

Welcome · Tuesday 20 October 2026

AI for sermon development and Christian content

AI can help you research. The message remains yours — prayed over, studied and preached by you.

01 Discuss

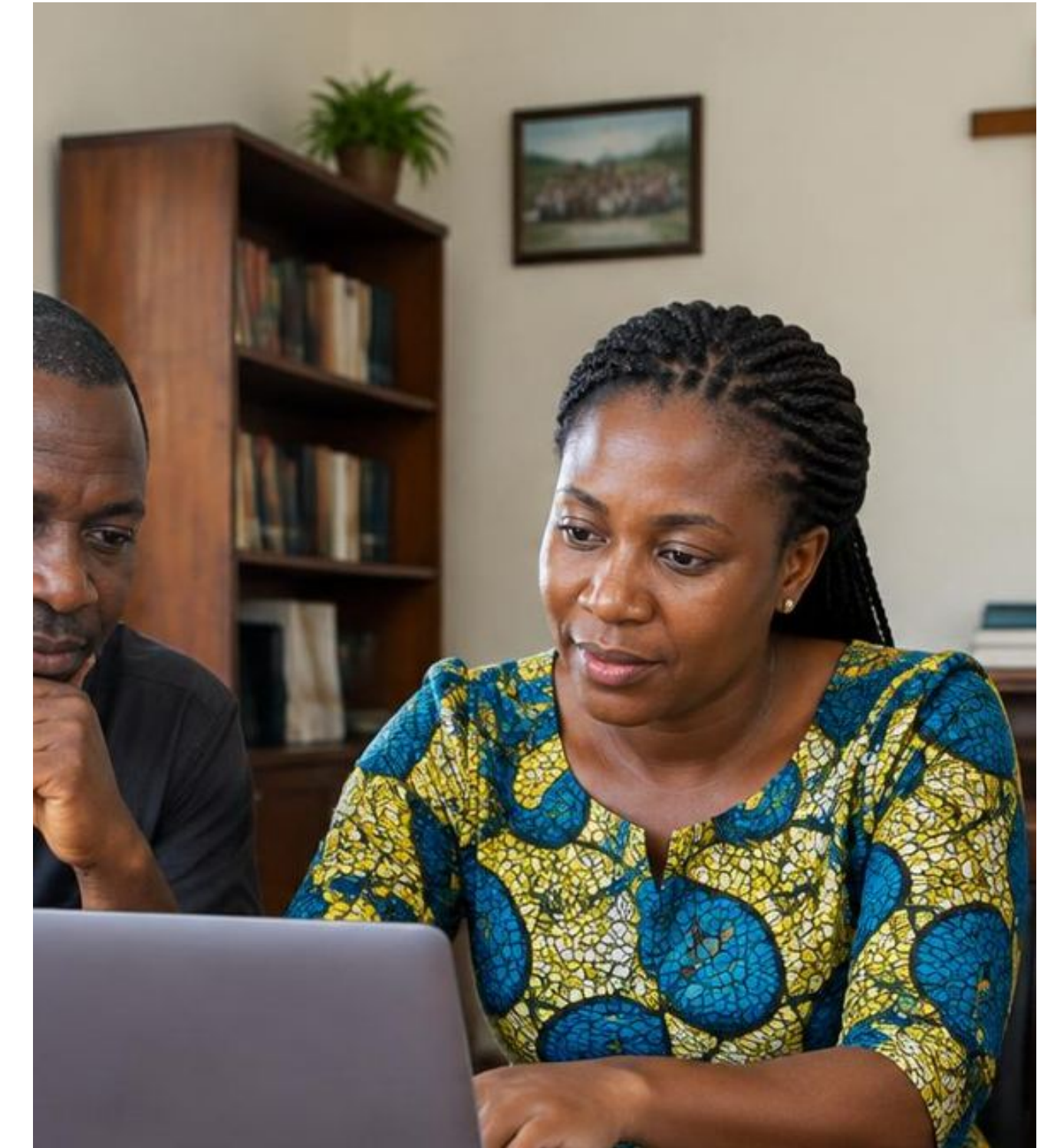
How we already use technology in sermon preparation, and what we think of it.

02 Decide

What AI should and should not do in sermon research.

03 Practise

Two clear projects: a Claude sermon research skill and a Gemini Deep Research report.



MINISTRY-FIRST LEARNING

**More time for people.
The same responsibility.**

Open discussion

Two questions to start

Share honestly. There are no wrong answers.

01 Question 1: How have you been using AI or technology in sermon development?

For example: Bible apps, YouVersion, online commentaries, WhatsApp study groups, ChatGPT, projection software or YouTube sermons.

02 Question 2: What do you think of it?

What has helped? What worries you? Where has it saved time — and where has it gone wrong?

03 Agree one shared principle

Write down one rule your team will keep whenever AI touches the pulpit.



PEOPLE FIRST

Ministry relationships

Human-led care

Prepare → Verify → Approve

01 · AI and sermon research

What to do

Use AI as a research assistant that saves study time, not as the preacher.

01 Pray and read the passage first

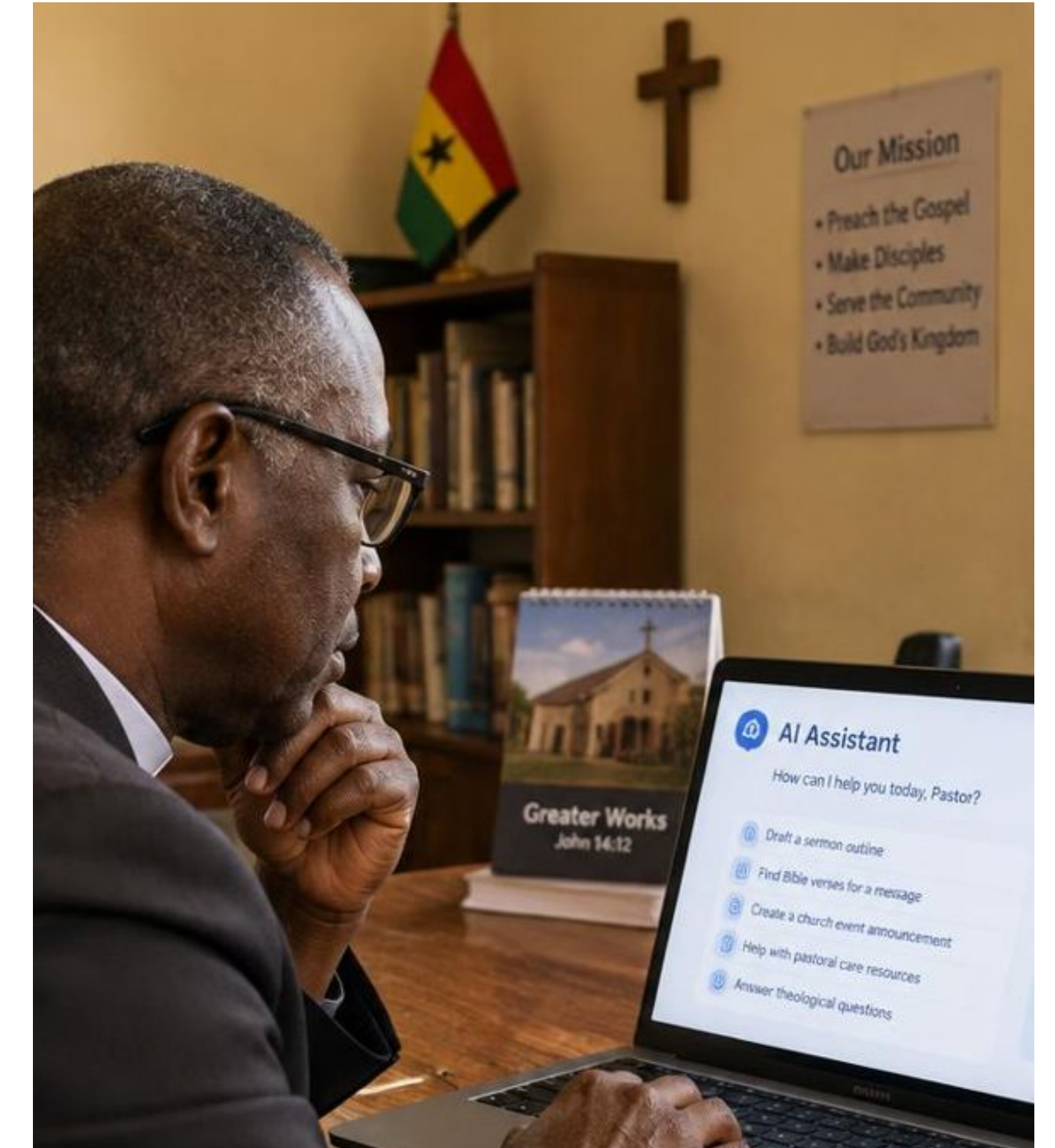
Form your own first impressions before asking AI anything.

02 Use AI for research tasks

Original-language word studies, historical background, cross-references, interpretive views and illustration ideas.

03 Verify everything

Check every verse, quote, date and citation in your Bible and trusted commentaries before it reaches the pulpit.



LEARNED PATTERNS

**Useful assistance.
Human judgement.**

01 · AI and sermon research

What not to do

These lines protect your integrity and your congregation.

01 Do not let AI write and preach for you

Your calling, prayer and the leading of the Holy Spirit cannot be outsourced.

02 Do not trust quotes or citations blindly

AI can invent quotations, authors and page numbers that sound real.

03 Do not share confidential stories

Never paste counselling cases or members' personal details into an AI tool.



VERIFY BEFORE SHARING

Source · facts · permissions

You remain accountable

Prepare → Verify → Approve

Today's hands-on work

Two practice projects

Each project ends with a research document you check and own.

01 Practice Project 1 — Sermon research with a Claude skill

Install the free “sermon-research” skill, run /sermon-research on your passage and receive a structured research PDF.

02 Practice Project 2 — Deep sermon research with Gemini

Customise a detailed research prompt and let Gemini Deep Research build a cited report on your passage or topic.

03 What you need

A laptop or phone, internet, a free Claude account and a Google account.



BRIEF → DRAFT → REVIEW

**Clear instructions.
Approved outputs.**

Practice Project 1 · Step 1

Open Claude and understand skills

Go to <https://claude.ai> and sign in or create a free account.

01 What is a skill?

A skill is a ready-made set of instructions you add to Claude once. It teaches Claude how to do one job well, step by step.

02 Why it helps

Instead of writing a long prompt every week, you type one short command and Claude follows the same careful method.

03 Example

The sermon-research skill knows which questions to ask and how to lay out a research PDF.



GOAL → STEPS → APPROVAL

Permission-limited actions

Keep a human gate

Prepare → Verify → Approve

Practice Project 1 · Step 2

Download the sermon research skill

Open <https://github.com/tkcostello/pastor-ai-skills> in your browser.

01 Download the files

Click the green “Code” button, then “Download ZIP”. Save it to your computer.

02 Find the skill

Open (unzip) the download and locate the “sermon-research” skill folder.

03 Prepare it for upload

Compress only the sermon-research folder into its own ZIP file, ready for Claude.



BRIEF → DRAFT → REVIEW

**Clear instructions.
Approved outputs.**

Practice Project 1 · Step 3

Add the skill to Claude

Return to <https://claude.ai>.

- 01

Open Settings

Click your name or profile icon, then choose Settings.
- 02

Go to Customize → Skills

Open Customize, then Skills, and choose to add or upload a skill.
- 03

Upload and switch on

Upload the sermon-research ZIP and make sure the skill is turned on.



GOAL → STEPS → APPROVAL

Permission-limited actions

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Practice Project 1 · Step 4

Run /sermon-research

Start a new chat, type the slash command and give your passage.

01 Required

The passage you are preaching or teaching — for example Romans 8:1-11. That is the only thing needed.

02 Optional extras

Your preaching angle, the series context and any interpretive questions you are wrestling with.

03 PDF header

Send your name and church name, or the header is left blank.

YOUR INPUT — COPY AND ADAPT

/sermon-research Romans 8:1-11. Angle: freedom from condemnation for believers who feel defeated. Series: “Life in the Spirit”, week 2. Question: what does “the flesh” mean here? PDF header: Rev. [Your name], [Your church name].



BRIEF → DRAFT → REVIEW

**Clear instructions.
Approved outputs.**

Practice Project 1 · Step 5

Watch, then review the research

Claude works through the passage and produces a research document you can download.

01 Watch the process

Notice how the skill moves through context, key words, interpretation and cross-references.

02 Check it

Confirm every verse and quotation in your Bible and a trusted commentary. Mark anything uncertain.

03 Make it yours

Pray over the material and decide what serves your congregation. Keep the PDF as study notes, not as your sermon.



VERIFY BEFORE SHARING

Source · facts · permissions

You remain accountable

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Practice Project 2 · Step 1

Open Gemini Deep Research

Go to <https://gemini.google.com> and sign in with your Google account.

01 Click the plus sign (+)

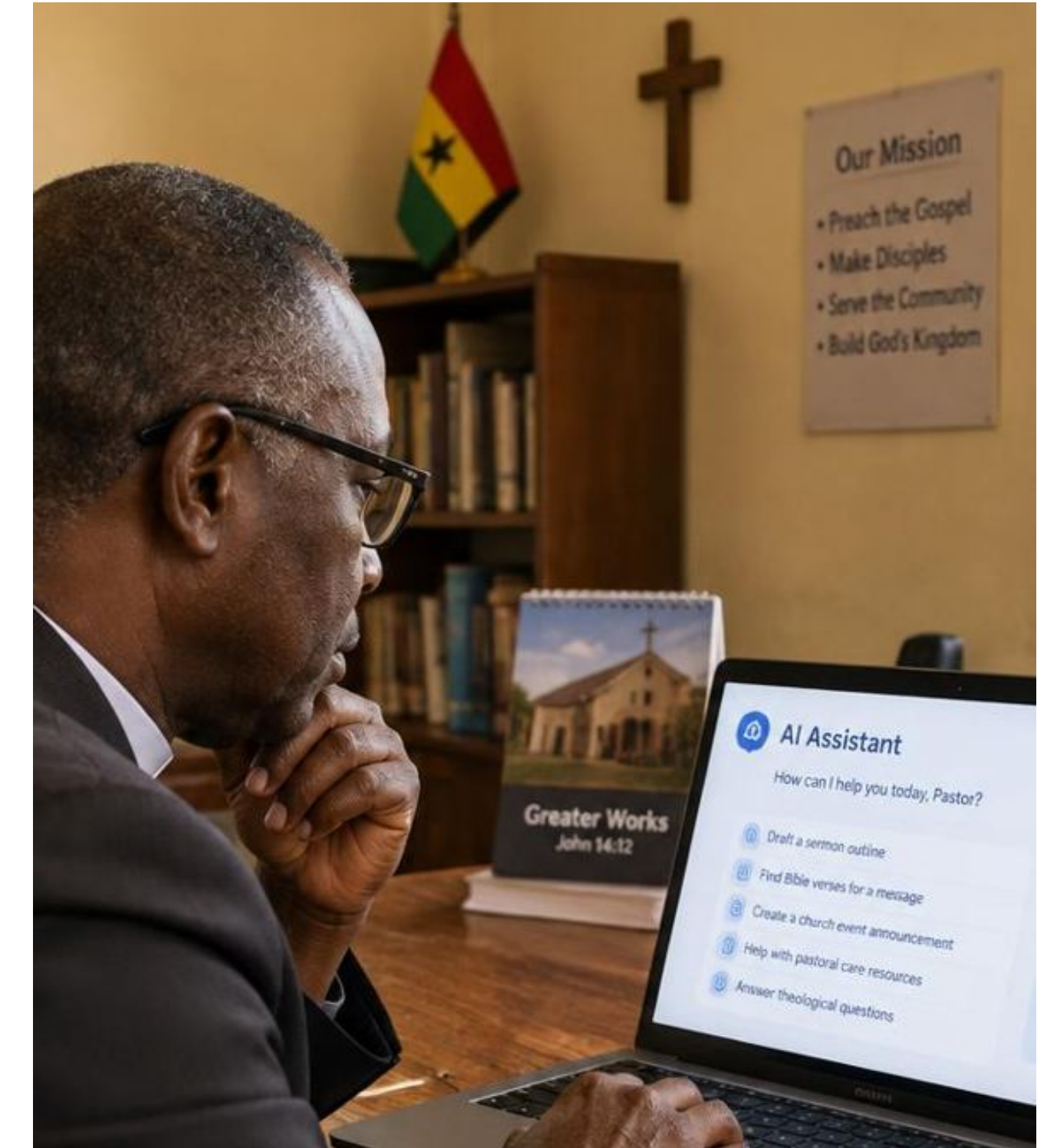
It is in the message box where you type.

02 Go to More tools

Then select “Deep research”.

03 What Deep Research does

Gemini searches many sources, then writes a long report with links you can check.

**LEARNED PATTERNS**

**Useful assistance.
Human judgement.**

Practice Project 2 · Step 2

Study the research prompt

The full prompt asks Gemini to be a theological researcher — not a preacher.

01 Its rules

No sermon outline, no application points, no writing the sermon. Reliable, attributed sources (Chicago/SBL). Flag anything uncertain.

02 Its six parts

01 Context · 02 Original language and background · 03 Interpretive landscape · 04 Interdisciplinary connections · 05 Homiletic resources · 06 Further study.

03 Get the full prompt

Use the button below to view and copy it, or find it in full at the end of the Day Two PDF.



BRIEF → DRAFT → REVIEW

**Clear instructions.
Approved outputs.**

Practice Project 2 · Step 3

Customise section 01: Context

Replace the examples with your own details before you run the prompt.

01 Passage, sermon context and work done

e.g. Luke 15:11-32; part of a series on grace; I have read two commentaries and lean towards the elder brother.

02 Theological tradition

e.g. Pentecostal, Methodist, Presbyterian, Anglican, Baptist or broadly evangelical.

03 Congregation and preferences

e.g. mostly young adults in Kumasi, mixed Bible knowledge, wrestling with family pressure; keep it accessible.



PEOPLE FIRST

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Practice Project 2 · Step 4

Run, read and verify the report

Paste your customised prompt, start the research and review the plan Gemini proposes.

01 Start the research

Check Gemini's research plan, edit it if needed, then click Start research. It may take several minutes.

02 Verify sources

Open the links. Confirm quotations, authors and citations. Treat any flagged or unverifiable claim with care.

03 Export and study

Export the report to Google Docs, add your own notes and use it to prepare — the sermon is still yours.



VERIFY BEFORE SHARING

Source · facts · permissions

You remain accountable

Prepare → Verify → Approve

Closing · Take it home

Your sermon research checklist

Prepare with AI. Preach with conviction. Remain accountable.

01 This week

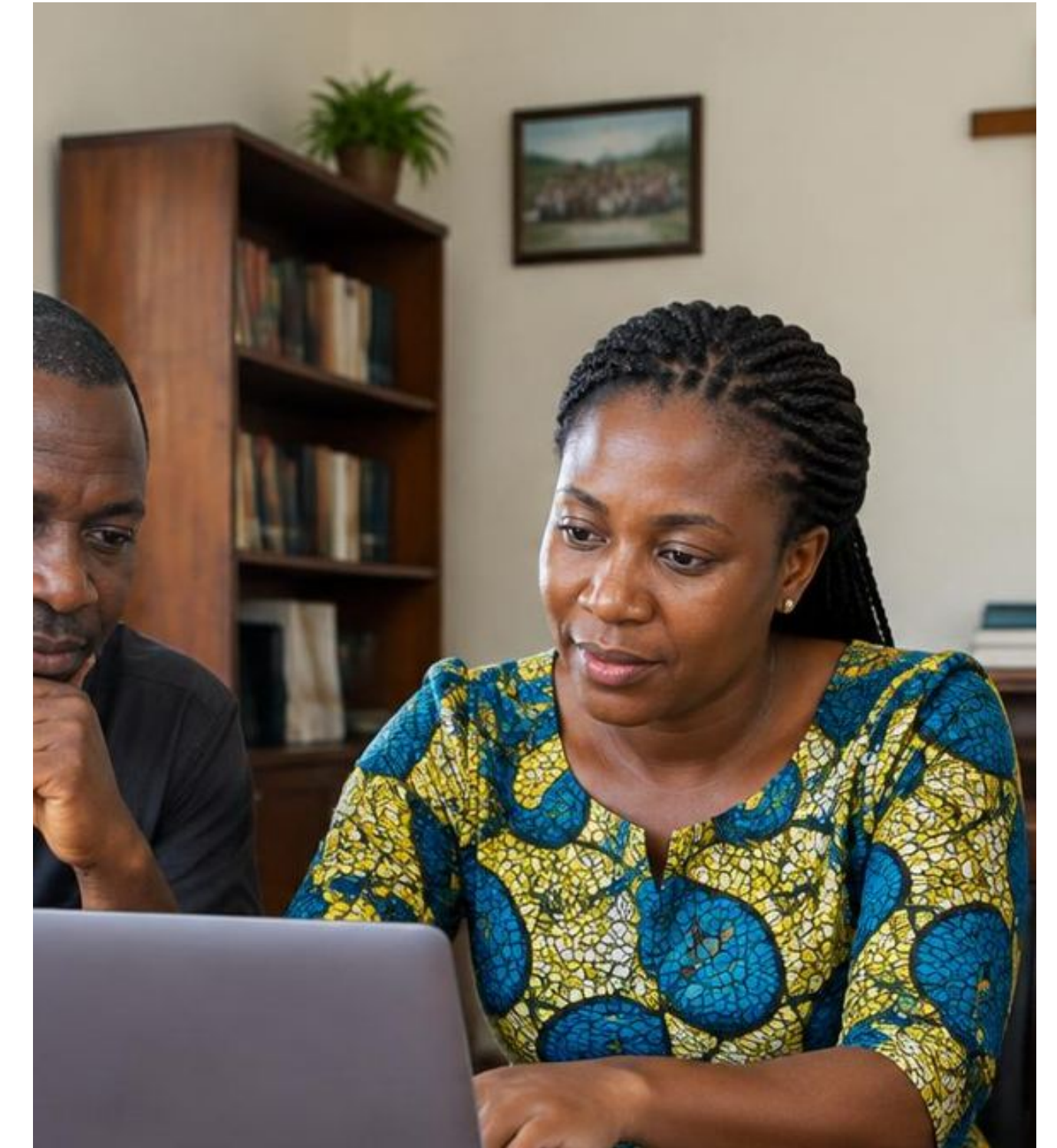
Run one passage through the Claude skill and one through Gemini Deep Research. Compare the results.

02 Before the pulpit

Every verse checked, every quote confirmed, nothing confidential shared.

03 Bring to Day Three

One insight AI gave you — and one thing you had to correct.



MINISTRY-FIRST LEARNING

**More time for people.
The same responsibility.**

PRACTICE PROJECT 2 · GEMINI DEEP RESEARCH · <https://gemini.google.com>

Full deep sermon research prompt (1/3)

You are an expert theological researcher. Generate a comprehensive research report to aid sermon preparation.

Do not suggest a sermon structure, outline, or application points. Do not write the sermon. Your role is researcher, not preacher.

All information must be reliable, accurately attributed (Chicago/SBL citation style preferred), and free of hallucination. Where certainty is low or a citation cannot be precisely verified, flag this explicitly rather than presenting it as established fact.

- 01
- Context
- Passage or topic
- e.g. Romans 8:1-11 / The prodigal son (Luke 15:11-32) / The doctrine of forgiveness
- Sermon context
- Is this part of a series? Any specific questions or angles you want explored? Points you are already planning to make?
- What I have already done
- Commentaries already read, angles you are leaning toward, questions already answered. This stops the AI covering ground you have covered.
- Theological tradition
- Your church's tradition, e.g. Reformed, Wesleyan, Anglican, Baptist, Pentecostal, broadly evangelical, Churches of Christ.
- Congregation
- Approximate age range, cultural background, biblical literacy, what they are currently wrestling with.
- Preacher preferences
- Any constraints or preferences around length, tone, or content.

02

PRACTICE PROJECT 2 · GEMINI DEEP RESEARCH · <https://gemini.google.com>

Full deep sermon research prompt (continued 2/3)

Source Language and Contextual Analysis

Complete this section only if the sermon is based on a specific biblical passage.

Identify and analyse the key terms in the original language (Hebrew or Greek) most significant for interpreting the passage. For each: semantic range, relevant etymological insights, significant grammatical features (verb tenses, participles, etc.), and their interpretive implications.

Describe the passage's immediate literary context within its book, and the broader historical-cultural context of the book itself: authorship, date, original audience, socio-historical setting.

03

Interpretive Landscape

Survey mainstream Christian interpretations of the passage or topic, with attention to key theological themes. Note significant interpreters from the Patristic, Reformation, and contemporary periods, and trace how interpretation has developed over time.

Where relevant, show how the passage or topic is understood within different theological traditions (e.g. Covenant Theology, Dispensationalism, Liberation Theology, Feminist Theology, Patristic Theology). Represent each tradition fairly.

04

Interdisciplinary Connections

Explore substantive connections between the passage or topic and the fields below. For each, identify genuine points of dialogue, not superficial parallels. Focus only on connections that are genuinely illuminating for this passage and skip any that would require forcing a link. Note where connections are useful and where they should be handled with care.

Contemporary science: findings in neuroscience, evolutionary biology, or physics that intersect with the passage's themes.

Philosophy and secular thought: ethical frameworks, existentialist or postmodern perspectives, critiques of religion.

Psychology: research on the psychological dimensions of the passage's themes: grief, shame, forgiveness, identity, etc.

Pop culture and the arts: films, literature, music, or cultural moments that illuminate or push back on the passage's themes.

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Full deep sermon research prompt (continued 3/3)

Current events and social issues:where the passage speaks into contemporary ethical, political, or social conversations.

05

Homiletic Resources

Provide 3-5 quotes from reputable and diverse sources (scholars, theologians, historical figures, or thoughtful cultural voices) that illuminate the passage or its themes. Include full attribution and a sentence explaining why each quote is useful for preaching.

List and briefly explain 3-4 related Scripture passages (drawing from both Testaments where possible) that offer thematic parallels, typological connections, or theological development relevant to the passage or topic.

06

Further Study

Provide an annotated bibliography of 5-7 recommended resources for deeper personal study: commentaries, monographs, or key scholarly articles. For each, note what it contributes and why it is worth reading.

Prioritise depth, critical analysis, and honest representation of diverse viewpoints. Accuracy and careful attribution are non-negotiable.