

Preaching the Gospel

A monthly magazine for preachers and those who want to preach.

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THE WORK OF AN EVANGELIST

Whit Sasser, Appleton, Wisconsin, U.S.A.

My Work As An Evangelist Is...

1. **To be a man of God (I Timothy 6:11)** - I am first and foremost loyal to God. My allegiance is to the Lord, no matter what a man or group of men, including a congregation, may think or do (Galatians 1:10). I do not consider myself a "church of Christ" preacher.
2. **Full time (Acts 20:20)** - I am available 24 hours a day to assist anyone, both publicly and privately. Jesus said that the field is the world, therefore my scope of labor may take me many different places, at many different times.
3. **To hold forth the pattern of sound words (II Timothy 1:13)** - There will be no new gospel from me. I preach the old story unapologetically.
4. **To declare the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:27)** - I intend to withhold nothing profitable to you and to preach all of God's Bible on any given subject. There will be no taboo subjects, no gag orders enforced, no testing the wind to see if something is favorable, in season or out (II Tim. 4:2-5), before preaching on my part. And I trust you respect me for that. On the other hand, I do not use the pulpit to promote my private opinions or "hobby-ride" a subject. In the long run I hope that a good balance of spiritual food is provided.
5. **To set in order the things that are lacking (Titus 1:5)** - What that is may change with the passing of time and with persons growing, but I see this as a God-given responsibility.
6. **To be an example (I Timothy 4:12)** - I hope I will exemplify to the believers what a Christian can and should be. And this to my neighbor also. I am not infallible, of course.
7. **To be a Bible student (I Timothy 4:13, 15)** - I hope my Bible study can benefit you, too.
8. **To be an evangelist (II Timothy 4:5)** - An evangelist is a "gospelizer", not a personal work expert with some magic plan for increasing numbers at a congregation. Increase is the Lord's area ((I Corinthians 3:7). Noah preached for over 100 years with no visible results (assuming his family was already faithful). Was he therefore a failure? Of course not! We may become preoccupied with increases in numbers due to the pride of having a large group or the embarrassment of being small, more so than simply loving souls that are lost. I will not resort to carnal methods, human wisdom, "bait and switch" techniques, or any other man-made thing to accomplish what the gospel may not be doing for someone. Paul said he was not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God unto salvation (Romans 1:16). To that I say, "Amen"
9. **An impartial person (I Timothy 5:21)** - I will try to be non-prejudiced and show no partiality or favoritism in my dealings with anyone.

10. **To be gentle with all (II Timothy 2:24-26)** - The Scriptures do not permit me to exert pressure on anyone to do anything the Lord commands them to do. Not that I would want to or even could, but I must not even consider it. God being my helper, I will humbly and gently encourage all to do the Lord's will.

Additional Passages: I Timothy 1:3-4; 4:6; II Tim. 2:2, 14-16; Titus 1:12-14; 2:1, 7-8, 15; 3:1-2, 8.

Conclusion: I thank you for allowing me the privilege of teaching the Bible among you.

[More About Long Sermons](#)

In response to my article *When You Have More Material Than Time*, Darrell Hamilton who, I think, now lives in Texas, wrote:

“You missed one. What if you have—

More Words than you have Material?

Preaching the Gospel Magazine is published the middle of each month. It is free by e-mail. Those who receive it are encouraged to print it for others.

This file is formatted for printing on both sides of the paper, with room to punch holes on the left for inserting in a notebook.

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“My observations over the years have me conclude that many lengthy sermons were actually short messages disguised as novels. The new preacher especially is prone to stretching points to cover a perceived deficit in time and then gets caught when his time runs out.

“One of the things I had to do in the military that was quite useful was a 9 week class where we had to prepare briefings. Normally we were allowed 8-10 minutes (plus or minus 15 seconds). After nine weeks of that, we were all really good at estimating just how long 9 minutes was and just how much useful information you could cram into it. Every little Hmm and Umm just killed your presentation timing. A good sermon is a crammed 3 or 4 short presentations of no more than 10 minutes that are tied together.”

Good thoughts, Darrell.

A New Monthly Column

I have asked my grandson, Joel Williams, to write a monthly column reviewing material on the internet which is of help to preachers. The first column, which is a review of E-Sword, is on page 15. Joel is a computer expert who knows how to get the best out of the resources available. You will get a lot of good from his columns.

Online With Joel



Over the years, more and more computer software has been developed to aid in Bible study. For a long time, the only Bible software I knew about was costly. Power Bible CD was a wonderful product when it came out because it allowed one to study many different translations of the Bible with online commentary, cross-references, dictionaries, and more for only \$20 for the CD, and you could share it with members of your family.

Today, \$20 for Bible study software is too much because there are several very good free programs available that will do all that Power Bible CD will do and more. For Windows and Macintosh users, there is an extremely powerful program available called E-Sword. (If you happen to run Linux instead, you can get it working under WINE without much trouble.)

You can download E-Sword from <http://www.e-sword.net>. When you first install it, you only have a small part of the available resources. Also available on the website are many additional Bible translations, commentaries, dictionaries, map and image collections, and “topics” which include collections of the writings of the church fathers, books by Josephus, and more. All of these can be downloaded to E-Sword.

Some of the Bibles are marked with a “+” after the name. That means that each word has a Strong’s number after it. If you hover over the number, you can see the definition from Strong’s Hebrew and Greek Dictionaries. If you have installed additional Hebrew or Greek dictionaries, clicking on the number causes the definitions to be available in those dictionaries. Just clicking on the word causes the English definitions to become available in any English dictionaries you have installed.

When you click on a verse, the commentary for that verse appears in all of the commentaries you have installed as long as they have comments for that particular verse or section of verses.

The most powerful feature of any Bible software, though, is the search capabilities. I have composed several sermons based on the search results for certain words. You can click the small binoculars in the toolbar or type Ctrl + s to start a search. One of the newer features in the search is the ability to include a partial match. That means that if you search for “hol” it will return verses that have “holy,” “unholy,” “holiness,” “holies,” “whole,” etc.

Another useful feature is the *parallel Bible* view. You can choose up to four different Bible translations to view any passage side by side. This makes it easy to see the differences and similarities among different translations. Similar to this is the *compare* view where the verse you have selected is listed in every translation you have installed.

If you are already using Bible study software, E-Sword may not be any improvement, but if you are not using Bible study software already, give E-Sword a try. It is free and very powerful.

Top Ten Nevers For Preachers

1. **Never** build your self-esteem on hopes of spectacular, dramatic work, that elicits the applause of men. *99% of the good you do is done gradually, over time, and much is uncelebrated.*
2. **Never** think of generic, anonymous audiences. *You deliver the Word to people. They are individuals with unique experience and personality.*
3. **Never** congratulate yourself. *Be satisfied when your work justifies it, but never congratulate yourself, privately or publicly.*
4. **Never** let your office become a hiding place; there are people outside your office. *That's usually where the real work is.*
5. **Never** get in the middle of a controversy because it is intriguing; *get involved when, according to your responsibility to God, it is necessary.*
6. **Never** build your ambition and pride based on meeting or lecture invitations. *If that happens, do good work, but then come home – get back into your local work, and take the garbage out.*
7. **Never** argue with brethren about money. *Nobody wins those arguments.*
8. **Never** attempt any work, any crisis, any sermon or anything, without prayer.
9. **Never** put your wife and kids off to “build up your career.”
10. **Never** finish a Sunday's work without reflection on what you need to do better. *But don't beat yourself up; get beyond your blunders and do better.* {Just ask me, I have vast experience with blunders.}

--from **Expository Files, May 2007**, Jon W. Quinn and Warren E. Berkley, editors

www.headcoverings.org is where you can find the entire 150-page book *The Head Coverings of 1 Corinthians 11*, the tract *Command or Custom* by the late Hiram Hutto, an interesting article by a denominational columnist telling why she has decided to wear a head covering when praying, and other interesting and helpful items on the subject. Take a look.

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