

A COMPELLING DELIVERY

How To Preach So People Will Listen

*“Every man who enters the pulpit
must be conscious that his delivery
will either enhance the exposition
or detract from it.”*

John MacArthur, Jr.

I. Introduction (Adapted from Haddon Robinson, *Biblical Preaching*, 191-208)

- A. The effectiveness of sermons depends upon two factors:
 - 1. **WHAT** we say (content)
 - 2. **HOW** we say it (delivery)
- B. “In order of significance the ingredients making up a sermon are thought, arrangement, language, voice, and gesture. In priority of impressions, however, the order reverses. Gesture and voice emerge as the most obvious and determinative” (Robinson, 191). *In other words, that which takes the longest in the study (exegesis) actually has less impact than how we communicate this content.*
- C. The importance of non-verbal communication
 - 1. Silent language communicates **MORE** than spoken language.
 - 2. If non-verbal messages contradict the verbal, listeners will believe the **SILENT** message.
 - 3. Effective delivery begins with **DESIRES**. If you don’t want to say it well, you won’t!

II. Non -verbal Factors to Consider in Delivery

- A. **Grooming and Dress**: should fit the audience, situation and speaker.
- B. **Movement and Gestures**
 - 1. **SPONTANEOUS**: don’t let your gestures look planned
 - 2. **DEFINITE**: don’t make a “half-gesture” (either make it or don’t make it!)
 - 3. **VARIED**: using even a good gesture all the time will get old fast.

4. **PROPERLY TIMED**: coordinate your mouth and body so they're consistent!
5. **AUDIENCE ORIENTED**: what should be seen as a left to right move must be reversed for the speaker in order to look natural to the listeners/viewers.
6. **FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT**: Please get out from behind the pulpit and walk around some.

C. ***Eye Contact***: don't speak to the ceiling or only one side of the room.

D. ***Vocal Delivery***

1. **PITCH**: vary your inflections (raise and lower how high and low your voice sounds).
2. **PUNCH**: vary your volume (don't only shout/speak with intensity, but whisper too).
3. **PROGRESS**: vary your rate (how fast you speak).
4. **PAUSE**: vary your silence (give long pauses for effect, but not too much!).
5. **PRACTICE**: preach your sermon standing up - even in this very classroom to determine what your movement will be.

III. A Final Charge (Adapted from John MacArthur, Jr. *Rediscovering Expository Preaching*. Dallas: Word, 1992, 331-332).

When you mount the steps to the pulpit and are about to speak God's Word on His behalf, let these exhortations come to mind:

- Preach to ***HONOR*** God's Word
- Preach to ***REACH*** the unconverted
- Preach to ***PLEASE*** God
- Preach to ***EQUIP*** Christians for the work of the ministry
- Preach to ***LIFT UP*** the downhearted
- Preach to be more ***EFFECTIVE*** this time than last
- Preach to bring ***CONVICTION*** of sin and repentance
- Preach to ***COMPETE*** with no one but yourself
- Preach to ***REFRESH*** the spiritually weary
- Preach to ***EXALT*** the Lord Jesus Christ