Do you find it easier now to develop a sermon from a passage?
Scripture: Selected Scriptures
Code: QA88

I never study to make a sermon. I study to understand the text. As I have grown in the Lord and in the knowledge of the Word, I have been able to dig deeper into the passages I study. I just keep studying until I have discovered all the rich truths I can from a text. I only preach part of what I find in my study process. Even doing this, however, I often wind up with a three or four-week series from what began as a single message.

Preaching is a science, an art, and an adventure. It is a science in that it is based on the well-defined and absolute rules of hermeneutics and skills of exegesis. Interpretation is not whimsical, but implements literal, historical, grammatical, and contextual principles.

But preaching is also an art. Preaching a passage is similar to painting a picture. No two artists, though they use the same tools and techniques, will paint exactly the same picture. In the same way, no two preachers, even using the same principles of interpretation, will develop the same sermon. Applying the principles of sermon preparation and delivery is an art, the manner of application depending on the skill, experience, and perspective of the preacher.

Preaching is also an adventure. A spiritual dynamic is at work when I step into the pulpit. I find myself saying things I had not planned to say as the data from my study come together in a way I had not seen before. When this happens, I may depart from my notes and amplify the new thought. That is why it sometimes takes me several weeks to preach through notes originally designed as one sermon.

For a insider's look into John's pastoral heart, consider the audio series *Insight into a Pastor's Heart*, a rare opportunity to hear what makes him tick.

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