

Homiletical Strategies

Preaching Biblical Wisdom

Session 3

For “location” texts (such as Prov. 3:5-8):

- Identify opposition to the stable world of the biblical text from the “wisdom” of our self-help world.
- Note tensions within the biblical world.
(Characters, incidents, ideological position that are in tension with the wisdom text.)
- Analyze the “unwise” life lived prior to the life lived in accordance with the teaching of the text.

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Images of the “stable” world of the proverbial wisdom:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Images of the worldly opposition:

1. (etc.)

(Can we shape points of view that are in common or are reversed?)



**Holy Wisdom
(Russian Icon)**

Session 3

Approach:

Move 1. Begin by establishing the stable world of the proverb (through “talk about” and imagery).

Move 2. Here we place the “contrapuntal” (Buttrick). What is the “conventional wisdom here? How is it imaged? (Note: We will not use the same tactic for imaging in successive moves.)

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Move 3. If the second move focused on the social dimensions of this contrapuntal, move now to a more personal perspective.

Move 4. “Problem is, this wisdom is phony, and it leads to death, not life.” Again, we weave conceptual and imagistic language to shape the move.

Move 5. So maybe our God has the way to life, offered in Christ. It is the way of wisdom.

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Now we add an introduction and a conclusion.

The former brings the congregation to a readiness to hear the first move (only!). The conclusion does not “overconclude”—i.e., tie up into a neat package. In the conclusions, with the African American church, we may build a celebration. However, that sense of an ending shifts to a more emotive rhetoric, does not introduce new concepts, and addresses the whole person.



Icon: King Solomon