Exegetical Outline Checklist

Here are 32 things to check in your exegetical outline as the basis for your sermon outline on page 23 (-3% for each one missing)

Form
1. Have you written your questions & answers of the text and the text itself at the top (if preaching 1-2 verses)?
2. Are the Exegetical Idea (EI) and Main Points (MPs) all written in proper Z₁+X+Z₂+Y form?
3. Is the background/previous context given to appreciate the EI? Don’t summarize your text here.
4. Have you single-spaced (except between sections of the outline which is double-spaced)?

Exegetical Idea (EI): If missing then -18% (no credit for 2, 5, 6, 8, 9, and 10)
5. Is your subject derived from the main verb in the passage? (Generally this is the best way to find the correct subject in epistles, especially if the main verb is a command.) Is there only one EI?
6. Is the EI and outline exegesis true to the author’s intent? (AI = evaluate Authorial Intent)

Main Points (MPs): If missing then -45% (no credit for 2, 7-18)
7. Do the connectives in the text (e.g., “and,” “but,” “so that,” “because,” etc.) match those of the Z₁s in the outline (cf. p. 34)? Note that the NASB is better for connectives than the NIV.
8. Does each MP & EI have but one Z₁ and Z₂? (Not “The reason for... is because... in order that...”)
9. Does at least one Z₁ in the MPs match that of the EI? Does the Z₁ match the Z₂?
10. Is each MP’s thrust in the EI and each SP’s thrust in their MP (cf. #19)? And are there 2+ MPs and 2+ SPs?
11. Do the MPs tell the story as well as give the significance of the text addressed—esp. teaching about God?
12. Is each MP distinct from the others rather than sounding the same? Are phrases redundant?
13. Do the MPs flow without reading the various SPs (sub-points)? Are there 2-4 MPs and 2-4 SPs?
14. Do the MPs use Roman numerals (I, II, III, etc.) and the SPs use letters (A, B, C, etc.)?
15. Is each MP an indicative statement (not a question)?
16. Do statements translate figures of speech rather than use the text’s words? (“TF”)
17. Do statements translate ambiguities (“TA”) by clearly taking one exegetical option? Compare the NASB and NIV to clarify which verses are unclear. Greek & Hebrew students must interact with the original language.
18. Does the EO & EI have the same overall flow (same number of MPs) as the main movements of the text?
19. Do MPs (and SPs) avoid ideas not in the text (e.g., from cross-references)? (“NP” = not in passage)
20. Is there the focus of the recipients in the past (not present) tense (Write “The way the Colossians should...” not “We should...”) and in active (not passive) voice? Tell the story as well as the theology (cf. #11 & #25).
21. Are statements two lines or less? Delete all unneeded words in each sentence or I will write “TL” (too long).

Sub Points (SPs)
22. Does each point have a coordinating point (“I” has “II”, “A” has “B”; p. 61 [II,A.1.] & p. 55)? Avoid widows.
23. Does each point contribute to its superior point? Does your content here explain the text? Is it really needed?

Miscellaneous
24. Is each point one (not 2-3) full sentence (“FS”) with one subject (cf. #8) and complement(s) and not just a phrase? (Not “The rewards of blessed people are stated” as this only has a subject, but “The rewards of blessed people are prosperity and children” with a complement.)
25. Is each statement specific enough to relate only to this passage and does it make sense without needing to read the text (not “God fights His enemies” but “The way God fought the alliance of southern kings was by causing the sun to stand still”)? Are enough details included? Pay attention to what God said and did (cf. #11 & #20).
26. Is each level of subordinate points indented in from the previous level? Left justify each sentence.
27. Does each sentence include a different and correct verse, verses, or verse portion (1a, 1b, 1c, etc.)?
28. Are all verses/parts correctly expounded in the order of the text rather than switching verses around?
29. Is each point of the outline numbered/lettered rather than in paragraphs or parentheses or multiple sentences?
30. Do you state at the top your passage, name, mailbox number and speaker number?
31. Did you use a spell-checker or have a friend proofread your spelling and grammar? Use grammarly.com to correct grammar and turnit.in.com to assure that original content is 20% or less.
32. Did you correctly cite (cf. SBC Writing Standards) at the bottom at least three reputable commentaries used?

Abbreviations Used to Mark Outlines (numbers refer to the points above)
AI = Authorial Intent needs to be rechecked (6)
APP = Application needed
EI = Exegetical Idea or CPT (5-6)
EO = Exegetical Outline
FS = Full Sentence is required (24)
HO = Homiletical Outline
ILL = Illustration needed
MI = Main Idea (same as Homiletical Idea or CPS)
MP = Main Point needed (2)
NC = Not Clear — ambiguous statement (16-17)
NP = Not in the Passage (19)
R = Restatement needed
SP = Sub Point (22-23)
T = Transition needed
TA = Translate Ambiguity — no unclear words of text (17)
TF = Translate Figure — no unclear words of text (16)
TL = Too Long — don’t exceed 2 lines of text (21)
Z = Use Z₁+X+Z₂+Y form (2)
Homiletical Outline Checklist

Here are 47 things to include in your sermon outline before starting to manuscript your message (-2% for each one missing)

29th ed. 4 April 2020 (see examples on pp. 51, 210 and an expanded outline on pp. 156-57; use the Sermon_Format_for_Students_eng_pr_1900_v8.docx)

Introduction: If missing then -12% (no credit for 1, 2, 5, 8, 9, and 10)
1. Is a contemporary illustration given that gets attention on the subject and includes its point in one sentence?
2. Does your one “you” question relate to the subject with 2-3 examples that raise need or curiosity?
3. Does a single sentence of background/setting of the text cover: (a) the preceding verses, or (b) only relevant historical background, or (c) the beginning of the text to be expounded? Don’t summarize your text here.
4. Do you single-space except between sections of the outline? Is the design of each point stated?
5. Do you correctly specify whether your direction is towards the subject (theme), MI (= CPS), or MPI?
6. Is this MI and outline exegesis true to the author’s intent? (AI = evaluate Authorial Intent)
7. Do you identify a homiletical subject (relating to us)—not the EO (exegetical outline) subject? Does the HO subject/MI match the EO subject/EI (correct)? Is it a question that avoids speaking of “points” or “things”?
8. Is the text to be preached clearly noted at the appropriate spot? (In topical messages, give only the first text.)
9. Does the intro promise anything not given by the end? Does the restatement relate to the subject?
10. Do you give the correct number of MPs to preview the sermon structure? Is this preview linked to the subject?
11. Does a transition make the introduction flow naturally to the first MP by restating the subject in parentheses?

Body and Main Points (MPs)
12. Do the MPs of the HO match the MPs of the EO? (Please edit your EO to make it consistent with the HO.)
13. Does the message flow when you read only the key concept in the introduction (MI, subject, or MPI intro) through preferably 2-4 MPs to the MI in the conclusion? (Don’t let MPs sound the same.)
14. Do the MPs use sequential Roman numerals (I, II, III, etc.) and the SPs use capital letters (A, B, C, etc.)?
15. Are MPs and SPs indicative statements with a subject and complement rather than questions?
16. Do statements translate figures of speech rather than use the text’s words? (“TF”)
17. Do statements translate ambiguities rather than use the text’s words? (“TA”)
18. Do you show the major movements in the passage—especially in narrative? Do the MPs cover the whole story?
19. Is there at least one real life illustration that applies for every three minutes of preaching put within the HO?
20. Is the proper point and key word(s) of illustrations given (don’t just write “ILL” or “examples”)?
21. Are MPs & SPs one line yet still full sentences (cf. #24)? Delete all unneeded words in each sentence.

Form and Sub Points (SPs)
22. Does each point have a coordinating point (“I” has “II”, “A” has “B”; p. 61 [II.A.1] & p. 55)? Avoid “hanging” or widow subordinate points. Develop the HO at least to the SP level (“A,” “B,” etc.).
23. Does each point contribute to its superior point? Does your content here explain the text? Is it really needed?
24. Is each point one, short (“TL” = too long), active (not passive voice), clear, full sentence with one subject and complement(s)—not just a phrase (“FS” = full sentence is needed)? Are MPs restated in brackets (optional)?
25. Is each verse, verses, or verse portion underlined when it is to be read?
26. Are SPs included and indented from the MPs at the far left? (Don’t start or continue SPs from the far left side.)
27. Does each SP & MP include a different and correct verse, verses, or verse portion (1a, 1b, 1c, etc.)?
28. Does the sermon at least summarize all verses/parts of the text in 2-4 SPs or MPs?
29. Is each point of the outline numbered/lettered rather than in paragraphs, brackets, or parentheses? Not “I. Intro…”
30. Are you direct: “Love others…” (not “Believers or “We”) should love others…”? Use imperatives!
31. Did you spell-check or have a friend proofread your spelling and grammar? Replace “)” with “;”
32. Are transitions before MPs in parentheses? Do they repeat the subject rather than say “my second point…?”
33. Is the whole outline on a single page? You should sum up each point in one sentence, not a paragraph.
34. Is your EO#1 attached to this assignment with improvements suggested by the teacher clearly seen?
35. Is your EO#2 attached to this assignment with improvements suggested by the teacher now corrected?
36. Is support given for your view on difficult verses or facts in illustrations? Do you say why you hold to your view?

Conclusion (note in bold text)
37. Is the Main Idea stated and labeled as the MI (CPS)? Is it parallel to the EI (CPT)? Does it sum up all MPs?
38. Is the MI clear and short (TL = too long) enough to be grasped by ear but still applies the text (cf. #21 above)?
39. Does the conclusion review concepts in the MPs? Do you avoid adding new ideas in the conclusion?
40. Are specific examples of application developed rather than simply listed? Do listeners know specifically what to do after hearing you preach? Apply the MI to us—not to the original readers or your church or other audience.
41. Do you end with a clear exhortation to apply the MI now? Use stories along with “you” statements and questions.
42. Does the conclusion (and introduction) use Arabic numbers in point form? Do you indent them at the left?

Heading
43. Do you have a catchy title that doesn’t reveal the Main Idea so as to draw interest?
44. Is your correct sermon form at the top (cyclical inductive, simple deductive, etc.) with MI at the right place?
45. Is the correct desired listener response (purpose) clearly stated at the top as related to the audience and not to you?
46. Do you state the passage, your name and box number at the top?
47. Is this HO printed (not emailed)?

Abbreviations Used to Mark Outlines (see the Exegetical Outline Checklist on previous page)