

7 STEP SERMON PREP CHECKLIST

■ Pray

1

You may be thinking, "Duh!" But did you actually pray yet? Don't skip this!

■ Study

2

Pick the text you will preach. Copy and paste it into your word doc. Read it over and over (at least 7 times). Write down all observations. Then, and only then, break out the commentaries and reference tools.

■ Focus

3

Find the big idea. Based on scripture, what should be done? Who needs to do it? Why? When and Where should it be done? How? Write a paragraph answering these questions. Then, boil it down into one memorable sentence. This is the #1 thing people need to remember from your message.

■ Illustrate

4

Here comes the salt and pepper for your sermon recipe. Gather illustrations, videos, music, pictures, props, or any other creative ideas that might fit your sermon. Collect more than you need. The best stories and ideas will rise to the top.

■ Outline

5

Take your scripture, observations, big idea, and illustrations and piece it together into a full outline or manuscript. Think of it like a puzzle. Each element is a piece that you move around until you find

■ Edit

6

Everything up until this point was the rough draft. Now you need a finished product. Cut everything that doesn't fit. Kill whatever strays from the big idea. Get feedback. Move pieces around. refine the big idea even more. Play around with the sermon until everything feels right.

■ Practice

7

Practice makes perfect (or at least as good as it gets). Internalize your message. Read the message out loud. Practice with notes. Practice without notes. Practice in front of a mirror. Make changes as needed. Practice until you are comfortable with the material, but not so much that you become robotic with it.