

## HOMILETICS III (SENIORS)

*Dec. 8 last days  
before sermon  
can come in.*

I.-Arrangement of the sermon.-1.-Importance of arrangement.-As important as interest and force.

It is a task which calls for training and practice. In this respect the preacher is a builder. Out of materials gathered he builds a structure according to a specified design. Materials as brick, stone, wood and steel can be made into a house, Church, fort, bridge or ship, but the architectural design is different, and it is important to build according to architectural design. In like manner material can be wrought into a story, address or sermon. It is order which constitutes a sermon. Good thoughts abound, but organization of thoughts is not so common. The power of a message is in proportion to order, for a message without order is feeble.

- (1).-To the speaker himself.-One has not studied a subject when it is thought over in a careless manner. While arranging thoughts other thoughts are suggested. Arrangement helps in working out details. If the preacher's method is to speak without notes orderly arrangement will help him to remember his message. The reason for difficulty in extemporaneous speaking is that the message has not been well arranged. The speaker who does not arrange his message well, will lose, rather than improve his power of constructing a message. Without order he will repeat, or wander away from his subject.
- (2).-To make a good effect upon the audience.-It is necessary to make the message intelligible. We must present clear thoughts in a logical order or much of what is said will not be understood by the hearers. People forget much of what they hear, and carry away a various assortment of remarks, statements and appeals. Often the remark is made, "I do not remember what he preached about." The message will not be understood, but, what is worse, it will be misunderstood. One has said, "Render the message to be understood, and impossible to be misunderstood."
- (3).-To make the message pleasing.-"Order is Heaven's first law." Even things in Nature, which appear to be irregular, have a subtle order. "Moulting among birds is such that it is scarcely noticed, yet it is orderly. Two feathers, and two only, are shed at one time, and with perfect symmetry. The middle feathers of each wing are the first to go. When the replacement feathers are half grown another pair of feathers is shed, with perfect precision, and this continues until the process of moulting is finished. At no time is more than a single pair of feathers missing, or the bird's flight would be mechanically unbalanced." (Allan Devoe). Chaos is neither beautiful nor attractive. The message which pleases is the one which has a plan. An ill-arranged sermon may have statements which please, but even they would be more pleasing as parts of an orderly message. A well-arranged message will more surely keep the attention of an audience.
- (4).-To make the message persuasive.-Order is important when appealing to the emotions. If a man wants to break rock with a sledge hammer he does not hit it first one place and then another, but multiplies blows at a certain point or along a certain line. A house-mover lifts a building by applying the lifting power systematically. So when



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working on the emotions or will of the hearers, the message will be more persuasive when applied with some natural order.

(5).- To make the message to be remembered.-Principal elements of arrangement:

a.-Unity.-It is necessary, yet often neglected.

b.-Order.-All that is said may be upon one subject while the thoughts do not follow one another according to natural relation.

c.-Proportion.-Involves two things:

(a).-Natural symmetry.-The several parts of a message may be treated so as to make a symmetrical whole. Not all parts are discussed at the same length, but at a length proportionate to the relation to each other and to the message as a whole.

(b).-Specific design.-Particular points vary greatly in length. The lack of method is the most common fault in preachers, and it is due to insufficient and careless preparation.

2.-The several parts of a sermon.-

(1).-The introduction.-

a.-Necessity of an introduction.-People have a natural aversion to abruptness, and delight in a gradual approach. A house is not pleasant without a porch or something corresponding to it. "The light shineth more and more unto the perfect day" (Prov.4:18), and this gradual approach teaches us a lesson. A message without an introduction is incomplete. Elaborate pieces of music have a prelude or some introductory notes. Books have an introduction, even books of the Bible as the Pauline epistles. An introduction has two objectives:

(a).-To interest the hearers in the subject.-The preacher can depend on a certain amount of willingness on the part of the audience to listen. Not many come who are opposed to the truth, but many are careless concerning it. Attention is secured by an interesting introduction. As in the ordinary affairs of life much depends upon the first impression, so the success of the sermon depends upon the first impression which the preacher makes on his hearers. If this impression is favorable the audience will listen to the rest of the message with attention, pleasure and profit. Attention was requested by Moses (Duet.4:1), by Isaiah (Isa.28:14), by Jesus (Mat.13:3,18 15:10), by Peter (Acts 2:14), by Stephen (Acts 7:2) and by Paul (Acts 17:22 21:40 22:1 23:1).

(b).-To prepare the audience for understanding the subject.-We must guard against anticipating something which belongs to the body of the message. The method of some preachers is to give the introduction before announcing the text. This may be good occasionally, but is not good as a steady practice. If the sermon is to be long the introduction must be short. There should be a good introduction or none at all. "Well begun is half finished." A bad



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beginning is apt to spoil everything.

b.-Sources from which to draw the introduction.-They are many and varied.

(a).-The text.-When the meaning of the text requires an explanation, and when the context requires explanation, that explanation may form the introduction.

(b).-The subject to be discussed.-This may form the introduction. Its relation to some other subject similar or opposite. When the subject is to be explanatory or practical it is appropriated to have the introduction concerning the importance of the subject. If the sermon is to establish the truth of a proposition the introduction will explain the nature of the subject. As to the question of the existence of evil, or of God's sovereignty, the introduction would state that these are great problems, and have called forth the strength of the best preachers, and that no problem is more difficult or more deserving of attention.

(c).-The occasion.-If the sermon has reference to some particular season of the year, or connection with the ordinances, the introduction would contain remarks on the occasion. Allusion to the character of the times in which we live, to recent events, or something similar, would call forth the explanation as to why the text or subject was chosen. There may be in the introduction allusion to the spiritual condition of the Church in general, or the local congregation, or to some other Church. The hymn just sung, or the passage of Scripture just read, provides an interesting introduction.

(d).-Miscellaneous sources.-There are a great number which do not need to be mentioned in detail. Seek for each sermon the most appropriate introduction.

c.-Qualities of a good introduction.-Things to avoid:

(a).-Avoid unrelated subjects.-Present something closely related, and not something distinct from the discussion. Its design is to prepare the audience for the message. We must lead the audience along a certain line of thought in order to arrive at a definite conclusion.

(b).-Avoid more than one thought.-We do not want a porch to a porch of a house.

(c).-Avoid generalities.-Lack of interest will be the result.

(d).-Avoid vehemence in the introduction.-The creation of interest and awakening expectancy is met in the body of the sermon. We should not be impassioned at the beginning. ("Start slow, talk low, rise higher, take fire.") Even though the preacher is excited at the

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things made good  
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beginning the audience is not.

(e).-Avoid a lengthy introduction.-It is liable to keep the audience so long on the porch that they hardly get into the house at all. Or we will be so long setting the table that they will lose all appetite for the meal.

(f).-Avoid carelessness in preparation.-A faulty preface is like the helmsman who lets the ship strike the rocks while going out of the harbor. The introduction should be composed before the body of the message, and, if it is good, it will help in the composition of the rest of the message.

(2).-The discussion.-Or the body of the message.

a.-The body of the message should have a plan.-The preacher who trusts to the extemporaneous method, and follows no definite plan, will stray everywhere, and accomplish little. The body of the message is called by various names, as "development", "argument", or "treatment", but the best name is "discussion". This must have a plan. Sometimes the plan comes with little or no trouble. Sometimes it has a variety of separate thoughts. The arrangement will suggest new thoughts which otherwise would not have come to mind. We must not only seek a plan, but the best plan. Strive for the best, and do not be content with the first plan which presents itself. It should be simple, and free from straining after effect.

b.-The plan includes the statement of the subject, called the proposition.-This requires care. The proposition must be logical, as a result of consecutive thinking, and this results in unity. When the subject is to be discussed both negatively and positively the interrogative form of proposition is good. The proposition, or statement of the subject, should be complete, simple, clear and brief. The proposition should be studied, started and finished.

c.-The divisions of the plan.-

(a).-Progress of the divisions.-The movement, or progress, must not be irregular like undisciplined soldiers. The divisions should not have equal prominence, nor attract too much separate attention, but be a symmetrical whole. Follow a definite plan, and advance in an orderly manner. We need simplicity and naturalness. Instruction and conviction are the best means of leading people to action. Several detached sermons put together cannot make one sermon, nor a group of observations make an organized unit. The divisions are not to be independent and disconnected, but be advancing and cumulative.

(b).Number of divisions.-We must consider simplicity with variety. It is simpler to have but few divisions. The divisions must follow in natural order if the average hearer is to retain them in mind. Generally three divisions is sufficient. We are not to form the habit of blind following of a custom when nothing calls for that number. Three



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will give variety without distracting the attention or burdening the memory. Three divisions are "What", "Why", and "Result". There cannot be a climax without at least three divisions. Three gives the idea of completeness, the beginning, the middle, and the end. In a foot race there are three signals, "on your marks", "get set" "go". Scripture often has the three-fold mention of something, "Holy, Holy, Holy" (Isa.6:3 Rev.4:8), "The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord" (Jer.7:4), "Earth, Earth, Earth" (Jer.22:29), "Overturn, Overturn, Overturn" (Ezek.21:27), "Woe, Woe, Woe" (Rev.8:13), "Ask, Seek, Knock" (Mat.7:7,8 Lu.11:9,10). "The Resurrection of the Body" is Possible, Probable and Certain. "Being a Christian in Daily Life" is Possible, Desirable and Obligatory. "Piety in Youth" is a thing to be desired, A thing to be sought, and A thing to be respected. It is not accidental or strange that a sermon should have three divisions.

(c).-Character of the divisions.-a'.-Relation of the divisions to the entire subject.-

No one division can be equal to the whole subject. No one division can, or should, exhaust the subject. yet each should be a complete statement.

b'.-Relation of the divisions to each other.-Distinct.

One division should not include another. Each should be kept distinct. Distinct ideas merge into each other more clearly when there is a line of separation. Symmetrical. Not to be one extreme, like a mermaid, with the body of a woman and tail of a fish, nor like a centaur, which is half man and half horse. Neither is there to be the other extreme. The divisions must all have the same relation to the subject. Some divisions will be like the branches of a fruit tree, and others will be like the fruit. It is a mistake to think that each division must have the same number of subdivisions. Matter must not be inserted simply for the sake of symmetry. Neither should the divisions and subdivisions be discussed at the same length.

(d).-Order of the divisions.-This is controlled by logical and practical considerations. Instruction is to be subordinate to the arousing of the emotions, and stirring of the will to action.

a'.-As to instruction.-Those divisions should precede which will help to understand succeeding ones, and negative considerations should precede the positive.

b'.-As to practical effect.-Endeavor to keep the object in view, and then consider what order and arrangement of the divisions will be most likely to stir the hearers to action. Abstract ideas must precede the concrete, the general precede the specific, and instruction precede appeal. Interest must grow as the sermon advances.

(e).-Statement of the divisions.-Should be brief, and only that the hearers' attention will be awakened. The divisions may be announced when the announcement will help in following the train of thought, when the



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successive steps are to be remembered, and when we see that the announcement awakens interest and attention. Unless one of the three conditions exists no previous announcement need be made. Some use recapitulation rather than previous announcement. Sometimes it is good to use both previous announcement and recapitulation. *(repeating material at end)*

d.-Transition from one division to the next.-It is best when least noticed. The parts should fit together like well cut stones, or each part should grow out of the preceding one by natural development. The transition will be easy in proportion as the subject has been studied thoroughly, and the thoughts well arranged. No good transition can be effected between divisions that do not have a real and natural relation. Transition is difficult when the arrangement of ideas is defective. It is trying to work in ideas which have no place in the train of thought. A sermon is not a mixture of various ideas.

Transition is effected by a single brief sentence which causes the listeners to observe that we are passing to another related thought. Sometimes it is done by numbering the divisions, and introducing each division by mentioning the number. We may use any number of expressions which indicate progress from one division to another, as "again", "in addition", "besides", "furthermore", "still further", "moreover", "another fact", "in the next place", "on the other hand" or "finally".

(3).-The conclusion.-Some prepare the introduction, and neglect the conclusion. They begin well, but, toward the conclusion, they wander bewildered. Others proceed until, at the close, they are exhausted in mind and body. The conclusion is more important than the introduction. If conclude well it is because of careful preparation. "It is the final struggle which decides the conflict." "Gather up all of your powers for one supreme effort." One who extemporizes is apt to have an abrupt ending to his message. The conclusion should be as the river growing in volume and power.

a.-Recapitulation.-If the sermon needs careful explanation, and it is important that the divisions should be remembered, then the divisions should be carefully and distinctly restated. If the sermon is to be persuasive, and the purpose is to lead to a decision, there is no need of recapitulation.

b.-Application.-This is concentrated in the conclusion. It requires of the preacher intense earnestness, but he should not use pathos or an emotional manner unless he genuinely feels it. If the preacher's own feelings, and those of his audience, have subsided he had better omit an emotional appeal. An effort to work up feeling will fail. Few things are so painful or injurious as the reaction produced by an impassioned appeal when it is not felt by either the preacher or the audience. The concluding exhortation should be in keeping with the subject treated. It should carry the subject farther in the same direction. If the sermon has been one of solemn warning the concluding words should be of encouragement in view of God's promises.

c.-Length of the conclusion.-There is no rule, as it depends on circumstances. There is great danger of making it too long. If the message is long the conclusion should be brief.

*outside must  
important parts  
of sermon.*



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If the preacher is overcome by emotion silence is better than speech. The conclusion is not something fastened on to the sermon. If the preacher feels that he has failed in the sermon, and attempts to awaken interest by a long conclusion, he will be farther from his object than he was before. It is unwise to announce a conclusion, and then continue for a long time.

d.-Final words of the conclusion.-These strengthen the leading ideas of the sermon. The great leading truths appear once more at the end, or the text may be repeated as the last words. Repeat what will sum up all that has been said. Consider only the minister's responsibility and the hearer's salvation.

3.-Different kinds of sermons.-The various kinds overlap. If sermons are classed as Doctrinal and Practical it is evident that a Doctrinal sermon should have a practical application, and a Practical sermon should have a doctrinal basis. If they are classes as Explanatory, Illustrative, Argumentative or Hortatory (exhortation), these, also, intermingle. There are two distinct principles on which classification is made, one relating to the subject matter of the sermon, and the other has to do with the homiletical structure. The distinction between subject sermons and textual sermons has to do with the plan. Only in this respect are they different kinds.

(1).-Subject (Topical) sermons.-Drawn from the Scripture, as the subject usually is stated in the form of a proposition, and the subject is divided and treated according to its own nature. This insures unity, and trains the mind to logical analysis, and makes it more convincing and pleasing to the audience. The preacher will want to present some doctrine or topic, and it is better that it be specific rather than general. This promotes variety, and makes each subject more fruitful. The specific is illustrated by Robert Hall (1764-1831) in his series of three sermons on "The Judgment":

"Reasons for the Judgment to come" (Acts 24:25)

"Character of the Judgment to come" (Heb. 6:2)

"Remember in youth the Judgment to come" (Eccl. 11:9)

He confined himself to one aspect of the subject, and divided the subject according to its own nature.

(2).-Textual sermons.-Take a text, and get the sermon from that. There are two distinct varieties:

a.-Discussion of a single subject.-The divisions are drawn from the text, and they must be so related to the subject, and to each other, that the sermon forms a symmetrical unit.

b.-Discussion of several subjects.-They do not admit of being combined into one, yet they have a mutual relation, giving unity to the sermon. Some verses of Scripture suggest several distinct subjects, or topics, and sermons on such texts would be a series of sermons.

(a).-Diverse topics.-Topics unlike as avarice, ingratitude, remorse and suicide, might all be treated in one sermon on "Judas", because they apply not only to one person, but, in his case, they have an intimate connection.

*7 sayings of  
Christ on  
for series.*



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- (b).-Successive words in the text.-(Lu.24:43)  
 "Today thou shalt be with Me in Paradise"  
 "Today thou shalt be with Me in Paradise"  
 "Today thou shalt be with Me in Paradise"

(c).-Progress to the end.-

- a'.-"This Salvation" (Acts 13:26).  
 "Its Author"  
 "Disposition it produces"  
 "Obedience it demands"  
 "Blessing it incurs"  
 b'.-"The Gospel is all and in all" (I Tim.1:11).  
 "Our guide through life"  
 "Our support in death"  
 "Our portion forever"

(3).-Expository sermons.-This is mainly an exposition of a passage of Scripture, and it may be a chapter, parable or miracle. Ministers labor to have proficiency in topical and textual sermons, and should labor more so to have proficiency in expository sermons, also. The expository method requires an entirely different method of study of Scripture in order to prepare the message.

a.-Advantages and disadvantages of expository preaching.-(a).-Advantages.-

- a'.-Method of the Apostles.-It was the primitive and ancient method of preaching.  
 b'.-It corresponds better with the idea of preaching.-Preaching is expounding the Scripture.  
 c'.-Gives a better knowledge of the Scripture.-  
 This is true of both preacher and people in his audience. It causes the message to have more Scripture truth in it. It gives occasion to remark on many passages of Scripture which otherwise might never enter into sermons.  
 d'.-Lessens the temptation to misinterpret Scripture.-By excessive allegory or by accommodation.

(b).-Disadvantages.-These appear more serious than they are.

- a'.-Prejudice against expository preaching.-This is because of misunderstanding. Some preachers feel that expository messages are to be reserved for rainy Sundays, week day nights, when the preacher has no sermon prepared, when he wishes to save the elaborate sermon for a better audience, or some other similar occasion. Then the preacher will read some Scripture portion, and make some scattering remarks, for if he is persecuted in one verse he can flee to another".  
 b'.-People in the audience do not have their Bibles. Consequently they find it hard to remember the connection of some long passage of Scripture.  
 c'.-Lack of interest on the part of the hearers.-  
 They care so little about the Bible that they are not interested in the explanation.  
 d'.-Object on the ground that it lacks variety.-

*People want the word more than we realize. I will hold them.*



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- e'.-Object on the ground that it does not present a connected argument.-
- f'.-Object on the ground that there is no call for expository preaching.-They say that we have Sunday Schools and Bible classes for the purpose. The fact is that the Sunday School and Bible classes actually prepare people to receive expository preaching with appreciation and profit.

b.-Suggestions as to expository preaching.-This deals mainly with exposition of Scripture, but it does not exclude argument or exhortation. We may be dealing with a long or short passage of Scripture. It may be one of a series or stand by itself. There is no broad line of separation between expository sermons and other kinds, and one may pass easily from a textual to expository. Preachers often preach expository sermons which they would not call by that name. A large part of the Bible is narrative, which is something which interests both old and young, educated and ignorant, converted and unconverted. Requirements for effective expository preaching:

- (a).-Unity.-This is necessary to instruction, conviction and persuasion. Without it the hearers are not impressed. Often unity is not the aim, and the result is a series of disjointed remarks on successive verses, or little sermons fastened together. Unity is something that is to be desired.
- (b).-Structure.-The human mind delights in orderly structure. There is both unity and order in structure. Strive for unity, distinct connection and orderly progress. If a series of sermons is intended make a careful study of a book or other portion of Scripture. View each book as a unit, and trace in detail its outline. Expository preaching compels one to study the Bible by this method.
- (c).-Proper handling of details.-Brings out, not only the leading ideas, but details, and as these are explained it gives good material for the message. We need to study and master details, and then select and group them. It is not necessary for the preacher to give all of the results of his study on difficult passages, or of the different views held as to those passages, as that would be wearisome to any audience. Long study is his affair, and not theirs. To state at length differences as to views on some passage, without showing why one should be accepted as preferable, is unsatisfactory. Expository preaching requires much close study of the Bible in general, and much special study of the passages to be treated.

II.-Style.-1.-General observations on style.-

(1).-Nature and importance of style.-The "stylus" was a pointed iron with which the Romans wrote upon their tablets which were covered with wax.

a.-Denotes manner of writing.-Each person has his own

*One thought prevailing throughout prepared throughout*

*It pays to be careful on details.*



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peculiar handwriting, his own individual style of writing, and it cannot be imitated perfectly.

*sharp language*  
 b.-Notes manner of expressing thought.-A man's style is his characteristic manner of expressing his thoughts, whether in writing or speaking. It is said, "He wields a caustic pen." Some are distinguished for diction, the character and choice of words or expressions. *choice words* A man's style cannot be separated from his mode of thought. We know the thoughts of others only as those thoughts are revealed in words. Excellency of style has given lasting popularity to some books which had little merit otherwise. Books written in attractive and beautiful style will live forever. E. Renan (1823-1892) wrote his "life of Jesus" which was accepted because of the great beauty of style, and not what it said about Jesus. The writings of R. G. Ingersoll (1833-1899) have been studied in universities for style, and not for what he taught. Neither of these mentioned could be recommended for the Christian to read. Louis Agassiz (1807-1873) and T. H. Huxley (1825-1895) made scientific books acceptable because of their pleasing style of writing. It shows that style is not an unimportant thing. It renders mediocrity acceptable, and the able more powerful still. It made Mohammed's (570-632) errors seductive, while truth is unnoticed because of the lack of it.

*mediocrity*  
*mediocrity*  
*ability*  
 The Christian should not neglect so powerful a means of usefulness. Yet it is much neglected. One cause of neglect is the failure to understand the inseparable connection with the thought conveyed. Some put matter above manner. The best style attracts the least attention to itself, thus making people give credit to the matter, without knowing how much manner has contributed to the impression. Style is as important as thought. Every writer and speaker should give attention to the improvement of his style.

(2).-Means of improving style.-

a.-Study of language.-Particularly of English, though the study of other languages is beneficial. Whether or not we are acquainted with other languages we should study our own. In High Schools, Colleges and Universities much attention is given to the study of English language. Some think that there is no need to study our language at all, but it is a great mistake.

b.-Study of Literature.-This contributes still more to the improvement of style.

(a).-Positive benefit.-

a'.-Knowledge of Language.-From reading the best works we gain a richness of vocabulary and fullness of expression.

b'.-Form our literary taste.-Learn to discern between the good and the bad in literature.

(b).-Counteract certain evil effects.-

a'.-Vicious style.-Few people speak correct English. A large part of what people read in general is found in the newspaper or in what is called light literature. Much of what is heard in conversation is in vicious style. Both of



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these have an ill effect.

b'.-Errors in usage of words.-Such errors are often found among educated people.

(c).-There are many good authors.-Our religious literature, both of sermons and devotional works, presents good specimens of style which will feed the intellect and warm the heart. Associate with good literature.

(d).-Secular orators.-The preacher can learn much from reading the writings of the great orators.

c.-Careful practice in writing and speaking.-This is the chief means of improvement of style. Practice with care.

(a).-Careful concerning details.-

a'.-Spelling.-This is neglected. If a preacher's spelling is faulty he should apply himself diligently to correct the fault, which requires nothing but care and perseverance. Accuracy as to details will react profitably in all mental habits.

b'.-Grammar.-One preacher asked another, "Do you consider it beneficial, as a writer on religious subjects, to attend to such small matters as grammatical correctness"? The other answered, "Better write so as to make a critic turn Christian than to make a Christian turn critic." Grammatical correctness is an objective worthy of our earnest effort. One writer spent two hours over a single sentence, determined to get it right. Dr. J. W. Folsom, of the University of Illinois, spent one entire evening on one paragraph. H. W. Longfellow (1807-1882) spent nine years on "Evangeline". James Fenimore Cooper (1781-1851) wrote "Last of the Mohicans" twice. At the first writing he was dissatisfied, and destroyed the book. The present book is the second writing. A.L. Tennyson (1800-1892) wrote one poem fifty times before it suited him. He wrote one poem in two days, and spent six weeks correcting it. T.B. Macaulay (1800-1859) spent thirteen years on "The French Revolution". George Eliot (1819-1880) rewrote everything carefully before having it printed.

(b). *style* -Careful concerning speaking.-In order to improve speaking. Speaking style and writing style are different. Speaking on something that has been prepared carefully by writing, something prepared carefully, but was not written, and speaking on the impulse of the moment are different.

2.-Clearness of style.-Clearness is a most important element. Style is excellent when it shows the thought, but the style itself is unseen. Obscurity is often mistaken for great learning. Among the lamas of Tibet the more obscure and unintelligible are their sayings the more sublime they are considered to be. A preacher of the Gospel, more than any other, is under obligation to make his statements clear. He is proclaiming the words of eternal life. The preacher has greater difficulty than any other class of speaker in making his statements clear to his hearers, for he is speaking to such a mixture in



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his audience, including people of all ages, and of every grade of intellect and culture. This should stir him to diligence in painstaking effort. There is no use in preaching unless it is to do good, and no good is done unless the people understand. Only the truth that is understood is of any benefit to the hearers. Unless the statements are clear some people are repelled, and others misled, and what was intended for health becomes poison. Clearness depends on:

(1).-Choice of terms.-

a.-Use words intelligible to the audience.-The preacher should know the language of common life. He may think with the learned, but he must speak to the common people. If he speaks in language unsuited to the common mind he might as well speak in a foreign language.

b.-Use words that express the thought exactly.-

(a).-Use of ambiguous expressions.-When speaking on "The Love of God" is it our love to Him, or His love toward us?

(b).-Use of indefinite expressions.-Terms used should express the real meaning intended. Our thoughts have definite form in proportion as we use definite terms to express them. He who says exactly what he thinks will be understood.

(2).-Brevity.-Yet brief statements are not always clear. A prolonged style is seldom successful. People are bewildered by tedious expansion, and are unable to maintain steady attention and have forgotten part of what they have heard before all is completed. Feebleness is produced by excessive dilution, and is not good to the taste. Avoid either extreme of expansion or too great conciseness.

3. Energy (force) of style.-(1).-Choice of terms.-

a.-Concrete and specific terms.-Concrete rather than abstract, and specific rather than general.

(a).-Sayings of Moses.-"They sank as lead in the mighty waters" (Ex. 15:10). "Fell as metal" would have a different effect. That would be changing from specific to general.

(b).-Sayings of Jesus.-Consider the lilies" (Mat. 6:28-30). Substitute general terms, "Consider the flowers, how they gradually increase in size, and no King in his splendid clothing is dressed up like them". We form images of specific objects.

b.-Epithet.-An adjective added to a noun, which does not add anything to the sense conveyed by the noun, but brings the noun into prominence. Sometimes it adds to force, as "a fire-breathing warrior". It brings to notice what would otherwise escape attention.

(2).-Construction of sentences.-

a.-Periodic structure.-Going around or circumscribing. A sentence is called "periodic" when it returns at the close to the matter with which it began. Any sentence is called "periodic" when the sense is so suspended as to be incomplete until it reaches the end. An unexpected construction of a sentence which the reader or listener supposes to be concluded is like a person ascending or descending stairs, and meeting with one more step than expected. The



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periodic style is not as necessary in speaking as in writing. In speaking long periodic sentences are to be avoided. The hearer cannot retain all in mind, and cannot understand any part till the end is reached.

b.-Emphatic arrangement.-In writing emphasis is determined from the connection or from italics. In speaking emphasis is indicated by the manner of utterance.

(a).-Beginning of the sentence is most prominent position.-Next to that is the end. Compare "Great is Diana of the Ephesians" with "Diana of the Ephesians is great". Contrast "Silver and gold have I none" with "I have no silver or gold". In each illustration the latter statement is weak. "Not everyone that saith unto Me 'Lord; Lord'". "Now is the accepted time". Compare "Your fathers, where are they? And the prophets, do they live forever" (Zech.1:5) with "Where are your fathers? And do the prophets live forever?"

(b).-Close the sentence with the emphatic word.-Compare "I will give my earnest attention to the matter" with "I will give the matter my earnest attention".

c.-Antithesis adds to energy.-An opposition, or contrast of ideas, emphasized by the position of the contrasting words. "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath" (Mk.2:27) "The memory of the just is blessed, but the name of the wicked shall rot" (Prov. 10:7). Such abound in the Proverbs of Solomon "I do not live to eat, but eat to live". Each contrasting statement throws light upon the other. Force is added by brevity. The contrast makes the statements striking. There can be an excessive use of antithesis, or it can be used to express exaggeration.

d.-Breaking away suddenly.-(Aposiopesis). As if unwilling to express what is in mind. "His conduct--well, I had better not speak of that". "If even thou hadst known the things which belong to thy peace--but now they are hidden from thine eyes" (Lu.19:42). Silence suggests what Israel's destiny might have been. "Father if Thou be willing remove this cup from Me" (Lu.22:42). He does not ask that the cup be removed, but, after a pause, adds, "Nevertheless not my will, but Thine, be done". "We find no evil in this man, but if a spirit or an angel hath spoken to him let us not fight against God" (Acts 23:9). The silence is expressive as spoken by a Pharisee in the presence of Sadducees.

(3).Conciseness.-(Brachylogy) Helps energy or force. A maxim that admits of no exception is, "The fewer the words used, consistent with clearness, the more vivid the expression". The briefer the expression the greater the energy. As when the sun's rays are focused through a lens the smaller the spot compared to the surface of the lens the greater the heat. So in speech the narrower the compass of words to express the thought the greater the energy. An example is in the saying of Caesar, "Veni, vidi, vic" (I came, I saw, I conquered). The studied brevity of the Lacedaemonian orators gave rise to the word "laconic" (sparing of words). The orators among the North American Indians were noted for their brief pointed sayings.

a.-Opposed to conciseness.-

(a).-Needless repetition.-(Tautology). Needless repetition of the same meaning in other words, as "audible to the ear", "visible to the eye".



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(b).-Saying more than enough.-(Pleonasm). Superfluous words. Using more words than necessary to express the meaning. Leaving out some words would leave the statement still clearer. Use of words which add nothing to the sense detract from energy.

(c).-Multiplying words.-(Verbosity). Excessive wordiness, multiplying words which add nothing to the meaning. High sounding words are admired by the ignorant or half educated. Such is spoken of as "having a very fine command of language". The truth is "the language has a very fine command of the speaker". He has the same command of language that a rider has when his horse runs away with him.

b.-In seeking conciseness do not sacrifice clearness.-In Christ's teaching (Mat.19:30 20:16 22:14 23:12) and James (Jas.2:13,26 4:17). A brief statement that is of such a nature as to suggest more than is expressed, and the imagination is stimulated to supply the rest. The great majority of writings and speeches should be thinned out as a fruit tree of excess fruit.

(4)-Use of figures of speech.-Passionate feelings, whether anger, fear or love, express themselves by means of imagery.

a.-Metaphor.-Use of word or phrase denoting one kind of object or idea in the place of another by way of suggestion or analogy. "A ship plows the sea". "A volley of oaths". Illustrations of comparison - "His eyes as a flame of fire and His voice as the sound of many waters" (Rev.1:14, 15). "As the lightning cometh out of the East" (Mat24:27). "The ungodly--are like the chaff which the wind driveth away" (Ps.1:4). The metaphor implies resemblance or analogy without stating it as a comparison. To say of an orator "He is like the soaring eagle" is a comparison. To say, "He is a soaring eagle" is metaphor. This helps energy of expression.

b.-Synecdoche.-A figure of speech by which a part is put for the whole, (fifty sail for fifty ships), the whole for a part, (year when referring to one of four seasons); the specific for the general; (cutthroat for assassin), the general for the specific, (creature for a man). It makes the expression more suggestive. "They shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruninghooks" (Isa.2:4), is of more force than saying in general that they will convert the weapons of war into agricultural implements.

c.-Hyperbole.-Extravagant exaggeration of statement for effect. Saying more than is meant, and to exaggerate its importance. This is allowable if it is known that the exaggerated language will not be misunderstood. Christ. "Whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek" (Mat.5:39). When at the trial He was smitten there is no record that He turned the other cheek (Mat.26:67,68 Jno.18:22,23). It was a figure of speech meaning not to strike back: "Let not thy right hand" (Mat.6:3). "If any come to Me, and hate not father and mother" (Lu.14:26). As a teacher Jesus used a great variety of methods of stimulating attention, thus compelling the hearers to think and remember. John. "Many other things Jesus did" (Jno.21:25). Such statements

among Oriental  
is more common method  
to use strong speech.



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are natural with the Oriental mind, and they have power with the mass of men. Paul. "I could wish myself accursed" (Rom. 9:3). Some have said, "I would give my right arm if I could live in the West".

d.-Personification.-Representation of inanimate objects or abstract ideas as having personal attributes. Addressing inanimate objects as if they had life. Examples of this abound in Scripture, personification of wisdom (Prov. 8), and the personification of the Church.

(5)-Use of Apostrophe.-A feigned turning from the audience to address a thing, an abstract idea or an inanimate object. "It cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem--O Jerusalem, Jerusalem" (Mat. 23:36, 37 Lu. 13:33, 34). Apostrophe belongs properly to impassioned language, as even as such is not to be used too frequently or continued too long.

(6)-Use of Exclamation.-Impassioned preachers are apt to use this too often, "Oh," "Ah," "Alas". It loses its power when used too frequently.

(7)-Use of Interrogation.-With all speakers a frequent means of giving force to the message. "Amen" in rising tone of voice, and expecting a response from the audience. "Isn't it so? Do you believe it?"

4.-Elegance (beauty) of style.-The product of the imagination alone, or in combination with passion, but operating under the control of good taste. Elegance is of less importance than clearness or energy. It is modified by the subject and the occasion. For the poet elegance is the important element, but for the preacher it is subordinate to clearness and energy. The difference between the poet and the preacher is as great as between running and walking, or between speaking and singing. In speaking the preacher must attend to the expressing of what he has to say. If the poet instructs it is subordinate to its main purpose of giving pleasure. The preacher's purpose is to convince and persuade, but not to please.

Some preachers care too much for beauty and ornament of the message. It is a wrong motive to aim to entertain the audience, and such a person does not realize the seriousness of his calling. If the minister's desire to do good is superior to the desire to please the people, and if the sense of his responsibility to God is superior to his concern for the criticism of people, then he will care little for ornamenting the message. The desire to please men will fail, for the minister will fail with the very ones that he is seeking to please.

Some preachers unwisely take pains to avoid beauty and ornament of the message. There are thoughts which naturally lead to beauty of expression, and should not be repressed. Attention needs to be drawn to the truth, but not to the clothing it wears. Those who are afraid of elegance of style forget that a natural beauty is favorable to clearness. True energy of style is often elegant.

Elegance of style depends on terms, arrangement, imagery and simplicity.

(1)-Terms.-The most energetic terms are often the most elegant. Some highly forceful terms, as slang, are to be avoided as improper, and, also, the use of words too grand for the subject. Words which weaken the expression, or do not add anything to it, are not to be used.



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- (2).-Arrangement of words.-We must not, through desire for variety, sacrifice any-thing important to give sense.
- a.-Repetition of words.-In Rom.4 "reckon" occurs often, being the leading term in the argument, but three words are used, "counted" (2 times), "reckoned" (3 times) and "imputed" (6 times). Nothing is gained except variety. When the connection does not require the repetition of the same words then it can be varied.
- b.-Antithesis.-Will contribute to elegance if used sparingly. *opposite of repetition*
- c.-Alliteration.-Repetition of the same sound at the beginning of two or more consecutive words, or of words near one another. Rarely any occasion to be used in a sermon.
- (3).-Imagery.-Figures of speech which make for clearness are valuable. Those which do not add to clearness are not to be introduced.
- (4).-Simplicity.-No quality of style is more to be desired. *Strive for it.*
- a. Will be clear.-An idea may be made clear by repetition, variety of statement, or illustration. Simplicity of style makes it plain at once. Simplicity demands clearness, is understood more easily, and it expresses more exactly the idea intended.
- b.-Will be free from artificiality.-In manner simplicity is opposed to artificiality, and in motive opposed to conceit
- c.-Will be free from excessive ornament.-"My preaching was not with enticing words" (I Cor.2:4). It was Paul's way of dealing with sacred things. "He who believes will be saved" (Mk.16:16 Acts 16:31). The preaching of the apostles was successful because it was plain, natural, and suited to the capacity of their hearers. They aimed at directness and to reach men's hearts. The worst of all affectations of style is to affect simplicity.
- 5.-Imagination in preaching.-This is among the leading characteristics of good preaching.
- (1).-Use of imagination.-It is possessed by all true orators. A preacher without this quality may be respected, but he will never move people to act. It is a matter to which some give little attention, yet few things are more important. It is fancy.
- a.-Used by speakers in the construction of the message.-To give familiar things a new interest. Piles of bricks, sand and lumber make up as much of a house as piling up thoughts constructs a message. A builder works by constructing something which he has seen in imagination, and the same is true in building a message. Imagination organizes thought into definite form. The Constructive functions of the imagination are used in the formation of a poem or a story, and much more so in the sermon. This is true, not only of the message as a whole, but of every part of the message. Each part is complete in itself as a part of the whole message.
- b.- Used by speakers in the production of word pictures.- Imagination gives to thought a definite form. This creates imagination in others also. Word pictures more clearly resemble objects of sense than mere ideas do. Instead of dwelling on the idea of benevolence give illustrations of a benevolent person or of a benevolent act. The idea must



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become a picture by illustration. People remember what they see more than what they hear.

(2).-Means of cultivating the imagination.-

*wonderful study for anyone*

a.-Imagination awakened by the study of Nature.-The systematic study of Nature reveals to us wonderful things, and teaches us the handiwork of God. Geology acquaints us with the structure of the earth, and Astronomy with the wonders of God's universe (Ps. 8:3,4 19:1). God asked Job eighty-four questions concerning things in Nature (Job 38;41). Some have little or no appreciation of things in Nature.

b.-Imagination awakened by the study of Literature and Art.-

(a).-Sculpture.-Forest Lawn Memorial Park.

(b).-Painting.-Some will sit by the hour and study the great paintings, while others have no appreciation of such things. Huntington Art Gallery.

(c).-Architecture.-Some see, yet do not see, the great buildings throughout the country. Congressional Library.

(d).-Poetry.-William Shakespeare (1564-1616) has in his writings over five thousand direct quotations from, or allusions to, Scripture, and he quoted from fifty of the sixty-six books. A. L. Tennyson (1800-1892) and H. W. Longfellow (1807-1882) used Scripture quotations or illustrations continually. These writers help us to see things which we would not otherwise see. From the great poets we learn how to observe and interpret.

(e).-Prose.-Much of it has value as has poetry. We can read it profitably if we select wisely. Read the best works of the best writers.

c.-Imagination awakened by exercise.-This is the greatest of all means of cultivating the imagination. It is the same as the exercise of all of our faculties.

III.-Delivery of sermons.-1.-Methods of delivery.-

(1).-Recitation.-Repetition from memory what has been written and learned. This is common.

a.-Advantages and disadvantages of this method.-

(a).-Advantages.-More complete preparation, practice in writing, and it can be filed away for future use. It cultivates the memory. Any improvement of the memory is of great value.

(b).-Disadvantages.-

a'.-Lessons opportunity for correcting errors.-Such as are observed during the process of delivery.

b'.-Trying to recall what comes next on the page.-

c'.-Time consumed in preparation.-Whoever uses this plan spends not only time in preparing the material, but gives hours to memorizing.

d'.-Dread of failure.-This brings distress. The fear that he will see or hear something which will make him forget.

b.-Free speaking of a written sermon is not recitation.-When the speaker makes no effort to remember words it is not recitation. Free speaking from a written sermon is a variety of extemporaneous speaking. There is no difference between free speaking from a written sermon and speaking



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from an unwritten sermon. If there is effort to remember exact words then it is recitation.

- (2).-Extemporaneous or free speaking.-Speaking without any special preparation except the promptings of the moment. This is applied to (1) preparation of the thought, but the language is left to be suggested at the moment of delivery; (2) notes made as help in preparation, but the language is left to be suggested at the moment of delivery, and (3) after the message has been written in full there is no effort to remember the words of the manuscript.

a.-Advantages and disadvantages of extemporaneous speaking.-

(a).-Advantages of extemporaneous speaking.-

- a'.-Accustoms one to think more rapidly.-Also with less dependence on external helps than if the message is written in full.
- b'.- Gives ease in delivery.-The oratory of George Whitefield (1714-1770) was not that of a prepared sermon, but a burst of impassioned utterance like a geyser in eruption. He often spoke with no more preparation than that which came while he was speaking. He was full of his subject, and impressed with its importance.
- c'.-Change the forms of expression at moment of delivery.-According to the feelings of the preacher and of the audience. If feelings run high then use impassioned language. Language, whether impassioned or not, should be in harmony with the feelings of the audience. Every preacher has had the experience of repeating a sermon to different audiences, and found different response.
- d'.-Method the majority of hearers prefer.-Instead of educating the people to a method which they do not like the preacher is to educate himself into preaching in such a way as to hold the people.

(b).-Disadvantages of extemporaneous speaking.-

- a'.-Tendency to neglect preparation.-After having gained ease in speaking. This tendency is to be overcome through continued careful preparation.
- b'.-Tendency to neglect writing.-As fluency in speaking increases the contrast between fluency and toilsome writing becomes too great. Both the beginner and the experienced ready speaker should write much and write carefully. Write not only sermons but articles of various kinds. Writing promotes accuracy of thought as well as exactness of statement.
- c'.-Extemporaneous sermons are less condensed.-There is danger of wearisome repetition, concluding with no conclusion, or with several "lastly" remarks.
- d'.-Danger of making blunders in statements.-Say things which are inapplicable, improper or untrue. All speakers are liable to do this. Preparation is a safeguard.

*you have to give people  
the basis they'll take,  
the same with people.*



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e'.-Success of the extemporaneous sermon depends on the preacher's feelings at time of delivery.-  
The chance of failure keeps some from the extemporaneous method. The greatest of preachers suffer from nervousness before, or at the beginning, of a message. *Dr. Price*

b.-General advices concerning extemporaneous speaking.-

(a).-Care concerning health.-A speaker needs great power of endurance. Mental work is as taxing as any physical labor.

(b).-Cultivate accuracy and rapidity of thinking.-We need to discipline ourselves to follow a train of thought without interruption and without outside help. Get all of the knowledge of Scripture that we can, and all other knowledge on general subjects, and draw on that supply as needed. Think deeply along many lines so as to have definite views, and be able to state them.

(c).-Give attention to the use of words in writing and in conversation.-Form the habit of using exact terms. There is no marked difference between public address and conversation on this point. In order to speak well for certain occasions we must speak well always.

(d).-Arrange the sermon carefully.-If care is used in arranging the thoughts we would have no difficulty in remembering, but advance steadily from one point to another. What will help the preacher will help the hearer also.

(e).-Do not take notes into the pulpit.-This is the best and most desirable practice.

2.-Delivery as regards voice.-

(1).-General remarks on delivery.-

a.-Reasons for failure.-

(a).-Borrowing thoughts which have not been (incorporated into our own thinking).-

(b).-Saying what we do not really feel.-In that case we become an actor. Say nothing but what you feel. An actor is an imitator. Try to be real rather than to be a copy.

b.-Requisites for effective delivery.-

(a).-Have something to say which you are (confident is worth saying).-

(b).-Be yourself.-

(2).-The voice.-

a.-Defects of the voice.-

(a).-Drawling.-Speaking in a slow, lengthened tone.

(b).-Imperfect articulation.-Words spoken that are not understood. Demosthenes (383-322 B.C.) corrected imperfect articulation by determination and practice.

(c).-Harshness.-Unpleasant to the ear of the listeners, and is understood imperfectly.

(d).-Weak.-Some voices, which are weak by nature, can be corrected to some extent.

b.-Improvement of the voice.-

(a).-Compass.-Or range over which the voice extends. The



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difference between voices is seen in both speakers and singers. The desire is to project the voice, and make it reach farther, without elevating the voice and without straining it. Fixing the attention on some one far back in the audience, and trying to make that one hear, will help. To reach distance, especially in large audiences, one must speak slowly and articulate clearly. It is the same when speaking over the radio.

(b).-Agreeableness.-The voices of some speakers are attractive. Chrysostom (345-407) was called "The golden mouthed". W. J. Bryan (1860-1925) was called "The silver-tongued orator". R. E. Speer (1867- ) has a voice of such attractiveness that it is spoken of by nearly all who ever heard him.

c.-Management of the voice.-When actually preaching.

(a).-Begin low.-"Begin low, talk slow; rise higher, take fire". Some are apt to begin too high in the open air, in large and unfilled building, or when excited. Then it is difficult to lower the voice. It is easier to raise the voice than to lower it. Repeat-efforts to correct the error will fail, and when impassioned utterance is necessary, and when the voice should be raised, the speaker will scream. Rarely should the voice be used at full volume. There should always be something held in reserve.

(b).-Maintain the volume to the last word in the sentence.-It is a serious fault in some speakers to lower the voice toward the close of some sentences, and the words are not understood by the hearers.

3.-Delivery as regards action.-Freedom and variety are exhibited in children, when talking to each other, showing that the action is natural. Adults lose the power which they possessed as children. They become self-conscious, and can no longer forget themselves in their message, and the manner becomes unnatural. Action is true only when it is spontaneous and done unconsciously. Even a child becomes reserved as soon as he is aware of being observed. How shall the preacher "become as a little child" (Mat. 18:3) in this respect? He must care more for his subject than for himself, and must remember that he is called of God to preach the Gospel.

(1).-Gesture.-Expression, apart from language, is seen in the deaf and dumb people, and, also, in pantomime. Thoughts can be expressed by signs as well as by words. In some instances gestures are more expressive than words. Beckoning is more forceful than saying "Come here". The shrug of the shoulders by the French people is very expressive. When the speaker combines words and sign language it renders the message more effective. Not only the mouth but the eyes and the expression on the face carry ideas.

Some men naturally have more gestures than others. The more excitable peoples, as the Spanish, French and Italian, gesticulate almost constantly. The English people are of a different type. C. H. Spurgeon (1834-1892) had an extraordinary voice, but almost no gestures. John Balcom Shaw (1860- ) considered one of the greatest preachers



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of the Baptist denomination, made no gestures. Martin Luther (1483-1546) was almost violent in gesture while preaching. Paul "Beckoned with the hand" (Acts 13:16 21:40 26:1). Others (Lu. 1:22 5:7 Jno. 13:24 Acts 12:17 19:33 24:10). In ordinary speaking there is little occasion to gesticulate.

(2).-Expression on the countenance.-Supplication, rebuke, threatening, and the expression of sadness of joy. Often it is superior to words. To say "Leave the room" is not as expressive as a glance, and then point to the door. To say "Do not speak" is not as expressive as to put the finger to the lips. The expression in the eye is so great that it determines the expression of the whole countenance. It is almost impossible to disguise what we mean. A gambler studies the eye of his opponent. Even animals are susceptible to its power. A Dog watches the eye of his master, and discerns, before a word is spoken, what to expect, whether a pat of approval or a whipping. All of the passions and emotions of the heart, in all degrees and intensity, express themselves in the eye. "Jesus looked upon Peter" (Lu. 22:61). Besides the direct power which the speaker's eyes have over the audience, it is by looking that he catches the expression on the countenances of the people in his audience, and he knows whether his message is being accepted or rejected. The speaker is helped by this look of approval, and misses it when it is lacking in the audience. The look of attention, or the look of disinterestedness, also is seen.

(3).-Posture.-

a.-Of the body.-In walking, standing or sitting, we should take pains to acquire the habit of uprightness and ease. Then in public speech there is little danger of assuming anything except an appropriate posture. The body should be erect. A slight inclination of the head or body is a natural expression, but there comes a change as one gets into the message.

b.-Of the arms.-Folded, up and down like a pump handle, or flopping like a penguin.

c.-Of the hands.-On the hips, with fingers forward indicates defiance, with fingers backward indicates pain in the back; clasped hands, over the abdomen; clasped hands behind the back; clapping the hands; slapping the thigh; banging the Bible, or fluttering of the hands; clenched fist; hands in pockets, either coat or trousers or hands on lapel of the coat. Gesture by the hands can be very expressive, as arms extended, and palms up, indicates pleading; palms forward, indicates desire for the audience to be quiet.

d.-Of the Feet.-Far apart, or one forward, or restless, fidgety movements.

(4).-Remarks regarding action of any kind.-

a.-Acts suggestive rather than imitative.-To say "He struck him on the back", and then try to act it out would be ridiculous. A Minister preaching in a University said, "You shut your eyes to the beauty of piety; you stop your ears to the call of God; you turn your back--", and he acted it by putting hands over eyes, fingers in



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ears, and turning his back to the audience. The message was not attractive.

b.-Acts are not to be excessive in frequency or vehemence.-

Too frequent gesture in speaking is like too frequent italics in writing. The excess of anything has the opposite effect from what the speaker intends.

IV.-Conduct of public worship.-There is a neglect of thought concerning worship, but rather thinking mostly of the sermon. The remark is made, "When I get the preliminaries out of the way", or a similar remark, "I will shorten the preliminaries". Hymns of praise, prayer, and reading of the Scripture are not preliminaries, but very important parts of the service of worship. The spirit of worship should be manifest in all parts of the service.

1.-Reading the Scripture.-

(1).-Choose such passages as are devotional.-For instruction and encouragement. The Scripture passage and the sermon should harmonize. There should be variety, but not novelty. The passages selected need not necessarily begin or end with the chapter. The chapter divisions were made 1250 A.D. by Cardinal Hugo de Sancto Cano. Some feel that they must read an entire chapter, however long or short, and only one chapter. The chapter divisions sometimes interrupt the thought.

(2).-Strive to read well.-Daniel Webster (1782-1852) once read Ps. 100 with marvelous effect on those listening. R. L. Cummock read I Cor. 15, and R. J. Cooke read I Cor. 13 in a very impressive manner. More care is used in striving to excel in preaching than in reading the Scripture. Good preachers are numerous, but good readers of Scripture are comparatively few

a.-Requisites for good reading of Scripture.-

(a).-Quickness of apprehension.-Get the meaning at a glance out of a whole sentence, keep in mind the entire connection, and read each sentence as part of a great passage. We need to be familiar with what we are to read.

(b).-Careful practice.-Perhaps only a few practice reading the Scripture in private before reading it in public.

b.-Element of expression.-

(a).-Emphasis.-It is false emphasis to place it on the wrong word (Lu. 2:7 I Cor. 15:57). The difficulty is due to the lack of comprehending the thought. We rarely use false emphasis in conversation. We may, also, fail to distribute the emphasis, placing it on one word when it should be on several words.

(b).-Interrogation.-(Mat. 25:24-27 Acts 9:5).

(c).-Gesture.-Rarely used in reading except some natural movement of the head or the expression on the countenance.

c.-Importance of reading the Scripture well.-There will be some in the audience who do not read the Scripture at all, and some only rarely, and it is important that they hear the Scripture in Church. Some read the Scripture without comprehending it. Those who read the Scripture frequently enjoy hearing it in the Church service. The reasons for reading anything well apply more so to the Word of God. Good reading will help to make the Word of God clear.



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(3).-Explanation in connection with reading.-They are not to be so numerous or extensive as to take attention from the passage. Explanation to awaken interest, and to indicate its practical application, is profitable. Generally no comment is best.

2.-Hymns.-

(1).-Little care in proper selection.-Many do not realize the power of sacred song. Some select at the first opening of the book without care as to suitability to the message. Hymns of different ages are in abundance, and suited to every occasion. The minister needs to be familiar with the hymn books in order to make a wider selection. Often Churches get into a rut, and only a few songs are ever used. There is little variety. Quotations from hymns add more to preaching than quotations from any other source than the Bible.

(2).-Reading the words of hymns.-Why read when about to sing? It is to call attention to the words, and not to the tune only. There is a message in the words, and many of the hymns have a definite history back of them.

(3).-Music of the hymns.-The superiority of congregational singing is beyond question. In some Churches it is the custom to have the choir do most of singing. There is danger of crowding out the congregational singing. Singing is worship, and it should be enjoyed by all.

3.-Public prayer.-This is an important part of the service of worship. He who undertakes to express in prayer before God what the congregation needs, must know the people and their needs. He is also to give utterance to adoration, supplication, intercession and thanksgiving, and surely this is a great responsibility. It is a great privilege and responsibility to speak to people for God, and much more so to speak to God for the people. Few question the propriety of preparing a sermon, but few prepare their hearts for the public prayer.

(1).-General preparations for leading in public prayer.-

a.-Fervent piety.-Habit of prayer in private in order to pray in public. The only way to learn to pray is to pray. None will pray well in public who neglect prayer in the private life.

b.-Familiarity with the Word of God.-For the fundamental thought and language of prayer. The mind should be constantly stored with many devotional passages of the Scripture. We need to use more the language of Scripture in our prayers.

c.-Study the prayers of the Bible.-

(a).-Worship and adoration.-Psalms and Revelation.

(b).-Intercession.-Moses (Ex.32:31,32), Ezra (Ezra 9), Nehemiah (Neh.9), Daniel (Dan.9) and Jesus (Jno.17).

(c).-Supplication.-Solomon (1Ki. 8).

d.-Study devotional books.-They are many, such as "Imitation of Christ" (T.A.Kempis), "Still Hour" (Phelps), with "Christ in the School of Prayer" (A Murray), "Preacher and Prayer" (Bounds) "Quiet Talks" (S.D.Gordon), and many others.

(2).-Special preparations for leading in public prayer.-

a.-Matter of prayer.-Simple, comprehensive prayer given by Jesus, "After this manner" (Mat.6:9-13); "When ye pray" (Lu.11:2-4). Jesus did not give it as a form, or for



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words to say, but as a pattern. Some prayers are so general that they include everything. Jesus was specific (Jno.17): Avoid giving instructions to God or to the audience, exhorting the people or passing out compliments.

b.-Language of prayer.-

- (a).-Simple.-The natural language of emotion. It is the poorest of compliments to say to a minister, "You prayed an eloquent prayer". The earnest, fervent prayer is to be desired.
- (b).-Avoid pet expressions.-"Undertake", "Stop them in their mad career", "Touch and tender hearts", "Save us at last", "We will be careful to give Thee the praise".
- (c).-Quote Scripture correctly.-There are many inaccurate quotations. "Thou canst not look on sin with any degree of allowance" (Hab.1:13), "Where two or three---and there to bless" (Mat.18:20), "Ask largely" (Jno.16:24). It shows how much we learn from tradition.

4.-Length of the service.-

- (1).-The service.-It depends on the locality or the circumstances. The regular service of worship will differ from a revival service. In Eastern Europe the people will stand from five to seven hours while the missionary will preach several sermons. In the revivals of a century ago two-hour services were common. Conditions were different then. The people in the horse-and-buggy days were not in such a hurry as people in the automobile days. In places where the people walk or ride long distances, and have a service no oftener than once a week, long services are acceptable. Only on special occasions now are long services acceptable. Custom is law in some places.
- (2).-The sermon.-
- a.-Brief.-Can the subject be made interesting and helpful in a short time? Much depends on the subject, the personality of the speaker and his delivery.
- b.-Long.-There are subjects which demand extended treatment, and cannot be handled briefly.

5.-Pulpit decorum.-Much harm can be done by seemingly trifling acts while in the pulpit.

- (1).-Conduct during prayer.-Drinking water, looking at watch, whispering, looking up hymns, and other elements of conduct while prayer is offered.
- (2).-Talking during singing.-Better be omitted unless concerning something absolutely necessary in the conduct of the service. It would be wise to arrange everything before the service so as to prevent unnecessary conversation while on the platform.
- (3).-Looking about carelessly.-Shows that the mind is not taken up with the importance of the service.
- (4).-Kneel after entering the pulpit.-Is it "to be seen of men", (Mat.6:5) because of lack of prayer beforehand, or for a last moment preparation for the service? Many like the custom, but, to others, it is of doubtful propriety. Better be prayed up before entering the pulpit.
- (5).-Avoid show of irritability.-At inattention or misconduct in the audience. When rebuke is felt to be necessary there had better not be any show of resentment. Public rebuke had



## HOMILETICS III (SENIORS)

better be omitted. The good that might be done could be done in some other way. Private dealings work out better than public rebukes. No minister will have occasion to regret that he remained silent when he felt moved to make a public rebuke, but will regret something said when angry.

(6). Better "I" than the editorial or royal "We". May be more egotism in the "We" than the "I".

6.-Concluding remarks.-After all of the preparation, general and specific, for the conduct of public worship, we depend for success on the Spirit of God. When the minister preaches the Gospel, relying on God only, he never preaches in vain. Without the seeing of manifest results at the moment, the service may be heard from later or perhaps only in eternity. The service, seeming an utter failure, will benefit the preacher himself and those who heard him. "God's Word will not return void, but will prosper in the thing whereto He sends it" (Isa. 55:10,11).