

Novel Preaching: Fiction Writing Strategies for Sermons
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Session Two: Sermon Surgery

A. The sermon that is entertaining but lacks depth:

- Choose a subject worthy of your audience.
- Pay attention to character.
- Pay attention to imagery.
- Pay attention to setting.

B. The sermon that is incoherent:

- Check your “through line.”
- Enlist a guiding image to organize and unify the sermon.
- Check the sequence of your scenes.

C. The sermon that is coherent but boring:

- Find your voice
- Find your plot
- Show, don't just tell
 - Show characters' personalities
 - Show setting

D. The sermon that offers false teaching:

- If you had more faith, you would be healed and your problems would disappear.
- Faith automatically brings happy endings, healings, job opportunities and satisfying relationships.
- Living faithfully is a very simple matter.
- God has everything all worked out if we would just cooperate.
- Misfortunes come directly from God as punishments or teaching moments.
- There are no accidents.
- All suffering is a cross we must bear to be faithful disciples.
- Faith is a personal matter. Talking about issues of public life in the pulpit is mixing faith and politics.