



## Seasoned Advice on the use of Sermon Materials

**1. Pastoral Warning:** There is no substitute for the pastor's leadership from the pulpit, preaching the word of God without fear or favor, and applying it to burning issues such as abortion, the radical homosexual agenda, judicial tyranny, pornography, racism, gambling, etc. However, I have preached messages like these many times and they never fail to offend somebody. In fact, I've had people walk out on me during the sermon, and others leave my church membership. But be encouraged because I've also had people join my church in large numbers because I took the stand. Always remember what God told the prophet Jeremiah when He called him: "Get yourself ready! Stand up and say to them whatever I command you. Do not be terrified by them, or I will terrify you before them." (Jer. 1:17).

**2. Wise Counsel:** As the pastor, you already have a good idea what your flock needs from God's word. However, if you are new to preaching on moral issues in the public arena, it may be wise to talk with your deacon body or elders or governing board or trusted leaders – whatever accountability group you have in your church. In the multitude of counselors there is much wisdom. Remember, God's word offends people. Don't preach it if you can't handle the consequences. So before you launch out, seek the counsel of your trusted leaders, and ask for their support.

**3. Legal Issues:** Abortion, same-sex "marriage," embryonic stem-cell research, etc. are moral issues with political implications. There are some legal dos and don'ts for pastors and churches if you want to maintain your tax exempt status. Visit [www.iVoteValues.org](http://www.iVoteValues.org) click on Leaders, then on Legal Dos and Don'ts, then on What a Pastor May Do. Here's the biggie: Don't stand in the pulpit and tell your people how to vote (e.g., Vote for Candidate A and don't vote for Candidate B). However, you can confidently preach on moral and cultural issues from a biblical perspective and tell people to do their homework on the candidates without fear of losing your tax exempt status.

**4. Practical Matters:** You might want to put a "PG-13 rating" on some sermons that deal with the killing of the unborn or the homosexual agenda and allow parents to make decisions about young children hearing some of the content that will be discussed. If you take that route, you might want to provide for childcare beyond nursery and pre-school age during the message. I have found that parents appreciate a heads up and childcare when handling such topics. Just know that when you describe a moral problem with any detail you will get feedback. Plan ahead and you can avoid some problems.

**5. Perspective:** If Americans of faith don't take action on moral and cultural issues, then we will allow the devil and his people to win by default in an arena Jesus commanded us to influence as the salt and light (Matt. 5:13-16). That being said, remember that the way to change the world, beginning where you are, is through the Gospel. It is only when a person surrenders his or her life to Jesus as Lord and becomes His disciple that the heart and mind will change when it comes to these moral issues being debated in the public arena (Rom. 12:1-2). Equip your people to engage cultural issues from a biblical perspective, but also equip them to love people, share their faith and make disciples, beginning at home. Otherwise, we will be on defense all of the time and we will lose the battle for America. By the way, that is exactly what the devil wants. The reason? Americans have a unique Christian heritage, and on that foundation we have become the greatest missionary sending nation in the history of the world. Let's make the Great Commission the main thing!

Again, these message helps are intended to help you develop your own messages as you equip your people to follow the teaching of Jesus by being the salt and light in the arena of culture and especially government (Matt. 5:13-16). Don't keep these sermons a secret. More message helps can be found by going to [www.watchmenevents.org](http://www.watchmenevents.org), clicking on the Pastors Portal, and then Sermon Starters. Forward these sermon-helps to your friends in the ministry. Feel free to copy, cut, paste, and prepare your own message as the Lord leads, and then, as Paul says in 2 Tim. 4:2, "Preach the Word!"

Dr. Kenyn M. Cureton  
Vice President for Church Ministries  
Family Research Council