10 Points for Paperless Preaching

Through the years I have admired pastors who can preach without notes. I have marveled at their ability to deliver powerful, heartfelt, life-changing messages without having to be propped up by a stack of papers. Given my personal wiring, I sadly concluded that paperless preaching was forever beyond my reach.

Then one Friday afternoon as I reviewed my sermon notes, I suddenly realized that the message was so well written that I could remember it all - the sequence of introduction, points, stories, and applications. The next day when I stepped out of my pulpit and simply shared the message from my heart, something powerful happened - The freedom, the connection with my congregation, the interactivity, and the authenticity of the witness shared absolutely hooked me.

Let me share with you 10 points for paperless preaching that have worked well for me since that memorable Sabbath four years ago:

**Start Early** - When you have a guest speaker coming on Sabbath, or when you recycle a sermon in your second church, use that week to begin work on a new sermon. Study your passage, organize your research, and process your thoughts. Then on the Monday morning before preaching that new sermon, start writing. Try to complete the manuscript by Tuesday or Wednesday. Thursday and Friday can then be devoted to internalizing your message so that you are free to preach without notes on Sabbath.

**Begin With the End in Mind** - The decision to preach a sermon without notes needs to be made before the sermon is written, not after. This simple, but important step will enable you to think and write in a way that is memorable, both for you and the congregation.
STORIES WE TELL by Lyle Arakaki

The Gift Card

[I remove from my wallet a gift card for one of my favorite restaurants and hold it up for the congregation to see.]

I received this gift card to Olive Garden as a birthday gift from a good friend. I didn't do anything to earn or deserve this gift; my friend gave it to me out of the goodness of his heart and because he is a really generous and thoughtful person.

Is this gift card mine? Of course it is. I carry it around with me in my wallet. Is it of any value to me? Of course. But am I receiving any benefit from this gift card? No. What do I need to do to experience the full benefits of this gift card? I need to go to the Olive Garden and use it to enjoy a meal.

In a similar fashion, salvation in Jesus is a gift. You and I can do absolutely nothing to earn or deserve it. It is purely a gift of grace out of God's love and goodness towards us. When we accept this gift by faith, it is ours. But are we experiencing the full benefits of salvation by simply possessing this gift? I would suggest not. How can we receive the benefits of salvation?

We experience the benefits of salvation when we receive by faith the transforming power of the Holy Spirit which Jesus is wanting to impart to us. As Seventh-day Adventists, we believe that since October 22, 1844, Jesus has been ministering in the Most Holy Place of the heavenly sanctuary. What exactly is Jesus doing there? We commonly say that Jesus is interceding on our behalf before the Father. I would like to suggest that His Most Holy Place ministry can be compared to my using my gift card at the Olive Garden. Jesus is helping me to experience the full benefits of the salvation He has given to me as a gift. He is helping me to receive the grace and power of His Holy Spirit so that my life will be transformed and begin to reflect His character of love more and more. In other words, Jesus is helping us to experience sanctification. Let's make full use of His gift to us.

SENIOR PASTOR OR LEAD PASTOR? by Marvin Wray

I have been at my current church for 14 years now. When I came I took the title of "Senior Pastor." Now my card and our bulletins list me as "Lead Pastor." What's the difference? Why did I change?

I have come to the time in my life when I carry the title of 'Senior' in other ways. I have a "Senior Pass" to all of the National Parks. I get "Senior Discounts" at many stores and for entrance to many events. Some of my "loving" members suggested that the title of "Senior Pastor" simply indicated the proper age declaration of the staff!

Perhaps we're just dealing with semantics here. Technically it doesn't really matter too much what I call myself. What really matters is how I function. However, how I see myself does matter both to me and to my members...and maybe it will matter even more to my prospective members.

The title of "Senior Pastor" speaks to me of the one who is in charge. The buck stops here. You may be on the team, but I am the Senior and that can only mean that you are the Junior! Again, it's only a word and how I carry out my ministry will speak the loudest, but let's get off to the best start.

Lyle Arakaki is the pastor of the Forest Park Church in Everett, Washington

Join the discussion on facebook.
Early November, as part of the North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists (NAD) year-end meetings, a group of young adults offered a compelling presentation on the issue of young adult retention. Introduced by Debra Brill, NAD Vice President for Ministries, Pastors Marquis Johns and Benjamin Lundquist led the presentation on behalf of a nearly 30-member focus group who had convened earlier in the year, developing the Young Adult LIFE initiative.

Johns and Lundquist presented the focus group's six "Initiatives/Ideas" - We Are Ready to Listen, Small Group Communities, iCreate, Why Am I An Adventist?, The Locals and Mentoring/Campus Ministry. Pastor Benjamin mentioned the NAD Camp Ministry study and how Adventist Camp Ministry is one of the best ways to retain young adults in the church.

Clint Jenkin, PhD, Vice President for Research for the Barna Group, offered findings from a recent research project involving Seventh-day Adventist Millennials [ages 18-29 years old]. Year-end meeting delegates listened intently as Jenkin shared the attitudes of young adults towards church doctrines, lifestyles and practices. Dr. Clint also shared stories of several young Adventists, and how intergenerational relationships in the church had affected them in both positive and negative ways. He concluded by reminding the attendees that intergenerational relationships, especially mentoring-type relationships between older members and young adults, are crucial in the spiritual development of Adventist Millennials, and ultimately in their decision to stay or walk away from faith community. Read More.

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Christian Leadership Podcasts

Listening to Christian leadership podcasts is a great way to kick your ministry up a notch. These free podcast are available from iTunes:

- Ministry in Motion
- Rainer on Leadership
- The Sermonators
- Andy Stanley Leadership Podcast
- Rick Warren's Ministry Podcast

Let's Talk: Favorite Apps

Tell us which apps you find most useful to your ministry. Be sure to include your name and where you minister.

Contact us at danmartella.nadbestpractices@gmail.com

Ideas, Events, Resources, Announcements

Coming Events in the North American Division

The Scholar Practitioner: A Vision for the Ministry Professional, an annual conference of the Andrews University Theological Seminary DMin program, will be live streamed on December 5, 2013. RSVP rimoni@adnrews.edu.

- **NAD Prayer Conference** | Monterey, CA | January 9-12, 2014
- **Adventist Ministries Convention** | Monterey, CA | January 12-15, 2014
- **The One Project** | Seattle, WA | February 10-11, 2014
- **Just Claim It 4** | Miami, FL | February 19-23, 2014
10 Points for Paperless Preaching

Previous resource links:
- North American Division Theology of Ordination Study Committee
- 8 Reasons Why Most Churches Never Break the 200 Attendance Mark
- Why Men Have Stopped Singing in Church
- Sharpening the Sword
- Ten Reasons Pastors Quit Too Soon
- Free Inspirational E-Cards
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**Begin With the End in Mind**— The decision to preach a sermon without notes needs to be made before the sermon is written, not after. This simple, but important step will enable you to think and write in a way that is memorable, both for you and the congregation.

**Keep it Simple** – Operate around a single, central theme. Develop a simple, memorable outline. Craft simple sentence structures. Use no more than 5 points – You can’t remember more than 5 points, and neither can your people.

**Sleep on It** – As you drift off to sleep Friday night, go through the sermon in your mind. First thing after your wake-up prayer Sabbath morning, stay in bed long enough to go through it again. This is a great way to lock the message into your short-term memory bank.

**Tell Stories** – Jesus’ sermons were memorable because He told so many stories. People love stories, so pack them in. I find that my most effective sermons are 30 – 40 percent story based. The stories are easy for me to remember, and easy for my congregation to remember as I drive a point home.

**Create a Prompt Sheet** – Create a bare bones outline of your message that can fit on a single sheet tucked into your thinline Bible. If you ever get stuck, the trigger points on your prompt sheet will get you going again. Your prompt sheet is also the place to put notable quotes that will need be read word-for-word.

**Get the Messenger Ready** – Getting the messenger ready is just as important as getting the message ready. Though it all, keep your heart right with God. Go into the Sabbath worship service well rested and well hydrated. A small high-protein snack may also prove helpful to your adrenaline management while preaching.

**Relax** – When you relax, the inner springs of thought flow with greater freedom. Take a calming walk around the block before the worship service. Retreat to your church office, put the headset on, and move through some muscle relaxation.
exercises. Steady your nerves, whisper a prayer, set your butterflies free to fly in formation.

**Let It Go** – You don’t need to have every little word and every little detail on your manuscript memorized. Just remember the basic ideas and the sequence of materials. Don’t sweat it if you forget a few lines or even a whole section of your message. As long as your message flows well, no one will ever know the difference. Your improved ability to connect with people through paperless preaching will more than compensate forgotten pieces of the message.

**Go for It** – When it comes time to preach, take the leap of faith. Grab the brass bar as it comes flying your way. Your careful preparation and God’s faithful empowerment will hold you secure. Your growing success as a paperless preacher will score appreciative “tens” in the changed lives of those you minister to on Sabbath morning and throughout the week.
By Marvin Wray

I have been at my current church for 14 years now. When I came I took the title of “Senior Pastor.” Now my card and our bulletins list me as “Lead Pastor.” What’s the difference? Why did I change?

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I do not want to be seen as the one in highest authority. I prefer my job title to define more clearly how I view my ministry rather than my rank. I personally like the title of “Lead Pastor” much better. When I think of leading I see my task as setting a course or direction. I cast a vision for the overall mission of our unique church family to our unique community.

When Roy Ice came on board he took the title of “Executive Pastor,” and it was a much better descriptive title than “Associate Pastor.” He did not come on to assist me with my work. He came to use his gifts to do his own work. Clearly he was the one to go to with questions or suggestions regarding the workings of the church and much of its ministry. I was not threatened with that reality. I was thrilled and relieved with it! I’ll never forget his words to me as we discussed what our ministry together might look like in advance of his coming. He said, “If you will do most of the preaching and take care of the visitation and hospital and nursing home ministry and deal with the family emergencies that arise, I will take care of all the details of the running of the church and I’ll make you look good.” The best part is, he did it!

I was freed to be the Lead Pastor and set out a path for spiritual growth and stability. My preaching improved dramatically and my ability to find the emotional energy to deal with the large number of critical needs in the lives of our members was renewed.

Lastly, the title of “Senior Pastor” seems to indicate a staff of two or more. However, the title of “Lead Pastor” indicates a calling and a description that can apply to any pastor whether he or she has just one church or a district of multiple groups.

This issue is not a battlefield to die on. But, it may be a launching pad to grow from.

*Marvin Wray is lead pastor for the Napa Community Seventh-day Adventist Church*
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Pastor Marquis followed the Barna Group report with a strong appeal to the delegates to not think of young adults who have left the church as statistics, but rather as “our family.” Concluding the presentation, “Letter to the Church,” was read, reader’s theatre style, by several local collegians; It was a very honest, moving appeal to church leaders to embrace young adults and include them in all aspects of church life. Those in attendance responded with applause and a standing ovation.

Electronic resources from the NAD year-end meeting young adult presentation are available for download at [https://db.tt/mRvcDu1v](https://db.tt/mRvcDu1v) More resources for, details about, and services of Young Adult LIFE are slated to be released first of 2014 to empower and equip local young adults and leaders to disciple next generations. Young Adult LIFE is to be more fully detailed at the JCI/IGNITION Conference, February 19-23, in Miami, Florida [www.jci4.org](http://www.jci4.org).