

CAUSADE OUTREACH MINISTRIES

The Art of Preaching

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HOMILITICS

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Student's study and assessment requirements

Assessment for this study covers two areas. One is the multiple choice questions and the second part is a written section. Both parts need to be completed for full assessment.

The multiple choice questions and the written section must be returned to us for recording all results.

1. Please answer all multiple choice questions on your assessment answer sheet.

- Please mark your assessment answer sheet square with an **X**.
- Select; A, B, C, D or E
- A for True

OR

B for False.

Please mark your answer square with an "X".

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2. In the assessment section in this book please write your impressions of each chapter.

- Use key points that you found were beneficial from each chapter.

3. In this study you will be required to fill in one table as indicated.

4. In this study you will be required to write **four** sermons.

Introduction

As we approach this subject it is again with the sole purpose of better and more effective service for the Lord.

Men in the world today go to great sacrifices to master the art of speaking only to sell goods, argue politics, etc.

We have a much higher and more worthy cause, so let us not treat these principles lightly, but may they help us to better our service for Jesus.

The Lord Jesus gave preaching a central place in His Ministry.

The Gospels paint unforgettable pictures of the Prince of Preachers and the vast crowds that waited for His words (Luke 4:16—21, Matt.5:7, 4:23, 9:35).

As He was about to leave, Jesus gave the same strategy to His disciples (Matt.28:19). Using this an His means, the Holy Spirit, in three centuries, brought the Roman Empire to its knees. Since then, the quality of preaching, and the spirit and life of the Church, have advanced or declined together. Good preaching will always be a mighty power throughout the world.

Let us proceed to examine the art of preaching....

Chapter One

1. THE PRIMARY REQUISITES OF PREACHING

Since preaching is the communication of truth by man to man, therefore it has two essential elements:

- *TRUTH
- and
- *PERSONALITY.

The quality and power of preaching will depend upon the mixture of these two things.

Dr. A. E. GARVIE says: "Preaching is not merely a communication of knowledge. As it exercises the whole personality of the preacher, so it is addressed to the whole personality of the hearer, as a moral and religious subject,"

Dr. BROADUS says: "The subject of preaching is divine truth, centrally the gospel, as revealed and offered in Jesus Christ".

Its object is eternal life-in the words of Jesus, "that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly."

(1) PIETY

Piety is that quality of the soul which springs from continued fellowship with God. It is moral earnestness, and utter devotion to the will of God.

- * It is transparent sincerity.
- * It is the soul aglow with God.

Such a quality of the soul will keep the preacher himself ardent amid the icy circumstances of life.

It will:

FLAME HIM in earnestness, and get him a hearing.

IT WILL give him courage to face any man with the gospel.

C.H.SPURGEON said that his life could be written across the sky in letters of fire!

(2) NATURAL GIFTS

There are several gifts that are indispensable to a man if he is to become a worthwhile and effective preacher.

(a) Capacity for Clear Thinking.

There will never be clear speaking if there is not clear thinking.

What is not clear to the preaching will not be clear to the hearer.

(b) Strong Feeling.

Preaching is not CONVERSATION.

It is PROLAMATION!

- It must burst forth from the deep feelings of the preacher.

(c) Vigorous Imagination.

(d) Ability To Clearly Express Thought.

Even if these native gifts are present only in moderation, use and exercise will develop them.

(3) KNOWLEDGE

This must be of three kinds:

* Knowledge of religious truth

* Knowledge of kind things

And

* Knowledge of human life in its actual conditions around us.

(4) SKILL

This refers to skill in the art of preaching.

All who preach well have laboured to be able to do it. Most of those who fail, have

failed because they have not laboured to do it.

While it is true that the only way to learn to preach is to preach; at the same time mere practice will not bring the highest skill.

* We must practice right principles!

It must be:" Heedful, thoughtful practice, with close observation of others and sharp watching of ourselves, and controlled by good sense and good taste."

Personality.

- * THE WHOLR MAN IS TO PROCLAM-let him see that his body is kept in good order.
- * TAKE ESERCISE: Take care of your health.
- * LOOK WELL TO YOUR DIET.A change of diet is one of the first things that many a Christian needs on the path to holiness!

Chapter Two

2. YOU CANNOT PREACH WITH AN EMPTY HEAD.

Invention

Invention is the selection of materials out of a fund of knowledge and experience, and its arrangement for purpose of discourse.

So there are two processes in "invention":

* One has to do with:

KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE.

* The other has to do with:

SELECTION AND ARRANGEMENT.

Of course some minds are more creative than others. And the same mind may be more creative at some times than at others. Even a little natural ability at inventing can be indefinitely cultivated.

Every preacher must train this faculty for all he is worth.

* Next to piety it is the most important element in his mental outfit!

HOW TO DEVELOP THE INVENTIVE FACULTY.

Three processes are involved:

ACQUISITION
REFLECTION...AND...
EXERCISE.

For the production of bread we need the grain, the motive power of the mill, and the actual process of grinding.

THE GRAIN is the knowledge and experience.

THE MOTIVE POWER is the reflecting or thinking over it.

THE EXERCISE is the actual choosing out of the material and fashioning it.

So there must be KNOWLEDGE, THOUGHT, CONSTANT USE: there is no other way!

The chief materials of any given sermon are not invented at the time. They are acquired through long years.

They form the pantry from which the materials for the sermon, come. They are the bulk store, the granary.

Hence the richness and maturity of the messages of later life.

Many a great preacher has been asked how long it took him to prepare his sermon and he has answered:

Ten minutes, and thirty years!

Some young preachers find making sermons an easy thing at first; and most men find it harder later in life than at first.

This because in their early days they have quite a little pantry of material upon which they have never drawn, and they empty most of it into their early sermons.

Then later they find the pantry empty. They have not kept filling it up!

They are like those who have inherited a fortune, and spent the capital as though it were income.

They must maintain activity of mind and refresh their store of thoughts.

So next to piety, the preacher should labour most diligently to cultivate the acquisition of abundant materials for preaching.

SHEED says: "A preacher should acquire and cultivate a homiletically habituate." Everything he comes in contact with should turn to sermon material.

Chapter Three

3. SOURCES OF MATERIAL

Material should be drawn from every source. No knowledge if reflected on should be utterly useless.

There are, however, especially good sources.

(1) THE SACRED SCRIPTURES.

(These will come first)

Every preacher should have a familiar and accurate knowledge of the simple text of the Bible.

* He should know accurately:

* Its historical facts

* Its characters

and

* Many of its devotional passages.

The preacher should have it a first duty every day of his life to read and become yet more familiar with his Bible.

(2) SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

Especially such theologies as **Strong's**, are most stimulating and interesting.

Every preacher ought to read much in theology; so he will become an instructor in doctrine, and exert an abiding influence over his hearers.

A good knowledge of theology will enable the preacher to move with authority, confidence and maturity in the rich fields of Christian truth.

(3) ETHICS

Good books on Christian ethics are almost indispensable. Men need to be faced with the application to life and conduct of the Truth of the Faith.

(4) SCIENCE

Quite apart from the fascination of much that science is finding out, it has unearthed a wealth of fact about God's world that will provide a prolific source of illustrations.

W.L.WATKINSON was the first to see through this, and his sermons are full of references to scientific discoveries.

* "The works of God throw light upon the Word of God.

Or rather

* All the great discoveries of man in art, science, and morality, are so many words of God to him."

(5) HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY

Both of these furnish material of great vitality and variety.

(6) THE STUDY OF SERMONS

Study of other sermons will not only afford much valuable material, provided it is thoroughly masticated, and not used just as found, but will also give no little assistance in understanding the art of making sermons.

The careful and repeated analysis of rich passages is most helpful and wholesome.

(7) PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

This might have been mentioned second, and urged as of vital importance. Nothing can replace our own first-hand knowledge of human nature and the world.

And we must cultivate the art of perpetual reflection of everything we

experience.

We shall see when we come to study the arranging of our material that it also stimulates invention.

Chapter Four

4. SELECTING A TEXT

The age-long use of a text suggests that originally preaching was expository.

The early preachers unfolded some portion of Scripture. There are advantages in using a text.

I. HOW ARE WE TO SELECT THE TEXT.

It is of great importance to select the correct text.

If you make a happy choice, the text may carry with it through preparation and delivery.

*You are to deliver a message from God, then wait upon God in prayer for the message.

Pray much to be given the text and how to handle it.

There is real talent and skill in the selection of a text, and diligent and systematic efforts will be rewarded. Keep a note book for lists of texts.

When reading either the Scripture, or theology, biography, or the newspaper, or anything else, make a note of a text or a subject that would be striking for a sermon. Add beside it any train of thought awakened at the time, any outline, or anything striking.

*Make a habit of this.

Normally don't pick obscure texts, nor those that seem odd, nor avoid those that are familiar.

*Don't neglect any part of Scripture.

II. HOW ARE WE TO INTERPRET THE TEXT?

Our sacred duty is to interpret and apply the text as it was meant to be by the Divine Author.

When we announce the text and set out to preach, it is with the distinct understanding that we are about to unfold what God has said in that text.

*To do anything else seems to me to be one of the gravest sins of which we can be guilty on earth.

Yet how very often I have heard this very matter violated.

To make a passage mean what it does not mean, or use it as a peg on which to hang your own thoughts, is surely awful wickedness.

PHILIP BOOKS says: “Never draw out of a text a meaning which you know is not there. If your text has not your truth in it, find some other text which has.”

*How then should we proceed?

We must find out the exact meaning of the text we are going to preach from, and if we cannot do that we have no right to preach from it.

How can we unfold and enforce a text whose meaning we do not understand?

(1) STUDY THE TEXT MINUTELY.

FIND the precise meaning of the words and phrases used. FIND OUT if they have a peculiar sense in that passage. LOOK at your key text with a microscope.

PAY SPECIAL ATTENTION to any figures of speech that may occur.

MAKE SURE that they are not words to be taken literally before you make them figurative.

YOU MUST not make them fit in with your ideas of some, but find out what they mean and fit the doctrine in with them.

*DO NOT TRIFLE with God’s revelation of truth.

“Fire that never shall be quenched,” may be a figure. If it is it must stand for something, that something is as bad as fire!

(2) STUDY THE TEXT IN ITS IMMEDIATE CONNECTION

The connection will throw light on its meaning, and usually it is impossible to find this out without the context.

Rom. 12:1 needs almost the whole of the foregoing chapters to make it clear. Find out to who the words we addressed.

e.g.: The Letters to the Corinthians.

(3) WE MUST INTERPRET ACCORDING TO THE WHOLE TENOR OF SCRIPTURE.

In this connection remember that revelation was progressive. So we must interpret the Old Testament in the light of the New.

It means that we must be very careful in the use of proof text. Note the changes that Jesus introduced in the Mosaic Law re divorce, etc.

*Be diligent in the use of your references.

(4) COMPARE THE VARIOUS TRANSLATIONS AND VERSIONS

Today there are a great variety of translations available and these can be of great help.

*Use concordances such as **Youngs** and **Strong's**; and consult a good commentary.

(5) DETERMINE WHETHER THE PASSAGE IS LITERAL OR FIGURATIVE.

e.g.: John 2:19 is proved to be figurative by v. 21.

Usually the Bible interprets its own terms and by means of the context one can determine whether the language is to be taken in a literal sense or not.

The passage must be examined in all its details:

*Critically

*Exegetically

and

*Faithfully.

The figurative sense must be sustained by all these processes before it can be relied on as the true interpretation.

e.g.: John 2:19-22

How can we know it is figurative?

The narrator says so!

Also: Matt. 26:26-27; Mark 14:22-24; 1 Cor. 11:23-26.

“Wash” and “Washing;” are both figurative and literal.

e.g.: Naaman, 11 kings 5:10 – literal;

1 Cor. 6:11 – figurative.

The literal language of Scripture is to be preferred unless otherwise demanded by the context, parallel passages or analogy. Apply the simple rules of grammar as directed by a wide-awake, common-sense approach, and take for granted that the Bible means just what it says!

(6) ASCERTAIN THE MEANING OF WORDS AS USED BY EACH WRITER OF THE SCRIPTURE

All writers do not give the same words exactly the same meaning.

e.g.:

'FAITH'

In Gal. 1:23 and 1 Tim. 3:9 means "the gospel of which faith in Christ" is the great doctrine.

In Rom. 3:3 means: "Truth" or "faith."

In Acts 17:31 means "Proof" or "Evidence."

In Rom. 14:24 it means: "A conscientious conviction of duty."

The usage of the writer and the context must determine the meaning of the word in each passage.

FLESH.

In Ezek. 11:19 it is contrasted with stone.

In John 1:14, Rom. 1:3 it refers to human nature – without any reference to sinfulness.

In Rom. 8:13; Eph. 2:3 it points to human nature as both sinful and corrupt.

SALVATION. In Exodus 14:13 outward safety and deliverance is meant.

In James 5:15 bodily healing.

In Rom. 13:11 the whole of the blessings Christ has secured for believers.

Sometimes it means the gospel. (Heb. 2:3)

(7) THE CIRCUMSTANCES PECULIAR TO THE WRITER OR THOSE WRITTEN TO

These must be taken into consideration.

Historical books would be more likely to be interpreted literally than would poetical books.

Before expounding the passage, ask yourself:

*Under what circumstances was this portion written?

*What was the character of the people addressed?

*What was their prevailing moral state at the time?

*What circumstances are peculiar to the book and the author?

(8) LEARN WHAT YOU CAN ABOUT MANNERS AND CUSTOMS OF THE PEOPLE ABOUT WHOM THE BIBLE IS WRITTEN

e.g.: Potter, Sower, Stephen.

"Make the Word as much as possible its own interpreter. You will

best understand the Word of God by comparing it with itself – Comparing spiritual things with spiritual.”

(B. P. Newton.)

(9) PARALLEL PASSAGES

The preacher should be specially diligent in comparing parallel passages.

e.g.: Parable of the Sower.

It should be a rule with everyone who would read the Scriptures with advantage, to compare every text, which may seem important for the doctrine it may contain, or remarkable for the turn of expression, with parallel passages.

*Obscure words and phrases will thus become clear and plain.

e.g.: Mark 8:36 – “SOULS.”

What does “SOUL” mean?

Luke 9:25 throws light: “HIMSELF.”

Therefore; “SOUL” and “HIMSELF” are equivalent.

Cp: Mark 11:8; Matt. 21:8.

Now that you have:

*A correct text.

*Ascertained the nature of the passage and the meaning of words.

*Discovered any circumstances peculiar to the writer or those addressed.

*Learned what you could of manner of customs where necessary.

and

*Compare Scripture with Scripture,

You can now find out what others have said about it!

(Consult commentaries, expositions, sermons, etc.)

Chapter Five

5. ARCHITECT OR MUDDLER?

Next to having good material, and hardly less important is its effective arrangement.

Some men exhibit particular skill in constructing discourses, a skill far above their ability in other things; and above their general ability.

Other men find arrangement especially difficult.

Some can dress a window or arrange flowers. And others just can't!

Those who can't, can learn to do it moderately well; though they may never be excellent.

(1) THE ADVANTAGES OF ARRANGEMENT, OR A PLAN

a) FOR THE PREACHER

It reacts upon "invention". No matter how long and deeply you have thought about a subject, you can only come to a balanced view of the matter when you have arranged and ordered your thought.

Good arrangement helps you to work out the details either - mentally, or upon paper.

Each individual thought when looked at in its setting develops, and is likely to lead to others.

Dr. JOHNSON said: "The divisions not only help memory of the hearer, but direct the judgment of the writer; they supply sources of "invention" and keep every part in its proper place."

Good arrangement stimulates the emotions, because the preacher's feelings will flow naturally and freely when he is stimulated, supported and satisfied with consciousness of order.

b) FOR THE HEARER

- * It makes the discourse intelligible
- * It delivers it from being a hopeless ramble.

Clear thoughts presented in proper order have a livening effect on the

audience.

If we have not well arranged our material, the audience will carry little of it away. It remains with them as an indistinct mass of:

- * Remarks,
- * Ascensions.....or.....
- * Appeals, which nothing co-ordinates in their memory.

The impressions received are summed up in the saddest criticism that can be made by a hearer of the preacher for Christ:

- * "I don't know exactly what the preacher preached about!"

Good arrangement will:

- * Make the discourse pleasing.
- * Make your messages more persuasive

In splitting wood you need to be able to hit in the same place more than once; the same if you are trying to break a hard rock. So is preaching:

- * The ordered argument, point by point, will have its cumulative power.

It will enable the hearer to remember it. The food that feeds the flock is that which will be distinctly remembered. If they carry away the bones much of the meat will cling to them.

(2) QUALITIES OF GOOD ARRANGEMENT

Three are pre-eminent; Unity; order; proportion

a)UNITY

Do not have a sermon which is made up of two or three little sermons in succession. Whether the unity is achieved through doctrine, a person, or design, there must be unity.

b)ORDER

Thoughts must follow one another according to proper sequence. We must not merely say all that is to be said upon the subject, but put in order the

things we want to say.

Good order requires that we distinguish clearly the thoughts from one another; that we put them in proper order so that they form a continuity.

- * The order of thought should move toward a climax. Do not bring in your heavy guns first. Do not start with the head of a lion; and finish with the tail of a rat!

c) PROPORTION

The various parts of the discourse must be treated so that they make up a symmetrical whole. Not every part of a subject will merit the same weight or length of treatment.

The treatment given to any one part must be in keeping with the whole discourse and with its aim.

Young preachers are in danger of giving too much time to unimportant points.

Chapter Six

6. HANG THE BLUE PRINT!

A preacher is God's representative to men. He is God's mouthpiece to men.

- * Always remember this when you stand up to preach.

Let the sense of your mighty office determine your choice of language

- * Let it be simple and chaste
- * Let there be order in your sermon.
- * It must not be a tiring ramble.

But being a preacher does not free you from obedience to the laws of nature and of life. Some of these laws I now unfold. No builder can afford to throw away the plan and say

- * "Hang the blue prints."

(1) HAVE AN AIM

You are a hunter! Fancy a hunter shooting without taking aim. No question more important than:

"What is your aim?"

You must know:

- * What to aim at.
- * How to bend the bow; THEN draw it to its head and let it go.
- *

You may be aiming at convicting of sin, assurance of forgiveness, conversion, instruction, guidance, inspiration, comfort, etc. Whatever the aim is, here is **HOWLETT'S** golden counsel'

"I have a conviction that no sermon is ready for preaching, nor ready for writing out, until we can express its theme in a short, pregnant sentence as clear as crystal."

Never preach without being able to say, in one clear sentence, what you are going to say.

However difficult a task this may be, it is fundamental and essential and must be done thoroughly.

Once done its advantages are clear and manifold.

e.g.: Your actual task will stand out clearly; you will be saved from side-tracks and second issues.

(2) THE METHOD OF SERMON CONSTRUCTION

Every man will have his own method or lack of it; but with all the varieties of individuality, there are certain fundamental rules that are wisely observed.

Just as the physical organs of every human-being function in fundamentally the same way, so the organs of the soul function in fundamentally the same way. The process of thinking, imagining, judging, choosing and deciding, have broad highways along which to run.

*These laws require obedience.

To disregard these mental laws is foolish and courts failure. The earnest wise preacher will try to find out the mental processes which God has built into the human soul. and will use them in his great task of proclaiming Christ.

In teaching, speaking or preaching we should follow a certain order.

Modern scientific investigation has clearly defined this order.

It is interesting to note that the Greek philosopher, Aristotle (385-322 B.C), the Spanish rhetorician, Quintilian (35-92 A.D.), Herbart the German educationalist (1776-1841), and Phelps the American theologian, all come to practically the same conclusions.

Whether in the realm of philosophy, the public platform, the education of the young, or the pulpit, there are certain processes of thought which ought to be remembered and observed.

I set out these in columns for comparison.

ARISTOTLE	QUINTILIAN	HERBART	PHELPS
Introduction	Introduction	Preparation	Explanation
Proposition	Narration	Presentation	Introduction
			Proposition
Proof	Proof	Illustration	Division
	Refutation	Formulation	Development
Conclusion	Conclusion	Application	Conclusion

Modern education systems are based almost entirely on Herbart's principles. They lie at the base of all effective instruction, and have been followed knowingly, or instinctively, by the greatest orators and teachers of all time.

Let us examine these five steps more carefully.

(a) PREPARATTON OR INTRODUCTION

PHELPS SAYS:"All good definitions or an introduction agree in this, that its characteristic idea is that of preparing the minds of the hearers."

This is the idea behind **HERBART'S** first step.

Preparation to **HERBART** does NOT refer to the preparatory studies of the teacher or the preacher; but entirely to the preliminary preparation of the child or hearer.

We have to prepare those to whom we address ourselves.

This preparation consists in making suitable contact with the background or contents of the listeners' mind.

Here lies one of the secrets of the success of the popular preacher.

It can be done by the general knowledge possessed by the hearers:

By dealing with current events.

Or by using a suitable story.

(b) PRESENTATION (PROPOSITION OR NARRATION)

HERBART'S word means the presentation of the actual message to the hearers.

i.e.: It constitutes the main body, or substance, of the message.

Methods of presentation are as numerous and varied as the preachers.

THOS ADAMS; the puritan preacher has a sermon on: "Live in peace, and the God of peace shall be with you." He calls it the: "City of peace."

He has a long introduction, then 10 divisions, and six subdivisions. He would not suit a modern congregation!

Anyway we must be sure that the subject is presented in a clear and interesting way.

(c) ILLUSTRATION

Two extremes are possible.

(i) We may despise illustration and make the sermon a windowless dungeon.

(ii) We may be too profuse in illustration and make the sermon a glary house.

*Both extremes should be avoided.

Collecting illustrations is not easy, but we must embark on it. The best will come from daily observation, meditation and reading.

(d) FORMULATION OR SUMMARY.

In the courts of law, they call it "summing up." It is an essential element of effectual teaching. Its importance in good preaching cannot be over estimated.

It formulates in a few sentences the conclusion to which the preacher has aimed to lead the minds of his hearers.

It is the conviction, or persuasion, which exactly corresponds to the aim of the preacher.

(e) APPLTCATION

Many a sermon needs an application.

It is like a well-told story. Some preachers apply their message all the way through.

Jesus Christ acted on it continually; and so did Paul in his letters.

I commend HERBART'S principles to you, with the change of one or two words. They are based on an accurate study of the mental process of the human soul and are particularly suitable to the presentation of the gospel.

*Born preachers and teachers use them instinctively.

The rest of us will do well to use them with diligence and care. Their use has revolutionised the preaching of many.

Let us go over them again:

- (i) INTRODUCTION. Let it be an interesting little path to the front gate to the door!
- (ii) PRESENTATION. A clear, simple statement, in clear, simple language. Avoid being verbose and ponderous.
- (iii) ILLUSTRATION.
- (iv) SUMMARY
- (v) APPLICATION.

Having these principles in mind, let me offer this suggestion to help you in the development of your presentation.

This is the creative process, and the most difficult one for the beginner. But a little knowledge; some imagination, and willingness to work will produce good results.

Take a sheet of paper, and write your text, or theme, in a paddock in the middle.

*THEN ASK QUESTIONS!

*Jot down the answers and thoughts on the margin with lines to locate them on the text.

Do not worry at first about the knowledge, or order. Jot down all that comes to your mind. Let there be "brain sweat!" Refuse the temptation to attend to anything else.

Fill the page with:
Illustrations

Scriptures

References, etc

Then - let it all stand for a while, so that the sub-conscious mind can work on it.

This process is like the carrier dumping all the building materials in the yard. You can sort it out and put it together later.

Chapter Seven

7. THE SKELETON NEEDING FLESH

The divisions are the principal parts into which the sermon is divided. The greatest preachers of England have used divisions, and many of them indicate them as they go along.

"Three detached sermonettes do not make one sermon; but on the other hand, a handful of observations tied together by a text are not an organic whole.

"It all depends on whether the headings:

Advance,
Ascend,
Cumulate - or are
Independent,
Disconnected,
Parallel."

True liberty in writing comes by law, the more thoroughly the outlines of your work are laid out the more freely your sermon will flow, like an un-wasted stream between its well-built bank.

A sermon is not like a picture which (once painted) stands altogether before the eye. Its part eludes the memory,

Give your sermon an orderly, consistent progress, and do not hesitate to let your hearers see it distinctly, for it will help them first to understand and then to remember, what you say."

These things at least should be said about the divisions.

- i. They should cover the whole of the material i.e: The subject proposed in the presentation.
- ii. They should not go outside the subject being dealt with. Do not be tempted into a side-track and finish up making it a main division of your subject.
- iii. Do not include subordinate ideas.
- iv. They should show unity of design.

For your main divisions use:

Roman numerals, and block capitals, and underline.

For sub-divisions use:

Arabic numerals and commence them a little further from the margin.

(Examples will be given.)

The sub-divisions under the main headings contain nothing now, they merely cut up the divisions. If you cut up an apple, you simply get divisions of an apple, not a fruit salad.

Chapter Eight

8. THE BUILDER AT WORK

Having selected the text, or topic, let us proceed to the actual construction of the sermon.

HAVE AN OUTLINE

An outline is like the bony skeleton. It will give form, order, sequence and unity. It is to the sermon what the skeleton is to the body.

(a) It will help the preacher in thinking through.

(b) It will help the people to follow through - and to remember.

Ideas often remain hazy in our minds until sorted into an outline.
Clarity in our minds will help towards clarity in our hearers' minds.

An outline will help to do both!

Dr JOINSTON said: "The divisions not only help the memory of the hearer, but they direct the judgment of the writer, supply sources of investigation and keep every part in its proper place.

We shall deal with the three main types of sermon construction.

1. TEXTUAL SERMON

ATTACK THE TEXT

We may do this in several ways. Here are two:

A. ASKING QUESTIONS

A text will often open up to questions. e.g.:

Who?

What?

Where?

When?

How?

Take Rom .4:3."Abraham believed God and it was reckoned unto him for

righteousness."

To be able to answer those questions you have to read the context in Romans 4, and the account in Genesis. When you have read the account and thoughtfully answered the questions you will have gathered a lot of information about the man and about an important doctrine.

Even quite a fair outline will come out of some of the answers to the questions.

- I. What was Paul trying to prove?
- II. How did Abraham show that he believed God?
- III. Why was it reckoned to him for righteousness?
- IV. How does this prove Paul's point?

Dr JAMES BLACK says in "The Mystery of Preaching,"-"When I have my text or subject, I put a series of questions to it, and try to answer them e.g.:

1. What do you mean?
2. What did you mean for that man in his own day?
3. Why was he led to say this?
4. Are you true always?
5. Do you mean the same for me day?
6. What would it mean for me if I accepted what you teach?
7. What principles or duties do you involve for me?
8. What must I do to make your message real and true in my life?
9. How can I illustrate modernly what you teach for myself and others?

Notice that Dr BLACK asks for the meaning of the words, when they are written, and the truth of them, but particularly concerning their meaning and truth for us today.

Learn those questions by heart and use them.

If you can answer them intelligently you are likely to be an interesting preacher. It means hard work. There is no other way.

B. ANOTHER METHOD IS TO UNDERLINE A TEXT, PHRASES, CLAUSES, OR LEADING WORDS.

This is a very helpful method.

Take Matthew 13:44:

"The kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure, hidden in the field, which a man found, and in his joy he goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field."

The underlining has picked out five parts, which make the main headings of a sermon outline. Thus:

1. The kingdom of heaven.
2. Is a treasure.
3. Which is hidden.
4. But may be found, and when found.
5. A man will give all he has to possess it.

If you like you might re-arrange it as a sermon on the Kingdom of Heaven. Thus:

1. ITS VALUE - a treasure.
2. CONCEALED VALUE - hidden in a field.
3. DISCOVERED VALUE - when it is found.
4. ITS ABSOLUTE WORTH - selleth all that he hath and buyeth it.

While this is but an outline, it contains heavenly truths and is easily developed. Thus:

1. The kingdom of God means man's submission to God's Sovereignty. God's reign in man's heart.
2. How is it treasure? Discuss the message and hopes of redemption.
3. Why and how hidden?
4. How to find it?
5. Will a man surrender all?

2. THE TOPICAL SERMON

Another plan is to select an important doctrine, or person, and by using a concordance, to select texts, and build from the thoughts so suggested.

It will often be found that a topic will respond to questions in much the same way as will a text. However, whereas the text is selected from the Bible and the answers to your questions will provide you with the sermon material, in a topical sermon the topic is chosen and answers to your questions should be found in the scriptures.

If this rule is followed, it will avoid the danger of developing the topic along unscriptural or unsound lines.

Let the answers to your questions be supported by scriptures, and in harmony with the entire context.

Some of the advantages of a topical sermon are:

It helps toward a unity of thought.

It allows a thorough examination of one theme. A single text rarely allows this.

It trains the mind to breath of view and enables the preacher to give a consistent and systematic presentation of the subject.

(3) THE EXPOSTTORY SERMON

Expository preaching is the consecutive treatment of some book, or extended portion of Scripture, in an effort to explain it, illustrate it and apply it to life.

It is, therefore, marked by three features:

1. It takes for its text a passage, a psalm, a parable, a scene, or a narrative, etc.
2. It expands the meaning of the passage in a clear and forcible way.
3. It applies its lessons to life.

MATTHEW HENRY'S Commentary is an exposition of the whole Bible.

It is quite simple to have a series of expositions on a book of the Bible.

A series could quite easily be formed on the miracles, parables, etc.

Arguments in favour of Expository Preaching

1. It is the natural way of enforcing Divine truth.

Preaching was instituted to interpret the Scriptures.

SPURGEON said:"We cannot expect to deliver much of the teachings of the Holy Scripture by picking out verses and holding these up at of showing a house by exhibiting separate bricks."

2. The expository way is the scriptural way.

Ezra set the example, Neh.8. He read God's Word distinctly, and gave the sense,

and caused the congregation to understand.

The Lord Jesus expounded a portion in the synagogue of His home town.

The Reformers used this method with profound effects.

3. It is beneficial to the congregation.

- (a) It encourages them to study their Bibles, and it makes them appreciative of the best pulpit work.

Someone has said that this type of preaching has created a standard in Scotland which has influenced not only the religion of the people, but also their habits of thought, their literary judgment, their political faith, and the fullest pulsation.

- (b) It honours the mind of the Spirit, in unfolding His Word.

This will bring the blessing of God.

It permits the using and unfolding of many parts of Scripture that would otherwise not be easy to expound without realising the criticism that we are hitting at someone.

It enables us to speak about things that would otherwise be difficult to handle."When the Scripture battery is fired off in order, there is no suspicion as to the laying of the guns. We all take our turn to be under fire, as we all need it."

- (c) It builds up a congregation in Divine truth.

An American visitor heard Dr Candish expound the eighth and ninth chapters of 2 Corinthians, verse by verse, by way of inducing his people to pay off a debt on the church; and he testified that: The attention of the great congregation was intense as they followed him with their open Bibles.

"The preacher put the appeal upon the very highest ground, the lesson of God's on the subject of giving."

4. It is of great benefit to the preacher.

It enables him to maintain a great variety of subjects, and to deal with delicate themes.

Qualities requisite for Expository Preaching.

*A real faith in the inspiration of Scriptures.

It will build such a faith and reverence in the hearers, too.

*He will need powers of selection.

Not all parts of Scripture lend themselves equally to exposition.

*He will need to develop a logical mind, and a sense of perspective.

It is like landscape painting.

*He will need to maintain careful methods of study.

To expound you must know your Bible.

*Masters of the art should be your masters.

MOODY was a simple expositor; CANDISH an expositor of doctrine; DEAN STANLEY of Bible History; W.H.TAYLOR of Bible biography; MCLAREN of passages of books; G.A.SMITH in Isaiah. The Expositor's Bible is worth getting!

GUNERAL PRINCTPLES OF EXPOSITORY PREACHING

1. Do not attempt to treat every phrase, or word, in the passage.

* Select the important and helpful.

2. Select the leading ideas and group the teaching round them.

3. The lesson must be vital and have relation to life.

4. The method must be interesting.

* Learn to pick on the things that grip.

Here is an example of exposition on a lengthy passage:

WATCH YOUR STEP! (Eph.4:1-5:21)

I. FORBIDDEN PATHS (4:17)

Their stumbling is:

1. Due to:

(a) A perverted mind. (4:18)

(b) A hard heart (4:18)

2. It results in:

- (a) Immorality. (4:19)
- (b) Thieving. (4:28)
- (c) Lying. (4:25)
- (d) Bitterness. (4:31)

II. THE AVENUE OF HONOUR. (4:1)

A worthy walk is characterised by:

- (a) A humble spirit. (4:2)
- (b) Long -suffering and forbearance. (4:2)
- (c) Diligence to keep the unity of the spirit. (4:3)
- (d) Aspiration towards unity of the spirit. (4:13)
- (e) Desire for completeness in Christ. (4:1-16)

III. THE WAY OF THE LIGHT. (5:8)

The function of the light is:

- a) To reveal.(5:13)
- b) To convict.(5:13)
- c) Produces fruit of goodness.(5:9)
- d) Not unfruitful works of darkness.(5:11)

IV. A DIFFICULT TRACK. (5:15)

- (a) Danger of indolence in difficult times. (5:16)
- (b) A call for the exercise of common sense. (5:17)
- (c) Pitfalls on the road. (5:18)
- (d) Power for the way. (5:18-19)

V. THE KING'S HIGHWAY.

- (a) A way of sacrifice. (5:2)
- (b) A way of goodness. (5:3-4)

(c) A way of gratitude. (5:4)

CONCLUSION:

The call of the Christian life to great character.

The wide range of evil to be avoided and the life comprehending simple goodness in every form is here set forth.

A word of exhortation and appeal.

Chapter Nine

9. THE BUILDING ON DISPLAY

Here we will finally deal with the actual delivery of the sermon and some helpful guide lines.

1. KEYS TO EFFECTIVE DELIVERY

(a) Understanding Your Fears

You are not alone in your fears. Fear defeats more people than any other thing in the world. Surveys show that 80-90% of all students enrolled in speech classes suffer from stage fright.

A certain amount of stage fright can be useful. If these Physiological preparations are held within limits, you will be capable of thinking faster, talking more fluently and generally speak with greater intensity than under normal circumstances.

Many professional speakers say they never completely lose all stage fright. Speakers who say they are "cool as a cucumber" at all times are usually as thick-skinned as a cucumber and about as inspiring as a cucumber.

(b) Preparation Brings Confidence .

Hence it is essential to prepare what we are going to say. Those who begin without knowing what they are going to say, will sit down without knowing what they have said.

(c) Keep Your Goal

Do the following three things:

- * Lose yourself in your subject.
- * Keep your attention off negative things that may upset you.
- * Have confidence in the subject you speak on.

(d) Act Confidently.

Action seems to follow feeling, but really action and feeling go together.

By regulating action - which is under the more direct control of the will - we indirectly regulate our feeling, which is not.

Stand up straight and look your audience straight in the eyes and begin to talk with confidence.

2. ENOUGH IS ENOUGH

Sir WINSTON CHURCHILL once gave very good advice to a now parliamentarian who had given a lengthy maiden speech:

"To be immortal, you don't have to be everlasting," he chided.

All too often we find in business people who would do well to heed Churchill's advice:

The sales-person who chatters on long after he could have closed the order.

The credit manager who keeps on talking past the point of extracting a promise.

The service manager whom is better at conversation than following up

. . . and so on !

(a) Don't Give It All At Once

The inexperienced frequently endeavour to get out their whole message in a torrent of words. It leaves in reserve.

A far better approach is to practice being sensitive to the response of the hearers and the leading of the Holy Spirit.

FINALLY AND VERY IMPORTANTLY

(b) Know When To Stop

When you have achieved your objective, or spent your time, wind your message to a close.

Conclude simply by reiterating your major points and focus in on your application.

You will find that each successive presentation comes more easily.

Strive diligently to perfect your technique and covet earnestly God's rich anointing upon your ministry realising that we are God's ambassadors.
