

traditions?

- d. Should any be added or deleted?

15. Ask someone who is not known to your congregation to attend a service and tell you how your church looks to a visitor, or find someone in your congregation who started attending recently and ask them. If you can, visit another church with these questions in mind.

16. Are you familiar with your tradition's understanding of the sacraments or ordinances? How would you explain them to a new Christian?

17. Think about weddings and funerals.

- a. For whom are you willing to perform them?
- b. Is there anyone for whom you will not perform them? Why?

18. How can you use weddings as an opportunity for the three purposes of the church?

- a. To be a home for God (worship)?
- b. To raise God's children (discipleship)?
- c. To invite everyone into God's family (evangelism)?

19. How can you use funerals as an opportunity for the three purposes of the church?

- a. To be a home for God (worship)?
- b. To raise God's children (discipleship)?
- c. To invite everyone into God's family (evangelism)?

APPLYING CHAPTER 14

1. How do you decide what to preach for a given service?

2. How well do most of your sermons accomplish the four purposes of preaching:
 - a. Proclaim a truth?
 - b. Explain its meaning?
 - c. Apply it to life?
 - d. Encourage action?
 - e. Which come naturally, and which do you have to work to include?

3. The chapter lists nine keys to using the Bible.
 - a. Which of these do you need to work on more?
 - b. How will you do that?

4. Who are your favorite preachers?
 - a. What can you learn from them about how to preach?
 - b. What works for them but doesn't seem natural for you?

5. The chapter lists the following eleven tensions in preaching. For each one, do your sermons tend to lie on one end or the other, or somewhere in between?
 - a. Emotional or intellectual?
 - b. Prepared or spontaneous?
 - c. Evangelistic or teaching or exhorting?
 - d. Narrative or linear?
 - e. Topical or expository?
 - f. Focusing on eternal truths or current events?
 - g. Encouraging engagement with the world or separation from the world?
 - h. Covering the whole Bible or focusing on certain passages?
 - i. Emphasizing personal holiness or God's forgiveness?
 - j. Including mainly the chosen few or every tribe and tongue?
 - k. Telling people what God says or teaching people to hear God?

6. What did this exercise tell you about your preaching style?

7. In areas where you are close to one side, what will you do to increase your communication with listeners who are on the other?
8. Do you tend toward any of the “don’ts”? If so, what will you do about it?
9. List ways you can learn more about the practice of preaching. Which will you do first?

APPLYING CHAPTER 15

1. Does your church have clear policies as suggested in the beginning of this chapter?
 - a. Does everyone understand them?
 - b. Are any changes or additional policies needed?
2. Are your people clear on what ministries and responsibilities are theirs, and what are yours as pastor? More important, are you?
3. List all the ministry teams or groups or committees in your church.
 - a. Which are task-defined?
 - b. Which are group-defined?
 - c. Which support the others?
4. What do you call your ministry groups? What does that title imply about what they do and how they do it?
5. The first paragraph in the Task-Defined Ministries section lists what the author sees as the seven main functions of a local church.
 - a. Do you agree with his list – did he leave any out or include any that don’t belong?
 - b. How does your church address each of these functions?