PREACHING & TEACHING

Youth Sermon

A youth sermon framework built for twelve minutes and a room that can tell when it is being handled. Shorter movements, one idea, and no attempt to be current, because the fastest way to lose a youth group is to perform their culture back at them badly.

12 min preached · 5 segments

Five movements, twelve minutes. Short on purpose. The structure is written out; every cultural reference is deliberately left blank for you.

BEFORE YOU RECORD

- Twelve minutes, one idea. A youth talk that makes three points makes none. If you cannot say it in one sentence, do not give it yet.
- Do not reference anything you do not personally use or watch. Borrowed cultural references land as condescension and they are noticed instantly. Being plainly yourself and slightly out of date is far better received than pretending.
- Never end on a rhetorical question that assumes agreement. This room is more likely than any other in the church to be quietly disagreeing, and a talk that does not leave space for that teaches them to hide it.

01. The hook: something real from your week

2 min

[be the one who got it wrong - this buys you the next ten minutes]

Open with something that actually happened to you, recently, in which you do not look good. Not a sanitised confession with a tidy lesson. A small real failure.

This room has a finely tuned instrument for detecting adults performing authenticity. The only reliable way past it is to be genuinely unflattering about yourself once, early.

[your story, 120 words - true, small, and not flattering]

02. The text

2 min

[short passage - do not read three chapters]

[read a short passage, six verses at most]

Then say what is strange about it in one sentence. Every passage has something odd in it, and pointing at the odd thing is more interesting than explaining the familiar thing.

03. The one idea

4 min

[one - not three]

[your one sentence claim]

Then four minutes on that and nothing else. If a second good idea occurs to you while you are preparing, write it down and save it for a fortnight's time.

[your material, 350 words spoken - one illustration, from your own life or theirs]

04. The honest bit

2 min

[name the objection they are having - out loud]

Say the objection before they do. "Some of you are thinking this sounds like something adults say to get teenagers to behave." Naming it costs you nothing and buys enormous credibility.

[the objection you know is in the room, and your honest answer - 150 words]

05. The close

2 min

[one thing to do, and leave room to say no]

One thing, small enough to do this week. Then say plainly that they do not have to, and mean it. A room that is allowed to decline is a room that can actually agree.

[your one ask, then stop - do not add a closing summary]

USAGE

Free to use. Preach it, adapt it, record it, publish it under your own name, and keep whatever you earn from it. No credit required.

Record it with Hilite — hellohilite.com

Studio-quality audio from your laptop mic. Free to start.