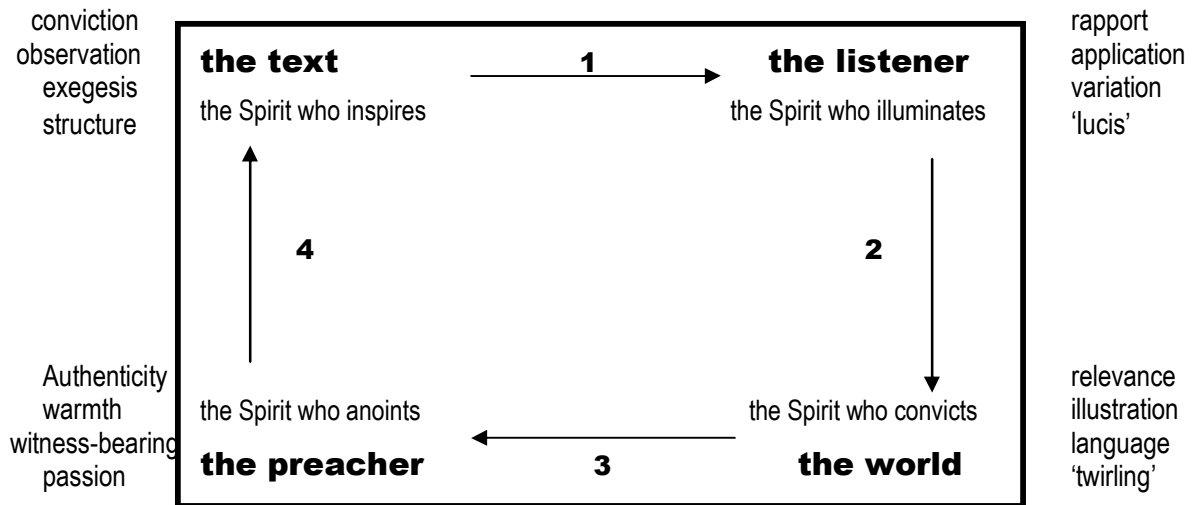


**the five corners:** *a picture of transformational preaching*



Transformational preaching visits five corners. Anchored by deep convictions about the Word of God, it commences with an openness of the Bible and an openness to the Spirit as time is taken to observe what the text is actually saying. It then draws on the best commentaries to ensure the most accurate exegesis (unpacking) of the text and then it commits to clarity of structure, believing it to be a key ingredient in building the momentum of the sermon as well as gaining and maintaining attention of listeners.

With this in place virtually anything is permissible in the pursuit of rapport with a congregation. There just must be connection. A variation in all aspects of the presentation will help, as will a specific application which keeps in mind a congregation's diversity. Then within the Kiwi context, nothing contributes more to this rapport than a 'lucis' delivery: Laidback, Understated, Conversational, Informal, and Self-deprecating.

In such transformational preaching the assumption is made that there are unchurched and unbelieving people in the pews (even if often there aren't). And so the sermon is infused with the freshness and vibrancy of a real-world relevance. These people, alongside the church members, hear the preacher speaking their language and utilising illustrations from their world. This is best achieved when the preacher enters that world with a personal investment in 'twirling'. as a Thinker, a Watcher, an Inventor, a Reader, and a Listener.

With all this bubbling away in the preparation, transformational preaching never loses sight of the preacher's own participation in the process. There is an authenticity which seeps into every aspect of life and ministry and this is then fused with both a warmth in the face and eyes as well as a passion in the voice and manner. Furthermore, in a world overwhelmed by a surplus of words, the words of this preacher stand out as different because they include words which bear witness to the truth being proclaimed from within the story of their own lives.

Having visited the corners of the listener, the world, and the preacher a return is made to the corner of the text. the fifth corner, if you like. There is no meeting in the middle of the room! We start in the corner of the text, we glean

insights from the other three corners, and then we take this material back to the text. Because it is the content of the text which must always shape the content of the sermon.

*And so...*

Transformational preaching is about taking the stories of the listeners, the world, and the preacher and weaving them around the Biblical story. Transformational preaching is about bringing to the exegesis of the listener, the world, and the preacher the very same skills of exegesis which we bring to the Biblical text. Transformational preaching is pursued in overt and vocal dependence upon the Spirit of God who can be relied upon to superintend the entire process because it acknowledges his inspiring, illuminating, convicting, and anointing work. Transformational preaching recognises that while neither the exegesis of the scholar (with text), nor the pedagogy of the educationalist (with listener), nor the ponderings of the sociologist (with the world), nor the personal story of the preacher fully describes the task on their own . the possibilities for transformational preaching are hampered without some combination of all four of these factors.