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ABSTRACT

**PREACHING BY DISCOVERY: A TRAINING
PROGRAM TO HELP LAY SPEAKERS
DEVELOP A STYLE OF PREACHING
THAT MOTIVATES TO ACTION**

by

Michael A. Mnich

Chair: Nancy Vyhmeister

ABSTRACT OF GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

Dissertation

Andrews University

Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

Title: PREACHING BY DISCOVERY: A TRAINING PROGRAM TO HELP LAY
SPEAKERS DEVELOP A STYLE OF PREACHING THAT MOTIVATES TO
ACTION

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Date completed: August 2001

Problem

Many Seventh-day Adventist congregants do not act upon the sermons they hear. Lay preachers often preach in small, rural, Seventh-day Adventist churches. This project sought to develop a six-hour seminar to train lay preachers to preach in a way that motivates hearers to action.

Method

A literature search was conducted on motivational principles in psychology, education, the Bible, and the writings of Ellen G. White. These principles were used to

develop the *Preaching by Discovery* seminar, which was given to the lay preachers of three small rural Seventh-day Adventist churches in Kansas.

After the six-hour weekend seminar, lay preachers delivered sermons that used seminar principles. These sermons were videotaped. Audience response was measured by a survey given the week following each sermon. The instructor and lay preachers reviewed videotapes and audience response surveys in order to evaluate and revise the seminar. Following revision, the seminar was presented in another district of small Seventh-day Adventist churches in Kansas.

Results

Research revealed that addressing personal needs should form the basis of motivational sermons. Three principal factors affect intrinsic motivation: self-esteem, participation, and the gospel. The gospel is the most important motivating factor. Preachers can also enhance audience motivation by incorporating principles of adult learning (andragogy) and learning style theory. The 4MAT system of learning offered a potentially effective way to include these various motivational factors in the sermon.

Lay preachers appreciated the seminar, but many felt there was too much new material to absorb in such a short time. Active audience response to lay sermons increased as more principles of the seminar were incorporated in the lay sermons. However, there was little improvement in audience motivation to act upon the lay sermons preached.

Conclusions

Motivational principles discovered seem valid, but they need more testing. The seminar may be more effective with professional clergy. Lay training needs to be more gradual. God and His gospel must remain the chief motivators to action.

Andrews University
Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

**PREACHING BY DISCOVERY: A TRAINING
PROGRAM TO HELP LAY SPEAKERS
DEVELOP A STYLE OF PREACHING
THAT MOTIVATES TO ACTION**

A Dissertation
Presented in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Ministry

by
Michael A. Mnich

May 2001

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HELP LAY SPEAKERS DEVELOP A STYLE OF
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Of course God is the one who leads and guides. I appreciate the privilege of working with Him. To God be the glory for any blessing this seminar may bring.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The Problem

Many Seventh-day Adventist church members lack sufficient motivation to act on what they hear. Personal piety and participation in the church's programs wane. On an average Sabbath in North America, only 30 to 40 percent of the Seventh-day Adventist membership attends worship.¹ Inaction in response to preaching discourages speaker, listener, and observer, further decreasing motivation. A circle of blame can begin, producing disunity and a poor community witness.² If the situation continues, people drop out, and church growth declines.

J. A. Harding cites preaching as a key factor in congregational motivation. In a personal observation of Seattle-area United Methodist churches, he found: "Where the message was dull, lifeless, poorly organized, and ineffectively delivered, there seemed to be an atmosphere of defeat and despair, followed closely by decline in attendance and membership."³ Good preaching seems to generate a positive atmosphere and enthusiastic

¹ Edward Motschieder, "The Circle of Blame," *Ministry*, June 1995, 20.

² *Ibid.*, 21.

³ Joe A. Harding, *Have I Told You Lately? Preaching to Help People and Churches Grow* (Pasadena, CA: Church Growth, 1982), 15.

motivation to action. There is need for further study on why and how preaching impacts congregational motivation.

In addition, little has been done to incorporate the motivational principles of adult education theory and learning styles into the sermon. Educational research indicates that traditional pedagogical styles of teaching ignore adult preferences and can demotivate adult audiences.¹ Preachers need to be trained in methods that motivate the congregation to action rather than discourage them to inaction.

Finally, professional ministers have some training in adult education theory, but lay preachers have little. Lay preachers occupy the majority of Seventh-day Adventist pulpits on a given Sabbath. Some congregations hear a lay preacher 50 to 75 percent of the time.² Eph 4:11-18 suggests that training is one of the chief duties of the pastor. Thus, training for lay preachers in the area of motivational preaching is particularly needed.

The Project

Purpose

This project developed a six-hour seminar to train lay preachers to preach in a way that motivates the hearers to action. The seminar was limited to six hours to fit into a weekend presentation format. This limited the amount of material to basic and

¹ Kenneth O. Gangel and James C. Wilhoit, *The Christian Educator's Handbook of Adult Education* (Wheaton, IL: Victor, 1993), 95-97; Raymond J. Włodkowski, *Enhancing Adult Motivation to Learn: A Guide to Improving Instruction and Increasing Learner Achievement* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1985), 7, 8.

² This is an estimate based on conversations with fellow pastors in the Kansas-Nebraska Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. In many multi-church districts, the pastor can be at a church only once or twice a month.

practicable motivational issues. Thus, the seminar did not cover all areas of sermon preparation or details of motivational theory. The target audience for the seminar was the local elders of small, rural, Seventh-day Adventist churches in Mid-America. The seminar might need to be presented differently to other groups in other areas.

Justification

Motivational theories are numerous and complex, interacting in ways as varied as human behavior.¹ This material needs to be condensed and simplified into the most important components that can be applied simply and practically to the sermon. Motivational factors in the fields of adult learning and learning styles need to be applied to homiletics.

Willmore D. Eva has suggested that the gospel is a chief motivating factor in preaching.² There is need, however, to learn how to apply the gospel to the preparation, construction, delivery, and follow-up of the sermon as well as to the sermon content.

Study of motivational principles in the Bible needs to be expanded, particularly as it compares to more recent findings in psychology and education. No thorough study has been done on motivation in the writings of Ellen G. White. Preaching textbooks do not

¹ Bernard Weiner, *Human Motivation Metaphors: Theories and Research* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1992), 3.

² Willmore D. Eva, "A Functional View of Human Motivation in the Local Seventh-day Adventist Church Based on Theological and Psychological Principles" (D.Min. dissertation, Andrews University, 1981), 3.

address directly the issue of motivating audiences to action.¹ Those textbooks that do address motivation in preaching do not address recent findings in psychology and education. No current lay preaching seminars focus on these aspects of audience motivation.

Goals and Objectives

This program sought to train local lay preachers in motivational homiletic principles. Congregations that hear preachers who use these motivational principles should become more involved in spiritual activity. Such activity should create a more positive congregational atmosphere that will further enhance motivation.

The trainer and lay preachers should develop camaraderie from working together in developing this program. They should also develop a deeper understanding of people. Thus, they should become better preachers and leaders.

Also, increased motivation and support should improve implementation of many other programs and principles for which there was previously little lay support. As the program succeeds, it can be shared so that other churches can discover the motivation to finish the gospel work, invite the Latter Rain of the Spirit, and prepare the world to meet Jesus.

¹ Robinson, Haddon W., *Biblical Preaching: the Development and Delivery of Expository Messages* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1980), 26-30. This author, for example, speaks of the need to apply the sermon to the hearers. It is assumed they will act on it as they respond to the Holy Spirit's prompting. However, the author does not discuss how homiletic techniques can encourage hearers to act upon the inspiration received.

Overview of the Dissertation

Chapter 2 of the dissertation discusses motivational theory. Literature in ministry, education, psychology, the Bible, and the writings of Ellen White were reviewed on the topics of motivation, persuasion in preaching, and volunteerism.

Chapter 3 discusses key motivational factors in relation to preaching. The 4MAT Learning System¹ is discussed as a model for motivational sermon design, especially as it relates to inductive and narrative preaching styles. Applications of motivational theory to preaching are suggested.

Chapter 4 describes the process of seminar development, implementation, initial evaluation, and revision for a six-hour training seminar entitled *Preaching by Discovery*.

Chapter 5 summarizes the findings on motivation in preaching, the results of the proposed seminar, and suggestions for the future.

Appendices present surveys, evaluation instruments, handouts, and lectures used in the seminar. A bibliography is included.

¹ Bernice McCarthy, *The 4MAT System: Teaching to Learning Styles with Right/Left Mode Techniques* (Barrington, IL: Excel, 1987).

CHAPTER TWO

MOTIVATIONAL THEORY

Introduction

Motivational theory takes different forms in different disciplines. Most germane to motivation in preaching is the research in the areas of psychology and education. The Seventh-day Adventist preacher is also vitally interested in what the Bible and the writings of Ellen G. White have to say about motivation in preaching. Thus, this chapter discusses motivational theory and applications to preaching in psychological and educational research, in the Bible, and in the writings of Ellen G. White.

Motivation in Psychology

Defining Motivation and Its Determinants

Motivation is a process that arouses, directs, sustains, or leads one to choose a particular behavior.¹ The study of motivation centers on those principles that cause people to initiate, choose, or persist in specific actions in specific circumstances.² Simply put, motivation is what makes people do what they do.

¹ Wlodkowski, 2.

² D. G. Mook, *Motivation* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1987), 4.

The problem, however, is that there are many determinants of an action. Some are external, such as results, demands, threats, rewards, and punishments. Some are internal, such as traits, states, moods, emotions, conscious thoughts, and unconscious attitudes. To complicate things further, the causal factors often interact in intricate ways, producing a complexity that defies analysis.¹

Wlodkowski cited over twenty recognized theories of motivation in 1974.² Weiner divided these motivational theories into two categories, based on the researchers' views of humanity. Either humans are machines, programmed by internal, external, genetic, and environmental factors, or they are "god-like," all-knowing, all-powerful, final judges of their own destiny.³ Neither is the biblical view of humanity. Instead, human beings are a more complex blend of the two views. I will say more on this in the section on the Bible and motivation.

Needs and Motivation

Farrar suggests that most scientists agree that motivation is a cyclical process that begins with a need and ends with a satisfaction.⁴ A need drives one to set a goal to satisfy that need. Movement toward the goal requires an act. Eventually the act brings satisfaction. The need is the key to the behavior. See figure 1.

¹ Weiner, 3.

² Wlodkowski, 44, 45.

³ Weiner, 13-16.

⁴ Robert B. Farrar, "Factors Affecting Volunteerism in Church Related Activities" (Ed.D. dissertation, University of Houston, 1985), 38.

Figure 1. The process of motivation

Wlodkowski defined a need as a general sense or pressure to move toward a goal.¹ Since these senses are difficult to measure, actions, behavior, or effort can be used for measuring the degree of motivation.² Thus, the best way of studying motivation is to explore the cause and effect relationships of various human needs and their effects on behavior.

Abraham Maslow suggested a basic hierarchy of needs summarized into five categories: physiological, safety, social, esteem, and self-actualization.³ Physiological needs include food, drink, sleep, shelter, and sexual gratification. Security needs help people feel safe and secure physically, mentally, and emotionally. Social needs include acceptance, belonging, and friendship. Esteem needs include self-respect, adequacy and

¹ Wlodkowski, 48.

² J. M. Keller, "Motivational Design of Instruction," in *Instructional-Design Theories and Models: An Overview of Their Current Status*, ed. C. M. Reigeluth (Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum, 1983), 391.

³ Abraham Maslow, *Motivation and Personality*, 2d ed. (New York: Harper and Row, 1970).

competence, as well as praise, recognition, and status given by others. Self-actualization encompasses the need to grow, accomplish, and develop one's gifts and potential.¹

Maslow's theory is that the basic needs, such as physiological needs, must be met before people will be motivated to satisfy higher needs. People must be warm, fed, secure, and have friends before they will be interested in doing things to grow, develop, and achieve. If a basic need is threatened, people will jump back down the hierarchy to satisfy the threatened need first. Therefore, someone taking Bible studies may suddenly lose interest if confronted with job loss or family problems. Once a need is satisfied it ceases to motivate. Thus, long-time church members who know the Bible may lose interest in daily study or weekly Bible classes.

Emotion and Motivation

Wlodkowski states that some psychologists feel that emotions are the "chief movers" of behavior.² One might say that emotions are how people feel about their needs. A person who feels strongly about his or her need will likely be more motivated to satisfy that need. Emotions can be negative (anxiety, fear, guilt, shame) or positive (confidence, trust, acceptance, enthusiasm). Both negative and positive emotions can motivate, but pleasant emotion is generally more conducive to long-lasting motivation.³

¹ Church Ministries Department, *Pathfinder Instructor's Manual* (Silver Spring, MD: North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists, 1989), 57.

² Wlodkowski, 52.

³ Farrar, 44-46. Farrar found that long-term commitment to volunteer positions is strongest when expectations, feedback, relationships with other staff, attitudes of family and friends, morale, working conditions, impact of their work, and a sense of personal growth are all positive.

Wlodkowski states that emotions usually stem from thinking. Thinking can arise from feelings, but it is the emotion associated with thinking that most strongly affects behavior.¹ One's perceptions and judgments produce feelings about a topic, person, or situation; these influence behavior.² These personal perceptions and judgments are, in turn, based on one's values and personal cognitive/affective construct system.

Weiner suggests that people are motivated by a desire to understand and predict behavior in order to control their lives. To maintain this control, people develop a cognitive/affective construct system to analyze every situation. When the construct system is inadequate to explain the situation, anxiety results. When a major change to their system is imminent, threat is perceived. When actions are not in line with one's personal system (ideal self), guilt occurs.³ Of course, when the perceptions fit and help one to control and predict behavior, the emotion will be positive. This attributional theory of motivation suggests that the need to control and predict behavior is one of the strongest and most basic needs that persons have. It also strongly affects how emotionally involved the person is.

Extrinsic and Intrinsic Motivation

Allport discusses this personal cognitive/affective construct in terms of extrinsic and intrinsic types of motivation.⁴ Extrinsic motivators are those values, teachings,

¹ Wlodkowski, 53

² Ibid., 73.

³ Weiner, 229.

⁴ Gordon W. Allport, "Behavioral Science, Religion and Mental Health," *Journal of Religion and Health* 2 (1963): 187-197.

demands, and circumstances imposed on the person from outside. They are rewards and punishments imposed to get the person to act. Intrinsic motivators are those values, beliefs, interests, and coping mechanisms that have been developed and adopted into the person's inner self. A person does these things because he/she believes and likes them or sees them of greatest value.¹

Extrinsic Motivation

Daniel found that extrinsic orientations in people were usually born from insecurity, inferiority, suspicion, and distrust learned in childhood.² Persons trained to receive their motivation from externally imposed demands tend to feel a lack of control. Their very cognitive/affective construct system tends to destroy self-esteem and produce negative emotions. In fact, Daniel states that the more extrinsic a person's religious outlook, the less internal satisfaction that person experiences.³

Persons with low self-esteem and an extrinsically motivated outlook often find institutional goals irrelevant to their personal needs of affection and friendship. In addition, extrinsic motivators tend to focus on results. This can produce an end-justifies-the-means mind-set. This mind-set can cause people to be motivated only when the result is extremely important to them, or when they are forced. Such an extrinsically motivated outlook also tends to make persons do the least they can to get the maximum reward.⁴ In

¹ Ibid., 190, 191.

² Eugene F. Daniel, "Intrinsic-Extrinsic Religious Motivation in the Local Seventh-day Adventist Church Based on Theological and Psychological Principles" (Ed.D. dissertation, Andrews University, 1980), 13.

³ Ibid., 23.

⁴ Włodkowski, 214, 215.

religious motivation, extrinsic type people may turn to God because they feel they have to. They may turn to God, but without turning away from self.¹ Their strong need for healthy self-esteem goes unsatisfied when God is merely the biggest external motivator.

Intrinsic Motivation

Conversely, intrinsically motivated people usually grew up in a climate of security and trust.² Intrinsically motivated persons often find their master motive in religion.³ Other needs, strong as they are, are regarded as less significant than their religious beliefs. Eva suggests that an internalized understanding of the love of God creates the sense of security and trust that motivates the intrinsic person to act consistent with their faith.⁴

Intrinsic motivation is also based on the doing or the process.⁵ Since self-esteem needs have been satisfied for intrinsic persons, they can feel confident and enjoy the journey in the motivation sequence while they are pursuing the end. As their religious creed or relationship with God has been embraced internally, it becomes the cognitive/affective compass for the rest of their life. All other needs are of lesser significance. This belief or Being that has given them security, acceptance, and the ability to predict and control the behavior in their lives becomes the prime motivator.

¹ Allport, 191.

² Daniel, 13.

³ Allport, 191.

⁴ Eva, 3, 58.

⁵ Włodkowski, 214, 215.

Self-esteem

Self-esteem is an important motivator in human behavior. When self-esteem is high, people tend to motivate themselves. Wlodkowski views self-esteem as one of the deepest of human needs.¹ Weiner points out that people tend to select causal answers as to why things happen to them in ways that enhance self-esteem and ascribe failures to external causes.² Self must be protected. Researchers find that people's feelings are hurt more when the cause was perceived as their own fault (I am clumsy) rather than the fault of some external factor (someone tripped me).³ In addition, people are more willing to hide the truth from someone so as not to hurt their feelings if they perceive the rejection was from internal causes (he was ugly) rather than external (I was too busy to date).⁴ Thus, a person's self-esteem seems more important than external motivators.

In a study of 215 Seventh-day Adventist youth, Eugene Daniel found that self-concept and an intrinsic outlook on religion were positively correlated.⁵ He suggested that internalizing the gospel increases positive self-concept and intrinsic motivation to religious life. Conversely, Daniel found that religion cast in a reward/punishment mode builds an extrinsic motivation and corresponding low self-concept. Thus, self-esteem seems to be an important factor in motivation.

¹ Wlodkowski, 6.

² Weiner, 285.

³ Ibid., 274.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Daniel, 80.

Application to Preaching

Motivational theory in psychology suggests that people are primarily motivated to provide for personal needs. External factors can motivate as they threaten or satisfy a person's needs. Still, internal factors such as values and beliefs often generate more emotional involvement and stronger motivation than do external factors. Thus, preachers should be able to enhance motivation to action by focusing on needs, building congregants' self-esteem, involving the emotions, and building intrinsic motivation.

Focus on Needs

Psychological and educational research can aid the preacher in constructing and delivering more motivational sermons. Maslow and others suggest that individual felt needs are prime motivators of human behavior. Preachers, then, should benefit from focusing on a needs-based ministry. Preachers could present core teachings and values in order to give people the means to control their own lives. These teachings would need to be presented in ways that foster the person's own exploration, testing, and acceptance. Such an approach would allow the hearers to incorporate the beliefs and emotions for themselves. As the preacher emphasizes the joy and value of the process, motivation of hearers should be increased.

Religious or spiritual needs are at the high end of Maslow's hierarchy. One might postulate from Maslow's secular humanistic view that religious or spiritual needs are not as important as physiological, security, and social needs. If, however, spiritual needs are most important, and they can be shown to affect significantly the satisfaction of other needs, then the preacher may have discovered something closer to a prime motivator.

Suffice it to say, good preachers should address people's needs if they hope to motivate listeners to action.

Build Self-esteem

Self-esteem is one of humanity's deepest needs, and thus an important motivator of human behavior. This suggests that the preacher should protect and strengthen self-esteem at all costs. A healthy and effective self that feels secure and accepted is necessary before one can be motivated to act in an active and sustainable way. It seems that material should be presented so people may accept it in self-determining ways. Hearers will likely be more motivated if they are taught to think and act for themselves. In fact, McDonough states that one person motivating another is actually a myth. Farrar suggests that a leader can only offer incentives and create a climate in which persons will motivate themselves.¹

McDonough suggests four keys to building such an effective climate: stability, acceptance, affirmation, and challenge.² Preachers should enhance audience motivation as they preach from the certainty of the Bible and focus on the love and acceptance of God. Motivational preachers might challenge their audience by presenting the attractions of constant growth and development of the self. At the same time, the effective preacher must affirm the individual choice of the congregant so motivation is not squelched. While the congregants are choosing and growing, they must be assured of God's constant respect, esteem, and value of themselves and their efforts. This approach should enhance congregants' self-esteem and motivation.

¹ Farrar, 29.

² Reginald M. McDonough, *Keys to Effective Motivation* (Nashville: Broadman, 1979), 81.

Include the Emotions

If emotions are the “chief movers” of behavior, as Wlodkowski states, it is imperative that preachers touch the emotions of hearers. The preacher should probably speak about topics with which the audience is more likely to be emotionally and intellectually involved. The preacher’s positive involvement and enthusiasm about the topic will help involve and motivate the audience to action.

People will also be positively emotionally involved when they can control and predict behavior. Topics that threaten listeners’ core values and coping systems should be avoided or gently approached. Topics that highlight hearers’ lack of control in their lives produce negative demotivating emotions of guilt. Preachers should always present Christ and the gospel as the all-sufficient antidote for human inadequacy.

Preachers could enhance audience motivation by giving their people tools to help them better control their lives. Preachers could give hearers a measure of control in the sermon selection process. These approaches to strengthen positive emotional involvement should help motivate hearers to action.

Build Intrinsic Motivation

Intrinsically motivated persons usually are more motivated to act in ways that fit with their cognitive/affective construct system than extrinsically motivated persons.

Religion cast in a reward/punishment mode builds an extrinsic motivation and corresponding low self-concept. Trying to do good only shows one’s inadequacies. Since imperfect humans can never achieve the ultimate goal of doing everything right, there is always a sense of hopelessness. There is no real control. One is always at the mercy of

the rules and demands of external sources. This causes frustration and resentment to the self. Motivation is weakened because it is under threat, fear, shame, or guilt. Thus, motivational preachers should avoid focusing on doubt, condemnation, and guilt in their sermons.

People may need to be brought to clear understanding of their inadequacy so they will seek sufficiency in Christ. Still, a relationship with Christ should provide the focus that will enhance intrinsic motivation.

Since intrinsically motivated persons usually grow up in a climate of security and trust, it is important for the preacher to foster such a climate in the church. The effective preacher should convey acceptance, love, and confidence in the people to do the right thing.

Since other people are external influences on a person, and since people will eventually disappoint, intrinsic persons find their master motive in religion. As intrinsically motivated persons make their relationship with God the compass of life, they find that all other needs are subjugated to this relationship. As God gives them security, acceptance, and the ability to predict and control behavior in their lives, He becomes the prime motivator. When a relationship with God provides acceptance, self-esteem is satisfied. A person can feel secure when One who is omniscient and omnipotent offers the ability to predict and control behavior. When this is offered and not imposed, self-determination is maintained. Yet, all of this comes because of one's commitment to this relationship and its guidelines. Thus, the focus is not on self, since it is being satisfied. Rather, the focus is on the Source of all satisfaction. Motivation is lifted from a basis on human needs to a basis on divine love. Preachers who focus the congregation on this all-important

relationship with God should enhance hearers' motivation to act in ways consistent with that relationship.

Motivation in Education

The field of education is concerned with what motivates people to learn. If learning is successful, people will apply or act on what they learn. Studies on motivation in education examine how and why people learn.

Nancy Vyhmeister has succinctly summarized the basic process of how people learn in the information-processing model. Sensory perceptions are first stored into short-term memory, depending on the strength of the stimuli, the attentiveness of the learner, and the importance of the stimuli to the learner's immediate needs. Cognitive and affective information in short-term memory is saved to long-term memory primarily by repetition and organizing the information. Retrieval of the information from long-term memory to be used in working memory is enhanced the better it is organized and the more varied its associations with other information.¹

Several researchers have suggested that individuals go through stages of development which impact how they learn.² Stages of development have been suggested for physical, cognitive, decision-making, morality, faith, psychosocial/affective, and

¹ Nancy Vyhmeister, Syllabus for the Class CHMN610 Teaching Ministry, Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, Berrien Springs, MI, 1992, 5-8.

² John M. Dettoni, "Psychology of Adulthood," in *The Christian Educator's Handbook of Adult Education*, ed. K. O. Gangel and J. C. Wilhoit (Wheaton, IL: Victor, 1993), 77-90.

spiritual development. Educators must know their students, so they can present material in ways they are able to understand.¹

Principles of Adult Learning

People do not mature at the same rates in the same areas. The problem for preachers is that their congregations contain persons at every stage of physical, mental, and moral development. "Pedagogy" (educational principles based on child development and needs) has guided the overwhelming majority of teaching and preaching practice. These principles, however, do not motivate mature adults well. Knowles and other contemporary educators have studied and offered a new set of learning principles based on adult needs and their stages of development. This is called "andragogy."² These principles of learning seem to increase motivation of adults. Table 1 summarizes some differences between "pedagogy" and "andragogy."

Generally, adults want to be self-directed.³ If adults feel ignored or put down by always being told what they should do, their motivation to achieve group goals suffers.⁴ Self-esteem is increased when learners are able to set their own goals, make choices, and evaluate their own progress.⁵

¹ Ibid., 88.

² M. S. Knowles, *The Modern Practice of Adult Education: From Pedagogy to Andragogy*, (Chicago: Follett, 1980); for a summary see M. S. Knowles, "Contributions of Malcolm Knowles," in *The Christian Educator's Handbook of Adult Education*, ed. K. O. Gangel and J. C. Wilhoit (Wheaton, IL: Victor, 1993), 97.

³ Dettoni, 87.

⁴ Wlodkowski, 182.

⁵ Ibid., 90-97.

TABLE 1

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PEDAGOGY AND ANDRAGOGY

Pedagogy	Andragogy
Children are dependent on parents and teachers	Adults are independent and self-directed
Children have had very little experience	Adults have a wealth of experience as a learning resource
Readiness to learn is determined by biological development and social pressure	Readiness is determined by social roles or tasks imposed by life situations
Children learn things they will use in the future	Adults learn what they can use and apply now
Children function well under authority, in a formal, competitive environment	Adults function best in a climate of mutuality, respect, collaboration
Pedagogy is subject centered	Andragogy is problem centered
The teacher alone does planning	Learners participate in planning
The teacher diagnoses children's needs	Learners participate in diagnosis of needs
The teacher formulates objectives	Learners participate in formulating objectives
Memorization is important	Understanding and applying are important
Learning by listening is expected	Learning by doing is vital
The teacher evaluates learning	Learners assist in evaluation of learning
Learning is compulsory	Learning is voluntary

Source: Nancy Vyhmeister, Class outline for CHMN610 Teaching Ministry, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan, 1992, 14.

Adults have a growing bank of experiences. Consequently, they tend to evaluate information and make decisions based more on their experience than on traditional methods such as lectures and tests. Participation and involvement are essential to good adult learning. The more teachers' activities move toward direct and simulated experience, the more students will be involved in their own learning.¹ Adults often learn best by doing.

¹ Donald L. Griggs, *The Planning Game* (Livermore: Griggs Education Service, 1971), 14-18.

Adults are busy and burdened with their current life situations. Therefore, they value most what is immediately and practically applicable to their everyday life and concerns.¹ They want to learn and practice what is useful, meaningful, important for the here and now. General concerns of most adults include health, time, money, popularity, improved appearance, efficiency, security, praise, comfort, leisure, competence, advancement (vocational or social), enjoyment, self-confidence, and personal prestige.² Table 2 summarizes incentives for adult learning.

Learning Style Theory

People do not learn in the same ways. Some perceive things more by sensing and feeling; others perceive by thinking and conceptualizing. Some process information by reflecting; others process information by actively doing. As Marlene Lefever states, “How we learn affects everything else in our lives, our feelings about ourselves, our willingness to try new things, and our contribution to society and our Savior.”³ Lefever goes on to say that preferred learning styles have nothing to do with their IQ, socioeconomic status, or levels of achievement. It is just the way they more comfortably and effectively perceive and process information.⁴

¹ Ibid., 87.

² Wlodkowski, 160, taken from McLagan, 1978.

³ Marlene D. Lefever, *Learning Styles: Reaching Everyone God Gave You to Teach* (Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook, 1995), 14.

⁴ Ibid., 19.

TABLE 2

INCENTIVES FOR ADULT LEARNING

People Want to Gain

1. Health	8. Comfort
2. Time	9. Leisure
3. Money	10. Pride of accomplishment
4. Popularity	11. Advancement
5. Improved appearance	12. Increased enjoyment
6. Security in old age	13. Self-confidence
7. Praise from others	14. Personal prestige

They Want to Be

1. Good parents	6. Influential over others
2. Social; hospitable	7. Gregarious
3. Up-to-date	8. Efficient
4. Creative	9. "First" in some things
5. Proud of their possessions	10. Recognized as authorities

They Want to Do

1. Express their personalities	5. Appreciate beauty
2. Resist domination by others	6. Acquire or collect things
3. Satisfy their curiosity	7. Win others' affection
4. Emulate the admirable	8. Improve themselves generally

They Want to Save

1. Time	5. Worry
2. Money	6. Doubts
3. Work	7. Risks
4. Discomfort	8. Personal embarrassment

Source: Jane Thayer, Class notes for CHMN610 Teaching Ministry, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan, 1995; adapted from Malcolm Knowles, *The Modern Practice of Adult Education* (New York: Cambridge, 1970), 87; and Irving Lorge, "Effective Methods in Adult Education," in *Report of the Southern Regional Workshop for Agricultural Extension Specialists* (n.p., June 1947), 25.

Persons asked to learn via a non-preferred style will not learn as well and will not be as enthusiastic about their learning. People who are presented material in their preferred learning style will be more motivated to learn and apply the material. Lefever cites teacher Mary Meeker as stating that all children have intelligence, but we have often asked, “How much?” when we should have asked, “What kind?”¹

Bernice McCarthy has summarized learning style theory into the 4MAT System of instruction.² She categorizes people into four types of learners: Imaginative, Analytic, Common Sense, and Dynamic. These categories are portrayed in table 3.

Imaginative learners are people persons. They value relationships. They are intuitive, and evaluate things according to their experience. The main question for them is “Why should I learn this?”³

Analytic learners want the facts. They love data and detail. They like structure, sequence, and objectivity. Their main question is, “What do the experts say?” Analytic learners like reading, filling in notes, models, diagrams, and careful complete analysis. However, they do need time to sit back, listen, and carefully consider information. Analytic learners appreciate argument and illustrations that highlight a strong sense of fairness, justice, and honesty. They like thought-provoking insight, so study deeply, and present material with curiosity and pithy accuracy.⁴

¹ Lefever, *Learning Styles*, 34.

² Bernice McCarthy, *About Learning* (Barrington, IL: Excel, 1996), 87-101.

³ Ibid., 87-89.

⁴ Ibid., 91-93.

TABLE 3

FOUR TYPES OF LEARNING STYLES

TYPE 1: IMAGINATIVE

They perceive information concretely and process it reflectively.
 They integrate experience with the self, learning by listening and sharing.
 They love people and harmony among people, so they like groups and discussion.
 They need clarity in their lives.
 Strength: Nurturing spirit and imaginative ideas.
 Function by: Clarifying values.
 Goal: To concentrate on important issues and to bring harmony.
 Favorite Question: Why?

TYPE 2: ANALYTIC

They perceive information abstractly and process it reflectively.
 They like to critique, analyze, and catalog what the experts think.
 They like a logical, sequential, and detailed presentation.
 Strength: Creating concepts and models.
 Function by: Thinking things through.
 Goal: Intellectual recognition.
 Favorite Question: What?

TYPE 3: COMMON SENSE

They perceive information abstractly and process it actively.
 They learn by testing, and applying common sense.
 They are practical down-to-earth problem-solvers.
 They focus on productivity and competence; getting things done.
 Strength: Practical application of ideas.
 Function by: Gathering data from kinesthetic hands-on experience.
 Goal: To align their view of the present with future security.
 Favorite Question: How does this work?

TYPE 4: DYNAMIC

They perceive information concretely and process it actively.
 They like to learn for themselves by trial and error.
 They are very adaptable, and relish variety and change.
 They are creative risk-takers.
 They are energizing visionaries.
 Strength: Action, getting things moving.
 Function by: Acting and testing experience.
 Goal: To bring action to ideas.
 Favorite Question: What if?

Source: Adapted from Bernice McCarthy, *About Learning* (Barrington, IL: Excel, 1996), 87-101.

Common Sense learners want to apply what they learn. They are doers. They like hands-on activities, and they want information to be practical. Their main question is “How do we make this work?” Common Sense learners also have a strong sense of justice. They like to solve problems. It is helpful for them to move while learning. They like practical demonstrations and concrete illustrations. For the Common Sense learner, focus is on the here and now, getting the job done, and mechanical, practical skills.¹

Dynamic learners love newness and variety. They are very creative. They want to take information and make it something grand and unique. Their main question is, “What if?” They want to know, “What can this become?”²

No person fits exactly or exclusively into any one learning style category. McCarthy, however, points out that these four styles also represent the general progression of perception and information processing that every individual goes through when learning new material.³ McCarthy developed the 4MAT system to enhance the learning experience of people from every learning style.⁴ For those interested, a learning type measure survey can help define each person’s unique learning-style preferences.⁵

¹ Ibid., 95-97.

² McCarthy, *About Learning*, 99-101.

³ McCarthy, *The 4MAT System*, 47-49.

⁴ Ibid., iv.

⁵ Bernice McCarthy, *The Learning Type Measure* (Barrington, IL: Excel, 1993).

Learning Modalities

Mehrabian states that communication is 7 percent verbal, 38 percent tone of voice, 55 percent body language, and thus, 93 percent non-verbal.¹ This points out another aspect of individual learning style differences. Learners can be classed by the modality in which information presented best reaches their senses. Some people are primarily visual, some auditory, and others kinesthetic.²

In fifty-five separate experiments by educators, tests revealed that learning was higher and retention longer when picture and text were combined.³ Visual learners can benefit from drawings, paintings, diagrams, sculpture, mapping, graphics, video clips, and drama. Even if it is difficult to provide visual aids, skillfully drawn word pictures can gain the attention of the visual learner and aid learning.⁴

Auditory learners can benefit from patterned, rhythmic, and melodic speech. Music, congregational song, and sound effects can also add to the learning atmosphere. Adding discussion, panels, buzz groups, debate, brainstorming, and interview can also aid the auditory learner.⁵

Kinesthetic learners benefit from touch and movement. These are perhaps the most difficult modalities to include in an educational setting. Watching others move may aid somewhat, but personal involvement is what the kinesthetic learner really needs.

¹ Albert Mehrabian, "Communication without Words," *Psychology Today* 2 (September 1968): 53.

² McCarthy, *The 4MAT System*, 128.

³ Lefever, *Learning Styles*, 103.

⁴ Henry H. Mitchell, *The Recovery of Preaching* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1977), 155.

⁵ Marlene D. Lefever, *Creative Teaching Methods* (Elgin, IL: D. C. Cook, 1985), 224, 225.

Filling in the blanks on a handout can help. Doing art, putting a puzzle together, diagramming or symbolizing the subject, writing acrostics, poetry, paraphrases, or letters, and illustrating with a story can all engage the kinesthetic learner. Mime, pantomime, games, simulation, and role-play aid the kinesthetic learner.¹

Role-play is one of the most effective ways to involve all three modalities: hearing what is said, moving in action, and seeing the expressions and reactions of other players and the audience.² Role-play simulates inductive learning. It provides immediate application. It allows the player to experience or release feelings. Role-play aids the players in discovering the variability and uncertainty of reality. Role players can experience new and challenging situations with less threat. Debriefing allows discussion of real problems. In role-play, players learn to identify and understand others.³

Right/Left Brain Learning Modalities

The left and right hemispheres of the brain process information differently. The left hemisphere carries the speech abilities and processes stimuli linearly and sequentially. The right side carries spatial capabilities and processes stimuli holistically all at once.⁴ These differences in how people approach learning are compared in table 4.

Some people prefer left mode, some right mode, and some use both, being termed wholebrained. McCarthy states that persons with analytical and common sense learning

¹ Ibid., 119, 149, 297-320, 261-285.

² Lefever, *Learning Styles*, 96.

³ Lefever, *Creative Teaching Methods*, 89-117.

⁴ McCarthy, *The 4MAT System*, 70.

TABLE 4

RIGHT AND LEFT MODE THOUGHT PATTERNS	
Left Mode	Right Mode
Analyzes	Synthesizes
Rational	Intuitive
Objective	Subjective
Uses language	Uses images
Theoretical	Experiential
Mind	Heart
Detail	Overall design
Controls feelings	Free with emotions
Slower thinking	Rapid thinking
Responds to verbal instructions	Prefers demonstrated instructions
Looks at the parts	Looks at the whole
Solves problems by sequential logic	Solves problems by hunches and patterns
Knows specific details	Knows more than he can tell
Likes abstract concepts	Likes metaphors and poetry
Looks at differences	Looks at similarities
Likes structure	Likes spontaneity
Prefers memorizing and recall	Prefers drawing and manipulating
Prefers hierarchical authority	Prefers collegial authority
Good at writing	Good at drawing
Prefers objective tests	Prefers essay tests
Guided by laws	Guided by paradigm and principle
Better at digit and letter recognition	Better at perceiving light, hue, and depth

Source: Adapted from Bernice McCarthy, *The 4MAT System: Teaching to Learning Styles with Right/Left Mode Techniques* (Barrington, IL: Excel, 1987), 78.

styles tend to use the left brain mode. Imaginative and dynamic learners tend to use right mode. Still, there are right, left, and wholebrained learners in each of the four learning styles.¹ In addition, studies show that effectual learning more readily occurs when both

¹ Ibid., 84, 85.

sides of the brain are involved.¹ McCarthy suggests that the 4MAT System engages both sides of the brain.²

Application to Preaching

People have learning preferences that affect their motivation to learn. Some preferences are the product of the physical, mental, social, and moral maturation process. Most adults, however, prefer self-directed, practical, experiential instruction. Preachers can enhance motivation to action by applying adult learning theory and accommodating learning style preferences in their homiletic process.

Apply Adult Learning Theory

The motivational preacher should consider how people learn to motivate others to action. Therefore, the preacher should (1) gain and hold attention; (2) repeat the main point and provide for immediate and repeated practice to seal the information into long-term memory; (3) associate the information with as many of the learner's needs, values, and experiences as possible; and (4) organize the material in as clear and logical a sequence as possible. These are the basic homiletic considerations that address how people learn.

Effective preachers should consider using more andragogical than pedagogical educational techniques. This involves letting congregants have more say in the selection of topics, as well as when and how they are presented. If the sermon can be presented in a

¹ Wlodkowski, 179.

² McCarthy, *The 4MAT System*, 84.

way that involves the congregation in discovering truth for themselves, they will be more likely to attend to and act on that truth.

Sermons should be relevant to the congregants' felt needs and be practically applicable. The preacher should focus on real problems the hearers are facing. Preachers should focus on the congregants' experiences as a source for identification, understanding, and illustration. Any activities during and after the sermon to involve the congregation in actually experiencing or doing what the sermon is talking about should enhance adult motivation to learn.

Accommodate Varied Learning Styles

Preachers might consider *what kind* of commitment their members have as well as *how much* commitment they have. Perhaps some people have not been motivated to act on a sermon because the learning style in which it was presented did not effectively engage their preferred learning style. Therefore, the message was more difficult or distasteful than it should have been. Perhaps the preacher needs to construct and present the message in ways that touch varied learning styles.

The preacher needs to focus on people's past and present experience in order to reach the Imaginative learner. The effective preacher could couch the sermon in imaginative "feeling" words, focus on people and relationships, and empathize with human behavior. Imaginative learners learn best by talking, interacting, and socializing. Therefore, dialogue or breaking into small buzz groups to discuss a topic is a good strategy. Imaginative learners also enjoy role-play, mime, simulation, color, and noise. Preachers should convey how much they care about the audience and the topic. The

congregation may want to know how much you care before they will care how much you know. The motivational preacher should answer the question, Why should I learn this?

The Analytic learner wants the facts of the Bible, the experts, and validated experience. Here is where the preacher clearly, sequentially, analytically, and, with as much detail as possible, satisfies the hearers' curiosity and questions. The question to answer for the Analytic learner is, What do the experts say?

The motivational preacher will best accommodate the Common Sense learner by relating the topic to real life. Solutions should be as practical as possible. Preachers should provide for actual hands-on application if it is practical to do so. The motivational preacher should answer the question, How does this work?

Preachers accommodate the Dynamic learner by suggesting opportunities for creative personal application. The Dynamic learner is an idea person, so speakers could suggest areas for future study and development, and then let the learners run with it. Dynamic learners like the arts and originality, so speakers should not be afraid to use audio/visual clips, artwork, music, drama, and new approaches. Preachers can use "what if" scenarios to illustrate their main points. Preachers might share their dreams and visions concerning the topic. The question to answer to motivate the Dynamic learner is, What if I make this my own?

McCarthy pointed out that these four learning styles also represent the general progression of perception and information processing that every individual goes through when learning new material.¹ Thus, preachers can ask the following questions in sequence

¹ McCarthy, *The 4MAT System*, 60-62.

to provide a natural motivating outline for the sermon: (1) “Why should I learn this?” (2) “What do the experts say?” (3) “How do we do this?” (4) “What if I make this my own?”

There are a few cautions to this information on learning styles. First, no person fits exactly or exclusively into any one learning style category. Second, a sermon does not have to be constructed in the exact same manner each time to be effective. As long as each learning style preference is being addressed, the sermon should be effective. Third, preachers should be aware of their own learning style preferences. Preachers will tend to present material in their own favored style. Preachers, however, should work hard to present things in styles that are most helpful to others.

Motivational preachers may also profitably consider including a variety of auditory, visual, and kinesthetic stimulation for their audiences. People have varied preferences concerning the principle avenue by which they learn. The Auditory learner attends to and grasps material presented to the ear. The Visual learner prefers stimulation to the eye. Various audio/visual aids can heighten attention and understanding.

The Kinesthetic learner learns best by touch, motion, and activity. This type of stimulation is more difficult to provide in a typical church setting. Watching others move may aid somewhat, but personal involvement is what the kinesthetic learner really needs. Filling in the blanks on a handout can help. Doing art during the sermon would be a creative option. People could be given the opportunity to draw or color a picture, draw the Bible story, model with clay, put a puzzle together, diagram or symbolize the subject. Creative writing such as acrostics, poetry, prayer, paraphrase, letter, and illustrating with a story can engage the kinesthetic learner. Mime, pantomime, or Bible games might be used. Participating in simulations or role-plays can help motivate the Kinesthetic learner.

Preachers can accommodate left/right-brain processing preferences by ensuring that they include both clear and logical reasoning with metaphorical holistic imagery. Considering table 4 will assist the preacher in this task.

By applying the research from psychology and education to preaching, preachers should be able more effectively to motivate their congregations to action. There is so much material to consider, and motivational theories are so complex and varied, one may wonder about the validity and necessity of including this research in the process of homiletics. The next two sections, therefore, search for corroboration in the writings of the Bible and Ellen G. White.

Motivation in the Bible

In the Beginning

The Bible begins with God providing for the needs of humanity. In the beginning, God created all that was good for man (Gen 1:31). He provided for physical and security needs by providing plentiful food and a well-watered garden home (Gen 1:29; 2:8-15). He blessed humanity with high self-esteem by making them in His own image (Gen 1:26, 27). He provided for self-actualization needs by putting humanity in charge of the earth and letting Adam name the animals (Gen 1:26; 2:19, 20). He provided the perfect helpmate for social/sexual needs (Gen 2:18). He shared Himself in a special celebratory rest day, the Sabbath (Gen 2:2,3). And then God, after providing for every human natural need, gave humanity the greatest gift love can give, the freedom to choose (Gen 2:16, 17).

Thus, from the beginning God's method of motivation was to share His love by graciously giving. God hoped that humanity would gratefully respond to His love by

loving obedience and gracious giving patterned after His awesome example. God's commands to have dominion, to keep Sabbath, to eat only certain foods, to stay away from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil were simply information shared to provide men and women with the highest fulfillment. Human behavior should have remained life sustaining as humanity loved and trusted their Creator.

When Adam and Eve chose to doubt God's word and the intentions behind His commands, their choices were directed away from giving to getting (Gen 3:1-6). Fearing their needs for self-actualization would not be met, they chose to act to meet them without God.

There was a separation between them and God. Isaiah calls it sin (Isa 59:2). To correct their behavior, which left them naked, Adam and Eve made garments of fig leaves (Gen 3:7). They sought an outward solution to an inward problem. In reality, their works could not repair the real problem, which was separation from God. God does not look on the outward appearance, but on the heart (1 Sam 16:7).

As soon as they fell, God sought to motivate the Edenic pair to reform. First, He came to them (Gen 3:8, 9). He accepted them; He still wanted to be with them and communicate with them. Second, He asked them questions (Gen 3:9, 11, 13). He maintained their right to self-determination. Third, He got them to consider where they were, what their felt needs and concerns were, and how those needs conformed to their relationship with Him. He must first get them to focus on themselves in order to lead them back to focusing on Him. Fourth, God did not attack the sinner, but sin and its instigator (Gen 3:14, 15).

Fifth, before God shared any punishment or consequences of their negative actions, God graciously gave a Promise (Gen 3:15). This first promise of the Gospel told Adam and Eve what God would be willing to do for them. It re-emphasized His unalterable love for them. It explained that God would heal the separation at infinite cost to Himself. Moreover, it offered assurance and hope that all would be restored. By lavishly giving to them, God hoped they would be motivated to focus not on getting for themselves without God, but on giving back to God because of their awed gratitude, which had restored their love and trust for Him.

God now meted out the punishments (Gen 3:16-24). If God's judgments were viewed solely as His justice, human beings would seek a right standing with God based upon their efforts to appease authority and avoid pain. Such a view would see punishment, avoidance of pain, and human effort as the prime motivators for human reform. This type of motivation would say, "Give them the consequences, challenge them to change based on reward and punishment, and then let the chips fall where they may!"

God's judgments, however, followed the promise of redemption, and justice was blended with mercy.¹ In Gen 3:17 the ground is cursed for Adam's sake. Mercy requires a different view of discipline in which God is seen as giving, caring, and warning. Pain, labor, and difficulties would serve as a constant reminder of how bad life without God is. Hardships would drive Adam and Eve to God as their only Source of hope. Toil and labor would develop character, and teach man humility and cooperation with God.² The hard

¹ William Dyrness, *Themes in Old Testament Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1979), 102.

² "Genesis," *SDA Bible Commentary*, ed. F. D. Nichol (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1953-57), 1:235.

labor would occupy Adam and Eve's time and attention so they would be less likely to fall into sin. Denying them access to the tree of life would protect them from prolonging miserable lives in sin.

Persons who view God's judgments as such a blend of justice and mercy would seek right standing with God based on appreciation for His acceptance, forgiveness, and caring discipline. If this understanding of God's punishments can be accepted, then it is consistent with God's approach in Gen 1 and 2.

God motivates by graciously giving. When the first pair would see that God's warnings came true, they would trust Him more. When they learned by experience that God would always answer when they called to Him in prayer, they would love Him more. When they realized that a life of self-centered getting without God is really hell, they would be ever grateful that God was willing to give them another chance, and even go through the pain with them. They would be motivated to say with David, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me?" (Ps 116:12).

Thus, both before and after sin, God's primary method of motivation is to give graciously, invoking a reciprocal giving response. He may share warnings of reality and its consequences. He may even punish the ignorant or wayward to wake them up. Yet, God always gives each person freedom to choose. This God of love motivates people to love because He first loved them (1 John 4:19).

In the Gospels

Jesus came that people might have an abundant life (John 10:10). The ministry He announced was to preach good news, to heal, deliver, and set free (Luke 4:18). Over half

of His ministry involved healing. Often He healed before He asked for any commitment. Thus, He seemed to be about His Father's business of motivating people by gracious giving.

Jesus focused on meeting needs to win a hearing. He associated with and provided for the hungry (Matt 14:17), the sick (Mark 1:34), the outcast (John 4:4-42), the sorrowful (Matt 9:23-26), the possessed (Luke 8:26-35), and the sinner (John 8:1-11). In fact, He said that the whole had no need of a physician (Mark 2:17). Christ's was a needs-based ministry, suggesting that meeting needs is the first step to motivating people toward fulfillment and proper action.

Christ offered this giving methodology as sound practical advice with its own attendant rewards. He said, "Give, and it shall be given to you" (Luke 6:38). He said that people should do unto others as they themselves would want to be treated (Luke 6:31). Jesus elsewhere used the natural motivators of fear¹ and reward.² Nevertheless, as Eva points out, fear, reward, and natural motivators are often the only avenues that can reach people steeped in a self-centered focus.³ Jesus seemed to corroborate Maslow's theory of hierarchical needs by meeting people's basic needs first before He addressed self-actualization and spiritual needs.

On the other hand, Jesus said, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matt 6:33). He also told His followers to deny themselves, take up their crosses, and follow Him (Matt 16:24). Thus,

¹ Matt 11:20-24; 12:36, 37; Luke 12:8.

² Matt 5:11, 12, 25, 46; 15:30-38; Luke 12:9, 10.

³ Eva, 85.

Jesus seemed to suggest the opposite of Maslow, that people should focus, not on their needs first, but on God. He suggested that they focus on fulfilling spiritual needs even before basic needs of health, security, and socialization.

Apparently, just as God did in Genesis, Jesus met people where they were. First, Jesus gave, healed, and accepted. Then, as people responded in gratitude, He led them to a better way. First, Jesus satisfied basic human needs and interests; then He pointed them to the higher, yet more important needs. Jesus satisfied the errant human thirst for getting and self-centeredness by giving of Himself. His hope was that people would see they could do nothing without Him, but with Him, all things were possible (John 15:5; Matt 19:26). This seems to be the true meaning of Jesus' statements about denying self.

People cannot connect to the Source of Life as long as they are focused on themselves as the source for fulfillment. This seems to be what Christ meant when He suggested that people should put the kingdom of God and spiritual pursuits first. God and His rulership in one's life is the Source for all basic needs. When Christ is the focus, the hierarchy of needs is met almost instantaneously, for when people sense His sufficiency is ever promised for every need, they are enabled to leap to the highest levels of actualization.

"God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). The focus for motivation is redirected from self to Christ. "This is eternal life, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ Whom Thou hast sent" (John 17:3). Motivation becomes relationship centered rather than behavior centered.

Thus, Jesus in the Gospels used a needs-based ministry to motivate people initially.

Then, as they responded in gratitude, the gospel of Christ as Savior and Source for all needs was offered freely to all. The gospel of Christ for us and in us becomes the most powerful motivator to change behavior. “But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name” (John 1:12).

In Matt 18:15-17 Jesus suggested how to deal with those who offend. Since this is an approach to a “brother,” a loving supportive relationship is presupposed. If there is no such relationship, it must be established before one has the right to say anything. The relationship is the important thing.

The offended is to go to the offender “alone.” This stresses the respect one should have for the individual. One should listen to what they have to say, and never embarrass them publicly. A public venue is not the place to reprimand or correct individuals.

If the offender will not hear, one or two other brothers are to go along to try to reason and to serve as witnesses. The intent is to convey to the errant that more than one is concerned with his or her well-being. In addition, several individuals can provide varying outlooks and approaches that might better reach and motivate the erring one to change.

Then, if the offender still refuses to accept correction, the matter is to be brought to the church. God wants the community of faith to use many minds and many attempts to convince the errant to change.

If the errant will not even hear the church, the Bible says, “let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican” (Matt 18:17). Heathens and publicans are non-believers who are to be won patiently by God’s program of gracious giving. In other words, Christ admonishes motivation of erring brethren by respectfully reminding them that God’s

commands are for their best good. The erring ones are to be won back by reiterations of God's love and gracious intent to give them the best. The community of faith may have to help the erring face the consequences of choosing against God's ways, but the community should give the errant the choice to follow God or not.

If the errant choose not to follow God and His ways, offenders should not be allowed to misrepresent God or His Church. They cannot be permitted to hurt others' walk with God.

If the erring choose to be separate, that is their privilege. The church's job then is to start over, lavishing love and giving, as it would on a new interest. The church should meet that person's needs, win a hearing, and have the errant respond by re-seeking God and fellowship with His Body because of gratitude for love bestowed.

Thus, although motivation for erring brothers and sisters might seem to center on reward and punishment for rules not kept, in fact, it centers on the same program of gracious giving elsewhere delineated in the Gospels. "For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved" (John 3:17). In fact, if the congregation is erring, the preacher's first job is to remind them of the gospel and reconnect them with Jesus.¹

In the Pauline Epistles

The apostle Paul used many means of motivating people to action. He used social pressure to appeal to people's desire for a good reputation.² Paul appealed to people's

¹ John 14:15; 12:32; 1 John 1:7-2:6; Eva, 58, 59.

² Gal 6:4, 5; 1 Thess 4:12; 2 Thess 3:7-11.

sense of decency (1 Tim 2:9), to their anxiety over riches (1 Tim 6:6-10), their desires for peace and safety (1 Tim 2:2), and to their desire for acceptance by society (Col 4:4; 1 Thess 4:5). In fact, Paul used any motivators he could to reach as many as he could (1 Cor 9:19-22).¹ Yet Paul always used the supernatural appeal of the gospel first and in proximity to these natural motivators (Rom 1:16).² Eva points out that for Paul the natural motivators were seen as subordinate, added incentives or considerations, to help people in the natural state to grasp and appropriate the gospel. Thus, Paul combined natural and supernatural motivators, and the supernatural motivator of God's love in the gospel was always preeminent.³ In this way, Paul did not deviate from the rest of Scripture.

For Paul, the carnal mind was always at variance with God (Rom 8:7). People trying to motivate themselves or others using fleshly, natural techniques would always end up not pleasing God (Rom 8:8). If, however, through Christ, their focus could be redirected from the flesh to the Spirit (self to God), the righteousness of God could be fulfilled within them (Rom 8:3-5).

Paul frequently attacked works of the law as a means of salvation.⁴ The problem was that when people sought to do good from a motivation of reward and punishment, they were still focusing on self-interest and self-empowerment (Rom 10:2, 3). There remained a subtle yet dangerous separation from God. God was held at arm's length. His

¹ Eva, 93-95.

² Ibid., 98.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Rom 3:28; 6:14; Gal 3:10:4,5; Eph 2:8,9, 15; Col 2:14.

will was considered and submitted to from compulsion, but there was no love. Left to themselves, without love for and trust in God, people maintained a form of godliness for a time (2 Tim 3:5), but eventually they chose, as Adam and Eve, to go their own way (Rom 7:18-24). Without a loving commitment to Christ, one could not hope to be free from sin, for sin is separation from loving and trusting Christ (Rom 14:23). However, with Christ, God's righteousness was established within the person (Rom 10:4, 9-11; 8:1-4). Faith in Jesus motivated the individual to keep God's law (Rom 3:31; Eph 2:10). Love for Jesus motivated a person to fulfill the law (Rom 13:10). Indeed, in Christ people found the motivation and power for all good things (Phil 4:13; 1 Cor 1:30).

That is why Paul could say, "For me to live is Christ" (Gal 2:20). Paul learned that the best way to motivate people toward salvation was to know nothing "save Jesus Christ and Him crucified" (1 Cor 2:2).

In Revelation

God pronounces blessing upon His people seven times in Revelation.¹ The words "give" and "given" are used twenty-two times each in Revelation. Again, gracious giving seems to be God's usual way of motivating.

On the other hand, each of the blessings pronounced is tied to some conditional act on the part of the people. Additionally, each of the messages to the seven churches closes with a promise that is predicated on the people overcoming.²

¹ Rev 1:3; 14:13; 16:15; 19:9; 20:6; 22:7; 22:14.

² Rev 2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21.

It is clear that each of the blessings God pronounces is for those who act appropriately. However, they are closely associated in context with views of Christ and His ample provisions for His people.¹ Each of the messages to the churches contains a vision of Christ that highlights His special abilities to provide just what each church needs in order to overcome.² The whole section of the seven churches is bracketed by the views of the powerful yet self-sacrificing Christ in Rev 1:5-18 and 4:1-5:14. The emphasis is on the gospel.³ Thus, the focus in Revelation seems to be on God's gracious giving, especially the gospel, as the primary means of motivation.

Revelation is God's great final warning.⁴ Reward and punishment seem to be the means of motivation in these sections. Still, God's love and the gospel form the overarching emphasis in Revelation.⁵ In fact, reward and punishment are tools that love must occasionally use to motivate the erring (Rev 3:19).

Application to Preaching

The examination of the first three chapters of Genesis, the Gospels, the writings of Paul, and the Revelation all reveal that God's primary way to motivate is by gracious giving. The sin problem forced a separation between man and God, and shifted man's focus to self-centered getting. God, in order to meet human beings where they are, seeks

¹ Rev 1:5-18; 14:1-5, 14, 15; 15:1-4; 19:10-16; 20:4-6; 22:1-7; 22:12, 13, 16, 17, 20, 21.

² Rev 2:1, 2, 8, 9, 12, 13, 18, 19; 3:1, 7, 8, 14, 15.

³ Rev 1:5, 7, 18; 5:6, 9, 12.

⁴ Rev 1:3; 10:7; 11:15-18; 14:6-12; 15:1-8; 19:1-9; 22:6-21.

⁵ Rev 1:5, 7, 18; 2:4, 8; 3:9, 19, 20; 5:6, 8, 9, 12, 13; 7:9, 10, 14, 17; 10:7; 11:8; 12:4, 5, 10, 11, 17; 13:8; 14:1-7, 10, 12, 13-16; 15:2, 3; 17:14; 19:7-10; 20:4-6, 11-15; 21: 6, 22, 23, 27; 22:1, 3, 4 12-14, 16, 17-21.

first to satisfy their needs. His is a needs-based ministry. God may use reward and punishment and the many human-centered motivators such as social status, peer pressure, desire for acceptance, desires for wealth, security, and accomplishment. These are secondary motivators that God uses in conjunction with His love and the gospel to first win the gratitude of human beings, and then help them see their greater need of the Source of all satisfaction. Then, God increasingly shares His love and the gospel until hopefully the human agent will trustingly, lovingly, reciprocate with love and obedience.

Thus, the motivational preacher should first address felt human needs in the congregation. The Bible, the gospel, and every doctrine should provide practical satisfaction for these felt needs. God, His love, and the gospel of Jesus must provide the central and ending focus of every message. The preacher must begin by identifying with the people and their needs, focusing on them. Gradually, through the sermon, the people's gaze must be lifted from themselves to Christ. "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me" (John 12:32).

Motivation in the Writings of Ellen G. White

The word motivation occurs only six times in the writings of Ellen G. White.¹ Motive occurs 556 times; motives, 1,315 times; motivated, 7; motivating, 3; and motivates, 1. In addition this survey checked 719 uses of inspire and many, but not all, of the 15,218 references to influence.

When Ellen White speaks of "motive" she is usually addressing the inner impulse of the individual. She says little of how to humanly manipulate or inspire another person's

¹ *Ellen G. White and Her Writings CD-ROM* (Silver Spring, MD: Ellen White Estate, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 1998).

inner impulse. White suggests that example, enthusiasm, hope, and meeting needs may inspire others to proper behavior. The greatest motivators she speaks of are the love of Christ and the gospel. These motivators are discussed in the sections that follow. The source for motivation, the mechanism of motivation, and applications to preaching complete the discussion.

Meeting Needs

Ellen White agrees with Scripture that motivating others begins with graciously giving to meet people's needs. This breaks down prejudice, creates interest and respect, and wins a hearing for the truths of the Bible. She states, "No minister is sufficiently equipped for his work who does not know how to meet people at their homes, and come into close relation to their needs."¹ Visitation helps preachers know how to adapt their teaching to hearers' needs.² Such concern for listeners' needs wins their hearts to God.³ Relieving congregants' physical needs gives opportunity to minister to their spiritual needs.⁴ White emphasizes that "Christ's method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Savior mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, 'Follow Me.'"⁵

¹ Ellen G. White, *Evangelism* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1946), 438.

² Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1963), 363.

³ *Ibid.*, 527.

⁴ Ellen G. White, *A Call to Medical Evangelism and Health Education* (Nashville, TN: Southern Publishing, 1954), 7.

⁵ Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1942), 143.

Example

Ellen White suggests that personal example can motivate others. As people live the Christian life, their example instructs, validates, challenges, and inspires. White notes, “Character is power. The silent witness of a true, unselfish, godly life carries an almost irresistible influence.”¹ When preachers’ lives are consistent with their words, they will have a powerful influence on their hearers.² Again she writes, “What a man is has more influence than what he says.”³ Example can influence when sermons cannot.⁴ In another powerful statement she says, “The unstudied, unconscious influence of a holy life is the most convincing sermon that can be given in favor of Christianity. Argument, even when unanswerable, may provoke only opposition; but a godly example has a power that it is impossible wholly to resist.”⁵ Personal example validates the spoken word.⁶

Enthusiasm

Another natural motivator White mentions is enthusiasm or energy: “You should cultivate energy of character, for the example of an energetic man is far-reaching and

¹ Ellen G. White, *Christ’s Object Lessons* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1941), 340.

² Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1948), 4:118.

³ White, *The Ministry of Healing*, 469.

⁴ Ellen G. White, *The Adventist Home* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1980), 353.

⁵ White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 510.

⁶ White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 6:263.

compels imitation. He seems to have an electric power on other minds.”¹ Enthusiasm and perseverance enhance success in gospel work² and education.³

White does, however, caution against undue emotional excitement, which she terms “enthusiasm”: “If we work to create an excitement of feeling, we shall have all we want, and more than we can possibly know how to manage. Calmly and clearly, ‘Preach the Word.’ We must not regard it as our work to create an excitement. The Holy Spirit of God alone can create a healthy enthusiasm.”⁴ White elsewhere explains that unhealthy enthusiasm is based on emotion, and brings only temporary motivation.⁵ The difference in types of enthusiasm is based on their source. A human-generated emotional enthusiasm is condemned as transitory, selfish, and false. A divinely inspired, reasoned, and emotive zeal is commended as enduring, other-centered, and true.

Hope

Another natural motivator White speaks of is hope. She suggests that the preacher should hold out before people what they can become.⁶ Preachers should inspire hope in congregants that their lives can change for the better with God’s aid.⁷ Preachers can

¹Ellen G. White, *Mind, Character, and Personality* (Nashville: Southern Publishing, 1977), 2:801.

² Ellen G. White, *Prophets and Kings* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1943), 263.

³ Ellen G. White, *Education* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1952), 233.

⁴ Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1958), 2:16, 17.

⁵ White, *Evangelism*, 138.

⁶ White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 342.

⁷ Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1940), 91.

inspire hope in the hopeless.¹ They can motivate by emphasizing possibilities and goals available to their hearers.²

Other Motivators

White also suggests simplicity, faith, dress, and active participation as natural motivators.³ These and other natural extrinsic motivators tend to produce weak and transitory motivation. They are inferior to the intrinsic motivation found in sensing, appreciating, and acting on God's love in the gospel. White states,

The basis or cause of every right action existing and operating in the renewed heart secures obedience without external or selfish motives. The Spirit of truth and a good conscience are sufficient to inspire and regulate the motives and conduct of those who learn of Christ and are like him. Those who have not strength of religious principles in themselves have been easily swayed, by the example of others, in a wrong direction. Those who have never learned their duty from God, and acquainted themselves with his purposes concerning them, are not reliable in times of severe conflict with the powers of darkness. The external and present appearances will sway them. Worldly men are governed by worldly principles. They can appreciate no other. Christians should not be governed by the same principles worldly men are. They should not seek to strengthen themselves in the performance of duty by any other consideration than a love to obey every requirement of God as found in his word, and dictated by an enlightened conscience.⁴

The Gospel

By far the greatest motivator in the writings of Ellen White is the love of God, especially as seen in the gospel of Jesus Christ. The following statements reflect her

¹ Ibid., 350.

² White, *Mind, Character, and Personality*, 2:453.

³ White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 28; idem, *The Desire of Ages*, 249; idem, *Messages to Young People* (Nashville: Southern Publishing, 1930), 349, 350; idem, *Testimonies for the Church*, 6:49.

⁴ Ellen G. White, *Appeal to the Battle Creek Church* (Battle Creek, MI: Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association, 1870), 82.

views. "The great motive powers of the soul are faith, hope, and love."¹ "The true Christian draws his motives of action from his deep love for his Redeemer."² "Love to Jesus must be the motive which impels us to action."³ Love for God because of the gift of His Son is sufficient motivation to change the heart.⁴ The cross of Calvary should be sufficient motivation to inspire enthusiasm.⁵ Love for Christ is the master motive.⁶ It was the master motive for Paul.⁷ Love for Jesus is the motive that actuates Christian endeavor for others.⁸ Love for Christ is the one great truth to be constantly kept before the minds of men.⁹

The Source of Motivation

White suggests that preachers can convey motivating example, enthusiasm, sympathy, hope, and love only by the grace of God. White states, "It is only through the grace of God that we can make a right use of this endowment. There is nothing in us of

¹ White, *Education*, 192.

² Ellen G. White, *Sons and Daughters of God* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1955), 288.

³ Ellen G. White, "Right Methods In Labor," *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, November 18, 1884, 722.

⁴ Ellen G. White, *Christian Education* (Battle Creek, MI: International Tract Society, 1894), 96.

⁵ Ellen G. White, *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1943), 338.

⁶ White, *Christ's Object Lessons*, 102.

⁷ White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 246.

⁸ Ellen G. White, *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials* (Washington, DC: Ellen G. White Estate, 1987), 2:806.

⁹ *Ibid.*

ourselves by which we can influence others for good.”¹ Love for others is a gift awakened by love for God. White writes,

The unconsecrated heart cannot originate or produce it. Only in the heart where Jesus reigns is it found. ‘We love Him, because He first loved us.’ In the heart renewed by divine grace, love is the ruling principle of action. It modifies the character, governs the impulses, controls the passions, and ennobles the affections. This love, cherished in the soul, sweetens the life and sheds a refining influence on all around. John strove to lead believers to understand the exalted privileges that would come to them through the exercise of the spirit of love. This redeeming power, filing the heart, would control every other motive and raise its possessors above the corrupting influences of the world. And as this love was allowed full sway and became the motive power in the life, their trust and confidence in God and His dealing with them would be complete.²

Human beings are dependent on God for the power to influence others for good.³ The character God develops in people has more influence than what they say.⁴ Thus, preachers are dependent on a relationship with Christ to produce the love, enthusiasm, and character example that will lend credibility to their words.

White suggests that attempts to use worldly methods to attract an audience will produce shallow, transitory results. She states, “Christ's way of presenting truth cannot be improved upon. The worker who tries to bring in methods that will attract the worldly-minded, supposing that this will remove the objections that they feel to taking up the cross, lessens his influence.”⁵

¹ White, *Christ's Object Lessons*, 341, 342.

² *Ibid.*, 551, 552.

³ White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 7:90.

⁴ White, *The Ministry of Healing*, 469.

⁵ Ellen G. White, *This Day with God* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1979), 185.

White also states that escape from punishment and consequence should not be the prime motivator. She cautions, "The shortness of time is frequently urged as an incentive for seeking righteousness and making Christ our friend. This should not be the great motive with us; for it savors of selfishness."¹ The desire to gain reward should also be a secondary motive.²

The Process of Motivation

White emphasizes that the principal motivational tool of the effective preacher is the love of God and the gospel. The gospel's ability to produce an enduring intrinsic motivation is of greater value than all the natural extrinsic motivators of reward and punishment are. White states that the exact method by which God empowers a person to motivate others is unexplainable by human philosophy.³ White does offer, however, the following generalizations about the motivational process.

First, as God graciously gives, the preacher has the choice to accept a loving relationship with God. As the preacher accepts that relationship, God gives transforming power that makes the speaker a loving, enthusiastic example. This example attracts, instructs, and inspires. Thus, God's power must transform the speaker before he or she can effectively motivate another hearer. God is the preacher's source of motivation.⁴ In

¹ Ellen G. White, *Lift Him Up* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1988), 98.

² White, *Christ's Object Lessons*, 398.

³ White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 284.

⁴ Ellen G. White, *God's Amazing Grace* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1973), 185.

order to be transformed, preachers need to devote time to connecting with God through Bible study and prayer.¹

Second, as the love of God transforms preachers, they seek to share that love with others. Preachers want to see others transformed. White stresses that motivation to correct behavior must be based on love, not censure.² Love attracts and motivates; censure demotivates. She reinforces this thought in the following statement:

No one is ever made better by denunciation and recrimination. To tell a tempted soul of his guilt in no way inspires him with a determination to do better. Point the erring, discouraged one to Him who is able to save to the uttermost all who come to Him. Show him what he may become. Tell him that there is in him nothing that recommends him to God, but that Christ died for him that he might be accepted in the Beloved. Inspire him with hope, showing him that in Christ's strength he can do better. Hold up before him the possibilities that are his. Point him to the heights to which he may attain. Help him to take hold upon the mercy of the Lord, to trust in His forgiving power. Jesus is waiting to clasp him by the hand, waiting to give him power to live a noble, virtuous life.³

The effective preacher will motivate by inspiring faith and hope through love and sympathy.⁴ This will awaken a desire to change in the hearer.

Third, the preacher must help hearers establish their own relationships with God. God is their source of power. White emphasizes that it is the hearers' own intrinsic love and trust of God that best motivates them to correct behavior.⁵ She adds,

Those who are one with Christ have the mind of Christ, and work the works of Christ. They are ever improving, ever drawing nearer to God, ever uplifting the soul to Jesus. By beholding the world's Redeemer, they become changed into his

¹ Ellen G. White, *Our High Calling* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1961), 116.

² White, *God's Amazing Grace*, 234.

³ White, *Mind, Character, and Personality*, 2:453.

⁴ White, *Our High Calling*, 295.

⁵ Ellen G. White, "My Son, Give Me Thy Heart," *The Youth's Instructor*, January 5, 1887, 9.

image. A new spiritual life is created, a new motive-power supplied. When one is fully emptied of self, when every false god is cast out of the soul, the vacuum is supplied by the inflowing of the Spirit of Christ. Such a one has the faith which works by love and purifies the soul from every moral and spiritual defilement.¹

Thus, if preachers are to motivate their congregations to correct behavior, they must focus the errant ones on God's gracious giving love. As the hearers are drawn to look to Christ rather than self, they are lifted out of themselves, and begin to experience the miraculous transforming grace of God. By beholding they become changed (2 Cor 3:18). As they know God, they are drawn to reciprocate with loving behavior toward God and their fellow men (John 17:3; 1 John 4:19). White explains,

In the heart renewed by divine grace, love is the ruling principle of action. It modifies the character, governs the impulses, controls the passions, and ennoble the affections. This love, cherished in the soul, sweetens the life and sheds a refining influence on all around.²

Application to Preaching

In summary, Ellen G. White agrees with Scripture concerning human motivation. She agrees that the effective preacher must first address felt human needs. As practical instruction and application from the Bible meet these needs, people are attracted to God's love, graciously given. The preacher's focus should be the love of God, especially as seen in the gospel. As people see Christ lifted up in supreme sacrifice on their behalf, they are drawn to commit their lives to following His principles (John 12:32). By focusing on Christ and God's love, hearers are changed from a self-centered extrinsic focus of reward and punishment to a God-centered intrinsic focus of trust and love.

¹ Ellen G. White, *Special Testimonies*, Series A, No. 01b (n.p., 1892), 22.

² White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 551.

The effective preacher does not motivate to correct behavior by censuring the erring. The preacher may need to inform persons about wrong, right, and consequences, but information or condemnation does not motivate. By offering the acceptance, hope, and power that comes from a relationship with Christ, preachers enable people to receive the motivation to correct their behavior.

CHAPTER 3

MOTIVATIONAL PREACHING

Key Factors in Motivational Preaching

Seldom does a single factor provide the motivation for a person's service.¹

Motivation research in psychology, education, the Bible, and writings of Ellen G. White reveals complex factors that can affect a person's response to a sermon. Lasting and effective motivation must arise intrinsically from the hearer's own thoughts and values. If that is so, the preacher's job is really to help the people motivate themselves. Perhaps it is more proper to say that the preacher helps the people to choose God's inspired way.

If preachers want to enable intrinsic motivation, they should try to understand their hearers. I suggest that most intrinsically motivated people ask three basic questions:

1. What do I want? Here the preacher identifies with and addresses the listener's needs.
2. How can God give me what I want? Here the preacher makes the Bible relevant.
3. What can I do to fulfill my wants and God's will? Here is where the preacher helps listeners apply the Bible's answers to their lives.

¹ McDonough, *Keys to Effective Motivation*, 75.

These three questions touch almost every motivational factor and provide a basic structure for any sermon.

Additionally, of all the motivational factors mentioned in the various fields studied, three factors seem of primary importance: self-esteem, participation, and the gospel. Focus on these three factors, along with the three questions above, will enable the preacher to speak in ways that will most likely motivate people to action.

Self-esteem

Every person has needs which the self naturally attends to and is motivated to satisfy. Unfortunately, self-focus is the essence of sin. As such, self-focus will always eventually fail. As persons provide for their needs, their self-esteem rises. As they fail to satisfy their needs, self-esteem falls. Thus, most people struggle with low self-esteem, since all have sinned and come short of the ideal (Rom 3:23). This is probably why Wlodkowski calls self-esteem one of the deepest human needs, and why enhancing it is the prime motive behind all behaviors.¹

The problem of low self-esteem in the church is rampant. Schaller suggests that in perhaps one-half of all congregations low self-esteem is such a serious problem that it should be given first priority before other plans for ministry.² People need to feel in control of their own lives. They also need to feel they can influence others. Where members are treated as “sinners” and told how they always come short, self-esteem is devastated. Where members have no job or no say, the needs of esteem are not met.

¹ Wlodkowski, 6, 88, 89.

² Lyle Schaller, *Hey, That's Our Church* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1975), 182, 183.

Consequently, people will become passive, irresponsible, and even resistant.¹ In other words, low self-esteem means low motivation. Where members have a self-determining say in the church, intrinsic motivation is enhanced.²

The effective preacher, then, should focus on enhancing the self-esteem of the congregation. In order to gain attention and credibility, the preacher must focus first on a needs-based ministry. If the preacher can provide practical help in satisfying a variety of needs, persons can comfortably pursue higher needs, such as self-actualization. Most adults come to church or religious instruction looking for help in fulfilling their roles in life.³ Sermon topics that provide this practical help should improve self-esteem.

Second, self-esteem is enhanced by the gospel. Exclusive focus on satisfying needs can foster selfishness. According to Eva, when Christians are mostly concerned with their own salvation, their needs, and insecurities, it is "impossible for them to be genuinely missional."⁴

When the gospel is set forth as the ultimate answer to every need, selfishness is allayed and self-esteem is enhanced. People are taught to look away from self, and to Christ, as their source of acceptance, hope, and satisfaction. There seems to be a significant interrelationship between the gospel and self-esteem. If needs are not met and self-esteem is low, people are not able to look away from themselves to God. Yet if the love and sacrifice of God for them (the gospel) is shared, self-esteem is lifted, and they

¹ Eva, 130.

² Ibid., 73.

³ Wlodkowski, 128.

⁴ Eva, 110.

now look hopefully to God rather than themselves. Looking away from self enables them to look toward God and serve their fellow man.

Third, participation enhances self-esteem. If the preacher and church are doing all the providing, the members' self-esteem will be low because they are not in control of their own lives. If they are not included in the decision making of the group (the church), they will feel ignored, discounted, or impotent. They will not feel motivated by group norms or goals; they will be withdrawn or passive.¹ The preacher should provide ministry in ways that the people can participate, think, plan, and execute for themselves. The more they are allowed to participate in planning, dialogue, practice, and application, the more self-esteem will be enhanced.

Self-esteem can also be improved by ensuring success.² If preachers ask congregants to perform duties, the tasks should be given in short, easily accomplished components. The preacher should also speak much of encouragement and hope, being quick to recognize effort and accomplishment. The congregation should be given choices, and allowed to set their own goals. Affirming congregants' worth, identifying with them in their concerns and struggles, and involving them in planning minimizes the fear of change. Such a process should take place slowly, preserving security with adequate communication and preserving trust by focusing more on relationships than the task.³ By thus enhancing self-esteem, preachers will more likely motivate people to action.

¹ Ibid., 182.

² Wlodkowski, 90-97.

³ Benjamin Schoun, Class notes for CHMN727 Leadership in Church Organizations, Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary Extension, Lincoln, NE, 22 August, 1996.

Participation

Too often sermons generate good intentions, but also passivity. The speaker speaks; the listeners listen. Nothing happens after the congregation leaves the church. There are several possible reasons for this. First, listening tends to be a passive activity. Second, the preacher telling the hearers tends to lower self-esteem. Sermons are usually preacher-determined rather than self-determined. The impression can be left that persons cannot think or act for themselves. Didactic, deductive approaches in sermon delivery may tend to demean and underinvolve hearers. Third, sermons may tend to be theoretical and not practical. Often the application of theology is expected to take place later during the week, but there is a great natural inertia to overcome. Fear of change, lack of support, forgetfulness, and lack of experience may cause this inertia. Persons with certain learning styles need to experience an idea before they can understand and apply it.

The enabling pastor should focus on ways to involve the audience. Seeing, touching, moving, even smelling and tasting may enhance listening to the sermon. All the senses should be engaged. Audiovisuals should be used more. Drama can be more engaging, especially if congregants are doing the acting or reading. Painting word pictures and using descriptive imagery engages the senses as well. People can be engaged by dialogue, filling out handouts, writing, drawing, constructing puzzles, playing games, doing role-plays and simulated experiences. Thought questions, playing the devil's advocate, introducing contradictions, problem-solving, experimenting, constructing

models, doing art, paraphrasing to one another, outlining, and writing summaries are other do-ables that can help the audience participate during the sermon.¹

The enabling pastor helps the laity experience what he or she is trying to teach.² Donald Griggs suggests, "The more our teaching activities are in the direction of verbal symbols the less involved the students are, and the less they will learn. The more our teaching moves toward direct and simulated experience the more a student will be involved in his own learning."³ Anything that allows the audience to be actively involved during the sermon should enable them to put the sermon into action during the week. One learns to speak by speaking, to write by writing, to witness by witnessing.

The enabling pastor should not preach down to the congregation. Linberg notes that "equipping happens when God's people, both clergy and laity together, are involved in defining ministry, growing in skill, and in actually practicing their ministry in the world."⁴ The speaker should share more than tell. Preachers need to share themselves, their struggles, and questions. Identifying with the congregation helps hearers to feel on a par with and sympathetic to the speaker. An inductive style, mutually exploring a topic, seems to be a good sermonic form for building self-esteem and audience involvement.

People are primarily motivated to meet their own goals. A minister cannot expect

¹ Wlodkowski, 168-171.

² Edwin C. Linberg, "An Examination of the Role of Clergy as an Enabler of the Development and Growth of the Ministry of the Laity" (D.Min. dissertation, Claremont, California, School of Theology, 1975), 249.

³ Griggs, 14.

⁴ Linberg, 251.

to move any congregation to accept goals seen as imposed upon them.¹ This suggests that motivation needs to be accomplished even before the sermon. Linberg found that congregational involvement increased when he preached on texts that had been studied by small groups before the sermon.² Preachers could include the congregation's ideas in their sermons in order to enhance audience self-esteem and participation. Techniques for building participation before the sermon include topic surveys, topic discussion groups, a sermon/worship planning committee, home visitation, and sharing oneself with congregants before the sermon.

Sermons need to be practical; provision must be made to enable the hearers to apply what they hear. Adults will be motivated to learn when they sense they are accomplishing something. The new information must work at home, at work, and in their communities if motivation is to be sustained.³ Farrar points out that the primary reason laity volunteer is a desire to put their faith to work; the primary reason for ceasing to serve is a lack of impact from their service.⁴ Many adults want to do something, not just talk about it. Yet, they need guidance, support, evaluation, and feedback to enable their motivation to carry them from thought to action.

One way to provide better participation is to concentrate on process more than product.⁵ Focus on the goal can be intimidating. Not all learn at the same pace. The

¹ Eva, 137.

² Linberg, 178.

³ Wlodkowski, 55.

⁴ Farrar, v.

⁵ Howard Hendricks, *The Seven Laws of the Teacher*, no. 3, prod. Howard G. Hendricks, 43 min., Walk Thru the Bible Ministries, 1988, videocassette.

thought is often, "No one can do it as well as the preacher." In fact, if people are taught only to do what the teacher does, the students never seem to come up to the same level of expertise. However, if the teacher concentrates on the process, teaching students how and why things work, the students learn how to learn. Eventually they may exceed the instructor, as they apply themselves to the learning process.

People will participate if they do not feel threatened. J. W. Atkinson's theory of achievement motivation says that adults will participate actively when their hopes for success override their fears of failure.¹ Studies have demonstrated that people are more motivated when the task is of intermediate difficulty, not too hard or too easy. Weiner has shown that this is because people want to know where they stand, and the intermediate task best reveals this. If the challenge is too easy, people become bored or insulted, because they realize it will not reveal their true potential. If the job is too difficult, people fear failure and do not want to risk revealing their inadequacies. Thus, the preacher should devise challenges and activities that will be easy enough to accomplish, yet meaningful and hard enough to create a sense of personal growth.

Participation involves activity not only before and during the sermon, but also after it. Linberg suggests that the sermon alone cannot motivate completely to action. There must be follow-up, including support, additional training, skill practice, and mutual sharing of experiences.²

¹ Weiner, 181.

² Linberg, 252.

This researcher conducted a small experiment about participation in the same three churches involved in this project.¹ A motivational sermon about the need to attend mid-week service was delivered to all three. In two of the three churches, pre- and post-work was done. This included personal visitation, a survey of attitudes on “prayer meeting,” asking advice on how to approach and implement the topic, and commitment sheets as to times available to meet for such spiritual meetings. In the three months following the sermon, the two churches that had the extra pre- and post-participation doubled their average attendance at mid-week service. The third church, which had only a motivational sermon about the importance of midweek service, had the same attendance before and after the sermon. Clearly, participation helped motivate to action.

Participation after the sermon can be accomplished via on-the-job training, take-home assignments, planned practice, discussion, and application later in the day or week. Reaction reports, commitment or sign-up sheets, and evaluation forms can also aid involvement. Communication is important in keeping volunteers motivated.² People want to know how they are doing. Feedback needs to be factual, specific, prompt, frequent, positive, and personal to the individual.³ It is best done in a way that fosters self-evaluation and self-correction. Motivated students want to know when their instruction period is, how much time they have, what their resources are, and how they can tell when

¹ Michael A. Mnich, “Motivational Effects of Sermon Content and Follow-up,” paper for CHMN727 Leadership in Church Organizations, Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, Berrien Springs, MI, January 1997.

² Farrar, v.

³ Wlodkowski, 216-225.

they have achieved the learning objective.¹ Unmotivated students should have short assignments, few objectives, frequent feedback, more supervision, and genuine praise.²

The effective preacher should provide as much participation as possible for the congregation. This needs to be done in the sermon, using creative ways to involve listeners. Congregants should also be involved before and after the sermon in order to effectively motivate to action. As Ellen White said, "When a minister has preached a sermon, his work has but just begun."³

The Gospel

Good news and hope provide positive motivation to love and serve.⁴ The gospel means good news, and its hope is in the substitutionary death and resurrection of Jesus.⁵ The Apostle Paul stressed that it was the gospel that provided the power for people to change (Rom 1:16). As people accept what Christ has done for them, they are constrained by love and faith to follow Him (2 Cor 5:14, 15). This power and constraint of the gospel suggests it is the greatest motivator of godly human behavior.

Ellen White agrees. "Nothing reaches so fully down to the deepest motives of conduct as a sense of the pardoning love of Christ."⁶ White tells gospel workers, "Your

¹ Lefever, *Learning Styles*, 230.

² Ibid.

³ White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 363.

⁴ Harding, 52.

⁵ Ulrich Becker, "Gospel, Evangelize, Evangelist," *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology* (1982), 2:111.

⁶ White, *The Desire of Ages*, 493.

success will not depend so much upon your knowledge and accomplishments, as upon your ability to find your way to the heart.”¹

Willmore Eva hypothesized that an internalized understanding of the pardoning love of God is what motivates people to godly activity.² Eva states that uncertainty demotivates, certainty motivates, and faith in Christ, which accepts the gospel, provides a core of certainty amid the uncertainties of life.³ Eva points out that achievement, social affiliation, and self-actualization are natural with humans, but the gospel can and should condition these.⁴ As they have their need for belonging and esteem met, people are freed to extend to others the same gracious attitude that has made them whole.⁵ Christiansen agrees: “Gratitude is the very matrix of the Christian’s heart.”⁶ Thus, the gospel motivates because of gratitude for God’s having satisfied ultimate human needs.

The gospel satisfies self-esteem needs. Most people feel their present and eternal life are based upon their behavior. If it is good, they receive blessing; if they are bad, they receive curses. Guilt, failure, and low self-esteem constantly plague people since all fall short of perfect behavior because of sin. Harding cites a personal interview with George G. Hunter III, Methodist Secretary for Evangelism in 1981, in which Hunter said that whatever is preached must be proclaimed as Good News rather than a new version of law.

¹ Ellen G. White, *Gospel Workers*, (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1949), 93.

² Eva, 3.

³ *Ibid.*, 58.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 91.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 46.

⁶ James L. Christiansen, *Don't Waste Your Time in Worship* (Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell, 1978), 48.

The message must present a new opportunity to join with God in some great cause rather than some grim and burdensome duty that must be performed.¹ Eva stresses that the justifying grace of the gospel helps the sinner see that by faith their rightness stands perfect at the throne of God in the person of Jesus. Thus, they have every reason to confidently present their praise, needs, and works to God (cf. Heb 4:14-16; 10:19-21).² Motivational roadblocks are removed when Christians change focus from “how” do I exercise faith to “in whom do I trust.” The incapable and “not good enough” will find in Jesus’ goodness and capability, the freedom to live and witness.³ Thus, the gospel lifts self-esteem by refocusing people’s efforts from self to Christ.

If Christians at times fail to experience success in their Christian living, the way to motivate them is not to focus on their failures and efforts. Rather, the preacher should help them refocus on the sufficiency of the work of Christ on their behalf.⁴ He is the source of their motivation and strength (Phil 4:13).

Even the right motivator, the gospel, can be used by preachers to manipulate others to meet their own needs for acceptance and achievement.⁵ A minister who realizes completeness in Christ will not have as strong a need to manipulate for personal success. Conferences and ministers who put emphasis on goals and quotas, especially with the bite of fear or reward, draw people away from the gospel and promote manipulation and self-

¹ Harding, 50.

² Eva, 48.

³ Ibid., 57.

⁴ Ibid., 58, 59.

⁵ Ibid., 89.

concern. The enabling preacher should rest in Christ's ability to motivate. The focus should be on establishing congregants in His love and power for them.

In summary, the gospel must be the focus of every sermon. It is the great motivator enabling Christian action. Effective preachers are not orators. As well-known preacher P. T. Forsyth said: "It is one thing to have to rouse or persuade people to do something, to put themselves into something; it is another to have to induce them to trust somebody and renounce themselves for Him."¹ An orator's goal is to get people to do something. The preacher's goal is to bring about or strengthen a relationship with God.² Effectively announcing the gospel allows people to become free from self and focused on God. Through the Holy Spirit, God then brings about appropriate behavior change.³ Thus, the effective preacher must remember that motivation to action comes from connecting people to Christ, not by telling them what they must do.

The 4MAT Learning System in Motivational Preaching

A Model for Sermon Design

Bernice McCarthy's 4MAT Learning System is a teaching tool developed to accommodate various personal learning styles, modalities, and right/left-brain learning characteristics.⁴ Besides touching all personal learning styles, the 4MAT system also follows a natural approach to learning and problem solving. Studies have shown that

¹ P. T. Forsyth, *Positive Preaching and the Modern Mind* (New York: Eaton and Mains, n.d.), 3, 4.

² Eva, 114.

³ Ibid.

⁴ McCarthy, *About Learning*, 193-239; see pp. 23-25.

incorporating such learning principles and models in classroom instruction has improved student motivation and ability to learn.¹ Since preaching is a form of teaching, the 4MAT system might be used as a design, or at least a guide, for successful motivational sermons.

People learn by perceiving and processing.² Imaginative and Dynamic learners, who perceive mainly by sensing, feeling, and experiencing, tend to focus on personhood and relationships.³ This is valuable, for relationship is the basis of the gospel (John 17:3). Perceiving information through the senses and experience also aids the person in translating truth into action. The danger of this approach to learning is that some may mistake personal perception for objective truth.

Those who perceive information more by detached analytical reasoning are more likely to be objective in their assessments.⁴ These Analytic and Common Sense learners can evaluate the validity and applicability of truth without being caught up in it. This reliance on outside authority (the Bible for instance) is a valuable safeguard against subjectivity and self-delusion. The danger of this approach is that people may understand truth but not experience or apply it. The Analytic learner may also be impatient with unorthodox, creative learners.⁵ If preachers present facts devoid of emotional involvement and a relational focus, congregants may be eager to learn, but slow to apply what is preached.

¹ McCarthy, *The 4MAT System*, vi-ix.

² *Ibid.*, 3.

³ *Ibid.*, 37.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 39.

⁵ *Ibid.*

Jack Calkins, a certified instructor in the 4MAT system, has suggested that biblically these differences in perceiving can be characterized as “worshipping in spirit and in truth.”¹ Both elements are needed to reach all learning styles and to provide for the fullest understanding and application of truth. Sermons must be designed to involve more of the senses, the emotions, and to focus on relationships and the “heart” of the matter.

As far as processing information is concerned, there are also two types of learners. Some prefer to jump in and try (Common Sense and Dynamic learners), others prefer to watch and reflect (Imaginative and Analytic learners).² Those who jump in and try are more likely to put truth into action. Their danger is that they may blunder because of ignorance and inexperience. Those who process by watching and assessing will be more careful to do it right when they do act. Their danger is that they may never get around to acting.

Preachers who focus hearers on detailed reflection and exacting behavior may inadvertently be conditioning them to inaction. A fear of “getting everything just right before I act” may be produced. Preachers need to include more elements before, during, and after the sermon, to give congregants opportunity to participate, act, and apply truth.

Traditional outlined, analytical, proof-texted sermons given as monologue, with little audience participation, attract Analytic learners. The problem is that 70 percent of learners are not Analytic.³ McCarthy further states that she believes effective learning cannot take place without students being allowed to make choices, explore, manipulate,

¹ JackCalkins, *Leading the Learning Church*, (Lincoln, NE: Advent Source, 1999), 23.

² McCarthy, *The 4MAT System*, 9.

³ *Ibid.*, 51.

and experience.¹ Traditional sermon forms give facts and call for choice. There is little sense of mutual exploring, discovery, manipulation, or experience. McCarthy also states that without the active involvement of the student, education becomes an externally applied act.² Sermons need to be constructed in such a way that they are perceived and processed as the people's own process of discovery and application.

The basic questions of the 4MAT system can be used to form the outline or basis of the sermon. McCarthy suggests we ask, "Why should I learn this?" Next, one should ask, "What am I supposed to learn, and what do the experts say?" Then one should ask, "How does this work practically in everyday life?" Finally, one should ask, "What if I incorporate this in my life? What new possibilities can I create?"³ Calkins describes the four learning styles as Relational: experiencing grace; Analytical: enlightened by grace; Practical: applying grace; and Dynamic: empowered by grace.⁴

Preachers should begin the sermon and the learning process by sharing themselves, their interests, and concerns--especially about the topic. Such sharing will particularly appeal to Imaginative learners. Preachers should then vividly portray or allow experience of the topic under consideration. The need is painted in powerful relational and emotional terms, so that the audience can say, Yes, I have experienced that; Yes, I am interested; Yes, I want to know more.

¹ Ibid., 108.

² Ibid., 109.

³ McCarthy, *About Learning*, 87-101; Table 3: 24; Appendix C (144-145) summarize characteristics of the four learning styles.

⁴ Calkins, 47.

Traditional teaching comprises the second step in the learning process, and it particularly appeals to Analytic learners. Preachers should begin to explore the facts, ramifications, details, pros, cons, and testimony of the experts. In order to involve both right and left brain, the preacher should use audio-visual aids, vivid illustration, and personal experience, as well as biblical and authoritative commentary.

The third step in the learning process, which appeals to Common Sense learners, focuses on practical application. Preachers should sell the benefits, relevance, and simplicity of the concept or action. If possible, preachers should let the audience try it themselves. This could be done by having hearers share, role play, fill out plans or commitment sheets, or practice the activity being called for.

The fourth step in the learning process particularly appeals to Dynamic learners. Preachers should summarize and synthesize everything discussed in the sermon. Preachers should vividly portray a vision of what they want the people to do, offer creative possibilities and choices for fulfilling hearers' commitments, and release them to personally, creatively put it into action. It will aid motivation to action if various forms of follow-up opportunities, encouragement, and evaluation are implemented.

The above sermon structure need not be slavishly adhered to. As long as all of the four learning elements are incorporated, the sermon should provide effective and motivated learning. Variety holds interest and improves motivation to action. Preachers can gradually improve their sermons by studying and applying the 4MAT principles.

Practical Application

George Barna postulates, “Knowing what is on people’s minds and applying the truth to Scripture guarantees . . . an attentive audience.”¹ Since the sermon process begins with understanding people’s needs, it is essential that preachers know their audience. Ellen White wrote, “Men are needed for this time who can understand the wants of the people and minister to their necessities.”²

In order to discover people’s needs, the preacher must read widely, and read what the congregation is reading. Preachers should listen to television, radio, conversations at work, at the store, and at play. Preachers must visit, for they cannot know their members if they never see them. Finally, preachers should pray for members. They could even keep a notebook with members’ names, pictures, and what they like and need.³ White suggests: “No minister is sufficiently equipped for his work who does not know how to meet the people at their homes, and come into close relation to their needs.”⁴

Once preachers know the people’s needs, they can begin applying Scripture to help address those needs. The application, however, must be done with the right approach to ensure motivation to action. People are more open, accepting, and responsive to materials or tasks presented by someone they like and trust.⁵ Since the essence of the gospel is relational, establishing a speaker-listener relationship is the first key to effective

¹ George Barna, *User Friendly Churches* (Ventura, CA: Regal, 1991), 107.

² White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 4:315.

³ Howard G. Hendricks, *Teaching to Change Lives* (Portland, OR: Multnomah, 1987), 41, 42.

⁴ White, *Evangelism*, 438.

⁵ Wlodkowski, 75.

communication and motivation.¹ Miller suggests that preachers take the first three minutes before every sermon to share themselves. They can share a common struggle, question, or problem. It is most effective if this sharing addresses the needs and sermon topic of the day. Doing this formally every time, especially when preacher and congregation know each other well, is not as necessary as when the speaker and listener are unfamiliar with each other. Still, such sharing in the “sermon-before-the-sermon” fosters a positive atmosphere of caring and mutuality. As someone once said, people do not care how much you know until they know how much you care.²

Self-esteem and participation are enhanced in an atmosphere of mutuality. Biblical preaching presents the Good News in a way that preacher and people share in an experience of power and energy from God.³ The preacher must stand by, not over, the congregation to jointly consider and respond to the biblical text.⁴ Linberg suggests a style of preaching in which preachers view and convey themselves as part of the congregation as well as spokespersons for God.⁵ An inductive approach to the sermon should best create such an atmosphere of mutual discovery.

¹ Calvin Miller, *The Empowered Communicator: 7 Keys to Unlocking an Audience* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1994), 13, 14.

² Ralph L. Lewis and Gregg Lewis, *Inductive Preaching: Helping People Listen* (Westchester, IL: Crossway, 1983), 22.

³ Harding, 28.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 50.

⁵ Linberg, 182.

Induction is the reasoning process by which particular instances of experience lead to forming general concepts.¹ The preacher gets the congregation to explore various aspects of a topic or problem, leading them to discover insights, solutions, and applications for themselves. This also fits well with adult learning preference for self-directedness and evaluation by experience. The inductive preacher must have and convey attitudes of acceptance, tolerance, respect, trust, humility, cooperation, and patience.² Preachers should ask, not demand. They should dialogue, not dictate. The inductive preacher must encourage, not demean. Inductive preachers investigate, not impose; probe, instead of preaching; inquire, instead of insisting.³ Preachers should place themselves with, not above, their hearers. Such attitudes build listener self-esteem and participation, which in turn, are more likely to motivate them to action.

Induction naturally engages the mind and builds interest. There is a natural movement to it. Induction engages the listener and makes it easier for preachers to follow their own sequence of thought.⁴ The process is like that of a treasure hunt. Induction involves the hearer. Such active involvement may be more likely to be translated into future action.

Induction is guided by questions. This fits nicely into the 4MAT approach with its natural sequence of thought questions. Imaginative and Dynamic learners will relish induction's emphasis on experience. Analytic learners will relish uncovering all the facts.

¹ Lewis and Lewis, 42.

² Ibid., 44.

³ Ibid., 45.

⁴ Ibid., 82.

Common Sense learners will appreciate the emphasis on practicality to real-life situations. The inductive approach would seem to better satisfy all the learning styles as well as aid the natural process of human thought and problem solving.

The inductive process also fits the biblical model well. The entire Bible is built upon a process of learning from experience. In the gospel, God graciously gives, hoping humanity will consider the facts, teaching, and their experience, and choose to follow Him. Induction highlights individual choice. The New Testament promulgates the priesthood of all believers (1 Pet 2:9). Preachers must remember they are on equal footing with their members. Preachers need to share more than tell.

Ralph and Gregg Lewis share several scriptural examples of the inductive approach.¹ Jesus' methods often involved asking questions about everyday concerns in people's lives. We see Him inviting, "come" (Matt 1:28), "see" (John 1:39), "hear" (Matt 13:18). He mingled among them as one of them, desiring their good.² He explained by doing, respected people and their ability to think, and led them to discover truth for themselves.³

Ralph and Gregg Lewis stress that the inductive approach can fit various homiletic outlines.⁴ One can enumerate facts and experiences, illustrations, and examples until a conclusion is reached. One can wander around exploring. The preacher can follow a biography, single or multiple stories, cause-effect, problem-solution, or question-answer.

¹ Lewis and Lewis, 67-78.

² White, *The Ministry of Healing*, 143.

³ Lewis and Lewis, 77.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 79-102.

The basic outlines, however, begin with common ground, proceed through mutual exploration, and reach a conclusion.

Lowry and others have popularized narrative preaching.¹ This style of sermon also fits well into the inductive and other motivational structures suggested in this paper. Everyone loves a story. The more personal and true to life, the more listeners are riveted. Lowry's approach is to construct the sermon in such a way that it presents a question or problem that builds to a climax. At the climax, the listeners suddenly discover a revelation of the possible answer. The rest of the story line carries one through further exploration, clarifying and satisfying the hearer's need to understand and apply, until a satisfying personal solution is achieved.

The narrative sermon can effectively pursue listeners' needs, building interest until they can discover at the climax what they really need. Then they ask, What does God want me to know in order to meet my need? They can explore various solutions, narrowing down or confirming possible solutions. Then they can ask, "What must I do to obtain the solution and stay in God's will." Here the homiletic plot brings one to a satisfying personal application or conclusion. Thus, the narrative sermon form can answer the three basic questions asked by most intrinsically motivated persons.

Narrative can be constructed to coincide with 4MAT's four questions: Why should I learn this? What do the experts say? How does this work? What if I make this my own? As a sermon plot thickens, people develop vital interest until they can say why

¹ Eugene L. Lowry, *The Homiletical Plot: The Sermon as Narrative Art Form* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1983); Fred Craddock, *As One without Authority* (Enid, OK: Phillips University, 1974); Frederick Beuchner, *Telling the Truth* (New York: Harper and Row, 1977); Charles Rice, *Interpretation and Imagination* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1970).

they should listen. A sermonic climax could come here, or after examining several explanations of what the experts say. A climax could occur at the point of question three, How can I do this? It could even occur at the end with the question, What if? The key is to induce the hearers to answer all the questions for themselves as they explore the homiletic plot. The preacher's exploratory process for sermon construction or textual analysis can even form the plot inductively shared with the congregation.

Wlodkowski states that variety maintains interest.¹ Preachers may use deductive sermon styles for variety. Bornstein and Smith point out that students in uncertain situations prefer more direction and structure.² Deductive approaches provide more direction and familiar structure than inductive sermons.³ Thus, deductive sermons may work better than inductive where audiences face significant change or ignorance of the topic.

The 4MAT questions can form the structure of the deductive sermon. The preacher simply tells the audience what the topic is instead of exploring inductively. The preacher then shows the importance of the topic, particularly to hearers' important relationships. This answers question one: Why do I need to learn this? The preacher should give sufficient detail to make the topic clear and authoritative, which answers question two: What do the experts say? The speaker must make the information practical, which answers question three: How does this work? Finally, the preacher suggests ways

¹ Wlodkowski, 151.

² Steven M. Bornstein and Anthony F. Smith, "The Puzzles of Leadership," in *The Leader of the Future*, ed. Frances Hesselbein, Marshall Goldsmith, and Richard Beckhard (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1996), 285, 286.

³ Lewis and Lewis, 109, 110.

hearers can apply the topic, which answers question four: What if I make this my own?

Thus, the 4MAT learning process is covered by a deductive approach as well.

Ralph and Gregg Lewis argue for using both inductive and deductive approaches in each sermon.¹ Sermons may begin inductively to explore a topic, then once “discovery” is made, application and admonition can proceed deductively.² This sermon design would answer the first two or three 4MAT questions inductively and the last 4MAT question deductively. The 4MAT system, then, can be used quite flexibly with a variety of sermonic forms.

¹ Ibid., 110.

² Ibid., 113.

CHAPTER FOUR

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Planning

In multi-church districts, there is a need for lay preachers to be trained to preach in ways that will motivate the congregation to action. Such a training program must be built on study of motivational theory, the needs of the churches and students involved, and sound principles of course development.

Study

Motivational theory was studied in psychology, education, the Bible, and the writings of Ellen White.¹ Biblical narratives were examined by asking how God, Jesus, and Paul motivated people. A few secondary references also suggested ways in which motivational principles were implemented in the Bible.² The writings of Ellen G. White were examined using the White Estate CD-ROM and its indexes to do word searches on “motivation,” “inspire,” and “influence.”³

¹ See chapter 2, Motivational Theory.

² See Eva, 93-95, as an example.

³ *Ellen G. White and Her Writings CD-ROM* (Silver Spring, MD: Ellen White Estate, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 1998).

The literature search revealed three key motivators that can be applied to preaching: the gospel, self-esteem, and participation. Three key questions motivate Christian adults to action: What do I want? How can God give me what I want? What do I need to do to fulfill my wants and God's will? Learning style theory shapes these factors and questions into four sequential questions that can form the structure for any sermon: Why should I learn this? What should I learn? How do I practically apply it? What if I apply this in my own life? The theory was that these questions and factors, explored together inductively, give the message the best chance to motivate people to action. These would form the subject matter of the proposed seminar.

Initial Preparation

Since one of the key motivational factors is participation, the churches and students involved in the proposed training program needed to be consulted. First, the need for greater congregational motivation was discussed with local lay leaders in three small, rural, Seventh-day Adventist churches in the Flinthills district of Kansas in 1995. This was done to create awareness of the need and get them thinking about possible solutions. Next, as I studied motivational research, I began to share my findings informally with lay leaders. Their reactions and ideas were solicited. This took place over a period of two years.

The following actions were taken to secure formal permission and evaluation for the proposed training course. In September 1998, the lay preachers of the district agreed to participate in and evaluate a six-hour seminar focusing on motivational principles in preaching. The preferences for format, time schedule, and logistics were solicited from

the church boards and prospective students. Local lay preachers completed a survey called, "Planning Together" (Appendix A) which solicited their input on subject matter and time schedule for the seminar. Lay preachers were especially interested in how to find illustrations and how to make a "spiritual" sermon. The majority of lay preachers wanted an all-day Sabbath seminar that ended about 5 p.m. Church boards for the three district churches agreed to have the seminar at the centrally located church from 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. on Sabbath, February 5, 2000. Two members of the Kansas-Nebraska Conference leadership staff were asked to be present to evaluate the course.

Course Development

Basic Approach and Time Constraints

The course was limited to six hours on a Sabbath morning and afternoon because of participants' time constraints. The morning sermon was to be part instruction and part demonstration, focusing on the gospel, the greatest motivator. This left only three time periods available for instruction: 9:00-10:30 a.m., 2:00-3:30 p.m., and 4:00-5:30 p.m.

The material naturally fell into four segments which followed the four 4MAT questions: Why should I learn this? What do I need to know? How does this work? What if I make this part of my life? Additionally, Segment 1 could serve as an introduction of the problem and outline of the course. The remaining three sections could naturally divide into discussions of the three main motivators of self-esteem, the gospel, and participation. The three main questions of intrinsically motivated Christians (What do I need? How can God provide for my need? What must I do to fulfill my need and God's will?) would also fit well as topical guides for the three remaining sessions. Segments 1

and 2 were planned to be covered before the morning sermon. The remaining segments would fill the afternoon time slots. One half hour at the end would be used for evaluation. The seminar would be titled *Preaching by Discovery* to highlight interest and the basic inductive approach to the material (Appendix B, Instructor's Outline).

Each seminar segment began with sharing a personal experience or thought following Calvin Miller's "sermon-before-the-sermon" concept.¹ Each sharing time ended in a question to the class that began the inductive discovery of the topic of the segment. Fill-in handouts were prepared for each seminar segment to keep the participants involved and to help organize their thoughts and provide a place for notes (Appendix C). Buzz groups, dialogue, role-play, Scripture reading, a learning style inventory, audio/visuals, demonstrations, music, drawing, and questions were prepared to involve participants further. Each seminar segment was to end with a time for questions and reactions focused on personal application. The instructor summarized the main points in each segment.

The Intended Program

Segment 1: Preaching by Discovery

Segment 1 was to explore the problem of motivating laity to action. The inductive and narrative styles of preaching were to be offered as the best means of meeting adult learning preferences and enabling motivation to action. The process of mutual discovery was to be set forth as the overall theme of the seminar and of sermon preparation and delivery. The *Preaching by Discovery Checklist* was to be handed out (Appendix C).

¹ Miller, 18-39.

Segment 2: Discovering what they want

Segment 2 was to discuss the “sermon-before-the-sermon” concept, the importance of intrinsic motivation, needs-based ministry, and the gospel. The handout *Ellen White and Motivation* was to be surveyed (Appendix C).

The sermon

A sermon and accompanying response handout were to be delivered to the congregation between Segments 2 and 3 (Appendix D). It was intended as a demonstration of the principles being taught, and explored the issue of basic human needs and how the gospel is the prime answer to those needs.

Segment 3: Discovering God’s answers to their needs

Segment 3 intended to cover several principles of motivational preaching: how to manage change, attract and hold audience attention, build clarity and practicality, address varied learning style preferences, and correctly involve the emotions and the “heart.”

Opportunity would be given to take a learning style inventory (Appendix C). The 4MAT Cycle as the basis of sermon structure was to be discussed.

Segment 4: Applying our discoveries

Segment 4 intended to discuss active congregational involvement in the sermon process. The seminar was to conclude with a summary of the material and time for the participants’ questions, comments, and evaluation.

Course evaluation and revision

Participants were supposed to complete a course evaluation (Appendix E) at the end of the seminar. They were also to be given the opportunity to commit to preparing and delivering a sermon in the next two months using the principles discovered in the seminar. Participants were to be co-evaluators and developers in the seminar development process.

Each participant sermon was to be videotaped. An audience response sheet was to be filled out by the congregation one week following the sermon (Appendix F). After the preachers had completed their sermons, the pastor and preachers planned to review and critique the sermons and the effectiveness of the training course. Videos were to be reviewed, and audience response sheets were to be discussed. Suggestions from the course evaluations, audience responses, and collegial reviews were to be used to discuss training seminar revision.

The revised seminar was to be given in another district in the Kansas-Nebraska Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. Students were supposed to receive a questionnaire before the seminar asking what their preferences were for scheduling and subject matter (Appendix A). Evaluations from participants were to be taken at the end of the second seminar. These would help provide for final course evaluation and revision.

Implementation

The first seminar was given February 5, 2000. Seventeen lay persons participated; of these, seven preach regularly. The rest had some experience in giving Bible school

introductory remarks, leading Bible school classes, or giving short talks at the prison.

Four persons were unexpected participants.

Sabbath Morning

More time than was anticipated was spent in getting acquainted, sharing, and covering the first segment. The checklist for sermon preparation was not given out during the first session as planned. Very little of Segment 2 was covered before the morning sermon. The instructor shared briefly the three basic factors and questions that affect every sermon. The “sermon-before-the-sermon” concept was briefly explained.

Participants were asked to watch for these in the sermon.

The sermon, *Whatcha Need?* (Appendix D) was delivered during the regular eleven o’clock worship hour. The speaker began by sharing himself and asking the congregation to aid him in solving a problem: how to provide for congregational needs. The speaker used dialogue to engage the congregation in discussing what their needs were, and what they expected the preacher to do to provide for those needs. Their comments were placed on an overhead transparency (Appendix D). An inductive approach using questions led them to see that no preacher can really meet all their needs. Only Jesus and His gospel can really provide lasting answers. The sermon ended with a gripping story and the questions:

“What did the protagonist discover? What have you discovered this morning?” A special musical number and a projected slide illustrating the final story gave a possible answer to the thought questions. Audience involvement was so complete that the instructor noticed there was insufficient time to complete the sermon as planned and still finish by noon. The

sermon was hurriedly completed by noon. However, in the instructor's haste, the audience response sheet was not passed out.

Sabbath Afternoon

After lunch, instruction began with a debriefing of the sermon the instructor had given during the worship hour. The handout on Ellen White's emphasis of the gospel as the greatest motivator was distributed. The audience response survey for the sermon was discussed. The *Preaching by Discovery Checklist* was handed out (Appendix C).

Following this short "catch up" session, the seminar proceeded as planned. Only one fifteen-minute break was taken. A few Christian choruses were sung to break the ice and center thought at the beginning of the afternoon and during the break. People were anxious to discuss, and it was hard to cover all of the material. A few segments were forgotten or purposely skipped. Overhead transparencies of the fill-in handouts (Appendix C) and a blackboard were used to add visual reinforcement.

The seminar ended at 5:30 p.m. At the end of the seminar, participants completed a seminar evaluation (Appendix E). They were asked to plan to give a sermon within the next two months, but were not required to sign a commitment sheet. Each local church head elder was asked to coordinate the participants' speaking schedule, the video taping, and collection of the audience response surveys.

Participant Follow-up

Copies of the Audience Response Form were delivered to each local head elder (Appendix F). These coordinators were also contacted by telephone and reminded to schedule the participants to speak, and to have video equipment ready to tape the

sermons. They were reminded to pass out the Audience Response Forms one week after each participant sermon, to collect them that day, and to keep each set of responses separate for each speaker.

After two months, only two lay speakers had given and videotaped their sermons. The instructor was involved in an overseas trip for the next three weeks, so each local coordinator was contacted and asked to have all participant sermons given and videotaped within the next month. Dates for getting together for evaluation would be set at the end of the one-month extension.

Eight lay preachers conducted sermons and came to an evaluation meeting in their local church. Five of the eight videotaped their sermon. Four of the eight tried to apply principles learned from the training course.

Each evaluation session began with a reiteration that the participants were not evaluating themselves, but the course. The group would watch a videotaped sermon and then discuss which course principles they had tried to implement. The group discussed how well the training principles fit their preaching styles and the people's practical needs. The group gave the instructor suggestions for course improvement.

Evaluation

Evaluation by Conference Observers

The two observers from the pastoral supervisory staff of the Kansas-Nebraska Conference of Seventh-day Adventists divided their remarks into commendations and recommendations.

They commended the instructor for such a large number involved in the seminar. They commended the volume of written material prepared and given to the participants. They felt the material generated much conversation and helped many to gain new insights. They commended the handout of quotations on Ellen White on motivation as particularly meaningful to Seventh-day Adventists. The instructor was commended for maintaining participant interest throughout the day.

The sermon during worship was commended for involving young people, using good visuals, and music to focus the message. They cautioned that audience participation could distract and consume valuable sermon time, but that in this case the preacher was able to do it successfully.

The observers made the following recommendations. Introductory remarks needed to relate more clearly to the topic. The purpose of the seminar needed to be made clearer. It would have been better to cover smaller areas at a time. The sermon could have incorporated more of the principles of preaching by discovery.

The observers further suggested that the instruction might cover different types of sermons: topical, narrative, and expository. Future revisions of the course might include the importance of a balanced sermonic calendar, i.e., evangelistic, nurture, prophetic, and doctrinal topics. Other topics that might be included were what to preach and how to preach.

Evaluation by the Participants

Fourteen participants submitted a Seminar Evaluation (Appendix E) at the end of the course. Seven felt that the seminar was very helpful; seven thought it was somewhat

helpful. Eleven said the instructor was very easy to follow and interesting; three said he was somewhat clear and interesting. Nine felt they had acquired new skills, two felt they had not, and three were uncertain.

Open-ended questions were answered variably, often incompletely, or not at all. The open-ended questions included: What was most important to you? What was the most interesting thing you learned? What specific changes do you plan to make in your preaching? Answers to open-ended requests for suggestions were likewise often incomplete or not answered at all. The most common suggestions were to have more clearly defined and shorter course segments, number the handout pages, and give more breaks.

The seminar was also orally evaluated by participants who preached a sermon following the seminar. Many of these participants felt intimidated by the scope of the material presented. Several remarked that they did not try to include the principles of the course in their sermon because they could not concentrate on the sermon and include the principles at the same time. One elder suggested that many lay preachers are not naturally creative, and a more step-by-step approach to sermon construction was needed. The one principle that seemed to come through and be applied the most was involvement of the audience during the sermon.

Three lay preachers in one local church got together and discussed how to apply the course principles before they did their sermons. These individuals understood and incorporated more of the course principles than those in the other two churches. They said the sermon checklist (Appendix C) had been most helpful. They also used the four 4MAT questions (Appendix B) and the four questions that ensure practicality (Appendix

B) to check sermon content. One preacher, new to her task, even contacted people before the sermon to involve them in the sermon process.

Participants suggested the course be revised by leaving out some material (not specified), shortening the instruction periods, giving more breaks, providing an outline of the course, and numbering the handout pages. They all said it would have been helpful to have had more instruction before the instructor's inductive example sermon. Several had difficulty understanding the inductive process. Some expressed the idea that the concepts were too new, especially to older preachers. They needed more exposure to the material before they could effectively apply it. Most were too busy to study the handouts and their notes. One participant suggested audio taping the course so they could listen to it repeatedly while driving.

The Audience Response Survey (Appendix F), given one week following each participant's sermon, was not very effective. Many congregants refused to complete the form. Some lay preachers thought their fellow members were reluctant to criticize their peers. Perhaps the form was too long and open-ended, so people felt they had insufficient time to fill them out. Those forms that were filled out were often very cursory and incomplete.

Another problem with the Audience Response Form was that many people did not even remember what was preached the week before. Very few applied or even thought about the sermon during the week. In the one church where the lay preachers discussed the seminar and applied the course principles more consistently, a greater percentage of the congregation remembered and applied the sermon during the week. All three of these preachers made it a point to tell the congregation exactly what they expected them to do

during the week. They also made the activity short and easy. This did help the congregation to apply the sermon. Still, many listeners did nothing.

Evaluation by the Instructor

Apparently, the inductive approach was so unfamiliar to most of the participants that they had difficulty understanding and applying the material. The entire course and the worship sermon were presented inductively. One evaluator commented that they would have liked to have seen more of the seminar principles applied in the demonstration sermon. Many of the principles were applied, but I suspect they were so completely applied inductively, that the participants did not realize it. Several times the instructor noted that participants were confused about where they were going and what was expected of them. For people used to the deductive approach, it appears that a more traditional deductive approach should be used initially to teach the inductive method.

The initial enthusiastic attendance at the seminar seems to have been from curiosity and commitment to the pastor. Only eight of the seventeen followed through and applied the principles of the seminar to a sermon. Since several had not given sermons before, they were probably afraid to try. A more basic course of instruction would be needed for them.

Several lapses in giving the initial seminar needed correction. There was not enough time to cover all of the material. More of the material should have been covered before the demonstration sermon. The sermon checklist should have been given to participants earlier in the seminar. There should have been more time devoted to prayer at

the beginning and end of seminar sections. At least two more short breaks would have been helpful.

More time for the learning style survey was needed. Participants seemed very interested in this. The professionally constructed survey by Excel¹ would be more accurate and authoritative, if cost were not prohibitive.

Most participants were so tired by the end that they did not complete the seminar evaluation surveys thoroughly. Several could not come on Friday night, and most did not want to give up their Sunday, so it was difficult to work the material in with adequate time for breaks, discussion, hands-on application, and rest. A Friday evening session would definitely be helpful if possible. If participants could be released by 3:30 p.m. or 4:00 p.m. Saturday afternoon, then return for two or three hours on Sunday morning, the atmosphere would probably be more fresh and relaxed.

The seminar evaluation survey contained too many open-ended questions. People need to be able to finish it more quickly with less effort.

The head elder of each local church was asked to coordinate the lay speakers, the video taping, and dissemination and collecting of audience response surveys. It probably would have been better if the pastor was more involved in this coordination. Lay speakers were afraid to get their feet wet and be videotaped. If the seminar instructor would have talked privately with the lay preachers and helped them plan their sermon, the response would probably have been better. Of course, if the instructor were not also the local

¹ McCarthy, *The Learning Type Measure*. This instrument is available through About Learning, Inc., 1251 N. Old Rand Road, Wauconda, IL 60084, 1-800-822-4628, (847) 487-1800, or aboutlearning.com.

pastor, this would not be possible. Continued instruction and follow-up on seminar principles and application would be much more effective than the one-day, one-sermon approach.

Only a small percentage of audience response surveys were returned. Many of those returned were incomplete. The general trend was that people could not remember what was preached the week before. Clearly, motivation to apply what they had learned was not significantly improved. There seems to be a long ingrained understanding that the sermon is a momentary inspiration, not an impetus for the week's spiritual activities. A concerted and protracted education process is needed to motivate people to action. One seminar cannot complete the task. Rome was not built in a day.

Revision

Course Changes

Participants suggested that the seminar should cover less material. They were reluctant to cut out any specific items, however. The revised seminar was to be given on a Friday evening and Sabbath morning and afternoon. The instructor felt this would give more time to cover material. He also felt that having had experience in presenting the course and shifting the approach to a more direct deductive style would also provide more time. Therefore, course content was not altered. The instructor felt comfortable providing the students with more resource material than they might actually cover. In addition, he realized that some material could be left out or only briefly mentioned if student interest dictated.

In order to make the seminar more understandable, a deductive approach to the material was taken. The inductive method was explained deductively. Participants were told what they would cover during the course and in each section. They were told what was expected of them, and more guidelines for questions and discussion were given. More time was spent asking if they were understanding the material as it was covered. Participant handouts were numbered, stapled together, and a cover sheet and outline added to facilitate material manipulation. (Appendix C shows handouts, as they would be given for another presentation.)

Three handouts were added as resource material: Incentives for Adult Learning, What's My Learning Style?, Finding Your Strength (Appendix C). The Seminar Evaluation survey was shortened, and some questions changed from open-ended to multiple choice (Appendix E gives the survey as it would be used in the future).

The worship sermon was changed only slightly (Appendix D). The opening remarks and names in the pastor and his pretty-preachers illustration were changed to identify with a different congregation. A couple of people found the closing story in the worship sermon too poignant, especially if some in the audience might have experienced domestic abuse. The ending story was changed, and therefore, the closing slide of a butterfly was not shown.

Thus, course content was revised only slightly in order to add resource material, to better relate to a different congregation, and to present the material in a more organized manner. Delivery of the material was more deductive in order to be less confusing to the participants.

Implementation

Arrangements were made through a fellow district pastor to conduct the *Preaching by Discovery* seminar in the Manhattan, Kansas, district on July 15, 2000.

After he had secured permission from his church boards, the Planning Together survey (Appendix A) was sent to the pastor via electronic mail. He made copies and gave them to his lay preachers. They then returned the completed surveys concerning time schedule and material interest to the course instructor via electronic and regular mail.

Five participants returned the Planning Together survey. These indicated the best times for the seminar were Friday, 7 p.m.-8:30 p.m., Sabbath, 9:30 a.m.-11:00 a.m., 2:00 p.m.-5:30 p.m. There was some interest in how to find and use illustrations. The instructor brought a couple of website and mail order addresses, and prepared a short comment about finding illustrations. These were presented impromptu at the end of the seminar, so they were not formally added to course revisions.

Only two participants came Friday evening. The instructor spent more time becoming acquainted. The approach was more personal sharing than formal instruction. The first two sections of the seminar were completed, but with the understanding that much of it would need to be repeated for those who were absent.

Four participants arrived at various times Sabbath morning. The first two who arrived were not the two who had come the previous night. The instructor took one half hour catching these two up on what we had discussed before. It was very difficult for the instructor to present a cogent class. Nevertheless, students were briefed on what to look for in the worship sermon. Again, participants had difficulty understanding the inductive approach.

The sermon invoked considerable discussion. Although congregants' responses were quite different from those of the first time the sermon was given, the instructor was still able to guide them to see Christ and His gospel as their ultimate need. Several appreciated the closing special music.

After a potluck lunch with the seminar participants, their families, and a few other church members, the seminar reconvened at 2:30 p.m. Six people participated in the afternoon sessions. The district pastor also sat in on the last hour of the course. Since three participants had not been to previous sessions, it was difficult to catch them up, explain concepts that had been given before, and at the same time move the seminar forward. Two fifteen-minute breaks were taken at 3:30 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. The instructor cursorily discussed the topic of application, ending instruction at 5:30 p.m. Participants then took one half hour to complete the seminar evaluations.

Evaluation of Revised Seminar

The instructor learned later that many of the preachers in the Manhattan district have not had to preach or had not preached before. Several were reluctant to be at the seminar.

This reluctance, poor communication, or other personal factors may have produced the erratic attendance. The instructor was somewhat unnerved by the erratic attendance. It would be difficult to compare the effectiveness of the two seminars, since the second was so spontaneously reorganized and impromptu because of the disruptions. Still, some general evaluations can be made.

Again, participants had difficulty understanding the inductive approach. Those who had more education and were younger tended to understand the concept better. The more deductive approach to explaining induction did seem to help a couple of participants who recognized it being applied in the morning sermon.

Participants generally appreciated the seminar. They all said they gained new insights. Four said the seminar was very helpful and gave them very meaningful insights; three said the seminar was somewhat helpful and meaningful. Two said they planned to incorporate 90 percent of the seminar material in their sermons; four said they could use 50 percent in their sermons. Differences in how people learn seemed to be the topic of most interest.

The material seemed too new and intimidating to some. The instructor could tell from comments that a few lay preachers considered the seminar to have some nice points, but they would continue to construct sermons basically the way they always had. The instructor did not feel he conveyed the burden to motivate the congregation to action. Most lay preachers' concern was just how to get their job done from week to week.

Follow-up would have been essential to the success of the second seminar. If the seminar's principles were valid, the lay preachers would have to apply those principles in their sermons before any motivation to action could be expected. Then, the response of the audience would need to be measured. A closer coordination with the instructor and pastor to ensure such follow-up would have helped. Further trial and revision of the seminar are probably needed to accurately determine its effectiveness.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary of Motivation in Preaching

Motivation in preaching is affected by numerous factors in the preacher, the individual hearers, the material, and the environment. The preacher who studies these factors will understand and be able to use them to motivate the congregation to action.

The field of study is so vast, however, that there is need to distill motivational factors into more easily studied and applied principles. Three prime factors should be considered in building motivational sermons: self-esteem, participation, and the gospel. In addition, preachers must build intrinsic motivation within the hearers themselves. Hearers must want to choose for themselves what action they will follow. Intrinsically motivated people will generally ask three questions of the sermon: What do I want? How can God give me what I want? What must I do to obtain my desires in accordance with God's will? As these three factors and three questions are considered and satisfied in the congregants' minds, they will be motivated to act upon the sermon.

Behavioral psychology suggests that as people's basic needs are met, they become more ready to address self-actualization needs. People want information that will provide for their felt needs. The preacher, then, must begin with a needs-based ministry, focused on satisfying the needs of the self. The effective preacher must discover from study,

visitation, and prayer what the people need. As people's needs are met, they are more ready to act altruistically to meet the requests of God, church, and others.

Self-esteem is further built by allowing congregants to participate in the homiletic process. Adult learning theory points out that adults want self-direction in their learning. If congregants have say in what is preached, how it is preached, and how and when it is applied, their self-esteem is enhanced, and they become more ready to act on issues. The motivating preacher can enhance self-esteem and participation by providing varied and personalized activities or "do-ables" the congregants can engage in before, during, and after the sermon.

Self-esteem and participation can also be enhanced by following the four questions of the 4MAT learning style system: Why should I learn this? What do I need to know? How does this work practically? What if I incorporate this into my life? These questions not only build self-esteem and interest by touching varied learning preferences, but they also follow the normal psychological routine for addressing most goals or problems. The 4MAT questions can provide a structure or motivational checklist for each sermon.

An inductive approach to the sermon can also build self-esteem and participation. Induction gives the hearers the impression that they are with the preacher in addressing the sermon topic. They move with the preacher, discovering for themselves the significance, answers, and applications for their lives. Induction also naturally holds interest until the discovery is made. Sermons constructed to involve the audience by questions and discussion build self-directedness and participation. A narrative style sermon, which poses a problem or question, then follows an exploratory path until a climaxing self-discovery, explores practical solutions, and finally, gives the individual varied, simple, practical,

personalized options of application, should best enhance motivation to action. It must be cautioned, however, that approaches that are more deductive will work best if self-esteem is low, the inductive approach is too new and uncomfortable, or the people have been long trained to inaction.

The greatest motivator the preacher has is the love of God and the gospel. Love and trust are the strongest intrinsic motivators to action. Natural extrinsic motivators such as physical, security, social, and other needs motivate persons. However, these are all provided for as reality or promise when one has a relationship with One who is not only the ultimate Source, but also highly values the individual. Thus, the intrinsic gratitude, love, and trust that comes from one who accepts the relationship with God supersedes all the other extrinsic motivators affecting one's life. The gospel lifts self-esteem, for God Himself loves us. The gospel promotes participation for its essence is a personal choice to have a personal relationship with God.

Because God is the ultimate source of motivation, all the preacher's efforts to motivate will always be secondary to God's. Preachers cannot use God to motivate, but must themselves be motivated to action by the incomprehensible love of God. This relationship of preacher to God will provide the sincerity, enthusiasm, emotion, and love that actuate the speaker. Often these non-verbals will motivate to action more effectively than carefully crafted words or programs. Thus, the gospel--in the life of the preacher, the words of the sermon, and the life of the Church--is still the greatest motivator to action.

Summary of the Seminar on Motivational Preaching

Course Design and Implementation

Summary of the Seminar on Motivational Preaching

Course Design and Implementation

A six-hour seminar, *Preaching by Discovery*, was designed to train lay preachers to preach motivationally. The seminar promoted the inductive method of sermon design as a means of fostering an atmosphere of mutual discovery. The course emphasized practical methods of satisfying congregational needs and self-esteem. The gospel was presented as the greatest means of satisfying needs and building intrinsic motivation. Andragogical principles and learning style preferences were explored as means of increasing learner satisfaction and motivation. The seminar also emphasized practical ways to enhance audience participation before, during, and after the sermon. The course suggested the 4MAT system of learning designed by Bernice McCarthy as a simple, effective way to incorporate seminar principles and enhance audience motivation to action.

The first seminar was given to lay preachers in three small, rural, Seventh-day Adventist churches in Kansas. These lay preachers used the principles of the seminar to preach sermons in their churches. An audience response survey was collected the following week for each sermon to evaluate sermon effectiveness. The lay preachers later met with the seminar instructor to evaluate the sermons and seminar. Observations by participants, professional observers, and the instructor were used to evaluate and revise the seminar.

The seminar was revised and given to lay preachers of another three-church district of Seventh-day Adventists in Kansas. Seminar participants completed an evaluation survey at the end of the seminar. These surveys and instructor observations formed the basis for future seminar recommendations.

Results

Most seminar participants appreciated the training. Several participants, however, felt the material was hard to understand and difficult to apply. In particular, the inductive method was difficult to grasp for many. A few lay preachers used the 4MAT learning system questions to outline their sermons, but many had difficulty applying these concepts. A few reluctant participants did not try to apply seminar principles to a sermon.

The information on learning style preferences seemed to be the most fascinating subject for many participants. Strategies for audience participation seemed to be the most easily understood and implemented by the lay preachers. Several preachers applied the lesson of "sharing" rather than "telling." The younger and more highly educated participants seemed to grasp and apply the seminar material more readily.

Most participants felt the seminar covered too much material. A few participants had other things to do or became tired and missed portions of the seminar. Most seminar evaluations were cursorily completed because everyone was tired by the end of the day.

Audience response to the lay sermons did not reveal significant improvement in congregational motivation. Many congregants said they thought the sermons were better than usual, but they could not define any specific reason or benefit. Congregants did not seem to apply the sermon's topic through the next week to any significant degree. Most congregants could not adequately fill out the Audience Response Survey because they could not remember the previous week's sermon. Those lay preachers who incorporated seminar principles most completely did seem to get greater audience response than those who did not incorporate seminar principles. The audience responded most significantly when the lay preachers told the audience exactly what they wanted them to do and made

the expected task as simple as possible. Even in these cases, however, most congregants failed to be motivated enough to apply the sermon through the week.

Suggestions for the Future

Areas of behavioral motivational research are extensive and expansive. They will always provide a fruitful field for future research that can be applied to homiletics. Preachers should devote time continually to understanding human behavior and motivation. Research in this study seems to indicate fruitful areas for improving audience motivation to action. The fact that the *Preaching by Discovery* seminar did not seem to produce significant results should not deter further research in this area.

Comments by lay preachers in the seminar indicate that the material was too new and difficult to grasp. Clearly, the seminar material needs to be simplified and reduced. The seminar might be more effective if spread out once a week for six weeks. This would give students time to absorb new material. Pastors who wish to train their lay preachers to be more effective should try to promote an atmosphere of life-long camaraderie and personal growth. Regular monthly or quarterly instructional and fellowship meetings for pastor and lay preachers should provide the extended time needed for lay preachers to become thoroughly trained in principles that motivate congregants to action.

Participants who did not have a high level of interest in preaching or changing their approach to preaching did not apply the material. The instructor should ensure that lay participants really want the instruction. Coercion demotivates.

Professional clergy may more readily appreciate and appropriate the seminar material. It would be valuable to give the seminar in a larger church, to a class of more

experienced preachers, even clergy, in order to see how it is received by different types of preachers. Having different instructors would test the course's validity regardless of instructor skill. Putting the course in audio or video format might prove more effective by giving participants the opportunity to repeat the material.

More work needs to be done in involving the congregation before, during, and especially after the sermon, so that they are encouraged to be more involved in motivating themselves to action. There needs to be a serious and extended program to change congregational expectations from passively hearing a message on the Sabbath, and then forgetting about any future application of that message during the week. This cannot be done by command, but must be "caught" as pastor and congregants journey together, both on Sabbath and during the week, toward common goals.

The preacher must not expect simple solutions to complex needs and problems. It will take patience to change long-standing attitudes and inertia and enhance congregational motivation. The basic congregational needs for prayer, Bible study, fellowship, worship, visitation, and service must be filled. Preaching, though important, is only part of building the climate and structure essential for a congregation to be intrinsically motivated to action.

Finally, the love of God and the gospel must be the central focus in every aspect of the congregation's life, for this is the greatest motivator. If God does not motivate, it is insignificant how good the material, instruction, or administration is. Pastor, preachers, and congregants must focus together on His great love and His great mission. Without Him, sermons, persons, and church programs will motivate only temporarily. With Him, motivation to action will carry all into the kingdom of heaven.

APPENDIX A
PLANNING TOGETHER SURVEY

PLANNING TOGETHER

1. Check the three areas that most interest you:

- ☐ Finding ideas to preach on
- ☐ How to organize a message
- ☐ Where to find illustrations
- ☐ Tips on sermon delivery
- ☐ How to make a message relevant
- ☐ Use of multimedia in preaching
- ☐ How to have a spiritual message
- ☐ Creativity in sermon preparation
- ☐ How to assess congregational needs
- ☐ How to preach so people with different learning styles will get the most benefit
- ☐ Other (Please list) _____

2. Length of Seminar. Would you prefer six hours spread over:

- ☐ Friday night, Sabbath, and Sunday?
- ☐ Friday night and Sabbath?
- ☐ All day Sabbath?
- ☐ Sabbath and Sunday?

Times: _____

- ☐ All day Sunday

3. Seminar Format. What format do you prefer?

- ☐ Lecture
- ☐ Informal discussion
- ☐ Group discussion
- ☐ Role play/practice

4. What would make the seminar meaningful and practical to you? (Be specific).

5. What personal goals do you have for this seminar?

6. What problem would you like the seminar to address?

APPENDIX B
INSTRUCTOR'S OUTLINE

LESSON NOTES

PREACHING BY DISCOVERY

(Students will use handout by this title)¹

I. Questions to Ponder.

First, share my struggles with preaching and not getting response.

Engage students in dialogue, learning their struggles with preaching, and guiding them to consider the inductive style. Note: Use buzz groups for questions A1, A2, B1, and B2 of the Preaching by Discovery Handout if 6 or more students. Have each buzz group share thoughts with the larger group.

A. Use Heb 8:11 as a puzzler, along with 1 Pet 2:9, to focus on the priesthood of all believers. We are on equal footing and need to **share** not **tell**.

B. Have students consider the questions in B3 to bring out adult learning principles and the need for an inductive preaching style

As I see it, an enabler is one who helps people to discover, to develop skill in, and to begin to take responsibility for their ministry as God's people. I believe it is the enabler, not the teller, the doer, the coercer, or the admonisher, who will ultimately be instrumental in helping God's people to overcome the gap between the visions of a renewed Church and the actuality of a renewed Church.²

C. Adults often want to collaborate rather than be told. Adults want self-direction, to learn by experience, what practically works, to meet their present needs & real life situations. Use other quotes on adult learning as needed.

¹ Appendix C, 133.

² Edwin C. Linberg, "An Examination of the Role of Clergy as an Enabler of the Development and Growth of the Ministry of the Laity," (D.Min dissertation, Claremont, California School of Theology, 1975).

II. Jesus' Method of Preaching¹

When Jesus preached what were His subjects? They were universal needs, desires, and experiences, such as anxiety, family, honesty, stewardship, marital faithfulness, etc. How did He present His materials? He used the parables of everyday life.

What was His approach? Let's look at **Matthew 16:13-20**

A. How does Jesus begin His teaching (v. 13)? He begins with a question.

The Bible records 153 questions He asked His listeners.

Jesus respected what people thought.

Does Jesus begin with where people are, or where they ought to be?

Does Jesus tell Peter Who He really is, or does Peter discover it for himself?

Does Jesus trust the Holy Spirit to work with Peter, or does He feel Peter can

“get it” only if He thoroughly indoctrinates him (verses 17, 18)?

Are people's acceptances of the preacher's message to be based on the preacher's position or their understanding of the message?

Compare verse 19 with Luke 11:52.

Why does Jesus make the statement in verse 20? Each must discover truth.

B. Help students fill out comparison on Preaching Styles (see handout).

C. Summarize the principle characteristics of inductive versus deductive preaching.

D. Distribute and discuss Preaching by Discovery Checklist.²

Summary and Application

¹ Adapted from Ralph L. Lewis and Gregg Lewis, *Inductive Preaching: Helping People Listen* (Westchester, IL: Crossway Books, 1984), 67-78.

² Appendix C, 134.

- A. Ask, "What are your thoughts about what we have discussed."
- B. Ask, "What could we do to create an expectant atmosphere of discovery in our congregations?"
- C. Does the following statement express our new vision? First, explore our mutual concerns. Then, discover together God's relevant answers to those concerns. Finally, decide together how we can practically and effectively take advantage of our new discoveries.

DISCOVERING WHAT THEY WANT

(Students use handout by this title)¹

I. Three Questions and Three Factors that Impact Every Sermon

Did you ever wonder why some people never come to Church when they know it is right? Others come; then quit coming. Still others are there every week without fail. Why? Share some recent experiences.

Jesus answered the question with differing types of soil (Luke 8:4-15). Psychologists speak of two types of motivation: extrinsic and intrinsic. Extrinsic motivation is based on factors impinging on you from the outside. It is based upon what others tell you, make you, or pressure you to do to win their acceptance. It involves the areas of reward and punishment. Intrinsic motivation arises from within oneself. It centers on your convictions, desires, concerns, values and choices. You do it because you want to do it.

Which do you think is more effective in motivating people?

If that is so, then the job of the preacher is really to help the people motivate themselves. It is more proper to say the preacher helps the people choose God's inwardly inspired way.

A. Intrinsically motivated people ask three basic questions:

1. What do I want? This is where we can identify with them.
2. How can God give me what I want? Here we make the Bible relevant.

¹ Appendix C, 135.

3. What can I do to fulfill my wants and God's will? This is where we can help them apply the Bible's answers to their lives.

B. Seldom does a single reason provide the motivation for a person's service.¹

Three basic motivational factors are the Gospel, self-esteem, and participation. Before we say anything about our subject, however, there are two questions we must answer for our audience before they will even listen to what we have to say.

II. The Sermon Before the Sermon

A. Everyone in our audience is secretly asking of its speaker: (1) Do I like him/her? and, (2) Does he/she like me? Why?

1. Adults will be more open, accepting, and responsive to materials or tasks presented by someone they like and trust.²

2. Establishing a speaker-listener relationship is the first key to communicating.³

B. Who would you rather buy a used car from a stranger or a friend?

What can we do in the first three minutes of our sermon to help them feel they can trust us and our message? Go over handout.

C. Establishing a trusting relationship is the first key in effective communication.

¹ Paul P. McDonough, *Keys to Effective Motivation* (Nashville: Broadman, 1979).

² Raymond J. Wlodkowski, *Enhancing Adult Motivation to Learn: a Guide to Improving Instruction and Increasing Learner Achievement* (San Francisco: Jossey - Bass, 1985), 75.

³ Calvin Miller, *The Empowered Communicator: 7 Keys to Unlocking an Audience* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1994), 13, 14.

D. A formula for the first three minutes¹

1. Share some common struggle, question, or problem.
2. Share what from the Bible and your personal experience has helped you.
3. Offer the hope that they can learn the lesson faster and better as they consider God's message this morning.
4. Ask for role-play on the Second Coming to give students practice.

III. Discovering Our People

- A. Laity imply that what turns people off is not the unimportance of church, but the pressure of time and more compelling interests. The laity list church failure to offer an appealing program that meets their needs for dealing with the problems of life as the main problem. So they invest their time and energies elsewhere.²

"Knowing what was on people's minds and applying the truth to Scripture guarantees . . . an attentive audience."³

"Men are needed for this time who can understand the wants of the people and minister to their necessities."⁴

How can we discover what our people's needs are, what questions they wrestle with, what their interests are, and what will bolster their self-esteem?

Read, Listen, Visit, and Pray.

1. Read widely. Read what they read.

¹ Miller, 34-38.

² Robert B. Farrar, "Factors Affecting Volunteerism in Church Related Activities" (Ed.D. dissertation, University of Houston, 1985), 17, 18.

³ George Barna, *User Friendly Churches* (Ventura, CA: Regal, 1991), 107.

⁴ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1948), 4:315.

2. Listen by asking people about their interests, concerns, etc. Take note of what people at work, at the store, in the paper, in your social contacts are talking about.

3. Visit! You cannot know them if you never see them.

“No minister is sufficiently equipped for his work who does not know how to meet the people at their homes, and come into close relation to their needs.” From *Review and Herald*, April 19, 1892.¹

4. Pray! Have a notebook with names, pictures, what they like and need.²

Pray over each one each day, and you will soon know them, and they will know you care.

B. List common needs all people have. Have them fill in handout. Use a board.³

C. Goals Vs Problems

1. Share my experience with goal orientation that others didn't share.

2. Many people hate setting goals, but like solving problems.

3. Example: Goal: Wouldn't it be good to have 10 more people per week at services? Problem: Attendance is dwindling, money is not coming in, and the church is dying. What can we do to fix it?

4. Share Inventories if there is time.⁴

¹ Ellen G. White, *Evangelism* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1946), 438.

² Howard G. Hendricks, *Teaching to Change Lives* (Portland, OR: Multnomah, 1987), 41, 42.

³ Appendix C, 136.

⁴ Bobb Biehl, *Stop Setting Goals If You Would Rather Solve Problems* (Nashville: Moorings, 1995), 4-17.

D. Self-esteem

1. Share the story about members who quit coming because "They are always telling us what we need to do, and how we come up short. We know that, but what we need to hear is some encouragement." Why did they quit coming? They did not feel good about themselves.

2. Wlodkowski cites several studies that indicate maintaining and enhancing self-concept are the prime motives behind all behavior.¹

3. How do we challenge yet not condemn? How do we convey acceptance while we are calling for improvement?

To challenge people, devise learning just beyond their capabilities, but not too difficult to seem impossible or unpleasant. Second, maximize attractions and minimize dangers of the risk. Third, make sure the learners truly want the challenge and are not being coerced. A fourth optional step is to agree on a written commitment to complete the challenge.²

4. What are some things we could do to build self-esteem?

We can compliment, focus on possibilities more than problems, give tasks in easy, short-term bits to give them some likelihood of success which builds confidence. We can emphasize God's love and acceptance: the Gospel.

¹ Wlodkowski, 6, 88, 89.

² Wlodkowski, 133.

E. The Gospel

1. What is your reaction to this statement? “Nothing reaches so fully down to the deepest motives of conduct as a sense of the pardoning love of Christ.”¹
2. Eva cites Maslow as seeing lack of motivation for the person dealing with the sin problem as a problem of self-actualization, fulfillment, or esteem. The person feels “wretched” (Romans 7:24). The law shows him to be ever more evil, even though he is trying to be good (Romans 7:21).²
3. Trying to do good only shows our inadequacies, and lowers self-esteem. Realizing the Gospel, that through Christ, I am highly esteemed, though evil, lifts esteem, from self to Christ. So, now trying is not under threat, or pain, or fear, or guilt, but motivated by freeing gracious love. Motivation is lifted from human needs to Divine love. We are lifted “out of ourselves.” It is an “out-of body” experience!
4. An orator’s goal is to get people to do something. The pastor’s goal is to bring about or strengthen a relationship with God. Effectively announcing the Gospel or ministry of reconciliation (2 Corinthians

¹ Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1940), 493.

² Willmore D. Eva, “A Functional View of Human Motivation in the local Seventh-day Adventist Church Based on Theological and Psychological Principles” (D.Min. dissertation, Andrews University, 1981), 22.

5: 20) frees the person from self, and focuses them on God. God then, through the Spirit, facilitates appropriate behavior change.¹

5. Our job is to lead people to Christ. When they are locked in a love relationship with Him, they will be teachable and responsive to His program.

6. Motivational roadblocks are removed when Christians change focus from “how” do I exercise faith to “Who” do I trust. When “bringing others to Christ” is just that, and not indoctrination or lifestyle change, believers will feel more able and motivated to witness. The incapable and “not good enough” will find in Jesus’ goodness and capability fully in their behalf, the freedom to live and witness.²

7. Share a few quotes on Ellen White and motivation.³

IV. Reaction and Summary

A. Ask what their reactions are to this lesson segment.

B. Highlight major points of lesson.

C. Empowered people will accomplish far more than ordered-about people.⁴

¹ Eva, 114.

² Ibid., 57.

³ Appendix C, 137-140.

⁴ George B. Weber, “Growing Tomorrow’s Leaders,” in *The Leader of the Future*, eds. F. Hesselbein, M. Goldsmith, and R. Beckhard, (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1996), 309.

DISCOVERING GOD'S ANSWERS TO THEIR NEEDS

(Students use handout with this title)¹

I. Managing Change

- A. Questions
1. How do you feel when something is sprung on you?
 2. How do you feel when given a task you know nothing about?
 3. How do you feel when asked to do something that seems too hard, or will take too long, or changes some favorite pastime?
- B. How could you make the above changes more acceptable? Use buzz groups if practicable.
- C. To manage change,
1. Affirm their history, past, self and corporate worth.
 2. Identify with them. You are going through this with them.
 3. Involve the people in the decision making and planning.
Help them to feel they have control of the change.
 4. Go slowly, and preserve security with adequate communication. People are usually down on what they are not up on!
 5. Preserve solidarity and trust by focusing more on relationships than the task.²

¹ Appendix C, 141, 142.

² Benjamin Schoun, Class Notes for CHMN727, Leadership in Church Organizations, Andrews University Extension, Lincoln, NE, 22 August, 1996

II. Engaging the Whole Person in the Discovery Process

If the preacher tells them what they must do, the audience can sit back and say, yes or no. They do not have to be involved. However, if they are wholly engaged in the discovery process, it is hard to be detached and non-committal. Let's talk now about the form our sermon content should take to engage the listeners in the discovery process.

A. The Mind

1. What attracts someone's attention and holds it? Discuss the place of

humor, contrast, identification with the audience, stories and variety.

a. The preacher, feigning illness, instructed his associate in the details of taking over the service for him one Sunday morning. Soon, however, he was on the links in a small town 50 miles away. His guardian angel, speaking to God, asked, "You aren't going to let him get away with that, are You?" God thought a moment, then replied, "I guess not." Just then the preacher stepped up to the first tee, gave the club a mighty swing, and the ball traveled 425 feet, bounced, and rolled into the cup, a 425 foot hole in one! "Why did you do that?" the angel asked. God paused, then winked and said, "Who's he going to tell?"

b. How could you use this humor to teach a lesson?

c. How did Jesus engage the mind? He told stories.

d. Narrative preaching is popular today.

(1) One can tell a running story, bringing out points as one

proceeds.

(2) Short stories can illustrate truth.

(3) The sermon can take the form of a homiletical plot.¹ Begin by sharing a common problem or concern, build tension to a climax, or “Aha!” moment, then explain and apply.

(4) Give an example. I was looking at this bible text, and it presented a problem. Do you see it? How would you answer it? I searched the dictionary,, it suggested this. I checked the context; it suggested this. I examined the concordance it added this. I asked, “How could this fit the congregation?” I thought of this. So I wondered, could it mean this? Yes, that fits the context. Ellen White agrees. It works like this in real life. To apply this, I could 1, 2, 3....

e. Do you have any questions?

2. Clarity

a. The scuba diver was teaching his first class. All the students were to follow him as he led them to an underwater cave where they would practice putting on a fresh air tank. As he dove in, he noticed the visibility was only 4 feet. He was not sure whether the cave was just to the left or just to the right. He did not want to let the students know his uncertainty, so he went ahead, first one way, then another.

¹ Eugene L. Lowry, *The Homiletical Plot: The Sermon as Narrative Art Form* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1983).

Eventually he located the cave, but found that only one student had been able to keep up. Some got lost, some ran out of air, and some just stayed where they had entered the water. What was the scuba teacher's problem? Evoke comment. He lacked clarity.

b. Build clarity by

1) Illustrating with the most contemporary experience first; next

illustrate from historical experience; finally, illustrate from the Bible.

2) Explain texts slowly, logically; anticipating their questions and objections.

3) Move logically from slow to fast, simple to complex, broad to focused.

3. Practicality

a. Adult learners want choice, value, enjoyment, and success. They also demand that instruction should solve a practical problem they have or may have, or that it will improve one's position in life. In other words, "What have you done for me lately?"

b. Ask: Will it work?

How will it work?

How long will it take?

How hard will it be?

Is it worth it?

- c. Answering these questions as you build your arguments will help
make the sermon practical to your hearers.

B. God Answers through Varied Learning Styles

1. What is your learning style? (Inventories)¹
2. Describe the 4MAT Cycle.² (Handouts)³
3. Four Critical Questions:
 - a. Why should I learn this?
 - b. What does God want me to know about this?
 - c. How does this work in practically in my life?
 - d. What If I apply this in my own life?
 - e. Note: Using the Cycle, all are touched, and all of the learning
sequence is engaged.
4. Thought Patterns (Handout)⁴
5. Modalities people use to discover God's answers (inventory).⁵
 - a. Visual
 - b. Auditory
 - c. Kinesthetic
 - d. How would you illustrate faith for each type of learner?. Discuss.

¹ Appendix C, 143-146.

² Bernice McCarthy, *About Learning*, (Barrington, IL: Excel, 1996), 87-115.

³ Appendix C, 147, 148.

⁴ Appendix C, 149.

⁵ Appendix C, 150, 151.

C. Touching the Emotions

a. Some psychologists feel emotions are the “chief movers” of behavior.¹

b. An enthusiastic teacher will have students who do better on tests than those with a non-enthusiastic teacher. Energy and animation attract. People see enthusiasm as the evidence that what is being said can make a difference in one’s life. Enthusiasm heightens the concentration of the hearer. It shows that the speaker is speaking from the heart as well as the mind. Thus, it increases credibility.²

If the speaker is not naturally emotional or expressive, how can he/she touch their lives? Here are a few practical suggestions.

c. Speak of their concerns and values. Talk in feeling terms.

Make the subject personally applicable to their lives.

Let them experience concepts through

visual/auditory/kinesthetic aids.

Appeal to the imagination and memory. Use fond memories of their past, picture, sound, and touch words.

Use role-play and practice. Illustrate each concept.

¹ Wlodkowski, 52.

² Ibid., 28-32.

D. The Heart

“Your success will not depend so much upon your knowledge and accomplishments, as upon your ability to find your way to the heart.”¹

1. The heart is touched when we identify with them, share ourselves, and expect the best of them.
2. Jesus and Paul used natural motivators like reward and punishment, social pressure, concern over security and material possessions. However, they always used them in conjunction with and subordinate to the supernatural motivation of the Gospel.²
3. Gratitude is the very matrix of the Christian’s heart. It is the precondition to worship. It is out of a conscious dependence upon God and a recognition of His undeserved goodness that we ask, as did the Psalmist: ‘what shall I render to the Lord for all His bounty to me?’ (Psalm 116:12).³
4. Take time to let your own sermon into your heart.
5. Jesus and His love are the way to the heart.

III. Four Easy Steps

A. What are your questions and reactions?

B. Remember,

1. Attention touches the need and raises the question, **Why** should I learn this?
Experience offers a possible answer.

¹ Ellen G. White, *Gospel Workers* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1948), 93.

² Eva, 93-95, 98.

³ James L. Christiansen, *Don't Waste Your Time in Worship*, (Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell, 1978), 48.

2. Illustration and the Bible explore the evidence of **What** God wants me to know.
3. Example and participation explore **How** this is to work in practical life.
4. Attention and a supported challenge appeal to the question, **What If** I try God's Answer in my own life?

APPLYING OUR DISCOVERIES

(students use handout by this name)¹

I. How effective is the sermon alone?

A. I had read that Ellen White says the sermon is just part of the preacher's work.

There should be visiting, counseling, application in the home. We already talked about giving the audience a say in what is addressed in the sermon. We also touched on the need for the adult learner to be able to practically apply the sermon ideas afterward. I wondered, how much impact can the sermon alone have? Also, how effective would work before and after the sermon in engaging the people be in motivating them to actually do what the sermon suggested? Share the experiment in which pre- and post-work doubled the attendance at prayer meeting compared to the church at which the sermon alone was preached on the importance of prayer meeting.

B. Which do you prefer: To study what interests you or what interests someone else?

To plan your vacation or have someone plan it for you?

To play a game or watch someone else play it?

To decide how to handle a problem or have someone tell you what you must do?

To read a "how-to" book, or have someone show you?

C. When members have a self-determining say in the church, intrinsic motivation is more likely.²

¹ Appendix C, 152.

² Eva, 73.

D. Linberg feels the enabling pastor must help the laity experience what he/she is trying to teach.¹

E. Mehrabian states that communication is 7% verbal, 38% tone of voice, 55% body language; thus, 93% non-verbal.²

F. The more our teaching activities are in the direction of verbal symbols, the less involved the students are and the less they will learn. The more our teaching moves toward direct and simulated experience, the more a student will be involved in his own learning. Teaching activities at the verbal level tend to restrict students. Whereas, teaching activities involving direct experiences tend to include all the students in one way or another.³

G. Experience is the best teacher.

H. How can we get people to experience what we are talking about?

II. Participation in the Discovery Process

A. Why does Christianity tend to die in the second or third generation? Why is it a product is often not as good as when it was originally made?

1. We have two choices in teaching. We can make a choice, but we can not escape the consequences.

a. One focuses on the product. Everyone coming after tries to duplicate what the one did before. The result is they can never quite achieve what the predecessor did, so quality goes down. Illustrate on board.

¹ Linberg, 249.

² Albert Mehrabian, "Communications without Words," *Psychology Today* 2:4 (September 1968): 52-55.

³ Donald L. Griggs, *The Planning Game* (Livermore: Griggs Educational Service, 1971), 18.

b. The second method focuses on the process. How does one go about doing what the predecessor did. The result is the students learn to learn. They learn principles; they learn the process of development. As a result, they often build on what the predecessor accomplished, but they add to, and produce better quality.

c. Illustrate. The church set a standard to fulfill "love not the world" which said, "Do not go to movies." The younger generation, taught a product, questions why not movies when there is worse on television? Why?

2. Focus on Process not Product; the how and why of principles, not just rules. Focus on a relationship with Christ more than a set of behaviors.

B. "The more say learners have in choosing what, when, how, etc. they learn, the more they will be pleasantly stimulated to learn."¹ So what are some do-ables we can involve the people in before we even get to the sermon? Discuss; break into buzz groups if feasible.

Possibilities include topic surveys, topical discussion groups, visitation, and sermon and follow-up planning groups.

C. What are some do-ables they can engage in during the sermon? Discuss.

¹ Wlodkowski, 143.

Possibilities include fill-in handouts, dialogue, engaging questions, role-plays, practice, writing/drawing/constructing, puzzles/games, music, and paraphrasing or explaining to another.

D. What are some do-ables for after the sermon? Discuss.

Possibilities include on-the-job training, take-home assignments, planned practices, discussions, or applications later in the day or week, reaction reports, choice of applications available that are ready to go, commitment or sign-up sheets, and evaluation forms.

III. Be Doers of the Word and not Hearers only -- James 1:22

A. What shall we do with what we have learned? Negotiate for trial discovery

sermons. Suggest that those willing to try these techniques on a new sermon to do so, and be followed by a peer discussion. Perhaps the sermons can be video taped. Set up a timetable.

B. Questions?

C. Preaching Resources (Handout).¹

D. Evaluation²

¹ Appendix C, 153.

² Appendix E, 161.

APPENDIX C

PARTICIPANT HANDOUTS WITH ANSWERS

PREACHING BY DISCOVERY

A Seminar for Lay Preachers
Preaching that Enables Members to Action

Instructor: Michael A. Mnich

Place

Date

PREACHING BY DISCOVERY OUTLINE

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E. Questions and Reactions	
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G. Seminar Evaluation (Handout)

PREACHING BY DISCOVERY

I. Questions to Ponder

- A.
 1. What is our job as a preacher?
 2. What does this text mean to you?--- Heb. 8:11.
 3. What does 1 Pet. 2:9 tell us?
 4. Who are we to tell them?
 5. Would we be more likely to be heard if we *told* or *shared*?

- B.
 1. What is your biggest frustration or challenge in preaching?
 2. Why don't people do what we tell them?
 3. Which are people more likely to do?
 - What interests them ____ or What doesn't ____
 - What they are comfortable with ____ or What demands change ____
 - What they initially fear ____ or What they have time to check out ____
 - What they have to ____ or What they want to ____
 4. Would people be more likely to act on our sermons if they discover it for themselves, or if we told them?

II. Jesus' Method of Preaching

A. Matthew 16:13-20

B.

Preaching Styles

Jesus

vs.

The Pharisees

Personal

Impersonal

Respected People

Ruled People

Trusted Relationships

Trusted Rules

Gave Evidences Before Conclusions

Gave Set Conclusions

Appealed to Reason

Appealed to Authority

Concerned With Hearer's Needs

Concerned With Facts

People were First

Doctrine was first.

Teaches from Experience

Teaches from theory

Asked Questions

Proclaimed Demands

- C.
 - Deductive preaching proclaims; then explains.
 - Inductive preaching explains; then proclaims.

III. Exploring our mutual concerns, and discovering together God's relevant answers to those concerns, we decide together how we can practically and effectively take advantage of our new discoveries.

Their interests or Our interests?

Questions or Commanding?

Practical or Theoretical?

Audience Involved or Audience Passive?

1. Story for sharing myself:

2. Their needs and interests:
3. Topic to explore:
4. Questions to Ask:
5. Relationship stories and examples:
6. Practical applications:
7. Strategies to involve audience:

DISCOVERING WHAT THEY WANT

I. Three Questions and Three Factors that Impact Every Sermon

A. The Questions:

1. What do I want? - Identification.
2. How can God give me what I want? - Relevance.
3. What can I do to fulfill my wants and God's will? - Application.

B. The Basic Motivational Factors:

1. The Gospel.
2. Self-esteem.
3. Participation.

II. The Sermon Before the Sermon

A. What are the first two questions an audience secretly asks of it's speaker?

1. Do I like him/her?
2. Does he/she like me?

B. Who would you rather buy a used car from, a Stranger or a Friend?

1. Establish Common ground.
2. How are we alike?
3. Do they care about my interests?
4. Do we like the same things?
5. Do we share the same concerns and beliefs?
6. Does the speaker understand me?

C. Establishing a trusting relationship is the first key in effective communication.

D. Share:

1. Your common struggles, questions, problems
2. What from the Bible and your personal experience has worked for you.
3. How they can learn the lesson faster and better.

III. Discovering Our People

A. How can we discover what our people's needs are, what questions they wrestle with, what their interests are, and what will bolster their self-esteem?

1. R ead, L isten, V isit, and P ray!

B. List some common needs all people have: _____

C. Goals vs Problems

D. Self-esteem

E. The Gospel

IV. Empowered people will accomplish far more than ordered-about people.

PREACHING BY DISCOVERY

INCENTIVES FOR ADULT LEARNING

People Want to Gain

1. Health	8. Comfort
2. Time	9. Leisure
3. Money	10. Pride of accomplishment
4. Popularity	11. Advancement
5. Improved appearance	12. Increased enjoyment
6. Security in old age	13. Self-confidence
7. Praise from others	14. Personal prestige

They Want to Be

1. Good parents	6. Influential over others
2. Social; hospitable	7. Gregarious
3. Up-to-date	8. Efficient
4. Creative	9. "First" in some things
5. Proud of their possessions	10. Recognized as authorities

They Want to Do

1. Express their personalities	5. Appreciate beauty
2. Resist domination by others	6. Acquire or collect things
3. Satisfy their curiosity	7. Win others' affection
4. Emulate the admirable	8. Improve themselves generally

They Want to Save

1. Time	5. Worry
2. Money	6. Doubts
3. Work	7. Risks
4. Discomfort	8. Personal embarrassment

Source: Jane Thayer, Class notes for CHMN610 Teaching Ministry, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan, 1995, adapted from Malcolm Knowles, *The Modern Practice of Adult Education*, (New York: Cambridge, 1970), 87 and Irving Lorge, "Effective Methods in Adult Education," *Report of the Southern Regional Workshop for Agricultural Extension Specialists* (n.p., June, 1947), 25.

PREACHING BY DISCOVERY

ELLEN WHITE ON MOTIVATION

Ellen White only uses the word motivation six times in her writings. When she speaks of motive she is usually addressing the inner impulse of the individual. She says little of how to manipulate or inspire another's inner impulse. Today's emphasis on 'motivational speaking' is far from her consideration. Example, enthusiasm, hope, and challenge can affect one's motive. By far the greatest motivators she speaks of are the love of Christ and the Gospel. Some of her more salient points are included here for your consideration..

Mind, Character and Personality, 1:341-349. "Principles of Motivation" focuses on the principles of challenging people to high and lofty purpose; also self-examination as to selfish or serving motives.

The Great Motive Powers of the Soul.--The great motive powers of the soul are faith, hope, and love; and it is to these that Bible study, rightly pursued, appeals. {*Education*, 192 (1903); *Mind, Character, and Personality*, vol. 1, 349.3}

A thoroughgoing Christian draws his motives of action from his deep heart-love for his Master. Up through the roots of his affection for Christ springs an unselfish interest in his brethren. {*Adventist Home*, 425.4}

Those who have had committed to them the treasures of truth, and yet who are dead in trespasses and sin, need to be created anew in Christ Jesus. There is so little real vitality in the church at the present time, that it takes constant labor to give men the appearance of life to the professed people of God. When the converting power of God comes upon the people, it will be made manifest by activity. They will become workers, and will esteem the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of the world.--{*Review and Herald*, Jan. 17, 1893}

Love to God and to our fellow men should be our motive. {*Christ's Object Lessons*, 398.1}

The true Christian draws his motives of action from his deep love for his Redeemer. {*Sons and Daughters of God*, 288.5}

The love of our heavenly Father in the gift of his only begotten Son to the world, is enough to inspire every soul, to melt every hard, loveless heart into contrition and tenderness; ... {*Christian Education*, 96.1}

Love to Jesus must be the motive which impels us to action. {*Review and Herald*, November 18, 1884}

If there is anything in our world that should inspire enthusiasm, it is the cross of Calvary. {*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, 338.1}

[N]o discourse should ever be preached without presenting Christ and Him crucified as the foundation of the gospel. {*Gospel Workers*, 158.3}

Let it be seen that the love of Christ is an abiding motive; that your religion is not a dress to be put off and on to suit circumstances, but a principle, calm, steady, unvarying. Alas that pride, unbelief, and selfishness, like a foul cancer, are eating out vital godliness from the heart of many a professed Christian! Love to Jesus will be seen, will be felt. It cannot be hidden. It exerts a wondrous power. It makes the timid bold, the slothful diligent, the ignorant wise. It makes the stammering tongue eloquent, and rouses the dormant intellect into new life and vigor. It makes the desponding hopeful, the gloomy joyous. Love to Christ will lead its possessor to accept responsibilities for His sake, and to bear them in His strength. Love to Christ will not be dismayed by tribulation, nor turned aside from duty by reproaches. {*Reflecting Christ*, 368.3,4}

The unconsecrated heart cannot originate or produce it. Only in the heart where Jesus reigns is it found. "We love Him, because He first loved us." In the heart renewed by divine grace, love is the ruling principle of action. It modifies the character, governs the impulses, controls the passions, and ennoble the affections. This love, cherished in the soul, sweetens the life and sheds a refining influence on all around. John strove to lead the believers to understand the exalted privileges that would come to them through the exercise of the spirit of love. This redeeming power, filling the heart, would control every other motive and raise its possessors above the corrupting influences of the world. And as this love was allowed full sway and became the motive power in the life, their trust and confidence in God and His dealing with them would be complete. {*Acts of the Apostles*, 551, 552}

So the life-giving power of the Holy Spirit, proceeding from the Savior, pervades the soul, renews the motives and affections, and brings even the thoughts into obedience to the will of God, enabling the receiver to bear the precious fruit of holy deeds. The Author of this spiritual life is unseen, and the exact method by which that life is imparted and sustained, it is beyond the power of human philosophy to explain. {*Acts of the Apostles*, 284.1}

It is only through the grace of God that we can make a right use of this endowment. There is nothing in us of ourselves by which we can influence others for good. If we realize our helplessness and our need of divine power, we shall not trust to ourselves. {*Christ's Object Lessons*, 341, 342}

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." Eph. 2:4-8. The leaven hidden in the flour works invisibly to bring the whole mass under its leavening process; so the leaven of truth works secretly, silently, steadily, to transform the soul. The natural inclinations are softened and subdued. New thoughts, new feelings, new motives, are implanted. A new standard of character is set up--the life of Christ. The mind is changed; the faculties are roused to action in new lines. Man is not endowed with new faculties, but the faculties he has are sanctified. The conscience is awakened. We are endowed with traits of character that enable us to do service for God. {*Christ's Object Lessons*, 98.2,3}

The best help that ministers can give the members of our churches is not sermonizing, but planning work for them. Give each one something to do for others. Help all to see that as receivers of the grace of Christ they are under obligation to work for Him. And let all be taught how to work. Especially should those who are newly come to the faith be educated to become laborers together with God. If set to work, the despondent will soon forget their despondency; the weak will become strong, the ignorant intelligent, and all will be prepared to present the truth as it is in Jesus. They will find an unfailing helper in Him who has promised to save all that come unto Him.--{*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, 49}.

Character is power. The silent witness of a true, unselfish, godly life carries an almost irresistible influence. {*Christ's Object Lessons*, 340.1}

The influence of believers would be tenfold greater if men and women who accept the truth, who have been formerly careless and slack in their habits, would be so elevated and sanctified through the truth as to observe habits of neatness, order, and good taste in their dress. Our God is a God of order, and He is not in any degree pleased with distraction, with filthiness, or with sin. {*Messages to Young People*, 349, 350}

And when the living preacher exemplifies in his own life the self-denial and sacrifices of Christ, when his conversation and acts are in harmony with the divine Pattern, then his influence will be a powerful one upon those who listen to his voice. {*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, 118}

There is an eloquence far more powerful than the eloquence of words in the quiet, consistent life of a pure, true Christian. What a man is has more influence than what he says. {*Ministry of Healing*, 469.1}

You should cultivate energy of character, for the example of an energetic man is far-reaching and compels imitation. He seems to have an electric power on other minds. {*Mind, Character, and Personality*, vol. 2, 801.2}

Christ's way of presenting truth cannot be improved upon. The worker who tries to bring in methods that will attract the worldly-minded, supposing that this will remove the objections that they feel to taking up the cross, lessens his influence. Preserve the simplicity of godliness. The Lord's blessing rests not upon the minister whose speech bears the stamp of worldliness. But He blesses the words of the one who cherishes the simplicity of true righteousness. {*This Day With God*, 185.2}

Sympathize with them in their trials, their heartaches, and disappointments. This will open the way for you to help them. Speak to them of God's promises, pray with and for them, inspire them with hope.-- {*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 158}.

It is Satan's work to discourage the soul; it is Christ's work to inspire with faith and hope. {*The Desire of Ages*, 249.2}

He must have also the tact and skill, the patience and firmness, that will enable him to impart to each the needed help--to the vacillating and ease loving, such encouragement and assistance as will be a stimulus to exertion; to the discouraged, sympathy and appreciation that will create confidence and thus inspire effort. {*Education*, 279.3}

The true object of reproof is gained only when the wrongdoer himself is led to see his fault and his will is enlisted for its correction. When this is accomplished, point him to the source of pardon and power. Seek to preserve his self-respect and to inspire him with courage and hope. {*Education*, 291.6}

Never, never become heartless, cold, unsympathetic, and censorious. Never lose an opportunity to say a word to encourage and inspire hope. We cannot tell how far-reaching may be our tender words of kindness, our Christlike efforts to lighten some burden. The erring can be restored in no other way than in the spirit of meekness, gentleness, and tender love. {*God's Amazing Grace*, 234.4}

No one is ever made better by denunciation and recrimination. To tell a tempted soul of his guilt in no way inspires him with a determination to do better. Point the erring, discouraged one to Him who is able to save to the uttermost all who come to Him. Show him what he may become. Tell him that there is in him nothing that recommends him to God, but that Christ died for him that he might be accepted in the Beloved. Inspire him with hope, showing him that in Christ's strength he can do better. Hold up before him the possibilities that are his. Point him to the heights to which he may attain. Help him to take hold upon the mercy of the Lord, to trust in His forgiving power. Jesus is waiting to clasp him by the hand, waiting to give him power to live a noble, virtuous life.--MS 2, 1903. {*Mind, Character, and Personality*, vol. 2, 453.1}

The most persuasive eloquence is the word that is spoken in love and sympathy. Such words will bring light to confused minds and hope to the discouraged, brightening the prospect before them. The time in which we live calls for vital, sanctified energy; for earnestness, zeal, and the tenderest sympathy and love; for words that will not increase misery, but will inspire faith and hope. We are homeward bound, seeking a better country, even an heavenly. Instead of speaking words which will rankle in the breasts of those that hear, shall we not speak of the love wherewith God hath loved us? Shall we not try to lighten the hearts of those around us by words of Christlike sympathy? {*Our High Calling*, 295.5}

The shortness of time is frequently urged as an incentive for seeking righteousness and making Christ our friend. This should not be the great motive with us, for it savors of selfishness. {*Lift Him Up*, 98.3}

Communion with God will impart to the minister's efforts a power greater than the influence of his preaching. Of this power he must not allow himself to be deprived. With an earnestness that cannot be denied, he must plead with God to strengthen and fortify him for duty and trial, and to touch his lips with living fire. All too slight is the hold that Christ's ambassadors often have upon eternal realities. If men will walk with God, He will hide them in the cleft of the Rock. Thus hidden, they can see God, even as Moses saw Him. By the power and light that He imparts they can comprehend more and accomplish more than their finite judgment had seemed possible. {*Acts of the Apostles*, 362.3}

Ministers may have little learning from books; but if they do the best they can with their talents, if they work as they have opportunity, if they clothe their utterances in the plainest and most simple language, if they are humble men who walk in carefulness and humility, seeking for heavenly wisdom, working for God from the heart, and actuated by one predominating motive--love for Christ and the souls for whom He has died--they will be listened to by men of even superior ability and talents. There will be a charm in the simplicity of the truths they present. Christ is the greatest teacher that the world has ever known. {*Selected Messages*, vol. 2, 152.1}

DISCOVERING GOD'S ANSWERS TO THEIR NEEDS

I. Managing Change

- A. Questions
 1. How do you feel when something is sprung on you?
 2. How do you feel when given a task you know nothing about?
 3. How do you feel when asked to do something that seems too hard, or will take too long, or changes some favorite pastime?
- B. How could you make the above changes more acceptable?

II. Engaging the Whole Person in the Discovery Process

A. The Mind

1. Attraction: Humor, contrast, identification, variety
2. Clarity: Illustrate with most contemporary experience first.
Next, illustrate from historical experience or metaphor.
Finally, illustrate from the Bible.
Explain texts - Anticipate their questions, objections.
Move logically from slow to fast, simple to complex, broad to focused.
3. Practicality: Will it work?
How will it work?
How long will it take?
How hard will it be?
Is it worth it?

B. God Answers Through Varied Learning Styles:

1. Discovering my learning style? (Handout)
2. The 4MAT Cycle (Handout)
3. Four Critical Questions for Effective Discovery:
 - a. Why should I learn this?
 - b. What does God want me to know about this?
 - c. How does this work practically in my life?
 - d. What if I apply this in my own life?
4. Thought Patterns (Handout)
5. Modalities people use to discover God's Answers
 - a. Visual.
 - b. Auditory.
 - c. Kinesthetic.

C. Touching the Emotions

1. Speak of concerns and values.
2. Make subject personally applicable.
3. Let them experience concepts through visual/auditory/kinesthetic aids, appealing to imagination and memory, using role play and practice.

D. The Heart

The heart is touched when we: identify with them,
share ourselves,
expect the best of them.

III. Four Easy Steps: 1. Attention touches the need and raises the question, **Why** should I learn this?

Experience offers a possible answer.

2. Illustration and the Bible explore the evidence of **What** God wants me to know.

3. Example and participation explore **How** this is to work in practical life.

4. Attention and a supported challenge appeal to the question, **What If** I try God's Answer in my own life?

PREACHING BY DISCOVERY

DISCOVERING MY LEARNING STYLE

Instructions: Choose the one answer per question that best fits you. Place the corresponding number in the blank space. Add all the numbers. Compare your total with the key on page 2.

1. My favorite subject in school was: 1) art, 2) science, 3) driver's ed., 4) drama _____
2. I prefer: 1) talking, 2) chess, 3) building, 4) exploring _____
3. I'm fascinated by: 1) different cultures, 2) intricate detail, 3) intriguing problems, 4) exciting new ventures _____
4. I learn by: 1) listening and sharing, 2) studying and analyzing, 3) experimenting and tinkering, 4) trial and error _____
5. I ask: 1) Why?, 2) What? 3) How?, 4) What if? _____
6. I appreciate: 1) insightful thinking, 2) careful analysis, 3) practical application, 4) creative flair _____
7. I value for my children: 1) their self-acceptance, 2) accurate knowledge of the truth, 3) development of the skills they will need in life, 4) discovery of their true self _____
8. I prefer: 1) group discussion, 2) lecture, 3) actual practice, 4) doing it my way _____
9. I tackle a problem by: 1) brainstorming with others, 2) gathering the facts, 3) getting down to business, 4) looking for patterns and possibilities _____
10. Decisions must: 1) include others, 2) be in line with authority, 3) be practical, 4) foster new possibilities _____
11. My one weakness is: 1) I am too easy on people, 2) I am not very sensitive 3) I am pretty bull-headed at times, 4) I can be too pushy _____
12. One of my goals is: 1) to bring people into unity, 2) be recognized for my intellectual achievements, 3) set up things now for a secure future for me and my family, 4) to actually put into action some of God's plans for our Church _____
13. One of my goals for my children is: 1) to help them define their own goals, 2) for them to find the life-long joy of learning, 3) for them to make a practical success of their life, 4) to see them 'pushing the envelope', being all they can be. _____
14. I lead with my: 1) heart, 2) head, 3) hands, 4) energy _____
15. One of my great strengths is: 1) my personal caring and imaginative ideas, 2) my ability to analyze and explain concepts, 3) my practicality, 4) my ability to get things going _____
16. If I am unsure I like to: 1) clarify values, 2) think things through, 3) gather facts from hands-on experience, 4) try it and see if it works _____
17. I am uncomfortable: 1) with ambiguity in my life, 2) with subjective decisions, 3) fuzzy theoretical ideas, 4) slow progress _____

18. Discipline is necessary because: 1) it can help us understand life, 2) it teaches us what God and society expects, 3) it helps one eventually gain power and control, 4) it helps one learn to be self-disciplined _____
19. A good sermon should: 1) help people be more honest about themselves, 2) systematically explain essential information, 3) be of some practical help, 4) help a person accomplish what they want to for God _____
20. I like: 1) to imagine how things are, 2) to analyze what is right, 3) to use my common sense, 4) to create dynamic new possibilities _____

Total the number of: 1's: ____ + 2's: ____ + 3's ____ + 4's ____

Total _____

KEY

20 - 30	Imaginative Learner
35 - 45	Analytic Learner
55 - 65	Common Sense Learner
70 - 80	Dynamic Learner

Note: People can have combinations of learning styles. Learning styles may change with time or situation. If your score is between or near the end of the ranges, look also at the highest frequency of numbered answers (i.e., the number of 1's, 2's, etc.). For a more definitive survey to assess one's learning style, take the Learning Type Measure.¹

¹ Bernice McCarthy. *The Learning Type Measure* (Barrington, IL: Excel, 1993). 1-800-822-4628.

PREACHING BY DISCOVERY

WHAT'S MY LEARNING STYLE?¹

Directions: After reading each sentence, indicate if that statement is:

- VM** Very Much like me.
MM Moderately like me.
SM Somewhat like me.
NM Not at all, or very little like me.

After completing the statements, decide what predicts most closely the way you learn. For example, if you have three VM's in Imaginative and none in any of the other categories, you may be an Imaginative learner. This prediction may confirm what you already know about how you learn best.

Imaginative

- ☐ I do my best work when I am with other people.
- ☐ I like a colorful working environment.
- ☐ I like to give essay-type answers to questions, rather than specific fill-in-the-blank answers.
- ☐ I see myself as a friend to my students.
- ☐ The worst thing that could happen in my class is that students wouldn't get along well together.
- ☐ People describe me as a really nice person.
- ☐ Part of my self-identity is wrapped up in the number of friends I have and the strength of those friendships.
- ☐ Three words that describe me are friendly, sharer, hugger.

Analytic

- ☐ I do my best work alone, after gathering information I need from books or other teachers.
- ☐ I like to work at a desk or table.
- ☐ I like to solve problems by finding the right answer.
- ☐ I see myself as an information giver to my students.
- ☐ The worst thing that could happen in my class is that students will not learn the basics of their faith.
- ☐ People describe me as a really smart person.
- ☐ Part of my self-identity is wrapped up in how smart others think I am.
- ☐ Three words that describe me are rational, analytic, smart.

¹ Marlene D. Lefever, *Learning Styles: Reaching Everyone God Gave You to Teach*. (Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook, 1995), 101, 102

WHAT'S MY LEARNING STYLE? (continued)

Common Sense

- ☐ I do my best work alone, putting together information so it will work.
- ☐ I like to work with my hands, as well as my mind.
- ☐ I like to solve problems by checking out my own ideas.
- ☐ I see myself as a trainer, helping my students do what needs to be done.
- ☐ The worst thing that could happen in my class is that students would not learn to live their faith in practical ways.
- ☐ People describe me as a hard worker, a results-oriented person.
- ☐ Part of my self-identity is wrapped up in how well my creations work.
- ☐ Three words that describe me are active, realistic, practical.

Dynamic

- ☐ I do my best work brainstorming new ideas and trying things not many people would dare to try.
- ☐ I like playing with new ideas, making intuitive guesses on what works.
- ☐ I like to solve problems by making guesses or following hunches.
- ☐ I see myself as a facilitator or idea-stimulator for my students.
- ☐ The worst thing that could happen in my class is that students would not take what they have learned and make this world a better place.
- ☐ People describe me as a highly creative person.
- ☐ Part of my self identity is wrapped up in how many new ideas I have.
- ☐ Three words that describe me are curious, leader, imaginative.

Based upon these predictive lists, I suspect:

- My strongest learning style is: _____.
- This quadrant may be your "home base," the place where you are most comfortable teaching and learning.
- The students I am most likely to miss are those who are strongest in the two learning style quadrants: _____ and _____.

PHOTOCOPY OF 4MAT CYCLE¹¹ Jack Calkins *Leading the Learning Church* (Lincoln, NE: Advent Source, 1999), 24.**DISCIPLE STYLES**

PHOTOCOPY OF 4MAT LEARNING CYCLE¹¹ Calkins, 30.**LEARNING CYCLE**

PREACHING BY DISCOVERY

RIGHT AND LEFT MODE THOUGHT PATTERNS¹

Left Mode	Right Mode
Analyzes	<u>Synthesizes</u>
Rational	<u>Intuitive</u>
<u>Objective</u>	Subjective
<u>Uses language</u>	Uses images
<u>Theoretical</u>	Experiential
Mind	<u>Heart</u>
Detail	<u>Overall design</u>
<u>Controls feelings</u>	Free with emotions
Slower thinking	<u>Rapid thinking</u>
Responds to verbal instructions	<u>Responds to</u> <u>demonstrated</u> <u>instructions</u>
Looks at the parts	<u>Looks at the whole</u>
Solves problems by sequential logic	<u>Solves problems by</u> <u>hunches and patterns</u>
<u>Knows specific details</u>	Knows more than he can tell
<u>Likes abstract concepts</u>	Likes Metaphors and poetry
<u>Looks at differences</u>	Looks at similarities
Likes structure	<u>Likes spontaneity</u>
Prefers memorizing and recall	<u>Prefers drawing and</u> <u>manipulating</u>
<u>Prefers hierarchical authority</u>	Prefers collegial authority
<u>Good at writing</u>	Good at drawing
Prefers objective tests	<u>Prefers essay tests</u>
Guided by laws	<u>Guided by paradigm and</u> <u>principle</u>
Better at digit and letter recognition	<u>Better at perceiving light,</u> <u>hue, depth</u>

¹ Adapted from Bernice McCarthy, *The 4MAT System: Teaching to Learning Styles with Right/Left Mode Techniques*. (Barrington, IL: Excel, 1987), 78.

PREACHING BY DISCOVERY

Find Your Strength¹ Visual, Auditory, or Tactile/Kinesthetic

Directions: Complete the sentence by marking the letter on the right of the statement that is most typical of you. Then count the number of checks in each column. This will give you a rough idea of your strength in each learning modality.

	A	B	C
1. My emotions can often be interpreted from my:	☐	☐	☐
(A) Facial expressions			
(B) Voice quality			
(C) General body tone			
2. I keep up with current events by:	☐	☐	☐
(A) Reading the newspaper			
(B) Listening to the radio			
(C) Quickly reading the paper or spending
a few minutes watching TV news			
3. If I have business to conduct with another person, I prefer:	☐	☐	☐
(A) Face-to-face meetings or writing letters			
(B) the telephone; it saves time			
(C) Conversing while walking, jogging,
or doing something physical			
4. When I'm angry, I usually:	☐	☐	☐
(A) Clam up and give others the silent treatment			
(B) Am quick to let others know I am angry			
(C) Clench my fists or storm off			
5. When I'm driving, I:	☐	☐	☐
(A) Frequently check the rear view mirror			
(B) Turn on the radio as soon as I enter the car			
(C) Cannot get comfortable and continually shift position			

¹ Marlene D. Lefever, *Learning Styles: Reaching Everyone God Gave You to Teach*. (Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook, 1995), 101, 102.

FIND YOUR STRENGTH (continued)

6. I consider myself:	☐	☐	☐
(A) A neat dresser			
(B) A sensible dresser			
(C) A comfortable dresser			
7. At a meeting, I:	☐	☐	☐
(A) Come prepared with notes and displays			
(B) Enjoy discussing issues			
(C) Would rather be somewhere else			
8. In my spare time, I would rather:	☐	☐	☐
(A) Watch TV, go to a movie, attend the theater or read			
(B) Listen to the radio or stereo, attend a concert,
or play an instrument			
(C) Engage in a physical activity of some kind			
9. The best approach to discipline is to:	☐	☐	☐
(A) Isolate the student from the peer group			
(B) Reason with the student			
(C) Use acceptable forms of punishment			
10. The most effective way of rewarding students is:	☐	☐	☐
(A) Positive written notes or awards others can see			
(B) Oral praise to the student in front of peers			
(C) A pat on the back, hug			

Total the number of checks in each column

A ____ B ____ C ____

A = Visual

B = Auditory

C = Tactile/Kinesthetic

APPLYING OUR DISCOVERIES

I. Which do you prefer?

- A. Do you prefer:
 - To study what interests you or what interests someone else?
 - To plan your vacation or have someone plan it for you?
 - To play a game or watch someone else play it?
 - To decide how to handle a problem or have someone tell you what you must do?
 - To read a "how-to" book, or have someone show you?
- B. Experience is the best teacher.

II. Participation in the Discovery Process

- A. Focus on Process not Product.
- B. Do-ables before the sermon:
 - Topic survey
 - Topic Discussion Group
 - Visitation
 - Sermon and Follow-up Planning Group
- C. Do-ables during the sermon:
 - Fill-in Handouts
 - Dialogue
 - Engaging Questions
 - Role Plays
 - Practice
 - Writing/Drawing/Constructing
 - Puzzles/Games
 - Paraphrase or Explain to Another
- D. Do-ables after the sermon:
 - On the Job Training
 - Take-home Assignments
 - Planned practice, discussion, application later in the day or week
 - Reaction Reports
 - Choice of applications available ready to go
 - Commitment or Sign-up Sheets
 - Evaluation Forms

III. Be Doers of the Word and not Hearers Only - Js. 1:22

- A. Negotiation for trial discovery sermons.
 - Suggest those willing to try these techniques on a new sermon to do so, and be followed by peer discussion. Perhaps video sermon. Set up time table.
- B. Questions?
- C. Evaluation (Questionnaire)

PREACHING BY DISCOVERY

PREACHING RESOURCES

Calkins, Jack. *Leading the Learning Church*. Lincoln, NE: Advent Source, 1999. Course and workbook applying the 4MAT system to worship and leadership in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Jack is also a trainer in 4MAT levels one and two. 1-800-328-0525, ext. 2199

Elder's Digest. Silver Spring, MD: General Conference Ministerial Association. Seventh-day Adventist quarterly periodical on preaching, leadership, and evangelism. \$9.95/year. 301-680-6508.

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_____. *Learning Styles: Reaching Everyone God Gave You to Teach*. Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook, 1995. Adds detail of what kind of practical activities can be used to reach various learning styles and modality preferences.

Lewis, Ralph L., and Gregg Lewis. *Inductive Preaching: Helping People Listen*. Westchester, IL: Crossway, 1983. Excellent book on the inductive style.

Lowry, Eugene L. *The Homiletical Plot: The Sermon as Narrative Art Form*. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1983. How to organize any message into a story with a plot.

McCarthy, Bernice. *About Learning*. Barrington, IL: Excel, 1996. Definitive work on learning styles.

_____. *The Learning Type Measure*. Barrington, IL: Excel, 1993. Test to determine one's learning style profile. Obtain through About Learning, Inc., 800-822-4628.

_____. *The 4MAT System: Teaching to Learning Styles with Right/Left Mode Techniques*. Barrington, IL: Excel, 1987. Practical guide to implementing learning style theory, with many examples.

Strickland, Mike. *Heralds of God's Word*. Silver Springs, MD: General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists Ministerial Association, 1999. New book and workbook on the basics of preaching.

Wlodkowski, Raymond J. *Enhancing Adult Motivation to Learn: a Guide to Improving Instruction and Increasing Learner Achievement*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1985. Excellent practical guide on applying adult learning theory.

APPENDIX D

EXAMPLE SERMON, TRANSPARENCY, AND RESPONSE FORM

WHATCHA NEED?

I. Introduction

A. You may be wondering what all these preachers are learning, and why. How is it going to affect you? Let me set you at ease. We are not here for ourselves. We are here for you. The most important thing to us is to meet your needs. Thus, our title, 'Whatcha Need?'

B. We do have a problem, however. We want to share it with you to see if together we might solve it. That is our goal. Let me illustrate. (Names are changed to fit the congregation.)

Once upon a time, there was a Handsome Prince Pastor and his band of Pretty Preachers: Glen Scarlet, Little John, Tiny Tim; Friar Morris, Marvin the Magician, and Doc; Maids Melinda, Janice and Jean; Lady LaDonna Lady Ogle; Richard the Tinkerer and Sir Francis the Drake; the Good Knights Hawley and Alan-a-Bale. Every week they robbed the Rich (Finley, Bachelor, Bradford, Venden, and White), and gave to the poor congregation. But the problem is the poor congregation kept giving the loot back. Some starved, some slept, some stole over to the Sheriff of

Knottslandingham to watch TV, and some left Camelot altogether.

This prompted the Handsome Prince Pastor and his band of Pretty Preachers to ask, "Whatcha Need?"

So, could you help us? Share overhead. What are your needs? Can the preacher really meet those needs? How can he/she meet them? What will the results be? **Note:** Discover and explore personal needs together. Discuss how

the preacher can meet those needs. Emphasize gradually and to a climax that the preacher really can not meet most practical needs. Even if he helps, ultimate issues remain. For example, he/she can pray for the sick or visit and encourage them. But even if they get well they still face other illnesses and death. The preacher cannot give you a million dollars or give you a job. She does not have time to do your baby-sitting, raise your kids, give you energy or make you happy. He/she cannot marry you if you are single or stuck in an unhappy marriage. The preacher cannot even make you come to church, study your Bible, quit sinning, or witness.

Is there any wonder why many give up on church, and preachers find it hard to 'get up a sermon' each week?

What is it we each really need? J-E-S-U-S... YES! Have children hold up letters on cards, and sing the chant.

Texts: John 1:4; 3:15, 16; 4:14; 5:25-26; 6:48, 63; 10:10, 27, 28; 11:25; 14:6; 15:13; 17:1-3

Who is the only One to fill all your needs? JESUS

What is the primary thing we as preachers must give? JESUS and His GOSPEL.

What is the ONLY thing that can motivate us do what we should do and be what we should be? JESUS

EGW Quote: Let it be seen that the love of Christ is an abiding motive; that your religion is not a dress to be put off and on to suit circumstances, but a principle, calm, steady, unvarying. Alas that pride, unbelief, and selfishness, like a foul cancer, are eating out vital godliness from the heart of many a professed Christian! Love to Jesus will be seen, will be felt. It cannot be hidden. It exerts a wondrous power. It makes the timid bold, the slothful diligent, the ignorant wise. It makes the stammering tongue eloquent, and rouses the dormant intellect into new life and vigor. It makes the desponding hopeful, the gloomy joyous. Love to Christ will lead its possessor to accept responsibilities for His sake, and to bear them in His strength. Love to Christ will not be dismayed by tribulation, nor turned aside from duty by reproaches. {*Reflecting Christ*, 368.3,4}

III. Conclusion and Application

- A. Have we discovered together what our real need is? Have we uncovered the key to effective and lasting motivation? What is the only thing that can change our lives, change our attitudes, change our preaching so it effects positive change?
- B. Briefly tell the story of an injured Vietnam war veteran, David, who discovered, through his wife's acceptance and care, God's love and the strength to go on with life. Note: answers "how it works."
- C. Sermon ends with the questions: What did David discover? What have we discovered today? This was done to have them think about the sermon through the next week.

A direct appeal, such as the following could have been made. May His love free you today to face your obstacles in hope, to reach out and serve Him in unconquerable confidence, to soar on the wings of His enabling Grace.
- D. Have congregation fill out response form, and keep for themselves.
 - 1. In what way has Jesus' love inspired you today?
 - 2. What specific venture are you impressed to 'try your wings' on next week?

End with Special Music: *Wind Beneath My Wings* or *Freely, Freely*

WHATCHA NEED?

A Seminar Discovering What We Really Want Out of Life

Need?

Can Meet?

How?

Result?

AUDIENCE RESPONSE FORM
(Cut in two)

He's Everything to Me!

1. How has Jesus' love inspired you today?

2. What specific venture are you impressed to 'try your wings' on next week?

He's Everything to Me!

1. How has Jesus' love inspired you today?

2. What specific venture are you impressed to 'try your wings' on next week?

APPENDIX E
SEMINAR EVALUATION

PREACHING BY DISCOVERY
SEMINAR EVALUATION

1. This seminar was helpful to me. ☐ Very ☐ Somewhat ☐ Little
2. The material gave me meaningful insights. ☐ Very ☐ Somewhat ☐ Little
3. The instructor was easy to follow. ☐ Very ☐ Somewhat ☐ Little
4. The instructor was interesting. ☐ Very ☐ Somewhat ☐ Little
5. The instructor's mannerisms were distracting. ☐ Very ☐ Somewhat ☐ Little
6. What percentage of the seminar material do you plan to incorporate in your next sermon? ☐ 90% ☐ 50% ☐ 30% ☐ 10% ☐ none
7. How practical was the seminar? ☐ Very ☐ Somewhat ☐ Little
8. What was the most interesting thing you learned? _____

9. What suggestions do you have for the course? _____

10. What suggestions do you have for the instructor? _____

APPENDIX F
SERMON RESPONSE FORM

PREACHING BY DISCOVERY

WHAT I LEARNED

1. What was last week's sermon topic?

2. Was the subject important to you, and why? _____

3. What answers did God give you for your life? _____

4. Was the sermon practical, and how do you apply it? _____

5. What did you do with the information this week? _____

6. How many times did you try what the sermon suggested?
_____ times.
7. How much time did you spend this week thinking about and applying the sermon?
_____ hours.
8. What results has the sermon made in your life this week? _____

9. What effect do you expect the sermon will have on your future life? _____

10. The sermon made me feel: ☐ uncomfortable ☐ encouraged ☐ challenged ☐ bored
☐ confused ☐ excited ☐ intrigued ☐ guilty ☐ upset ☐ blessed
11. What did the speaker do that helped you enjoy the message? _____

12. What constructive advice would you give the speaker? _____

13. How does the sermon quality compare with the past?
☐ worse ☐ same ☐ same, but different ☐ better ☐ much better

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