

MAKING SERMONS LAST:
PT. 1: BEFORE THE SERMON

Here are some practical suggestions on how to get the most out of our Sunday morning sermons at Calvary (or wherever you may belong). ***DO NOT think of them as legalistic rules.*** However, even doing some of them can help you to concentrate and focus on Sunday morning to get the most from our Lord's Word.

PREPARATION IS KEY.

DURING THE WEEK LEADING UP TO THE SERMON:

- **Make Sunday Morning THE priority for the week!**

Sermons are like meals. Few of us remember every single meal. But a steady diet has kept us from starving throughout our lives.

No, not every sermon is going to be as meaningful as some. **However, a steady diet of sermons contributes to the totality of your walk with Christ and spiritual health.** In other words, *if you are skipping church regularly, do not expect to be mature spiritually.* (Hebrews 10:25)

Put simply, church should be the reason you skip everything else!

- **Spend time in regular prayer for your pastor** – his preparation, holiness, and study. Pray for yourself, your family, and each person to hear God's Word.
 - Pray for **Illumination** – This means:
 - Understanding the meaning of the text.
 - An understanding of how to apply the text practically
 - A desire to respond in faithful obedience out of loving gratitude for our Savior. (James 1:22-24)
 - Pray for soft hearts that God can shape through the sermon.
 - Someone who is lost.
 - Someone who is sinning.
 - Someone who is suffering.
 - Someone who is joyful.

- Read Ahead!
 - If your pastor preaches through books of the Bible:
 - Read through the entire book he is preaching through once per week as long as he is in it. (Ask your pastor for help to divide a long book into sections)
 - This will give you an amazing understanding of the book and will also help with sermon recall!
 - If your pastor does not preach through books of the Bible regularly, this is admittedly more difficult. Consider asking him what his next sermon's text will be on so you may read and meditate on it prior to Sunday.
- Unfortunately, Sunday morning is often the most hectic of all mornings for families. **Some simple preparations can assist with this.**
 - **Get a good night's sleep** on Saturday night!
You simply cannot be at your best mentally or physically if you are exhausted.
 - **Choose your outfits** for the entire family and set them out on Saturday.
 - **Eat a good breakfast** – enough that will hold you over until a late lunch. Remember – it's the LORD'S Day. Don't complain about long sermons.
 - If you have a family and children, make it a point to **help one another get ready.**
- **Do your best to establish a godly atmosphere before church.**
 - Play good worship music on the radio in the car. (Seeds Worship, Sovereign Grace, CityAlight, or live music from Sing! Conference or T4G)
 - If your church has a prayer room/garden, use it!
 - Consider having a time of family prayer upon arrival or before leaving the house.
 - Arrive early enough to pray for each person sitting in each pew of the church.
- **Arrive early.** Greet others as they come in. Enjoy fellowship! Pray for one another as you worship today.