Preaching*, pp. 260-265.]

*For mid-term review:*

*What is "the main thing to be done" in an expository sermon according to Broadus?*

*What distinguishes instructional specificity and situational specificity?*

*What are key characteristics of effective "common sensical" applications?*

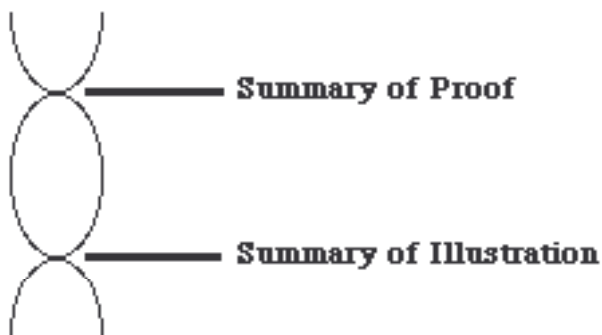
*What key distinction should be kept in mind when making concrete applications?*

Goal for this lesson: To understand how sermon components and listener involvement are knit together through the use of effective transitions and "pulpit dialogue."

**I. The Function of Transitions:**

Don't forget double-helix:

- Each node in whichever order the components appear is a summary statement of what preceded and the thematic statement of what follows.
- Transition is made easier by remembering what you illustrate or apply is always the "last thing you said" in the preceding material section.
- Components are tied therefore by the parallel concepts (and often terminology) that connect them.



## II. The Nature of Transitions:

This process by which Main Point components are tied together conveys the more general nature of transitions both within and between Main Points.

- A. **Basic definition:** Transitions demonstrate or develop the relationships of the parts to the \_\_\_\_\_, or parts to \_\_\_\_\_.

Transitions may relate the . . .

- B. **Why Use Transitions?** Careful transitions help the listener to follow the speaker's thought throughout the progress of the message.

### C. How Are Transitions Used?

Transitions may:

1. Review where \_\_\_\_\_
2. Preview where \_\_\_\_\_
3. Relate an immediate matter to the \_\_\_\_\_
4. Interest the listener in a new thought or the relationship between \_\_\_\_\_
5. Any \_\_\_\_\_ of the above

*Therefore, as a result: don't rush into subpoints after statement of Main Point. Tell what you mean by Main Point and explain how you will support it with subpoints. Why are they ordered so? What causes us to consider the matter this way? The audience can't see your outline. So, transitions keep tying components back to the central idea. A typical mark of sermon excellence is consistent use of "\_\_\_\_\_"; i.e., transitions at the end of each major component of thought that tie that thought back to the sermon's main idea (particularly the \_\_\_\_\_).*

## III. Types of Transitions:

- A. \_\_\_\_\_ — asking (out loud) the questions listeners would ask if they felt they could.

1. Examples (Who, what, when, where, why, and how)
  - \_ How do we apply this?
  - \_ How do we know this is true?
  - \_ If this won't work, what will?
  - \_ What plan does God offer for this?
  - \_ What comes next?

<> *This is the \_\_\_\_\_ to assume in creating all transitions whether you voice the question or not. You learn to hear the question in the mind of the listener and answer it.*

## 2. Reasons

### 3. Hints for Using Dialogical Transitions:

The best \_\_\_\_\_ answers "How do we know this means what I said?"  
—more than simple "what does this mean?"

The best \_\_\_\_\_ answers "How do we apply this truth?" — most  
commonly used for application. Audiences  
never tire of this question.

The best \_\_\_\_\_ answers "How can we see this better — in our own  
experience?" (this is typically a silent question).

<>An important place to learn to use an analytical question is immediately  
after the \_\_\_\_\_. A good question here sets up the  
reasoning for the main points.

**B.** \_\_\_\_\_ (a result of the dialogical process)

*"Not only but also..." can take many forms:*

+ "If this is true, then these are the implications . . ."

+ "Our understanding is not complete until we consider . . ."

+ *"God is loving but that is not enough to warrant our trust. Good intentions don't make everything work out all right. That is why Paul continues his argument by saying God is sovereign. God does not just desire what is good for us. He accomplishes it. Because God is sovereign, we must trust Him."*

**C.** \_\_\_\_\_ (most elementary and least artistic — but not wrong)

"The next thing we see in this passage is . . ."

"My second point is . . ." (never say "subpoint A, B, or C" as though the audience is reading your outline)

"Finally, . . ."; "In conclusion . . ."

**D.** \_\_\_\_\_

*It may sound insensitive to emphasize that,  
God is the Object of our Faith  
Until you remember this Scripture also teaches,  
We are the Object of God's Affection.*

**E.** \_\_\_\_\_

+ "The Flip side of the coin is . . . ."

is + "The next thing crash investigators do after determining the point of impact,  
trace back the causes of the malfunction."

+ "You know why personal gratification can never be the goal of  
righteousness. What happens when you pat a dog's head. He rolls over  
for you to pat his belly. The more he seeks gratification the more  
vulnerable he makes himself."

Hint: Sometimes illustrations can be great transitions, making us see the  
relationship between points. These types of transition are saying "In the  
same way . . ."

**F.** \_\_\_\_\_ — relating a matter just covered to the central idea first introduced.

e.g. "We have talked about Christ being our high priest because it relates  
directly to our understanding of why we are not rejected simply because  
we sin."

<>It is particularly important to keep relating each main point to the F.C.F., since  
this keeps us developing a message rather than simply describing a text.

#### IV. Billboards

*An important but often neglected area of transition is between introduction and body of message.*

1. What are Billboards?

e.g. "In order to have this assurance of your relationship with God you must believe that the love of Jesus is greater than your sin, your circumstances, and Satan himself."

2. Why use Billboards?

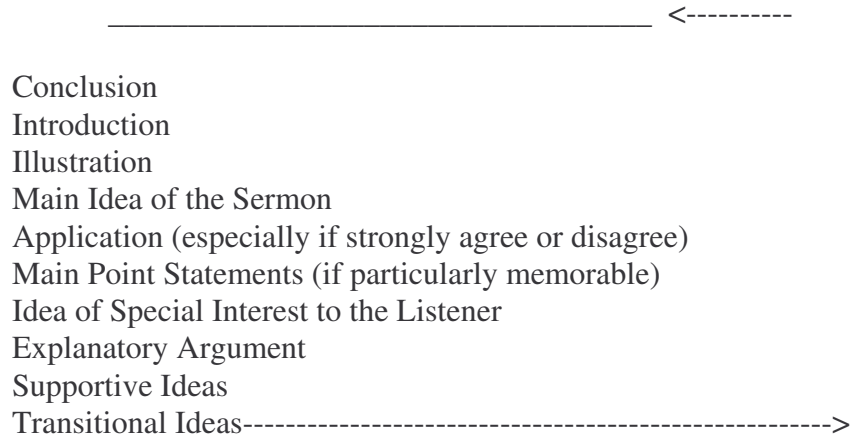
3. Hints for using Billboards?

#### V. Using Verse References

- Verse references are usually \_\_\_\_\_ immediately after the principal statement of the Main point or subpoint that needs to be proven (i.e., "Look with me at verse 15." —Try not to say, "Look with me at verses 8 through 13," since no one can scan so much material in the scant second it takes you to say it.). You are in essence saying, "Now this is where I get this idea." You are in essence answering, "Now where did he get that?" Explanation then follows the reference, as well.
- Expository points "usually" have a text reference immediately following them but when expounding a narrative, or developing an idea based upon context or genre, you may simply have to identify the event, textual feature, or aspect of context that proves your point.

## VI. Understanding the Memory Retention Hierarchy:

### A. The Retention Hierarchy:



B. Each component vital if first component to be favorably received.

### Conclusion:

### Assignment for Next Class:

Reading Assignment #17: *Christ-centered Preaching*, 346-349.