

Minister's Class, #10
Thursday, February 29, 2024
Subject, Theme, Topic, Title, Proposition of the Message

Introduction: Some homiletical writers use these words interchangeably: subject, theme, topic, and title. Other writers make a distinction between these words.

- I. The Subject of the Message:**
 - A. The subject of the message is the person, place, thing, or idea you are talking about.**
 - B. The subject is broad and general and usually consist of one word.**
 - C. Some examples of subjects: Anger, Angels, Baptism, Believers, Burdens, Blessings, Christ, Church, Courage, Death, Divorce, Disciple, Evidence, Encouragement, Fear, Faith, Fellowship, Grace, Glory, Goodness, Holy, Heaven, Hell, Hope, Hospitality, Humility, Idolatry, Innocent, Joy, Judgment, Jehovah, Kindness, Love, Life, Mercy, Meditation, Nature, Omnipotent, Omniscient, Omnipresent, Peace, Power, Repentance, Return, Sovereignty, Salvation, Suffering, Truth, Trouble, Tribulation, Understanding, Unity, Victory, Vision, Word, Warning, etc.**
 - D. To determine the subject of a verse, paragraph, or chapter, etc.:**
 - 1. Read and reread the material under consideration and look for the word, phrase, or idea that keeps occurring.**
 - 2. What is the passage about?**
 - E. The subject will aid you in your meditation and preparation of the message.**
 - 1. The subject will direct you in your research.**
 - 2. The subject will direct you in your meditation.**
 - F. Create a folder for illustrations, ideas, Scriptures in relation to a particular subject such as love, humility, faith, etc.**
- II. The Theme of the Message:**
 - A. The theme is what you are saying about the subject.**
 - B. The theme limits the subject.**
 - C. Some examples of themes: Controlling Your Anger; the Importance of Baptism; Some Characteristics of Believers in Christ; Some Sources of Courage; How to Make Disciples; Evidences for the Resurrection; The Different Kinds of Grace; How to Give Glory to God; The Means of Holiness; Some Results of Humility; etc.**
- III. The Topic of the Message:**
 - A. The topic is what you are saying about the theme.**

- B. The theme limits the subject and the topic limits the theme.
 - C. Some examples of topics: **Seven Ways to Control Your Anger, Five Evidences for the Resurrection of Jesus.**
 - D. Some writers on homiletics do not make a distinction between topic, theme, title, and subject.
- IV. The Title of the Message:**
- A. The title is the name of the message.
 - B. The title may be the same as the theme or topic.
 - C. The title is for the church bulletin, newspaper, or whatever is used to advertise the message.
 - D. Some requirements for a good topic or title:
 1. It should be brief – not more than seven words.
 2. It should be interesting.
 3. It should be clean, or sacred, or reverent.
 4. It should be clear.
 5. It should be appropriate for the occasion.
- V. The Proposition of the Message:**
- A. The proposition is the theme of the message in a complete sentence.
 - B. The proposition is the statement that will be explained, proved, illustrated, applied, etc.
 - C. Some designations for the proposition: “the central idea of the sermon;” “the sermon in a nutshell;” “the theses of the sermon;” “the core of the sermon;” “the gist of the sermon.”
 - D. Some examples of propositions: **God is Holy; Prayer Is Necessary for Spiritual Growth; The Word of God Is Necessary for Spiritual Growth; Fellowship with Other Believers Is Necessary for Spiritual Growth.**
 - E. The proposition helps to determine what should be included in the message.