

for the

PREACHER

IF YOUR SERMONS NEEDS
MORE SUBSTANCE
THIS BOOK IS FOR YOU

EDWARD PAZ

About This E-Book

I have had the privilege of preaching and teaching from God's Word on most Sundays for the last 10 years. In total, it's probably safe to say I've preached anywhere between 350-400 sermons.

That's 350-400 reps. 350-400 mistakes. 350-400 learning opportunities. 350-400 times God has used me *in spite* of me.

I would be remiss if I didn't invest the time to reflect upon the most valuable lessons God has taught me about preaching after preaching for over a decade. So, here they are.

In addition to the lessons, I've also included "Questions to Consider" after each lesson. Prayerfully, by reflecting upon the questions, these lessons can make your journey as a preacher, less painful than mine!

EDWARD PAZ
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LESSON 1

Good News = Great Advice

Though I want my messages to be helpful, I am more concerned with my messages being *powerful*.

With that in mind, for me, if a message doesn't include and/or conclude with extolling the finished work of Jesus Christ as the true source of power for all life change, I have not preached; I have, merely, given a talk.

(Romans 1:16)

Questions to Consider

How can you preach to place a greater emphasis on the finished work of Christ on our behalf than on our unfinished work for Christ on his behalf? What prevents you from doing this?

LESSON 2

Find Energy in Text. Bring Energy to Text.

My best energies in my message should not be given towards jokes, illustrations or personal anecdotes.

Instead, in my study, I must find where there is energy, movement, and momentum in the text of Scripture and then I need to bring my energy, creativity, and enthusiasm to that text of Scripture.

**The source of life is not in my stories,
the source of life is in God's Word!**

(Psalm 119:25)

Questions to Consider

Where do you currently find yourself placing the most “energy” when you are preaching? How can you begin to place more energy into the actual text of Scripture you are preaching?

LESSON 3

No Burden. No Bueno.

The more in tune I am with the consequences of not obeying/applying/ understanding what I am about to preach, the more ready I am to preach.

The more my heart is broken for the people who need to hear the message I am about to bring, the more ready I am to bring it.

If I am not aware of the sense of urgency to my message there will be no sense of urgency *in* my message.

No burden. No bueno. (Nehemiah 1:4)

Questions to Consider

How do you develop a sense of urgency for what you are about to preach? How can incorporating your burden *into* your sermon help your listeners to grasp the importance of your message?

LESSON 4

Build Tension. Earn Attention.

The greatest books and movies I've ever read and watched build a tremendous amount of tension and suspense in the beginning causing me to "lean in" to find out how the problem is going to be resolved.

In preaching, the better I can craft a tension-building question (a problem that the audience wants the answer to), the more engaged the listener will be.

DON'T ASSUME INTEREST.

Build tension. Earn attention. (Luke 15:4)

Questions to Consider

If you push back on the idea of developing tension in your sermon, why? How can you develop a greater degree of tension towards the beginning of your message?

LESSON 5

Be Affected. Be Effective.

When I have already been *affected* by the truth of the text that I am going to preach, I find myself being more *effective* in preaching it.

When I have already *inhaled* the truths from God's Word that I am going to proclaim, I find it so much easier to *exhale* them. Truths that have not been first *received* by me will not be easily *accepted* by others. Your audience knows if you've *been* where you're trying to take them!

Smoke what you're selling! Be affected. Be effective. (Titus 2:7)

Questions to Consider

How do you allow yourself to be impacted by the text you are preaching? Do your listeners *feel* your affectedness? What can you do to prevent yourself from detaching your life from your weekly messages?

LESSON 6

Your Weakness. God's Strength.

I connect best with my church through stories of how I have failed, *not* how I have succeeded. Vulnerability and transparency with *my* sin and *my* shortcomings creates an authenticity in communication like nothing else.

One of the greatest gifts a preacher can give to their listeners is the comfort that they are working out their own salvation with fear and trembling *just like their church is!*

Lean into your struggle. Your weakness. God's strength. (2 Corinthians 12:9-10)

Questions to Consider

What hinders you from being more vulnerable with your weaknesses and shortcomings in your preaching? What part of the Gospel do you need to apply to yourself to free you to preach more authentically and transparently?

LESSON 7

Absent Spirit. Impotent Word.

My words have absolutely no power to transform a life. None at all. Only the Holy Spirit of God can convict a heart. Only the Holy Spirit of God can cause change. Only the Holy Spirit of God can bring salvation.

We prepare. The Holy Spirit brings the power. We talk. The Holy Spirit transforms. We communicate. The Holy Spirit convicts.

Plead for God to do what only God can do.
Absent Spirit. Impotent Word.

(John 16:7-15)

Questions to Consider

Be honest. How much time do you invest pleading for the Holy Spirit of God to do what only He can do in the lives of your listeners before, during, and after they've heard your preaching? How can you invest more time?

LESSON 8

Teach Less. Teach More.

If I have taught *everything* in a particular text, but I have conveyed *nothing*, I have failed.

With that in mind, I find communicating *one big idea* from the text to be more effective than communicating *every single point* of the text. If there are multiple points in a text, I don't try to preach it all in one *sermon*, I try to preach it all in one *series* of sermons.

Many times, when *less* is taught, *more* can be understood (and applied!). Teach less. Teach more. (2 Timothy 2:16)

Questions to Consider

Do you equate faithfulness *to* a text with preaching everything *in* the text? If “saying it all” in a sermon is a struggle for you, what can you do to discipline yourself to teach less?

LESSON 9

Let It Out. Let It Go.

I will drive myself crazy if, after I preach, I worry too much about how "good" I did or how "effective" I was.

I will become too self-absorbed if I find myself unhealthily looking for affirmation or approval from my listeners.

With that in mind, my mantra when I finish a sermon is, "Because I let it out, I can let it go." All I can do is be obedient to what God was leading me to say. If I did that, I can rest easy. The results are up to Him. Let it out. Let it go. (Isaiah 55:11)

Questions to Consider

How well do you do with detaching yourself from the "results" of your weekly sermons after they have been preached? How can you apply the gospel to yourself so that you can more freely "let go?"

LESSON 10

Son First. Preacher Second.

My identity is not in what I say about God.
My identity is in what God has already said
about me!

I am a prodigal who has already been
received before I am a preacher who longs
to be accepted. I don't preach *for* God's
approval, I preach *from* God's approval. **If I
am preaching to "become somebody,"
I am not going to help anybody!**

Son first. Preacher second. Don't get it
twisted.

(Ephesians 1:3-5)

Questions to Consider

How acutely aware are you of your
sonship before, during, and after you are
preaching? How can you make yourself
more aware of *whose* you are before you
do *what* you do?

BONUS CHAPTER

A Prayer All Preachers Should Pray

“

Heavenly Father,
as I make preparations
to preach your Word,
I humbly and boldly ask for
insight beyond my intellect,
anointing beyond my ability,
and
power beyond my preparation.

A move of *your* Spirit
is what I long for!

In Jesus name I pray,

AMEN.

BONUS CHAPTER

A Prayer All Preachers Should Pray

Pray for ***insight beyond your intellect*** because interpretation of the Scriptures is a *spiritual* endeavor. Our intellect is physical, therefore it is limited. Insight from above can transcend what our intellect can't comprehend.

Pray for ***anointing beyond your ability*** because like intellect, ability is physical, therefore it is also limited. Anointing on the other hand, can cause ears to be opened that otherwise wouldn't be. Anointing can cause walls to be broken that otherwise couldn't be. Anointing can cause miracles to take place that otherwise shouldn't be!

Pray for ***power beyond your preparation*** because no matter how thorough you are in your preparation, preaching void of the power of the Holy Spirit is merely a speech. Both believers and unbelievers alike don't need another well put together talk, they need the power of God!

for more encouragement:
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