

ChatGPT: Keyboard Shortcuts & Writing Tricks

The **Shift + Enter** trick is the first “secret door” most people discover. It lets you add a new line without sending the message. A few other shortcuts can make ChatGPT feel less like typing into a mailbox and more like using a real editor.

Useful ChatGPT Keyboard Shortcuts

Shortcut	What it does
Shift + Enter	New line without sending message
Enter	Send message
Ctrl + Enter (sometimes)	Send message if Enter is set to newline
Ctrl + Shift + C	Copy the last response
Ctrl + /	Show keyboard shortcuts menu (in some versions)
Ctrl + C / Ctrl + V	Copy / paste as usual
Ctrl + Z	Undo typing
Ctrl + A	Select all text in the prompt box
Ctrl + U	Add photos & files

1. Drag-and-drop files

- You can simply drag a document, PDF, or image into the prompt window instead of hunting for the upload button.

2. Paste long text safely

If you paste a long article, **start with a line like:**

I'll paste an article below. Wait for my instructions before analyzing it.

Then paste. That prevents accidental early responses.

A Writing Trick That Works Well for Your Style

The **Shift + Enter** shortcut lets you structure prompts like this:

*I'm preparing a homily on Isaiah 58.
Audience: clergy retreat*

Theme: Lent as debugging season

Please give:

1. Opening story
2. Scripture insight
3. Practical application

It reads more like notes on a legal pad than a long paragraph, and the responses tend to be clearer.

Five More Practical Tricks that many people never discover.

1. Ask for Multiple Options

Instead of asking for one answer, **ask for several versions.**

Example: *Give me 5 different opening stories for a homily on Isaiah 58.*

2. Tell It the Audience

The same idea sounds very different depending on the listeners. Add a line like:

Audience: clergy

Tone: reflective and conversational

Length: 3 minutes

For example: Explain “psychosclerosis” for a Lenten parish mission audience.

3. Use “Tighten This”

When you have something wordy, simply paste it and say:

Tighten this while keeping my voice.

It acts like a **literary pruning shear.**

Your ideas stay intact, but the extra foliage disappears.

You can also say: Cut this by 25%.

Very helpful for bulletins

4. Ask for Structure Before Content

If a topic feels big, ask first for the **outline.**

Example: *Help me structure a 15-minute reflection on “Encouragement: The Key to Caring.”*

Then once you like the outline, say: *Expand point #2 with a story and practical*

example.

This mirrors how good teachers build a talk: skeleton first

5. Use “What Am I Missing?”

One of the most valuable prompts: *What important angles or insights am I missing?*

Example: *Here is my Lenten reflection. What insights or connections might I be overlooking?*

It often surfaces biblical links, stories, or pastoral angles that were just outside the field of view.

A Bonus Trick (My Favorite for Teachers)

Ask for discussion starters:

Give me 5 discussion questions that would get clergy talking about this idea.

You’ve already used this instinctively in your retreat work, and it’s a wonderful way to **turn a talk into a conversation.**

Three Power Prompts

1. Connect the Dots

This uncovers relationships you may not have considered.

Example prompt: *Connect these ideas for a homily or reflection:*

- Isaiah 58
- Lent as debugging season
- Zig Ziglar’s concept of psychosclerosis
- Practical pastoral application

This works because the model starts **building bridges between ideas** rather than explaining them one by one.

2. “Teach It Like a Story”

Since your **Legacy Lectures** thrive on narrative, this prompt pushes the response toward storytelling rather than lecture notes.

Explain this idea through a story or parable that would work in a homily.

Example: *Explain spiritual complacency through a short story suitable for a homily.*

3. “Give Me the Line”

Every good talk has one sentence people remember.

Give me 10 memorable one-line takeaways from this reflection.

Sometimes a single sentence becomes:

- the **title**
- the **closing line**
- the **quote graphic** for Facebook

Example output might be something like:

Lent is not a punishment from God; it's a system update for the soul.”

Other High-Value Tricks

Ask for Analogies:

*Give me three analogies that explain grace in everyday language.
Explain repentance using an analogy from computer programming.*

Your **debugging image for Lent** fits perfectly here.

Ask for Objections:

*What objections or misunderstandings might people have about this idea?
Then follow with: How could I respond pastorally?*

This prepares you for **the question someone will ask afterward in the hallway.**

The “Illustration Factory”

Give me five short illustrations that could introduce this Scripture reading.

You can also say: Make them suitable for a homily.

Ask for Biblical Echoes:

What other Scripture passages echo this idea?

For example: What Scripture passages echo Isaiah 58's call to authentic fasting?

One More Trick (Quietly Powerful)

After a response, simply ask: *What is the deeper spiritual insight here?*

That often moves the conversation from **information** → **contemplation**.

A Small Observation

You **test an idea**, refine it, connect it with Scripture, then turn it into something pastoral.

In other words, you are using it less like a **search engine** and more like a **thinking companion**.

The “Sit With the Scripture” Prompt

Help me pray and reflect on this Scripture as a preacher preparing a homily.

Please give:

1. What the text says (plain meaning)
2. What the text reveals about God
3. What the text reveals about the human heart
4. Where people today might struggle with this message
5. One image or story that could open a homily
6. One memorable closing line

Why this works so well is that it follows a **natural movement of reflection**:
Scripture → God → Human life → Pastoral application → Proclamation.

A Second Version (Even Deeper)

Sometimes you can add one more line: *What in this passage would surprise or challenge a modern listener?*

That question often reveals the **sharp edge of the Gospel**

A Third Version You May Enjoy

Because your preaching often uses **story and image**, try this variation:
If Jesus were explaining this passage today, what story might he tell?

A Final Trick for After You Draft the Homily

Once your talk is written, paste it and ask:
If you heard this homily, what line would stay with you on the drive home?

If the answer isn't strong, you know the **anchor line** still needs sharpening.

Three “next-level” tricks that experienced users quietly rely on.

1. The “Angle Finder”

Sometimes the text is familiar and people have heard it many times. This prompt

helps uncover a **fresh angle**.

What surprising or overlooked detail in this passage could become the central insight of a homily?

This often pulls out things like:
a small phrase people skip over
a reversal in the story
a tension between two ideas

Scripture suddenly feels **new again**, even if everyone has heard it for decades.

2. The “Three Audiences” Prompt

How might three different people hear this passage:

- someone suffering
- someone comfortable
- someone searching for God

It reminds the preacher that a congregation is **never one audience**.

3. The “Hidden Question”

For example:

Zacchaeus → *Can someone who has made a mess of life start again?*

Prodigal Son → *What happens when mercy is bigger than justice?*

Isaiah 58 → *What kind of religion actually pleases God?*

When the **question becomes clear**, the homily almost writes itself.

A Tiny Trick That Improves Almost Every Prompt

Add this line at the end: *Be concise and pastoral rather than academic.*

That steers the response toward **preaching language instead of lecture language**.

One Observation

You naturally move through:

1. Scripture
2. Insight
3. Story
4. Application
5. Memorable line

That’s actually the classic architecture of effective preaching.
These prompts simply help surface the pieces faster.

The **Triple Harvest** Prompt

After you write a homily or reflection, paste it and ask:

From this homily, create:

1. *A 120-150 word Apple Seeds style reflection*
2. *One memorable quote suitable for a graphic image*
3. *A short discussion question people could ponder today*

That single prompt produces three different pastoral tools from the same idea.

A computer programmer once explained debugging to me. When something isn't working, you don't throw away the program. You examine the lines carefully and correct what went wrong. Lent works the same way. God doesn't discard us when life gets tangled. He invites us to pause, look honestly at our lives, and repair the places where love has broken down. Fasting clears the clutter. Prayer reconnects us to the Source. Charity restores what selfishness damaged. Lent is not punishment. It is God patiently debugging the soul so the program of love can run again.

Quote line: *Lent is not God condemning the program of your life. It is God helping you debug it.*

Discussion question: *Where in your life might God be inviting you to make a small but important correction this Lent?*

Another Fun Trick: The “Pocket Parable”

Sometimes ask: *Turn this idea into a 3-sentence parable Jesus might tell today.*

Example:

A man complained that his phone stopped working. The technician looked and said, “You never installed the update.” The man replied, “I thought updates were optional.” The technician smiled: “So is wisdom.”

1. The “Modern Parable Generator”

Jesus often began with ordinary life: seeds, coins, vineyards, lamps. This prompt recreates that pattern.

- *Create three short modern parables that illuminate the message of this Scripture passage.*
- *Use ordinary situations people recognize today.*
- *Keep each story under 100 words.*

You might get things involving:

- a mechanic
- a teacher
- someone fixing a computer
- a neighbor helping another

These small scenes often slide beautifully into a homily opening.

2. The “Unexpected Lens”

Sometimes the best insight appears when the story is told from an unusual perspective.

Retell this Gospel moment from the perspective of a minor character who was present but never speaks.

Examples:

- the servant filling jars at Cana
- a bystander during the healing of Bartimaeus
- the boy who shared the loaves and fish

Suddenly Scripture feels like a camera angle nobody noticed before.

3. The “Heavenly Newspaper”

This one is fun and surprisingly insightful.

Write a short newspaper article reporting this Gospel event as if it happened today. Include a headline and a brief quote from a witness.

Example headline might look like:

LOCAL TEACHER FEEDS THOUSANDS WITH FIVE LOAVES

It turns the passage into something vivid and immediate.

4. The “Invisible Thread”

Some Scriptures connect across the Bible in beautiful ways.

What thread connects this passage with other moments in Scripture? Show the hidden theme running through them.

For example:

*water
light
bread
desert
exile
homecoming*

You suddenly see Scripture not as scattered stories but as one long tapestry.

5. The “Five Sermon Seeds”

When you’re preparing a homily, try this:

*Give me five different homily directions this passage could take.
Each direction should emphasize a different spiritual insight.*

Instead of one idea, you suddenly have five possible doors.
Often the best one is not the first one you expected.

6. The “Memory Line Forge”

Every strong talk needs one sentence people carry home.
Forge ten memorable one-sentence insights that capture the heart of this message.

Sometimes you’ll get lines like:

*Grace is the doorway God keeps open even after we slam it shut.
God does not wait for perfection before offering mercy.*

Those lines are little sparks that linger in memory.

7. The “Sunday-to-Monday Bridge”

Many people ask silently: *What does this mean tomorrow?*
Show three ways the message of this Gospel might appear in ordinary life this week.

Examples might involve:

- forgiving someone
- noticing a lonely neighbor
- resisting quiet cynicism

The text moves from ancient page to modern sidewalk.

One Last Creative Prompt

This one almost always produces something interesting:

If this Scripture passage were a painting, what would the artist place in the foreground, background, and shadows?

You start seeing the passage visually:

foreground: the obvious action
background: the hidden context
shadows: the tension or mystery

Preaching then becomes describing the painting people didn’t notice.

A Thought for Your Legacy Work

Because your Apple Seeds collection thrives on story and insight, these prompts often produce little nuggets that fit that tradition perfectly. Short, memorable, gently reflective. More like **small lanterns along the road**.

The Eight-Word Prompt

Where is the emotional center of this passage?

That's it. Eight simple words. Yet it often reveals what the intellect alone can miss, the **heartbeat inside the story**. ♥

Many people read Scripture looking for:

- doctrine
- moral instruction
- historical detail

All valuable.

*But the Gospel writers also tell stories where **emotion carries the meaning**. When you find that emotional center, the homily suddenly gains gravity.*

A Few Examples:

The Prodigal Son

The emotional center is not the son returning. It is the **father running**. In that culture, dignified patriarchs did not run. Yet the father runs, robe gathered in his hands, racing toward the boy who squandered everything. That image preaches the entire Gospel.

The Good Samaritan

The emotional center is not the wounded man. It is the phrase: *He was moved with compassion*. The Greek word suggests something like a stirring in the gut, mercy that refuses to stay seated.

The Transfiguration

The emotional center might be Peter blurting out: "Lord, it is good that we are here."

It is the human instinct to build tents on mountaintops rather than walk back down into the valley where suffering waits.

A Companion Prompt

After identifying the emotional center, try asking:
What human experience today carries that same emotion?

Then suddenly the Gospel meets:

- a hospital waiting room
- a strained marriage
- a tired teacher
- a lonely student

And the ancient story steps quietly into modern life.

One More Tiny Prompt (Also Powerful)

Where is the turning point in this passage?

Every great story has a moment when everything shifts.
Often that moment is the hinge of the homily.

A Small Observation

Great preaching often happens when three things line up:

- Scripture
- Human experience
- A single clear insight

When those converge, the homily begins to feel less like a lecture and more like a lamp lighting up a dark room.