**Text Driven Preaching in Student Ministry**

I’m not sure about you, but there’s been an alarming trend that I’ve noticed in student ministry…really ministry in general over the years. Our people have become extraordinarily illiterate when it comes to Scripture. Obviously, there are a lot of reasons for this and we could spend a while parsing out all the variables…but what does it mean for those of us who work with students? I would say its a problem…but it’s a problem that we could view as an opportunity to made an eternal impact in the way we teach.

So, let’s talk about text driven preaching in student ministry. I would say let’s first start with the goal of teaching.

**Transformation over Information**

Here are 3 quick tools for us as we seek to lead to life change through our teaching.

1. **Let the text drive your message.**

* Remember that the Word of God is…
* Inspired
* Infallible
* Inerrant
* So, then it is sufficient
* Allow the text, whether you find yourself in the middle of book series in one of the epistles or whether you’re in the midst of a series on Biblical friendship…allow the text to drive your message.
* You’ve probably been there before, you have a great story, quote, video clip or anecdote that you really want to shoehorn in. Allow the text to be the the driving force in all those things.
* Certainly, we want to capture the minds and hearts of young people.
* The truth is, though, that no matter how gifted a communicator you may be…your words are still just that.
* God’s Word, however, has the power to transform.

1. **Let the structure dictate your outline.**

* I’m not sure what your study and preparation looks like, but the chances are that you have a comfort zone. Like the rest of us.
* Maybe you prefer a solid 3 point outline.
* Perhaps you like to have one overarching point where everything you say circles back around to emphasize that point.
* It’s easy to fall into that routine.
* Whether you’re manuscripting, heavy outlining, or rolling in with one big idea…we have to be open to the structure of the text when preparing.
* Sometimes the text lends itself to three clear points. Sometimes there is one giant point being emphasized throughout a chunk of text.
* It is important that we are faithful to allow our structure to be malleable to the structure of the text.

1. **Let the purpose unlock your passion.**

* Finally the application.
* You and I, as the messenger that God has chosen for our particular contexts get to take the Holy Word of the creator of the universe and deliver it to students, parents and ministry leaders on a regular basis.
* The purpose of a particular text can be, responsibly and accurately, brought off of those pages or screens and into the hearts and minds of those who are listening.
* What an awesome responsibility we have, but even more…what an incredible opportunity.
* You’re probably already doing this in your church…but in case you aren’t let me challenge you.
* Maybe you’re trudging through the book of Job. Or perhaps you’re in the middle of a series on sin and repentance.
* The obvious temptation is to get bogged down in middle of a topic and text that is not only hard to talk about, but also hard to hear.
* Allow the purpose of what you’re