

Open in prayer

Read Titus 1:1-4

⁵ The reason I left you in Crete was to set right what was left undone and, as I directed you, to appoint elders in every town.

⁶ An elder is to be blameless, the husband of one wife, with faithful children who are not accused of wildness or rebellion.

⁷ As an overseer, God's steward must be blameless, not arrogant, not hot-tempered, not an excessive drinker, not a bully, not greedy for money, ⁸ but hospitable, loving what is good, sensible, righteous, holy, self-controlled,

⁹ holding to the faithful message as taught, so that he may be able both to encourage with sound teaching and to refute those who contradict it.

Introduction

Q What could destroy a healthy church without ever looking like an attack? It may not be outside persecution. It may not be financial pressure. It may not be cultural hostility. It may be something far more ordinary. A church without faithful leaders.

R Paul writes to Titus because the churches on Crete were young, vulnerable, and surrounded by moral chaos. And Paul does not give Titus a strategy for becoming culturally relevant. He does not tell him to build bigger buildings, attract larger crowds, or create better programmes. He tells him to appoint elders.

Why? Because the church needs men whose lives are shaped by the gospel deeply enough to guard the gospel faithfully.

That is the burden of this passage. Gospel character guards gospel conviction. The messenger's integrity protects the message's credibility.

R And this matters for us. It matters for Benoni Baptist Church. It matters as we strengthen Dunnottar Baptist Church. It matters as we pray and prepare to plant another church in Benoni. Churches need more than people in seats. More than programmes. More than resources. We need qualified men.

R So as we come to Titus 1:5–9, Paul gives us three movements. First, the Solution: Appoint elders. The church needs recognised, qualified men to lead

Christ's people. Second, the Standard: Blameless character. Not sinless perfection. Gospel transformation made visible in a man's family and personal life. Third, the Purpose: Guard the Truth. Elders are called to cling to the faithful message, strengthen the church, and confront error.

R But where do you find men like that? How does a church recognise them? And what must be true of the man who stands up to guard the truth?

~ Paul starts with the solution. Because the job is not done until qualified men are appointed.

1) The solution: appoint elders (Titus 1:5)

R Paul writes, The reason I left you in Crete was to set right what was left undone. Titus is on mission. He's Paul's representative. Commissioned to complete the church-planting work Paul started but did not complete.

on When is a church planted? When there are 10 people in attendance? 50 people? 100 people? That's not what Paul focuses on. When the church can afford to pay their pastor? No, that's not Paul's focus either. When the church can afford to hire a venue or build a hall? People. Finances. Venue. All these things are good, but none of these things are what was left undone on Crete.

~ Paul wants Titus, as he had directed him, to appoint elders in every town.

R What is an elder? The Greek word originally meant an older man. But in the New Testament, an elder is a designated leader in the local church. To be an elder is not about your age. To be an elder is about your spiritual maturity.

R What does it mean to appoint an elder? To be appointed or inducted is the official recognition and installation of those whom God has already qualified. You can't self-appoint yourself. Self-appointed pastors, bishops, prophets, and apostles ruin people's faith. In church planting, a missionary may appoint the first elders, as Titus did. In an established church, like Benoni Baptist Church, the congregation recognises and affirms elders. Qualified men are to be publicly set into office.

R How many elders was Titus directed to appoint? Titus was to appoint elders plural, not an elder singular. In Acts 14:23, Paul and Barnabas appointed elders in every church. In Acts 20:17, Paul summoned the elders of the church in Ephesus. In Philippians 1:1, Paul greets the overseers in Philippi. In James 5:14, the sick are to call for the elders of the church. And in 1 Peter 5:1, Peter exhorts the elders. The consistent New Testament pattern for local-church leadership is a

plurality of elders. More than one. Titus was to appoint elders.

R How many elders was Titus to appoint in each church? He was to appoint more than one elder in every town. Meaning, each local congregation would have its own elders. Not one elder over many churches. Not regional elders over multiple congregations. A plurality of elders in each local church.

~ The job's not done until elders are appointed. Think of the revitalisation of Dunnottar Baptist Church. The congregation there has grown. The reports are of 40, 50 people attending services. Praise the Lord! But until a plurality of elders are appointed, the job's not done. Bongani, the acting pastor, needs to be appointed. And men must be raised to serve alongside him as elders.

~ The job's not done until elders are appointed. Think of our desire to plant a church in Benoni. We're going to need elders. Elders to remain at Benoni Baptist Church. Elders to go and plant the new church. This is why we invest time training men in Becoming a Biblical Leader. This is why you see a steady stream of new faces in services reading Scripture, praying pastoral prayers, preaching. Because strong churches that plant strong churches need strong men who can be appointed as strong elders.

R Titus' task on Crete was to appoint elders.

on But what does an elder look like? How can Titus identify him? Is he a shrewd businessman? A popular politician? Here's the answer. An elder must be a man of blameless character. Not perfect. But transformed by the gospel.

2) The standard: blameless character (Titus 1:6-8)

R Paul says *an elder is to be* blameless. Above reproach. The overarching qualification. It comes first. And it is repeated twice. The candidate must not be under credible accusation of conduct that would disqualify him from leadership. His life, public and private, must give no cause for legitimate reproach against the gospel. No man is perfect. But the pattern of his life should demonstrate these qualities through gospel grace, not self-effort.

R The first two descriptions of blameless relate to family life. He is to be the husband of one wife. Morally and sexually pure. If married, faithful to his wife. He cannot be polygamous. He cannot have been unbiblically divorced. If single, like Gerhard, who has been nominated as an elder at Benoni Baptist Church, he cannot be characterised by a wandering eye. Elders with children under their roof must have faithful children who are not accused of wildness or rebellion. His kids respect him. His kids demonstrate a reasonable measure of obedience.

We know he will care for God's household because we see he has cared for his own household.

R As an overseer, God's steward must be blameless. Notice the repetition. And the change. Blameless is repeated. Verse 6 described a blameless family life. Verses 7-8 describe a blameless personal character. Notice the shift. Verse 6 spoke of an elder. Verses 7-8 speak of an overseer. The word elder speaks to his spiritual maturity. The word overseer speaks of his ability to make decisions. To manage. The words elder and overseer are used interchangeably with the word pastor in the New Testament. Each word describes a function of the leader. Elder describes who he is. Overseer describes what he does. Pastor describes how he serves.

□ Next, Paul states several negative characteristics. What don't we want our elders to look like? Not arrogant, not hot-tempered, not an excessive drinker, not a bully, not greedy for money. Elders can't resort to physical or verbal intimidation. Can't be in bondage to alcohol or any other substance. Can't be combative. Can't use their position for personal gain.

P Then, Paul states several positive characteristics. What do we want our elders to look like? Hospitable. Elders actively welcome, serve, and refresh both believers and unbelievers as an expression of the gospel. Loving what is good, righteous, holy. Their lives are set apart for God, marked by practical righteousness that comes from the Spirit. Sensible. Elders are dignified. They're worthy of esteem. They live in a way that invites respect. Not because they're stiff. Because they reflect Christ. Self-controlled. Clear-headed. Disciplined in judgment. Not impulsive or given to excesses. They demonstrate a Spirit-governed mastery over their appetites, emotions, and decisions.

~ Cretans were known as liars, evil beasts, and lazy gluttons. Paul's standard in Titus 1:6-8 is counterculture. Leaders in the church aren't liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons. Rather, their family life and personal character set them apart from the world.

Å How seriously should we take Paul's standard in Titus 1:6-8? Some of you know my father is an evangelical Anglican priest. In my 20s I led a debaucherous life. I was wild and rebellious under my parents' roof. One day my father came to me and said I'd disqualified him from ministry. That's the right application of this passage. As you reflect on these characteristics, it should convict you where you fall short of the Biblical standard of spiritual maturity. Now that wasn't the end of my story, nor my dad's ministry, but I use that part of our story to illustrate how seriously we should take Paul's

standard.

R Titus' task on Crete was to appoint elders. And those leaders were to be men of blameless character.

~ But what will these men be tasked to do? Are elders CEO's? Vision-casters? Life coaches? Motivational speakers? Programme coordinators? What is the primary task of a pastor? They are to be preachers. Faithfully teaching sound doctrine. Because gospel character guards gospel conviction.

3) The purpose: guard the truth (Titus 1:9)

R The appointed leader is to hold to the faithful message as taught. Good ministers cling to Christ. Cling to the gospel. Cling to the apostles' teaching. Cling to Scripture. They are not open to novel doctrines.

P What does it look like to cling to Scripture? Positively, Bible teachers edify. They comfort. They exhort from God's Word so that he may be able both to encourage with sound teaching. You don't come to church to hear me give my top life tips. My philosophy for happy living. You come to church to sit under the preaching of God's Word, because your soul longs to hear Truth that feeds your soul. Builds you up. Strengthens your inner man.

O Negatively, to cling to Scripture is to expose error. To correct opponents. To refute those who contradict *sound teaching*. Elders must be gifted to explain, to apply, and to defend Biblical Truth. Not just hold correct doctrine, but patiently instruct the congregation with wholesome words.

~ What kind of man should we look for in the are we looking for to partner with to plant a conservative evangelical Baptist church with our healthy DNA in Benoni? A preacher man. Who clings to the whole counsel of God. And can faithfully feed the sheep Christ entrusts to his care.

R Paul wants Truth safeguarded in Crete. And so, he instructs Titus to appoint leaders of blameless character and sound doctrine. Because, as Paul wrote elsewhere, the man in the pulpit must pay close attention to his life and his teaching. He must persevere in these things. For in doing this he will save both himself and his hearers.

on Where? Where will Titus find men like this? Where will we find men like this? As we look around, leaders seem in such short supply. How will these men be raised?

Connect to the gospel

R Raising men who will persevere in these things is a work of God. The list of character traits in this passage is not a works checklist. They are fruit, produced by the gospel, which trains believers to renounce ungodliness and live upright lives.

^ Only the gospel can produce this kind of godliness in a man. Blamelessness is an impossible, crushing legal demand if the gospel hasn't supplied the grace which causes blamelessness to bloom. These characteristics are not humanly manufactured, but are the fruit of a life transformed by the Spirit.

on Here's the surprise in the text. These characteristics aren't just for a select few in the congregation. Our leaders. These characteristics are for all Christians. Not out of legalistic fear or pride. But as a fruit of the grace we have received.

P And Non-Christians can experience this blameless life too. Not by living according to legalism. But by resting in the merits of Christ's blameless life. By being washed blameless by the blood of the Lamb.

Application for believers

R **So what is the application of this passage for us?** Christians, examine and pray for our leaders whose gospel character guards gospel convictions.

^ Examine Gerhard's nomination as an elder against this standard. And pray for him. Examine the lives of the elders in our church, and pray for them. As we revitalise Dunnottar Baptist Church, as we prepare to plant a church in Benoni, look for men who pay close attention to their life and their teaching. Who persevere in these things. Examine them. And pray for them.

^ And for yourself. Examine your own life. Pray for yourself. Salvation looks like something. Pray that you'd grow towards gospel maturity. With character that guards gospel convictions.

Application for unbelievers

o **What is the application for Non-Christians?** The standard is blamelessness. You're never going to meet that bar. You must trust Jesus Christ has met it for you. He is the only truly Blameless One who lived the perfect life and died for your sins. The high standard of blamelessness in this text exposes your moral

bankruptcy.

P Christ is the perfectly blameless Shepherd. Through faith, His righteousness is counted as ours. Then the grace of Christ begins producing in us the kind of character Titus describes. God's grace does not merely forgive ungodly men. It trains them to live godly lives. And right now He offers you His grace as a free gift through faith. Not by works. By faith. In Christ. Turn to Him today. He says, Come to me, all of you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.

Conclusion

Ø So, what could destroy a healthy church without ever looking like an attack? Not the culture out there. Not a lack of money. Not a lack of relevance. A leadership vacuum.

R Paul has shown us the answer. First, the Solution: appoint elders. The church needs qualified men publicly recognised to lead Christ's people. Second, the Standard: blameless character. Not perfection. Transformation. Men whose family life and personal lives show the gospel has changed them. Third, the Purpose: guard the Truth. Elders cling to the faithful message. They feed the flock with sound doctrine. They confront what contradicts it.

~ Because gospel character guards gospel conviction.

~ So, church, examine our leaders. Pray for them. Support them. And as we consider Gerhard, as we strengthen Dunnottar, as we prepare to plant in Benoni, look for men whose lives and doctrine can bear the weight of leadership. And examine yourself. Salvation looks like something. Pray that the gospel would produce in you the character you see in this passage.

~ And if you are not a Christian, the standard is blamelessness. You have failed it. Jesus has not. He lived the righteous life you could never live. He died the death your sin deserved. Trust Him.

~ We need men of character. Men of conviction. Men who cling to Christ. But above all, we need the perfectly blameless Man. Jesus Christ. Rest in Him.

~ Amen.

Close in prayer

Homiletic indicators

- The operative word in the sentence is underlined.
- R – Instruction
 - **Body:** Natural, one hand gestures.
 - **Voice:** measured, firm.
- ^ – Uncion
 - **Body:** Forward, expressive.
 - **Voice:** Raised, faster.
- Ø – Fear
 - **Body:** Narrow eyes, still shoulders, lift your chin slightly (exposed posture).
 - **Voice:** Breathy, higher pitch, quick shallow breaths. Speak into the back of the throat.
- O' – Anger
 - **Body:** Jaw forward, stable feet (no shifting weight), sharp hand strikes (karate chop motion).
 - **Voice:** Hard attack on consonants. Drop pitch slightly, but increase volume on key syllables. Staccato.
- P – Happiness
 - **Body:** Relax shoulders, soften the brow. Open palms, wider stance.
 - **Voice:** Rise in melody at the end of phrases. Bright, forward resonance (smile while speaking).
- Å – Sadness
 - **Body:** Heavy eyelids, slight forward slump, hands still or clasped low.
 - **Voice:** Lower volume, monotone descent (each phrase ends lower than it started). Use mostly single-syllable words.
- □ – Disgust
 - **Body:** Wrinkle nose, pull back your head, sharp turning away from the pulpit.
 - **Voice:** Nasal, sharp, with a "negation cadence" (rising then falling sharply on the sin's name). Hard glottal stops.
- ɹ – Surprise
 - **Body:** Eyebrows up, slight backward step or open-mouth inhale.
 - **Voice:** Bright, high onset. Use a sudden upward interval (a leap in pitch on the unexpected word).
- ● – Pause
 - **What it does:** Allows the last sentence to land, convict, or heal.
 - **Length:** 1 second (colon), 2 seconds (period), 3+ seconds (after a weighty statement or call to worship).
 - **Body:** Stop moving. Hold eye contact. Do not smile or nod. Let the silence be uncomfortable.
 - **Delivery note:** A pause feels longer to you than to them. Trust it. Hold one more beat than you think is comfortable.

1) Titus' task to appoint elders (Titus 1:5)

⁵ The reason I left [AAI] you [in Crete]

i) Purpose: Set right what remains (Titus 1:5).

1.) was to set right [AMS] what was left undone [PAP]

ii) Means: Appoint elders in every town (Titus 1:5).

2.) [P] and, as I directed [AMI] you, to appoint [AAS] elders [πρεσβυτέρους] [in every town].

2) The characteristics of appointed leaders (Titus 1:6-9)

i) An elders's blameless family life (Titus 1:6).

1.) ⁶ An elder must be/is [PAI] blameless [ἀνέγκλητος],

1.) the husband of one wife [μιάς γυναικὸς ἀνὴρ],

2.) with faithful/believing children [who are [PAP] not accused of a.) wildness
b.) [A] or rebellion].

ii) An overseer's blameless personal character (Titus 1:7-8).

2.) [S] ⁷ As [PAI] an overseer of God's household/steward, he must be [PAN] blameless,

[−] 1.) not arrogant,

2.) not hot-tempered,

3.) not an excessive drinker,

4.) not a bully,

5.) not greedy for money,

[+] 1.) ⁸ but hospitable,

2.) loving what is good,

3.) sensible,

4.) righteous,

5.) holy,

6.) self-controlled,

iii) An overseer's faithful teaching (Titus 1:9).

[C] ⁹ holding to [PMP] the faithful message [as taught],

[E] so that he will/may be able [PAS] both

1.) to encourage [PAN] [with sound [PAP] teaching]

2.) [S] and to refute [PAN] those who contradict it [PAP].

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).
 - [/] [/] - 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.

Sermon preparation worksheet

Passage: Titus 1:5-9 **Preaching Audience:** Benoni Baptist Church

1. How has the author organised this passage? a) Sections, b) Strategies, c) Emphasis.

- a) 1) Titus' task to appoint elders (Titus 1:5)
 - i) Purpose: Set right what remains (Titus 1:5).
 - ii) Means: Appoint elders in every town (Titus 1:5).
- 2) The characteristics of appointed leaders (Titus 1:6-9)
 - i) An elders's blameless family life (Titus 1:6).
 - ii) An overseer's blameless personal character (Titus 1:7-8).
 - iii) An overseer's faithful teaching (Titus 1:9).
- b) I identified the text type as discourse. Paul starts by stating the purpose (put things in order) and the means (appoint elders) and goes on to detail the characteristics for leaders (blameless). That overseers are to teach and defend sound doctrine is the climax of the characteristics.
- c) Appoint leaders of character.

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

- a) In Titus 1:1-4, Paul established his authority and mission, pointing out that truth and godliness are inseparable. In Titus 1:10-16, Paul reveals that leaders are needed to protect the church from false teachers. This matters because, godly leaders safeguard truth in local churches.
- b) The church in Crete was young, vulnerable, and lacked leadership. Paul had moved, entrusting Titus to appoint elders. This matters because, leaders were needed to refute false teachers, and Paul's clear standards for selecting them quickly but carefully, ensures the church's health in a morally and doctrinally challenging environment.
- c) The ancient poet Epimenides called Cretans liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons. This matters because, Paul's standard is men whose character stands in contrast to the surrounding culture. A leader whose family life, personal life, and doctrinal conviction mark him out as different from the world.
- d) There are no direct citations in Titus 1:5-9. The term elder alludes to Exodus 18, and the pattern of elders who served as leaders in Israel.

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

To safeguard the truth Titus must appoint leaders of blameless character and sound doctrine.

4. How does this passage connect to the gospel of Jesus Christ? a) Connection, b) Function, c) Significance.

- a) The ethical requirements in the text (blameless) are not a works-based checklist for earning salvation. Rather, they are the fruit produced by the gospel, which trains believers to renounce ungodliness and live upright lives (Titus 2:11-12), precisely because they have been saved by God's mercy, not their own righteousness (Titus 3:5).
- b) The gospel functions as the engine producing godliness. Blamelessness would be an impossible, crushing legal demand if the gospel didn't supply the grace to grow in godliness. These characteristics are not humanly manufactured, but are the fruit of a life transformed by the Spirit.
- c) This is the antidote to moralism. Christians can pursue blamelessness, not out of legalistic fear or pride, but out of gratitude for the grace we have received. And non-Christians can rest in Christ's blamelessness.

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

Gospel character guards gospel conviction.

6. What is your sermon title and your preaching outline? a) Title, b) Outline.

- a) Who will lead us?
- b) 1) Introduction (Titus 1:10-16) - We live in a world of false teachers, moral chaos, and a vulnerable flock. Who will protect us?
- 2) The solution: appoint elders (Titus 1:5) - Not a program but qualified men must be appointed. What will they look like?
- 3) The standard: blameless character (Titus 1:6-8) - Not perfection but gospel transformation. What will they do?
- 4) The purpose: sound doctrine (Titus 1:9) - Character guards gospel conviction. How should we respond?
- 5) Conclusion - We need men like this. Examine yourselves. And rest in Christ, the Blameless One.

7. What applications will you make? a) Christians, b) non-Christians.

- a) Christians must examine, pray for, and support leaders whose character guards the gospel. This has immediate application as we weigh the appointment of Gerhard Wessels as an elder, as we go about the revitalisation of Dunnottar Baptist Church, and as we prepare to call a man to plant a church in Benoni. This application will be made throughout the sermon and a call to step up in the conclusion.
- b) Non-Christians must stop trying to earn God's approval through their own goodness and instead trust in Jesus Christ, the only truly Blameless One who lived the perfect life they cannot and died for their sins. They can do this by recognising that the high standard of blamelessness exposes their own moral failure, by seeing that Christ perfectly fulfilled these qualifications on their behalf, and by receiving His righteousness as a free gift through faith, not by their own works. This application will be made when the standard of blamelessness is discussed (Titus 1:6-8) and reinforced in the conclusion, where the gospel invitation is clearly extended.

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 (Discourse traces argument flow, conjunctions, and grammatical subordination, narrative tracks scene changes, plot development, and character contrasts, and poetry notes stanzas, parallelism, shifts in speaker, or imagery changes), 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 is your sermon title and your preaching outline? a) Sermon outline, b) Sermon title.

7. 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).

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), and show relationship to 6).