Exploring New Applications

Introduction: “What do the Scriptures principally teach?” The personal consequence of expounded truth (behavior or attitude).

I. How Important is Application

   A. Broadus - “The main thing to be done”
      Thus, we start early. Put reason (burden) with theme in Introduction.

   B. Calvin - “If we leave it to men’s choice to follow what is taught them, they will never move one foot. Therefore, the doctrine itself can profit nothing at all.” (Sermon on II Timothy 4:1-2).

      <> Just as we expound what the Spirit must ultimately interpret, we must articulate what the Spirit will ultimately apply (contra solus Spiritus argument).

   C. Personal Ethos
      Ethos = Credibility (knowledge, realism) + Compassion (altruistic care, courage)

II. What Troubles Us About Application?

   A. The Courage required to be specific

   B. The Hermeneutics required to be specific (the movement from descriptive to imperative is always difficult but necessary).

   C. The Grace denied (?) by requiring specific duties
      Is it ungracious to talk about duty?
      1. To redeem from an empty way of life is gracious.
      2. To teach to say, No, to ungodliness is gracious.
      3. To lead to the blessings of obedience is gracious.
      4. To teach that there is discipline for disobedience is gracious.

      1. To teach that there is merit in obedience is ungracious.
      2. To teach that God rejects for disobedience is ungracious.
      3. To teach that God does not require godliness is ungracious.
      4. To teach the law apart from grace is ungracious (Deadly Be’s).
III. How Do We Properly Apply?

A. Regular use of ALL four standard Questions of Application?
   What, Where, Why, How

   1. What: **Instructional** specificity:
      The **specific** instructions derived from and **proved** by the explanation.

   2. Where: **Situational** specificity
      Identify **where** in real life the expounded principles apply
      a. Be concrete by going in through the **who** door
      b. Spotlight **one** situation, then more quickly “unroll”
         (i.e. identify other situations your people face where the
         expounded principles also apply - “Don’t fence me in”)

      **Particular Problem/Need Possibilities**
      1. Building Proper Relationships (w/God, family, friends, co-workers,
         church people, etc.)
      2. Reconciling Conflicts (in marriage, family, work, church, etc.)
      3. Handling Pain and Difficult Situations (stress, debt, unemployment,
         grief, fatigue, etc.)
      4. Overcoming Weakness and Sin (dishonesty, anger, addiction, lust,
         doubt, discipline, etc.)
      5. Lack, or improper use, of Resources (time, treasures, talents, etc.)
      6. Meeting challenges/using opportunities (education, work in or out of
         church, witnessing, missions, etc.)
      7. Taking **Responsibility** (home, church, work, finances, future, etc.)
      8. Honoring God (worship, confession, prayer, devotions,
         compartmentalizing life, etc.)
      9. Other?

   3. Why: Biblical **motivation**
      a. Love over **fear** (contra self-protection as primary motivation)
      b. Gratitude over **gain** (contra self-promotion as primary motivation)

      :. The motivation hierarchy (Why should I do what God requires?):
         Love for **God**
         Love for **others**
         Love for **self**
The relationship levers (maintaining proper motives for repentance)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>What can change</th>
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<td>Fellowship</td>
<td>Sonship</td>
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<td>Blessing</td>
<td>Welfare</td>
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<td>Our assurance</td>
<td>His affection</td>
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<td>His delight</td>
<td>His desire for our good</td>
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<td>Discipline</td>
<td>Destiny</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conviction</td>
<td>Justification</td>
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<> In Christ-centered (grace-oriented) preaching the rules don’t change; the reasons do; we obey Him because we love Him.

4. Provide Biblical enablement (answering the How question)

a. By means (Instructions and Disciplines)

Instructions for:
i. Confessing Sin
ii. Adjusting Attitudes
iii. Correcting or Rejecting Past Practices
iv. Establishing new patterns of thought or behavior
v. Utilizing means of grace (serious consideration of the nine categories of problem/need above will help keep you from over utilizing this set of instructions)

Disciplines (means of Grace ≠ Means to Grace)
i. Informing of God’s instructions
ii. Stimulating greater love for God (primary purpose as we seek to build an ever greater expulsive power of new affections)

b. By faith
i. Confidence in the New Creation
   - identity - ability

ii. Confidence in the Holy Spirit

B. Prudent use of Applicational Options

1. Open the Horizon
   a. Answer what but not where
   b. Answer where but not what
   c. Why and how still need to be answered
2. Reverse the Train
   Application → Illustration → Explanation

3. Love a Puritan; and, a Parable

   **2-phase messages**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Puritan</th>
<th>Parable</th>
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<tr>
<td>Exposition</td>
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<td>Uses</td>
<td>Moral</td>
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4. Turn the Radio On

   **Information Models vs. Communication Models**

   | Traditional "Information Model" | "Communication Model" |
   |("Detail" or "Exegetical" Model) |("Applicational Model") |
   | Statement of the Main Point | Statement of the Main Point |
   | a. subpoint # 1 | [Immediate proof, explanation, or definition; 1-2 sentences] |
   | b. subpoint # 2 | Illustration |
   | c. subpoint # 3 | Applications |
   | Illustration | -Developed |
   | Application | -Particularized |

   **Strengths**

   1. Dealing didactic passages
   2. Exploding small Scripture portions
   3. Explaining complex ideas
   1. Simplifying large/complex themes
   2. Distilling large Scripture portions
   3. Applying developed truth

   **Weaknesses**

   1. Often dull or belabored
   2. May lose people in detail
   3. Little time for application
   1. May become topical
   2. May inadequately expound

   **Assumptions**

   1. Complexity = Seriousness
   2. Higher Order Abstraction = Orthodoxy
   3. Universal→particular
   1. Sincerity = Seriousness
   2. Applicability = Orthodoxy
   3. Particular is universal

   **Conclusion:** 1) Stay true to the text; concentrate on its authority not yours. 2) Sermons must be redemptive as well as instructive. 3) Let earnestness be your eloquence. 4) The character of the messenger is more important than the quality of the message.