

"Communicating for a Change"

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By Dave Kraft

The concept of one point. One Question. One application. I had crafted a statement upon which I could hang the entire message. To understand why, submit and apply. Every time I stand to communicate, I want to take one simple truth and lodge it in the heart of the listener. I want them to know that one thing and know what to do with it. Every sermon should take the audience somewhere.

1st Imperative: *Determine Your Goal.*

What is your goal as a communicator? Are you teaching the Bible to people, or are you teaching people the Bible?

2nd Imperative: *Pick a point.*

Take them to a place where they discover a truth that will change their lives. I can talk about a lot of interesting stuff—and it can all be true, for that matter. But if there's no point, no ultimate destination, then all I've been doing is talking. Work at a "One point message." If you give people too much to remember, they won't remember anything.

3rd Imperative: *Create a map.*

A good map will allow you to find the best and most effective course for arriving at your destination. There is a big difference between an informational outline and a relational outline.

ME, WE, GOD, (TRUTH) YOU, WE

ME-Share how you struggle or deal with the truth at hand; introduce yourself and the topic

WE-Find an emotional common ground with them around the topic or idea of the message. The goal is to raise a felt need with as many people in the audience as I can

GOD-Introduce Biblical truth

YOU-The application segment

WE-What kind a difference would it make if large numbers of us began to apply this truth.

#4 Imperative: *Internalize the Message*

Internalize a message until it's part of you and you own it. Until you can stand up and tell it as a story you are not ready to preach

#5 Imperative: *Engage the Audience*

#6 Imperative: *Find Your Voice*

You want to stand up in front of your people and be YOU.

7 Imperative: *Find some Traction*

As these questions when you get stuck in message preparation:

1. What do they need to know
2. Why do they need to know it
3. What do they need to apply
4. Why do they need to apply it

Now that you've determined your goal, go take a single portion of scripture and present it in a clear, engaging, memorable way that they can apply and then watch God change lives.

Determine a goal, pick a point, create a map, internalize the Message, Engage your audience, find your voice, find some traction

It is so easy to determine our success by how we perform. The scope of our evaluation must reach beyond our presentation. What people do as a result of what we say; the audience's willingness to act on what they have heard. Life-change. Our approach to communicating should be shaped by our goal in communication.

Three possible goals:

1. Teach the Bible to people-did a cover well the material
2. Teach people the Bible-The communicator takes his audience into account. Did my audience understand and will they remember the content
3. Teach people how to live a life that reflects the *values, principles, and truths of the Bible.*

#3 is the best. The first two are basically information oriented. When I have finished preaching, I want people in the audience to know what to do with what they have learned. Spiritual maturity is gauged by application not contemplation. Preaching is not talking to people about the Bible, it is talking to people about themselves from the Bible. Preaching for life change requires far less information and far more application.

What concerns you more, how you did on Sunday, or how your people are doing on Monday?

Building a message around a single point:

Every message should have one central idea, application, insight, or principle that serves as the glue to hold the other parts together. What is the one thing I want my audience to know, and what do I want them to do with it? You pick one idea, principle, etc and build around it instead of choosing two or three or four ideas to leave with your audience; leave one!

1. Dig until you find it
2. Building everything around it
3. Make it stick

Because insight can originate from the text or from life, we must be students of both.

The sermons that have put you to sleep were delivered by men with information but no burden. The key is to build around your relationship with the audience, rather than content. When a communicator rushes through material it sends a specific message: I am more concerned about covering my material than I am about communicating with you. When you're speaking to a new audience, it's critical that you begin with something about yourself, because they don't know you. I go out of my way to lay my humanity and frailty out on the front of the stage. If you preach from your weakness, you'll never run out of material.

Seventy to eighty percent of the Gospels and Epistles are application oriented. Watch out for the tendency to squeeze too much information and too many verses and not enough life into your sermons. Creating one point messages makes internalizing a message much easier. Remembering one point is much easier than memorizing a bunch of points. Remember, the goal is not to cover everything in your notes. It's to take your audience with you on a journey; to move them from mile marker to mile marker until you reach your destination.

Having too much to say has almost the same effect as saying nothing. If we don't engage people in the 1st few minutes; it is an uphill struggle from there. If we don't finish strong, an entire message may be forgotten before they get to their cars. I think it is imperative that our opening and closing be committed to memory. You have to internalize it. It must become your story.

Have an audience turn to one passage and one passage only. Pick a central text and teach it. Trying to cover the text is not guarantee that we've clearly communicated the point of the text. A hard landing leaves the passengers feeling a bit uneasy. The same is true of a rushed conclusion to a message. Error on the side of being too direct. Get there quicker than you think you need to. Be more specific than you think you need to, and repeat it more times than you think you need to.

As a communicator:

1. Know who you are
2. Accept who you are
3. Be who you are

Experience doesn't make you better. Only evaluated experience makes you better.

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| 1. What do they need to know? | INFORMATION |
| 2. Why do they need to know it? | MOTIVATION |
| 3. What do they need to do? | APPLICATION |
| 4. Why do they need to do it? | INSPIRATION |
| 5. How can I help them remember? | REITERATION |