



BEACON NEWS

Paluxy Baptist Association

1844 Acton Hwy, Granbury TX 76049

Ph. 817-579-5111

January 2023

“But He said to them, *“I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also, for I was sent for this purpose.”* And He kept on preaching in the synagogues of Judea.”
Luke 4:43-44

Sermons That Direct People to God - Part One

By Pastor Don Smarto

An effective sermon proclaims the gospel. There are many aspects to a good sermon such as exposition of a biblical text, distinct delivery, and careful organization. Most pastors follow these guidelines. But these are mechanics which can be developed. There is a more important factor I will discuss in this article. In seminary I studied exegesis and hermeneutics with excellent professors. They taught interpretation of scriptural texts. Historical context is important. They also taught literal and allegorical understanding. Likewise, these were useful principles but in many ways emotionless. These courses failed to teach a key factor in crafting a sermon which I discovered in time. That factor is the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

From 1980 to 1997, I had the privilege of traveling with Billy Graham. I studied his technique but soon realized the power of his preaching by watching him in private. He was a man of prayer. A member of his team, John Ackers, wrote outlines for many of Graham's sermons. Dr. Graham chose the scripture and theme. I often sat with John during a crusade. But each time I heard Billy Graham preach, he went in directions not in his outline. Dr. Ackers would say to me, “He's off script”. That was not meant as a criticism. Dr. Graham was allowing the Holy Spirit to guide him. So often I witnessed and felt the power of his preaching, like electricity filling a venue. Because Billy Graham allowed the Holy Spirit to guide his preaching, 2.2 million people received Christ. Of course God called him to be an anointed evangelist. A pastor who has a dozen people come to Christ is just as significant. Let me add, Millie Dienert, created prayer teams to support Dr. Graham's preaching. Deacons and church members praying for you, the pastor, is very powerful, too. Create a church prayer team, if you do not have one.

This brings me to some practical guidance. Having been in ministry for forty years, I have preached many sermons. During my years with Graham, I preached in over 350 churches in 42 states and in 820 prison chapels in 18 states. In my home, I have a large tub of past sermons, literally hundreds. Since accepting a call to pastor Southside Baptist Church in Granbury, I have never used even one past sermon. On average, I spend ten hours a week creating a sermon. I begin Sunday afternoon praying for guidance. When the Lord puts on my heart a theme and scripture for a sermon, I use Monday to study the scripture and the context. By Tuesday, I have read commentaries and begin an outline. On Wednesday, I spend an hour praying for guidance and outlining the beginning and conclusion of the sermon so I have my key points. But several times mid-week, the Holy Spirit has instructed me to start over on a new theme. I have argued with God explaining my lack of time to start over, but God always wins. He makes it so clear to me He wants me to go in another direction, that I obey. This tells me my message (actually God's message) is meant for the church or someone specific.

The reason I create original sermons each week is it keeps me fresh and keeps me in God's Word. In one sense, I preach to myself. God continues to show me new insights from the scriptures even after forty years. As a redeemed sinner, I too need the power of His Word in my life.

(Continued)

Here are my key points:

Start with prayer and let God guide your theme and choice of scripture.

Study the scripture and the context.

Use outside readings and commentaries for guidance but do not use their words.

Use simple clear words to communicate in your own voice.

Allow the Holy Spirit to guide you by taking prayer breaks.

Write the sermon conclusion, first so you focus on your main points.

Next, write the sermon beginning which tells your congregation what they will learn and gets their attention.

Use an outline but do not write out your sermon or read it.

Pray again over your completed sermon adding for detail or deleting to reduce redundancy.

Rehearse your sermon so you know it thoroughly and time it (35 to 40 minutes).

In conclusion, I never use old sermons because I believe the Holy Spirit will give me new biblical insights and as a pastor I need to be fresh and relevant to my congregation's needs.

© 2023 Pastor Don Smarto

Southside Baptist Church, Granbury

JOB OPENINGS

PBA—DIRECTOR OF MISSIONS Ph. 817-579-5111 or upload resume to paluxybaptist.org

Acton Baptist Church—Minister of Music. Ph. 817-326-4693

Brazos River Church—Lead Pastor Ph. 817-776-4770

Happy Trails Cowboy Church—Bi-Vocational Youth Leader Ph 254-897-1217

Rainbow Baptist Church—Music Director, part-time Ph. 212-897-2121

Southside Baptist Church—Bi-vocational Worship Leader. Call for job description, 817-573-1462

Tolar Baptist Church—Lead Nursery Worker Ph. 682-500-0475

BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

4 Kelly Jones (Dan) - Triple Cross

6 Heather Lehrman (Lonnie) - Granbury Baptist

10 Mona Dolan (Marki-Mambrino)

16 Rusty Addison—Lipan Cowboy

20 Troy Strickland—FB Lipan

JANUARY



ANNIVERSARIES -

9 Mychal & Brittney Hunt—Tolar Baptist

UPCOMING EVENTS

SOUTHSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH

will be showing the movie
“The Case for Christ”
on January 22nd at 5pm.

Everyone welcome!



100TH ANNIVERSARY
1923 - 2023

Celebration May 6, 2023

YOUTH DIRECTOR/YOUTH LEADERSHIP WORKSHOP

The Paluxy Baptist Association will sponsor a Youth Director/Youth Leadership Workshop on Saturday, March 18th. The event will be hosted by Tolar Baptist Church; and is scheduled to include experts in the field of Youth Work. The intent of the event is to inform, educate, and motivate all of our partner Churches to engage their Youth groups in discipleship, training, and service. The Workshop is intended for all Church Volunteers, Youth Directors, (Paid as well as Volunteer), and Youth Pastors. A light noon meal will be served, so r.s.v.p. the PBA office, 817-579-5111.

The 2023 WOMEN'S GATHERING

Join us for our 40th annual conference “The Gathering” on Saturday, February 25th at Granbury Baptist Church from 8:30-3:30. Come find hope and freedom as we learn to “Abide in Me” from John 15:5. Tina Samples will be our speaker this year! We will have childcare, provide lunch, have breakout sessions, and everything this year is FREE!! Registration is still required through the Paluxy Baptist Association’s website. Grab your girlfriends and come join us for this fantastic day of fellowship!

PRAYER TIME

Blessings of God’s goodness to all—Thank you Lord!

Search for the PBA Director of Missions leader

Church Pastors and Leadership

Area Food Pantries and answer to prayers for the Lost and Hungry

Closeness of our PBA Churches as we grow in His Love and are bold in Community Outreach

Bro. Glenn’s house here in Granbury to sell

Pray that God will send workers to fill our job openings



Lindsay Luedeker’s father, Wilbert “Bupsy” Luedeker passed away this week. A memorial service will be held today (11AM) at Grace Gardens Funeral Home in Waco, TX. Please remember the family in your prayers. Lindsay is Pastor of Waples Baptist Church.

ANNIE ARMSTRONG OFFERING

TEXAS WMU announced that the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering Materials are available now. Phone 214-828-5150 or go to wmutx.org for further information.

Paluxy Baptist Association Statement of Cash Flows

	11/30/2022	Year to Date	Monthly Budget	Annual Budget
Receipts:				
From Churches	\$ 14,826.77	\$ 129,871.07	\$ 15,046.74	\$ 180,560.86
Missions	\$ 3,481.43	\$ -	-	-
Other	\$ 15.78	\$ 95.01	-	-
Total Receipts	\$ 18,323.98	\$ 129,966.08	\$ 15,046.74	\$ 180,560.86
Expenses:				
Partnership Ministries	\$ 845.83	\$ 9,304.13	\$ 845.83	\$ 10,150.00
Support Ministries	\$ 1,706.00	\$ 21,260.24	\$ 2,408.33	\$ 28,900.00
Personnel	\$ 12,759.62	\$ 101,096.66	\$ 9,434.24	\$ 113,210.86
Office	\$ 1,733.52	\$ 16,781.72	\$ 2,358.33	\$ 28,300.00
Missions	\$ 3,200.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Total Expenses	\$ 20,244.97	\$ 148,442.75	\$ 15,046.73	\$ 180,560.86
Receipts Over (Under) Expenses	\$ (1,920.99)			
Bank Balance -- Beginning	\$ 238,478.65			
Bank Balance -- Ending	\$ 236,557.66			

PALUXCY BAPTIST ASSOCIATION 1844 Acton Hwy, Granbury TX 76049 Ph 817-579-5111

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