

1) We must love one another, fulfilling ethical prohibitions with a relational principle (Romans 13:8-10).

i) We owe a debt of love to one another (Romans 13:8).

a.) ⁸ Do not owe [PAM, command] anyone anything,

b.) [Adv] except to love [PAN, ἀγαπάω] one another,

[G] for the one who loves/is loving [PAP, ἀγαπάω] another has fulfilled [RAI] the law [νόμος].

ii) Because love continually sums up each commandment (Romans 13:9).

[G] ⁹ [for] *The commandments* [Exodus 20:13-15, 17; Deuteronomy 5:17-19, 21],

1.) Do not commit adultery [FAI, 6th commandment];

2.) do not murder [FAI, 5th commandment];

3.) do not steal [FAI, 7th commandment];

4.) do not covet [FAI, 9th commandment];

5.) [S] and any other commandment,

are summed up [PPI, continual] [by] this commandment:

Love [FAI, ἀγαπάω, future tense, as were the commandments of the law]

[V] your neighbour

[V] as yourself [Leviticus 19:18].

iii) Because, in the end, love relationally fulfils the law (Romans 13:10).

¹⁰ Love [ἀγάπη] does [PMI] no wrong to a neighbour.

[I] Love [ἀγάπη], therefore [summary], is the fulfilment of the law [νόμος].

2) The command to love is urgent because salvation is near (Romans 13:11-12a).

i) Pay attention because salvation is nearer than when we first believed (Romans 13:11-12a).

¹¹ Besides this [Romans 13:11-14 is why, and then how Romans 13:8-10 is to done],

[W] since you know [RAP, εἶδω] the time [καιρός],

[Ed] [that] it is already the hour for you to wake up [APN] [from sleep],

[G] because now our salvation is nearer [T] than when we first believed [AAI, πιστεύω].

1.) ¹² The night is nearly over,

2.) [S] and the day is near [RAI];

3) The command to love can be achieved by adopting Jesus' character (Romans 13:12b-14).

i) We must stop living in relational sin, and live in relationally purity (Romans 13:12b-13).

[I] so let us discard [AMS] the deeds of darkness and put on the armour of light.

a.) ¹³ Let us walk [AAS, περιπατέω] with decency, [V] as [in] the daytime]:

1.) not in 1.) carousing 2.) [S] and drunkenness;

2.) not in 1.) sexual impurity 2.) [S] and promiscuity;

3.) not in 1.) quarrelling 2.) [S] and jealousy.

ii) To do this we must be empowered by Jesus and not give in to our flesh (Romans 13:14).

b.) [A] ¹⁴ But

1.) put on [AMM, command] the Lord Jesus Christ,

2.) [S] and make [PMM, command] no provision for the flesh [to gratify] its desires.

Sermon preparation worksheet

Passage: Romans 13:8-14

1. How has the author organised this passage? a) *An outline*, b) *Tools*, c) *The emphasis*.

- a) 1) We must love one another, fulfilling ethical prohibitions with a relational principle (Romans 13:8-10).
 - i) We owe a debt of love to one another (Romans 13:8).
 - ii) Because love continually sums up each commandment (Romans 13:9).
 - iii) Because, in the end, love relationally fulfils the law (Romans 13:10).
 - 2) The command to love is urgent because salvation is near (Romans 13:11-12a).
 - i) Pay attention because salvation is nearer than when we first believed (Romans 13:11-12a).
 - 3) The command to love can be achieved by adopting Jesus' character (Romans 13:12b-14).
 - i) We must stop living in relational sin, and live in relationally purity (Romans 13:12b-13).
 - ii) To do this we must be empowered by Jesus and not give in to our flesh (Romans 13:14).
- b) I identified Romans 13:8-14 as discourse, and used syntax analysis. I took note of verbs (especially the commands to love in Romans 13:8, and how to love in Romans 13:14), conjunctions, and preposition. The hinge in Romans 13:10, moved the argument from the command to love in Romans 13:8-10 to the urgency to submit. And the inference in Romans 13:12b moved the argument from the urgency to submit to how the command can be achieved Romans 13:12b-14.

c) The command to love one another is urgent because the day of salvation is near and made possible by putting on the Jesus' character.

2. How does the context inform the meaning of this passage? a) *Literary*, b) *Historical*, c) *Cultural*, d) *Biblical*.

- a) In Romans 13:1-7, Paul commands submission to governing authorities as an extension of submission to God. In Romans 14:1-15:7, Paul addresses disputes, commanding believers not to judge one another but to pursue peace and mutual edification. This matters because, love is the practical engine for all Christian social ethics, without which, the church cannot navigate political pressures or internal disputes as a witness in these end times.
- b) The letter is written to a mixed church of Jewish and Gentile Christians in Rome experiencing tension, living in a Roman culture which celebrated Christian vices as virtues. This matters because, the emphasis on relational love addresses the internal tensions, and is a counter-cultural declaration of Christian virtue.
- c) The putting on imagery, was commonly used for putting on clothing or armour, and metaphorically for adopting characteristics or aligning with a faction. Night and day were common moral metaphors, associated with secrecy, vice, and spiritual ignorance, in contrast with truth, morality, and divine favour. Vice lists were well known in Hellenistic philosophy and Jewish culture as shorthand for a life opposed to God. This matters because, Paul is using culturally understood metaphors to express the urgent command for Christians to live relationally holy lives as a public declaration of their faith.
- d) Romans 13:9 cites Exodus 20:13-15, 17 and Deuteronomy 5:17-19, 21, as well as Leviticus 19:18. Paul condenses the second table of the Decalogue. This matters because, Paul is showing that the command to love does not undermine the law but perfectly fulfils the law's intent.

3. What is the main point the author is arguing to his audience?

Love one another by putting on Christ because the dawn of our salvation is near.

4. How does this passage connect to the gospel of Jesus Christ?

This passage connects to the gospel by presenting the urgent call to love as the necessary outworking of Christ's law-fulfilling work. The love that fulfils the law (Romans 13:10) is only possible because Jesus Christ first fulfilled the law for us (Matthew 5:17). Therefore, to put on the Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 13:14) is to actively clothe ourselves in our gospel-given identity, relying on His Spirit to live out the reality of His finished work. The driving urgency (Romans 13:11) is the approaching culmination of that very gospel, the return of Christ, demands we live now in a manner worthy of the age to come.

5. What is the main point you will argue to your audience?

Put on Christ today to fulfil the love-filled life His gospel empowers.

6. What applications will you make? a) *To believers*, b) *To unbelievers*.

- a) Put on Christ. Today. That means war. War on darkness. Name your night. One deed. Is it gossip? Lust? A jealous quarrel? Now put on light. One deliberate act. Speak a name of blessing where you cursed. Guard a glance. Honour a rival's success. This is not morality. This is love. Love fulfilling the law. Put on Christ. And love.
- b) Your night is ending. Your moral effort is futile. A dressed-up darkness. The dawn brings judgment. Or salvation. You lack a Saviour. You lack a Lord. Do not make provision for that flesh. Not one more day. Take one step toward the light. Today. Read Romans 13:14. Ask a Christian, Who is this Christ? Call on the Lord you lack. This is urgent. The night is almost over.

7. What is your sermon title and your preaching outline? a) *Sermon outline*, b) *Sermon title*.

b) A Christian dress code

- a) 1) The debt that pays all debts (Romans 13:8-10)
- 2) The clock that's about to ring (Romans 13:11-12a)
- 3) The uniform that makes you holy (Romans 13:12b-14)

Pray

Read Romans 13:8-14

⁸ Do not owe anyone anything, except to love one another, for the one who is loving another has fulfilled the law. ⁹ For the commandments, Do not commit adultery; do not murder; do not steal; do not covet; and any other commandment, are summed up by this commandment: Love your neighbour as yourself. ¹⁰ Love does no wrong to a neighbour. Love, therefore, is the fulfilment of the law.

¹¹ Besides this, since you know the time, that it is already the hour for you to wake up from sleep, because now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. ¹² The night is nearly over, and the day is near;

So let us discard the deeds of darkness and put on the armour of light. ¹³ Let us walk with decency, as in the daytime: not in carousing and drunkenness; not in sexual impurity and promiscuity; not in quarrelling and jealousy. ¹⁴ But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh to gratify its desires.

Introduction

You know that moment just before dawn. The stillest hour of night. The world is silent. It can feel like something is about to shift. A faint line of grey touches the eastern rim. Not light itself, but light's herald. The black is no longer absolute. It begins to retreat. The sunrise is now not a possibility. It is an inevitability. Its arrival is fixed. Imminent. The universe itself leans towards dawn.

Now hear this. You are living in that precise spiritual moment. The long night of this age, its chaos, its compromise, its secret shadows, is thinning. Its power is breaking. The dawn of Christ's kingdom is not a hopeful thought. It is a fixed certainty. Its arrival is written into history's end. The universe is leaning toward His light.

This changes everything about how you live now. It demands a response. A specific, urgent response. This is how the apostle Paul would have you act. Put on Christ today to fulfil the love-filled life His gospel empowers. This text will show us three things. That love is the debt that pays all debts. That Christ's immanent return is like a clock which rings our souls awake. And that there is a perfect uniform for you to wear for the coming day.

And as the first light exposes what the night concealed, it first exposes a debt we all owe.

1) The debt that pays all debts (Romans 13:8-10)

Hear the Apostle's command. ⁸ Do not owe anyone anything, except to love one another. What a staggering exception. A debt God commands you to carry. **Why?** For the one who is loving another has fulfilled the law. Consider the law. ⁹ Do not commit adultery; do not murder; do not steal; do not covet; and any other commandment. The law is the perfect standard. It demands flawless conduct. It condemns every failure. Now be honest. Have you kept it? Is there a man here untouched by coveting? Unaffected by hatred? Unstained by lust? The law does not grade on a curve. It pronounces a verdict upon you. Guilty as charged.

But behold. Paul takes this immovable law. And he sums it up. He gathers every command. Every prohibition. And then he condenses them into one. Love your neighbour as yourself. This is not a new law. It is the heart of all law. ¹⁰ Love does no wrong to a neighbour. Love, therefore, is the fulfilment of the law.

Understand this. We owe a debt of love. A perpetual obligation. It is the only debt Scripture commands us to keep. **Why?** Because love continually sums up each commandment. See the law not as a list of rules. See it as a description of love. Love will not steal. Love will not murder. Love will not covet. Love fulfils the intent behind every prohibition. Love answers the why behind every, thou shalt not.

In this way love relationally fulfils the law. And goes beyond the law in this, the law is the bare minimum. Love is the glorious maximum. It fulfils what God requires between people. The law demands right action. Love produces right relation. The law says thou shalt not harm. Love says I shall do good.

This was radical then. It is radical now. Paul wrote to a fractured church. Jew and Gentile. Suspicion was their currency. He did not give more rules. He gave a principle. A relational principle. Love one another. The way you treat the person you distrust is the fulfilment of God's entire law.

Think of the relationship between a man and a woman. The law says, *You must not hurt her*. Love says, I cannot bear to hurt her. One is an external standard. The other is the inward reality that meets and exceeds that standard. The law is the document. Love is the vow.

Therefore, we must love one another. Fulfilling every ethical prohibition with this relational principle. This establishes the what of Paul's call. We are to live a life of love.

But if love is the command, what is the motive?

2) The clock that's about to ring (Romans 13:11-12a)

¹¹ Besides this, since you know the time. Paul assumes knowledge. You know it. This is not clock time. This is καιρός. God's appointed season. The epoch of redemption. The prophets spoke. Christ came. The Spirit was given. The church was born. The signs are clear. You know the time.

Since you know this, you must act. It is already the hour for you to wake up from sleep. This is a command wrapped in a declaration. The hour has come. What is this sleep? It is the soul's slumber. It is planning your life as if this world is permanent. It is managing your reputation while neglecting your character. It is alert to market trends but numb to the signs of the times. Spiritual drowsiness. Moral complacency. Paul sounds a fire bell in the corridor of your soul. Wake up. Your soul depends on it.

Why this urgency? Because now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. Every moment brings it closer. Your initial faith was the first hint of dawn. Now the full sunrise approaches. This salvation is not merely a past transaction. It is a future culmination. The return of Christ. The final redemption. The end of all night. It is nearer now than it has ever been.

Therefore, ¹² The night is nearly over. Its power is fading. Its darkness is thinning. The long age of sin and death is in its final moments. Its reign is ending. And the day is near. The full manifestation of Christ's kingdom. The age of perfect light. Of righteousness and peace. It is at hand. It is imminent.

For the original readers, this was a call to public faithfulness. Their world was in moral darkness. Rome celebrated drunkenness as joy. Sexual chaos as freedom. Quarrelling as ambition. Is our world any different? To live in love is to be a walking alarm clock. A declaration that nighttime is over.

True story. This happened to me. Christmas Eve. I sat at a boarding gate, hoping to catch a flight, but missed my final boarding call. The gate closed. The last announcement echoed. It is possible to become comfortable in the terminal of this age, daydreaming, while the flight to salvation closes its doors. That's spiritual sleep. Paul says, The final call is echoing down the corridors of history. Wake up, before the night departs and leaves you in darkness.

The command to love is urgent because our full salvation is imminently near. This establishes the why of Paul's call. The pressing motive of the approaching dawn.

But how does a sleeping person ready himself?

3) The uniform that makes you holy (Romans 13:12b-14)

The command is clear. The urgency established. Now comes the method. The glorious, practical how. Paul moves from the alarm to the armour.

First, the negative action. So let us discard the deeds of darkness. Put off darkness. Strip away the habits of the night. Not in carousing and drunkenness. The lack of self-control that destroys fellowship. Not in sexual impurity and promiscuity. The lust that uses people. Not in quarrelling and jealousy. The pride that defends self and envies others. These are not private failings. They are public failures. Allegiance to the old, dark age. They must be put off. Like filthy garments.

Then, the positive action. And put on the armour of light. To put on armour was to prepare for battle. To declare your side. This armour is made of light itself. It is the character of the coming kingdom. You are a citizen of the day.

This leads to the result. ¹³ Let us walk with decency, as in the daytime. Your walk is your daily conduct. Your public life. Decency means honour. Respectability. A life that aligns with the light. Live as if everyone sees you. Because they can. And God does. Your life becomes a pointer to the dawn.

How do we put on the armour of light? Is it a checklist? No. Paul gives the stunning answer. ¹⁴ But put on the Lord Jesus Christ. The armour is not a what. It is a Who. You are not strapping on pieces of morality. You are being clothed in a Person. It is like putting on a uniform given to you. You don't become a soldier by putting it on. You acknowledge you are one. Putting on Christ is the daily, deliberate act of faith that says, I am not my own. I belong to Him. Therefore, I will think, speak, and act as one who wears His name.

And make no provision for the flesh to gratify its desires. The flesh is your old, night-bound nature. To make provision is to plan for its survival. To stockpile its food. To leave a door unlocked. The command is ruthless. Starve the darkness. Do not feed the grudge with rehearsal. Do not feed the lust with a glance. Do not feed the jealousy with comparison. Cut off its supply.

Consider a man handed the uniform of a king's own guard. The polished breastplate. The official cloak. He doesn't just wear the king's colours. He is entrusted with the king's authority and represents the king's person. So it is when we put on Christ. We are wrapped in His righteousness. Entrusted with His mission. And our very identity is now derived from Him.

We obey the command to love by putting on the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the how of Paul's call. The means of a transferred identity.

Is this putting on a distant ideal, or a present reality?

Connect to the gospel

Behold the debt you could not pay. Hear the clock, you cannot delay. See the uniform you cannot weave. This is the crisis of all man. The law demands perfect love. The dawn demands urgent change. Our souls require a righteousness we do not possess. Without the gospel, this text crushes us. It is a demand without deliverance. A wake-up call with no power to rise. But the gospel speaks. And it changes everything.

The love that fulfils the law is only possible because Jesus Christ first fulfilled the law for us. He said He came not to abolish it, but to fulfil it. And He did. Every command you have broken, He kept. Every debt of love you have failed to pay, He paid. Perfectly. On your behalf. The law demanded a verdict. Christ received your guilty verdict. The law demanded a penalty. Christ absorbed your penalty. The law demanded a perfect life. Christ lived that life. In your place. This is the gospel.

But death could not hold Him. He rose. The One who fulfilled the law for you conquered death for you. And in His resurrection, He secured not just your pardon, but your power. The life you are called to put on is a resurrection life. A life that has already defeated the night.

Therefore, to put on the Lord Jesus Christ is not a pretence. It is not performance. It is to believe. To actively clothe yourself in the identity purchased for you with His blood. You put on the righteousness He earned. You put on the sonship He secured. You put on the victory He won. You are not mustering character from within. You are receiving character from above. You are in Christ, and Christ is in you.

The driving urgency is that the dawn that is near is the return of the King. The salvation that is near is the completion of His redeeming work. He is returning for a people made ready. A people clothed in fine linen, bright and clean. That linen is the righteous acts of the saints. Acts of love. Acts made possible by the gospel you have put on.

So the command is not a burden. It is a gift. The urgency is not panic. It is preparation. My argument to you is this. Put on Christ today to fulfil the love-filled life His gospel empowers.

Now, let us apply this truth.

Believers

Behold your calling. You are children of the day. Do not allow the old uniform of the night to cling to you. You know its fabric. The secret grudge that binds your heart. The covetous glance that stains your eye. The competitive sting that poisons your tongue. These are not minor flaws. They are the declared allegiance of a dying age. You must strip them off. Not tomorrow. Now. Put on Christ. Today.

This is your spiritual warfare. Name your darkness. Be ruthlessly specific. Is it gossip that tears down a brother? Lust that consumes your solitude? Jealous quarrel that fractures your relationships? Identify a deed. And then execute one deliberate exchange. Speak a blessing where you cursed. Guard your glance. Honour your rival's success. This is not human morality. This is divine love. Love fulfilling the holy law. This is measurable. You will know tonight if you have done it.

Remember this. You are not mustering this love from your own heart. You are putting on a Person. You are clothing your daily life with His finished obedience. His perfect righteousness. His resurrection power. Your one deliberate act is the very fabric of Christ made visible. So put on Christ. And love. Let your first battlefield be your own family table. Tonight, perform the one act that proves the dawn has broken your darkness.

Unbelievers

Your night is ending. Can you hear the final ticking of its clock? All your moral effort is a dressed-up darkness. A costume that cannot survive the coming dawn. That dawn brings one final, unavoidable revelation. Judgment. Or salvation. You stand utterly exposed. You have no Saviour. You have no Lord. This is your eternal crisis.

Do not feed that darkness one more hour. Do not make a single provision for its survival. Your time is shorter than you dare believe. The night is almost over. You must take one step toward the light. Today. Make it simple. Make it immediate. Here is your what now. Put on the Lord Jesus Christ. Call out to the Lord you lack. *Say, Lord, I have no righteous of my own. Cloth me in Yours. Save my soul.*

This is urgent. This is your only moment. Your one step. Your only call. Do not complicate this. Do not delay this. The long night of your soul is ending. The dawn of judgment or grace is breaking. Take the step. Call on the Lord and you will be saved. Do not delay. Do it this moment. Obey.

Conclusion

You stood with me in that deepest hour. The black sky. The silent world. The first grey hint of dawn on the eastern rim. That is where we began. Behold where we have arrived.

The debt has been exposed. A perfect law we could not pay. The clock has been heard. A final hour we cannot delay. The uniform has been displayed. A righteous armour we could not weave.

But the gospel has spoken into each. The debt you owed, Christ paid. The verdict you feared, He bore. The clock that ticks, marks His return. The dawn that comes, is His kingdom. The uniform required, He provides. The armour of light, is His own character.

Therefore, the command is not a burden. It is a gift. The urgency is not panic. It is preparation. The call is not to manufacture love from your depleted heart. It is to put on the Lord Jesus Christ. To wrap your life in His finished work. To wear His resurrection victory as your own.

The night of this age is in its final moments. The day of His kingdom is at the door. You are not waiting for the light. You are called to wear it. To live now as a citizen of the coming day.

So put on Christ. Today. Fulfil the love-filled life only His gospel empowers. Let your home see it. Let your workplace witness it. Let your soul rest in it.

You are not dressing for a battle you might lose. You are clothing yourself in a King who has already won. The sun is not just coming. For you, in Christ, it has already risen. Now go. And live in its light.

The benediction

Ephesians 5:8-9, For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light – for the fruit of the light consists of all goodness, righteousness, and truth

This is how I parse Greek verbs:

- I use a three-letter combination in square brackets (e.g. [PMI] for Present, Middle, Indicative) after a verb, which I underline.
 1. First letter indicates the tense. Tense deals both with time and kind of action.
 2. Second letter indicates the voice. The relation of the subject or agent to the action.
 3. Third letter indicates the mood, participle, or infinitive.
- Tense:
 - P: present, continuous or linear action.
 - I: imperfect, continuous action in the past.
 - F: future, both progressive and punctiliar action.
 - A: aorist, expresses punctiliar action that has happened.
 - R: perfect, represents an action that is complete but has an ongoing resultant state of being.
- Voice:
 - A: active, reflects the subject that performs the action.
 - M: middle, the agent participates in the results of the action.
 - P: passive, subject is being acted upon by someone or something else.
- Mood/participle/infinitive:
 - I: indicative, reality, that which is actually occurring.
 - S: subjunctive, likely to occur.
 - M: imperative, a command that is possible.
 - P: participle, participles are verbal adjectives that behave like a verb and an adjective..
 - N: infinitive, verbal nouns that use the preposition "to", and they can also be used with "ing".

This is how I indicate the function of conjunctions:

- I put a letter in square brackets before a clause to indicate a logical relationship.
 - [S] - SERIES, Each proposition makes an independent contribution to the whole (and, moreover, furthermore).
 - [P] - PROGRESSION, Each proposition is a further step toward a climax (then, and, moreover, furthermore).
 - [A] - ALTERNATIVE, Each proposition expresses an opposite possibility arising from a situation (or, but while..).
 - [W] [Ed] - WAY-END (ACTION-MANNER), Statement of an action and one which tells more explicitly what is involved in carrying out this action (in that, by).
 - [I] [I] - COMPARISON, Statement that clarifies an action or idea by showing what it is like (even as, as...so).
 - [-] [+] - NEGATIVE-POSITIVE, The relationship between two alternatives in which one is denied so the other is enforced, implicit in contrasting statements (not...but).
 - [Gn] [Sp] - GENERAL-SPECIFIC, Statement of a whole and one or more statements which set forth parts of the whole.
 - [Ft] [In] - FACT-INTERPRETATION, Statement and clarifying statement; does not set forth a distinguishable part of the preceding whole.
 - [G] - GROUND, Statement followed by the argument or reason on which it stands; supporting proposition follows the supported proposition (for, since, because).
 - [I'] - INFERENCE, Supporting statement followed by the conclusion drawn from it; supporting proposition precedes the supported proposition (therefore, wherefore, consequently).
 - [C] [E] - CAUSE-EFFECT (ACTION-RESULT), One action and another action which results from the first as an automatic consequence (that, so that, with the result that).
 - [C?] [E] - CONDITIONAL, Like cause-effect except existence of the cause is only potential (if...then, if, except...).
 - [M] [Ed] - MEANS-END (ACTION-PURPOSE), One action and another that is intended as the goal or purpose of the first (in order that, that, lest, to the end that).
 - [T] - TEMPORAL, Proposition and the occasion when it occurs (when, after, before).
 - [L] - LOCATIVE, Proposition and the place where it can be true (where, wherever).
 - [Adv] - ADVERSATIVE, Main clause that stands despite a contrary statement (although, yet, but, nevertheless).
 - [Q] [A] - QUESTION-ANSWER, Statement of question and answer to that question (question mark ?).
 - [S] [R] - SITUATION-RESPONSE, The relationship between a situation in one clause and a response in another.
 - [B] [L] - BILATERAL, A proposition which supports propositions in both directions, rarely used.

This is how I use colour highlighting:

- **Orange**: structure indicator, conjunctions, and prepositions.
- **Yellow**: verbs, Greek, and Scripture reference.
- **Green**: keywords.
- **Red**: repeated words.
- **Pink**: imperatives.
- **Blue**: main idea.

On my sermon preparation sheet, these are the questions and an explanation:

1. How has the author organised this passage?

- a) An outline: The author's organization (or structure) is a way of talking about the shape or form of a biblical passage. Beneath the surface of each passage is an underlying arrangement of material and a logic that the author has used to organize the passage. And each part of the passage has a role to play in that structure.
- b) Tools: Identify the text type, and any grammatical tools used to identify the structure.
- c) The emphasis: The structure will reveal an emphasis that the author is making.

2. How does the context inform the meaning of this passage?

- a) Literary context: How do the passage that comes before and the passage that comes after relate to your passage?
- b) Historical context: The historical situation or circumstances experienced by the first audience at the time when the book was written.
- c) Cultural context: The setting in the daily life of the people/characters in the book and how that will have been understood by the first audience. This is distinct from historical context in that it does not relate to a particular audience in a particular place at a particular time, but the details of life that the people/characters in the text had in common. Anything that requires extra-biblical knowledge should be treated skeptically.
- d) Biblical context: Is the author citing or alluding to some previously written Biblical passage? What connections could the author have reasonably expected his first audience to make.

3. What is the main point the author is arguing to his audience?

The author's main point is a way of talking about the aim of a passage as a whole. It can be descriptive or prescriptive. It is not simply a summary statement. But rather, it is the idea of which the author is trying to persuade his audience. As you work on articulating the author's argument, please keep in mind that it needs to be specific enough to the passage that it clearly comes from the particular passage (and not any other passage), it is for the first audience, it should be one single sentence that is both short and clear, and captures the argument of the passage.

4. How does this passage connect to the gospel of Jesus Christ?

What part of the gospel (the death and resurrection of Christ) is in view? Every part of the Bible, every passage of Scripture, in some way relates to the gospel of Jesus Christ. What parts of the passage connect to the gospel? The connection must be legitimate and textually driven.

5. What is the main point you will argue to your audience?

6. What applications will you make? a) To believers, b) To unbelievers.

The main point of a sermon is the fundamental statement of what you, as a speaker today, are trying to convince your audience today. It will certainly be intimately related to the author's main point for his original audience and it will consider the gospel connection. It should be well reasoned and, perhaps, articulated as the result of proof (so depending on premises and building arguments).

7. What is your sermon title and your preaching outline? a) Sermon outline, b) Sermon title.

On my sermon preparation sheet, this is how questions relate to one another:

- 1 a) should be driven by the text.
- 1 c) should be driven from the outline in 1 a).
- 2) should be directly relevant to 1 c).
- 3) cannot be disconnected from 1 c), and should be clarified by 2).
- 4) must be found in the text.
- 5) cannot be disconnected from 3), and should be driven by 4).
- 6) should flow from 5).
- 7) should structurally relate to 1 a), and make the argument in 5).