

# I Got the Preachin' Blues

Written by Chris Jackson

---



Feeling discouraged after a sermon? You're not alone.

Discouragement. It's one of the greatest hounds of hell that assaults us pastors who are trying to share powerful, dynamic messages from God's Word with our people every Sunday morning. There's a reason for the pastors' adage of "no resignations allowed on Mondays"; post-preaching discouragement can be brutal as we review every nuance of the sermons we've so painstakingly crafted and delivered.

Sometimes I feel guilty for these feelings of discouragement. And when the next Sunday rolls around and I'm elated because I think I "hit it out of the park," I feel guilty again and wonder how pure my motives are after all. Either I have personal issues, or there's an enemy that opposes us every time we take our stand behind our pulpits and lecterns. I believe it's the latter and that we're vulnerable to his assault for several reasons.

**First, the ministry of preaching—whether confrontive, challenging or comforting in nature—is a declaration of war.** We're not delivering speeches; we're striking a nerve with our culture, our listeners, the enemy who opposes them and, sometimes, with our own souls. A.W. Tozer said: "Our message is not a compromise but an ultimatum," and every time we issue that ultimatum, we step into a ring of fierce spiritual combat.

**Second, preaching is a pure expression of who we are; therefore, the delivery of our sermons is a vulnerable, sensitive experience.** Oh, I know, our identities shouldn't be wrapped up in what we do. But as pastors, what we do is intrinsically linked to who we are. When we preach, we're pouring out the essence of our identities, what we stand for and what we're longing for in our lives. Consequently, any negative feedback or perceived rejection of the message can strike us at a deep level.

**Third, most pastors aren't content with base hits.** When we preach, we want to hit home runs and when we don't—even if we've hit a solid grounder that lands us on first base—we become vulnerable to discouragement. Don't forget that if a major league baseball player got a hit (not to mention a home run) just 50 percent of the time, he'd be an unparalleled all-star and instant hall of famer. Granted, we're not playing for a pennant—we're contending for a crown and the hearts of our generation. But it's still wise to remember that life is comprised of both the exhilarating and the mundane, and celebrating our base hits can bring tremendous peace and perspective. Most lives aren't changed by one awesome sermon; they're changed little by little as people consistently hear the Word over time.

## I Got the Preachin' Blues

Written by Chris Jackson

---

**Fourth, we love our people.** And we're desperate to give them a high-quality message. So to counter the post-preaching discouragement, I suggest the following simple steps:

1. Revel in this fact: God has called you to preach His Word.
2. Take only a few minutes to review your performance, and make any applicable notes of how you'll do better the next time around (you'll get another chance in about a week).
3. Linger in your study and prayer times until you have an "unction" from the Holy Spirit. Knowing you've preached His heart goes a long way in staving off ensuing second-guessing.
4. Thank God for base hits (even as you swing for the fences).
5. With every cell of your being, reject the demonic discouragement of the enemy.
6. Remember that God loves you and will never lift His hand from your life.
7. Make a commitment to always give one more altar call before you go home to crawl under a rock and die. Who knows, the next Billy Graham might be listening.

---

Chris Jackson is senior pastor of Grace Church of La Verne in Southern California and author of several books.

### *Ministry Resources*

An ancillary tool for sermon or Bible study preparation, Steven K. Scott's *The Greatest Words Ever Spoken* organizes

## **I Got the Preachin' Blues**

Written by Chris Jackson

---

Jesus' sayings into more than 225 topics. Great for pastors wanting to quickly search the breadth of Christ's teachings.