

III. Putting a Presentation Together

In the nature of things there are three forms of presentation in which the main part is an oral delivery of some specific material. (Other forms of presentation include discussion groups, panels, participant seminars, pictorial information, etc.) The three forms are known to us as 1) textual, 2) topical, and 3) expository. These are determined presentations and need fuller preparation than, say, an announcement!

By way of definition it must be understood that the Bible was written as a bulk of text and not a book of chapters and verses. These divisions were made by godly persons for ease of study and quickening of reference. The Biblical books were written as separate items and there were some divisionary tools in ancient texts but nothing like the chapter and verse divisions that have come in the Christian era. The Word of God, in that light, is the basis for all three of these message forms and the use of one or the other is in the hands of the "speaker". But all three of them have common needs and these are:

- A prepared introduction and conclusion
- A stated theme
- An analysis of the Biblical support or explanation
- A developed structure
- Accompanying illustrative and Scripture support material.

We need to remind ourselves regularly that the power is not in our clever presentations but in the work of the Holy Spirit. Our aim is to offer the best of our efforts to the Lord in preparation and presentation and we are often surprised at how the Spirit takes rather poor messages (from a human point of view) and brings great blessing while sometimes the carefully articulated and designed messages may put the congregation to sleep! But we do not want to do something shabby and dare God to make it good! Our consecrated efforts are offered to the Lord as an offering and we look to Him for the blessing that only He can provide. And now that I have that off my chest, let us go and look at message preparation.

A. The textual message:

1. By definition it is a message that develops a single text (not necessarily one verse, but a completed thought). This does not deny the use of supportive Scripture and does require the consideration of the context, both near and far. But basically the speaker is going to develop one text and try to make its meaning and application obvious to the hearers. In the nature of delivery the speaker will refer to the text many times and everyone will know the nature of the ministry...for the speaker pounds it out repeatedly.

2. The recommended procedure moves like this: