

The art of

# **PUBLIC SPEAKING**

**I. and II**  
(Teacher's copy)

a  
Workbook  
by  
*Dr. T.E. VanBuskirk*

# **The Art of Public Speaking**

by

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Portions of this study are based upon and quote from "Speaking In Public" by Arthur Stevens Phelps. That text, © 1930, is, unfortunately, out of print. If you can find a copy of it, please buy it and read it because it expounds more in depth upon the principles taught in this workbook. Reading it will be of immense benefit to you in your endeavors to sharpen your skills for public speaking.

Dr. VBK

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## INTRODUCTION

**O**f all of the things that God has His people do, public speaking is probably the single most terrifying. The last public poll that I read listed “death” as only running fourth. In the number one spot came that terror of terrors- PUBLIC SPEAKING. That means that the average person would literally rather die than to have to speak to an audience.

There are several reasons for this. We will examine a few of the most common; but not necessarily in order of importance.

- 1. Fear of the unknown.**
- 2. Not feeling qualified.**
- 3. Shyness.**
- 4. Embarrassment.**

There is one sure cure for all of the above. PREPAREDNESS and PRACTICE!

We will, in this class, learn how to be both prepared and practiced in public speaking. We will also study many other perceived “obstacles” to giving a successful speech. The reason I put the word **obstacles** in parentheses is because there are no such things as true obstacles in the life of a Christian. In the flesh they appear as obstacles but in the spirit they are “**opportunities**” for Christ to give us the victory through the power of His Spirit that indwells us.

Much of the material in this class is from the book “Speaking in Public” (©1930) by Arthur S. Phelps who was the Professor of Public Speaking at Berkeley Baptist Divinity School in the early decades of the Twentieth Century. There will also be much material gathered from various other sources.

In order to speak effectively, whether in the ministry or in business, you must learn first how to handle people. You must befriend the people to whom you are speaking; i.e., they must like you personally before they will listen to what you have to say. That is why many speakers start with a joke or an anecdote. They do so to win over their audience to themselves; and then they speak on the subject of the hour. Then when you do begin to speak on the subject at hand, know more than anyone else in the audience but never speak down to them or denigrate their opinions on the subject. Get them involved, if the subject and the situation allow you to do so, but never give in to the temptation to verbally beat their brains out when they express a wrong opinion or understanding of the subject or one of its points. Handle them with tact and diplomacy. Tell how their answer could possibly be right under certain circumstances and then lead them gently to what is the right answer for these specific circumstances. You may have to explain the circumstances again. You may have not been clear enough the first time (which you may want to admit so as to take the heat off of them.) Remember what God says in **I Corinthians 8:1** “... **Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth.**”

Being dictatorial leads to cruelty; and when you are honored by being asked to speak in public, then you will not win the audience by being cruel to them. Especially if you are a Christian. God has given you an opportunity to build up others with your speech; but, if you belittle them you will have failed in the task for which God put you there. However, if you present your speech in the spirit of edification and love (charity) then you have a chance of winning them over to your point of view. If you use your knowledge as a club with which to beat them over the head, then you will never win them over to your way of thinking. If, however, you come across in your delivery as someone that is striving to use their knowledge as a tool to help build them up, then you have a good chance of winning them over. At the least they will consider your point of view even if they disagree with it. Always seek the audience's good when asked to speak and you will generally be received well.

## **REQUIREMENTS**

**To participate in this class you must meet the following requirements:**

1. You must show up for every class unless excused by the teacher.
2. You must complete your workbook, and to do that you must be in class.
3. You must do any required homework.
4. You must participate in class as required by the teacher which includes giving speeches on various topics.
5. You must follow the biblical precept of using your opportunity to speak in class in a way that seeks to edify the listener.
6. In order to pass the course you must be able to write a speech and orally deliver it to the class as part of the final test.

## **LESSON ONE**

### **IMPORTANCE**

Today we live in what is called “The information age.” And being able to speak effectively, whether to an individual or to a group is still the most effective way of conveying information. However, if you expect them to retain the information you give them in your speech, then you must exhort them to use what you are teaching them. Former President John F. Kennedy made this statement, “Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country.” That statement was an exhortation to get involved in that conglomerate of the citizens known as our “country.” Active involvement of the citizens is what makes a country great. Involvement from the top, in government to meet the leadership needs of the citizenry, to the bottom, the working man that produces the goods that supply the physical needs of the citizenry, involvement makes the whole thing work. And in the field of public speaking, encouraging your audience to get involved will make the knowledge that you impart to them become a part of their lives and it will make their lives work better.

Everyone needs to be able to speak effectively. Sooner or later you will have to speak up for yourself. Sooner or later there will be something that you need to defend or explain to some one person or to a group. If you do so effectively you will have defended either yourself or promoted your cause, or you will have enlightened them in some area in which they were previously mistaken or shed some light in an area where their understanding was darkened or clouded. And if you were effective in your communication and, as a consequence, they learned what to them was some morsel or meal of new truth or clarity in a previously obscure area, then you have given them something valuable. If, in the course of your discourse or dialogue, you also encouraged them to use their new knowledge in their lives, then what they learned from you will stick with them long after you have finished speaking. The majority of speeches are failures, whether they be to a group or to individuals. Since our subject is Public Speaking, then we will address that issue and leave the subject of speaking to individuals for another time. (Although both use basically the same underlying principles for effective execution.)

Effectively speaking to an audience is difficult and yet it is a most valuable tool. And for the preacher and/or teacher, it is a tool that one can not do without. You can have an exquisitely fine-tuned belief in and understanding of the Bible; and yet if you cannot effectively communicate that knowledge to others then you have caused what lives within you to be still-born as it comes forth into the world. Phelps said that “The more important the subject is, the more reason for giving it carrying power.” When we handle the Word of God we handle the most important subjects in both life and eternity. From the Word issues the intertwined messages of life eternal and life abundant, both on this earth and beyond. The eventual destiny of men’s souls and the edification and ongoing sanctification of God’s People issue from the wellspring of the Bible; and our effectiveness, or lack of it, in communicating the truths from God’s Word will have eternal consequences for good or for evil. Entrusted to us are the most important messages imaginable, therefore, we are duty bound to learn how to effectively give them to

others. They are not a possession to keep but a necessity of life to be shared with all; and public speaking is the channel through which God shares them with the world. We must never stop up or narrow the channel, but, to the contrary, we must seek to dredge it out, and widen it, and remove all dams to the free flow of the messages from God's Word through us to others. That is the importance of Public Speaking to a Christian servant that God is using to speak on the most important messages of all messages.

## **Boring delivery:**

***Excitement:*** The best way to get people to trivialize, or even completely ignore, your message is to bore them with your delivery. Any subject can be made exciting; and the beginning of making it so is that you, personally, must be excited about it. If you cannot become excited about it, THEN LEAVE IT ALONE! Let someone else speak on it; and that someone needs to be someone who IS excited about the subject.

***Generating excitement within you for the subject:*** If the subject is not particularly exciting to you, then start thinking of how the subject can change the lives of your audience for the better. Once you figure out how it will change their lives, then you can think of the honor being given to you of being an instrument used of God to change the lives of someone lost or someone who is saved but needs to grow in the particular area associated with the subject of the speech. Surely being entrusted by God with the growth and edification of another human being will generate some feelings of excitement within you! Not to mention the thrill of knowing you are in the will of God and the anticipation of His pleasure with you for your obedience and submission to His will. We need not even mention the rewards that God promises to the faithful who willingly allow Him to work His will through them! Do you feel these things already generating excitement within you? And we haven't even considered the subject itself yet, have we!

***Facts and figures:*** Straight facts and figures are necessary, true, but they can, if overdone, soon become a dead horse. Do not make the mistake of beating on that dead horse because you will cause your audience, by your example, to join you in thinking that your subject is a dead horse. In the realm of public speaking you will find a strange anomaly. Not only will your audience perceive that the horse you are beating is dead, but somehow your persistence in beating it will transfer to their minds with one slight twist. Soon they will mentally begin beating you with the same force with which you are beating the dead horse; or, they will soon perceive you as being as dead as the horse; and no one listens to a dead horse. At least not for very long.

***Dead pan:*** Another way to bore your audience is to put a dead expression on your face and stand there like a ventriloquist's dummy. People look at your face while you are speaking. If your face has a dead expression on it then they will think your subject is also dead. If your head only turns from side to side once in a while and your mouth moving up and down is, like the aforementioned dummy, just about the only movement they ever see, then they will soon begin to think you are mechanical. Once they do, then you have lost your audience.

***The dummy's body:*** Another thing you might have noticed about a ventriloquist's dummy is that only the head and the mouth move. The arms and hands and the rest of the body don't

move at all. But that's OK for a dummy. You want the attention of the audience drawn to the mouth and head movements. That draws their focus away from the ventriloquist's mouth and transfers it to the dummy's head and mouth; and, voila, it looks like the dummy is talking. However. When it comes to a speaker, if only your mouth and head move, then the audience will soon think you are the dummy and will begin wondering who is really operating you! You look mechanical and no one expects a machine to really think. Soon they will start to wonder if you really have a brain at all or if your head is really just full of sawdust. Again, you have lost your audience. To prevent that from happening, be animated in your movements. I don't mean that you need to look like a marionette with your arms jerking and flailing or your body flying up off the floor as someone jerks up on your wires; I simply mean give a little physical life and excitement to your speech. Emotional excitement, as was addressed in an earlier segment, is a much needed facet but physical excitement is also needed to round out the sought after general tone of excitement that you want to permeate the delivery of your speech.

**The message and the messenger:** Remember, when you give a speech, whether it be as a preacher and/or a teacher or merely as a guest at a luncheon or face to face with some individual, you are above all else a Christian and, as such, an ambassador of the King. Never forget, people will judge the message by the way it is delivered by the messenger. If you deliver it in a dry and boring manner, then they will perceive the message itself to be dry and boring. If you deliver it with excitement and pathos, then they will perceive the message to be exciting and it will touch their emotions. If you deliver it without any ring of conviction, then they will perceive the message as not being worthy or capable of evoking conviction in them. You are responsible for being a good messenger. Because, you see, you have no choice in being a messenger. The only choice you have is whether you will be a good one or not. Deliver the message well and the cause of Christ will be furthered. Deliver it badly and the cause of Christ will be hindered. The choice is up to you. The importance of the task is irrefutable because of our position and the message we carry when speaking.

**II Cor 5:20 "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ..."**

**You can be a good ambassador or you can be a bad ambassador; but, you ARE an ambassador so decide which kind of one you are going to be. As a good ambassador you must learn how to deliver the exact message of the King in a convincing and accurate manner. With that, God will be pleased!**

**The purpose of this class is to show you how to be a better speaker so that you can be a better ambassador. If we do our best to teach you, then God will be pleased with us. If you take what you learn here and use it in your ministry as an ambassador for Christ, then God will be pleased with you.**

**Only by working together can we both be pleasing to God!**

## **LESSON TWO**

### **PUBLIC SPEAKING AND ITS PLACE IN LIFE**

#### ***A great lack in our churches today:***

One of the great lacks in our churches today is that of men who have both the gift of administration and the gift of oratory. Both of these are needed in order to effectively minister. As Phelps put it, **“The reader of the Bible can easily distinguish between the writings of the priest and the prophet.”** The priest took care of the performance of the sacrifices and the prophet took care of giving forth the Word of God directly to the people. Today’s preacher needs to develop both of these abilities. If he cannot, or will not, then he needs to team up with an administrator to take care of the day to day details of running a church and concentrate his own ministry on giving forth the Word. The best course of action is for the Pastor to seek to develop both abilities; and since this course is Public Speaking, then we will concentrate on developing that skill in this class.

He should also be able to, in the area of public speaking, practice both elocution, getting into the minds and emotions of others to enable him to effectively recite what they have written, as well as oratory proper, which is speaking on your own subject. Lack of the former, elocution, is the single most important cause for the dryness of many of the church’s opening exercises and their failure to excite people in the corporate reading of the Scriptures. While lack of the latter, oratory, is the reason for the boring tone of so many of the sermons preached from our pulpits.

The importance of public speaking in the secular realm is easily seen by the huge amount of money spent on public auditoriums, at least one of which can be seen in every city. And in the spiritual realm its importance can be seen in the size of the auditoriums built for even the small churches and the hugeness of the lavish auditoriums built by the “mega-churches.” The latter, many times, spending several millions of dollars on their construction.

#### ***Public speaking and our churches:***

In our churches, the vitality of the pulpit is usually the indicator of the vitality of the church. If that is true, and it is, then we are really in trouble and the importance of learning to be a vital speaker cannot be overestimated. True, we know that it is the Holy Spirit working in the hearts of men that energizes the church. However, it is the delivery of the message that either lulls the listener to sleep so that he cannot hear the Spirit or captures the attention of the listener with an excitement and vitality that opens and prepares their heart so that the infusion of the power, conviction, and other wooings of the Holy Spirit has free and unimpeded access.

#### ***Public speaking and our pulpits:***

The ability to speak effectively, if it is from the pulpit to “preach” effectively, is not a destination but a road. It continues on for the rest of one’s life. Every hill that is climbed as we learn to speak more effectively brings to light another even higher hill in the distance. There may be valleys between or the hills may simply climb to ever higher peaks or plateaus;

either way, we should look at the venture as a giddy adventurous trip that offers us each day new and greater opportunities to serve our Lord Jesus Christ. The more tools and weapons you have the better He can use you; and the more well-oiled the tools and the sharper the edge on those weapons, the more effective you will be as the Lord uses you to carry out His will.

### *Public speaking and the ministry:*

Two things are needed for effective Public Speaking; especially as it relates to the ministry:

ONE: You need to work on the mechanics of preparation and delivery.

TWO: You need to seek the power of the Holy Spirit in prayer so that He can empower you to heights of use and effectiveness that will transcend your merely human abilities.

Concerning the first, the mechanics of preparation and delivery, this will not come easily or quickly. Certainly you can gather the rules governing them from reading and observation but the use of those rules can only be effected by constant and earnest practice with those tools. You must use them and practice them over and over until your use of them comes without even consciously thinking about them. Otherwise, you will either appear mechanical or you will be so preoccupied with the rules that you defeat your own purpose and will be unable to deliver your speech because your mind is on the rules for the use of your tools and not on the subject at hand.

The same principle holds for your “weapon,” the Word of God. Keep your sword sharp and keen, both in your heart and in your mouth, and then God’s wielding of it through you will be effectual to win the battles the Lord puts you too, both in speech and action.

**Heb 4:12 For the word of God [is] quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and [is] a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.**

Concerning the second, seeking the transcendent power of the Holy Spirit, you can only tap into that power if you are indwelt by the Holy Spirit by virtue of your salvation by the blood of Christ and, after that, by keeping the channel of prayer clear and free of obstructions. The only way to do that is to avoid sins of both omission and commission and by maintaining a healthy relationship with the Godhead by staying in the Word of God and practicing daily cleansing from sin. **(I Jn 1:9)** Also, if the only time you pray is when you want power from God to effectively preach or teach, then your “pray-er” will be rusty from lack of use. And a rusty tool with vital moving parts, such as you find in active prayer and the receiving of an answer, is not going to function properly, if at all. More than likely it will “seize up” and fail to work. Ever feel like the “sky is brass” or that your prayers seem to “bounce off the ceiling?” Sin in your life and/or the lack of habitually using your “pray-er” are generally behind your inability to “get to God” with your prayers. Keep a clean life and a clean and well-oiled and functioning “pray-er” and you will have God’s power when you need it to speak far beyond your own abilities or even, in a wider sense, to carry out any other ministry that God calls you to.

Whenever and whatever you do, in word or in deed, take heed to God’s exhortation:

**I Cor 10:31 “...whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.”**

## “MAKE IT YOUR AIM NOT TO DO WELL, BUT TO DO GOOD” (A.S. Phelps)

There are many things that will be addressed and varied ways people will be affected by the speeches you will give. Each speech can and will affect the varied listeners according to their needs, station, and the specific events in their lives at that time. Take the following sentence found at the very beginning of the Bible. (Remember, since the thrust of this class is for those speaking on or preaching from the Bible or for Christians speaking on other varied subjects but always Christians first, then I will use as much scripture as possible.)

### Genesis 1:1 “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.”

This verse can affect many people in many different ways.

1. To the **evolutionist**- it can **rebuke** him and cause him to look to the Creator for answers.
2. To the one who is **despondent** because of his current situation- it can **encourage** him by letting him know that God is in control of all of creation and, thus, all situations.
3. To the **hopeless**- it can give him **hope** because there is an omnipotent God.
4. To the **sad**- it can bring them **cheer** to know that God is over all creation and all events.
5. To the **lethargic**- it can **rouse** them to know there is a God whom they must face.
6. To the one who is **grief-stricken**- it can **console** them to know there is a Creator who is concerned about His creation.
7. To those that **lack motivation**- it can **inspire** them to know that God is over the whole creation and it will **motivate** them to serve that Creator.

There are many other effects that could be brought about by just this one sentence; but just with the few mentioned here we already can see that to various people listening at the same time to the same sentence, a variety of effects can be felt by them and worked within them. That one sentence can rebuke, encourage, bring hope, cheer, rouse, console, inspire, and motivate depending on the needs of the listener. There will be many people hearing the one and the same sentence, but many and varied are the effects brought about in them. If you have done good in the lives and minds of the listener, then you will have done well as a speaker. Let your motivation be to “do good;” and when you do that, then you will have “done well.”

***The needs of the listener:*** If you can see what their needs are and then fill that need, then you will be a successful speaker. They may not even know what their need is. But the following are some suggestions of needs to fill.

#### **The need of those who’s heart is filled with sorrow:**

Everyone goes through sorrow. Some need consoling, some strength, some rebuke, some simply need love, and some cheering. If you can recognize and meet their need, then you will be successful as a speaker to them.

**The need of instruction:** Intellectual curiosity is a common emotion and quest of all of humanity. Rare indeed is the man, woman, or child, that does not thrill when learning something. Ignorance is the prime cause of mischief in our world. People have always turned to the

great teachers in history. Teachers of truth and teachers of lies, yes, but both have always gathered their followers among the people. Instruction concerning questions about which we have wondered, sometimes a recent question and sometimes a question that has puzzled us for years, but if someone can give us the answer to that question, whatever it may be and whenever it first tickled our mind, we will listen to the answer when it finally comes. The speaker that can find out the question and then answer it, will succeed as a speaker to that person or group. Remember, however, that new truth, at least new to the listener, is often startling. It must not be imparted too fast, especially to the immature or unknowledgeable or novice. This is especially true as concerning the things of the Word of God. If you can find out what knowledge the listener is seeking or what their point of ignorance is concerning things they really need to know and then meet that need, you will be successful in speaking to that person or that group. It makes no difference in what area the subject is you are speaking on, be it spiritual, religious, business, accounting, medicine, politics, family relationships, societal ills, needs, or direction, or any other area, if you fill their need for knowledge then you will be successful in speaking to them.

**Caution:** No one wants to be told, nor will they usually admit, that they are wrong. Harping at them continually about their faults will only cause them to rebel and to try to justify their actions. In the spiritual realm, rebuke from the Word of God needs to be a positive and constructive exercise. God's Word will tell them what is wrong with their life; but, it also will tell them how to fix the problem. And when you speak, as a preacher or as a public speaker, always give both sides of the issue. To tell someone they are such filthy sinners that they are deservedly going to Hell will generally NOT bring about the desired effect of repentance unto salvation. But to tell them from God's Word of the sinner's Hell and how they are going there against God's wishes, and then tell them of God's love expressed to them in Christ who willingly took their punishment, that will motivate them in the desired direction. The thrust is not that they are wrong, they generally already know that even if they won't admit it, but if you zero in on the fact that God loves them and can and will save them from the deserved consequences of their wrongness, then the overall message is a positive one of building up and not a negative one of tearing them down. To tear down a building to build a newer and better one is a positive thing; but, to tear it down and leave the ground empty is to invite weeds to grow and people to throw their unwanted trash into the empty lot. When preaching you only use the negative as preparation for the positive. This same principle can be used in all types of public speaking. Many times the negative side needs to be presented, true, but it must then be followed up with a viable and acceptable solution; i.e., a positive.

In the words of Dale Carnegie, "Don't criticize, condemn or complain." Try to see their side, they are, after all, human beings and human beings make mistakes. Let the Word of God point out those mistakes and let it also give them a viable solution to the problem.

**Read:** You would do well to read biographies of great speakers; beginning with the speeches of the greatest speaker of all time, Jesus Christ. Then follow that up with other great speakers. Read their speeches. Better still, if possible go listen to them in person.

*Speak:* If God has called you into this arena of life, then accept every opportunity to speak. If you are called as a preacher, then you must preach. There is no better perfecter of your craft than experience. We might liken public speaking to a weapon, a weapon against need and/or ignorance. Classroom instruction may shape the weapon into the proper shape by fire and pounding but exercising your speaking abilities is the best way of sharpening and polishing your weapon to give it the keenest of edges. And the more you speak the sharper and more polished will the weapon become. You may hit a piece of rock or something else that will nick your blade, but it can break it only if you let it do so. When you give a speech that is not received well by the listeners, then don't quit and let your weapon be broken, simply accept that nick in your blade and find out what caused your failure to meet their needs. Then rectify that problem. You may need to go back to the classroom and do some reshaping of your weapon. Or maybe you just needed to be better prepared for the battle. Even if your blade breaks you only need study some more, maybe even go back to the classroom if need be and reshape your sword, and then go back out to sharpen and polish the new edge by more public speaking.

I once asked my daddy in the Lord, Pastor Mayfield in Texas, "How do you know if you've been called to preach." He said, "You'll be out preaching somewhere." I will now rephrase that somewhat and give it to you. "You will know that God has called you to the ministry of preaching or speaking because He will have you out preaching or speaking." The fact of you being here in this class should be enough to show you that God wants you to shape this skill of public speaking here in the classroom; and if He has you here shaping it, then He must plan on you going out and sharpening and polishing it by using it.

Public speaking is a skill that can be learned; but, for it to be polished and used effectively-then it **MUST BE USED AS OFTEN AS POSSIBLE!**

## LESSON THREE

### THE SPEAKER

If you do not understand the value of public speaking then you will never be motivated to perfect the craft. If you do not appreciate the beauty and use of the craft in shaping the lives of others, then you will never develop the art. If you truly understand that God shapes your life to bring about His will, then you will understand the importance of pleasing Him when He calls you to public speaking. And when you seek both to please Him and edify those He puts within the hearing of your voice, then you will do all you can to perfect the craft and develop the art of public speaking.

**Preparation:** Thorough preparation is of the utmost necessity.

People in this era of expanding knowledge are intelligent and perceptive; albeit, many times, in maybe only one or two specialized areas because of the failure of our public school system. However, if they came to hear your speech then it must address some issue in which they are interested. And if they are interested then they will already possess some amount of knowledge of the subject. If they have some knowledge of the subject then any lack of knowledge on your part will be very apparent to your audience. To avoid nervousness, and/or making an ass of yourself, know more about your subject than anyone else in the house. Or, at the very least, have your knowledge and presentation of the subject more coordinated and finer tuned than any one else in the house. To do so takes thorough preparation including an eye to the smallest details.

Another area of preparation is in the area of personal or anecdotal examples or illustrations. Make sure you are knowledgeable about the objects or situations that you are using as examples or illustrations. Make sure that your knowledge and use of them is thorough and accurate enough that the listener will be enlightened by them rather than having inconsistencies and inaccuracies glare out from them in such a manner as to distract the audience.

Preparation is for the sake of many of those involved. First, for the sake of your audience. As Phelps said, “In the study, you are to lay your very soul, in imagination, at the feet of your audience to help and serve them.” There should be no excess baggage, but only food to feed their thoughts and needs. You owe proper preparation to them. Secondly, you also owe it to the subject about which you are speaking. It is your child to be cared for and properly prepared before being sent out to the world. Lastly, you owe it to yourself to make proper preparation. You develop a standard which you must maintain. Know your faults and use that knowledge to enable you to prepare and, thus, you can overcome them. You know your strengths, use that knowledge so that you will capitalize upon those strengths. A word of caution, if you are one of those rare men and women who take to public speaking with a natural flair and eloquence, do not fall into the trap of, as Phelps puts it, “neglecting the training which such gifts deserve... (those who do) neglect preparation, trust to the native talent, and fall off the ladder. “Valuable jewels are worth polishing.”

***Preparing yourself:*** Preparation of yourself is essential.

Do not try to ape others; instead, be yourself. Take what God has given you and develop your own unique usage of those god-given talents. When I was a beginning musician, the man that taught me my first few chords told me this, “Never try to imitate someone else’s style because then the best you could ever be is a shadow.” Later, as a professional musician, I followed that advice and never lacked for work nor was I ever accused of trying to be someone else. After the Lord saved me out of the cesspool of the professional music industry and turned me into a preacher, I carried that precept with me into the ministry. Again, I have never been accused of trying to be someone else. In fact, quite to the contrary. More than one Christian in the pew and preacher in the pulpit has come to my wife after hearing me preach and told my late wife, “I never looked at that quite the way Bro. Terry has.” Now it was never made clear if that was good or bad; but, one thing for sure, it was a different presentation than that of any one else they had known or heard. Even people who disagreed with me, most notably lost people and liberal Christians, have told me such things as, “I don’t agree that I believe what you are saying; but I do believe that you believe what you are saying!” I take no credit for this. God gives to every man the tools necessary to carry out the ministry to which He has called them. Those events in my life, even as a lost person, were used by God to shape me and prepare me for the ministry to which He called me later after I was saved. To sum up this section, never try to be a clone of a great speaker or preacher, be yourself. Don’t be a shadow of another, simply be the best you that you can be. And to be that, in the area of public speaking or in any other area of your life, you must fine-tune what God gave you and use the brain that He gave you to make up any natural lack that you may have. By His power you truly can, “Be all that you can be.”

***The problem with phonies:*** The problem is that people can spot a phony a mile off. Sooner or later they will find out that you are not the real deal but only a shadow of the real deal. That goes both for trying to be a clone and it also goes in another area of public speaking, lack of knowledge and preparation concerning the subject about which you are asked to speak. If you don’t adequately prepare by researching your subject and organizing your facts into an effective presentation of those facts, then it won’t take long for people to recognize you as a phony. Thorough research is a necessary part of your preparation. Be comfortable enough with your research on the subject and your collation of it into an effective presentation that you feel confident that you DO KNOW your subject thoroughly and that you know it intimately enough to present it to your audience for their edification. Above all, be sincere. Never speak the truth as if it were fiction and never speak fiction as if it were truth. Test your speech out loud. And do so in front of a mirror. If the details of your subject have a ring of insincerity, manipulation, or falsehood, then do not give that speech; rewrite it. If your voice has a ring of insincerity, manipulation, or falsehood, then do not give that speech until those problems are rectified! If your actions have an air of insincerity, manipulation, or falsehood then change them! If you can spot yourself as a phony when alone, then no harm is done to your audience. You can use that knowledge to help you rectify what is wrong and turn it into something that will truly be a help to your audience when you do finally give your speech. If, however, you publicly give

that speech with all of its faults of insincerity, manipulation, and falsehood, then you will be spotted as a phony within a very short time. Then you will have pretty much given up any future chance of being used of God to be a positive influence in the lives of those particular people. If you do have another chance to be used to edify them, you will have to work twice as hard that second time to overcome the first impression they formed by hearing you the first time. In fact, the second time they will naturally be more intensely scrutinizing of you and your presentation than they were the first time and rightfully so since you failed them the first time around. The best thing both for you and for them is to be honest, sincere, and motivating rather than manipulating, the first time around. Not only is it best, but you actually owe this to both them and you.

***A man needs to be a man and a woman needs to be a woman:*** Practice being whichever you are. Phelps stated that “In manhood... we understand four qualities: modesty, force, sincerity, courage.” If you are a man, then cultivate those qualities. In womanhood we recognize the traits of: femininity in dress and deportment, quiet strength, and a nurturing nature. If you are a woman then cultivate those traits. In both cases the speaker needs to come across as what they are, a man or a woman. Remember, your listeners will soon spot you for what you are, either the real deal or a phony. Whichever of those they peg you as will dictate how well they will receive what you are speaking to them about. Sincerity will win the day and phoniness will ruin your effectiveness in feeding their need. They have seen enough phoniness in their lives so don't expect them to feed on the plate full you are serving up to them by not being a manly man or a womanly woman.

***Cultivate the gift of conversation:*** Conversation and public speaking are two different abilities, so cultivate them both. In conversation several things happen: ideas become clear, those involved will learn to value the other's point of view, you will learn to express yourself convincingly, and you will learn to think in the presence of others. Do not just use idle chatter to fill empty space in the conversation. Plan ahead of time for the conversation and others will perceive you as an interesting person rather than avoid you as a bore. These things learned in the area of personal conversation will then serve you well also in the area of public speaking.

***Selected reading:*** Another important part of preparing yourself is reading to learn the views and facts that others have discovered. These will always be useful to you. Some will be useful as positive reinforcement and some will be useful as positive examples of errors to avoid. All things learned can be used in a positive way so read both sides of an issue before speaking on it.

As Phelps put it, “From a score of sources of rain and flood and mountain stream come the waters that fill the reservoir of life-giving irrigation whose ditches and laterals thread the thirsty orchards and gardens of the arid plain.” Gather the water of knowledge from many sources in order to have an adequate supply from which to quench the arid thirst of those who listen to your speeches. It is laudable to know more than you need to meet the needs of your listeners but it is foolish to try to meet their need when you have an inadequate supply. And always make sure that you have much extra in your reservoir if you plan on a question and answer period following your speech.

**General reading:** Don't limit your reading to only those things that pertain to the subject of the speech you are currently working on. Broaden your horizons. Be well rounded with knowledge from a wide variety of disciplines. You may not need it for the subject of the speech you are currently working on; but, sooner or later everything you learn will be used by you.

As Phelps put it, "(The public speaker) **more truly than men of any other calling needs to know something about everything, as well as everything about something... no matter what he picks up, some day he will have a use for it.**"

**Appreciate the beautiful:** Be refined and your speeches will be the same. Be men and women of refinement not coarseness. God created this beautiful universe. It may be in a fallen state, but if you learn to appreciate the beauty that remains in it, think how much more you will appreciate it after it is restored to its pristine state! Keep that kind of an appreciative mindset about everything in God's Creation. Fine art will show the touch of God's hand upon the artist. Fine music will soothe or stimulate the heart, the inner you. Beauty is pleasant to the eyes. And reading God's beautiful Word will bless your soul and guide your feet as you walk through this life. All of these and all other beautiful things are pleasant and uplifting parts of God's creation and if you learn to love them then you will exhibit an aura of refinement. Refinement in the Public Speaker will offend no-one. Coarseness, on the other hand, is a burden to bear and an obstacle that must be overcome every time you speak. Your coarseness will make it harder to reach your audience because that roughness will stand between you and them as an abrasive; but, refinement will act as a smooth cloth that will feel good to their senses. If people don't like you or are put off by your coarse manner, then it will be just that much harder to get them to give an unbiased listen to your message.

**Stay physically fit:** Soundness of body facilitates soundness of spirit and brain. A tired person cannot give his fullest; neither in speech nor in any other endeavor. A person in frail health will fail in the rigours of public speech.

Phelps gave five common-sense rules:

1. Sleep right- eight hours a night.
2. A cold shower upon rising, if a good reaction follows.
3. Six or eight glasses of water daily.
4. Two hours of outdoor exercise each day, except when you have to do an unusual amount of mental work.
5. Eat slowly and moderately- in fact live moderately.

Of course there are other things that will help you stay fit but these five are surely a good place to start.

If you have spent time preparing for a speech mentally, then why would you not spend at least some time preparing yourself physically. If the message is important, then make sure you deliver it in a container that can safely transport it from your mind to the ears of the recipients. If you are run down physically then that has to affect your ability to be a proper vessel to safely transport and deliver what is important enough for you to have spent at the very least some hours or days of your life to prepare. In addition, no one will eat a delicious steak if it is served up to them in a garbage can full of refuse and filth. Your speech may be the delicious and

nourishing food that they need but if you are physically run down then you are serving it up to them in a garbage can; and how can you expect them to want to consume it when it is proffered in such a manner? Keep the vessel clean and strong and then they will be free to consider whether what you are delivering to them is nourishment to meet their needs. Allow yourself to become physically run-down and they will be involved so much in looking at the reprobate state of the container that they will not be able to see the nourishment that you are trying to serve them.

They will see you long before they hear you, so don't let your physical appearance be a stumbling-block to your listeners. If you do, then their journey through your message may never progress past that first misstep caused by their tripping over your run-down physical appearance or frailness; and you alone will be at fault for your failure to "do good" in their lives.

A strong body also breeds a strong mind. When you are physically run-down then it is almost impossible to think clearly. To struggle physically is to nearly guarantee that you will struggle mentally. So keep a strong mind and a strong body. Take care of both and they both will be able to sustain you through the rigours of public speaking and any other task you may set them too.

### *Maintain a fervent inner life:*

Man is spirit, soul, and body, (**I Thess 5:23**) and to neglect any one of them will cause a drain upon the other two. The body we have already discussed, we are to keep it fit; now we will go from the visible to the invisible. From the external man to the internal man.

**Spiritual:** The first part of the internal man that we will discuss is the spirit; that part of the human being that enables us to commune with God. As you must keep yourself physically fit as a public speaker, so you must keep yourself spiritually fit. This is done by exercising yourself spiritually. Pray, read your Bible, commune with God and give Him thanks constantly for what He has done for you, what He is doing for you, and what He will do for you in the future. Keeping generally fit spiritually will facilitate your appropriation of His power to touch the spirit of your listeners, assuming they are saved, when you stand before them to speak. If by chance they are not saved, then they are spiritually dead and you will be unable to reach their spirit. However, their lack will need not be your lack. Even if you cannot touch their spirit, by maintaining a fervent spiritual life you can manifest the power of God within you and even the lost will be able to see it. They may not understand it but they will be able to see it; and hopefully they may later ask you about this effluence of power they can see exuding from you when you speak and you will then be afforded the opportunity to tell them of your power source, God's Holy Spirit, that is made available to all, including them if they desire it, through the Lord Jesus Christ! Keep fit spiritually and you will have access to God's power when you speak to both the saved and the lost!

**Emotional:** The third part of man is the soul; and the soul is the dwelling place of our emotions. Those emotions, or feelings if you will, are a tool; use them to your advantage. Zeal is contagious as are the other emotions. If you do not have them to give then your audience cannot feel a sympathetic vibration within themselves that will cause them to soon be in tune

with you as you speak. When your emotions are discordant or flaccid, then you will soon have a discordant or flaccid reaction taking place in those who listen to you. God gave us emotions as the channel to the heart; so use that channel. If you speak from your heart to their heart then you can sway the person. I have heard preachers say that we should not play upon the emotions of those we preach to. Poppycock! If your sermon, or even your secular speech, does not touch the emotions then you are denying the Holy Spirit the God-provided quickest channel to the hearts of your listeners! I have never heard a sermon that channeled the power of God's Holy Spirit to my heart, to give me God's joy or to convict me to my shame, that was not drenched in emotion. The zeal and the raw power of the speaker's emotions struck a sympathetic chord within my heart and that channel was used by the Holy Spirit to shoot His arrows straight to my very soul. Be they arrows of love, joy, compassion, consolation, or strength from God that brought me joy or relief, or be they arrows that pierced my heart with shame and conviction of sin- they all were guided unerringly from God through the speaker's emotional delivery straight to my heart.

In the realm of secular speaking the same is true. Your emotions will strike a sympathetic emotion in your listeners. For good or for bad, your emotions will influence the receptiveness of those listening to you and that can make or break your effectiveness as a public speaker. So keep yourself emotionally fit.

***Ambition is no good if you do not set a goal and then strive toward your goal:*** The only people who succeed are those that have a goal and then strive toward that goal. If you do not decide to accomplish something then you will surely accomplish nothing. If you want to be a successful public speaker then set that as your goal and then strive toward that goal. And to achieve that goal, as we said earlier, learn the mechanics of it, yes, but then remember that to strive toward that goal, and reach it, it is a necessity that we understand it as truly a striving to become more effective in meeting the needs of those you speak to and, thereby, to do some good in their lives.

Also, keep in mind that public speaking is not a destination but a journey. If you think you have reached your goal, you have scaled the heights so to speak, then look down because that is the only direction you have left to travel. If, however, you keep searching for higher ground, then the striving itself becomes your ultimate goal; i.e., to keep on traveling higher and higher should be the goal of every speaker. Not "arriving" but "striving" should always be your mindset.

***Dealing with nervousness:*** Everyone experiences what is commonly called "stage fright" before speaking in public. This is perfectly normal. It is a natural reaction for your body to prepare for any stressful situation; and public speaking is definitely a stressful situation. The natural chemical involved is called adrenaline. Adrenaline is a hormone produced by your body and released into the bloodstream to heighten the body's effectiveness in dealing with any mentally or physically stressful situation. The normal physiological reactions are pounding heart, hand tremors, knocking of the knees, and increased skin perspiration. These symptoms should not be feared but welcomed. They signal that your body is properly "psyched up" to face the stress to come. Welcome such reactions, don't fear them. View them not as signs of

weakness to be feared but signs of heightened ability to cope. Channel them into your speech. Don't be victimized by them by allowing them to create feelings of fear and even dread; but rather be vitalized by them. Enjoy the zest and vigour of heightened feelings of "life and preparedness!"

## **Methods of dealing with nervousness.**

### **1. Practice, practice, practice.** Acquire experience at Public Speaking.

You will acquire some of this by giving speeches in class; but, take every opportunity to speak to other groups whenever and wherever the chance presents itself.

Many times we notice that a preacher or a secular speaker will come to speak and the sermon or speech is polished, effective, and moving. That is why preachers have evangelists come and hold special meetings and that is why groups call in special speakers in the secular realm, to accomplish that something special. That is no accident. They have given that same speech many times. This has given them time to smooth the rough edges off of it. Time to eliminate the dross and cultivate the purity of the message. In addition it has allowed them much time and many opportunities to cultivate their own strengths and ample time to recognize and rectify, or compensate for, their weaknesses. If you speak every time you are asked and afterward critically and honestly examine your performance, then you will advance more toward the polish, effectiveness, and ability to move an audience that you see in the experienced speakers. There is no substitute for practice; and the more you practice the less will your nervousness take control of you. In fact, in time you will take control of it and use it as a positive influence in your life and especially in the areas of both public and private speaking.

### **2. Prepare, prepare, prepare.** Pick a topic you are truly interested in and then do as thorough a job as is humanly possible in preparing to speak on that subject.

*Preparation time.* How much time does it take to adequately prepare for a speech? A good rule of thumb is **two hours** of preparation for each **minute** of your speech. And it may be more than that depending on how much research is needed.

Dr. Dennis Brown was once asked, "**That was a great sermon; how long did it take to write it?**" He then replied, "**Five minutes - and fifty years.**" He had drawn upon fifty years of study and research and the preparation of countless other sermons to deliver a sermon on short notice. However, he wanted the questioner to understand that in order to be able to do that, that it takes a lifetime of study. Countless hours engrossed in the Bible, or any other subject, will give you a nearly inexhaustible pool of knowledge from which to draw when a drink is needed. However, if all you have is a small drink to begin with, then don't try to draw out an entire well full or, for that matter, even a bucket or a cup full! Make sure the well is full; i.e., study your subject until you know it intimately. Proper preparation will reduce your nervousness immeasurably.

### **3. The power of positive thinking.** If you truly think you can accomplish something, then the chances are that you will, someday and somehow. On the other hand, if you prepare yourself for disaster then it is almost guaranteed that you will get exactly that. The Bible precept here is "**... whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.**" (Gal 6:7) and

that holds true in every area of life; in the spiritual realm, in the mental (including emotional) realm, as well as in the physical realm. Never think negative about yourself, your abilities, or your upcoming presentation. Instead think positive. Keep your mind on your subject and how you are going to effectively communicate your ideas to your audience. Every time you have a negative thought, counteract it with at least five positive thoughts. Otherwise, you will be overcome with the negative manifestation of your nervousness instead of taking the useful tool of positive nervousness into your hands and utilizing it to better accomplish your goal.

4. **The power of visualization.** People in every arena of life use the technique of visualization. Develop the ability to mentally picture yourself successfully going through every phase of your speech from the moment when you rise to approach the lectern right on through to the close. Picture vividly in your mind's eye every part of your introduction, delivery, and close, and reinforce yourself with pictures of your poise and your articulation during your delivery. Feel the receptiveness of your audience as you enfold them into your subject, anticipating their smiles and nods as they are drawn into agreement with you on your unfolding presentation and their ready yielding to the conviction of your arguments. Then, make sure you carry it through to your feelings of enjoyment at the end as you feel the audience's appreciation for your complete fulfillment of their expectations as you met the need for which they called you there. Picture the smiles and congratulations afterward and your humble acceptance of them. You have succeeded. You have met their need. You sought not to do well but to do good- and picture that you have accomplished your goal. Feel the satisfaction in knowing that you have helped someone today. You have been true to the calling that God has given you. Well done thou good and faithful servant! Picture yourself as pleasing to God, in every phase from the beginning of your speech to the end, accomplish His purpose of doing good in someone's life, and you will be able to channel the adrenalin-induced rush away from destructive nervousness and far along the road to useful psyching up for the effort to come!
5. **Most nervousness is not visible.** You may be dying inside but rest assured that only a tiny portion of that is visible on the outside. A pounding heart is not visible through your clothes. Sweaty palms are uncomfortable but the sweat is not visible even at close range. And knocking knees are covered by your clothes, not to mention the lectern if you are using one. If you actually fainted I'm sure someone would notice; however, the other signs are only excruciatingly obvious to you but not to your audience. Knowing this will allow you to ignore those signs and not worry if your audience knows you are a wreck or not and concentrate on your speech.
6. **There is no such thing as a perfect speech.** Every speaker makes some kind of mistake somewhere in their speech. Fortunately the audience usually never knows. Only you know what you were going to say. They only know what you actually do say. If you miss a point or switch two of them around, they will be none the wiser. Even if the mistake is a big one it is still not a catastrophe unless you allow it to become one. You are not being

judged on your performance but on how well you communicate your ideas. Sometimes a mistake can actually enhance the effectiveness of a speech because it lets the listeners know that you are a human being, just like them. In fact, many times they will actually subconsciously start rooting for you when you make a mistake. This is a good thing as long as you don't keep on making mistake after mistake and start coming across as incompetent. Knowing that a mistake is not going to ruin your speech will allow you to ignore negative thoughts concerning any dreaded lack of perfection and allow you to concentrate on proper and thorough preparation and delivery. Don't fight ghosts in your imagination; they have a habit of not materializing in the daylight and even when they are seen they are not real and thus incapable of hurting you unless you believe that they can. Even then it is a deception because there are no such thing as real ghosts. Mistakes are the same way. Even if they do materialize they can only hurt you if you let them. Remember, your audience does not know what you were planning on saying. They only know what you actually did say. You may know it was a mistake, i.e., you could see the ghost; but; to them it is immaterial, not real, not tangible, unless you make it so. Therefore, it cannot hurt you unless you let it. So don't let it!

## **YOUR FIRST SPEECH**

### ***Assignment one:***

Pick a subject and write a 10 minute speech to deliver in class next week. If you choose to write it out in-toto and then read it, you may do so; but, make sure it is not delivered dry but impassioned. If you choose to deliver the speech from an outline, you may do so; but, make sure it is not delivered dry but impassioned. Which ever way you decide to deliver your speech, it is necessary that you first make an outline of your speech.

**NOTE:** The 2 most lasting impressions will be the strengths of your Introduction and Close.

A sample outline will be given on the next page. Use the sample outline as a pattern for your own outline. Your outline can be as complicated or as simple as you want to make it but you must follow the pattern given. You will be required to turn in your outline for grading.

## *SAMPLE OUTLINE:*

**SUBJECT or TITLE**

**INTRODUCTION:**

**I. POINT ONE**

- A. If there is an “A” then there must be At least a “B.”**
- B.**

**II. POINT TWO**

- A.**
  - 1. If there is a “1” then there must be at least a “2.”**
  - 2.**
- B.**

**III. POINT THREE**

- A.**
- B.**
  - 1.**
    - a. If there is an “a” then there must be at least a “b.”**
    - b.**
  - 2.**
    - a.**
      - I. If there is a “i.” then there must be at least a “ii.”**
      - ii.**
    - b.**

(More main points (i.e., “IV.” “V.” etc.) can be added if necessary following the rules set out in this sample. **CAUTION: Don’t make your outline any more complicated than necessary.**)

**THE CLOSE OR CONCLUSION (In a sermon this would be the INVITATION.)**

## LESSON FOUR

### YOUR RELATION TO THE AUDIENCE

Remember, you are there to fill the needs of your audience, not to fill your own need. If you succeed in filling their needs then they will go away filled. If however, you do not fill their need then they will go away resentful of that fact. Do your job, and part of that job is knowing your audience.

In order to fulfill their expectations you must know your materials and in addition you must know your audience. How can you fulfill a need if you don't know what that need is? How can you speak on a level understandable by your audience if you don't know what that level is? Knowing your audience is as essential as knowing yourself and your material. It does no good at all to prepare a sumptuous meal and then not know how to serve it to those who will eat it. You don't serve lunch to a bunch of lumberjacks working in the woods by setting it out on a table covered with a pretty lace tablecloth; with candles and soft music in the background and a fingerbowl to daintily dip their fingers in to wash them after eating. Likewise, you would never serve a formal luncheon to a group of millionaires setting at poolside on the grounds of some-one's mansion, in a lunch bucket with a thermos of hot coffee and a banana for desert, expecting them to wash their hands in the swimming pool after eating. By knowing who will be served you can plan accordingly. And that plan will include not only what food would be appropriate but also how that food should be served. Both would be planned from beginning to end. Public speaking is the same way. Know who is to be served and you will know what and how to serve it to them.

#### **Prior to speaking to them.**

**1. You have prepared your speech and you are waiting for the time to arrive to deliver it to them.** What do you do now? The answer is simple- rest! Some take a nap. Some read a book on an unrelated subject. Some listen to music or take a walk or go to a church service. You are sharp and ready; but if you take a sharp knife and keep trying to sharpen it you will only succeed in grinding it down. Phelps quoted Tolstoy in saying **“It is a well-known fact that no strong emotion can be long sustained.”** Do not overwork your emotions and the forceful thrust of your speech during preparation. Else when the time comes to deliver it you will have no more within you to give. Practice speech-giving in front of a mirror or before your friends in order to learn the mechanics of it; but, don't over practice any actual speech before delivering it. I never go through the whole wedding ceremony during the practice. I only give them short, and many times generic, portions of it during the rehearsal. They want to have the experience of the actual wedding itself to be fresh and moving; but if they have been moved during the practice session then they will be robbed of the full experience of the actual wedding ceremony. If they had gone through all, or even many, of the words and emotions of the ceremony during the rehearsal, then when the actual wedding took place, they would feel that

somehow they had missed something- that they had somehow been robbed or short-changed. In fact, during rehearsal I keep the mood light and funny and explain to them that they need not worry during the actual ceremony because I will lead them through all of the steps when the time comes. If they forget something, they can trust me to unembarassingly put them back on the right track. This takes immense pressure off of them. By the time the rehearsal is over they know they can trust me as the expert who will guide them step by step to a successful culmination of the ceremony the next day. This is to put them at ease because they usually are very up-tight by this time. That also helps them get through to the actual wedding the next day as well as help them to not be so tense when the actual ceremony takes place. They know and trust me by the time the rehearsal is over. This is not only how you should prepare but this could also be compared to the part of your actual speech called the introduction. It should put your audience at ease and foster feelings of trust in you as the expert who will guide them through what is to follow. In addition you have not tried to sustain any intense emotions to the point of breaking or numbing on your part or theirs.

In like manner, when you overtax your own emotions during your preparations, then your audience will be robbed of those emotions that you had wasted on yourself during your practice session. The emotions evoked during your speech are meant to be a tool to help capture your audience so you can better meet their needs; but, instead you used them up when they were absent. You met your needs, not theirs! So save them for their proper purpose.

Be aware of what emotions are evoked and even plan on what ones you want to purposely evoke, yes; but, don't let them take their full course during your preparation time. Save those useful tools for use at the proper time. Don't dull them beforehand.

**2. When you approach the platform to begin your speech:** Pause until the audience has stopped fidgeting and they have centered their attention on you. This gives you time to put your-self in the delivery mode. Once they are zeroed in on you then their attention is drawn to your opening which should be of special importance. Nervousness during this time is advantageous. Phelps talks about the "secret of the second speech of the day." Success in the morning speech can lead to failure in the evening speech for the simple reason that your mind is not on the upcoming speech but upon the morning's success. However, if you fail in the morning then you will probably, all other factors being equal, meet with complete success in the evening.

Remember this scripture and you will not let the morning's success rob you of the evening's success.

**Prov 16:18 "Pride [goeth] before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall."**

**3. Your opening:** Have your opening remarks ready upon your tongue. They trust that you know what you are talking about; but, remember that first impressions are usually the longest lasting ones. If you hesitate at this very beginning of your speech then the audience's trust in you and your knowledge and abilities will be destroyed and you will have to win it back. In many cases you will find that it is impossible to do so. Walk, act, and especially here at the beginning of your speech of all places, talk like you are the master of the situation and everything involved in and with it.

**4. View of your audience:** View them as agreeable companions. Be eager to know them, don't be afraid of them. You are there to feed a need in their lives so they really want you to succeed. That's what they came for, to receive something from you. They are the consumer and you are the supplier; and consumers always want their supplier to do a good job. Otherwise they won't receive what they seek for. Enjoy supplying and they will enjoy receiving. Enjoy your time with them. Some slight slip of the tongue or other mistake is not to be feared. Often they supply a point of connection with your audience. Also, never talk down to your audience. Compliment your audience by treating them with respect and they will generally respond favorably. As Phelps said, "Talk to them as you would to family, but without familiarity." If you are going to use a personal experience as an illustration which helps in establishing this family like rapport, do so comfortably as you would with true family. Audiences don't usually like for you to talk about yourself so don't do so unless it is necessary to make a point. The point is what is important so make sure it is the point that is stressed and not yourself when you use personal illustrations. Bear in mind that public speaking is actually only public conversation and subject to the same rules; and no one in conversation with another speaks excessively about himself. Do so and the one you are conversing with will soon seek any route of escape. Although public speaking is one-sided conversation it is still conversation so treat it as such and you will be less likely to bore your listeners to death or offend them in other ways with your boorish and "looking down your nose at them" haughty demeanor. You would not do that in normal conversation so don't do it while hiding behind a podium as a public speaker. Be natural and put them at ease and you will be more able to meet their needs. Which is what you are there for anyway. Remember?

**5. Look them in the eye.** This not only makes you more believable but it involves them in the speech. It helps them "get on board," so to speak. It catches their attention and helps them to gain more from the speech you are giving. It has been said that "the eye is the window to the soul." When your eye locks for a moment with their eye, then they can see the enthusiasm and conviction that you feel for the subject. They also see that you are speaking not for your benefit but for theirs. Sincerity in your gaze, conviction of the truth you are conveying, and true concern for their needs, can all be better conveyed to your audience by simply looking in their eyes. One caution, if you are a phony then the meeting of your eye with theirs will convey that message to them also. So my advice is, don't be a phony and then you don't have to be afraid of looking them in the eye! Also, if their attention is drifting or they are about to fall asleep, then by looking them in the eye you will be more aware of their condition. Forewarned of their immediate need, you will be better able to do something to meet that immediate need and bring them back. Besides, it may or may not be your fault that they are falling asleep. They may be overtired or they may have a medical condition. Or, maybe it is your fault. Either way, you will be aware of the situation if you are looking them in the eye and able to deal with that situation. Sometimes just the meeting of your eye with theirs is enough to bring them back. Phelps recounted in his book how that "**Let the speaker derive comfort from the fact that the prophet Daniel fell asleep while the angel Gabriel was preaching.**" (Dan Ch. 8) When you read that scripture you will find that Daniel's reaction was prompted by fear, a type of

extreme stress. Maybe that person who falls asleep is experiencing a similar reaction or may have some other type of physical or psychological problem. Who knows. Just don't let it bother you. If it's your fault, be aware and rectify the problem. If it's their fault, be aware and draw their attention back. If it's nobody's fault (physical, psychological, etc.) then there is nothing you or they can do about it- so don't let it bother you.

**6. The introduction.** This is the first thing the audience hears and sets the stage for what is to follow. It must be lively and coordinated. You must take a firm stance and be physically ready, and then launch into the introduction and by it foster feelings of confidence and life; then the audience will have that on which to firmly plant their feet like a runner in the blocks for the race to follow. On the other hand, if the opening is listless then the audience will probably reward you with their snores as you plod through the rest of the speech. Plodding through a boring opening prepares them for what they expect to be a boring speech. However, if the opening is exciting, concise, and articulate, then they are ready and expectantly alert for the rest of the speech; which they assume will be along the same vein.

**7. Never falter.** If you get stuck in the middle of a sentence, then just keep on talking. Maybe your mind decided, without you knowing it, that what you were about to say was not the thing that needed to be said. It may recall it later when it truly is needed. Maybe a new thought will be kindled in its place that is much better than what you were about to say but forgot. This happens all the time. Love it and accept it! This is the reason why the more times you give a speech the better it generally gets. The old dross is slowly being skimmed off and the pure refined metal comes to the surface. These are but a few of the things that can be the reasons behind your mind manipulating things behind the scenes. Don't be afraid of your mind, instead, embrace it and all of its quirks that cause most people to fear it. As it polishes and rearranges the speech each time you give it, remember that your mind is on your side and working for your benefit. Phelps tells the story of Whitefield, who said that he could not do justice to a sermon until he had preached it fifty times.

**8. Take charge.** You are delivering a speech that they have asked you to give and you have but one purpose in mind: to do good in their lives by giving them what they need. Then give it to them. You have prepared for the hunt to which they had specifically invited you; and you have rounded them up with your introduction now go after their ignorance and kill it. You must purpose in your heart, mind, and body, that you are going to effectively deliver to them exactly what they need and have asked you to bring to them. So now- DO IT!

## LESSON FIVE

### THE SETTING

The modern advertising guru knows the advantage of proper packaging. Why should we not be as aware and ready to take this same advantage when it comes to the setting for our speeches?

**Outdoor setting:** Select where you will stand very carefully. Take into account where the audience will be and situate yourself accordingly. Do not let the relationship between where you are situated and your surroundings cause undue strain upon the audience. Make sure there is nothing distracting behind you that will constantly draw the audiences attention away from you. To stand with your back to a road or a sidewalk where they will most certainly be distracted by the motion of the cars or the pedestrians is to court disaster. You will not be able to keep their attention and they will not be able to have their need met. They came to be filled by the flow of knowledge or understanding that you are there to supply with your speech. If the flow to their minds and understanding is constantly diverted by the moving background behind you, then they will not be filled to the capacity that would have been possible if you had positioned yourself in some other less distracting place. So pick a position within your surroundings that is the least susceptible to intrusive distractions and this will go a long way toward allowing the success of the speech to rest upon the speech alone and not upon the whims of chance distraction.

**Indoor setting:** Make sure that ventilation and heat are not going to be conducive to either lethargy or uncomfortable agitation because it is too hot or too cold. Fresh air is necessary because a lack of proper ventilation causes oxygen shortage to the brain; and this in turn causes lethargy and even a desire to go to sleep so that the demand for oxygen becomes less. The more people in the audience the more oxygen that is needed in the room to feed their demand. And the only way to supply them with more oxygen is to pump it in from outside. Also, the exhaled carbon dioxide needs to be pumped away from them. The only way for both of these to take place is through proper ventilation. Proper temperature is also necessary. If it is too warm they will become lethargic and distracted; however, if it is too cold then they will become irritated and distracted. Make sure that these factors are taken into account and proper adjustments made before the audience arrives.

Also make sure that the platform has proper ventilation and a means of regulating heat and cooling. Platforms are generally raised, which means they are up closer to the heat which, we all know, rises. It is sometimes 10 or more degrees hotter on the platform than it is on the level of the floor where the audience is seated. The same heat that causes lethargy in the audience is actually a greater burden to the speaker because he is exposed to a higher degree of it. Likewise, the distraction of being too cold or the lack of proper ventilation tells upon the speaker exactly as it does upon the audience. So make sure that your comfort is seen to with exactly the same care and preparation as that of your audience. Both are important and for the

same reasons. They need a comfortable environment to properly receive and you need it to properly deliver.

**Lighting:** Bright lighting gives a room a sense of cheer. It also helps those with sight problems to see what is taking place. In a church setting it is also necessary to enable the congregants to read the Scriptures that go along with the sermon.

There should never be a bright light behind the speaker because this will fix the gaze of those listening upon it instead of upon the speaker where it belongs. The hypnotic affect of fixing ones gaze upon any light is quite well documented scientifically and is counterproductive in your efforts to keep the audiences attention within the bounds of your speech. Likewise a white wall behind the speaker will attract attention. Such a wall can be covered as can any window unfortunately located behind the podium.

**Seating:** It is an axiom in churches that a church will not grow much beyond 75% of its seating capacity. Americans do not like to be crowded. It is somewhat different in other cultures but you probably will do most of your preaching to Americans. If you should be blessed with a chance to speak or preach in other countries make sure that you investigate the customs and spacial needs of the predominant culture so that you can better meet their needs in the area of personal space as well as in the many other areas concerned with effective public speaking.

On the other hand, a large empty room is intimidating to many people while many others are distracted by the empty space which they expect should be filled. I know of one church in Colorado that actually cut the size of their auditorium down from 400-450 seating to a size which comfortably accommodated seating for 250 congregants. People felt much more comfortable without the presence of 200-300 empty seats. The auditorium went from a feeling of emptiness and wasteland, which distracted from the message, to one of a feeling of more intimacy and closeness which no longer distracted from the message but actually enhanced the attention and spiritual involvement of the congregation by making them feel more spatially involved with the speaker instead of isolated from him by the previously cavernous feel of the auditorium. Brother Phelps suggested the use of pews instead of chairs; however, because of the reluctance of Americans to set close together, except maybe with members of their own family, the use of comfortably padded chairs will increase the seating of the auditorium by approximately twenty-five percent. Increasing evolvement of custom has negated much of the necessity of arranging the atmosphere of the auditorium to one portraying a “churchy” feeling. Therefore, the use of pews can, depending on the local population, actually be counterproductive. Know the population you are serving and pick your style of seating accordingly. Is it going to be conducive to helping the listeners to pay attention to the speaker and the message or is it going to be a distraction. Pick your type of seating accordingly; i.e., don’t put tradition above the needs of the people to whom you are ministering. The same general principles apply to speaking in the secular realm. Pick the density and style of seating according to the needs of your audience. And in order to do that you need to do some proper investigation long before the actual delivery of your speech. By the time speech day, or preach day, rolls around it is too late to tend to the material setting; you just have to take what you get.

Therefore, it makes more sense to do preparatory work in the areas of investigation and rectification of seating problems so that your speech will rise or fall upon its own merits instead of on the presence of or lack of distractions.

**Distractions:** There are as many varied distractions that can happen during a speech as there are people, animals, and objects in God's creation. The best advice I can give you is **“always expect the unexpected.”**

**People:** Many times the main distraction will be a deacon or an usher. They want to be helpful but many times they are an immense distraction. They will pick the most inopportune time to walk up and down the isles or across in front of the platform. Many times they walk with their head down thinking that makes them invisible; which it does not! Train them thoroughly and you can eliminate the problems that they can cause. If you are speaking somewhere and they have ushers, then a short word of instruction to them before your speech will eliminate them as a source of distraction.

Babies are another source of disturbance. They are loved by almost everyone; and when they laugh or cry during your speech or sermon, then they will have the eyes and attention of most of the audience. What do you do when it happens? You could order the mother or father to take the baby out of the room but if you do so you risk alienating them, possibly forever. Announcing the existence of the nursery beforehand is a good way to handle it. If the baby cries during the service, have one of your ushers go get the most friendly and loving nursery worker in the nursery and have her quietly go to the mother and sweetly ask if they can take the baby to the nursery so “you can enjoy the sermon.” or something to that effect. If there is no nursery provided, maybe you could have the mother set in the back with the baby just in case the baby fusses so she can take him out into the lobby for a moment.

Another type of disturbance is misbehavior, laughing, whispering, or otherwise cutting up on the part of someone in the audience. The best defense is to have a well trained usher. They can generally handle the situation for you. On no occasion let such behavior go unchecked. It is rude and can infect the rest of the audience. At the very least, if left unchecked, it can become habitual on the part of the perpetrator. As Phelps says, “Never lose your temper, or get petty or nervous... Better too much patience, than too little.”

**Non-human creatures:** These could vary from dogs to rats to spiders or any other of the multitude of animals and insects upon God's earth. In fact, it could even be a fish or a reptile. I personally have been interrupted by spiders, flies, cats, birds, hornets, bees, and dogs. And probably others that I have forgotten about. Do not let them perturb or befuddle you. Use them as you would any other distraction- to your advantage. A witty comment or some such thing can establish a point of contact between you and your audience. It can be a plus if you are on your toes or it can be a death-knell if you let it rattle you. We had a dog come in an open door at Church one day and disturb the service. One of the men simply shooed it back out the door before anyone could say anything. We just laughed and went on. Later while visiting a Pastor friend, Pastor Warneke of Salt Lake City, I told him about it. His comment was, “That dog has more brains than most people- at least he knows enough to come to Church on Sunday.” That would have been a good line to use. Such a remark can establish your coolness under fire to

the audience and make a very positive point of contact between you and they.

**Distractions from yourself:** Some slip of the tongue or other mistake made by you that breaks the serious train of thought that you had been cultivating in your audience and sends them into peals of laughter can never be taken back or rectified. Simply pause with a knowing smile and wait for the laughter to subside and then continue. Again, this could actually establish an advantageous point of contact between you and them. Just don't let it rattle you. If you act embarrassed then you are forcing them to be embarrassed for you and that will have a very negative effect upon them and maybe cause them to resent that you forced them to feel bad for you. To do so to them will, at the least, have a deleterious effect upon your effectiveness in reaching them; and, at the worst, you may lose them completely.

**Distractions prevented:** The single most effective deterrent to most distractions is a well-trained staff of ushers. They should be suitably attired and well-trained in their duties. They should be instructed that there are certain times when late-comers are not allowed into the auditorium. Times such as: prayer, reading of the Scriptures, singing of the solo, invitation, etc. Instruct the ushers that theirs is a ministry as much as preaching from the pulpit is a ministry. With proper instruction and motivation of the ushers, most of the distractions mentioned so far can never even happen in the first place because the usher will nip them in the bud before they can blossom. And for the rest, he can solve them tactfully and quickly and spare the speaker the problem of having to deal with them himself.

**Other distractions:** Acoustics, the beauty or lack of it of the facility itself or its contents. These are but a few of the things over which you may have no control with the exception of the acoustics. If it is in a church setting where you have some influence over the pastor or, if you yourself are the pastor, you have some influence over the construction or reconstruction of the facilities, then you can adjust or rectify the bad acoustics. Books on this subject are readily available so we need not go into that here. The beauty or ugliness of the facility inside or out is another matter. You may not be able to do something about either; but if you can, then do it! If paint, furnishings, curtains, or even construction are distracting then do whatever can be done to change them. If you are a guest somewhere then you may not be able to do anything about it; but if you are in a position to do something about it, then do it!

## LESSON SIX

### VARIETY OF AUDIENCE

God made a wide variety of people. Therefore, every audience varies from every other audience because they are made up of a variety of people. And then within each audience there is a wide variance between members of that audience. Your speech must seek to meet the needs of such a diverse group of listeners. Each has specific needs and ways of meeting that need and the skilled preacher must meet those needs and in those various ways. He must learn to read both the group and the individual. A mechanic strives to get the overall functioning of a vehicle in order. All of the individual parts must function together in order for the vehicle to be effective in being used as a conveyance. And yet the overall need cannot be effected unless the mechanic gives attention to each individual part. The lack of proper turning of just one nut or bolt will defeat the overall purpose. It is the same with speaking to an audience. The overall success depends on attention being given to each part of the whole. The ability to meet the needs of the audience depends upon meeting the needs of the individuals that make up that audience. Never neglect the whole but neither should you neglect any of the various parts. Learn to read both and then you can truly rise to meet the need of the hour; instruction of both the whole and the parts.

Sometimes it is the environment or local customs or mode of life that affects the audience. Then know those things in advance. The environmental element, lights, heat, ventilation, etc., can be changed by you; but the elements of local custom and mode of life you must learn and adjust for in order for those things to not have a negative effect upon your speech and the way that it is received by your audience.

**It takes two to make a speech:** Bro. Phelps used that phrase in his textbook and it is true. Without a hearer the speaker has spoken in vain. The sympathetic hearer multiplies what is heard by connecting it with knowledge he already has within himself. Your new knowledge then reinforces what he already possesses and both of you are the better for it. You are the better speaker because you can see he is with you and helping you and he is the better because you have met his need and expanded his horizons and knowledge. Everybody wins and you have given a successful speech. Remember, your job is “Not to do well but to do good” in his life.

On the other hand, a pitying hearer makes you a worse speaker. He is there to disagree in his heart and what you say will only bring forth contempt from him. Remember this when speaking. If you speak in a whining complaining way then you are inviting contempt and attack from your audience. To do so from the advantage point of the pulpit or the podium is to be the coward because your listener cannot respond as he could in a personal conversation. We have no respect for the coward and tend to pursue them. Your audience will do the same to you if you fall into this mode of speaking.

Then there is the hungry hearer. He has come to be filled; so do your job and fill him. He

needs enough to not only satisfy his present hunger but he needs at least a little extra that he can carry home with him to feed upon later.

Your speech should feed something to all of these. It should be versatile enough to reach each man where he is and take him to where you want him to be. The hearer who does not want to hear, must be left to the Lord; but the rest must be fed by what you give them. It takes two to make a speech; a speaker and a listener. Other than the contemptuous listener, the rest will give back what you give them. Sympathy, love, concern, interest, a desire to help, etc., or contempt, coldness, stiffness, painfully formal and disinterested, what you give them they will give back to you. Bro. Phelps said it this way and it is completely and sometimes painfully true:

**THE AUDIENCE IS THE ECHO OF THE SPEAKER**

## **LESSON SEVEN**

### **VOICE**

God made a wide variety of people and that varies the audience; but, in like manner it also varies the voice from person to person. Very few voices, if any, are the same or even closer than a similarity. Many times those similarities are merely ones of inflection and local enunciation or slurring or drawl. The northern twang and the southern drawl give similarities between those who are residents of the same area or region. But putting those aside you will find that no two voices are exactly alike. After the death of Elvis Presley, there proliferated throughout the entire world multiplied legions of Elvis impersonators. Today, some 30 years or so later, they are as thick as fleas on a mongrel dog or an alley cat. But not one of them is famous or could even be named by the most devout music fan. It is so bad today that if you don't watch it, when you turn around quickly you are liable to fall over an Elvis impersonator and hurt yourself. And yet, even if you are not an Elvis fan, which I'm not, you can easily tell the difference between the impersonator and the real thing. That is because no two voices are exactly alike. There are some that are very close and many that are alike but when one really listens you can tell they are different one from the other; and believe me, when you speak publicly people listen very close. If you try to impersonate someone else, the best you can ever be is a shadow. Those people came to hear you, not someone else. If they had wanted to listen to someone else then they would have gone to where that someone else was speaking. I noticed in my last 10 years in the music business, which I ended in 1984, that Elvis impersonators were becoming extremely popular; but I also noticed that their popularity did not last. People were ready to accept an artificial substitute (which speaks volumes about the shallowness of the bar crowd) but it soon wore thin and the impersonator's moment of glory was even more fleeting than that of most singers and musicians. In fact the impersonator's moment would be measured in split seconds if you measured the moment of the original as maybe 5 or 6 hours or a half day at most. People want the real thing; and therefore you better develop your "real thing" to be the best it can be.

There is nothing as versatile as the human voice. It's versatility makes it capable of nuances and range that far outdo that of any of the animals. The mere sound of a voice has a physical, emotional, and spiritual effect upon the listeners. There is something in sound that strikes a resonant note in the metabolism of the listener; and that change of metabolism affects many parts of the hearer. Certain kinds of music can soothe and others excite. Classical music affects the listener one way and Rock and Roll another. The first can soothe and the other can make you irritable and violent. Likewise, certain speakers can soothe or excite. Have you ever heard a whining voice that gets on your nerves or a smooth voice that soothes you. Or an exciting voice from an excited speaker that can excite you? Leaving aside the content of what is spoken, the very sound of a particular voice itself can incite very different responses in the listener.

Then there is also the emotional response elicited by different voices. The physical and the emotional are conjoined inseparably so it is no surprise that the sound of a voice must affect both. The physical response to a voice elicits certain unavoidable emotional ones, and vice-versa. Emotions such as anger, love, hate, etc., all evoke physical responses. Being depressed over a period of time can cause physical sickness or susceptibility to infections and viruses. Therefore, it is easy to understand that anything like the voice that can affect one will automatically affect the other. And sound affects both and the voice is made up of sound. To prepare your voice properly is essential to your effectiveness as a public speaker.

Finally, there is the spiritual side of man. To the conjoined twins of the physical and the emotional we now add a third inseparable element and make conjoined triplets. This side, the spiritual, the most important of the three, is also touched by the voice. I listen to the Bible on tape just before going to sleep each night and I have noticed one thing. Different readers evoke different spiritual responses in me to the same passage of scripture. My favorite to listen to is Alexander Scourby. The scriptures seem to come alive when spoken by him. They strike a spiritual chord within me. I currently don't have the complete Bible read by him so I listen to the New Testament read by another reader. Before I found the tapes by Scourby I listened to the ones read by the other man so I have listened to the Old Testament read by both readers; but I have to tell you, I have a much more spiritual response when Scourby is the reader. Just the sound of a particular voice can and will elicit a spiritual response within all listeners just as some music lifts us spiritually while others depress us spiritually.

When you speak publicly, your voice can, and will if you are preaching, evoke some kind of a response in all three areas; spiritually, emotionally, and physically. Therefore, you need to fine tune that tool so it will be versatile enough to accomplish that task to which you set it.

Brother Phelps stated that the deep voice is best for carrying power and I agree. I have heard many preachers and the most pleasing to listen to and the ones most easily heard are those with the deeper voices. It is true, however, that high notes carry the best with the least power but the tendency there is to adopt a whining tone and that will grate upon the nerves of the listeners so avoid it at all costs. I have a somewhat deep voice, but I had to defeat a tendency in myself as a young preacher (at 39) where my voice would ascend higher and higher when preaching an especially emotional point. My professor in college brought this to my attention and I developed a habit, especially when reading a passage of scripture, of purposely lowering the pitch of my voice especially during intense emotional output. It took both time and a conscious effort to rectify that problem. If you have a problem in that area you too can overcome it.

### ***Your voice is best for you:***

Your voice, no matter what kind it is, will serve you well with proper training. There are physical defects to be sure and medical help should be sought for those. But if your voice is physically sound then you can train it to make it serve you well. Nasal habits or a weak or otherwise displeasing or distracting voice can, with proper training, be retrained to be pleasing and strong.

### **Breathing and register.**

Many speakers sound like their voice is about to break or give out completely. This is, many

times, so distracting that you can hardly hear what they are saying because of how they are saying it. Your attention is drawn time and time again to the delivery and tone of the speaker and away from the message he is striving to deliver to you. Most times these distractions could have been eliminated if the speaker had spent more time on the overall fitness of his voice.

Each person has a natural register. That is the place where their vocal chords are the most comfortable and the most effective in producing sound. In the music business I noticed that many times the singer's effectiveness was greatly hindered because they sang a song in the wrong key for them. They sounded like they were about to explode from the constant strain or their voice was about to crack and shatter from being pierced by shattering notes outside of their voice's range. Most disconcerting to say the least and catastrophic to say the most.

Another cause that is at the root of this problem is that many people do not know how to breath properly. Brother Phelps suggests laying on your back and breathing naturally. In that position deep breathing is natural. Then, stand up and breath exactly as you did when laying down. He suggests that you practice deep breathing in the morning before rising for the day. **“[Draw] in the breath gradually through the nose, holding it for a moment, and then expelling it more rapidly through the open mouth. Breath from the whole lung, both lower and upper.”** Following this procedure will train you to breath more deeply and increase your speaking ability by giving you more air on hand for use of the natural voice that God has given to you.

Study your voice and you will know both it's strengths and it's weaknesses. This will allow you to capitalize on the former and rectify the latter.

### **Lifestyle, posture, and care of the throat.**

Another necessity is a good healthy lifestyle. Healthy habits and proper posture while speaking will do more to help your natural voice than all of the training in the world. Training is necessary to improve your voice, of course, but good posture and good health are necessary for proper maintenance and use of that trained voice. Such things as sore throats can be overcome, at least temporarily, with a cough drop or by use of a little lemon in some honey. You must be careful, however, because numbing the throat with these can lead to increased soreness later because of overtaxing an already sore throat and weakened voice. Because of not feeling the soreness, because of the temporary relief effected by the drops or lemon/honey mixture, one can push the throat too far and exacerbate the hoarseness later. I found this to be true when in the music business. There were times I had to sing in spite of slight hoarseness and soreness of the throat so I used the honey and lemon. It worked well and helped me perform for the four hours necessary that night but the next day I found my throat to be even hoarser than the night before. So be careful when using temporary measures. They can cause greater problems later. Whenever possible, consult a doctor if there is swelling and/or fever accompanying the hoarse-ness or if it doesn't go away in a couple of days. Remember, the vocal chords are muscle; and like any other muscle, if you push an already injured muscle you will only make it worse. Also, avoid constriction; both around the throat and around the stomach. The diaphragm needs to be unrestricted so you can breath easily and the throat needs to be unrestricted so you can speak. Make sure that both your pants and your tie are not too

tight. Also, I have tried to preach wearing a vest that was too tight. It caused me to be extremely short of breath.

## **Use of the voice.**

When beginning a speech, begin moderately and work up from there. The somewhat softer tone will get their attention and you will have plenty of power and volume in reserve to use later in the speech when it is called for. Use chest tones and not throat tones. Raspy speech spoken from the throat can only get worse if allowed to continue. As you get interested in your subject you will fail to notice your raspiness and it will get completely out of your control; and, as it gets worse, so will your audience's attention to your speech. They will be distracted by your voice, not instructed by it.

Use your mouth properly to form and project the words much in the way that a professional singer does. It takes practice to do this but it will enhance your speaking voice exactly as it enhances their singing voice.

## **Strengthening of the voice.**

Finally, practice, practice, practice. Use your voice everyday. Stretch it every day. Exercise it every day. It is a muscle- use it and it will become stronger. Not use it and it can only weaken. Don't overtax it and injure it but tax it reasonably everyday and it will respond like any other muscle- with an increase in strength, flexibility, and endurance. Use it or lose it. Refuse to stretch it and it will not grow stronger and more usable. Neglect it and it will atrophy. If you are called by God to be a speaker in the secular realm or, as in the case of the majority of students attending this college on-campus or at home, in the realm of preaching or bible teaching, then remember that the God that called you gave you the voice that you have. He can use it and improve it; but one thing is certain, He knows what He gave you before He called you to use it in His service. He doesn't make mistakes so use what He gave you and He will enable you to improve it until it becomes exactly the tool He wants you to have to serve Him in the way He wants. It's up to you. You can obey God and give the voice He gave you back to Him for His use or you can disobey God and refuse to use the tool He gave you in His service. You practice and improve your voice the best you can and then He'll take over and lift you higher as only He can do.

## LESSON EIGHT

### THE VOICE II

This section is concerned with the use of your voice.

**Tone:** Find the middle tone of your voice and learn to speak there. Then vary your tone from higher pitched to lower pitched around that pivot point. This will add variety to this element of your speaking ability.

**Expression:** To learn expression one must use his voice and allow the feelings from within you to find birth on your lips. To speak expressively one must learn to think expressively and then allow that to come out of your mouth and add variety to your speech. Without variety you will fall into a monotonous tone. This will cause your speech to die a premature death. There is nothing that causes the audience to soon tire of you and your speech more than a monotonous tone. Monotony wearies and tires; while variety, on the other hand, motivates the audience to action. If you have no emotion coming out of you to be expressed vocally, then vary your tone purposely. Do it naturally and not by repeating jumps high or low, loud or soft, i.e., not in a mechanical manner but in as natural a manner as you can muster. You will find in cases where you must artificially vary your voice that **“Actions precede feelings.”** If you are experiencing a lack of emotion, then begin to speak and act emotionally. Soon you will find that the emotion you triggered with a purposefully emotional turn to your speaking will begin to grow and follow suit with your purposeful intention.

Then there is the way that sentences are spoken. When one rises during a passage then finishes with a falling slide at the end of it, this gives the passage and its thought a feeling of dignity.

Volume and force must also vary as does the necessity of judging the room and the acoustics for the overall volume you will need to be easily heard by everyone in the room or hall. Of course we now have electronic means to amplify your voice to where it can be easily heard even in the most distant parts of the room. However, you will not always have such devices and in addition it is advantageous to your voice to exercise it properly by using the volume of it and varying it so as to make it stronger and more useful.

**Rate or speed:** These also can be, and should be, varied to add spice to your speech. Do not talk fast all of the time. Nor should you talk slow all of the time. Vary your speed according to the need and feel of the sentence or phrase you are speaking. In addition there is the matter of the pause. This is used generally between divisions of your speech so that a distinct transition can be made. This prevents confusion caused by the running together of the separate ideas. God is not the author of confusion so in preaching this is very important; however, in secular speaking it is also important for clarity and flow from one thought to another. Not only during transitions but also pause following an important thought or key word within a particular division in order to let the word or thought sink in and solidify the thrust of the section.

**Pauses:** These are an extremely effective way to get the immediate attention of your audience. Don't drag them out too long though or your audience will think you have lost your place. Use them only to add spice to your speech. Silence draws their attention much more effectively than rambling and captures it as noise never could.

**Enthusiasm or excitement:** Use these also as tools to put across a particularly exciting part of your speech. If you are enthusiastic, then let it show in your voice as well as your gestures. The pace of the sentence can increase with the pathos of the speaker.

**Quality of tone:** Vary this according to the sense of what you are trying to put across in various parts of your speech, but also vary it according to the particular situation in which you are giving your speech. You do not speak the same at a wedding as you do at a funeral. Likewise, you do not speak the same way when addressing a crowd at a Fourth of July outing as you do when addressing a group of senior citizens at the local nursing home. Make sure your tone fits the situation in general and also see that it fits the sense of the parts of your speech.

**The "Holy Tone" and the Natural Tone:** This is nothing but an affectation that is to be avoided. The natural tone is always to be used and is immensely more effective than the "holy tone."

**The Falsetto whine:** This is an irritating habit that needs to be avoided as much as the "holy tone."

**Ranting:** This is another habit that forms when one seeks to intimidate their audience instead of educate them.

## LESSON NINE

### MANNER & MANNERISMS

The previous sections were concerned with the use of your voice. Now, in this section, we are going to discover a hindrance that can negate even the most assiduous preparations, training of voice, and weight of content of your speech. This plunderer of your effectiveness may seem trivial, or at least made up of trivials, and yet its effect is total and devastating. The subject of this section is the little or big, few or many, irritating mannerisms that are generally subconscious in their execution. These irritating actions if left unchecked will become habits; and habits are clinging things that are extremely hard to break.

These mannerisms catch the eyes and attention of the audience to the point that they can no longer pay attention to what you are saying. Phelps refers to irritating mannerisms as “fungi” growing on the speaker.

If you are to develop mannerisms to help you with your nervousness, then develop ones that will not capture the attention of your audience to draw it away from your subject. Such things as lightly grasping the podium in front of you. One that is used by singers is that they will hold the microphone in one hand and then hold the chord in the other hand with a loop of several feet hanging down between their hands. This gives them something to do with their hands which otherwise would be left to their own nervous devices. This is an effective device for controlling nervousness in case the singer is not versed enough in entertaining to use his hands for gestures that fit the song.

If you wish to find out what your mannerisms are, ask a friend or relative whom you can trust. They will not enumerate your mannerisms to hurt you but to help you.

**Prov 27:6 “Faithful [are] the wounds of a friend;  
but the kisses of an enemy [are] deceitful.”**

Develop the habit of listening to criticism from both friend and foe alike. Then analyze their criticisms for truth. Finally, act upon the truths that you find in their words about you. Only a fool perceives himself to be perfect. Everyone can use improvement; but no one can improve until they know their defects. You will not see many of your own defects, so let those who can see them instruct you to your edification. And then set your will to correct the problem.

One way of striving toward eradication of existing objectionable mannerisms or the prevention of their formation is to act natural and unconstrained when speaking in public. Let a conversational style of rapport exist between you and the audience. You would not want affectations or irritating mannerisms to intrude in personal conversation, so why let your own such irritants come between you and an audience while speaking in a public forum.

Along with this must also be given the seemingly unnecessary admonition to converse as much as possible with people one to one so that the habit of speaking comfortably and naturally is ingrained within you so that you can have that naturalness at all times, including when speaking publicly to a group.

**Freedom and Grace:** When speaking, do so with grace of movement. This can only be learned from use of the body in a graceful manner. Some light outdoor sports or light manual labor will increase your ease of body movements. As will taking a martial arts class or home dancing. Practicing Ti Chi will also help one gain mastery over the use and fluidity of the body. Beware of course of the false spiritual elements in some of the eastern disciplines. Absorb only the physical elements that lead to coordination and fluidity of body.

Also practice the determined precept of freedom while speaking. Determine to shake off bindings of constricting habits and just determine to have freedom to enjoy yourself as you speak. Just rear back and cut loose and enjoy what you are doing. Your freedom from constraint will draw your audience along with you and you will both have a good time.

Warning, never let your freedom be an excuse for lowly or vulgar communications while speaking. Always remember who you represent, the Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, keep your standards high. Free yourself from constraints of stodginess, frigidity, fright, and frailty, yes; but, remember that the freedom you need is freedom from negative constraints but not freedom from decency.

**John 8:36 “If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.”**

**End of**

**Public Speaking I.**

## **Public Speaking II.**

### **LESSON TEN**

#### **PSYCHOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES**

One of the things that is not usually taught in Bible College public speaking classes is how to, as Steve Cohen puts it, “Win the Crowd.” There are certain techniques that can be learned that will help you to better win the hearts and attention of your listeners and that will, in turn, enable you to better deliver your message by preparing them to be more receptive to you personally. The reason I say this is because the two, you and your message, are inseparable to the listeners, be your message a sermon or a speech on a secular subject. And when you come right down to it, many sermons speak to secular subjects but from a biblical standpoint. But to get back to the inseparableness of you and your message. I have seen speakers who have had a soundly prepared and informative message and yet that message was not well received by the audience because of the speaker him/herself. I have seen this both in sermons and secular speeches. What went wrong? Generally, it is one of two things:

1. Because the listeners arrived with the predetermined purpose of discrediting or protesting the speaker.
2. Because the speaker failed to “win the crowd.”

***Because the listeners arrived with the predetermined purpose of discrediting or protesting the speaker.***

Little can be done about this one. If either the subject of the speech or the speaker him/herself are unpopular with a certain group, then certainly that group has the right to protest, but, they should do so in an orderly manner. Which, unfortunately, many times, if not most times, they do not. Certainly the unruly and rowdy protests are the ones that are given the most exposure in the media and that is what motivates those who protest in this manner. Regardless of whether the protest is done in a decent, civil manner or in a rowdy, uncivil and unruly manner, these things are largely out of our control. It is in our control, however, how we respond to this problem. We should always do so in a civil, godly, Christian manner and not stoop to the uncivilized tactics of those who stage uncivil types of protests. And, as a side note, Christians should never be the ones involved in the staging of a protest in an ungodly, un-Christlike, manner! Unfortunately, I see this happening constantly; and those of us who try to be civil and Christlike in our activities and demeanor have to suffer the consequences of those negative actions by others. The counter-productivity of Christians being uncivil in speech and protest, far, far, outweighs any tiny gains that are, usually very incidentally, brought about by such actions. There are, at times, some very tiny gains brought about in such ways; but, they can only be viewed as proof of God using us “in spite of” our actions and not “because of” them.

### ***Because the speaker failed to “win the crowd.”***

Just as there is little that we can do about the previous problem of protesting, uncivil, listeners, in this case we are the ones who can, and must, do everything we can do! If we do not win the crowd, then they will not be receptive to the message/speech that we wish to deliver to them.

### ***Clarification.***

To set the stage for what you are about to learn, and the need and, even, the appropriateness of learning and using psychological principles to “win the crowd”- or that we should even try to “win the crowd,” I need to clarify a few things.

In my 20 years in the ministry serving the Lord from the Gulf of Mexico to the Gulf of Alaska, I have heard on many occasions, from the brethren (and sisteren), that we are “preachers (or teachers,) not entertainers.” That, “Church is to feed the spiritual needs of people, not entertain them.” I also have heard complaints that secular, psychological, methods to sway people should “never be used in Church” and that it can “stifle the Holy Spirit.” And that the Charismatics use “classic hypnotic techniques” to accomplish their goals of getting and keeping the people.

My answer to these things is that we ALL use “classic hypnotic techniques” when we preach or speak before an audience! If people would bother to do a bit of research they would find that hypnotic techniques are simply “suggestion” techniques used in a systematic manner and that nothing that is done under hypnosis is done against the will of the one who is hypnotized. And in answer to the statement that we shouldn’t use psychological methods, which they wrongly believe are all secular, to sway people in Church, is to deny the psychological side of humanity, which has been given to us by God. Finally, to the statement that we are “preachers or teachers, not entertainers,” I say but one word- boredom! (I will explain this statement in just a bit.)

*An answer to- hypnotic techniques:* Hypnotism, as I said, is simply “suggestion” done in a systematic manner. No one’s will is abrogated. No one is “controlled.” The one who is hypnotized can refuse to do anything suggested at any time. It is not demon possession nor is it witchcraft. It is simply strong use of “suggestion” to which the subject willingly submits.

I can understand the reluctance of Christians to admit that we really do use such methods. Because of a woeful ignorance of what such techniques really are, we have relegated them to the realm of “witchcraft” at the worst or “worldliness” at best. And what that means to Christians in general is that as “good” Christians we can have nothing at all to do with such things. And yet suggestion is, or at least should be, the basis of every sermon preached and/or speech given. When we develop our message, or speech, I shall use the term “speech” to include sermons, we develop a logical progression of sub-points toward a final point so that the conclusion that we want drawn is drawn by our listeners- or, so that the listeners will change their behavior, attitude, or understanding, or rectify some error in one or more of those areas.

*Dictatorial delivery:* Although some do deliver their speech in a dictatorial manner, this is not as productive as it should be. In fact many, if not most, people react in a negative manner to this type of speech. Therefore, we should avoid this type of delivery because it generally

engenders a reaction of rebellion from the listeners rather than one of concurrence with the conclusion the speaker wishes to present as desirable. In other words, it is generally counter-productive.

***Suggestive delivery:*** On the other hand, if a speech is presented in a non-dictatorial way, but rather as a series of suggestions (one may call them “proofs” if you want but when taken as a whole they are really suggestions that a particular direction or understanding is desirable) then the listener is more likely to accept those sub-points and follow the speaker to the desired conclusion. Not all of the listeners will agree with the conclusion, but, the listeners are more likely to at least listen and at least have a chance to decide whether to agree or not agree, if dictatorially engendered rebellion is not added to the mix to cloud the issue and maybe even overshadow it to the point of total misunderstanding, obscurity, or even irrelevance or non-existence. In other words, why add rebellion to the mix at all when it is not necessary to do so.

***Suggestion techniques:*** Therefore, to not use “suggestive techniques” of various kinds would be to leave out some of our most useful methods for delivering the message. And that is true whether it is a secular or a spiritual one. If we read the bible, we will actually find that the two realms, secular and spiritual, really are so interconnected that to separate them is really an error on our part. Our laws, way of life, society and interactions within it, as well as all of the other things in the so-called “secular” realm of our lives have their roots in the Bible or, if you are non-Christian, in the “sacred texts” of the religions of the various societies in which we may have been raised.

**NOTE:** It is only in the atheistic and agnostic segments of the members of our society, and the sway they have had upon our educational system and the government that runs it, that a differentiation is made between the “secular” and the “religious.” And even then, based upon personal experience attending meetings of different groups and even speaking before the “Atheists of Utah” group on the subject of Morals and Ethics, if one is honest it is easy to see that, contrary to their statements, there is a completely spiritual element to their beliefs- which they adamantly maintain are totally secular. Quite contrary to what they maintain, their entire philosophy of life is drawn, on the positive side, from a spiritual basis (in truth, God’s teachings) or, on the negative side, their philosophy is drawn from their rejection of the spiritual basis for their teachings. Their confusion is drawn in its essence, though they would never admit this, from their rejection of the truth that the original basis for their philosophy of life was spiritual and that all good in it has come, originally, from God’s teachings in the spiritual realm. To deny truth does not negate truth, it merely makes it unuseable to the one who denies it. And refusing to believe, and use truth, is always debilitating to the one refusing it.

And the truth is, we better not be the ones guilty of denying and/or refusing to use truth. And refusing to use suggestive delivery incorporating suggestion techniques is to deny the truth that God gave us those tools, and how to use them, in the Scriptures. When we give a speech, let’s do our job and use every tool that He gave us for the work- and then let us, “Let God be God,” and use what we do in any way He sees fit to do His work in the hearts and souls of the listeners.

## *An answer to- "Psychological techniques should never be used in Church:"*

First I will ask a question- how do you define "psychological techniques?"

### **Definitions:**

#### **A. Psychological techniques:**

1. Psychology (*Classical Greek: psyche = "soul" or "mind," logos = "study of"*) is an academic and applied field involving the study of behavior and its relationship to the mind and brain. Psychology also refers to the application of such knowledge to various spheres of human activity, including problems of individuals' daily lives and the treatment of mental illness.<sup>(OR1)</sup>
2. Psychological, Of or pertaining to the psychology; of or relating to the mind.<sup>(6)</sup>
3. Technique(s), The entire body of procedures and methods of a science, art, or craft; a way of achieving a purpose.<sup>(ibid.)</sup>

### **Summary:**

For the purposes and aims of this class on public speaking, the term "psychological techniques" can be defined as **"procedures and methods of a science, art, or craft, such techniques used as a way of achieving a purpose through application of knowledge gained through study of behavior and its relationship to the mind and brain with a view to application in various spheres of human activity, including problems of individual's daily lives."**

Knowing something of the psychology of the mind of our listeners will enable us to better deliver our speech in a way that is most likely to be received by their mind. When applied to preaching, such acceptance by their mind will then make it easier for us to reach through the channel of their mind into their soul with the truths of God's Word. Even in a "secular" speech, acceptance of us and our speech by their minds is a necessity if we are to convince them of the truths of our subject- no matter what that subject may be.

#### **B. Persuasion:** Persuasion is a psychological process.<sup>(5)</sup>

Very few people would object to "persuasion" being used in Church; and yet persuasion is a psychological process.

Persuasion is a form of influence. It is the process of guiding people toward the adoption of one's views. It is a problem-solving strategy, and does not rely on force or deceit.

The word "persuasion" is usually used in distinction to coercion, which involves the use of violence or other kinds of force, or the threat of such force in order to get someone to act against his will.

Persuasion is often confused with manipulation, which is the act of guiding another towards something that is not in their best interest. Persuasion is meant to benefit all parties in the end.

The online encyclopedia at "<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Persuasion>" we find the fol-

lowing list of methods of persuasion. Not all of these are acceptable methods for us, nevertheless, they are methods and, thus, I will leave them in the list. But I do so strictly for informational purposes. And I also leave the unacceptable ones in to forewarn you so that you can recognize them when some speaker uses them on you.

## METHODS OF PERSUASION<sup>(OR2)</sup>

### *By appeal to reason:*

1. Logical argument
2. Logic
3. Scientific method
4. Proof

### *By appeal to emotion:*

1. Advertising
2. Faith
3. Presentation and Imagination
4. Propaganda
5. Seduction
6. Tradition

### *Aids to persuasion:*

1. Body language
2. Sales techniques

**NOTE:** Persuasion is something that a speaker does “with” an audience, not “to” them.<sup>(5)</sup>

### **Conclusion:**

Therefore, to properly convey the message of our speech, in our case the message from God’s Word, we need to know something about the psychology of our listeners. In order to do this, we must garner general data as well as specific data.

### **Psychological Data and the use of it-**

Now it is necessary to discuss psychological data and the use of it in public speaking.

**General data:** Included in this area would be general psychological data drawn from the Word of God about human beings in general; as well as data drawn from secular sources, including general studies of human behavior.

**Specific data:** Included in this would be studies of specific people, groups, including ethnic groups, sexes and sexual ratios, geographical area, including climate, housing, job and professional opportunities specific to that area, also specific data on educational levels and opportunities, data on Churches, religions and spirituality, data on social clubs and activities and other such types of specific data.

**Audience data and adaptation:** Some of the data we gather beforehand probably, and hopefully, will be specific or general data about the group to whom we are giving our speech. We would be well-advised to use that data in both our preparation and our delivery.

**Preparation:** Data gathered beforehand should be incorporated into our preparation. We need to make sure that the content of our speech is both relevant and interesting to our audience. If either of those two elements is missing, then we will have spoken in vain. Data gathering and incorporation of that data directly into our speech and/or use of it in the

preparation of our speech will help us a long way toward preparing a speech that is both of those things: relevant and interesting.

“**Keeping your audience in mind**” is a phrase that is oft used. According to Lucas:

“**Keeping your audience in mind,**” however, involves more than simply remembering who your listeners will be. Above all, it means two things:

(1) **ASSESSING** how your audience is likely to respond to what you will say in your speech and (2) **ADJUSTING** what you say to make it as clear, appropriate, and convincing as possible.

During the time of preparation we must try to put ourselves in the other guy’s shoes. See things from his perspective, see how he experiences life in relation to your topic or subject. Try to hear how your speech is going sound to him. His experiences and his past and current situations will dictate **HOW** he hears what you are saying as well as how he will react both during the speech and at its conclusion. As human beings we are so wrapped up in our own life that this is not an easy thing to do- and yet we must learn to do it if we are to excel in the area of public speaking.

As you develop your speech, try to anticipate how each point will be accepted, or at least how it will be perceived or understood, by your listeners. How will they react to your introduction? How will they react to each and every point as you progress through your speech? How about the conclusion, will they receive it, understand it, will they act upon it in the way that you want? Will any of the individual points bring questions to their mind? Will the tie-in and transition from point to point be received favorably by them? Will the way you present a particular point engender a misunderstanding through lack of evidence in and for it or maybe even a lack of proper presentation of the facts or direction presented within or in support of that point? Even worse, will they not even consider contemplation on any one or even all of the points and the conclusion or summary because of their lack of interest engendered by your boring or lackadaisical presentation of the points and/or conclusion or summary?

Try to anticipate how they will receive what you are going to say. Don’t let your knowledge puff you up to where you think you are so above them that you think the way to present the speech is to try to dazzle them with your lofty knowledge and grasp of the subject. Don’t give them so much dazzle and lofty language that they can’t grasp what you are trying to present to them. On the other hand, don’t let your lofty position be your excuse for talk down to them either. Rather, understand where they are so that you will know how they will receive you and your speech and then incorporate whatever is needed into your speech to edify the listener.

One way to learn and anticipate your listener’s possible response is to role play a bit. Give the intro to your speech and then try to set your mind to that of someone who is totally antagonistic to you and what you are about to present. How would they react to your intro? And I mean every word, sentence, phrase, and the whole of it. Then see if there are some adjustments that can be made so that the intro will not exacerbate their already present anger and opposition to you. Do the same with each point and the content/arguments/facts presented

in it and also with the conclusion/summary.

Do the same thing again but this time play the part of someone who holds the opposing viewpoint; and then from the view of someone who is ignorant of the subject. Then from the viewpoint of someone who is very knowledgeable in it. In each of these, and as many other groups or individuals you role-play, try to figure out how are they going to react to the individual parts and to the whole of your speech. What questions will each group ask? What doubts will surface that need to be answered? What knowledge must be given to them so they can logically and intelligently act upon, or react to, your speech?

### ***Adaptation:***

The practice of “**Keeping your audience in mind**” is not only for use during your preparation but also for use during your delivery.

You have written your speech while taking into account all of the specific and general data that you can find. You have fine-tuned your speech by role-playing the various groups and individuals who may be in the audience. Now you are there behind the podium and you are delivering this polished and organized bit of verbiage and, wham, out of nowhere you can plainly see that something is wrong! Now what do you do? Or maybe when you arrive you find the time for your speech has been cut in half- or maybe the size of your audience has. Or maybe the audience is larger and you’ve been moved to a different or larger room where your visuals can’t be shown or can’t be seen from the back of the room. Or maybe a dozen other possible things have gone wrong- what do you do? In one word, adapt. Find a way to present your visuals in an effective way. If you are shorted on time allowed for your speech, condense it to its most essential elements and then present them in the best way you can. Don’t try to simply speed up your rate of speech so you can get it all in, this would be disastrous. Your audience will understand you have been shorted on time and most of them will sympathize with you and this can turn to your advantage. Adapt!

Another area of adaptation is predicated upon the reaction of your audience. Are they sitting forward and nodding their heads, smiling, or otherwise responding in a positive manner? Or are they sitting back, maybe with their arms folded across their chests, shaking their heads slowly from side to side with a “tsk, tsk,” kind of aura, or with looks of confusion or giving you looks of confusion? If the latter is the case, then you need to adapt your delivery and or schedule of points to clarify or expand or re-deliver the previous point or adapt the future direction of delivery in response to the negative reaction of your audience.

### ***Summary:***

**As Lucas put it in “The Art of Public Speaking,” (1998)**

**Good speakers are audience-centered. They know that the aim of speech-making is to gain a desired response from listeners. When working on your speeches, keep three questions in mind: To whom am I speaking? What do I want them to know, believe, or do as a result of my speech? What is the most effective way of composing and presenting my speech to accomplish that aim?**

**Blackwood, in “The Fine Art of Preaching,” (1946)**

**If two competing companies broadcast the football game on the Coast, the announcer who is likely to attract most of the hearers is the one who has a sense of literary style and a habit of putting himself in the place of his unseen hearer.**

**Phelps, in “Speaking in Public,” (1930)**

**The speaker that sincerely serves his audience will make them feel, when he dismisses them, that they owe him a debt of gratitude greater than they can repay.**

To serve your audience is your goal and understanding them and adapting to them in both preparation and delivery is the method which will give you the greatest success.

## **SOME PSYCHOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES USEFUL IN PUBLIC SPEAKING**

In the book, *Win the Crowd*, Steve Cohen makes the following statement:

**When you strip away the sleight-of-hand tricks, magicians are masters at attracting interest, holding attention, and leaving audiences with fond memories of their time together. Aren't these skills that we can all use?**

I agree. One of the biggest complaints I have heard in my travels as a preacher is that people get bored with sermons- or the sermon is too long- or it has nothing to do with my daily life! And another complaint I hear, not as often as the previous ones by a long-shot, is that **“I'm not being fed.”**

Although the “not being fed” complaint, many times and in my personal experience that should read “most” times, is just not true; but, on the other hand, many times there is truth to the complaint. It is hard to discern the difference but to do so it must be on an individual basis. If the person is a know-it-all type, then it is most probable that the reason they are not being fed is because they refuse to step up to the full dish and eat. But, on the other side of the coin, it may be true that the person is not being fed and it is the pastor's, or the speaker's, fault for not filling the dish.

Those problems with individuals can, and must, be handled on a one-on-one basis. If they truly are not being fed, then move them to a more in-depth Bible Study group. Or send them to Bible college. Or, God-forbid that it should be our fault (I'm speaking facetiously of course), maybe we need to spend more time studying before we get up to speak or teach so that there will be more meat to our message. If, however, they just refuse to eat the substantial meal set before them, then there is really nothing we can do about it. Counseling can be tried, if we feel

it is appropriate, but it is for sure that their unrest cannot be allowed to infect the rest of the flock. So something must be done about it sooner or later- preferably sooner!

Here, however, we are more concerned with speaking to an audience, one made up of individuals of course, but nevertheless, an audience and we need to deal with them as such as well as dealing with them as individual listeners. Keep in mind that the methods we are going to learn can also help us in our individual relationships as well helping us in our communal ones such as at speaking engagements.

### ***Verbal and non-verbal communication:***

Since public speaking is undeniably communication, then we need to be aware that there are two types of communication, verbal and non-verbal. Since there are these two different types of communication, then we need to know how to use both of them and the principles involved in each one as well as the elements involved in each one and the methods for the application of both. We also need to know a bit of the psychology behind both as well as a bit of the psychology behind why and how they are each received in the way that they are.

## **LESSON NINE**

### ***Section assignments:***

1. Pick a subject on which you have never given a speech or sermon before, and write a minimum 30 minute speech to deliver somewhere this week. It may be a particular passage of scripture, a person, a thing, a teaching, a doctrine, a bible subject or a secular subject. You can have wide latitude in picking your subject, but it must be one on which you have never spoken before as the main subject of a speech or sermon.

Choice of subject differs from last week in this respect- if this week's subject was mentioned in a previous speech or sermon even as a sub-point then you may NOT use that as the subject of the speech for this week. The main subject for this weeks speech must be something totally new to you.

You must carry out the appropriate research and/or study to be knowledgeable and effective in speaking/preaching on this new subject.

2. Give the speech somewhere this week.

3. Include a self-critique at the end of the Outline Submission form you will turn in at the end of this lesson concerning the areas addressed in this week's lesson. At the end of the critique, include when, where, and to whom you gave the speech, also address their reaction, and, lastly, your reaction to their reaction.

NOTE: Remember, when giving a speech, the 2 most lasting impressions will be the strengths of your Introduction and Close.

## **PSYCHOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES**

One of the things that is not usually taught in Bible College public speaking classes is how

to, as Steve Cohen puts it, "Win the Crowd." There are certain techniques that can be learned that will help you to better win the hearts and attention of your listeners and that will, in turn, enable you to better deliver your message by preparing them to be more receptive to you personally. The reason I say this is because the two, you and your message, are inseparable to the listeners, be your message a sermon or a speech on a secular subject. And when you come right down to it, many sermons speak to secular subjects but from a biblical standpoint. But to get back to the inseparableness of you and your message. I have seen speakers who have had a soundly prepared and informative message and yet that message was not well received by the audience because of the speaker him/herself. I have seen this both in sermons and secular speeches. What went wrong? Generally, it is one of two things:

1. Because the listeners arrived with the predetermined purpose of discrediting or protesting the speaker.
2. Because the speaker failed to "win the crowd."

### ***Because the listeners arrived with the predetermined purpose of discrediting or protesting the speaker.***

Little can be done about this one. If either the subject of the speech or the speaker him/herself are unpopular with a certain group, then certainly that group has the right to protest, but, they should do so in an orderly manner. Which, unfortunately, many times, if not most times, they do not. Certainly the unruly and rowdy protests are the ones that are given the most exposure in the media and that is what motivates those who protest in this manner. Regardless of whether the protest is done in a decent, civil manner or in a rowdy, uncivil and unruly manner, these things are largely out of our control. It is in our control, however, how we respond to this problem. We should always do so in a civil, godly, Christian manner and not stoop to the uncivilized tactics of those who stage uncivil types of protests. And, as a side note, Christians should never be the ones involved in the staging of a protest in an ungodly, un-Christlike, manner! Unfortunately, I see this happening constantly; and those of us who try to be civil and Christlike in our activities and demeanor have to suffer the consequences of those negative actions by others. The counter productivity of Christians being uncivil in speech and protest, far, far, outweighs any tiny gains that are, usually very incidentally, brought about by such actions. There are, at times, some very tiny gains brought about in such ways; but, they can only be viewed as proof of God using us "in spite of" our actions and not "because of" them.

### ***Because the speaker failed to "win the crowd."***

Just as there is little that we can do about the previous problem of protesting, uncivil, listeners, in this case we are the ones who can, and must, do everything we can do! If we do not win the crowd, then they will not be receptive to the message/speech that we wish to deliver to them.

### ***Clarification:***

To set the stage for what you are about to learn, and the need and, even, the appropriateness of learning and using psychological principles to "win the crowd"- or that we should even try

to "win the crowd," I need to clarify a few things.

In my 20 years in the ministry serving the Lord from the Gulf of Mexico to the Gulf of Alaska, I have heard on many occasions, from the brethren (and sisters), that we are "preachers (or teachers,) not entertainers." That, "Church is to feed the spiritual needs of people, not entertain them." I also have heard complaints that secular psychological methods to sway people should "never be used in Church" and that it can "stifle the Holy Spirit." And that the Charismatics use "classic hypnotic techniques" to accomplish their goals of getting and keeping the people. My answer to these things is that we ALL use "classic hypnotic techniques" when we preach or speak before an audience! If people would bother to do a bit of research they would find that hypnotic techniques are simply "suggestion" techniques used in a systematic manner and that nothing that is done under hypnosis is done against the will of the one who is hypnotized. And in answer to the statement that we shouldn't use psychological methods, which they wrongly believe are all secular, to sway people in Church, is to deny the psychological side of humanity, which has been given to us by God. Finally, to the statement that we are "preachers or teachers, not entertainers," I say but one word- boredom! (I will explain this statement in just a bit.)

***An answer to- hypnotic techniques:*** Hypnotism, as I said, is simply "suggestion" done in a systematic manner. No one's will is abrogated. No one is "controlled." The one who is hypnotized can refuse to do anything suggested at any time. It is not demon possession nor is it witchcraft. It is simply strong use of "suggestion" to which the subject willingly submits.

I can understand the reluctance of Christians to admit that we really do use such methods. Because of a woeful ignorance of what such techniques really are, we have relegated them to the realm of "witchcraft" at the worst or "worldliness" at best. And what that means to Christians in general is that as "good" Christians we can have nothing at all to do with such things. And yet suggestion is, or at least should be, the basis of every sermon preached and/or speech given. When we develop our message, or speech, I shall use the term "speech" to include sermons, we develop a logical progression of sub-points toward a final point so that the conclusion that we want drawn is drawn by our listeners- or, so that the listeners will change their behavior, attitude, or understanding, or rectify some error in one or more of those areas.

***Dictatorial delivery:*** Although some do deliver their speech in a dictatorial manner, this is not as productive as it should be. In fact many people, if not most people, react in a negative manner to this type of speech. Therefore, we should avoid this type of delivery because it generally engenders a reaction of rebellion from the listeners rather than one of concurrence with the conclusion the speaker wishes to present as desirable. In other words, it is generally counter-productive.

***Suggestive delivery:*** On the other hand, if a speech is presented in a non-dictatorial way, but rather as a series of suggestions (one may call them "proofs" if you want but when taken as a whole they are really suggestions that a particular direction or understanding is desirable) then the listener is more likely to accept those sub-points and follow the speaker to the desired conclusion. Not all of the listeners will agree with the conclusion, but, the listeners are more likely to at least listen and at least have a chance to decide whether to agree or not agree, if

dictatorially engendered rebellion is not added to the mix to cloud the issue and maybe even overshadow it to the point of total misunderstanding, obscurity, or even irrelevance or non-existence. In other words, why add rebellion to the mix at all when it is not necessary to do so. ***Suggestion techniques:*** Therefore, to not use "suggestive techniques" of various kinds would be to leave out some of our most useful methods for delivering the message. And that is true whether it is a secular or a spiritual one. If we read the bible, we will actually find that the two realms, secular and spiritual, really are so interconnected that to separate them is really an error on our part. Our laws, way of life, society and interactions within it, as well as all of the other things in the so-called "secular" realm of our lives have their roots in the Bible or, if you are non-Christian, in the "sacred texts" of the religions of the various societies in which we may have been raised.

**NOTE:** It is only in the atheistic and agnostic segments of the members of our society, and the sway they have had upon our educational system and the government that runs it, that a differentiation is made between the "secular" and the "religious." And even then, based upon personal experience attending meetings of different groups and even speaking before the "Atheists of Utah" group on the subject of Morals and Ethics, if one is honest it is easy to see that, contrary to their statements, there is a completely spiritual element to their beliefs- which they adamantly maintain are totally secular. Quite contrary to what they maintain, their entire philosophy of life is drawn, on the positive side, from a spiritual basis (in truth, God's teachings) or, on the negative side, their philosophy is drawn from their rejection of the spiritual basis for their teachings. Their confusion is drawn in its essence, though they would never admit this, from their rejection of the truth that the original basis for their philosophy of life was spiritual and that all good in it has come, originally, from God's teachings in the spiritual realm.

**To deny truth does not negate truth, it merely  
makes it unuseable to the one who denies it.**

And refusing to believe, and use truth, is always debilitating to the one refusing it. And the truth is, we better not be the ones guilty of denying and/or refusing to use truth. And refusing to use suggestive delivery incorporating suggestion techniques is to deny the truth that God gave us those tools and directions on how to use them in the Scriptures. When we give a speech, let's do our job and use every tool that He gave us for the work- and then let us, "Let God be God," and use what we do in any way He sees fit to do His work in the hearts and souls of the listeners.

***An answer to- "Psychological techniques should never be used in Church:"***

First I will ask a question- how do you define "psychological techniques?"

***Definitions:***

**A. Psychological techniques:**

1. Psychology (*Classical Greek psyche = "soul or mind," logos = "study of"*) is an academic and applied field involving the study of behavior and its relationship to the mind and brain.

Psychology also refers to the application of such knowledge to various spheres of human activity, including problems of individuals' daily lives and the treatment of mental illness.(OR1)

2. Psychological: Of or pertaining to the psychology; of or relating to the mind.(6)

3. Technique(s): The entire body of procedures and methods of a science, art, or craft; a way of achieving a purpose. (ibid.)

**Summary:** For the purposes and aims of this class on public speaking, the term "psychological techniques" can be defined as "procedures and methods of a science, art, or craft, such techniques used as a way of achieving a purpose through application of knowledge gained through study of behavior and its relationship to the mind and brain with a view to application in various spheres of human activity, including problems of individual's daily lives." Knowing something of the psychology of the mind of our listeners will enable us to better deliver our speech in a way that is most likely to be received by their mind. When applied to preaching, such acceptance by their mind will then make it easier for us to reach through the channel of their mind into their soul with the truths of God's Word. Even in a "secular" speech, acceptance of us and our speech by their minds is a necessity if we are to convince them of the truths of our subject- no matter what that subject may be.

**B. Persuasion:** Persuasion is a psychological process.(5)

Very few people would object to "persuasion" being used in Church; and yet persuasion is a psychological process.

Persuasion is a form of influence. It is the process of guiding people toward the adoption of one's views. It is a problem-solving strategy, and does not rely on force or deceit.

The word "persuasion" is usually used in distinction to coercion, which involves the use of violence of other kinds of force, or the threat of such force in order to get someone to act against his or her will.

Persuasion is often confused with manipulation, which is the act of guiding another towards something that is not in their best interest. Persuasion is meant to benefit all parties in the end.

## **METHODS OF PERSUASION**(OR2)

The online encyclopedia at "<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Persuasion>" we find the following list of methods of persuasion. Not all of these are acceptable methods for us, nevertheless, they are methods and, thus, I will leave them in the list. But I do so strictly for informational purposes. And I also leave the unacceptable ones in to forewarn you so that you can recognize them when some speaker uses them on you.

**By appeal to reason:**

- 1. Logical argument**
- 2. Logic**
- 3. Scientific method**
- 4. Proof**

**By appeal to emotion:**

1. Advertising
2. Faith
3. Presentation and Imagination
4. Propaganda
5. Seduction
6. Tradition

**Aids to persuasion:**

1. Body language
2. Sales techniques

**NOTE:** Persuasion is something that a speaker does "with" an audience, not "to" them.<sup>(5)</sup>

**Conclusion:**

Therefore, to properly convey the message of our speech, in our case the message from God's Word, we need to know something about the psychology of our listeners. In order to do this, we must garner general data as well as specific data.

**Psychological Data and the use of it-**

Now it is necessary to discuss psychological data and the use of it in public speaking.

**General data:** Included in this area would be general psychological data drawn from the Word of God about human beings in general; as well as data drawn from secular sources, including general studies of human behavior.

**Specific data:** Included in this would be studies of specific people, groups, including ethnic groups, sexes and sexual ratios, geographical area, including climate, housing, job and professional opportunities specific to that area, also specific data on educational levels and opportunities, data on Churches, religions and spirituality, data on social clubs and activities and other such types of specific data.

**Audience data and adaptation:** Some of the data we gather beforehand probably, and hopefully, will be specific or general data about the group to whom we are giving our speech. We would be well advised to use that data in both our preparation and our delivery.

**Preparation:** Data gathered beforehand should be incorporated into our preparation. We need to make sure that the content of our speech is both relevant and interesting to our audience. If either of those two elements is missing, then we will have spoken in vain. Data gathering and incorporation of that data directly into our speech and/or use of it in the preparation of our speech will help us a long way toward preparing a speech that is both of those things: relevant and interesting.

**"Keeping your audience in mind"** is a phrase that is oft used. According to Lucas:

**"Keeping your audience in mind,"** however, involves more than simply remembering who your listeners will be.

**Above all, it means two things:**

**(1) ASSESSING** how your audience is likely to respond to what you will say in your speech.

**(2) ADJUSTING** what you say to make it as clear, appropriate, and convincing as possible.

During the time of preparation we must try to put ourselves in the other guy's shoes. See things from his perspective, see how he experiences life in relation to your topic or subject. Try to hear how your speech is going sound to him. His experiences and his past and current situations will dictate HOW he hears what you are saying as well as how he will react both during the speech and at its conclusion. As human beings we are so wrapped up in our own life that this is not an easy thing to do- and yet we must learn to do it if we are to excel in the area of public speaking.

As you develop your speech, try to anticipate how each point will be accepted, or at least how it will be perceived or understood, by your listeners. How will they react to your introduction? How will they react to each and every point as you progress through your speech? How about the conclusion, will they receive it, understand it, will they act upon it in the way that you want? Will any of the individual points bring questions to their mind? Will the tie-in and transition from point to point be received favorably by them? Will the way you present a particular point engender a misunderstanding through lack of evidence in and for it or maybe even a lack of proper presentation of the facts or direction presented within or in support of that point? Even worse, will they not even consider contemplation on any one or even all of the points and the conclusion or summary because of their lack of interest engendered by your boring or lackadaisical presentation of the points and/or conclusion or summary? Try to anticipate how they will receive what you are going to say. Don't let your knowledge puff you up to where you think you are so above them that you think the way to present the speech is to try to dazzle them with your lofty knowledge and grasp of the subject. Don't give them so much dazzle and lofty language that they can't grasp what you are trying to present to them. On the other hand, don't let your lofty position be your excuse for talk down to them either. Rather, understand where they are so that you will know how they will receive you and your speech and then incorporate whatever is needed into your speech to edify the listener.

One way to learn and anticipate your listener's possible response is to role play a bit. Give the intro to your speech and then try to set your mind to that of someone who is totally antagonistic to you and what you are about to present. How would they react to your intro? And I mean every word, sentence, phrase, and the whole of it. Then see if there are some adjustments that can be made so that the intro will not exacerbate their already present anger and opposition to you. Do the same with each point and the content/arguments/facts presented in it and also with the conclusion/summary. Do the same thing again but this time play the part of someone who holds the opposing viewpoint; and then from the view of someone who is ignorant of the subject. Then from the viewpoint of someone who is very knowledgeable in it. In each of these, and as many other groups or individuals you role-play, try to figure out how are they going to react to the individual parts and to the whole of your speech. What questions will each group ask? What doubts will surface that need to be answered? What knowledge must be given to them so they can logically and intelligently act upon, or react to, your speech?

## *Adaptation:*

The practice of "Keeping your audience in mind" is not only for use during your preparation but also for use during your delivery.

You have written your speech while taking into account all of the specific and general data that you can find. You have fine-tuned your speech by role-playing the various groups and individuals who may be in the audience. Now you are there behind the podium and you are delivering this polished and organized bit of verbiage and, wham, out of nowhere you can plainly see that something is wrong! Now what do you do? Or maybe when you arrive you find the time for your speech has been cut in half- or maybe the size of your audience has. Or maybe the audience is larger and you've been moved to a different or larger room where your visuals can't be shown or can't be seen from the back of the room. Or maybe a dozen other possible things have gone wrong- what do you do? In one word, adapt. Find a way to present your visuals in an effective way. If you are shorted on time allowed for your speech, condense it to its most essential elements and then present them in the best way you can. Don't try to simply speed up your rate of speech so you can get it all in, this would be disastrous. Your audience will understand you have been shorted on time and most of them will sympathize with you and this can turn to your advantage. Adapt!

Another area of adaptation is predicated upon the reaction of your audience. Are they sitting forward and nodding their heads, smiling, or otherwise responding in a positive manner? Or are they sitting back, maybe with their arms folded across their chests, shaking their heads slowly from side to side with a "tsk, tsk," kind of aura, or with looks of confusion or giving you looks of confusion? If the latter is the case, then you need to adapt your delivery and or schedule of points to clarify or expand or re-deliver the previous point or adapt the future direction of delivery in response to the negative reaction of your audience.

## *Summary:*

As Lucas put it in "The Art of Public Speaking," (1998)

**Good speakers are audience-centered. They know that the aim of speech-making is to gain a desired response from listeners. When working on your speeches, keep three questions in mind:**

- **To whom am I speaking?**
- **What do I want them to know, believe, or do as a result of my speech?**
- **What is the most effective way of composing and presenting my speech to accomplish that aim?**

Blackwood, in "The Fine Art of Preaching," (1946)

**If two competing companies broadcast the football game on the Coast, the announcer who is likely to attract most of the hearers is the one who has a sense of literary style and a habit of putting himself in the place of his unseen hearer.**

**Phelps, in "Speaking in Public," (1930)**

**The speaker that sincerely serves his audience will make them feel, when he dismisses them, that they owe him a debt of gratitude greater than they can repay.**

To serve your audience is your goal and understanding them and adapting to them in both preparation and delivery is the method which will give you the greatest success.

## **A BRIEF MENTION OF PSYCHOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES USEFUL IN PUBLIC SPEAKING**

In the book, *Win the Crowd*, Steve Cohen makes the following statement:

**When you strip away the sleight-of-hand tricks, magicians are masters at attracting interest, holding attention, and leaving audiences with fond memories of their time together. Aren't these skills that we can all use?**

I agree. One of the biggest complaints I have heard in my travels as a preacher is that people get bored with sermons- or the sermon is too long- or it has nothing to do with my daily life! And another complaint I hear, not as often as the previous ones by a long-shot, is that "I'm not being fed." Although the "not being fed" complaint, many times and in my personal experience that should read "most" times, is just not true; but, on the other hand, many times there is truth the complaint. It is hard to discern the difference but to do so it must be on an individual basis. If the person is a know-it-all type, then it is most probable that the reason they are not being fed is because they refuse to step up to the full dish and eat. But, on the other side of the coin, it may be true that the person is not being fed and it is the pastor's, or the speaker's, fault for not filling the dish.

Those problems with individuals can, and must, be handled on a one-on-one basis. If they truly are not being fed, then move them to a more in-depth Bible Study group. Or send them to Bible college. Or, God-forbid that it should be our fault (I'm speaking facetiously of course), maybe we need to spend more time studying before we get up to speak or teach so that there will be more meat to our message. If, however, they just refuse to eat the substantial meal set before them, then there is really nothing we can do about it. Counseling can be tried, if we feel it is appropriate, but it is for sure that their unrest cannot be allowed to infect the rest of the flock. So something must be done about it sooner or later- preferably sooner!

Here, however, we are more concerned with speaking to an audience, one made up of individuals of course, but nevertheless, an audience and we need to deal with them as such as well as dealing with them as individual listeners. Keep in mind that the methods we need to learn can also help us in our individual relationships as well as helping us in our communal ones such as at speaking engagements.

## *Verbal and non-verbal communication:*

Since public speaking is undeniably communication, then we need to be aware that there are two types of communication, verbal and non-verbal. Since there are these two different types of communication, then we need to know how to use both of them and the principles involved in each one as well as the elements involved in each one and the methods for the application of both. We also need to know a bit of the psychology behind both as well as a bit of the psychology behind why and how they are each received in the way that they are.

## **HOMEWORK DUE:**

**You must turn in the outline assignment.**

## **Final Words**

The investigation of those aforementioned psychological principles as well as the investigation of both verbal and non-verbal communication will have to be for another time and another class. You have been fed enough to keep you busy for some time implementing the principles which have been presented to you in this text. Chew them well, digest them thoroughly, and incorporate them into yourself mentally and physically as your body incorporates the elements into itself when you digest your food. Let them help you grow as you study, teach, and communicate both the Word of God as well as general knowledge, from a godly viewpoint. If you can meet the needs of others while communicating truth of all kinds to them in this area of public speaking and preaching, then you will be a good ambassador of God and a useful co-laborer with Christ.

Serve God in this area of Public Speaking the best you can; learn all that you can learn; and then let God use you in any way He sees fit. Above all, no matter where you go and no matter what the setting and no matter what the subject, present yourself first and foremost as what you are, an ambassador to the King. Act accordingly, deport yourself accordingly, and never be an unfaithful, unruly, or slothful servant that brings shame upon His Lord.

**Col 3:23**

**And whatsoever ye do, do  
it heartily, as to the Lord**

**Dr. T.E. VanBuskirk  
June 5, 2008 - Salt Lake City, UT**

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### ***Online Resources:***

**OR1. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Psychology>**

**OR2. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Persuasion>**