

Pentecostal Preaching and Homiletics

I. Introduction

a. **Definition:**

*“Pentecostal preaching means a type of message and a style of delivery characteristic of Pentecostal worship. Pentecostal preaching is the best of one’s study and meditation, warmed by the Spirit of God, and made to glow in the heart by the anointing of the same Holy Spirit.”*¹ Ray H. Hughes

b. **The power and presence of the Holy Spirit influences and empowers:**

1. The Preacher – Communicating by SPIRIT
2. The Preparation – Communicating by WORDS
3. The Preaching – Communicating by BODY LANGUAGE/GESTURES

c. **5 key components that distinguish Pentecostal preaching:**

1. True Pentecostal preaching must centre on the Word of God
2. Pentecostal preaching must always exalt Jesus Christ
3. Pentecostal preaching should always be directed and empowered by the Holy Spirit
4. Pentecostal preaching should be prophetic
5. Pentecostal preaching is uniquely effective (convicting of sin, producing faith, confronting demonic power, producing Godly reverence and being confirmed by the operation of spiritual gifts)

II. Types of Sermons

In general, three homiletical forms and variations thereof dominate the preaching landscape:

a. **The topical sermon**

The topical sermon analyzes the Scriptural data and organizes its points around logical framework. Ideally, it includes the elements of exposition, application and illustration. Unfortunately, just a good course in public speaking may be viewed as adequate training for this kind of preaching. Consequently, the risk often associated with this approach is the ignoring of context (literary, historical, cultural and situational); it has produced some of the greatest abuses of Scripture, both in interpretation and application. At the same time, topical preaching has as its benefits responsiveness to felt need and current issues. Correctly done, topical preaching always exhibits exegetical sensitivity and would never use Scripture in a self-serving, context ignoring way. Some of the most powerful sermons ever preached, however, have been topical in nature.

¹ Ray H. Hughes, “Preaching, A Pentecostal Perspective,” in *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, eds. Stanley M. Burgess and Gary B. McGee, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1988), 722.

b. The narrative sermon

The narrative genre basically builds the sermon around a storyline or character, weaving the proclamation of eternal truth and application into its very fabric. The risk of narrative preaching can be that the preacher becomes more storyteller than communicator of eternal truth. Skill in weaving a good story upstages preaching the Word. Narrative preaching, however, is an approach that very effectively enables the preacher to bridge the gap between generations and has the approach of Jesus to commend it.

c. The expository sermon.

Expository preaching proclaims the message of a passage of Scripture to a contemporary audience in such a way that people hear what a passage of Scripture says, identify with the situation it addresses, become aware of how it applies to their lives and are led to a decision. This is the best and most powerful type of sermon and we will concentrate on this in this course.

III. Preparation of the Preacher

- **The most important factor in the preparation of sermons is the preparation of the preacher's own heart.**
 - No amount of knowledge, or of learning or of natural endowments can take the place of a fervent, humble, devoted heart which longs for more and more of Christ.
 - Only the man who walks with God and who lives a holy life can inspire others to grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ. Such a man will spend much time in secret with Jesus, holding daily, uninterrupted, unhurried communion with Him in His Word.

- **The preacher must also be a man of prayer who has learned the art of holy warfare upon his knees.**
 - Like Daniel, he must have the habit of prayer and find the time, yes, make the time, to pray daily and regularly in his closet.
 - His sermons then will not be the product of mere intellectual effort but will be heaven-sent messages -- sent to him in answer to prayer.
E. M. Bounds, the mighty man of prayer, said in truth, *"Prayer puts the preacher's sermon into the preacher's heart; prayer puts the preacher's heart into the preacher's sermon."*

- **But the man who is to preach the message of the Book must also be a man of the Book.**
 - He must study the Scriptures not just to get a message for his congregation. He must live in the Book.
 - The Word of God must become his meat and drink. Throughout his life he must spend hours every week in diligent study of the Bible.
 - He must saturate himself with it until it grips his heart and soul so that with Jeremiah he may say, *"His Word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay"* (Jer. 20:9).

IV. Preparation of the Preaching

1. Topical Preaching

a. Definition of a Topical Sermon:

A topical sermon is one in which the main divisions are derived from the topic, independently of a text.

This means that the--

- 1) A Topical sermon begins with a topic or theme and that the main parts of the sermon consist of ideas which come from that topic.
- 2) It does not require a text as the basis of its message. That is, a certain text is not the source of the topical sermon, although it is all based on the Word of God.
- 3) We start with a Biblical topic. The main divisions of the sermon outline must be drawn from this Biblical topic, and each main division must be supported by a Scripture reference.

Example of a Topical Sermon

Satan's Attack of the Family!

Aim: Recognizing some aspects of his attack! (Eph. 6:10-18)

A. His Goal is to Devour! (I Peter 5:8,9)

B. His Desire is to Sift as Wheat! (Luke 22:31,32)

C. His Method is to Build a Stronghold! (II Cor. 10:3-5)

D. His Purpose is to Bring Total Bondage to Sin! (II Tim. 2:24-26)

b. Unity of Thought in a Topical Sermon

It will be observed from the example given above that the topical sermon contains one central idea. There is but one theme, not many. In a topical sermon we must limit the entire outline to the one idea contained in the topic and the aim of the message itself.

c. The Various Kinds of Topics

The Scriptures deal with every conceivable phase of human life and activity. They also reveal God's purposes in grace toward men in time and in eternity. Thus the Bible contains an inexhaustible storehouse of topics from which the preacher may obtain materials for topical messages suited for every occasion and condition in which men find themselves. Through constant and diligent study of the Word of God, the man of God will enrich his own soul with precious nuggets of divine truth.

There are many themes, such as: influences for good, little things God uses, blunders of God's children, blessings that come through suffering, results of unbelief, facts about prayer, meaning of prayer, methods of prayer, power of prayer, results of prayer, lies of satan, conquests of the cross, characteristics of a Christian, glories of heaven, riches of the Christian, power of God's love, etc.

d. Choice of Topics

If we are to know the topic to select, we must seek the leading of the Lord. The choice may be determined by the theme on which the minister is asked to speak or by the specific occasion on which the message is to be delivered. Certain conditions within

the particular congregation may indicate the need for selecting a topic suited to the circumstances.

e. Basic PRINCIPLES for the PREPARATION of Topical Outlines!

1. The main divisions should be in logical or chronological order. (Illus.)

The Believer's Hope

Topic: Characteristics of the Believer's Hope!

- I. It is a living hope, I Pet 1:3
 - II. It is a saving hope, I Thess 5:8
 - III. It is a sure hope, Heb. 6:19
 - IV. It is a good hope, II Thess. 2:16
 - V. It is an unseen hope, Rom. 8:24
 - VI. It is a blessed hope, Tit 2:13
 - VII. It is an eternal hope, Tit. 3:7
2. The main division may be an analysis of the topic. Each part of the outline contributes to the completeness of the discussion of the topic.
 3. The main divisions may present the various proofs of a topic.

Knowing God's Word

Topic: Some values of knowing the Word of God!

- I. Knowing God's Word makes one wise unto salvation, II Tim. 3:15
 - II. Knowing God's Word keeps us from sin, Psa. 119:11
 - III. Knowing God's Word produces spiritual growth, I Pet. 2:2
 - IV. Knowing God's Word results in successful living, Josh. 2:7-8, Psa. 1
4. The main divisions may treat a subject by comparison or contrast with something else in Scripture.

An Effective Testimony!

Topic: A comparison between the testimony of the believer and salt.

- I. Like salt, the believer's testimony should season, Col. 4:6
 - II. Like salt, the believer's testimony should purify, I Thess. 4:4
 - III. Like salt, the believer's testimony should not lose its savor, Matt. 5:13
 - IV. Like salt, the believer's testimony should create thirst, I Pet. 2:12
5. The main divisions may be expressed by a certain word or phrase of Scripture which is repeated though out the outline.

The Ability of God!

Topic: Some Things Which God Is Able to DO!

- I. He is able to save, Heb 7:25
- II. He is able to keep, Jude 24
- III. He is able to help, Heb. 2:18
- IV. He is able to subdue, Phil. 3:21
- V. He is able to give grace, II Cor. 9:8
- VI. He is able to do beyond what we ask or think, Eph. 3:20

6. The main divisions may be supported by an identical word or phrase of Scripture though out the outline.

7. The main division may consist of a word study showing the various meanings of a certain word or words in Scripture. (Such as a study of the names of Christ, or the names of God, etc.)

f. Various ideas about Topical messages!

1. The topical message is suited to the construction of the doctrinal sermon.
2. Many times you may choose to work on a series of topical messages -- such as the Love of Jesus, the Face of, the Hands of, the Tears of, the Cross of, the Blood of, etc.
3. A study of major subjects in a book or a group of books in the Bible will also suggest a series of discourses in topical form.

Exercises:

1. Prepare a topical outline using one of the themes or ideas listed:
2. Prepare a topical outline using your own topic, support each main division with appropriate Scripture. Be careful to follow the principles suggested above.
3. List seven suitable topics for evangelistic messages, and make a topical outline of one of them.
4. Find a significant word or phrase which occurs repeatedly in a book of the New Testament and develop a topical outline from the repetitions of that word or phrase. (Such as the word, walk in Ephesians 4, 5, 6.)
5. With the help of a concordance prepare a word study on the word forgive.

2. Expository Preaching

Basic Principles for the Preparation of Expository Outlines!

1. Any passage under consideration should be carefully studied to understand its meaning and to obtain the central thought of the text.
2. Significant words or phrases in the text may indicate or form the main divisions of the outline.
3. The outline should be drawn from the expository unit in a chronological way.
4. The important truths suggested by the passage may form the main divisions of the outline.
5. Two or three passages from various parts of Scripture may be put together to form the basis of an expository outline.
6. By means of the method of multiple approach, we may treat a passage of Scripture in various ways and thus have two or more entirely different outlines on the same portion.
7. We should, in study, note the context.
8. In study we should also note the historical background of the passage, whenever possible.
9. The details of the text should be treated properly, but not necessarily exhaustively. Don't spend too much time on the details.
10. The truths contained in the text must be related to the present day through application of truths to present needs.

a. The Study Phase

- **Stage One – Observation**
 - *Task 1: Determining the boundaries of the passage.*
 - *Task 2: Identify the central idea of the passage in the writer’s own words.*
 - *Task 3: Analyze how the biblical writer develops this theme in the passage.*
 - *Task 4: Find the “situation clues” and “purpose clues” in the immediate and broader context.*
- **Stage Two – Interpretation**
 - *Task 5: Write a paragraph summarizing the situation the passage addresses.*
 - *Task 6: Write a paragraph synthesizing the purpose clues of the passage.*
 - *Task 7: Develop a descriptive outline tracing the argument of the passage.*
 - *Task 8: Engage in further study using quality resources.*
- **Stage Three – Application**
 - *Task 9: Identify how the passage applies to similar situations today.*
- **Stage Four – Response**
 - *Task 10: Personally respond to the teaching of the passage.*

b. The Strategy Phase

- *Step 1: Prayerfully reflect on what you have studied.*
- *Step 2: Write a theme statement (proposition) for your sermon.*
- *Step 3: Identify the “felt need” that the passage addresses.*
- *Step 4: State clear objectives for your message.*
- *Step 5: Brainstorm with a creative team about media and drama support.*
- *Step 6: Come up with a good title and introduction.*
- *Step 7: State each point as a principle.*
- *Step 8: Explain and apply the text for each point.*
- *Step 9: Identify apt illustrations.*
- *Step 10: Prayerfully craft your conclusion and appeal.*

Notes for Step 2:

The Proposition (or theme) of the Message or Sermon!

The theme or thesis is a simple declaration of the subject which the preacher proposes to discuss, develop, prove, or explain in the sermon. In other words, it is the sermon reduced to one sentence. The proposition contains the basic element of the theme or central thought of the sermon. It should be so stated as to relate it to the hearers in the form of a timeless truth.

Look at Isaiah 55:7 - The theme is that God pardons sinners! Observe that the basic element of the theme, divine pardon, is expressed in a statement which has universal application. It is a timeless truth so stated!

The Importance of the Proposition!

1. The proposition is the foundation of the entire structure of the sermon. The importance of a correct proposition cannot be overestimated.
2. The proposition will accurately express the main thought of the sermon.
3. It clearly indicates to the congregation the course of the sermon.

Types of Propositions!

1. The form most commonly used is the declarative or declaring -- a simple statement expressing the main idea of the sermon- e.g - Christian life may be said to be a life of dependence!
2. Another type is the interrogative or using questions. The dominant idea of the sermon is put in the form of a question. We could take the sermon above and use the approach of a question! Asking, "Why is the Christian life said to be a life of dependence?"
3. The third kind of proposition is called the hortatory (exhorting). This is employed when the preacher's aim is to encourage or exhort his congregation to adopt a certain course of action. (This is probably used the most.)
4. The fourth kind of proposition is known as the exclamatory. (This type of thesis takes the form of an exclamation where the sermonizer desires to give special emphasis to the main idea of his theme. For example, if he wishes to stress the blessings which the believer has in Christ as revealed in Ephesians 1:13,14, he may use an exclamation such as that shown in the outline below.)

"Supremely Blessed!", Ephesians, chapter one

Proposition: How wonderful are the blessings which we have in Christ!

I. We are Chosen in Him, vs. 4

II. We are Redeemed in Him, vs. 7

III. We Have An Inheritance in Him, vs. 11

IV. We are Sealed in Him, Vs 13

Principles for the Formulation of the Proposition!

1. The proposition should contain one main idea.
2. The proposition should generally be expressed in the form of a timeless truth stated simply and clearly. It should be in the form of a complete sentence. Since it is the expression of a Biblical truth, it should often be stated to suggest the idea of obligation, worthiness, or desirability.

Example: "Triumphant Living!"

Text: Phil. 1:12-21

Proposition: Christians can be triumphant in Christ!

I. In the face of adversity, as Paul was, vs. 12-14

II. In the face of opposition, as Paul was, vs. 15-19

III. In the face of death, as Paul was, vs. 20-21

3. The proposition should be stated as concisely and clearly as possible. (Few words – much meaning.)
4. The proposition should be connected to the main body of the discourse by questions and a transitional sentence. (Interrogatives are: Why? How? What? When? and Where?)
Example: Statement -- The Christian life may be said to be a life of dependence.
Interrogative -- Why is the Christian life said to be a life of dependence?
Transitional sentence -- There are several reasons why the Christian life may be said to be a life of dependence.
5. The proposition may be formulated by including the key word and the transitional sentence with the statement of the thesis or aim of the message.

It is best if the preacher writes out the proposition in his sermon notes. The proper place is generally at the end of the introduction. You are stating what your goal is, or your aim of the message. The hearer knows where you are going, what you are seeking to accomplish in the message although you are not sharing everything at that point.

Notes for Step 6:

The Title of a Message or Sermon!

The title is the expression of the specific feature to be presented in the sermon, stated in a manner which may be suitable for advertising the sermon.

1. The title should be pertinent to the text or to the message.
2. The title should be interesting.
3. The title should be in keeping with the dignity of the pulpit.
4. The title should generally be brief.
5. The title may be stated in the form of either facts, questions, or exclamation.

Introduction to a Message or Sermon!

The introduction is the process by which the preacher endeavors to prepare the minds and secure the interest of his hearers in the message he has to proclaim.

The Purpose is --

1. To secure the good will of the hearers. (The introduction then must be presented in such a way as to win the favorable attention of the entire congregation if at all possible.)
2. To arouse interest in the theme. (People may not seem interested at first or may be preoccupied with other things, or indifferent to biblical truth. Other conditions may distract them such as a poorly ventilated building, insufficient lighting, the slamming of doors, or other sounds outside.)

Principles for a Good Introduction!

1. It generally should be brief.
2. It should be interesting. (The first few minutes of a sermon are crucial. How can we stimulate interest as we begin the sermon? -- By arousing curiosity, by means of variety, by the use of illustrations, by a captivating title, by relating the sermon to life situations.)
3. It should lead to the dominant idea or central thought of the sermon or message.

Proposition: The statements contained in the introduction should consist of a series of progressive ideas culminating in the one main idea of the message.

4. It should be stated in the outline in a few brief sentences or phrases, with each successive idea on a different line. (Long complex sentences should be avoided. They should be clear, even at just a glance, for the one bringing the message.)

Example of Step 7: Consider the following comparison of the two approaches taken from a message entitled “Thank You for Giving to the Lord” (Text: Philippians 4:10-23)

Points Stated as Descriptive Statements	Points Stated as Principles
1. Their Gift: Prompted Paul’s Rejoicing (vv. 10, 20)	1. Giving Prompts Praise (vv. 10, 20)
2. Their Gift: And an Important Lesson Paul Learned (vv. 11-13)	2. Giving Helps Put Things in Proper Perspective (vv. 11-13)
3. Their Gift: A Partnership in Ministry (vv. 14-16)	3. Giving Demonstrates Partnership in Ministry (vv. 14-16)

4. Their Gift: An Investment and More (vv. 17-18)	4. Giving Is a Heavenly Investment and a Pleasing Sacrifice to God (vv. 17-18)
5. Their Gift: Leads to a Wonderful Word of Assurance (v. 19)	5. Giving Results in a Wonderful Promise of Assurance.

Notes for Step 9: Apt Illustrations

The speaker's greatest asset is the listeners IMAGINATION

3 tactics of Story Telling:

1. PHRASES of truth

CLEVER phrase – *“When you come to the end of yourself you come to the beginning of God.”*

DEFINITIONS – *“Commitment is staying true to a worthy decision long after the motions have gone.”*

QUOTES – *“A Bible that is falling apart usually belongs to someone who isn't”*
Moody

2. Word PICTURES (eg. 2 Tim 3:16 – picture of a road – Doctrine = Signpost, Reproof = turning 180 degrees to go right way, correction = coming back on track, instruction = walking with an experienced guide)
3. Illustrative STORIES – listen to good story tellers, Read short stories/illustrations, increase your vocab and be more descriptive.

Notes for step 10:

Ten key characteristics should be evident in effective sermon conclusions:

- They should evidence prayer and thoughtful preparation.
- They should be brief and sincere.
- They should be prepared with the purpose of the passage in mind.
- They should be the logical extension of the truth of the passage.
- They should provide the emotional climax of the sermon.
- They should personalize the application – moving the sermon from second and third person (“others”) to first person (“me”).
- They should seek a verdict based on the evidence presented in the message.
- They should seek a commitment from the hearer.
- They should be specific about what the preacher expects the audience to do at the close of the service.

- They should be sensitive to the working of the Spirit in the heart of the hearer.

Exercises:

1. Prepare an expository outline on I Corinthians 13:1-8, giving the title, central thought, and main divisions of the passage.
2. Prepare an expository outline on John 15:1-8, giving the title, central thought or theme and main divisions of the passage.
3. Prepare an evangelistic, expository message from John 3:25-28, giving the title, central thought or theme, and main divisions of the passage.
4. Make a biographical sermon outline on Abraham's nephew Lot (note all the portions that deal with his life in Genesis 13, 14, and 19.) Give the title, central idea, and main divisions, and indicate the references which relate to each main division.
5. Prepare an evangelistic sermon from Ephesians 2:1-9. Give the title, theme and main divisions of the text.
6. Choose your own expository unit and prepare two different expository outlines on the same passage. Indicate the central thought and main divisions of each.
7. Prepare an expository outline on I Corinthians 3:1-8, giving the title, central thought, and main divisions of the passage. Indicate the verses which relate to each main division.

V. The Preaching Itself

a. Overcoming Nervousness

1. Be CONVINCED.
2. LIVE it out.
3. Get the MESSAGE in you.
4. Deal with NEGATIVE ROOTS of nervousness (Pride, insecurity, fear of failure or man, lack of love and compassion for others).
5. Visualize an audience of ONE.

b. Presentation Tips

1. PREPARE and over-PREPARE
2. MEMORIZE your first 50 words.
3. Stay SIMPLE
4. Stay HUMBLE
5. Before you go up to speak - BREATH
6. Speak SLOWLY

7. Develop a greater PASSION than your FEAR

c. The Holy Spirit enhances the presentation of the Pentecostal preacher.

- The preacher should not be bound to outline but led by Spirit.
- The Spirit helps overcome distracting mannerisms and idiosyncrasies.
- The Spirit free preachers from the destructive self-consciousness that destroys effective communication.
- He is also able to help the preacher maintain a clear sense of objective so that freedom and flexibility do not degenerate into pointless and aimless wanderings.
- The Holy Spirit will enable a realistic evaluation of time so that a fully developed sermon can be preached (exercise self control - Gal 5:22-23)
- There is an appropriate sense of authority that comes from the Spirit of God at work in the preacher's life (Mt. 7:29; Mk. 1:22).
- The guidance of the Holy Spirit along with the preacher's interpersonal skills are critical to dealing with unexpected disruptions (1 Cor 14:40)

d. Important Points for effective preaching:

Eye contact

- Look directly into the eyes of several people around the room. Find responsive listeners, but don't focus exclusively on them. Don't dodge the resistant faces.
- Ignore unresponsive body language, but respond to looks of confusion, excitement, etc.

Voice

- You should practice **variation** in *tone* (sharp or mellow), *pitch* (high or low), *rate* (fast or slow), and *volume* (loud and soft). Uniformity bores people or wears them down.
- Use vivid words, and find effective ways to emphasize key words. Use pause, repetition or special gestures for emphasis of important statements. Listen to other effective teachers and imitate them, without losing your own personality.
- Your voice should be loud enough for the person farthest away to hear comfortably.

Gestures & Posture

- Don't slump or cower. Come across relaxed, but take authority.
- Your gestures should be varied, appropriately aggressive, and undistracting (enhancing your content, not distracting from it)--not showy or over-dramatic. **Avoid drinking unless necessary.**
- Your facial expressions should express the full range of emotion: anger, surprise, delight, irony, pathos, compassion, etc.

- Lecterns, coffee tables, etc. should be avoided in home group teachings. They introduce more formality and distance between you and your audience, and they encourage more notes.

Dress should be undistracting to the audience--avoid excessive sloppiness or formality.

Never disqualify yourself as a teacher or your content. Statements like, "I'm not very good at this," or "This is not a very good outline" needlessly compromise the opportunity to impact your audience, and deflate your own confidence. You are teaching God's Word and you are God's spokesman!

- However, you should be careful to distinguish between your own opinion and God's Word. You should also acknowledge the complexity of certain issues.

Speak both as a fellow-learner/sinner and as a prophet. Somehow, you should communicate that you have much to learn and a long way to go in your own walk with God. This helps people to identify with you and is a way of communicating God's grace. But having done this, you also need to boldly proclaim God's Word and call on people (as God's mouthpiece) to respond to it.

- Your use of personal pronouns is important in achieving this balance. "We" and "I" are usually appropriate in speaking as a fellow-learner. "You" is often most appropriate in speaking as God's spokesperson.
- Normally, you should speak *more* as a fellow-learner/sinner than as a prophet. Also, you should normally speak as a fellow-learner *before* speaking as a prophet. And when you use yourself as an illustration, it should often be of your errors and sins rather than of your victories.

Be sensitive to the non-Christian and the new Christian. Keep them in mind in every part of your teaching preparation.

- Avoid saying things like "I'm sure you all know that passage . . ." They do *not* know it and will feel intimidated by this statement.
- Avoid undefined "Christianese"—Christian jargon or biblical terms with which new people are unfamiliar. If you use these terms, define them immediately. Otherwise, they alienate new people.
- Don't turn to other passages unless necessary. When turning to another passage, tell your audience how to find it and allow time for them to find the passage before you read it.
- Stay grace-oriented. Non-Christians and new Christians usually view the Christian life without proper understanding of or emphasis on God's grace, so unless you emphasize this, they will usually hear you through a legalistic grid. When teaching biblical ethics, stress God's acceptance apart from our works, the Holy Spirit's role in sanctification and ministry, biblical ethical priorities (e.g., love over ritual; sexual purity over no cussing) and the fact that God's moral will is for our welfare and fulfillment. Having done this, be *strong* and *unashamed* in your ethical imperatives.

Use slang only if it is familiar and appropriate to your audience. Otherwise it will reduce your credibility.

Avoid verbal "fat."

- Avoid extraneous material and redundancy.
- Don't narrate what you went through as you prepared your teaching: "So I wondered what this word was in the Greek . . ." Tell your audience what you discovered, *not* what you went through in the process.
- Don't say, "An example/illustration of this is . . ." Just give your example/illustration.

If you blank out or goof up, go on to the next point. Resist the urge to go back over the part you messed up unless it is crucial to the teaching. You usually just make the mess worse.

e. The Holy Spirit leads into congregational response and ministry.

- The preaching of the Word should give rise to faith and the Holy Spirit's activity among God's people that provide the setting for the miraculous to occur (I Cor 12:8-10)
- The Holy Spirit pierces hard hearts, smashes resistance, breaks down walls, opens doors, and slips in through the smallest of crevices. He seasons and influences everything (Acts 2:2)