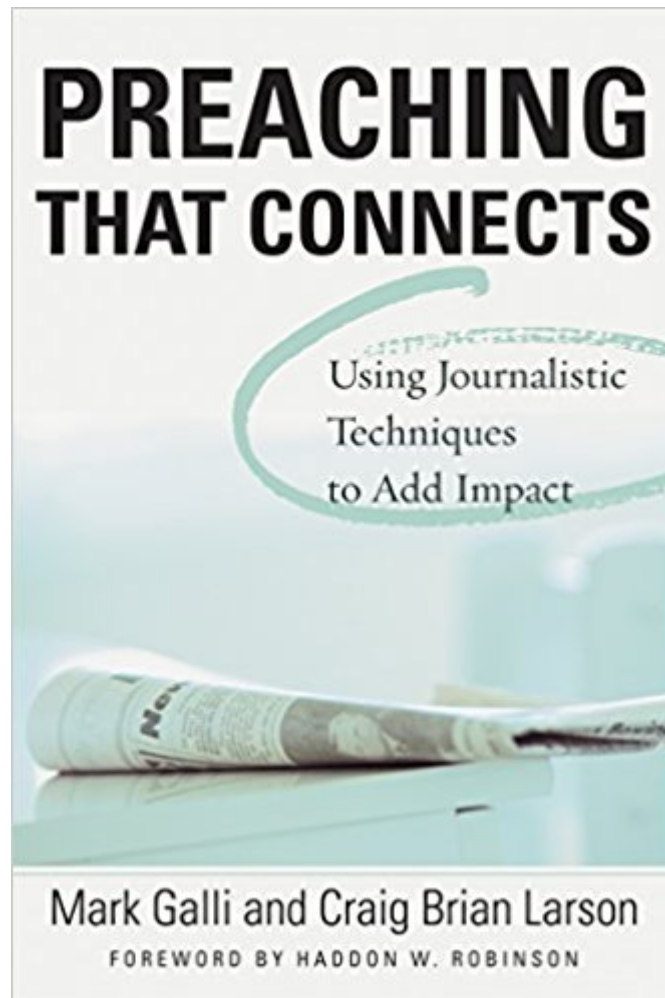




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# Preaching That Connects



## Synopsis

Master the craft of effective communication that grabs attention and wins hearts. Like everyone else, preachers long to be understood. Unfortunately, the rules first learned in seminary, if misapplied, can quickly turn homiletic precision into listener boredom. To capture heart and mind, Mark Galli and Craig Larsen suggest preachers turn to the lessons of journalism. In *Preaching That Connects*, they show how the same keys used to create effective, captivating communication in the media can transform a sermon. Amply illustrated from some of today's best preachers, *Preaching That Connects* walks through the entire sermon, from the critical introduction to the bridge to illustrations and final application. Key points include the five techniques for generating creative ideas, your six options for illustrations, and the ten rules for great storytelling—and why the transition sentence is the hardest sentence you'll write. *Preaching That Connects* is for all who seek to hone their craft to communicate the truth of the gospel effectively.

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## Customer Reviews

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Mark Galli (MDiv, Fuller Theological Seminary) is managing editor of Christianity Today magazine. He was a pastor for ten years and is the author of numerous books on prayer, preaching, and pastoral ministry. Craig Brian Larson is chief editor for Christianity Today's PreachingToday.com, an online journal and illustration service. He also pastors a church in Chicago, Illinois. His books include Contemporary Illustrations for Preachers, Teachers, and Writers; Preaching That Connects; and The Art and Craft of Biblical Preaching. He and his family live in the Chicago suburbs.

Preaching that connects has been an interesting read and I've found I've been able to apply the key principles and strategies given directly to my preaching in the last two months. This book has helped me in a practical way to examine my current preaching style and to make changes to improve the impact I have when I preach. It has challenged me to extend my knowledge of the Word of God and my conviction to be more disciplined in the art of written and verbal communication. This book has helped to equip me to better understand the role of literary devices to enhance effective communication and improve sermon delivery. It has helped me to appreciate the role of the listener and how to be more creative when I preach to enable participation and engagement. I have learnt a lot about how to structure a sermon to improve effect and the appropriate use of illustrations and analogies. I've enjoyed reading the writers examples and have found the book overall quite an easy read that I have been able to apply and meditate on. This book has changed my perspective on the art of preaching and has led me to have a greater admiration and respect for good preaching. It has also encouraged me to observe and listen to other preaching styles and critique for the purpose of developing my own style and learning how I can grow into a good preacher. It has caused me to realize that the process of becoming a confident and Spirit filled preacher relies a lot on my personal devotion to the Lord and reliance more on the Holy Spirit for direction and wisdom. I would recommend anyone who is interested in developing their own preaching style to read this book!

The primary emphasis of Preaching that Connects is based upon the awareness of an increasingly

breath-takingly fast-paced life in a hyperactive society with hyperactive forms of communication. The challenge - preaching in a fashion that fits this hyper context. Journalists have long known that the average reader can easily grab another book from the shelf, or flip the page of the local paper until something worthy of reading is discovered. Far too long have pastors considered their audiences captive. Occasionally, the country preacher will almost gloat over the "privilege" of subjecting his bemoaning parishioners to the ensuing barrage of irrelevant and often unbiblical babble. The hopeless victims sit like zombies in their respective pews with their eyes open (some closed) but their heart and mind hermetically sealed to the unsuspecting preacher. The idea that communicating to the people to meet their needs is more important than communicating my knowledge in a manner that I understand. This is an inherent problem with preachers who critique other preachers. In principal there is something terribly wrong in essentially defining the audience as just another preacher. Preachers who preach for other preachers are clearly in the wrong profession. Their effort would be better exhausted in a local elementary spelling bee contest where an overindulgent mother can fawn over her son's winsome performance. Reaching people with the Word requires self-denial - a willingness to work in order to see things from the unfamiliar perspective of a listening audience. In Journalism, the reader is given priority. Preaching should be no different for the listener. This is not to say that the Spirit of God cannot enliven the heart and mind of the weary listener, and speak truth into a life. He has certainly used lesser things to communicate with humanity. However, it would seem fitting that a preacher of the Word be fully prepared to passionately address the audience to the best of his ability, carefully exercising techniques and discovery of subject matter that captivates and compels to listen. As usual, pastors tend to polarize on these types of discussion. Many argue their passivity in the process - shunning all credit for the God-inspired results. Others prepare as if God seemingly had no place in the matter whatsoever. I think the better answer is somewhere in between the two extremes. The message of the authors in *Preaching that Connects* is one based upon desire to find balance between faithful dependence upon God and the careful preparation of the faithful student in what is known as "Journalistic Preaching." The idea of an introduction that is riveting to the ears, heart, and mind of the listener is the ultimate goal. We would all agree that we don't necessarily want the people to hear us. It is our ultimate desire that they would hear another voice - the voice of an all-powerful God. At the same time, we don't want to deter the listener from hearing God in response to our distracting or ineffective manner of communication. A solid introduction and a captivating conclusion might simulate theological hooks to catch the hearts and minds of the listener that might be carried off like cargo into their lives and the lives of those they encounter. Preaching with the attitude and

preparation of a journalist has tremendous merit and potential in the often dull and mundane pulpits scattered throughout the harvest of humanity.

Great book!

Mark Galli is practical as always in this book. He gives illustrations of how to make sermon illustrations appealing to hearers by making them personal and detailed, for example. Galli also gives practical things a preacher can do toward making sermons memorable without using time-worn trademarks such as alliteration and rhyming section heads.

Recommended by Jonathan Merritt, my writing coach, this book explains why some connect and some do not in all forms of communication. I highly recommend it to you.

A good read, must stay focused and you will understand the dynamics of catching the attention of your audience.

Excellent book. Inspiring! Practical! Interesting! The book has brought to my attention dozens of things that I was not even aware of and has brought clarity to things I was confused about. Full of stories and illustrations from other preachers. I couldn't put it down!

The book brought into perspective of writing as well as preaching a clear and concise sermon. It went over some of the do's and don'ts and rules of writing and preaching. I also like the examples given for the rules, do's and don'ts. This book is a good reference tool to have in one's library.

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