



**HOW TO HELP MYANMAR PASTORS IN CHIANG MAI
TO PREPARE AN EFFECTIVE SERMON**

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to help Myanmar pastors in Chiang Mai in order to know how to prepare an effective sermon. This study describes the needs of Myanmar pastors. It helps them to prepare themselves and prepare a sermon effectively. Myanmar pastors can learn important things related to preparing sermons. This study will benefit Myanmar pastors in sermon preparation because it describes their needs and show the methods on preparing themselves and sermons. Finally, it gives suggestions for them.

In this study five chapters are included. Chapter one is the introduction of this study. It is about the situation of Myanmar pastors and their needs. And it describes the importance of preaching, its goal and the definition of preaching. Chapter two says preparing and developing the preaching. It contains preparing heart, mind, and body of the preacher. It describes that the preacher needs to have relationship with God, loving heart for God, receiving the word of God, and the gentle manner. To have a healthy body in doing ministry the preacher has to do exercise at least 30 minutes a day. Chapter three is about preparing the material for an effective sermon. It mentions the importance of knowing the audience and preparing the text for a sermon. The preacher has to make sure that he or she knows the maturity of the audience, the biblical knowledge of the audience, and the culture of the audience. And the preacher is to know the importance of studying the biblical text and types of studying the text. It also describes that the preacher is to make sure that he or she study the biblical text

based on the situation of the original audience. The preacher is to study the text contextually and historically. Chapter four explains the preacher how to add the important parts of the sermon. It says the importance of the introduction of the sermon, the body of the sermon, and the conclusion of the sermon. Chapter five is the conclusion for the whole study. It includes the summary for the whole study and suggestions that will be useful to Myanmar pastors.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements

Abstract

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Reasons for choosing this topic

1.2 Knowing definition of preaching and its goal

1.3 Knowing the importance of preaching

1.4 Knowing the importance of homiletics

Chapter 2: Preparing and developing the preacher

2.1 Preparing heart

2.1.1 Having relationship with God

2.1.2 Having love for God

2.1.3 Receiving the word of God in heart

2.1.4 Being clean heart in doing ministry

2.1.5 The gentle manner

2.2 Preparing mind

2.2.1 Rightly thinking about God

2.2.2 Seeing what God wants them to see

2.2.3 Using the Bible

2.3 Preparing body

2.3.1 Doing regular exercise

2.3.2 Eating and taking relaxation for body

Chapter 3: Preparing materials for an effective sermon

3.1 Knowing the audience

3.1.1 Maturity of the audience

3.1.2 Biblical knowledge of the audience

3.1.3 Culture of the audience

3.2 Preparing material for the text

3.2.1 Study the biblical text

3.2.2 Types of studying the text

Chapter 4: Preparing parts of the sermon

4.1 Introduction of the sermon

4.1.1 Principles for preparing the introduction

4.2 Body of the sermon

4.3 Conclusion of the sermon

4.3.1 Principles for conclusion

Chapter 5: Conclusion

5.1 Summary

5.2 Suggestions for Myanmar pastors

Bibliography

Resume

Chapter 1

Introduction

Since I study in McGilvary College of Divinity at Payap University, Chiang Mai, Thailand for a Master's degree, I have the opportunity to go and participate in Myanmar Churches in Chiang Mai. I have made fellowship with these Myanmar Churches. Sometimes I have the opportunity to preach in these Myanmar Churches and encourage them through sermons. Sometimes I have a chance to listen to sermons from Myanmar pastors. Therefore I recognize the situation of these Myanmar churches and the lives of Myanmar Christians who live and work in Chiang Mai. For me, I am interested in doing mission and evangelism for Myanmar workers in Thailand. I am always looking for the opportunities to join Myanmar churches in Thailand and explore situations of the churches and lives of Myanmar Christians in Thailand. Therefore, I decided to cooperate with Myanmar Churches in Chiang Mai, in doing Myanmar Christian ministry. Whenever I participate in church worship service I recognize the importance of preaching in ministry because it is an important tool that can show God, His love and mercy, and His plans for all people. Besides that, I have decided to study the role of preaching and to help Myanmar pastors and Myanmar churches in Chiang Mai concerning preparing sermon through studying how to prepare sermon and how to preach it in their ministry inside and outside of the churches.

1.1 Reasons for choosing this topic

I have several reasons why I decided to study how to help Myanmar pastors to prepare effective sermons. For me, I often hear and know that many Myanmar Christians are not longing to hear sermons and appreciate preaching for their lives because they are struggling for living and supporting for their families. Therefore they are not interested in taking time to be encouraged by sermons for their spirituality even though they are giving time for sermons in worship service. And they do not prepare to change their lives through listening to preaching in church worship service because their priority is to live and work, and make money in Thailand. For some of them, their purpose is only to earn money so that they may have a better life in future. Therefore, some of them are still working even on Sunday. Almost every day they are busy with working for living. On the other hand some Myanmar pastors in Myanmar churches are still struggling to prepare sermons and preach for their church members. They are also busy with families activities and do not have enough time to prepare sermons. I realize that it is time to reconsider the role of preaching in Myanmar churches in Chiang Mai because it is one of the important things for Myanmar pastors and Myanmar Christians. Besides that, I understand that the ministry of Myanmar churches and the role of Myanmar pastors should depend on how to prepare sermon and how to preach because without preparing for preaching there could be no more living Myanmar churches and no more effective Myanmar pastors in the future in Chiang Mai.

Nowadays Myanmar Christians who live and work in Chiang Mai still have opportunities to hear many sermons from church pastors and from internet websites. Many pastors from Myanmar often come to Chiang Mai in order to visit, give Bible studies, and preach in Myanmar churches. But for Myanmar Christians, they still need

to hear preaching that are well prepared according to good principles. They still need to hear preaching from the powerful word of God. There are several problems about preachers concerning preparing sermons within Myanmar Christian churches. Some preachers in one church read a lot of books to give a good sermon to their audience. Some in another church only read the Bible and pray to get a good sermon. Some in one church in Chiang Mai do not have enough time to read and prepare a sermon because they are busy doing work for family and church activities. Some did not have the chance to study homiletic principles for preaching because they did not have enough education for ministry. Anyway a sermon should be well prepared and preached to the audience according to homiletic methods that show how to prepare a sermon.

I believe that knowing homiletics and using its principles could be essential to every Myanmar pastor and preacher in the ministry. In order to prepare an effective sermon, every Myanmar pastor and preacher needs to study about how to prepare an effective sermon through knowing homiletic principles and using its methods. Myanmar pastors in Myanmar churches in Chiang Mai also need to know how to prepare an effective sermon through knowing homiletic and its principles. Therefore knowing how to make preparations to be effective in preaching should be also important to Myanmar church pastors and Myanmar preachers who often preach in Myanmar churches.

On the other hand they should be the ones who are trying to know the situation of the lives of Myanmar Christians. And they should know the methods about how to prepare sermons based on the needs of Myanmar Christians. Therefore the role of homiletics is essential to Myanmar pastors. Homiletics could help them so that they should be ready in preparing an effective sermon and they should be ready in

preaching. Therefore, through knowing how to prepare an effective sermon is the key to succeed in doing Myanmar ministry. And they may give the message that will fulfil the need of Myanmar Christians who live and work in Chiang Mai. As a result, Myanmar Christians could hear well prepared sermons. And they could be healthy in their faith and happy in building their spirituality. Finally, they may change their lives according to the word of God.

1.2 Knowing definition of preaching and its goal

Nowadays, some pastors in Myanmar churches preach sermons without knowing real definition of preaching. I often recognize the problems that some Myanmar preachers and Myanmar pastors do not try to understand the definition of preaching. But they are so eager to preach sermons in church. Therefore they could not preach. Without knowing the definition of preaching they have no idea about how to prepare an effective sermon according to the purpose the sermon. In the same way I recognize that some preachers and pastors in Myanmar churches in Chiang Mai do not understand the real definition of preaching. But they often preach in the churches because they think that reading the Bible every day and praying to God regularly could help them to preach. They often say that the Holy Spirit could help them while preaching. Therefore, Myanmar pastors and Myanmar Christians in Chiang Mai really need to know the definition of preaching, its goal and the importance of preaching in ministry. Therefore, I would like to help them to know the definition of preaching and its goal. If they are not familiar with its definition and its goal they could not find the essence of preaching and importance of its role in Christian ministry and their lives. John Stott says, “Preaching is indispensable to Christianity because Christianity is

based on the truth that God chose to use words to reveal himself to humanity.”¹ He is right, because preaching is one of important things in ministry and in Christian life for every Christian, who always needs to build their spiritual life by hearing preaching as one of spiritual strengths.

Most of the preachers and pastors may already know that Christian preaching is based on the Bible. I think that all preachers and pastors should be aware that Christian preaching should be biblical preaching. In other words, they need to know that Christian preaching is giving biblical sermon. Therefore, they need to be careful when they preach in church. I want them to learn that knowing the meaning of biblical sermon could help them in preparing sermons effectively. For Myanmar pastors and Myanmar Christians, they need to know its definition because without knowing its meaning they could not know the importance of preaching in ministry and they could not use it as an important thing in daily life. Terry G. Carter, J. Scott Duvall and J. Daniel Hays state, “A biblical sermon is one that carries with it high biblical authority. In such a sermon the biblical text serves as the basis of the sermon, and the message communicated through the sermon follows closely the intended meaning of the biblical text, thus drawing its authority from that text.”² Therefore, while preparing sermons Myanmar pastors need to make sure that they are preparing a biblical sermon because it could help them to use the biblical text as the basis of the sermon that can serve as the meaning of the text and draw the authority of the text in preaching.

¹ John R. W. Stott, *The Challenge of Preaching* (Carlisle: Langham Preaching Resources, 2011), p. 3.

² Terry G. Carter, J. Scott Duvall, and J. Daniel Hays, *Preaching God's Word: A Hands-On Approach to Preparing, Developing, and Delivering the Sermon* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2005), p. 22.

I would like to help Myanmar pastors to preach biblical sermons based on the biblical text that would serve as the basis of the sermon. John Stott says, “To expound is to open up the inspired text with such faithfulness and sensitivity that God’s voice is heard and his people obey him.”³ Therefore, in order to know God’s voice and obey Him preachers and pastors need to expound the text and open it up with faithfulness and sensitivity. Besides they really need to be familiar with the truth of God in daily life. This is very important for Myanmar pastors because they need to take time to be familiar with the truth of God in daily life. Therefore they should prepare themselves to read the Bible so that it could help them to be familiar with the truth of God before they prepare a sermon. It is really necessary because without taking time to read the truth of God from the Bible they could prepare the living words of God for their audience. In fact, they are responsible to know that they are delivering the living truth of God to man. William Evans says, “The message of the very truth of God through man to men - that is preaching.”⁴ Therefore, Myanmar pastors should know that in the ministry of God they are the ones who carry the message of the truth of God to his people. They are really responsible to know that what they are preaching is the message of the truth of God. Haddon W. Robinson says, “Preaching is a living interaction involving God, the preacher, and the congregation, and no definition can pretend to capture that dynamic.”⁵ This is true because Myanmar pastors may learn that preparing to preach is to make a living interaction involving God, the congregation and them. Therefore, they should be very careful in preparing their sermons that are meant to connect God to their audience.

³ Haddon W. Robinson and Craig Brian Larson, *The Art and Craft of Biblical Preaching: A Comprehensive Resource for Today's Communicators* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2005), p. 24.

⁴ William Evans *How to Prepare sermons* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1964), p. 12.

⁵ Haddon W. Robinson *Biblical Preaching: The Development and Delivery of Expository Messages*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2001), P. 21.

As a pastor, he or she should use this definition while participating in the ministry. William Evans says, “Preaching is the proclamation of the Good News of salvation through man to men.”⁶ Yes, it is really the Good News of salvation and pastors need to preach it as a tool in doing ministry. On the other hand, preaching should be the good news of salvation in which preachers and pastors might need to show the good news for those who need to be liberated from various kinds of slaveries such as poverty, drugs, lack of love, lack of hearing God’s word, and lack of having a relationship with God and their fellow workers. Myanmar Christians also need to hear the gospel so that they may receive it and be encouraged in times of living and working for a better life.

Terry G. Carter, J. Scott Duvall, and J. Daniel Hays say, “The goal of our preaching is to translate the meaning of the text in the time of the biblical audience to the meaning of the text in our time, connecting this meaning in a relevant and contemporary way.”⁷ This is true because compared to the biblical audience, we are living differently. This is why we need to know the background of the original audience culturally, historically, and geographically. Therefore, it is the task of every preacher to translate the meaning of the text in the time of the biblical audience so that today’s listeners can find and apply the meaning of it to their everyday life. Myanmar pastors are the ones who need to know how to translate the meaning of the text in the time of the biblical audience and how to translate the meaning of the text in our time.

John Piper states, “The goal of preaching: The glory of God. The ground of preaching: The cross of Christ. The gift of preaching: The power of the Holy Spirit.

⁶ William Evans ----- p.11.

⁷ Terry G. Carter, J Scott Duvall, and J Daniel Hays ----- p. 26.

God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are the beginning, middle, and end in the ministry of preaching.”⁸ Therefore, it is important to Christian pastors and preachers to recognize the glory of God in preaching that is based on the cross of Christ and that is to preach by the power of Holy Spirit. As we Christians believe in the Trinitarian God, every sermon should reflect it. Myanmar Christians should hear the sermons based on Trinitarian God because it can support their belief in Trinitarian God.

1.3 Knowing the importance of preaching

Some Myanmar pastors are weak in knowing the importance of preaching. Therefore they are not able to prepare a sermon effectively. As a reason, they point to the fact, that they could read the Bible and then preach something different in the sermon, for example about a family or about a church. The problem is that they forget the importance of preaching in church ministry. Another reason is that they do not try to know its importance in the ministry. Therefore, I would like to help them to understand the importance of preaching, because it is important to them. So they could get help from it when they prepare a sermon. They need to recognize that knowing the importance of preaching is very essential in church ministry because it could help preachers and pastors to promote the role of preaching in church ministry. If they focus on knowing its importance they will prepare an effective sermon. For example, a preacher who often preaches to his or her audience may recognize that preaching is not easy thing. And he or she may also recognize that they need to take time to prepare an effective sermon because it is important in church ministry and it is

⁸ John Piper, *The Supremacy of God in Preaching*, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 2004), p.23.

essential to promote the role of ministers and their ministry. Therefore, they need to accept that every preacher and every pastor are the ones who should know the importance of preaching. Besides that, they should take time to prepare an effective sermon and they should always know the importance of preaching inside and outside of the church. Therefore, I would like to help Myanmar pastors to know the importance preaching because they often deliver sermons to Myanmar Christians. They need to invest time and effort to prepare an effective sermon. Donald L. Hamilton says, “Preachers invest much of their lives in thinking about sermons. If they preach regularly, they are all too aware that their praying, Bible reading, planning, studying, outlining, writing, practicing, and delivery involve major time expenditure.”⁹ Myanmar pastors who are currently in Chiang Mai, should know how the importance of preaching and take time to prepare effective sermons for their audiences.

1.4 Knowing the importance of homiletics

In order to prepare an effective sermon every preacher or pastor needs to know the importance of homiletics because it is essential to preachers and pastors. They may prepare an effective sermon through knowing homiletics. Through knowing the importance of homiletics they could learn how to prepare themselves and find ways to build effective sermons using homiletic methods. Myanmar pastors really need to learn the importance of homiletic so that they may use it in order to prepare an effective sermon. Therefore, if they learn and know the importance of homiletics they could find the ways that can help them to prepare an effective sermon. Therefore, I

⁹ Donald L. Hamilton, *Homiletical Handbook* (Nashville, Tenn.: Broadman Press, 1992), p. 10.

would like to help them to know and use it in preparing a sermon. Before starting to prepare a sermon they need to know the meaning of homiletics.

Besides all this, it is important to know where the word “homiletics” comes from and what it means. William Evans says, “The word “homiletics” is derived from the Greek word *himilia* and signifies either a mutual talk and conversation or a set discourse.”¹⁰ If Myanmar preachers and pastors know its meaning they will know how to arrange the preparation of an effective sermon. I would like to help them to know the importance of its meaning and use it in preparing sermons. Besides that, I also want them to learn its principles and find the methods in which they could see the ways to make preparation for sermon. Therefore, William Evans also says, “It shows us how to prepare a sermon or Gospel address and how to deliver it effectually. Homiletics, then, is the art and science of preaching.”¹¹ I am convinced that Myanmar pastors could find help from homiletics while preparing and preaching sermons.

Homiletics is very useful for every pastor and preacher in learning to understand how to prepare a sermon and how to deliver it. Therefore, Myanmar pastors should recognize the important role of homiletics before they prepare a sermon and preach it in public. And they should decide to learn it and prepare themselves to use the important role of homiletics for ministry.

¹⁰ William Evans -----p. 11.

¹¹ Ibid, p.11

Chapter 2

Preparing and developing the preacher

Preparing and developing the preacher is very important for all pastors who are in church ministry. This is very essential to them because they are called and chosen by God to be the ones who lead their church members to the will of God. Jerry Vines and Jim Shaddix say, “The preacher must not only spend time preparing the message, but he also must prepare himself.”¹² Therefore, preparing and developing is necessary for the preacher who will preach an effective sermon. All pastors are responsible to prepare and develop not only the sermon but also their daily life. In the same way, Myanmar pastors need to know that they are in doing ministry and need to prepare both the message and their daily life in order to develop themselves in ministry.

Jerry Vines and Jim Shaddix say, “Both what the preacher is and what he believes plays vital roles in sermon preparation.”¹³ This is right because the preacher needs to express what he is and what he believes to prepare an effective sermon. What he is and what he believes will affect in his sermon preparation. He should be responsible to prepare not only the message but also himself to preach effectively. Therefore, this could help Myanmar pastors to do preparation to be effective preachers for Myanmar Christians. Especially, this could also help them to know how to train in order to fulfill the will of God and take care of church members. Therefore, through preparing and developing they will see that Myanmar Christians will be able

¹² Jerry Vines and Jim Shaddix, *Power in the Pulpit: How to Prepare and Deliver Expository Sermons* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1999), p. 71

¹³ *Ibid*, p. 71

to be strong in their faith in God. On the other hand, they will pay respect and show their appreciation to them. This is the help to them to be the ones who will prepare effective sermons. In addition to this, they could be ready to preach an effective sermon through help from preparing and developing. Therefore, I would like to help them to know how to prepare themselves to be good preachers and how to prepare to get an effective sermon. Especially, I would like to help them to prepare living style so that they may develop themselves for doing ministry for Myanmar Christians.

The preacher is the one who is responsible to inspire their church members. That is why all pastors really need to show their good lifestyle and developing themselves in ministry. Therefore, preparing living style is essential to every Pastor. As a pastor, he or she needs to understand that it is necessary to change their living style that could help them to prepare to be a good preacher and to work effectively in preaching. Through preparing living style they will have confidence and ability not only in preparing an effective sermon but also in being servants of God in ministry. That is why this could help them to change their hearts, their mind, their body, and their time so that they could have healthy and active living style in sermon preparation. Therefore, in order to develop in preparing sermons it is necessary to prepare their mind, their body, and their time that could help them in doing ministry.

2.1 Preparing heart

J. Kent Edwards says, “The words of every sermon that is preached come from the heart of a preacher.”¹⁴ Therefore, as a Christian preacher, he or she is responsible to prepare his or her heart in doing ministry. Preparing the heart is

¹⁴ J Kent Edwards, *Deep Preaching: Creating Sermons That Go Beyond the Superficial* (Nashville, Tenn.: B & H Academic, 2009), p. 44

important because it helps the preacher to know how to be sincere, honor God, and become a good preacher in the ministry. William Evans says, “The preacher should be himself, his highest self. In so doing he will best prove his sincere, honor his God, and become a means of greatest blessing to the people to whom he ministers.”¹⁵ This is right because the ministry he or she serves is God’s ministry and he or she needs to prove his or her best attitude and heart to be sincerity and honor in preaching. Myanmar pastors need to be the ones who are sure to prepare their heart to prove sincerity and honor in the ministry. They should know and practise the following below in order to prepare their hearts.

2.1.1 Having relationship with God

J. Kent Edwards says, “Great preaching begins with a great relationship with God.”¹⁶ In doing ministry, Myanmar pastors should especially have a heart that is connected to God in a strong relationship. As they are doing ministry of God, they need God’s help and encouragement in order to continue their ministry by having a strong relationship with God in their heart. J. Kent Edwards says, “Deep sermons cannot be preached by shallow people. Profound sermons only come from people who enjoy a profound relationship with God. Like it or not, the condition of our personal relationship with God will control our public ministry of God.”¹⁷ This is right because every preacher needs to have a strong relationship with God so that they may prepare their heart and prepare an effective sermon according to the will of God.

John Stott says, “Our beliefs are not something we invented. They were revealed by God. We can thus proclaim the gospel with quiet confidence as good

¹⁵ William Evans ----- p. 17

¹⁶ J Kent Edwards -----p. 44

¹⁷ Ibid, p. 43

news from God.”¹⁸ It is really important to know that God reveals the preacher in order to proclaim the gospel. Therefore, Myanmar pastors need to have a faithful heart to God because He is the one who reveals them the truth in their hearts. In addition to that, this could help them to have confidence in preaching. Preparing their heart is the key to have a strong relationship with God and to receive the words revealed by God. In order to have relationship with God they need to pray. They need to know the importance of prayer in doing ministry. Richard J. Foster says, “To pray is to change. Prayer is the central avenue God uses to transform us.”¹⁹ Therefore, they should take time to pray so that they may have to prepare their relationship with God. Prayer is necessary for Myanmar pastors. J. Oswald Sanders says, “Prayer is indeed the Christian’s vital breath and native air.”²⁰ It will help them to have relationship with God in their heart. Keith Weller & Adrian Lane says, “The gravity of preaching should send preachers to their knees. Prayer puts preaching in perspective. Prayer reminds the preacher that preaching is a spiritual work.”²¹ Therefore, Myanmar pastors should pray so that they may be able to have relationship with God and able to remind them that preaching is a spiritual work.

2.1.2 Having a love for God

Especially, Myanmar pastors need to love God and to be passionate about Him. Without love for God they could not preach according to God’s love. It is necessary to have love for God in preparing sermons. J. Kent Edwards says, “The

¹⁸ John Stott ----- p. 5

¹⁹ Richard J. Foster, *Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth*, rev. ed. (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1988), p. 33

²⁰ J Oswald Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership, Commitment to Spiritual Growth Series* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1994), p. 85

²¹ Keith Weller and Adrian Lane, *Better Be a Good Sermon: Preaching for Special Occasions* (Brunswick East, Vic.: Acorn Press Limited, 2011), p. 6

people God chooses to use for his glory are people who not only know about God but are passionate about Him. He uses people who love Him with an irrational obsessive desire.”²² This is right for Myanmar pastors because love for God is teaching them to glory Him and to serve faithfully in preparing an effective sermon. Therefore, they could have a great help by being passionate about God and having love for Him.

2.1.3 Receiving the word of God in heart

As a preacher, it is necessary is to receive the word of God in his heart. He or she is really responsible to preach the word of God. Therefore, it is important to know that he is sure to preach the word that comes from God in his or her heart. John Stott says, “We need to remember that our authority to preach does not come from our appointment as preachers, nor from the church that ordained us, but from the word of God.”²³ Therefore, it is necessary for the preacher to make sure that the words he or she preaches only come from God. Myanmar pastors need to make sure in their heart that the words they preach only come from God. Through having a relationship with God and knowing the word of God in their heart they may preach the effective sermons in the ministry.

2.1.4 Being clean heart in doing ministry

It is necessary for the preacher to have a cleaned heart. Therefore, his or her heart needs to be cleaned in doing ministry so that their behavior shall be clean in their life. William Evans says, “The preacher must be clean in the habits of his life. Little foxes spoil the vines. He must have neither impure habits nor secret vices. God will openly put to shame him who secret sins. David’s life is an illustration of this

²² J Kent Edwards ----- p. 48

²³ John Stott ----- p. 5

truth (II Samuel 12:12).”²⁴ This is right because God will not accept the preacher who is not clean in the habit of life. But God will show his habits in order to clean and return back to the ministry. Jerry Vines and Jim Shaddix say, “God wants His vessel to be clean all the way to the innermost being – all the way to the preacher’s heart.”²⁵ In order to serve in God’s ministry he or she to be cleaned in their habits so that they may preach the word from God with a genuine heart. Jerry Vines and Jim Shaddix say, “Effective delivery and reception of the Word are tied to the related concepts of character and integrity.”²⁶ For the preacher his or her character and integrity is very important in order to prepare an effective sermon. Therefore, the preacher must be very careful about his character and integrity to preach the word that come from God effectively.

2.1.5 The gentle manner

It is important to have the gentle manner in the heart of the preacher. Jerry Vines and Jim Shaddix describe the gentle manner that could be seen in Paul who conducted himself in a gentle manner. Paul had a compassionate and loving heart. They suggest that the true preacher like Paul has a threefold role. First, Paul was like a mother to the people (I Thessalonians 2:7) and the true preacher acts in the same manner toward his people. The mother gives her life for her children. Paul would gladly have given his own soul for the people (I Thessalonians 2:7). Real preaching is both the delivery of a message and a life as well. Second, Paul was a labourer and he poured his life into his labors (I Corinthians 3:9). Personal integrity demands a hard worker. No member of your congregation should work harder at his job than you do at

²⁴ William Evans ----- p. 17

²⁵ Jerry Vines and Jim Shaddix ----- p. 72

²⁶ Ibid, p. 71

yours. Third, Paul compared himself to a father (Philippians 2:22). The preacher must provide the firmness of a father. Personal integrity demands a truthful father. A father teaches the child how to walk. God's people are children in a royal family. Preachers have a responsibility to teach them how to live the Christian life.²⁷ Therefore, Myanmar pastors would learn to have a gentle manner like Paul who showed the love of mother, the sweat of a hard work and the firmness a father.

2.2 Preparing mind

Preparing mind is also very important for the preacher in Christian ministry. It helps him or her to improve his or her spirituality and the ministry he or she does. In order to succeed in ministry it is necessary for the preacher to know how to prepare the mind. Myanmar pastors are weak in preparing their minds to preach an effective sermon. Therefore, they need to prepare their mind in order to know about what God wants to do in their ministry. Especially, they need to keep in mind that their preaching is to glory God, His word, and to encourage the church and their listeners to know what God wants them to do through their preaching. Greg Scharf says, "Our challenge is to keep in mind what God wants to achieve by our preaching."²⁸ The preacher is to keep in mind what God wants us to do and what God wants us to preach His people. Therefore, Myanmar pastors are also to keep in mind that they are responsible to know what God wants to do in the ministry. Especially, they are to keep in mind what God wants to achieve by their preaching.

²⁷ Ibid, p. 73-74

²⁸ Greg Scharf, *Prepared to Preach: God's Work and Ours in Proclaiming His Word* (Scotland: Christian Focus, 2005), p. 49

2.2.1 Rightly thinking about God

Concerning preparing the mind, the preacher is to keep in mind important things in ministry. First, they need to think rightly about God whom he or she serves. This is important for them because their responsibility is to preach what God wants them to preach. Therefore, Myanmar pastors are to think about God whom they serve. Especially, they should meditate on who He is and what He does for them in the ministry. Greg Scharf says, “God is triune. All three persons of the Godhead are active in making the glory of the Father known to the nations and beyond, through God’s people who display his multifaceted wisdom (Eph 3:10).”²⁹ That is why they need to make sure that they are serving God who is triune and that all three persons are active in making the glory of the Father.

2.2.2 Seeing what God wants them to see

In addition, the preacher who is serving the Lord needs to keep in mind what God wants to see. As we know, God is speaking to him or her through the scripture. It is important to see what God wants to speak to His people by preaching. The preacher is to prepare his mind to see what God wants to speak in preparing sermon. Therefore, Myanmar pastors are to learn to see what God sees and what He wants them to see in the Scripture. Gerg Scharf says, “If we expect to see something in Scripture other than what God wants to see, we will miss what he has for us. God’s purpose in Scripture is the display of his glory.”³⁰ This is right because the preacher could not expect to see what God has for him without preparing mind that hungers for the Lord. Myanmar pastors are to prepare their minds to search the will of God in the Scripture and know

²⁹ Greg Scharf ----- p, 51

³⁰ Ibid, p. 50

how to preach what God wants them to see in the Scripture. Especially, they need to prepare their mind by Scripture to see what God wants to see in Scripture and preach what God has for them in ministry.

2.2.3 Using the Bible

For the preacher, the Bible should be the main thing and used it as the key to prepare his or her mind. II Timothy 3:16-17 says, “All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work.”³¹ Greg Scharf says, “The four immediate uses of the Bible (teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness) achieve the larger purpose of equipping God’s people so that they will be ready for every good work.”³² This is right because using the Bible in ministry is the tool to achieve the goal of ministry and the purpose of God. Without the Bible the preacher cannot prepare anything and could not preach anything because it is like the main tool for him to serve the Lord.

Some Myanmar pastors eager to listen to sermons from the internet. They do not give enough time to read and use the Bible to prepare a sermon. Without giving time for reading the Bible they are weak in knowing the power of the word of God. As a result, they could not prepare their mind to receive the power of the word of God. Greg Scharf says, “The nature of the Bible shapes, even dictates, the nature of preaching. The Bible itself reveals God, his ways, and his plan.”³³ Therefore, they should know that the Bible is the key to prepare the mind to be ready for serving the

³¹ II Timothy 3:16-17

³² Greg Scharf ----- p, 55

³³ Ibid, p.55

Lord. It is important for them to use the Bible to prepare the mind to serve God with strength and power.

Before the preacher preaches he or she needs to prepare himself or herself to keep in mind that the Bible is the key to succeed in preparing an effective sermon. If he or she uses the Bible to prepare his mind or her mind, they could equip themselves to be a good preacher. In addition, they will be able to teach, rebuke, correct, and train God's people by their preaching. Therefore, the preacher is to use the Bible in teaching, rebuking, correction, and training in righteousness so that he or she may achieve the larger purpose of equipping God's people. Myanmar pastors should use the Bible as the main tool to prepare their mind in order to teach, rebuke, correct, and train their church members by preaching effective sermons. Therefore, they need to read the Bible and study it in their daily life.

2.3 Preparing body

Preparing body is one of the most important things in doing ministry for every preacher. Without preparing body the preacher may not be able to serve the Lord with a healthy body. Jerry Vines and Jim Shaddix say, "The better we care for our bodies, the better we will be able to serve our Lord."³⁴ This is right for every preacher because without taking care of their bodies they could be able to serve the Lord with healthy body. Therefore, every preacher needs to take care of his body and serve the Lord with healthy body. They are to take care of their bodies because they are responsible to put Jesus Christ on them and to abstain from physical materials on their bodies (Romans 13:14).

³⁴ Jerry Vines and Jim Shaddix ----- p. 78

Nowadays, many Myanmar pastors are busy and have no time to do exercise and take care of their health. As a result, they are often ill and have no strength in doing ministry. Greg Scharf says, “Jesus has a body that was born and grew, in which he learned obedience, died on the cross, was raised immortal, and will come again to reign, to save, and to judge.”³⁵ In the same way, the preacher was born and has a body that needs to be taken care in order to serve the Lord. The Bible says that the body is a shrine to the Holy Spirit from God (I Corinthians 6:19). The preacher should take care of his her body as it is a shrine to the Holy Spirit from God. Dallas Willard says, “Still our body is a good thing. God made it for good. That is why the way of Jesus Christ is so relentlessly incarnational. The body should be cherished and properly cared for, not as our master, however, but as a servant of God.”³⁶ Myanmar pastors should do the following things below concerning taking care of their bodies so that they may be able to serve God with a healthy body.

2.3.1 Doing regular exercise

Jerry Vines and Jim Shaddix say, “Some preachers minimize the importance of physical fitness. They claim that a minister should not waste time in exercise or other forms of recreation.”³⁷ Every preacher needs to prepare his or her body to be fit by doing exercise even though they have to do a lot of work in ministry. They are responsible to prepare the body to be healthy so that they may serve more and more in ministry. We can see in the Bible that the body is a living sacrifice (Romans 12:1). Scripture says that the Holy Spirit is living in our bodies. Therefore, the preacher

³⁵ Greg Scharf ----- p. 85

³⁶ Dallas Willard, *Renovation of the Heart: Putting On the Character of Christ* (Colorado Springs, Colo.: NavPress, 2002), p. 160

³⁷ Jerry Vines and Jim Shaddix -----p.78

needs to take care of his body and consecrate it as a living sacrifice. Greg Scharf says, “In the long-term, take care of your body; build it up so you will have the necessary strength. Employ a judicious combination of exercise, moderate diet, and sufficient rest.”³⁸ This is right because every preacher needs to do exercise.

Doing regular exercise could help them to be healthy. That is why the preacher needs to take care of their bodies by doing exercising and they need to take time to rest their bodies so that they may be healthy in serving the Lord. Therefore, Myanmar pastors should prepare their bodies to be healthy and serve with healthy body by doing regular exercise. Without doing regular exercise they may not be healthy and they could not prepare an effective sermon. Greg Scharf says, “Find some exercise that you enjoy and that is age-appropriate. It may be a vigorous regimen of weight lifting or a gentle daily stroll with your spouse.”³⁹ This is very helpful suggestion to Myanmar pastors so that they may do exercise regularly and prepare their body weight to be healthy.

Myanmar pastors need to know how to take care of parts of the body. They need to do preparation to keep every part of their body to be healthy. William Evans says, “Ordinarily a man must be a good animal before he can be a good preacher. The preacher should be in his best condition physically. A good physique is an attraction in the pulpit as well as the basis for good spiritual enjoyment.”⁴⁰ This is right because the preacher should prepare his or her body to be a good preacher in ministry. In order to be a good preacher with a healthy body he or she should prepare his body to be in his best condition physically.

³⁸ Greg Scharf ----- p. 86

³⁹ Ibid, p. 86

⁴⁰ William Evans ----- p. 19

Jerry Vines and Jim Shaddix encourage the preacher to do regular exercise. They suggest the following statement. The preacher will feel tired more easily without regular exercise. They describe that some form of regular exercise will benefit his cardiovascular system and give him more stamina and thirty minutes per day at least three days per week is a good minimal routine. The preacher will be more productive in his or her working hours because they take a few minutes each week for physical exercise.⁴¹ Therefore, regular exercise is beneficial to the preacher's body.

2.3.2 Eating and taking relaxation for body

Vines and Shaddix also suggest that eating correctly also helps their physical well-being. They suggest the preachers to keep weight and develop healthy dietary habits. They also suggest the preachers to eat only when they are hungry and avoid snacking between meals.⁴² Therefore, Myanmar pastors are to be careful to eat when they are hungry. And they are to avoid snacking between meals so that they may sustain healthy bodies and serve the Lord with healthy bodies.

In addition, they suggest the preachers to have adequate rest and relaxation. They suggest the pastor to get adequate rest on Saturdays, try to take Saturdays off, relax their mind completely, and spend some leisurely time with wife and children.⁴³ This is right because all pastors need to get relaxation so that they may have strength and energy in their bodies. Especially they should be healthy and ready in order to prepare an effective sermon. That is why before Sunday they should take time to relax their bodies before Sunday preaching. In doing so, they would be able to preach on Sunday.

⁴¹ Jerry Vines and Jim Shaddix ----- p. 79

⁴² Ibid, ----- p. 79

⁴³ Ibid, ----- p. 80

Chapter 3

Preparing materials for an effective sermon

Preparing materials is essential to build an effective sermon. All pastors need to prepare materials in order to write an effective sermon. Myanmar pastors also need to prepare materials that can support them in arranging an effective sermon. Firstly, they need to know which materials they need to collect and prepare. Secondly, they need to know how to use materials that help them in preparing sermons. Thirdly, they need to make sure that they are applying these materials that are necessary to support their sermons. Through preparing materials they will be able to preach an effective sermon.

3.1 Knowing the audience

All pastors need to consider about their audience. Before they preach, they need to prepare their relationship with the audience. Especially, they need to know how to make a good relationship with their audience and how to preach to them. In addition, the preacher should know their education, culture, and their needs so that he or she may be able to preach according to their situation. Nowadays, some preachers do not know about their audience. As a result, they cannot help them through their preaching. Therefore, Myanmar pastors need to know about the situation of the audience and preach according to their needs.

Terry G. Carter, J. Scott Duvall, and J. Daniel Hays say, “If you plan to connect the message of the Scriptures with your people in a meaningful and dynamic

manner, you must know your people.”⁴⁴ This is right because the sermon is for the audience. That is why every sermon needs to be connected to the audience in accordance with the Scripture and their daily living. Therefore, this idea is very useful for Myanmar pastors because they also need to know their audience and preach the message that will connect to their audience. Terry G. Carter, J. Scott Duvall, and J. Daniel Hays say, “If you do not know your people, their struggles, viewpoints, strengths, and weakness, you will struggle to preach effectively to them. Exegeting your audience, therefore, is a critical step if you are going to connect powerfully with them.”⁴⁵ Without knowing the audience every preacher is sure to struggle to preach the audience. That is why exegeting the audience is one of the most important parts of preparing materials. Therefore, Myanmar pastors need to consider the following things below concerning their audience.

3.1.1 Maturity of the audience

Knowing the maturity of the audience is one of the preparations of a good preacher. Nowadays, some Myanmar pastors do not know about the maturity of the audience. Especially, they need to know the spiritual situation of the audience. If they know it, they may be able to adjust their message for them because some audiences are weak in spirituality and some are mature in spirituality. Terry G. Carter, J. Scott Duvall, and J. Daniel Hays say, “Sometimes preachers face congregations that are mature spiritually. Mature Christians ask biblical questions that new believers cannot even imagine.”⁴⁶ Some Myanmar pastors sometimes face the believers who are mature in spirituality. They sometimes ask their pastors about biblical questions. They

⁴⁴ Terry G. Carter, J. Scott Duvall, and J. Daniel Hays ----- p. 85

⁴⁵ Ibid, p. 85

⁴⁶ Ibid, p. 88

want to receive more biblical knowledge from their pastors. But sometimes their pastors have no idea how to preach to them. That is why Myanmar pastors need to prepare to have good biblical knowledge so that they are confident in preaching to spiritually mature Christians.

Terry G. Carter, J. Scott Duvall, and J. Daniel Hays say, “By contrast, you may encounter one of the many spiritually immature congregations that possess little information about the Bible or the Christian faith.”⁴⁷ Sometimes preachers may face many spiritually immature congregations. If this is the case they need to know how to adjust their message so that their audience may understand what they preach. In Myanmar Churches there are many spiritually immature Christians that do not have biblical knowledge. Therefore, Myanmar pastors need to prepare how to adjust the message and how to preach them. Terry G. Carter, J. Scott Duvall, and J. Daniel Hays suggest preachers to spend time in informal settings with church members in order to sense where they are spiritually. They also suggest them to eat with church members, to visit them, to talk to them, and to listen to them.⁴⁸ Myanmar pastors need to follow this suggestion and try to know the spiritual situation of their church members before they preach a sermon to them.

3.1.2 Biblical knowledge of the audience

Terry G. Carter, J. Scott Duvall, and J. Daniel Hays say, “Preachers usually possess a significant amount of biblical and theological knowledge, and sometimes they subconsciously forget that the congregation does not have this some

⁴⁷ Ibid, p. 88

⁴⁸ Ibid, p. 89

knowledge.”⁴⁹ One of the problems among the preachers is that they sometimes forget the knowledge of their audience. Myanmar pastors sometimes do not know the level of the biblical knowledge of their audience. As a result, the audience cannot follow the sermon preached by their pastors because they do not have enough biblical knowledge. Terry G. Carter, J. Scott Duvall, and J. Daniel Hays say, “You cannot automatically assume that the church member listening to your sermon grew up in the church and thus has a good understanding of the Bible.”⁵⁰ Some Myanmar pastors think that their members are already familiar with biblical knowledge and preach to them using much biblical knowledge. As a result they cannot help them to improve their spirituality through preaching. Therefore, Myanmar pastors need to learn to know how much the audience has the biblical knowledge.

Another problem of Myanmar pastors is that they do not know the level of theological understanding in their audience. Sometimes they preach using theological terms without explaining the meaning. As a result, their listeners do not know what the preacher is preaching about. It is important to explain the meaning of theological terms in preaching. Terry G. Carter, J. Scott Duvall, and J. Daniel Hays say, “Keep in mind that often the congregation’s theological understanding is limited, even when they know a lot about the Bible. Thus be careful to avoid using complicated theological terms without properly explaining them.”⁵¹ Every preacher should keep this very helpful and useful idea in mind. Myanmar pastors can learn from this idea that they should not to use complicated theological terms. Terry G. Carter, J. Scott Duvall, and J. Daniel Hays suggest, “Awareness of the congregation’s general theological knowledge enables you to preach on their level and plan sermons that help

⁴⁹ Ibid, p. 91

⁵⁰ Ibid, p. 91

⁵¹ Ibid, p. 92

their knowledge and maturity grow.”⁵² Therefore, Myanmar pastors need to be aware of this and prepare their sermon on their audience level so that they could help them to grow in their knowledge and maturity.

3.1.3 Culture of the audience

It is important to know the culture of the audience in doing ministry. Every preacher needs to know the culture of their audience because it helps the preacher to prepare a sermon that support their audience concerning their work, economy, their stresses, and family. Therefore, the preacher needs to know the place where their audience live, their work, their economy, and their daily routine. Terry G. Carter, J. Scott Duvall, and J. Daniel Hays state, “Socioeconomic data on an audience will prove beneficial to understanding a group of listeners and gearing sermons to them.”⁵³ Myanmar pastors need to know socioeconomic data on their audience. Especially, they need to plan visits to their working places. They should prepare questions they could ask. Through understanding these things they could know how to prepare their sermons that help their audience’s need.

Terry G. Carter, J. Scott Duvall, and J. Daniel Hays say, “Everyone is influenced by social and economic pressures that they encounter in daily life. These pressures affect how people think. Understanding this helps you to preach more effectively.”⁵⁴ Myanmar Christians are struggling for living and a better life. They have social and economic pressures concerning their family and their children’s education. Myanmar pastors should know their pressures and their feeling so that they could understand their audience’s daily pressures and preach more effectively. Therefore,

⁵² Ibid, p. 92

⁵³ Ibid, p. 92

⁵⁴ Ibid, p. 92

knowing the culture of their audience is necessary to prepare an effective sermon related to the culture of their audience. Terry G. Carter, J. Scott Duvall, and J. Daniel Hays write, “Understanding the culture of a congregation also influences one’s preaching ministry.”⁵⁵

3.2 Preparing material for the text

In order to arrange the whole sermon, the preacher needs to prepare material for the biblical text that will be used in sermon preparation and sermon preaching. The preacher needs to know how to prepare material that will help him or her in doing preparations for an effective sermon. In the following pages I will describe ways that will help Myanmar pastors to prepare the biblical text.

3.2.1 Study the biblical text

The preacher needs to study the text as the first step preparation for an effective sermon. Ramesh Richard says, “Studying the biblical text is step 1 of the sermon-preparation process. Normally in a pulpit ministry that pursues expository preaching, no energy or time is wasted on choosing a passage to preach.”⁵⁶ It is necessary for all preachers to do this first process. In doing so they may be able to prepare an effective sermon. Some Myanmar pastors are weak in doing this first step of sermon-preparation. As a result, they could not prepare an effective sermon for their audience. John Stott says, “Good preachers prepare conscientiously. They study the text, try to explain it clearly, look for examples and apply it to their listeners’

⁵⁵ Ibid, p. 93

⁵⁶ Ramesh Richard, *Preparing Expository Sermons: A Seven-Step Method for Biblical Preaching* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 2001), p. 33

situation.”⁵⁷ Every preacher should follow this advice. The weakness of some Myanmar pastors is the fact that they do not take time to study the text and try to explain it clearly. And they do not try to look for examples. As a result, they are not able to preach it well and apply it to their listeners’ situation. Therefore, all Myanmar pastors need to take time and study the text. In addition, they need to try to explain the text and look for examples and apply it to the situation of Myanmar listeners.

It is important to study the text in order to prepare an effective sermon. All pastors are responsible to study the text before they preach. Therefore, Myanmar pastors need to study the text to prepare an effective sermon. And they should take time for doing that. John Stott says, “The sooner we choose our text, the longer we have to mine its riches. This involves reading it over and over.”⁵⁸ That is why Myanmar pastor need to read the text again and again. In addition, this preparation involves making discipline to think through the text carefully and study every detail in the text. John Stott says, “We must thus discipline ourselves to think about the text’s historical, geographical and cultural setting as well as its words and images.”⁵⁹

3.2.2 Types of studying the text

It is important to know various types of studying the text. First, the preacher needs to read the text for basic understanding. Thomas G. Long says, “We are simply trying to make sure that we understand the straightforward meaning of the words and syntax of the text.”⁶⁰ Carefully reading the text is necessary in order to catch the words and syntax of the text. Thomas G. Long states, “This is the time to look up any

⁵⁷ John Stott ----- p. 50

⁵⁸ Ibid, p. 52

⁵⁹ Ibid, p. 52

⁶⁰ Thomas G. Long, *The Witness of Preaching*, 2nd ed. (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005), p. 77

familiar terms in the text, like “ephah” or “zealot” or “phylactery,” in the Bible dictionary.”⁶¹ For the unfamiliar terms in the text, the preacher needs to find its meaning in the Bible dictionary. Therefore, Myanmar pastors need to use the Bible dictionary when they find unfamiliar terms in the text.

Secondly, the preacher needs to see the text in its larger context. Bryan Chapell says, “Accurate interpretations require us not only to determine what particular words say but also to see how they function in their broader contexts.”⁶² To understand the biblical text in its context is necessary for the preacher. Thomas G. Long says, “In a good commentary or a reliable Bible encyclopedia, we can find an outline of the book of the Bible in which our passage appears. By examining two or three of these outlines, we can begin to see possibilities for how our text fits into the larger structure and into the overall flow and development of the book.”⁶³ That is why using a good commentary or a reliable encyclopedia is helpful for the preacher to find the text in its larger context. Especially, he or she can find the outline of the book of the Bible and see the text in it. That is why Myanmar pastors need to see the text in its larger context so that they may know the text fits into the larger structure of the book of the Bible.

Thirdly, it is important to explore the text historically. The preacher also needs to see the text historically. Thomas G. Long says, “Biblical texts often speak of events in history, such as the reign of a king or the destruction.”⁶⁴ This is really right because the preacher may know that the texts itself is telling the historical events. But the problem is that some preachers do not explore the text historically. Myanmar pastors

⁶¹ Ibid, p. 77

⁶² Bryan Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching: Redeeming the Expository Sermon*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2005), p. 78

⁶³ Thomas G. Long ----- p. 79

⁶⁴ Ibid, p. 89

also do not explore the historical events in the text. Thomas G. Long states, “Biblical texts also have a history, the sense that they were written in particular moments in history and sometimes modified as they were passed along from generation to generation.”⁶⁵ Knowing historical events in the text helps the preacher to describe the period in which the book was written and the time of the biblical historical characters of the book. The preacher should try to get a clear understanding of the historical situation behind the text. The ways how events are told and how people react to them could be possible keys in applying the text to the audience.

⁶⁵ Ibid, p. 89

Chapter 4

Preparing parts of the sermon

William Evans says, “Every good and finished sermon or message divides itself into three parts: the introduction, the body or argument, and the conclusion.”⁶⁶ All pastors should use these three parts in their sermons. Some Myanmar pastors do not use this method. Sometimes they only use body of the sermon and conclusion of the sermon in preaching. They do not mention the introduction of the sermon. As a result, listeners or audience could not catch the purpose of the sermon. Myanmar pastors need to get used to these three parts in sermon preparation. It is important to divide a sermon into three parts so that church members or audience may able to catch the whole sermon and understand its meaning.

4.1 Introduction of the sermon

Every sermon needs to have an introduction. It is important to mention the introduction of the sermon because it describes what the preacher wants to preach and what the whole sermon is about. In addition, it introduces the audience to the purpose of the whole sermon. The introduction of the sermon helps the audience to take interest in what the preacher is about to preach. Through the introduction the audience can know what the sermon is about. The introduction of the sermon already includes its purposes. William Evans says, “One of the purposes of an introduction is to awaken the interest of the audience in your theme.”⁶⁷ Without awakening the interest of the audience the preacher cannot preach well. In addition, the preacher cannot help

⁶⁶ William Evans ----- p. 84

⁶⁷ Ibid, p.65

the audience to see the power of the word of God in preaching. John A. Broadus says, “The introduction has two chief objects: to interest our hearers in the subject, and to prepare them for understanding it.”⁶⁸ It is really helpful to the audience to take interest in and understand the sermon. That is why Myanmar pastors need to prepare good introduction to their sermons.

Paul Scott Wilson says, “The introduction, like the opening scenes of a movie, signals what the sermon is about and where it is headed, with some promise held in store. Listeners use the introduction as a time to adjust to the preacher.”⁶⁹ This is right because this shows the importance of the introduction of the sermon and the role of listeners who observe the introduction to adjust the preacher. This idea is very helpful to both the preacher and the listeners because they could communicate with each other through the introduction of the sermon. Myanmar pastors need to use it as the tool that the listeners may be able to adjust to the sermon and the preacher. Paul Scott Wilson says, “Introduction means “to lead in.” An introduction is a gate that we open, a path that we reveal. Within the first paragraph or two, the preacher needs to make the theme statement or topic clear, with some hint to both its relevance and the destination of the sermon.”⁷⁰ That is why the preacher is responsible to know how to write an introduction his or her sermons.

⁶⁸ John Albert Broadus, *A Treatise On the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*, ed. Edwin Charles Dargan, Southern Baptist Classic Reprint (Birmingham, Ala.: Solid Ground Christian Books, 2005), p. 267.

⁶⁹ Paul Scott Wilson, *The Four Pages of the Sermon: A Guide to Biblical Preaching* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1999), P. 58

⁷⁰ *Ibid*, p. 59

4.1.1 Principles for preparing the introduction

James Braga says, “The introduction should be brief.”⁷¹ The preacher does not need to take a long time for the introduction. His or her responsibility is to take time for all parts of the sermons. Especially, he or she needs to take more time for the body of the sermon. James Braga says, “Since the objective of preaching is to bring the word of God to people, we should get into the main part of the message as quickly as possible.”⁷² The preacher should go to the main of the sermon after he or she takes a few minutes in the introduction of the sermon. James Braga states, “The introduction should be interesting. The first few minutes of the sermon are crucial. During this time, the preacher will either gain or lose the attention of his congregation.”⁷³ Without any interest in the introduction the preacher is sure to lose the attention of his or her congregation.

James Braga suggests the preacher to arouse curiosity and that people are naturally curious. He showed an example that a preacher might begin his message by describing a conversation he had with an unbeliever. When he met him he questioned him. And he mentioned this question to the audience. Questioning arouses the congregation’s curiosity.⁷⁴

In addition, he suggests the preacher to use variety and not to begin each in the same way. He says to use different approaches from week to week and to open with an apt quotation, with the stanza of a hymn, with a striking statement, with a question. He also suggests the preacher to state the title of the sermon or quote the Scripture passage upon which it is based. And he says to explain the reasons for the choice of

⁷¹ James Braga, *How to Prepare Bible Messages*, 35th ed. (Sisters, Or.: Multnomah Publishers, 2005), p. 119

⁷² *Ibid*, p. 119

⁷³ *Ibid*, p. 119

⁷⁴ *Ibid*, p. 120

the title or text and proceeds to show the relationship of either or both to the topic.⁷⁵ Therefore, Myanmar pastors need to follow the ways above to arouse the interest of their audience.

4.2 Body of the sermon

Body of the sermon is also an important part of the whole sermon. This part of the sermon is to support the whole sermon effectively. In this part the preacher needs to describe the facts through repeating the theme and the general statements of the sermon. In addition, the preacher needs to make the divisions in the body of the sermon so that he or she may elaborate the subject or the statement of the sermon. William Evans says, “The divisions of a sermon are for the purpose of elaborating and amplifying the subject.”⁷⁶ It is necessary for the preacher to use the body of the sermon so that he or she may support the listeners to catch the meaning the theme of the sermon. William Evans mentions, “This may be done by restating the theme in different words, by detailing general statements, by setting forth abstract facts in concrete terms, and by clarifying the subject by the use of illustrations.”⁷⁷

It is important to know the proposition in order to build a solid foundation of the sermon. James Braga uses the word “The proposition” in order to explain the big idea of the sermon. But his suggestion and idea helps the preacher to understand how to make the big idea that can be used in the body of the sermon. He says that the proposition is a simple declaration of the subject a preacher intends to discuss, develop, prove, or explain in the sermon and that it also called the thesis, the big idea,

⁷⁵ Ibid, p. 120-121

⁷⁶ William Evans ----- p. 75

⁷⁷ Ibid, p. 75

the homiletic idea, or the subject sentence.⁷⁸ Therefore, the proposition is necessary to support the whole sermon. In the body of the sermon the preacher needs to describe and explain what he discusses. Braga suggests, “The proposition is the foundation of the entire sermon and that just as a house cannot be properly built without a solid foundation, so a sermon cannot be properly constructed with the right base for its thought structure.”⁷⁹ The preacher needs to be careful to construct the solid foundation of the entire sermon.

4.3 Conclusion of the sermon

The conclusion of the sermon is still one of the important parts of the sermon. It should be well prepared by the preacher. William Evans says, “It is not too much to say that the last five minutes of the sermon is the most important part of it.”⁸⁰ It is the time to connect the message of the sermon into the application for the audience. The preacher needs to connect the message with the audience in order to apply it in daily life. It is also called the application portion of the sermon. The preacher needs to show the application for the audience in the conclusion of the sermon. Terry G. Carter, J. Scott Duvall, and J. Daniel Hays say, “The application portion of a sermon is critical to its effectiveness. Preaching involves more than just giving out biblical information. Preaching connects biblical truth to people’s lives in a way that changes them.”⁸¹ This is a really idea helpful to Myanmar pastors because they need to make sure that they are connecting biblical truths to the lives of their audience. Especially, in their

⁷⁸ James Braga ----- p. 129

⁷⁹ Ibid, p. 130

⁸⁰ William Evans ----- p. 89

⁸¹ Terry G. Carter, J. Scott Duvall, and J. Daniel Hays ----- p. 117

conclusion of the sermon they should try to give not only biblical information but also biblical truth to their audience.

It is necessary for the preacher to consider how to develop the application of the text in the sermon. He or she needs to seek how to develop the application of the text so that both he or she and the audience may improve daily spiritual life. Duvall and Hays suggest three steps for application of the text. At first, observe how the principles in the text address the original situation. Secondly, discover a parallel situation in your audience's contemporary context. Thirdly, make applications specific to your audience's situation, based on the same principles.⁸² These three steps in application of the text are really necessary for Myanmar pastors because they can use them and apply them in their conclusion of the sermon for their audience.

4.3.1 Principles for conclusion

In order to write the conclusion for sermon the preacher needs to know the principles for it. After preparing the body of the sermon, he or she needs to prepare the conclusion of the sermon. Therefore, he or she needs to use the following principles. At first, he or she needs to repeat the main ideas and summarize the whole sermon. John Stott says, "The first task of the conclusion is to sum up, to repeat the main ideas of the sermon. We should not be afraid to repeat ourselves."⁸³ The preacher needs to make sure that he or she repeats the main idea of the sermon in his conclusion. It is really important to describe the main idea of the sermon again.

Secondly, the preacher needs to mention the personal applications. The application is important for the audience and it should be included in the conclusion.

⁸² Ibid, p. 117

⁸³ John Stott ----- p. 61

John Stott says, “A conclusion also requires personal application. Our expectation as the sermon comes to an end is not merely that people will understand or remember or enjoy our teaching, but that they will respond to it.”⁸⁴ Therefore, Myanmar pastors need to keep in mind that the application is required because it is important for the audience so that they may understand, remember, and enjoy the message and respond to it.

Thirdly, it is necessary to invite the audience to pray in the conclusion. The preacher should invite his or her audience to pray together in conclusion of the sermon. John Stott says, “It is good to invite the people to pray. Sometimes we will pray aloud, seeking to express the congregation’s response to God’s word. At other times it may be wiser to call the people to silent prayer.”⁸⁵ In the conclusion it is good to pray together with the audience. It is good for them to pray together because the audience can respond to God’s word while praying. Therefore, Myanmar pastors should invite their audience to pray together and their audience may respond to God’s word through prayer.

⁸⁴ Ibid, p. 62

⁸⁵ Ibid, p. 64

Chapter 5

Conclusion

Nowadays some Myanmar pastors are living and doing ministry in Chiang Mai. Even though they are pastors some of them are weak in preaching and struggling when preparing sermons. They need suggestions and ideas in order to prepare an effective sermon. They still need to know how to live a minister's life while doing ministry in Thailand. Therefore, this study aims to help them in preparing themselves and preparing sermon. This topic "How to help Myanmar pastors in Chiang Mai to prepare an effective sermon" has described them how to prepare themselves as a pastor and how to write an effective sermon. Therefore, the summary for this topic will be described below and some suggestions will be given to order to reflect this study and help Myanmar pastors concerning preparing effective sermons.

5.1 Summary

Myanmar Christians work and live in Chiang Mai for many years. Their purpose for living in Thailand is to find jobs and save money for their families. Their first priority is not to live a good Christian life or to be a good example to other people. They sometimes attend church and receive the word of God. But they are not enjoying sermons because of their pastor's weak spiritual and daily life and poor preparation for sermon. Since they are the children of God they need to receive the word of God through their pastors' preaching. Actually they want to hear sermons that are well prepared by their pastors. Myanmar pastors need to improve their life as a

pastor and serve in ministry as the servants of God. If not, they are weak in preparation to preach an effective sermon for their audience.

Some Myanmar pastors do not have enough time to prepare an effective sermon. They read sermons from books and from the internet. They do not do enough reading to understand the Bible for sermon preparation. Some to them are weak in studying the text historically, contextually and culturally to build an effective sermon. They need to read the Bible and study the text that will be used for sermon preparation. They need to take time with God and pray for their relationship with Him. They need to know the definition of preaching. Myanmar pastors are to prepare themselves and their message before they preach to their audience. In addition, they are to recognize the importance of preaching because preaching needs Bible reading, studying, practicing and delivery.

Regarding preparing and developing the preacher Myanmar pastors are to prepare their hearts, their minds, and their bodies. In order to prepare their heart they need a relationship with God through prayer. It is important to pray because it could help them to have a relationship with God. Prayer is also for Myanmar pastors in order to have a relationship with God and serve Him with their all heart. Through prayer Myanmar pastors can prepare their heart to serve God. In addition, to prepare their heart is to clean all the way in their preaching. God wants the preacher to be clean in his or her heart. In order to serve God in ministry Myanmar pastors should be clean in their lives.

Preparing the mind means to see what God wants them to see in ministry. The Bible is the key in preparing the mind to be ready for serving the Lord. The Bible is to shape Myanmar pastors to see God's will in sermon preparation. The Bible is the key and the main tool to succeed in preparing an effective sermon. Myanmar pastors are

to succeed in sermon preparation through reading and using the bible as the main source.

In addition, they are to prepare their bodies in order to be healthy in serving the Lord. Without healthy bodies, they cannot prepare an effective sermon and cannot serve God. Myanmar pastors are to take care of their bodies by doing exercise and eating regularly and healthy. They are to do exercise at least 30 minutes a day.

Nowadays Myanmar pastors are also weak in knowing their audience's situation. They are to make sure that they know their audience in order to prepare the sermon according to their needs. They need to know the spiritual situation of their audience. Especially they should know which audience is strong and which audience is weak in spiritual maturity. In addition, they are to prepare their sermons based on the biblical knowledge of their audience. And they are to prepare their sermons based on socioeconomic data of their audience. They need to know their audience's daily life concerning what they work, their pressures, their social problem, and their financial problems. Understanding their audience's socioeconomic data will help them to prepare their sermons effectively.

Concerning preparing the message, Myanmar pastors are to make sure that they take time to study the text before they preach. Firstly, they are to read the text carefully to catch the words and syntax of the text. And they are to see unfamiliar terms in the text and find its meaning in the Bible dictionary. Secondly, they are to need the text in its larger context. Thirdly, they are to explore the text historically because it helps them to know the events in history to see the historical period of the book.

In sermon preparation Myanmar pastors should divide the sermon into three parts: the introduction, the body or argument, and the conclusion. The introduction of

the three minutes to 5 minutes long sermon helps the audience to take interest in what the preacher preaches. It also helps the preacher to communicate his sermon with the audience. It shows the purpose of the whole sermon. The introduction should be brief and interesting. And it is to arouse the interest of the audience. In the introduction, the preacher should state the title of the sermon or the Bible verse for the whole sermon.

In the body of the sermon Myanmar pastors should describe the argument and the theme again. They are to make the divisions in the body in order to show the exact arguments that support the body of the sermon. They are to preach it by restating the theme in different words, by detailing general statements, and giving explanations and illustrations about the theme. They should use the proposition to describe the main idea of the sermon. The proposition is to describe what the preacher discuss and explain in the body of the sermon.

In the conclusion of the sermon Myanmar pastors should make sure that they are giving the biblical truth of the sermon to their audience. Therefore they are giving not only the biblical information but also biblical truth to their audience. They should develop the application of the text in the sermon for their audience. They should observe how the principles in the text address the original situation. And they should discover a parallel situation in your audience's contemporary context. Finally they should make applications specific to your audience's situation, based on the same principles.

In addition, they should repeat the main ideas and summarize the whole sermon. And they should give personal applications for their audience. And they should invite the audience to pray together so that the listeners are able to be part of the sermon and respond to the word of God with their participation.

5.2 Suggestions for Myanmar pastors

This topic “How to help Myanmar pastors in Chiang Mai to prepare an effective sermon” is to give some suggestion to Myanmar pastors in order to know the importance of preaching and some basic homiletic principles. Therefore, I would like to invite Myanmar pastors to follow the things below concerning preparing an effective sermon in doing ministry.

Knowing the definition of preaching should be familiar with the preacher who often preaches to the audience. As Christian preaching is based on the Bible reading the Bible carefully and prayer is important part in sermon preparation. Every preacher is responsible to preach a sermon that is based on the Bible. Therefore the preacher should study the biblical text and find its meaning in its context. And he or she should try to understand the text historically in order to know the author and its original audience. It is important to know that the goal of biblical preaching is to translate the meaning of the text in the period of biblical audience to the meaning of the text in our time. Therefore, the preacher should translate the text in the time of original audience and to translate again it in the time of today audience.

As a pastor’s life and his or her preaching plays a vital role in doing ministry he or she is responsible to prepare both his or her personal life and his or her sermon – preparation. Preparing both pastor’s life and the message is a great help in order to prepare an effective sermon. The preacher’s life has an important role in doing ministry because the audience can learn his or her life to listen to his or her preaching. The preacher’s personal life is affecting his preaching. The preacher is responsible to live a life according to his or her preaching. In the Bible we can see many suggestions and teaching concerning a pastor’s life. For example, the apostle Paul teaches Timothy and Titus to prepare the preacher’s life to be a good example to other people

(I Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9). It is very important to be very careful about a pastor's life. Therefore, the preacher should have a good relationship with God through having prayer in daily life. He or she should be clean in the heart to receive the word of God. In order to be healthy in doing ministry the preacher needs to do regular exercise. He or she should do it at least 30 minutes a day. He or she should take 3 three days a week for doing exercise to keep healthy body in serving the Lord.

Reading the Bible faithfully and knowing the audience is really necessary for the preacher. I want to suggest that Myanmar pastors read the Bible not only for preparing a sermon but also for their personal own spiritual lives. Reading the Bible helps the preacher to be familiar with the historical events and the lessons from the original audience. Through knowing the events in history the preacher can use it in sermon preparation. He or she should be familiar with the situation of the audience in order to preach according to the need of the audience. He or she should know the spiritual maturity of the audience, their biblical knowledge, and their culture. If the preacher knows them his or her preaching will be more helpful to the audience. Through knowing the situation of the audience the message will be connected with the lives of the audience.

The next important thing is that the preacher should give the application of the text to the audience. As the sermon is not just giving biblical information, the preacher should invite the audience to apply the application of the text in their life. Especially the preacher's responsibility is to give the biblical truth to the audience in order to reflect their lives.

Finally, the preacher needs to make sure that preaching is not an easy work and it should be well prepared. The preacher may face difficulties in sermon – preparation. He or she may be disappointed with his or her preparing sermon. But the

preacher should make sure that preaching is for the glory of God. The preacher needs to know that he or she is a servant of God and serving the Lord in ministry. I would like to encourage Myanmar pastors not to be discouraged in the ministry because God is working with his servants in ministry. God should be the center of preacher's life and his preaching. God alone is giving strength to the preachers. In addition, God helps them to understand his word and its meaning in order to know how preach and how to apply it in life.

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RESUME

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