

10 Questions I Ask before Preaching or Teaching

By Chuck Lawless on Jul 05, 2016 01:00 am

I've been preaching and teaching a long time, and I certainly don't claim to be an expert. In fact, my failures in the past have led me to ask these 10 questions before I stand before a congregation:

1. **Do I have any shame in standing before God's people?** Obviously, we're all sinners, so that's not my point. My question here is whether I'm walking in holiness and spending sufficient time with God beyond the preaching or teaching event.
2. **Am I operating in my power or God's power?** We usually know the difference. We know when it's just us, and when it's God all over us.
3. **Will my listeners know more about the Word of God after listening to me?** I do want them to learn something – to gain some knowledge – as I help them understand the Word. Proper understanding aids in accurate application.
4. **Will my listeners know what to do after listening to me?** If my listeners don't know how to specifically and intentionally apply my teachings, I haven't gone far enough in my sermon or lesson. Knowledge that's only in the head doesn't lead to much life change.
5. **Will my listeners love God and His Word better after listening to me?** If they do, that will likely occur because of my passion as well as my content – so, the prior question for me is, "Do I love God and His Word more after preparing?"
6. **How much have I prayed before, during, and after my preparation?** Too often, it feels like I pray briefly as I start, sometimes when I get stuck, and briefly again as I make my way to the platform. That's far too little prayer for the task of teaching or preaching God's Word.
7. **Will my hearers see a clear connection between the Bible text and my points?** If not – or if I have to spend significant time trying to explain the connection – I probably need to re-think my points. Listeners shouldn't have to struggle connecting the dots.
8. **If my hearers remember only my major points, what will they remember?** I prefer that points be clearly stated action steps because of this very question. If my listeners remember only one word per point, I'm not convinced they remember enough to act on the truths taught and proclaimed.
9. **Am I claiming anything in this lesson or sermon that no one else in the history of the church has claimed?** If I'm the first one *ever* to come up with an idea about God's Word, I'd be careful about making a big deal of it. It's quite possible I might be wrong.
10. **Are my insides shaking a bit as I think about preaching or teaching?** If not, I may be taking this task too lightly . . . or, I might be thinking of myself too highly.

What questions would you add to this list?