

# Agros

## Find, Train, Support

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Sermon Prep Workshop  
May 21, 2022  
Fillmore, MO

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“The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all the he has and buys that field.”  
Matthew 13:44

# Agros: Find, Train, Support Sermon Preparation Workshop

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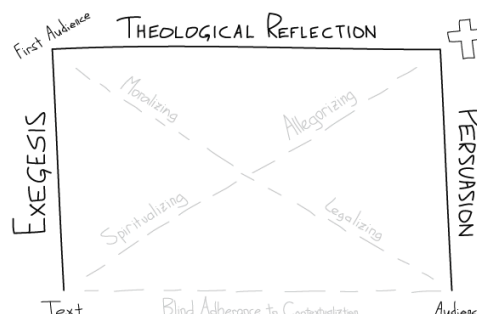
**Date:** May 21<sup>st</sup> 2022

**Location:** Fillmore Christian Church  
310 N Florence St  
Fillmore, MO 64449

**Bring:** There is no cost for this workshop. But bring whatever tools you might use for sermon preparation, such as a laptop, a notepad, and a study Bible.

**Purpose:** To build fellowship for pastors in NE Kansas and NW Missouri by honing sermon preparation skills together, and to create a training opportunity for lay leaders and future leaders by giving them a hands-on experience of the process

**Summary:** Because we believe that God's Word is the power of preaching—not human wisdom or enthusiasm—our aim in preaching is primarily to make God's Word clear. This belief about preaching is called "Expository Preaching." This diagram is from a ministry called Simeon Trust, and it's a good overview of three steps for preparing an expository sermon: Exegesis, Theological Reflection, and Persuasion. Our sessions will try to address aspects from each step.



**Approach:** We will focus on hands-on learning, instead of lectures and note-taking. Each session will begin with a brief explanation of the concepts, but will then be followed by practice in small groups.

## Proposed Schedule (session topics are subject to change)

- 7:00 – 8:00... Registration and fellowship (w/ light breakfast available)
- 8:00 – 9:00... Exegesis session: observations and summary
- 9:00 – 10:00... Theological Reflection session: Gospel-based Sanctification
- 10:00 – 11:00... Persuasion session: Purpose
- 11:00 – 12:00... Persuasion session: Unity
- 12:00 – 1:00... Lunch (provided at Fillmore Christian Church)
- 1:00 – 2:00... Pastoral Interview and Prayer
- 2:00 – 3:00... Persuasion session: Explanation
- 3:00 – 4:00... Persuasion session: Illustration
- 4:00 – 5:00... Persuasion session: Application

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## Sermon Prep Workshop

### Session 1 – Exegesis: Observations and Summary

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#### **1. Repetition of words**

- How many times is the word repeated in this sentence?
- How many times is this word repeated in the wider context?
- Does the repeated word always serve the same function?
- Does the repeated word utilize the same meaning each time it occurs?

#### **2. Contrast**

- What word signals the contrast?
- What ideas, people, or items are being contrasted?
- What differences are being pointed out?

#### **3. Comparisons**

- What ideas, people, or items are being compared?
- What similarities are being pointed out?

#### **4. Lists**

- How many items are in the list?
- What items are in the list?
- Is there any significance to how the items are organized into groups or a specific order?

#### **5. Cause and Effect**

- Does the cause have one effect or more than one?
- Which one is the cause and which one is the effect?

#### **6. Figures of Speech**

- What word or phrase is being used in a sense other than its normal, literal sense?
- What does the figure of speech add that a literal statement would not have?

#### **7. Conjunctions**

- What function does the conjunction serve? (Connecting: and; Contrasting: but; Concluding: therefore, so; Causing: for, because, since)

#### **8. Verbs**

- What is the tense of the verb? (present, past, future, perfect)
- What is the voice of the verb? (active, passive)
- Is the verb an imperative?
- Who is the subject of the verb?
- Does the verb have a direct object or an indirect object?

#### **9. Pronouns**

- What is the antecedent of the pronoun?
- Is the pronoun personal or possessive?
- What is the person (1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup>) and number (singular or plural) of the pronoun?

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## Sermon Prep Workshop

### Session 1 – Exegesis: Observations and Summary of Titus 3:3-8

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#### **1. Make observations of the text below for 30 min.**

Have one member read the passage out loud slowly while others take note of observations or write questions. Try to make different *kinds* of observations based on the list from the previous page. Share these with the group. Answer questions with this passage or the book of Titus. Then repeat this process until time is up.

[3] For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another. [4] But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, [5] he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, [6] whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, [7] so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. [8] The saying is trustworthy, and I want you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works. These things are excellent and profitable for people.

## 2. Identify the logic of the passage for 10 min.

Mark all of the logical connector words with the same symbol (see “Possible Examples” below). Then discuss each phrase that follows a logical connector word with your group. Ask: Which other phrase is this phrase connected to? What “Type” of logical connection does the word make? Which of the phrases seems more like a main/central idea, and which seems more like a supporting/secondary idea? Why?

| Type                 | Journalistic Question | Possible Examples                      |
|----------------------|-----------------------|--|
| MAIN POINT           | What?                 | Action verbs, commands, truths         |
| Means/Manner         | How?                  | By, through, with                      |
| Time/Location        | When? Where?          | When, after, before, beside, above, in |
| Reason/Cause         | Why?                  | Because, for, since                    |
| Purpose/Result       | Why?                  | That, so that, in order that, to       |
| Inference/Conclusion | Why?                  | Therefore, thus, then, so              |
| Condition            | When?                 | If, unless, when, provided             |

After discussing the whole passage, write main/central ideas on the left of the blank space below. Then, write supporting/secondary ideas beneath them, indented to the right. This will make an outline of the passage.

## 3. Write a summary sentence of this passage.

Summarize the argument of this passage to the original audience in one sentence of < 20 words. In a summary, give priority to important words/concepts from your observations, as well as main/central ideas from your logical outline. Do not simply summarize its topic, but what the author was *arguing about* that topic. Aim to be specific enough that your summary could not come from another Bible passage. Share with your group and make any helpful adjustments.

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## Sermon Prep Workshop

### Session 2 – Theological Reflection: Gospel-based Sanctification

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#### **1. Get to the basis of sanctification**

Jim turned up to the service late. The singing was over, and the preacher began reading his sermon passage, “And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery...” (Eph. 5:18a) It was a sign! This church was Jim’s last-ditch effort to beat his alcoholism, which ate up his paychecks and had destroyed his family. And the sermon’s three points did it! 1) Get rid of *access*, 2) Get lots of *accountability*, 3) Get a new *activity*. Jim went home, made these changes, and has been sober ever since. Discuss: Are you confident that Jim’s change pleased God? Why/why not?

Read the following verses and discuss: Matt. 23:25-28; Rom. 10:1-4; Col. 2:16-23; Gal. 3:1-3

What are different characteristics of bad sanctification? What do they have in common?

Is the only test of good preaching whether it changes people’s lives? Why/why not?

Agree or disagree: God not only cares about *what* changes we make, but *why* and *how*.

#### **2. Discuss the right basis for sanctification**

Read Phil. 3:4-16. Discuss: how does the gospel change our motives—*the why*—for sanctification? What motives for sanctification contradict the gospel? How has the gospel replaced these motives? Are there any other motives that are compatible with the gospel?

Read Rom. 6:1-14 and 8:1-11. Discuss: how does the gospel change our methods—*the how*—of sanctification? What are man-made, insufficient, alternative methods of sanctification? What has the gospel added to or changed about these methods? Is the gospel opposed to our effort?

Discuss: how does this theological reflection on gospel-based sanctification affect our preaching of every passage in the Bible? Write your answer in a few sentences below.

### **3. Identify areas of sanctification related to your passage.**

Discuss and write down the areas of practical sanctification related to our sermon passage. This could be commands to obey, sins to repent from, truths to apply, character to develop, etc. List at least three major ones.

### **4. Identify wrong bases of sanctification related to your passage.**

Discuss and write down some sinful or insufficient motives and methods for these areas of sanctification. Consider: *why* and *how* would a non-Christian try to improve in these areas? Underline the ones that are particularly tempting for you or your church.

### **5. Connect the areas of sanctification from your passage to the gospel**

Discuss and write down any motives/methods from our passage that are either direct references to the gospel or are compatible with it.

Discuss which sinful/insufficient motives/methods from step 4 are contradicted or completed by these, and draw a line in the right margin connecting them.

Discuss which areas of sanctification from step 3 are related to these motives/methods, and draw a line in the left margin connecting them.

Discuss: how can our preaching guard our audience from sinful/insufficient motives/methods and guide them to gospel-based sanctification?

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## Sermon Prep Workshop

### Session 3 – Persuasion: Purpose

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The Fallen Condition Focus: “The mutual human condition that contemporary persons share with those to or about whom the text was written that requires the grace of the passage for God’s people to glorify and enjoy him.” – *Christ-centered Preaching* by Bryan Chapell, p. 30

#### 1. Distinguish *what* is in a passage (Exegesis) vs. *why* it is there (FCF)

Read Rom. 3:28, and come up with three more exegetical points to the list below.

The word “For” indicates the logical reason that the “law of faith” excludes “our boasting.”

Faith is a gift from God, not a result of human effort (cf. Eph. 2:8-10).

Justified means “to be declared righteous,” and it happens instantaneously.

“One” is a translation of the Greek word for “man,” so it doesn’t refer to amount.

“The law” refers to the Mosaic law in the Old Testament.

The Greek word for “hold” is λογίζομαι, but it could also mean: to deliberate or to meditate on.

“By faith” occurs 42x in the ESV New Testament.

There is no law system that can justify us (cf. Gal. 3:21).

Faith apart from works is useless (cf. Jam. 2:20)

Point 1:

Point 2:

Point 3:

Discuss: what are some potential FCF’s that this passage addresses? Write one on the line below.

FCF: \_\_\_\_\_

With your FCF’s in mind, connect *what* is in your passage with *why* you would preach Rom 3:28. Discuss which three exegetical points above best address your FCF and circle them.

#### 2. Identify an FCF for our passage

This is how you would summarize *why* Paul wrote *these* truths to Titus in *this* situation. The FCF might be a sin or suffering or insufficiency that Titus or the Cretans were facing. Discuss: what problems or concerns were they experiencing that only these truths fix? What superficial solutions might they be considering? What emotions might they have been reacting to their situation with? What desires might they have been seeking to gratify? What were they trusting or loving that is inferior to these truths? Try to write several specific, concrete answers.



## **2. Find where the FCF of the original audience overlaps with our audience**

Now consider where your church's sins or sufferings or insufficiencies overlap with those of the original audience. Using the list above, discuss: what concerns and problems do we share in common with them? In what specific, concrete situations, relationships, responsibilities, or trials does our church need *these* truths?

## **3. Choose one specific purpose for your sermon to address**

From the list above, choose one FCF that is specific enough to be relatable to real life, but broad enough for the truths of your entire passage to address. To help clarify your purpose, fill in the first two blanks with potential FCF's and the third blank with your chosen FCF.

1. I am *not* preaching this sermon because...

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2. I am *not* preaching this sermon because...

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3. I am preaching this sermon because...

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## Sermon Prep Workshop

### Session 4 – Persuasion: Unity

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Consider the following sermon outline...

1. The walls of ancient Babylon were as much as 350 feet high and 80 feet wide.
2. The gnostic heresy at Colossae contained elements of extreme hedonism and asceticism.
3. Esau was a hairy man.

Discuss: Are these points true? Biblical? Are they good points for a sermon? Why/why not?  
Write some answers below.

Consider the following sermon outline...

Proposition: Because Jesus alone provides salvation, we must proclaim Christ to the world

1. Because Jesus alone purchased salvation, we must proclaim Christ to the world
2. Because Jesus alone possesses salvation, we must proclaim Christ to the world
3. Because Jesus alone bestows salvation, we must proclaim Christ to the world

Discuss: Are these points true? Biblical? Are they good points for a sermon? Why/why not?  
Write some answers below.

### **1. Create your sermon proposition**

The proposition defined: The wedding of a *universal truth* based on a text with an *application* based on the universal truth (Chapell, 131). This proposition is the one thing your whole sermon will be about. Your universal truth will likely come from your summary in session 1. Your application will be how this passage calls us to respond to your FCF from session 3. Discuss options and write three potential propositions in the format of “Because (universal truth), we must (application).”

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

## 2. Select the anchor clause for your main points

Anchor clause defined: a clause from the proposition (universal truth or application) that gets repeated in each main point to *anchor* them into one, united message (Chapell, 136). Look at your passage and outline from session 1, and discuss: does the passage spend more time explaining/developing your proposition's universal truth or application? Your anchor clause will be the one that gets *less* explanation/development. Write it below.

## 3. Write three main points

Begin by developing your magnet clauses. Magnet clause defined: the clause of each main point that changes and *magnifies* the unique subject or emphasis of that particular point (Chapell, 137). If your anchor clause is a universal truth, then your magnet clauses will be applications. If your anchor clause is an application, then your magnet clauses will be universal truths. Using your notes from session 1 again, discuss the three main ways that your passage develops your proposition. Write them as magnet clauses below.

## 4. Modify your outline

For an aural audience, good main points aim to have brevity, distinction, parallelism, proportionality, and progression. Discuss what these mean and how you could apply them to your main points. Below, write your final proposition, FCF, and three main points.

Proposition:

FCF:

Main Point 1:

(anchor clause)

(magnet clause)

Main Point 2:

(anchor clause)

(magnet clause)

Main Point 3:

(anchor clause)

(magnet clause)

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## Sermon Prep Workshop

### Session 5 – Persuasion: Explanation

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#### **1. Practice using explanation tools**

In a sermon from John 14:6, the first main point was: “Because there is no other way, come to the Father through Christ.” Working with one other person, write the following material for this main point: leading question, state, place, and prove. To prove the point, use repetition, restatement, description/definition, and two forms of confirmation (exegetical insight, logical argument, cross-reference, expert testimony). After writing them, label each tool.

#### **2. Determine your subpoints**

Choosing only one of your main points, work with your group to determine whether you will need subpoints. Do this by briefly explaining your point and then discussing: Are there multiple aspects of the magnet clause for me to address? Could I give more than one answer to a question? Could I answer more than one question about this point (who, what, when, where, why, or how)? Write them below.

#### **3. Write “state” and “place” for each of your subpoints**

For each subpoint, work with your group to write 1) a leading question, 2) the *statement* of your subpoint as a universal truth, and 3) the *placement* of your subpoint in the passage. Aim for parallel wording between your subpoints.

#### **4. Determine persuasive “proofs” for each subpoint**

For each subpoint, discuss with one other person and write below: What could I describe/define here? What exegetical insights could I share? What logical argument could I use? What cross-reference also makes this point? What expert testimony could I use?

#### **5. Write an outline of your explanation for this main point**

Main point leading question:

State main point (repeat):

Restate:

1<sup>st</sup> subpoint leading question:

State subpoint:

Place subpoint:

Prove subpoint:

2<sup>nd</sup> subpoint leading question:

State subpoint:

Place subpoint:

Prove subpoint:

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## Sermon Prep Workshop

### Session 6 – Persuasion: Illustration

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#### **1. Practice using illustration tools**

In a sermon from Matthew 13:44, the first main point was, “Because it’s an extraordinary treasure (magnet clause), be sold out for the kingdom of heaven (anchor clause).” The subpoints were 1) it’s *worth* more than all other treasures, 2) it’s *enjoyed* more than all other treasures, and 3) it *ransoms* more than all other treasures. Working with one other person, write a brief illustration of being sold out for something, using the “expository rain” from these subpoints and relevant “lived-body” material. Conclude with a summary statement.

#### **2. Brainstorm illustrations**

Discuss with your group potential illustrations for your same main point from session 5. Remember, try to illustrate specific concepts—not generic, vague ones. Prioritize human-interest accounts. Potential sources: personal experiences, news accounts, historical accounts, literary materials, imagination, a Bible story.

### **3. Write an illustration**

Selecting one from your list in step 2, write out a brief illustration. Write the last sentence of your explanation first. Include “expository rain” and “lived-body” detail throughout. Conclude with a summary statement and a “parallel grouping statement” that transitions to the application.

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## Sermon Prep Workshop

### Session 7 – Persuasion: Application

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#### **1. Determine the “what” of application**

Discuss with your group potential applications for your same main point from session 5. Use the following questions from *Text-Driven Preaching* (p. 284) to identify potential applications. Write several below.

1. Is there an example for me to follow? 2. Is there a sin to avoid/confess? 3. Is there a promise to claim? 4. Is there a prayer to repeat? 5. Is there a command to obey? 6. Is there a condition to meet? 7. Is there a verse to memorize? 8. Is there an error to avoid? 9. Is there a challenge to face? 10. Is there a principle to apply? 11. Is there a habit to change—that is, start or stop? 12. Is there an attitude to correct? 13. Is there a truth to believe?

#### **2. Determine the “how” of application**

For the application points above, discuss with your group: What does a mature Christian look like when they do this? What does an immature Christian look like? What are attainable steps between them? When should it be done? Whom should it be done with? What are some barriers to doing it? What training, habits, accountability, or discipline could make this application grow in my church’s life? Write any helpful material below.

#### **3. Determine the “why” of application**

Referring to your work from session 3, discuss with your group: what is a gospel-based or gospel-consistent motives for these applications? How could you guide your audience to these? What are gospel-contradicting motives for these applications? How could you guard your audience from these? Write any helpful material below.



#### **4. Write your application**

Selecting one “what,” “how,” and “why” from steps 1-3, write out a brief application. Write the last sentence of your illustration first. Include “expository rain” to maintain the unity of your sermon.

## How Firm a Foundation

How firm a foundation, you saints of the Lord,  
Is laid for your faith in his excellent Word!  
What more can he say than to you he has said,  
To you who for refuge to Jesus have fled?

Fear not, I am with you, O be not dismayed;  
For I am your God, and will still give you aid;  
I'll strengthen you, help you, and cause you to stand,  
Upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand.

When through the deep waters I call you to go,  
The rivers of sorrow shall not overflow;  
For I will be with you, your troubles to bless,  
And sanctify to you your deepest distress.

When through fiery trials your pathway shall lie,  
My grace, all-sufficient, shall be your supply;  
The flame shall not hurt you; I only design  
Your dross to consume and your gold to refine.

E'en down to old age all my people shall prove  
My sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love;  
And when hoary hairs shall their temples adorn,  
Like lambs they shall still in my bosom be borne.

The soul that on Jesus has leaned for repose,  
I will not, I will not desert to his foes;  
That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake,  
I'll never, no never, no never forsake.

Words from Rippon's Selection of Hymns, 1787; alt.; mod.; Music: Traditional American melody; J. Funk's A  
Compilation of Genuine Church Music, 1832; Public Domain