

# From the Study to the Pulpit

## Reformed Presbyterian Theological Seminary

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What “common concerns” do pastors have about their congregations as listeners?

What “common  
concerns” do  
congregations have  
about their pastors as  
listeners?

# *Orality & Literacy*

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## THE LITERACY ISSUE

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The Deadening Impact of the Printing  
Press on Christian Speech

# THE CHALLENGE

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Transforming  
WRITTEN WORD

into

SPOKEN WORD

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*From Study (literacy) to Pulpit (orality)*

Spoken Word

(not written word)

PREPARING TO BE  
HEARD...  
AND REMEMBERED

# SPEAKING & LISTENING

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If YOU *can't* remember,  
the AUDIENCE *won't*.

How?

Speaking with...

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A Careful Gameplan  
*and Minimal Notes*

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EXTEMPORANEOUSLY

# PREMEDITATION

No memorization.

No manuscripts.

# FULL-TIME EYE CONTACT

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If you can't see the audience,  
you can't listen to them.

# Speech Gameplan

BEST COMMUNICATION

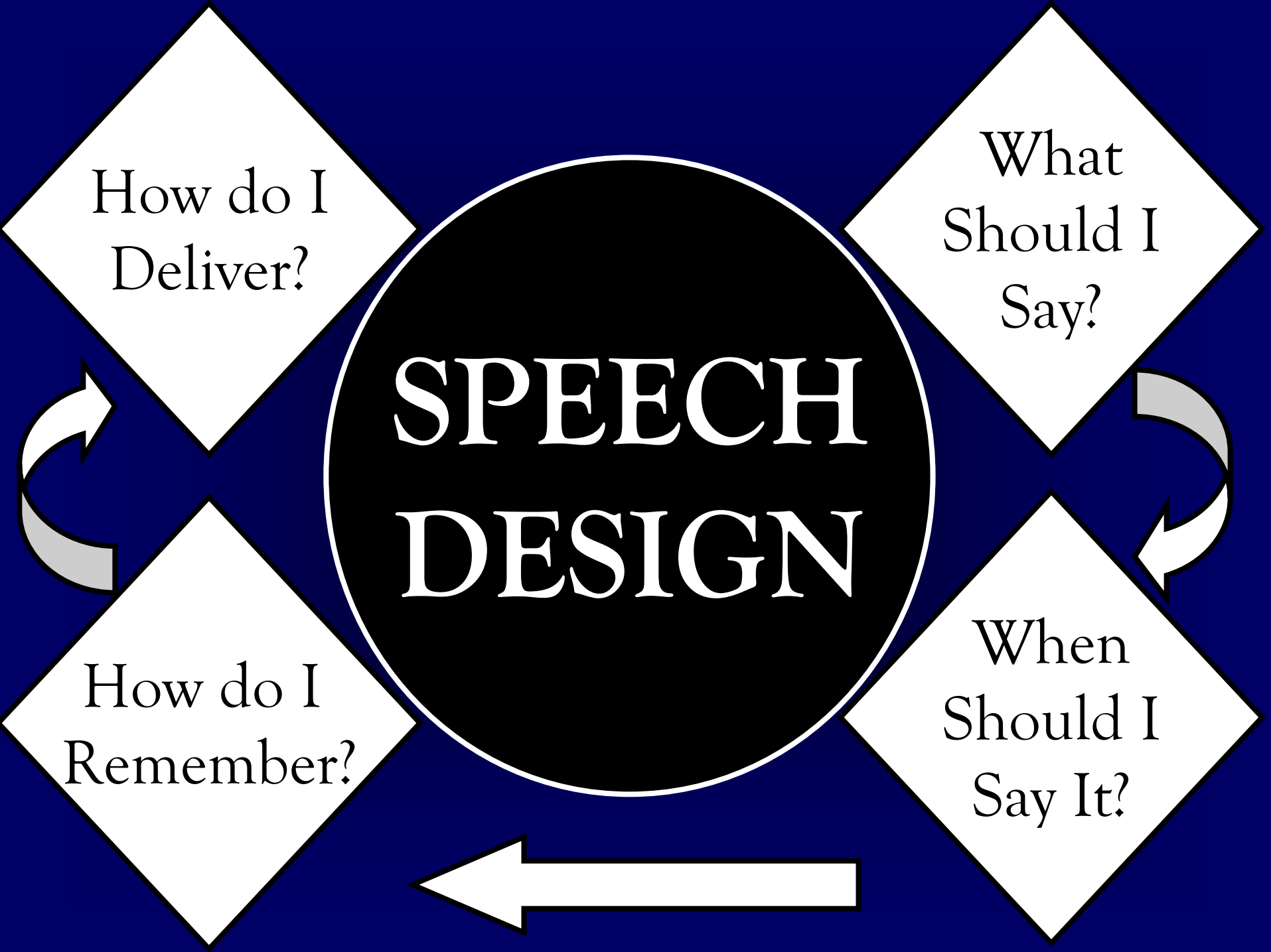
Engage  
Listeners

# Speech Gameplan

BEST COMMUNICATION

Embody

Speech



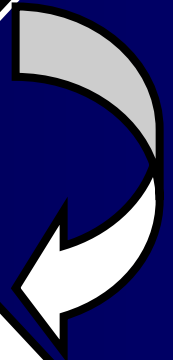
**BASIC  
LITERATE  
PREACHING**

How do I  
Deliver?

What  
Should I  
Say?

How do I  
Remember?

When  
Should I  
Say It?



# Orality & Literacy

What are some differences  
between

ORAL MEMORY

and

MEMORIZATION?

# Orality & Literacy

## MEMORABILITY

What are some ways that speakers should “make thoughts memorable”?

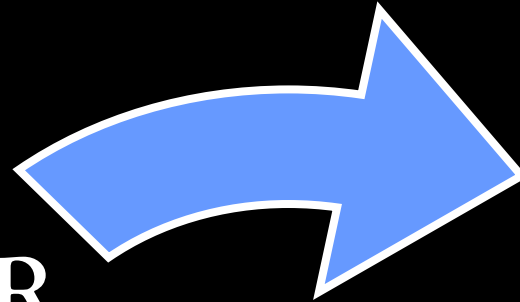
# ① SAY IT SIMPLY

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VERNACULAR  
SPEECH

SPOKEN  
DYNAMICS

ACTION  
&  
INTONATION



Make it Memorable

Speak for the  
EAR

LISTENING APPARATUS

# ② USE POWER PHRASES

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Better is...

The fear of the Lord....

You have heard that it was said....

Galilee  
of the Gentiles

Nathan  
the Prophet

The Fatherless  
& The Widow

# ③ CYCLE BACK

**CREATIVE  
REDUNCANCY**

- Intro
- Transitions
- Conclusion

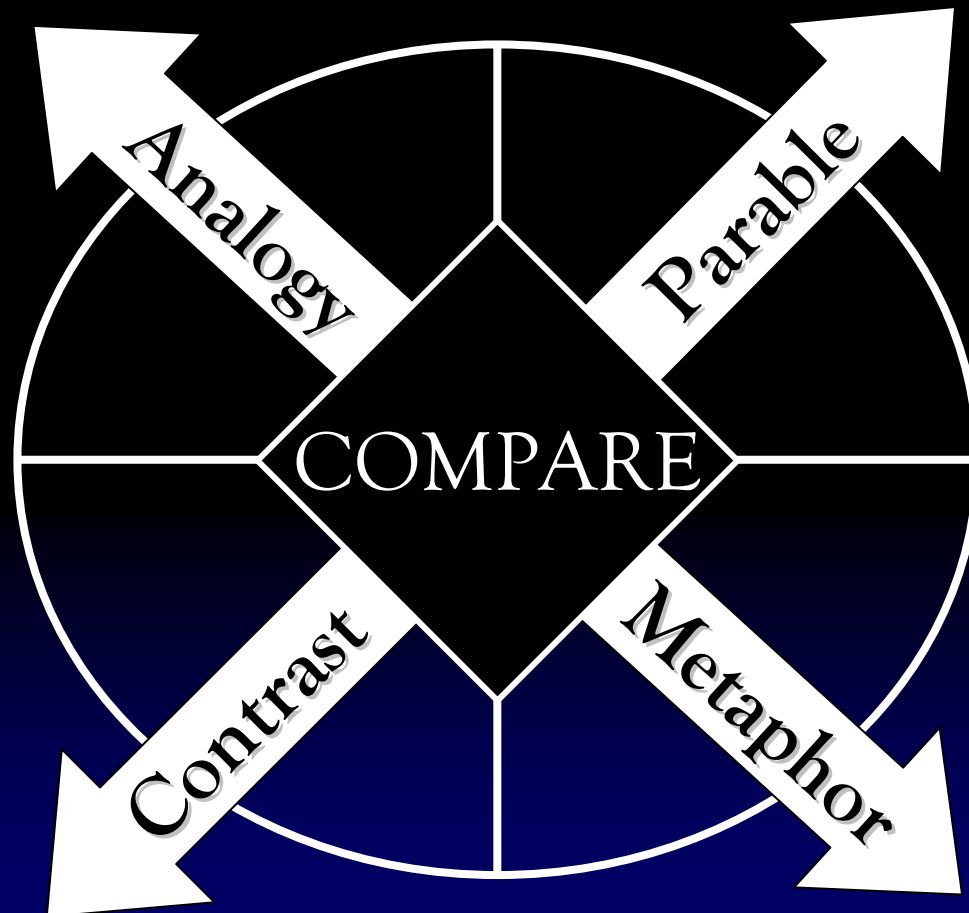
Make it Memorable

What's important  
enough to repeat?

(point & themes)

# ④ START FAMILIAR

“What Everybody Knows”



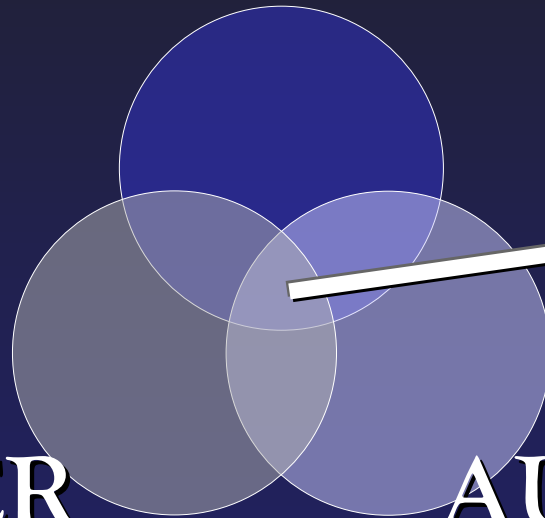
Make it Memorable

What is it like?

(comparisons)

# ⑤ CLOSE TO HOME

MESSAGE



Lived  
Human  
Experience

SPEAKER

AUDIENCE

# ⑥ HIGHLIGHT TENSION



Where's the Drama?

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What's at stake for listeners?

Make it Memorable

What's the  
story?

(action-centered message)

# ⑦ SPEAK TO THE HEART

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MESSAGE

Meet the Audience in the Message

Speaker + Listener

# ⑧ FOCUS ON PRESENT

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“TODAY”

Prophetic

Now

PAST

FUTURE



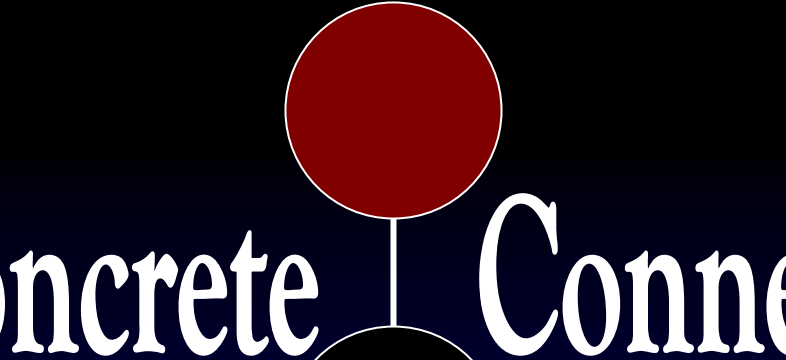
# Make it Memorable

Who's talking to  
whom about this?

(how does the conversation go)

# ⑨ ANSWER “So What?”

IMPLICATIONS & APPLICATIONS



Concrete | Connections

PRINCIPLES

PRACTICES

Make it Memorable

# Principles of Humor

# Orality & Literacy

What are some differences  
between

ORAL MEMORY

and

MEMORIZATION?

# PREMEDITATION

A coherent progression of  
memorable “episodes.”

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WHO IS FAMOUS FOR THIS?

ORALITY

Propositional Truth?

ABSOLUTELY!

Abstract Propositions?

RARELY!

# PREMEDITATION

No memorization.

No manuscripts.

# THE TEXT

Revelation 2:12-17

“The Letter to the Church  
in Pergamum”

What's the Point?

Every Audience's  
Basic Question

# What's the Point?

No good answer without good exegesis.

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Not answered by  
good exegesis!

*We're looking for...*

**ONE SIMPLE  
POINT**

to address the specific  
audience.

# How to Find the Point

## Clarify...

- AUDIENCE
- OCCASION
- YOUR ROLE

# How to Find the Point

## FIND THE QUESTION

What is the question  
on which the whole  
message turns?

Who, What, Where, When  
(FACT/DEFINITION)

How  
(PROCESS)

Why  
(CAUSE)

What Now/Next  
(DECISION)

So What  
(IMPLICATIONS)



# How to Find the Point

## STATE THE QUESTION

What is the question the audience will be (or should be) asking?

What is the  
Doctrine of Balaam?  
(Revelation 2:14)

# What Should I Say?

Connect with the  
audience by design,  
not by chance!

# How to Find the Point

I want each member of  
my audience to

[understand/believe/agree]

**THAT...**

I want each member of  
my audience to  
understand THAT the  
Doctrine of Baalam  
threatens the church  
today.

# How to Find the Point

WHAT'S  
YOUR POINT?

# Doctrine of Baalam

Listen to Baalam's  
Donkey.

When Should I Say What?

ORGANIZE

*...for the audience*

When Should I Say What?

K.I.S.S.

(Look at your question.)

# Common Speech Structures

- Problem-Solution
- Cause/Effect
- Historical
- Systems

# Common Speech Structures

Follow the  
Structure

# Intro & Conclusion

## THE LAW OF PRIMACY & RECENCY

# Intro & Conclusion

Opener

INTRO

Preview

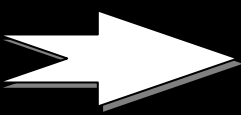
B O D Y of S P E E C H

Summary

CONC

Closer

# Openers & Closers

- Story/Scenario
- Question  the Point
- Remarkable Quotation
- Striking Fact

# OPENER NO-NOs!

- Review of Last Sermon
- Theological Qualifiers  
& Conditions

(Get Right Into It!)

# CLOSER NO-NOS!

## The Three-Conclusion Close

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Stop & Pray

(Prepare a Deliberate Close)

# DELIVERY

What are some reasons why a lot of smart people deliver mediocre speeches?

# DELIVERY MYTHS

“I deliver well when  
I really know the  
material.”

# DELIVERY MYTHS

“Writing out  
the speech helps  
me so much!”

# MEDIOCRE SPEECHES

No Real  
Delivery Plan

# Delivery

PLANNED

CONVERSATION

(expects a response)

# CONVERSATIONAL

- Voice Inflection
- Eye Contact
- Presence

Delivery

COMPOSURE

Not Perfection

# Delivery

No One Knows  
what you were  
“going to” say!

# PREMEDITATION

No memorization.

No manuscripts.

# Note Design

SIMPLE

REMINDERS

(not details)

# Note Design

SEEN,

NOT HELD

# Note Design

PROMPTS,

NOT A SCRIPT

# Note Design

KEYWORD OUTLINE

or

FLOWCHART

# Note Design

PRACTICE TOOL

(formal and informal practice)

# CONCLUSION

To the Pulpit...

- Work in Spoken Word.
- Prep for Oral Memory.
- Point—Structure—  
Delivery.