

# *a community called ...*

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## ABSTRACT

# TOWARDS A DEFINITION OF BIBLICAL PREACHING FOR THE YEAR 2000: AN HISTORICAL APPROACH

by  
Larry Glenn Teasley

Theologians, homileticians, and parish preachers use the term "biblical preaching." Nevertheless, no consensus on its meaning appears among them. Some scholars define biblical preaching in terms of exposition of the text. Others define it by the content or form of the sermon. Still others define it by the emphasis the sermon places on certain doctrines, or its anticipated outcome.

Can one define biblical preaching inductively by using an historical approach? I believe so. Historians have recognized certain preachers as biblical. They identify several characteristics common to biblical preaching. They assert these characteristics as admirable qualities of either biblical preaching or the preachers themselves. Using these qualities (which appear in the summary of Chapter 2) as an indicator, this descriptive study identifies the historic marks of biblical preaching, thus enabling preachers to use them as guides to become biblical preachers.

This study included three research techniques: (1) the collection of data through a mailed questionnaire to identify five historically significant preachers; (2) the examination of data through the reading of a stratified random selection of six sermons of each preacher; and (3) the analysis of data through an historical study of those sermons to determine their common traits. Data collection

occurred in two phases: the utilization of the Delphi principle to identify five biblical preachers from history and a systematic selection of six of their sermons. The Delphi principle determined the selection of the preachers in this study. I compiled a panel of contemporary experts in the field of biblical preaching, both scholars and preachers, and polled them to identify the biblical preachers for study. John Wesley, Charles H. Spurgeon, James S. Stewart, Alexander Maclaren, and G. Campbell Morgan surfaced as the top five choices based on the responses from the poll. An analysis of six sermons of each preacher revealed three common traits: 1) an authoritative use of Scripture; 2) a Christological emphasis; and 3) an urgent existential appeal to the listener to experience a personal spiritual transformation. These traits are the historic marks which define biblical preaching.

**DISSERTATION APPROVAL**

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements. . . . .	vii
Chapter	
1. Overview of the Study . . . . .	1
Understanding the Problem . . . . .	1
The Problem and Its Context. . . . .	2
The Study. . . . .	10
Purpose Statement. . . . .	11
Research Questions. . . . .	11
Methodology . . . . .	11
Data Collection . . . . .	12
Delimitations. . . . .	12
Definitions. . . . .	12
Overview of Dissertation . . . . .	13
2. Precedents in Literature . . . . .	14
Introduction . . . . .	14
Background. . . . .	15
Early Works . . . . .	17
John A. Broadus (1827-95) . . . . .	18
John Ker (1819-86). . . . .	22

T. Harwood Pattison (1838-1904). . . . .	27
Edwin Charles Dargan (1852-1930). . . . .	31
Ralph G. Turnbull (1901-85). . . . .	35
Dewitte T. Holland (1923 -) and Harold A. Boseley (1907- ). . .	35
Warren Wiersbe (1929 - ) . . . . .	38
Robert M. Grant (1917- ) and David Tracy (1939 -). . . . .	39
Paul Scott Wilson (1949 - ). . . . .	41
Summary . . . . .	44
3. Design of the Study . . . . .	51
Research Questions. . . . .	52
Methodology . . . . .	53
Qualitative Research. . . . .	53
The Historical Method. . . . .	56
Data Sources. . . . .	61
Data Collection Procedures. . . . .	61
Delphi Technique . . . . .	61
Stratified Random Selection . . . . .	64
Control Issues . . . . .	64
Data Analysis . . . . .	64
4. Findings of the Study. . . . .	66
Findings for Research Question # 2 . . . . .	66



An Authoritative Use of Scripture . . . . .	67
A Christological Emphasis. . . . .	68
An Urgent Existential Appeal to the Listener to Experience Personal Transformation . . . . .	69
Findings for Research Question # 1 . . . . .	70
John Wesley (1703-91) . . . . .	70
Charles H. Spurgeon (1834-92). . . . .	76
James S. Stewart (1896-1990). . . . .	86
Alexander Maclaren (1896-1910) . . . . .	92
G. Campbell Morgan (1863-1945). . . . .	106
5. Summaries and Conclusions . . . . .	118
Evaluation of Data. . . . .	119
Synthesis of Findings. . . . .	120
Theological Implications . . . . .	141
Academic Implications. . . . .	143
Limitations of the Study. . . . .	144
Unexpected Findings . . . . .	145
Practical Applications and Further Studies. . . . .	146
Epilogue. . . . .	147
Appendices . . . . .	148
Appendix A. . . . .	148
Appendix B. . . . .	150

Appendix C. . . . .	151
Appendix D. . . . .	152
Appendix E. . . . .	153
Appendix F. . . . .	154
Works Cited . . . . .	155
Works Consulted. . . . .	160

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## CHAPTER 1

## Understanding The Problem

Preaching is my passion. I have maintained that passion since answering the call to pastoral ministry. That passion strongly affected my choice of seminary and the courses I took. It equally affected the area of concentration I chose for my Doctor of Ministry degree. From the beginning I knew that while my vocation would include routine duties of the pastorate, the pulpit would become my primary arena for ministry. I remain convinced of that.

As I have discovered my gifts and graces, I have come under a second conviction: God called me to preach biblically. Before attending seminary I received encouragement to pursue this goal. During my years at seminary, several well-meaning friends in my home church admonished me to "preach the Word." Ironically, many of them could not agree on what this entailed or meant. Some, heavily involved in charismatic circles and who believed and practiced "health and prosperity" theology, encouraged me to preach like several popular television preachers. Others who ran from this theology urged me to remain evangelical but to preach holiness. Still others suggested I learn to preach in order to teach and inspire, but not to the point that I would offend, embarrass, or disturb anyone. Ironically, while few of these friends could agree on what constituted biblical preaching, all of them expressed their concern that a pastor should "preach the Bible." Therefore, I should strive to become a "biblical preacher."

## The Problem and Its Context

Little has changed in my twelve years of full-time pastoral ministry. In every United Methodist Church I have served, one issue surfaced consistently among their members: "Is he a biblical preacher?" While most of them affirmed me as a biblical preacher, their definitions of biblical preaching remain diverse.

One should not find such diversity surprising. Even among theologians and homileticians, no concrete definition of biblical preaching exists. Some definitions appear to be derived from preconceived notions (Adams, Fisher) or as preferences towards particular modes or homiletical methodologies (Robinson, Wiseman). Discussion of these definitions follows in this chapter. With such diversity, how can a preacher enter the twenty-first century assured that he or she truly practices biblical preaching? The new millennium presents a plethora of issues with which the biblical preacher must wrestle. As John Killinger noted,

We are now facing one of the greatest occasions of our lifetime: the approach of a new millennium. . . . People will grow more and more feverish about it as the moment approaches. It will be a fantastic opportunity for preaching! . . . The wise preacher will rise to the occasion not just once but many times during the period of transition. His or her sermons . . . should find unusual resonance in people's hearts and minds again and again. (12)

Killinger makes a good point. As these millennial issues loom on the horizon, the biblical preacher must find Scriptural answers for these issues. Thus the need for an adequate definition of biblical preaching confronts us.

The Bible maintains preaching as an accepted practice for communicat-

ing God's truth and revelation. The title of George Buttrick's classic, Jesus Came Preaching (1951), affirms what Scripture teaches. Jesus knew his calling to preach (Luke 4:18-19) and he sought to go where he could preach (Mark 1:38). He preached that the Kingdom of God was near, clearly grounding it in Scripture (Mark 2:2), and he commanded his disciples to do likewise (Mark 3:4).

The New Testament consistently implies the oracles of God as the foundation for preaching. The Apostles faithfully preached the Word of God (Acts 8:25). The Apostle Paul testified to his calling as a preacher of the gospel (1 Tim 2:8; 2 Tim 1:11), and spoke of his woeful existence should he not preach (1 Cor 9:6). He determined himself to preach Christ crucified (Acts 9:20; 1 Cor 2:1-2), which the world considered foolishness both in content (1 Cor 1:18) and practice (1 Cor 1:21). Moreover, he explained to Titus that God "has in due time manifested His word through preaching" (Titus 1:3, NKJV). Specifically, he admonishes Timothy to "Preach the Word" (2 Tim 4:2).

The whole of evangelical Protestantism esteems preaching, particularly the Reformed tradition. Some scholars have named it the "third sacrament" of the Reformation (Bloesch, Evangelical II:94-95; Forde 147-49), implying Christ's presence in the spoken Word and asserting that He offers grace through it. The core of Reformed theology rests, however, in the context of authority. The Reformers saw the Church as existing under the authority of the Word and not as the Bible's master or guardian (Bloesch, Evangelical II:87).

Several twentieth-century theologians have recaptured the sense of this

Reformed theology. Karl Barth understood preaching as an exposition of Scripture, noting that its context was fundamentally the "self revealing will of God" (49). Preaching does not merely speak *about* Scripture, but *from* Scripture. Moreover, it must occur within the sphere of the Church to maintain a proper context.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer echoed a similar concern about the context of authority in preaching. He presumed the Word of God ". . . enters the Church by its own self initiated movement" (qtd in Bloesch, Evangelical II:88). He warned against the assumption that the Word and the Church depended on the preacher to bring them together. "On the contrary," said Bonhoeffer, "the Word moves of its own accord, and all the preacher has to do is to assist . . ." (qtd in Bloesch, Evangelical II:88).

In recent years theologians have renewed an interest in defining biblical preaching. Thomas Oden, for instance, displays a deep conviction that biblical preaching finds its essential ingredients in both form and content. Indeed, the form must be consistent with its substance (135). Like Barth, Oden argues that the authority of the biblical preacher lies in the context of the Church, particularly the rite of ordination (137-38). Nevertheless, Oden appears less concerned about the nature of the content of preaching than others.

Donald E. Bloesch contends that content carries supreme importance, more so than mere ritual. Authority in preaching rests in the act of proclamation itself. Because Christianity is "a religion of the Word rather than a religion

of images" (Bloesch, Word 94-95), Scripture is the foundation of the faith and the source of all proclamation. When the preacher speaks, God speaks. Thus preaching carries an inherent sacramental element.

Both Oden and Bloesch make convincing arguments. Oden's concern for context and Bloesch's consideration for content carry equal merit. Donald English agrees. He finds these two elements coexisting in a proper context for biblical preaching. Biblical preaching exists fundamentally in the context of incarnation. God makes known his presence in the act of proclamation, the reading of the Scripture, and the presence of the congregation. The preacher is the interpreter and he or she expounds God's Word. Thus God ultimately determines the authority for preaching, the context for preaching, and the content of preaching (15-22).

Modern homileticians focus on similar issues. How do they define biblical preaching? Faris Whitesell finds preaching ". . .rooted in the Bible, saturated with the Bible and harmonious with the whole range of revealed truth in the Bible" (16). He prefers an emphasis on content rather than style, aiming for the goal of correct doctrinal teaching with Christ as the key figure and central focus (17). Whitesell argues the necessity of a sound hermeneutic to practice biblical preaching properly. He says, "Any preaching that allegorizes, spiritualizes, or symbolizes a passage of Scripture from its plain, literal, contextual meaning into some other meaning, is not Biblical preaching" (21).

Some homileticians emphasize form while others stress content. Neil



Wiseman characterizes biblical preaching foremost by its content, that being primarily the Bible, asserting that the sermon's form should flow from the genre of the pericope (11-12). Haddon Robinson defines biblical preaching as primarily exposition (15). On the other hand, Ralph and Gregg Lewis argue for an inductive approach to preaching. They describe induction (in regard to preaching) as the reasoning process by which instances of experience lead to the forming of generalizations. They contend that induction is part of human habit and naturally contributes to learning. Where the deductive sermon begins with a declaration of intent and then proceeds to prove that declaration, the inductive sermon begins with the listener's present reality and then leads to general conclusions. "Such a process," they say, "involves the listener by giving them a part in the sermon process" (42-43). Moreover, inductive preaching emerges within Scripture. The Bible contains dialogue, questions, and imagery which evoke one's imagination and query into its meaning. Inductive preaching, according to Lewis and Lewis, is inherently biblical (57-60).

Thomas Long reiterates a similar concern, noting that the literary form and the dynamics of a biblical text are important factors affecting the preacher's movement from text to sermon (11-12). Essentially, a sermon based on a psalm differs in approach from one based on narrative or apocalyptic literature. To oversimplify, Long sees "function following form," particularly as the preacher begins to craft the sermon. Rather than first considering the form of the sermon, the preacher must consider the form of the content: the genre of the

Scripture (13).

Some homileticians focus on authority as the point of concern. Donald Demaray describes the biblical preacher as one who employs Scripture as his or her chief source of authority (785). In a similar vein, Jay Adams writes that biblical preaching occurs when the preacher takes the stance that he or she offers to the listeners not just a word *about* God, but a word *from* God (1). Through this "preaching stance" (49), the whole sermon becomes an application to the lives of the hearers and they encounter God. When the listener experiences the presence of God, the sermon takes on an existential element and thereby achieves the goal of biblical preaching (54).

Wallace Fisher agrees somewhat with Adams, suggesting that biblical preaching is an expression of *Heilsgeschichte*, or salvation history. Accordingly, the Bible is "the Church's story about God through the ages" (15). Thus he sees biblical preaching as preaching properly couched in the ongoing flow of history and human experience (15-16). He says,

The biblical sermon brings us into a personal relationship with the God who creates, redeems, and guides us to be his people and, as individuals in community, to fashion a just society for the sake of his kingdom. (16)

Biblical preaching not only finds its roots in history, but can affect the course of history as well.

Fred Craddock, on the other hand, blends revelation and relationship. He understands preaching as appropriating God's revelation to the listener.

Revelation, however, appears in the sense of mode, not in the sense of content. Because preaching is a continuation of God's revelation in the present, it becomes harmonious with the mode of revelation. "The way of God's Word into the world is the way of the sermon in the Word" (51-52). Preaching becomes the mode of revelation; the form of the sermon determines content.

Timothy Warren supports Craddock's arguments. Working from John Stott's image of preaching as "bridging the gap between two worlds," Warren defines expository preaching as "the communication of a biblical proposition discovered through a Spirit directed exegetical/theological interpretation of a text and applied by the Holy Spirit through a preacher to a specific audience" (20). Rather than simply offering the listener an exegetical or theological lecture, the preacher begins to craft the sermon by treating the Bible as revelation. The preacher then proceeds to exegete its meaning for both writer and listener, continues to clothe it in an appropriate theological context, and then offers it to the listener in such a way that the listener returns to the Bible for further exploration (19-21). Likewise, David L. Bartlett thinks biblical preaching occurs only when the sermon interprets its intended pericope (11).

The preceding discussion of theologians and homileticians reveals how diversely they define biblical preaching. Consequently, this diversity displays a significant problem in the discipline of biblical preaching: What is the definition of biblical preaching? How can one describe biblical preaching? Is it a verse-by-verse exposition with a concentration on exegesis and word study? Can

one characterize biblical preaching by a specific homiletical method? Does biblical preaching result from a specific hermeneutic? Does it carry with it certain expectations of both the preacher and the listeners? Is biblical preaching an expression of a theology or a byproduct of a theology? Does the twenty-first century preacher find biblical, theological, or homiletical foundations as the only criteria available for defining biblical preaching? Can the twenty-first century preacher define biblical preaching by identifying the characteristics of biblical preachers from history?

Ronald E. Osborn argued for the need of a working definition of preaching, particularly one with "breadth enough to encompass the various activities which have been designated as preaching and to facilitate the descriptive mode of the historian" (53). He proposed an historian's definition of preaching instead of a theologian's definition; one "more Lukan than Pauline" (53). He offered ten historic marks of preaching:

(1) [It] is a sustained mode of public address, (2) dealing with a religious or ethical theme, (3) bearing witness to the faith of a community, (4) rooted in a holy tradition (a tradition defined in a sacred 'literature), (5) occurring within an assumptive world of rationalized belief, (6) communicated through the person of the speaker, (7) employing the forms of verbal art, (8) possessing the character of immediacy, (9) intended to convert the listener, (10) conveying powers of renewal to those who hear. (53-54)

Attempting to be objective in his study, Osborn addressed the issue of defining biblical preaching. He said,

Biblical preaching involves constant preoccupation with the sacred story and its archetypes. Paradoxically, this fixation on holy writ

both restricts the range of innovative thinking by holding the mind of the preacher to the traditional center and yet at the same time it inspires artistic and intellectual creativity, along with moral and spiritual force, because of the universality imputed to scriptural truth and the generative power of the archetype themselves. In Pauline language, the word of the cross, when preached, becomes the power of God and the wisdom of God. (60)

Osborn continued by saying that involvement with Scripture eventually raised questions of proper interpretation. "It is one thing to tell the story correctly, it is another to say what it means" (60).

### The Study

Can one define biblical preaching inductively? I believe so. Historians have recognized certain preachers as biblical. My recent study of the literature on the history of preaching (Chapter 2) identifies several characteristics common to some of the preachers. Historians have observed certain characteristics as admirable qualities of either biblical preaching or of the preachers themselves. The qualities which appeared more often include such elements as (1) the understanding and acceptance of the Bible as God's self-revelation, authoritative in all matters of Christian faith and practice; (2) a preferred hermeneutical methodology based on an historical-grammatical-literary interpretation rather than an allegorical or a symbolic interpretation; (3) a radical transformation in the lives of both the preachers and their listeners as a result of their encounter with Scripture; (4) a significant impact on the lives of their congregations by preaching in the vernacular of their day; and (5) a consistent preaching of Christocentric sermons. This dissertation will identify the historic characteristics

of biblical preaching, thus enabling any preacher to use them as guides to becoming a biblical preacher.

### Purpose Statement

This study will seek to define biblical preaching through an historical study of the sermons of selected preachers from the Reformation to the present. In defining biblical preaching, the following questions will be answered:

Research Question #1: What traits appear consistent within the sermons of each historical preacher?

Research Question #2: Which traits surface as common among these preachers?

### Methodology of the Study

The purpose of this study is to define biblical preaching by describing the common traits of the sermons of selected historical preachers.

In this study I utilized the Delphi principle (Schorr) to determine the selection of preachers for this study. I compiled and contacted a panel of contemporary experts, scholars, and preachers in the field of biblical preaching to help identify five outstanding biblical preachers from the Reformation to the present or who have made a significant impact on their own biblical preaching. These five preachers became the subjects of this study. I read six sermons of each preacher to observe their common traits. These traits define the historic marks of biblical preaching.

### Data Collection

Once I identified the subjects, I determined the number of their published sermons. I chose six sermons by each preacher through a computer generated, stratified random sampling. After choosing the sermons, I completed an analysis of their content.

### Delimitations

This study is limited to historical preachers from the Reformation to the present. Precedents in literature indicate a preponderance of biblical preaching within this historical time frame.

### Definitions

1) *Epistemology* is that part of Western philosophy concerned with the nature and origin of knowledge. As a part of theology it pertains to such issues as revelation and authority.

2) *Existential* is the term I use to mean the nature of one's personal experience which involves or affects one's personal existence and reality.

3) *Hermeneutics* is the academic discipline and practice of Biblical interpretation.

4) *Homiletics* is the academic discipline and practice of preaching. It is both art and science; it maintains an aesthetic appeal and a practical methodology. Homiletics includes the written and spoken sermons; it requires of its practitioners rhetorical and literary skills, as well as a fundamental knowledge of Scripture.

5) *Induction* is the process of reason whereby a generalization is drawn from a set of particulars. It begins with the evidence of data and then interprets the data. Induction draws conclusions from the data. Deduction, its opposite, is the process of reason whereby one proves a theory by finding or citing supportive evidence. Unlike induction, it presupposes a conclusion. The historical method, described in Chapter 3, is inductive in nature.

6) *Stratified Random Sampling* subdivides a particular population into strata, from which a given number of respondents are chosen. A stratified random sampling ensures equalized representation.

#### Overview of Dissertation

Chapter 2 anchors this study in the precedents of scholarly literature. Chapter 3 contains the details of the design of this study. Chapter 4 includes the findings of this study. Chapter 5 includes summaries of those findings and their interpretation identifies the historic marks which define biblical preaching.



## CHAPTER 2

## Precedents in the Literature

Introduction

John R.W. Stott holds the conviction that preaching is indispensable to Christianity. Preaching gives Christianity an authenticity without which the Church would exist void of its most effective tool. As Stott affirms, Christianity ". . . is in its very essence, a religion of the Word of God" (15). The tradition and history of the Church support Stott's conviction. The first act of the new-born Church on the Day of Pentecost was preaching. Peter's sermon to the pilgrims in Jerusalem established Christianity as first and foremost a faith proclaimed by its adherents. Whether to a crowd of Pentecost pilgrims or to a congregation in twenty-first century America, preaching has been and will be the identifying practice of Christianity and the preacher its representative.

Throughout the history of the Church, preaching has undergone numerous setbacks and advancements. Any survey of church history can explain how factors both from within and without the Church influenced preaching. While the Church has always practiced preaching, it has not always held preaching as its central focus of worship, nor practiced it uniformly. Twenty centuries of preaching hold a plethora of issues for homileticians and a perusal of homiletics textbooks indicates such.

Recently the definition and classification of certain styles of homiletical methods emerged as an issue among homileticians. In the last three decades

inductive preaching, narrative preaching, expository preaching, and ethnic preaching unfolded as dominant homiletical methodologies. For the most part, scholars agree on their definitions. Nevertheless, an exception appears among them. The method known as biblical preaching has not been adequately defined. Some theologians and homileticians have attempted to define biblical preaching based on theological leanings or preferred methodologies. As seen in Chapter 1, their definitions sometimes appear deductive and biased.

Can one define biblical preaching inductively? A study of the sermons of historical preachers, identified as biblical, would achieve this end. Such a study would describe their common characteristics. These characteristics could then become the identifying marks that define biblical preaching inductively. Nevertheless, in order to study historical preachers, one must first study of the literature on the history of preaching.

### Background

Edwin Charles Dargan, in A History of Preaching (1905), argued that, "The history of preaching has not yet been adequately written" (1:3). How true this statement was for Dargan's day! By 1915, when he published his second volume, only a scant number of histories of preaching existed. Progress has occurred since then. A perusal of recent bibliographical works reveals some 552 works on the history of preaching written between 1935 and 1965 (Toohey and Thompson 70-79; 189-219; 237-79). Between 1966 and 1979, scholars completed another 390 (Liften and Robinson 35-41; 164-89; 205-221). These

works include monographs, articles, theses, and dissertations on the histories of both individuals and groups of preachers, periods of history, and the history of homiletical theory. No completed bibliographical work on histories since 1979 exists, although some worthwhile material appears occasionally in the bibliographies of homiletics textbooks (Stott and Demaray).

Such a broad spectrum of historical studies on preaching presents several problems. The breadth of topics and their subjects limit the depth of survey histories. Volumes of primary documents pertaining to significant preachers abound and tax the scholar's efforts. Homiletics as an academic discipline offers numerous avenues of study, such as the history of oratory and the history of hermeneutics.

The abundance of materials makes difficult the writing and studying of the history of preaching. Dargan recognized these problems as well. Noting a "super abundance" of materials, he suggested that the most pressing need of his day was to produce a general history of preaching. He believed one could accomplish this end in three ways:

- (1) A compendious manual covering the whole ground, but briefly and clearly;
- (2) A larger work of several volumes, going more into biographical, critical and general historical detail;
- (3) A *magnum opus* of many volumes really covering the subject and remaining a complete and enduring authority. (I:7-8)

Dargan understood the scope of his third option and the difficulty of one scholar producing such a work. Because several works of the first type already existed, he chose the second for himself (I:4-8).

Both Dargan's dilemma and solution remain and face any scholar intent on producing a history of preaching. How does one begin such a study? Both the super-abundance of primary materials and the profusion of scholarship equally create difficulties for any historiographical study. Assimilating the material in an understandable and usable format appears improbable, and a comprehensible evaluation of the material proves superficial at best. Following Dargan's chosen course seems the logical choice. Because of the relatively small number of general works available, this chapter traces chronologically the scholarly developments in the general history of preaching from the nineteenth century to the present. This chapter compares and draws contrasts between both historical methodology and content. This approach should prove helpful in identifying the emerging issues in the history of preaching, particularly those which aid in identifying preachers considered biblical. A summary of those issues concludes this chapter.

### Early Works

In the nineteenth century few general histories on preaching existed. Most of them were initial efforts at best. Lentz' Geschichte der Homiletik (1839) was a small contribution of biographical sketches of selected preachers. H. C. Fish's Masterpieces of Pulpit Eloquence (1850) contained selected sermons from the past. J.J. Van Oosterzee sketched the history of preaching and included sermon outlines in his Practical Theology (1879). Both Christlieb in Geschichte der Predigt (1886) and Paniel in Geschichte der Christlichen

Beredschomkeit (1839) attempted to write a comprehensive history of preaching. Nevertheless, the first consistent history to appear in English was John A. Broadus' Lectures on the History of Preaching (1876) (Dargan 1:4-6).

John A. Broadus (1827-95)

John A. Broadus delivered the last named lectures at Newton Theological Seminary near Boston that same year. He intended to give a brief account of the leading preachers in several broad periods of history. This plan had a twofold purpose: first, to "determine the relation of these preachers to their own time," and second, to learn "the principal lessons they have left for us" (5). His five lectures cover (1) preaching in the Bible, (2) the period from 30 AD to 430 AD, or from the Ascension to the time of Augustine, (3) Medieval and Reformation preaching, from the time of Peter the Hermit to the Anabaptists (1560), (4) the French Pulpit (1568-1742), and (5) the English Pulpit, including the times of Wycliffe, the Reformation, the Puritan and Anglican preachers of the seventeenth century, the age of Whitefield and Wesley, and the nineteenth century.<sup>1</sup> In his first lecture, Broadus surveyed preaching in the Bible. He mentioned numerous occasions where preaching took place, the nature of the sermon, and the character of the preacher. He focused on the preaching of Jesus as the "ideal" of all Christian preachers (22).

Broadus made a striking statement in his first lecture about the nature of

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<sup>1</sup>Broadus derived these divisions from the dated lifetimes of selected preachers. For more exact material see Broadus' table of contents, pp. vii-xi.

the preaching of the prophets. He saw the role of the prophet corresponding to that of the New Testament minister. Herein his Reformed preference became evident. Arguing that the role model of the New Testament minister is not the priest (owing to the Reformed doctrine of the priesthood of all believers), Broadus exalted the office of prophet and declared it the only acceptable role of Christian ministers (11). He said,

The prophets reminded the people of their sins, exhorted them to repent, and instructed them in religious and moral, in social and personal duties; and when they predicted the future, it was almost always in the way of warning or encouragement, as a motive to forsake their sins and serve God. The predictive element attracts the attention of Bible readers today, and yet in reality, as things stood then, it was almost always subordinate, and often comparatively diminutive. The prophets were preachers. (11-12)

Broadus discussed a number of preachers who lived during the second through the fifth centuries, and gave detailed attention to several he considered of historical significance. He surveyed the impact of the biblical interpretation schools at Alexandria and Antioch, giving preference to the latter. In his discussion of Origen he praised his work as a scholar more than his preaching. Although never denying Origen's impact, Broadus made the indictment that he "injured preaching" by dignifying the allegoricalization of Scripture (54-57).

In contrast to his treatment of Origen, he hailed John Chrysostom as the "prince of expository preaching," having no superior (77-79). This observation clearly demonstrates Broadus' preference for the Antiochan school. He commended Chrysostom for the extent of his knowledge of the Bible and mentioned certain Reformers who diligently studied him, most notably Bourdaloue of

France (77-79). Nevertheless, in spite of his high esteem for Chrysostom, Broadus criticized him for faulty theology regarding the sacraments, asceticism, the laudation of saints and martyrs, and so on (77-79).

Broadus' preference for the Reformers and their theology became evident again as he transitioned into his third lecture, beginning with the early medieval period. With the passing of Chrysostom and Augustine, preaching "suddenly and entirely ceased to show any remarkable power. East or West, after Chrysostom and Augustine, there is not another really great preacher whose sermons remain to us, for seven centuries" (87). His reasoning here profoundly reflects a strong Reformed theology:

. . . in both East and West, men's minds were now turned towards impressive ritual, sacerdotal functions and sacramental efficacies, and these left little room, as they commonly do, for earnest and vigorous preaching. (92)

Broadus made a sweeping jump from the Middle Ages to the Reformation, practically bypassing the Renaissance, and casually mentioning the "reformers before the Reformation" (112). He made an excellent analysis of the common traits of preaching among the Reformers. Perhaps he made this jump since he purposely used the word "revival" to describe the nature of Reformation preaching. First, a revival in preaching took place; preaching occurred more than ever before. Second, a revival of biblical preaching followed to the extent that it consisted primarily of expository preaching. Third, a revival in moral and controversial preaching stimulated a rethinking of doctrines. Finally, and most significant for Broadus, a revival of the preaching of the

doctrines of grace appeared (113-17).

Broadus also made a keen observation about the style of preaching during the Reformation. He contended the following:

Such careful and continued exposition of the Bible, based in the main upon sound exegesis, and pursued with loving zeal, could not fail of great results, especially at a time when direct and exact knowledge of Scripture was a most attractive and refreshing novelty. The same sort of effect is to some extent seen in the case of certain useful laborers in our own day, who accomplish so much by Bible readings and highly Biblical preaching. The expository sermons of the Reformers, while in general free, are yet much more orderly than those of the Fathers. (115-16)

Broadus' view of biblical preaching emerged from his homiletical background. An orator more than a Bible interpreter, he belonged to a group of scholars who taught homiletics as a species of rhetoric. He defined preaching in terms of rhetoric's intent to instruct and persuade. Biblical preaching contained the Word of God and style of presentation made it effective.

Another group of teachers -- among whom belonged Henry Ward Beecher, Phillips Brooks, and Henry van Dyke -- considered the sermon an instrument of the divine plan of salvation. The content of the sermon, regardless of its style of presentation, made the sermon effective. For these interpreters, primarily parish pastors, the sermon served as the means to the end, the vehicle of salvation. Broadus and the rhetoricians, on the other hand, saw the sermon as an end in itself (Wardlaw 245-46). Thus his concern for biblical preaching rested in the style of the sermon rather than its content.

As a homiletician, Broadus offered keen insight into the lives and



practices of preachers throughout history. His observations about the developments of their homiletical practices are valuable to both the professor and the parish preacher. Nevertheless, as an historian Broadus displayed a weak use of an historical methodology. He often made broad generalizations with little or no supporting documentation. Because he has no primary thesis (nor any apparent implied thesis), the specific purposes of his lectures are difficult to determine. Still, Lectures is the first significant attempt at writing a general history of preaching in English and he merits consideration as the father of modern homiletical history. No one had produced such a work before and more than a decade passed before anyone else attempted such a study.

#### John Ker (1819-86)

The next significant history of preaching to appear after Broadus was a volume by the same title. Although published posthumously (1901), John Ker (d. 1886) wrote Lectures on the History of Preaching in 1881. He read them to students of the theological seminary of the United Presbyterian Church in Scotland. Ker intended the lectures to trace the course of preaching in the history of the Church. He categorized the history of preaching in four broad epochs: (1) the time before the Apostles, (2) from the time of the Apostles to the seventh century, (3) the Middle Ages (roughly the eighth through the sixteenth centuries), (4) the Reformation to the present, which he called the Modern period (1-2). Ker gave no explanation why he used these parameters.

Ker was decidedly a Calvinist with pietist leanings. His theological prefer-

ence appeared when he declared that he preferred Chrysostom over Augustine as a preacher because Chrysostom "preaches to the conscience" (51). Unlike Broadus, Ker displayed an openness to styles of preaching other than Reformed yet left no doubt about his preferences (9-10).

Like Broadus, Ker appeared fervently Protestant in doctrine. He set this tone as he traced the origins of preaching to the prophets, beginning with Moses. Ker stated that, at least historically, God had set apart a "class of men" to declare his will for him. He argued that this class was not the priesthood, but the prophets. Said Ker, "There is one great High Priest; but all Christians are priests; this honour have all His saints" (16). Ker further revealed his theological preferences when he said that most prophets received a supernatural knowledge in some instances. He stated,

The mission of the prophet was often to declare present truth alone, and the great majority of those who bore the name were merely instructors of the people, not foretellers of the future. Taking God's message as it had been already given, they unfolded it and enforced it. (16)

Moreover, the office of prophet found its fulfillment in the preaching of Christ. Because His preaching always leads back to Himself, He is the fullness of revelation. Thus preaching is the great Christian work and in preaching "we have to preach Christ." Ker made this position clear for the remainder of the lectures (34-35).

Ker made some telling remarks about his preference for expository preaching when he noted the weaknesses of the schools at Alexandria and

Antioch. The main defect in both schools was a "want of Scripturalness." Scripture, even in Antioch, was "not dealt with in the way of reasonable interpretation and application to doctrine and life" (78). Moreover, the schools developed two tendencies: first, a preaching of nature and morality on a merely theistic basis (in Ker's day called Broadchurchism; in ours, theological liberalism), and second, the laudation of saints and martyrs and ecclesiastical seasons (78-79). Ker's Protestant preference became more apparent when he refused to trace the history of the eastern churches any further than Chrysostom. Accordingly, "the Protestant Churches have given to God's ordinance of preaching a place and a power unknown since the days of the prophets" (80-81).

Ker's treatment of Augustine is a prime example of his theological preference. Although he prefers Chrysostom as a preacher, he lauds Augustine's method and theology. Augustine, he says, went beyond mere oratory in preaching. His preaching and teaching displayed a "strong adhesion to the Word of God" and included an apprehension of the "great antithesis of sin and grace, of fall and redemption through Christ" all encompassed in deep spiritual insight and earnestness. Moreover, Augustine "lays down the Protestant principle, that all preaching is to be founded on the Word of God" (104-106).

Ker's crescendo and the turning point of his study is his treatment of Luther. He is intent on discussing Luther's work as a preacher rather than a

theologian. "Preaching was the centre and spring of his power; by preaching he moved Germany and then Europe, till he shook the Papal throne" (149). As a Protestant and a reformer, Ker held Luther in high esteem; as a Scotsman, he found common ground between Luther and John Knox.

Ker noted that from the beginning Luther preached while "taking aim at the heart." His conflict with Rome led him to "the simplicity of the Gospel and to the central truth of his preaching -- justification by faith" (150-52). Luther believed that preaching was the most important part of public worship. The basis of preaching is the Bible to which the preacher must go for his final authority. Moreover, said Ker, the subject of all preaching is ultimately "the glory of God in Jesus Christ" (154-56). Such glory manifested itself when Luther preached in the vernacular, rather than in Latin, thus allowing the people to understand his sermons (156-58). Ker also makes a good analysis that Luther's preaching style was not consistent, clear, or simple. Nevertheless, Luther's redeeming quality was that he preached to the hearts and consciences of the people. Ker's preference for pietism emerged again (157-60).

Ker's treatment of Luther marked a dramatic turning point and he followed a specific course to the end of his lectures. Without explanation he limited the remainder of the study to the history of German preaching. He included in this remainder a broad discussion of pietism, which he defined as a personal religion of the heart (200-17). He noted that while pietism did not deny the need for the enlightenment of the mind, its preaching dealt almost

exclusively with the question of conversion and the state of the heart. In time, Pietism would completely abandon the growth of the mind for the growth of the heart. Ker warned, "While it is right that we should aim at conversion in preaching, and also that we should seek revivals, we shall lose all the blessing which these may bring into the Church, unless we cultivate growth, and lead Christian men into the treasures of knowledge and understanding" (210-212).

Ker made two final observations about the development of Germanic preaching. First, with the advent of the Mediating School in the late eighteenth century, an attempt was made to reconcile religion and science, faith and reason. This development opened the door to modern scholarship which fostered liberal theology (308-25). Second, in the nineteenth century a revival of what Ker termed "biblical preaching" emerged. Rudolf Stier exemplified these biblical preachers. While other preachers appealed to confessions, feelings, spiritual convictions, and the like, Stier went to the Bible alone for truth and revelation. Stier viewed the Bible as

. . . one Book with one pervading plan -- the history of salvation -- and with it the living breath of the Holy Ghost through it all. No part, therefore, can be interpreted by itself; each part must be taken in the light of the whole, and always has some reference to the whole. (352-53)

Ker came back full circle to the prophets of the Bible who spoke with an authoritative "thus saith the Lord." He ended his lectures with the assurance that modern preaching will find its way back to its roots and thus continue the corrective process.

T. Harwood Pattison (1838-1904)

Two years after the publication of Ker's Lectures, an American, T. Harwood Pattison, published a new history. *The History of Christian Preaching* (1901), surveys the history of preaching. Pattison limited the bulk of his material to individual biography rather than broad history. Not intending to write a definitive study, he gave brilliant short sketches of many leading preachers throughout history. Pattison attempted to set preaching in the broader context of Church history in order to see the influence of the Christian pulpit on society rather than to know every single preacher involved (iii-iv).

Like his predecessors, Pattison traced the origin of Christian preaching to the Hebrew prophets. He argued that "prophet" had a three-fold meaning: (1) one who speaks beforehand, (2) one who speaks in public, and (3) one who speaks on behalf of someone else. In the case of the Hebrew prophet, God was that "someone else". Pattison noted a distinct difference between the priest and the prophet. The priest worked in relation to the temple, primarily at the altar, a place couched in visual communication. The prophet, on the other hand, worked in relation to the synagogue, primarily at the pulpit, a place identified with oratory. Thus Christian preaching carried a prophetic nuance because it consisted primarily of oratory (7-10).

Pattison discussed at length the preaching of Jesus, noting the characteristics of his preaching which every preacher should imitate. Accordingly, Jesus' preached (1) naturally, (2) clearly and systematically, (3) with word

pictures and with right-brained orientation, (4) with good word economy, (5) authoritatively, (6) always relative to his Father, (7) with interest to his hearers in that "he lays his finger on the human heart", (8) with one central theme: the Kingdom of God, and (9) consistently. Pattison also viewed that Jesus as the paragon for preaching (16-27).

Pattison believed the key element in apostolic preaching lay in its didactic quality. Citing Peter's sermon at Pentecost, he argued that it asserted that all the prophecies about the Messiah had come true and defended the messiahship of Jesus and the work and the role of the Holy Spirit. Furthermore, Peter's primary homiletical method was exposition. Pattison's preference for expository preaching became evident here and continued throughout the remainder of the work (35-36).

Pattison further displayed his preference for exposition when he noted that a crucial shift occurred in preaching around the year 400 AD. To that time preaching had been simple and humble with reliance on the teachings of the Apostles. The influence of Greek oratory, the change in emphasis from doctrinal to ethical preaching, and eventually the introduction of allegorical interpretation all led to this shift. With the development of simple homilies, "Human opinion was appealed to now, where formerly the Word of God sufficed" (48-57).

Pattison noted a second shift in preaching. At the end of the Roman Empire the priesthood acquired a sense of political power. With the coronation

of Charlemagne in 800 AD, the Pope became a political figure; with the birth of the Holy Roman Empire, the Kingdom of God became an entirely different entity (73-74). From this point, according to Pattison, Christian preaching fell to its lowest level, not to rise again for six centuries. Occasional signs of life emerged such as in the likes of Wycliffe and Huss. The introduction of the "evangelical sermon" marked the point of "daybreak" for Christian preaching. Pattison described these evangelical sermons as characterized by "plain and literal Biblical sense" (118-21). Moreover, the invention of the printing press aided in the birth of the Reformation and prompted the desire in people to hear the Bible read in their vernacular (120-21). Again he displayed his strong Protestant leanings.

Finally, Pattison included a lengthy discussion of American preaching.

He argued that the autocratic effect of the Church was evident, asserting that

Throughout the early history of New England the influence of the sermon was great. It held nothing whether sacred or secular, as above or beneath its notice. The approaching election was as much a fitting subject of discourse as was the choice of a new pastor. (349)

Well separated from England by the Atlantic ocean, the New England preacher exercised a liberty in his pulpit unlike his counterpart back home. Said Pattison, "Clerical authority never again was so high in this country as it was in the first century of colonial history" (350). The real power of the pulpit was not seen, however, until it was occupied by Jonathan Edwards who Pattison describes as the epitome of American colonial preachers.



Pattison credits both the religious freedom and the lack of geographical proximity from England, along with Edwards' zeal for his effectiveness. Under his uncompromising preaching the first Great Awakening occurred. This series of revivals changed the face of the continent (Pattison, while covering Wesley and Whitefield in England, neglects a treatment of both Asbury and Coke<sup>2</sup>). Pattison continued this theme in his treatment of nineteenth century preaching. Discussing Charles Finney, he noted that "the first half of the nineteenth century was marked by constant revivals in religion. Finney represents the sanest and most intelligent type of evangelists" (369). He gives credence to Henry Ward Beecher as one who "treats the Bible more reverently" than any other preacher since he used the Bible to express his thought rather than claiming his thought explained the text (373).

Throughout the book Pattison attempted to give the history of preaching a comprehensive treatment. The broad, general study was the only model available during his life. He included information on almost all preachers in the history of the Christian Church. Nevertheless, Pattison did not always critically evaluate each preacher and tended to prefer the Reformed preacher over the others. He did not exercise a sound historical method and tended to write more as a *chronicler* of history rather than an *interpreter*. His work, however, was the first to include a significant account of American preaching by an American

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<sup>2</sup>Pattison gives no explanation for this exclusion, which is surprising since he considered the Great Awakening in America as significant in the homiletical development of the Church (373).

scholar. Later the publication of Dargan's work in 1905 would overshadow Pattison.

### Edwin Charles Dargan (1852-1930)

Edwin Charles Dargan recognized the difficulty in writing a comprehensive history of preaching. Armed with a working knowledge of previous scholarship and the good sense to know a multi-volume history by one scholar was next to impossible, he set out to write a history of preaching. He intended to include not only biographical material but critical historical interpretation as well. Published in two volumes, Dargan's A History of Preaching (1905, 1915) soon became the classic piece of scholarship on the topic.

The genius of Dargan's work lay in his understanding of the effect of preaching on the course of events in history. "Since Christianity became an active force in human affairs, there has been upward and onward movement, and one mighty factor in that progress has been preaching," says Dargan (1:8). He proposed to set preaching in its historical context, thereby demonstrating that mutual impact.

Dargan gave primary concern to establishing the origin of preaching. He admitted that some may trace the history of preaching to ancient oratory. Although some of his predecessors asserted that preaching began with the prophets (e.g. Broadus and Ker), he believed preaching as known today began with the Apostles. In describing their preaching, he said it was

. . . fundamentally the same as that of the Lord, with only the important difference made by the great facts of his crucifixion,

resurrection and ascension, and the great promise of his second coming. Christ himself was still the central and dominant theme of the gospel message. Both repentance and faith, . . . found due emphasis in the apostolic preaching. It proclaims a crucified, risen, reigning and coming Saviour and Lord. It is universal in time, having touch with past, present and future; in extent, reaching out to all men of every race and class in the world, and in character, holding the one remedy for all sin, the one way of reconciliation with God, the one path to eternal life. (I:24)

Moreover, the two permanent elements of Christian preaching were evangelism and instruction. Thus Dargan traced the development of both *kerygma* and *didache* in the history of preaching, using apostolic preaching as his plumbline.

Dargan divided the history of preaching into six broad periods: (1) 70 - 430 AD, from the Apostles to Chrysostom; (2) 430-1095, after Chrysostom to Peter the Hermit, (3) 1095-1361, the central medieval, or Scholastic age, (4) 1361-1572, the transitional or Reformatory Age, (5) 1572-1738, the early modern age, from the reformers to the beginning of the English revival, and (6) 1738-1900, from Wesley and Whitefield to the end of the nineteenth century (I:28). He admitted that one cannot arbitrarily set these dates; they depend upon preceding and successive ages, yet the need for divisions presupposes their propriety (I:25-28).

Dargan aptly criticized the homiletics of various preachers. His sharp observations brought to light both the strengths and weaknesses of each individual. He intended neither to find fault with them nor to deify them but to learn from past successes and failures. He treated with equal fairness those individuals he liked and disliked.

Origen and Chrysostom became two subjects of Dargan's critical pen.

Of Origen, whom he did not admire, he said,

The great work of Origen and his school . . . shows itself. Preaching is largely exposition of Scripture, often on a short text, sometimes continuous on whole books or parts of books, or on subjects. . . . The preacher's knowledge of life, of passing events, of literature, affords abundant illustration. . . . The application is often close, direct, personal, and not infrequently very telling. (I:70)

In contrast, however, he critiqued Chrysostom whom he did admire. Dargan said,

Chrysostom's faults as a preacher were neither few nor little. . . . His best work is marred by the oriental intensity and exaggeration, in feeling, in thought, in language. In theology, . . . he did not escape the errors of his age and race. He overpraises alms, celibacy, monasticism, as meritorious works. His view of sin and its remedy is more moral than evangelical. Strong tendency toward the worship of Mary and the saints appears. Also there is the sacerdotal view of the ordinances. . . . In his preaching itself there are often loose and forced interpretations of Scripture. . . . While he does not allegorize after the Origenistic fashion, he does not mind twisting a passage to fit his homiletical needs. (I:92)

In spite of his strong preference for Reformed preaching and his Calvinist theology, Dargan gave fair assessments of the preachers in his study.

Dargan also presented preaching in light of its historical context. More than criticizing the age, he gave excellent insight and understanding as he developed his interpretation. His treatment of preaching during the early Renaissance and the Reformation revealed a significant transition. The language of sermons surfaced as an issue among preachers. Late medieval and early Renaissance sermons appeared typically in Latin, although some written ones surfaced in the vernacular with little opposition voiced. Publishers printed

collections of homilies which were used by an uneducated clergy and contributed to rampant plagiarism (I:186-87). By the time of the Reformation, however, Latin still maintained its prominence as the language of sermons but the use of the vernacular attained considerable ground, particularly in the Protestant pulpit (I:306-07). This development marked a milestone in the rise of biblical preaching.

Dargan used a better method of historical interpretation than any of his predecessors (although he remained somewhat myopic in doing so). His treatment of England at the time of John Wesley and George Whitefield exemplifies this ability. Dargan said that while England was beginning to approach her zenith as an empire, "Religious and moral affairs in England during the eighteenth century were for the most part in a deplorable condition" (II:289). Political corruption, vice, drunkenness, and debauchery infiltrated the country. The Enlightenment, along with rationalistic deism plus the skepticism of the philosophers of the day, called into question Christianity's claims. For the most part, "churchly religion" was brought into contempt by most thinking people (II:289).

As with moral conscience, Dargan said that preaching in eighteenth century England sank to its lowest. He attributed this condition to the low moral and spiritual tone of most clergy. Their preaching was cold and perfunctory, their theology was moderate at best (even with a few bright spots of evangelical light), and preaching for the most part "would require more charity than judg-

ment to pronounce other than lifeless and tame." Preaching deteriorated to moralizing with little exposition (II:291-94).

Indeed, Dargan's monumental work is considered the standard work on the history of preaching. His second volume ends with the nineteenth century British pulpit. He intended to continue his study with a third volume to include American preaching but died before that was possible. Several decades later Ralph G. Turnbull, a retired Presbyterian pastor from Seattle, Washington, achieved Dargan's aim in A History of Preaching: Volume 3 (1974).

#### Ralph G. Turnbull (1901-85)

While not as interpretative as Dargan, Turnbull presented an adequate survey of the history of American preaching through the twentieth century. He also included discussion of preaching in Europe, England, Africa, Asia, and Australia. The book contains primarily a compilation of individual biographies and Turnbull offers an excellent survey including both well known and lesser known preachers. His opening remarks about each century, giving a synopsis of historical settings and moods, prove helpful and the vast amount of information is quite valuable. One must commend Turnbull's attempts to complete Dargan's work. Nevertheless, because of his lack of interpretative material he cannot be fairly compared to the genius of Dargan.

#### Dewitte T. Holland (1923 - ) and Harold A. Bosley (1907 - )

Another excellent resource on the American pulpit is Preaching in American History: Selected Issues in the American Pulpit, 1630-1967 (1967),

edited by Dewitte Holland. This anthology contains twenty essays by various scholars, clerics, and students. Each essay deals with an issue in American homiletics ranging from the Puritan theology of authority to the contemporary concerns of the Church in a growing secular society.

The first essay, "The Role of Preaching in American History," by Harold A. Bosley, sets the tone of the book. He argues that the development of the American pulpit is the product of both the Reformation and the lure and nature of the frontier. Within this development the pulpit played a decisive role.

Said Bosley,

Some historians have been inclined to debate the importance of a religious motive in the founding of the colonies in this country. Yet the records of the colonies as planted and in operation leave no doubt as to the reality and power of such a motive. That preaching was one of the most powerful factors in this experience of emigration and settlement is an uncontested historical fact. (26)

Bosley noted several significant themes in American sermons. Among these concerns were, first and always, the Word of God as found in the Bible; second, a vital personal experience of salvation among the preachers; third, a conscientiousness about teaching correct doctrine among the preachers; fourth, a continued debate between Protestants and Roman Catholics; fifth, a strong voice among the preachers about personal morality and public order; and finally, a general involvement of preachers in the issues of their day (29-30). Moreover, Bosley further develops the role of the American pulpit as a catalyst of social, economic, and political developments as well.

The variety of essays in this work prohibits and makes unnecessary a

detailed discussion. Throughout the book each essay develops a theme: *the issue of authority*. Whether authority is derived from a commonly understood directive by God to the Puritans that they shall engage in an "errand into the wilderness" (Chapter 1), or from the historical roots of Christianity emphasized in neo-orthodoxy (Chapter 14), authority takes center stage. Even more so, the trustworthiness of the Scriptures underlies the debate, whether between the evangelicals and the Unitarians in the eighteenth century (Chapter 5) or between the fundamentalists and the modernists in the twentieth century (Chapter 13).

The ongoing debate over the priority of doctrine and experience emerges as a significant issue in these articles. For the Puritans (Chapter 2), the "city on a hill" expressed a common but correct doctrine. For the revivalists, such as Edwards and Finney (Chapter 4), personal experience validated doctrine. For Horace Bushnell the experience of personal conversion was unnecessary since a Christian "environment" nurtured Christians (Chapter 5).<sup>3</sup>

Equally significant were the motivational differences between similar groups, such as the fundamentalists and neo-orthodox preachers and between social gospel proponents and modernists. The fundamentalists needed to defend their beliefs; the neo-orthodox desired to declare them. Social reformers

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<sup>3</sup> This observation about Bushnell does not take into account his theological maturity in later years. For an accurate understanding of this issue, see "Discourse on Atonement" in God in Christ, NY: Gardener Publishers, Inc., 1987, 191-203.



wanted to change the world because of biblical injunctions; modernists wanted to change society because it could not change itself. Thus, this debate, whether emerging from pulpit or pew, sought either to preserve or reform the covenant society originally formed in the seventeenth century.

Warren Wiersbe (1929 - )

A work in a different vein is Warren Wiersbe's *Walking with the Giants: A Minister's Guide to Good Reading and Great Preaching* (1976). Primarily consisting of biographical sketches, Wiersbe's book is a collection of several sketches he wrote for *Moody Monthly* published by the Moody Bible Institute. Wiersbe follows his tradition of Reformed theology and preaching and has a penchant for such preachers.

Wiersbe discriminately selected the preachers he included in his essays. They range in time from Samuel Rutherford (1600-61) to W.E. Sangster (1900-60). In these essays he discussed some of their strengths and weaknesses. For instance, in his discussion of Alexander McClaren, he noted that the secret to McClaren's power was that he gave himself to study and his entire ministry was an exposition of Scripture. McClaren practiced a regular devotion and disciplined himself in the study of the Bible (36-39). Wiersbe noted that G. Campbell Morgan gave himself to study. Morgan occupied his study from six o'clock in the morning until noon. He would read a book of the Bible between forty and fifty times before preaching from it (133). Of Sangster, Wiersbe said that he was the leader of the Methodist pulpit in his day and that he preached

as a leader and a visionary. His sermons had three characteristics: simplicity, clarity, and intensity (175).

Although not scholarly in focus, Wiersbe's collection is helpful. He writes for the parish preacher. He is a cheerleader for ministers and uses the book to encourage them. Says Wiersbe,

Whenever I read a good biography of a Christian leader, especially a preacher, it makes me glad that God called me to preach! I feel a new sense of awe as I begin my sermon preparation and contemplate standing in the pulpit to minister to my people. (13)

His insights encourage his reader and his suggestions for good reading merit perusal. He includes excellent bibliographical materials.

Robert M. Grant (1917- ) and David Tracy (1939- )

Closely related to the history of preaching is A Short History of the Interpretation of the Bible (1963,1984), by Robert M. Grant with David Tracy. Tracy appears in the second edition published in 1984. As the title indicates, Grant surveys the history of biblical interpretation through the centuries, giving attention to major trends in its development. While the book does not deal directly with the history of preaching it does treat an issue that markedly affected the history of preaching. Grant and Tracy approach their topic, not so much with the intention of understanding the truth in the Bible as to understand the history of the methodology of interpreting the Bible.

Grant's comparison of the interpretive schools at Alexandria and Antioch is significant. He explains both of them so one can better appreciate the extremes of the allegory of Origen and the literalism of Chrysostom. His methodol-

ogy becomes significant for the history of preaching since he concludes that Antioch's literalism became the pillar for the Reformers. This observation gives understanding to the conflicts between preachers through the centuries, particularly between Luther and the Roman Catholic Church as well as Luther and the other preachers of the Reformation (70).

Grant observed that the Reformers took the stance that Scripture ". . . is not one of several pillars which uphold the house of faith; it is the sole foundation"(89). This observation is his great contribution towards understanding the history of preaching. If this is the case, as the Reformers believed, then the conclusion must be drawn that the Bible is the sole foundation for preaching. As Grant pointed out, the historical and grammatical interpretation of the Scriptures, typical of the Reformers, was not the end in itself. Rather it was the means to the end, a means to understanding Christ. Little wonder that Luther returns "to a considerable degree" to Christocentric interpretation. Assisted by the ministry of the Holy Spirit, anyone could understand Scripture since Scripture interprets itself (94-95).

Tracy, in the second half of the book, addressed a significant question: "What is a properly theological interpretation of the Bible in a historically conscious age" (153)? The key to understanding how biblical interpretation can be historically relevant lies in the issue of revelation. He said,

To believe *in* Jesus Christ *with* the apostles, means for the Christian, that every present, personal and communal Christian belief *in* Jesus Christ is in fundamental continuity with the Apostolic witness expressed in the Apostolic writings which have become the

Christian New Testament. To believe *in* Jesus Christ, moreover, is to believe *in* the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and thereby in the revelatory event of Sinai expressed in the Hebrew Scriptures and reinterpreted as the Christian Old Testament in the light of the Christ event witnessed to in the Apostolic writings. (176-77)

Moreover, Tracy zeroed in on the central issue at hand: ". . . what unites the New Testament is the Christian community's faith in Jesus Christ as revelation" (178). The implications are far-reaching for homiletics. Historically, a sense of fundamental trust in the revelation given in Scripture is validated by the historical witness of the Church. Thus Grant and Tracy provide an excellent resource for homiletics. By understanding the historical development of the interpretive process one can better understand the historical development of preaching.

#### Paul Scott Wilson (1949 - )

While numerous shorter studies have been written on various aspects of the history of preaching, Paul Scott Wilson attempted to produce a concise general history of preaching. He wrote A Concise History of Preaching (1992) for preachers, students, and teachers. Wilson attempted to create a concise history of preaching by selecting preachers representative of their eras and methodologies. He likened the study to an "excursion tour" wherein his approach is representative and not comprehensive (11-12).

Wilson confessed that while he found many avenues available for his study, he chose to concentrate on the issue of authority.<sup>4</sup> He said,

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<sup>4</sup> Wilson is the only historian in this study who admits to targeting authority as the primary theme of his study. All other writers imply this observation or simply allow it to surface as a general theme.

From the beginning of the Church, authority has been an issue: By what right does anyone preach, teach or claim one interpretation of Scripture to be superior to another? Even in the Middle Ages, when Scripture was the relatively private text of a small educated elite and church control might be said to have been at its peak, the rumblings of challenge were never silenced. When central ecclesial authority was radically overthrown by the Protestants in their Reformation, the foundations of other challenges to subsequent authorities were simultaneously and unavoidably laid. As history has taught us many times, the overthrow of central authority spawns multiple competing claims. The issue of authority is heightened in Protestant circles by the central emphasis, not on the Eucharist, but on the interpretation of the Word. (13)

Theologically a moderate, Wilson believes that a truly broad study of the history of preaching can never come to completion without taking into account cultural, regional, national, and global considerations, nor without maintaining the significance of preaching in the Roman Catholic and Orthodox traditions or including studies of preaching in other faith traditions. Nevertheless, because Protestants place primary emphasis on preaching as the center of their worship experience, the majority of the preachers whom he discusses from the post Reformation period are Protestants (14-15).

Throughout each chapter Wilson deals with the issue of authority. Origen, he notes, emphasized correct doctrine at the expense of interpretation of Scripture. Chrysostom stressed the literal interpretation of Scripture, bringing the world to stand judged before the Word. Cyprian accentuated the authority of the Church in matters of interpretation. Augustine emphasized the need to follow the "primary principle:" -- "keep studying a text until we have found something that contributes to the rule of love"(39,46,55,66).

In his discussion of medieval preaching Wilson observes that it adhered to the authority of tradition. Preaching was hindered by the Bible increasingly becoming the text of a privileged few. Moreover, the rise of scholasticism brought about high regard for Scripture and separation of the spirit of the Word and knowledge of the Word. Still, the traditional authority of the Church remained intact (67-72).

Ultimately the Reformers challenged the authority of the Church. According to Wilson, they placed "emphases on direct individual relationship with God, [and] on common access to Scripture. . ." (87). The Reformers, varied as they were in situation, agreed across the board on one vital issue: the centrality of the Word in Christian worship. Wilson notes with surprise that the Reformers not only challenged the authoritative interpretation of the Roman Catholic Church; they challenged others, as well, and no longer accepted any one interpretation. He said, "Once central and absolute authority was abandoned, the reformation spread like ripples in a disturbed pond" (88-89).

Wilson also observed that an increased attention to the biblical text does not fully emerge as a theme during the Reformation. While many of the Reformers preached their sermons exegetically, they often located the biblical text in its immediate context. Most of the time the preachers showed little concern for what they termed the "opening up of the Biblical text," or for developments occurring in biblical studies (91).

Wilson makes another astonishing statement in his conclusion: "It is not

surprising that the most Biblical sermons come from those preachers who are involved in writing commentaries" (178). This statement merits significance because Wilson appears to show a preference for neither conservative nor liberal. He implies therefore that biblical preaching contains the element of both exposition and explanation.

### Summary

Several issues arise from this study on the history of preaching. The authority of Scripture emerges as the foremost issue. Where does one find the authority to preach? What is the final authority for preaching? Is it found in the Bible, from the tradition of the Church Fathers, or elsewhere? Thus emerges a correlating issue: epistemology. Epistemology is that part of Western philosophy concerned with the nature and origin of knowledge. As a part of theology it pertains to such issues as revelation and authority (Harvey 79-80). Does one understand the nature of biblical authority as a revealed, yet concrete and factual record (e.g., accepting the words of the Bible as fact), or as an inspired literature pregnant with organic significance (e.g., the meaning of its universal concepts)? The historians discussed in this study derived their understanding of authority predominantly from two schools of thought in the early nineteenth century: the Princeton School led by Charles Hodge, and the Yale, or Language School, led by Horace Bushnell. Those historians, theologically Calvinist and affirming Scripture as the foundation and source of the sermon, appear as followers of the Princeton School. They insisted the Bible should be ap-

proached logically and treated as factual and accepted at face value. Those historians, theologically non-Calvinist or those who did not display this same regard for Scripture appear to follow the Yale School.

According to Hodge, theologians must consider the Bible as their "primary tool" (Ahlstrom 257). The theologian must assume the validity of its assertions as a scientist assumes the validity of the laws of nature. Moreover, the theologian accepts the Bible as his or her primary tool because he or she understands it as sufficient revelation of truth (258). Such an approach tends to lead toward nominalism, a theory of knowledge which insists that universal concepts have no separate or independent reality. They are simply names used to organize and classify similar ideas (Harvey 165). Hodge and his followers find truth in the concrete and factual. Therefore the theologian derives theological principles inductively from the "facts" of the Bible, and guards against imposing theory upon Scripture (Ahlstrom 259).

The interpretations of several historians in this study suggest this theory informed their view of biblical preaching. Broadus (114-15), Ker (151-67) and Dargan (I: 376-81) saw biblical preaching as the exposition or explanation of the Scriptures. They insisted the Bible should be approached literally. Dargan argued that biblical preachers, such as Origen (I:70) and the English Calvinists (II:291-94) exposed the literal meaning of Scripture. Likewise, Spurgeon sought the truth, although sometimes to a fault (II:528). Pattison argued in a similar vein. He recognized Alexander Maclaren as biblical since he based his sermons



on "textual analysis" (342). They noted that the Reformers based their theology on this definition. That theology understood preaching as rooted always in Scripture. The Church no longer needed to ask what the Pope thought or to inquire about the opinion of the Church Fathers. They only had to ask, "What does the Bible say?"

Regarding the Yale School, Bushnell argued that the meaning of language played the key role in the discovery of theological truth and preaching that truth in particular. Closely akin to the transcendentalists of nineteenth century America, Bushnell and his colleagues<sup>5</sup> argued that language as a vehicle of truth can never reveal absolute truth because words do not accurately represent physical objects (Ahlstrom 329). He contended that if a word cannot accurately represent a physical, finite object, neither could language accurately represent a moral or intellectual subject (Ahlstrom 330-31). He said that authority lies within the meaning of the language or a word rather than in its literal definition. Truth is derived, not from merely reading the words, ". . . but by allowing them to stand, offering our mind to their impressions, and allowing it to gravitate inwardly, towards that whole truth, in which they coalesce" (Ahlstrom 345).

This approach leads to realism, the opposite of nominalism. Realism, also a theory of knowledge, insists that universal concepts are more *real* than

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<sup>5</sup>Bushnell no longer thought as his liberal colleagues. His evangelical experience removed from him the label "classical liberal". However, he maintained the conviction that truth is found in the deeper meaning of the language in Scripture.

their physical representations. Humanity, for instance, is more *real* than anyone living human being (Harvey 165). For Bushnell and his followers the concept of truth carried greater weight than any one truth, for it found its existence in organic and wholistic *reality*.

Two historians, one Calvinist and one non-Calvinist, did not display this same regard for Scripture and appear to follow the school of thought advocated by Horace Bushnell and other classical liberals<sup>6</sup>. Wilson, who focused on Luther's preaching, questioned and analyzed the issue of authority in preaching, thus breaking new ground regarding both the origin and nature of authority in preaching (Wilson 92-98). Ker, although a Calvinist, also held Martin Luther in great esteem. Nevertheless, Ker's pietist leanings, along with his desire to experience a "heart religion" (200-17) informed his outlook on Luther. Unlike Dargan and Pattison who applaud the preachers who preached biblical truth based on the concrete facts of the Bible, Ker applauded Luther's preaching on the "kernel" of truth. Luther looked for a central truth in his preaching texts. He found each one to contain a Christological significance. For Ker, Christ became the overriding concept which informed Luther's preaching and gave it authority (160-64). Thus Ker's pietist leanings equally informed his understanding of biblical authority.

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<sup>6</sup> Consideration must be given to Bushnell's background. Although Puritan in his tradition, a profound evangelical experience signaled a marked maturity. See "Discourse on Atonement" in *God in Christ*, NY: Gardener Publishers, Inc., 1987, 191-203.

A second issue emerging from this study is the methodology used to interpret Scripture for preaching. Pattison and Dargan again appear to prefer an historical-grammatical-literary approach to hermeneutics since the historical preachers they admire the most used this method of hermeneutics. This preference supports the argument that they adhered to the Princeton school. Furthermore, these historians note that the preachers who preferred this methodology lived from the Reformation to the present. Thus a correlating issue relating to interpretation arises: the trustworthiness of the Scriptures. Can they be trusted and believed? The scholars in this study, because they appear as adherents of the Princeton school, make convincing arguments that the preachers they admired the most held a personal conviction that Scripture could be trusted and they preached their sermons as such.

This conviction points to a third issue common to all the authors: the transforming impact on the ministries and lives of those preachers by intentional Bible study. Augustine, Luther, Calvin, Wesley, Edwards, Finney, and Spurgeon, held with conviction the truth of the claims in Scripture and experienced radical spiritual transformation when they encountered the Bible. The efficacy of their encounters manifested in their lives and their ministries bore prolific fruit. Moreover, their preaching transferred this existential element to their congregations.

Fourth, those preachers who made the greatest spiritual impact and homiletical progress preached in the vernacular. They spoke in the plain

language of their day and they translated the Bible into that language (Broadus 115), thereby enabling their people to encounter the Bible personally. Ker (156-58), Pattison (120-21), and Dargan (I:306-07) concur. These Calvinist scholars make this point, noting the detriments of Latin preaching in the Roman Catholic Church.

Finally, the majority of the preachers admired by the authors consistently preached Christocentric sermons. Luther was especially noted for this practice, as were his successors. This element marked a significant change in preaching, becoming a predominant characteristic of the post-Reformation pulpit.

Because the majority of the authors discussed in this study are Calvinists, a history of preaching written from the perspective of a Roman Catholic would be helpful. Such a study would not only provide insight into the Roman Catholic theology of preaching, but would also help Protestant preachers appreciate their own homiletical heritage. Equally helpful would be a history of preaching from a Wesleyan viewpoint. Such a study could suggest what impact the role of prevenient, convincing, and sanctifying grace plays in the homiletical process.

Stott's conviction that preaching is indispensable to Christianity holds merit. The high esteem in which the scholars in this study hold preaching endorses his conviction. They demonstrated how preaching played a significant role in the life of the Church. Their own convictions stimulate further study in the history of preaching. A study of historically biblical preachers would secure

and strengthen Stott's conviction among theologians, homileticians, and historians alike.

## CHAPTER 3

## Design of the Study

This study addresses the need for an adequate definition of the term "biblical preaching." Many existing definitions appear as derived from preconceived notions or preferences towards a particular mode of homiletical methodology. This study asks the question, "Can biblical preaching be defined inductively by describing the common traits or characteristics of a random selection of sermons by historical preachers identified as biblical?"

Theologians, homileticians, and parish preachers use the term "biblical preaching." No clear consensus on its meaning appears to exist. Some scholars define biblical preaching in terms of exposition or textual analysis, others by the content or form of the sermon. Still others define biblical preaching by the emphasis the sermon places on certain doctrines or the anticipated outcome of the sermons.

The New Testament indicates that Jesus preached with a sense of authority because he based his sermons on Scripture. The Apostles received commendation for preaching the Word to the people. Nevertheless, a precise definition of the term remains elusive. Or does it?

A review of the scholarship on the history of preaching reveals characteristics common to preachers identified as biblical. These characteristics include such elements as (1) the understanding and acceptance of the Bible as God's self-revelation, authoritative in all matters of Christian faith and practice; (2) a

preferred hermeneutical methodology based on an historical-grammatical-literary interpretation rather than an allegorical interpretation; (3) a radical transformation in the lives of both preachers and listeners as a result of their encounter with Scripture; (4) a significant impact on the lives of their congregations by preaching in the vernacular of their day; and (5) a consistent preaching of Christocentric sermons.

These observations raise this hypothesis: Could one define biblical preaching by using an historical approach to study the sermons of preachers considered biblical? As a result of that study, could one identify the most prevalent traits of those sermons as the historic marks of biblical preaching? This study defines biblical preaching by describing the common traits of selected sermons of historical preachers identified as biblical.

### Research Questions

This study addresses the following research questions:

Research Question #1: What traits appear consistent in the sermons of each historical preacher?

In answering this question I identified the particular homiletical traits of each preacher on an individual basis. I limited this question to address only the exclusive traits of each preacher's sermons. I observed the consistency of such criteria as: (1) an understanding of biblical authority; (2) the use of an historical-grammatical-literary hermeneutic; (3) a radical change in the preacher's personal spiritual formation; (4) the use of the vernacular in preaching; and

(5) Christocentricity in the individual's sermons.

Research Question #2: Which traits surface as common among these preachers?

In answering this question I identified the homiletical traits common among the selected preachers. Specifically, I focused on their collective traits as a group. I based the identification on the individual traits of the preachers shown in Research Question #1. Thus, I established a composite description of the homiletical traits of these historically biblical preachers, thereby defining the term biblical preaching.

### Methodology

This study utilized qualitative research. Specifically, it utilized an historical methodology, discussed later in this chapter. It included three techniques of research: (1) the collection of data through a mailed questionnaire to identify the historical preachers for this study; (2) the reduction and examination of data through the reading of a stratified random selection of their sermons; and (3) the analysis of data through an historical study of those sermons to determine their common traits.

### Qualitative Research

Qualitative research deals with words or physical objects rather than numbers (Miles and Huberman 21). Qualitative research involves a multifaceted process: the gathering of data, such as public documents, personal interviews, recorded observations or reflections of field work, and physical



objects such as photographs or multi-media recordings (Creswell 150); the reduction, assimilation and the display of the data; and the verification of data and the presentation of conclusions drawn from the data (Miles and Huberman 21-23). Miles and Huberman remark that the process of drawing and verifying conclusions includes such methods as counting, noting patterns, and the triangulation of reliable evidence (216-218). Triangulation is the process whereby conclusions are validated by testing data against other data previously verified and validated. Ultimately, triangulation ". . . gives support to a finding by showing that independent measures of it agree with it, or at least, don't contradict it" (234).

Unlike quantitative research, qualitative research serves to explore topics when unknown variables and theory bases exist . When the researcher believes that an available theory appears inaccurate, inappropriate, incorrect, or biased, a qualitative approach becomes his or her preferred choice (Creswell 146). Scholars have defended both the practicality and the reliability of qualitative research (Crabtree & Miller; Creswell; Silverman).

Creswell observes that qualitative researchers work under a number of assumptions. He lists six which appear consistently: researchers generally concern themselves with process rather than outcome; they direct their attention to discovering the meaning of topics or subjects; they serve as the primary instrument of research; they become personally involved in fieldwork; their research is descriptive, since they are interested in finding the meaning of

words or pictures; and they engage in an inductive process of qualitative research, since the researcher establishes concepts, theories, and hypotheses from details (145).

Creswell also notes that qualitative research has found credence in a variety of disciplines: psychology, sociology, anthropology and education, to name a few (147). Silverman notes in particular the impact qualitative research has made in anthropological studies, particularly in ethnography (the study of a particular culture, either in the present or the past) (8). Anthropologists have discovered the possibility of making ethnographic observations of a particular group, either present or historical, and relating it to the cultural whole, either present or historical (10-13). Thus, a qualitative methodology proves an effective and reliable tool for social science research. Moreover, a qualitative approach offers similar expectations for historical research. Nevertheless, a critical difference between historical research and social science research exists and that difference must be clarified.

Crabtree and Miller describe the historical method as an effective tool adapted for social science research. For example, an anthropologist may use the historical method to describe a past culture. The anthropologist as social scientist recreates the culture with laboratory precision and expertise (163-71). The anthropologist seeks to understand the culture. On the other hand, the historian intends to establish reliable facts for the sake of recreating the culture, to critically analyze those facts, and then to communicate his or her findings of

the meaning of those facts in a synthesized narrative of that past (Gottschalk 31-37). Therefore, the historian does not practice a scientific method *per se*, but rather an historical method.

### The Historical Method

Gottschalk defines the historical method as ". . . the process of critically examining and analyzing the records and survivals of the past" (48). He defines historiography as the "imaginative reconstruction of the past from the data derived by that process" (48). Crabtree and Miller clarify the procedures of the historical method as ". . . investigation, interpretation, judgment of the correctness of the interpretation, and [the] communication of what has been judged to be correct or probably so" (167). Thus the historian gathers data, examines it for credibility, analyzes it for meaning and synthesizes the findings within an interpretive narrative. He or she asks questions to determine both the events of the past and the meaning of those events (Barzun and Graff 41). As Bloch says, the historian interprets the "tracks" of the past (55).

The historical method involves several steps. Once the historian establishes the research problem or subject, then he or she must inquire about the kinds of evidence available (Barzun and Graff 131). The historian deals primarily with two kinds of evidence: records and relics. Records are the intentional transmitters of facts. They may be written (chronicles, annals, diaries, memoirs, personal or professional letters and papers), oral (ballads, tales, sagas, multimedia recordings), or works of art. Relics are the unpremedi-

tated transmitters of facts. They may be items such as human remains, letters, literature, public documents, business records, language, customs, and artifacts (Barzun and Graff 133).

Evidence provides the historian with material to reconstruct the past. It provides raw data to report, interpret and synthesize. It provides documentation to substantiate findings or conclusions. Thus the historian works under the primary rule, "Give evidence" (Barzun and Graff 134-137).

The historian gathers evidence (data) from two sources: primary and secondary. Gottschalk says a primary source is "the testimony of an eyewitness." A secondary source is the testimony of anyone who is not an eyewitness (53). Barzun and Graff further clarify this understanding, saying that in historiography, ". . . a primary source is distinguished from a secondary by the fact that the former gives the words of the witnesses or first recorders of an event . . . .The historian, using a number of . . . primary sources, produces a secondary source" (98). Thus the historian draws from primary sources the principal data for establishing historical fact to recreate the past. Secondary sources may be used to triangulate and strengthen the interpretation of those facts, thereby establishing historical truth. By nature the process is both inferential and inductive.

Gottschalk defines historical fact as "a particular derived directly or indirectly from historical documents and regarded as credible after careful testing in accordance with the canons of historical method" (140). Barzun and

Graff agree and define historical truth as an assertion of fact grounded on probability. They argue, "It means the balance of chances that, given such and such evidence, the event [the document] records happened in a certain way; or, in some cases, that a supposed event did not in fact take place" (138).

Thus the role of the researcher evolves into that of interpreter when documents become the data sources used in a study and when they offer possible evidence which corrects theory, thereby eliminating bias or more accurately defining a term or theory (Creswell 147).

Historical interpretation consists of historical analysis and historical synthesis. Historical analysis requires the historian to "efface himself before the facts" (Bloch 138). The historian's impartiality, albeit limited, dictates that he or she plays two roles: scholar and judge. As Bloch remarks, "When the scholar has observed and explained, his task is finished. It remains yet for the judge to pass sentence" (139). Historical analysis is the vehicle by which the historian finds meaning in the data and by which he or she recreates an authentic account of the past. As Gottschalk states, "The task of the historian is not only to understand what a document's words may formally mean but also what his witness *really* intended to say" (134). He does so by assuming an "historical mindedness." Gottschalk defines this as "the ability to put oneself in the place of other individuals at other times and to interpret documents, events and personalities with their eyes, standards, and sympathies" (137). Failure to examine data critically and make historical analysis leaves one with a mere

recitation of the facts of a time past. That describes a chronicler. The historian, on the other hand, interprets the past (Crabtree and Miller 163-73).

Indeed, critical analysis alone cannot ensure sound historical interpretation. The historian must maintain a sense of objectivity. One maintains objectivity by engaging oneself in historical thinking (as mentioned above). R.G. Collingwood contends that the historian engages in historical thought when he or she re-enacts the past as past thought in his or her own mind. By engaging in such thinking, one gains an objective knowledge of the past. He defines historical knowledge as

. . . the knowledge of what mind has done in the past, and at the same time it is the redoing of this, the perpetuation of past acts in the present. Its object is therefore not a mere object, something outside the mind which knows it; it is an activity of thought, which can be known only in so far as the knowing mind re-enacts it and knows itself as so doing. To the historian, the activities whose history he is studying are not spectacles to be watched, but experiences to be lived through his own mind; they are objective, or known to him, only because they are also subjective, or activities of his own. (218)

Historical knowledge concerns itself with more than just the remote past. Collingwood contends that by historical thinking one can re-think or rediscover the thoughts of people from the past in the same way one discovers the thoughts of a friend who writes a letter. Only by historical thinking can one discover another's thoughts from the past by reading what that person wrote at that time. Collingwood argues further,

The same historical method is the only one by which I can know the mind of another, or the corporate mind . . . of a community or an age. To study the mind of the Victorian age or the English

political spirit is simply to study the history of Victorian thought or English political activity. (219)

Such re-enactment of past thought is not a precondition of historical knowledge; ". . . it is the vital component of historical knowledge" (290). In a sense, historical knowledge is the rehearsing of past thought or the consequences of past thought. Collingwood asserts that one's reflection of past thought is historical thinking. At its core, historical thinking is reflection. Specifically, it is thinking about how one thinks as an historian. As a part of the act of thinking, the historian experiences a self awareness, calling to mind his or her biases, prejudices, and worldviews. Historical objectivity occurs when the historian bridges the gap between his or her acquisition of historical knowledge and his or her interpretation of that knowledge (307-309).

Once the historian analyzes all data and draws conclusions from them, a synthesis of the findings occurs. At its core historical synthesis is historiography, or the writing of history. As Gottschalk states, the purpose of historiography, at its highest level is "to recreate the totality of historical fact in a manner which does no violence to the actual past" (198). Crabtree and Miller argue that the function of the historian is "to understand as correctly as possible what was going on at that time and place, given the data available. . . , and when correct understanding has been achieved, to communicate it" (172). The historian must communicate the meaning of his or her findings. The final result, once communicated, is historical interpretation.

## Data Sources

The data sources of this study are the sermons of preachers identified as biblical and who have lived since the Reformation. Historical research indicates that the Reformation marked the rise of consistent biblical preaching, particularly among Protestants. This study occurred under two assumptions: one, that by their nature the sermons are primary sources, and two, their content reflects the homiletical traits of each preacher.

## Data Collection Procedures

Data collection occurred in two phases: the utilization of the Delphi principle to identify biblical preachers from history and a systematic selection of six of their sermons.

### The Delphi Technique

Henry Schorr observed the Delphi technique as a useful method of eliciting the opinions and judgments of a group of people. It appeared in 1953 within the work of Olaf Helmer and Norman Oakley at the Rand Corporation while doing research with the United States Air Force. Their research revealed that the Delphi eliminates the undesired aspects of committee work: getting into ruts; undue influence by superiors; skewed observations. The Delphi allows a wide spectrum of people to articulate their views without physically assembling together (73-74).

The Delphi proves successful when the participants possess skills of written communication, are motivated to respond, and most crucially, have



adequate time for response (75). The Delphi also succeeds with subpopulations within a full population, when open-ended questionnaires are used, and when the number of rounds of the questionnaire is adjusted to suit the subjects (77). Moreover, Schorr's research suggests that one to three rounds of questionnaires as a process of elimination are necessary to secure a true narrowing of data (80).

Schorr identifies two advantages of the Delphi. First, it is effective in defining terms (which is the intent of this study). Second, it proves effective not only for obtaining consensus on an issue but also for identifying areas where no apparent consensus exists. Third, participants become the experts since they define and prioritize their own criteria for evaluating an issue or answering "what is" questions (81-84). Finally, the Delphi effectively identifies specific data (86). Thus the Delphi technique is an appropriate tool for data collection in this study.

With the assistance of Donald Demaray, I assembled a panel of thirty-one experts for use in the Delphi. The panel consisted of professors of biblical studies and homiletics at various seminaries and schools of theology, and pulpit preachers of churches in various locations and from various theological backgrounds. This panel of experts appears in Appendix A.

The Delphi consisted of two rounds of inquiry. In round one, I polled the panel through a mailed questionnaire. The questionnaire asked them to list five to eight historical preachers from the Reformation to the present whom they

considered biblical. They were instructed to return their choices listed on a postcard. The letter sent in round one appears in Appendix B. The responses from round one appears in Appendix C.

From those responses, I listed in alphabetical order eighteen preachers whose names were listed at least three times in response to the round one letter (Miles and Huberman 215-221). These preachers are listed in Appendix D.

In round two of the Delphi, I mailed the panel a second letter which included the names of those eighteen preachers. The letter instructed them to choose from that list the five most outstanding biblical preachers. The letter also instructed them to list them in ranking order, with "1" being the most outstanding preacher and "5" being the fifth most outstanding preacher. The letter instructed them to list their responses on an enclosed postcard. The letter used in round two appears in Appendix E.

Upon receipt of the responses to round two, I scored them by using a simple ranking order. Choice #1 received five points, choice #2 received four points, choice #3 received three points, choice #4 received two points, and choice #5 received one point. I then counted and recorded the total points each preacher received and the number of times each preacher received a listing. The top five scores determined which preachers would be chosen for this study (Miles and Huberman 215-21) . The responses to round two appear in Appendix F.

### Stratified Random Selection

After selecting the preachers for study, I determined the number of their available sermons. A computer generated a list of six sermons of each preacher by the use of a standardized software program. To ensure a true reflection of each preacher's ministry I made a stratified random selection of their sermons. A stratified random selection is preferred over a simple random selection for three reasons: first, a stratified random selection allows for the broadest scope of the life span of each preacher's ministry; second, the use of a stratified random selection helps to ensure a reliable sampling, accurately reflecting the gamut of each preacher's sermons; third, a stratified random selection helps to ensure the objectivity of interpretation of the selected sermons (Fink and Kosecoff). A biographical sketch of each preacher, along with the list of sermons chosen by the stratified sampling, appears in Appendix G.

### Control Issues

Because this study used qualitative research techniques, I implemented several triangulation devices. These devices include other primary sources such as personal journals, autobiographies, diaries, personal correspondence, and professional papers. These devices may also include secondary sources, such as historical scholarship. Such sources help to ensure a reasonable degree of objectivity and fairness in the historical analysis of each preacher's sermons.

### Data Analysis

I analyzed data using the historical method described above. The meth-

od, as applied in this study, assumed the treatment of the selected sermons as primary documents, accurately and sufficiently reflecting the theology, hermeneutics, and homiletics of each preacher. The historical analysis of each sermon focused on the observation of sermonic content, primarily the sermon's predominant traits. Analysis revealed trends and patterns within the sermons themselves (Barzun 159-75). The historical interpretation of the sermons found support by the documentation of those traits as well as substantiation by related primary and secondary sources (Leedy).

## CHAPTER 4

## Findings in the Study

This chapter contains a content analysis of thirty sermons, six each by John Wesley, Charles H. Spurgeon, James S. Stewart, Alexander Maclaren, and G. Campbell Morgan.<sup>1</sup> An analysis of those sermons revealed three common traits: 1) an authoritative use of Scripture; 2) a Christological emphasis; and 3) an urgent existential appeal to the listener to experience a personal spiritual transformation. These traits are the historic marks which define biblical preaching.

The inductive nature of the historical method requires the researcher to begin by observing the particular facts in order to draw general conclusions from them. This study followed that principle. To interpret the findings in this study, I must present data in two ways. First, I begin by offering as a thesis the findings from research question #2, summarizing the three historic traits common to these preachers which define biblical preaching. I present data germane to these traits in the separate categories. Second, I present my findings in question #1 to support my findings in question #2 by giving the particular evidences drawn from that data. I present the supporting evidence in separate sections as it relates to the sermons of each preacher.

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<sup>1</sup>Paul Rees actually received the fourth highest score in the Delphi. Because of the unavailability of his sermons, I eliminated him. Alexander Maclaren then moved to fourth place and G. Campbell Morgan moved to fifth place in the scoring.

## Findings for Research Question #2

In Research Question #2, I asked, "Which traits surface as common among these preachers?" Data pertaining to this question indicates three common traits which surfaced in the research. I present them in separate categories.

### An Authoritative Use of Scripture

The evidence presented in answer to Research Question #1 indicates that all preachers displayed an authoritative use of Scripture in their sermons in four primary ways. First, all preachers established clearly that their sermons were based on their pericopes. All preachers crafted their sermons with the specific purpose of interpreting their texts. Homiletical styles varied, but ultimately the interpretation of their pericopes appeared as the primary goal of each sermon.

Second, all preachers engaged in sound exegesis, using an historical-grammatical-literary methodology as a hermeneutic for interpretation. Data reveal numerous occasions in which each preacher established an historical context of his text, explained the grammatical and linguistic nuances of the text, or set the literary context for his pericopes. With one noted exception, data also reveal no allegorical interpretation or a rampant spiritualizing of their texts.

Third, all preachers blended scriptural language (verses or phrases of Scripture) within the body of their sermons and habitually used biblical cross references. Moreover, they took their illustrations from the Bible. The evidence

presented indicates no eisegesis in this practice.

Fourth, data indicate that all preachers presupposed the Bible as authoritative. On several occasions some of the preachers made forthright declarations regarding its authority and divine origin. Often their many references implied such assumptions.

### A Christological Emphasis

The evidence presented in answer to Research Question #1 indicates that all preachers under study maintained a Christological emphasis throughout their sermons. Without exception every preacher crafted his sermon to reflect a strong, biblical Christology. Data indicate that each one emphasized the power of Christ's death and resurrection. They centered their Christologies around the cross and the physical resurrection of Christ, as well as their transforming power. Whether they preached from the Old or New Testament, their sermons came back full circle to Christ. In all cases each preached the same Kerygma: Christ crucified.

While all preachers focused their sermons on Christ, their approaches carried various themes. Wesley's Christology emphasized redemption. He saw Christ as the answer to all spiritual needs, including home life.

Spurgeon approached Christology doctrinally. He stressed the benefits of knowing Christ personally. The evidence presented indicates that Spurgeon's sermons for both Old and New Testament texts contained a high Christology.

Maclaren and Morgan preached that a relationship with Christ under-

scored the main thrust of the gospel. Maclaren's sermon titles reflected this element and data indicate the preeminence of Christ in his sermons.

Stewart's expressed his Christology as the practical solution to life's difficult problems. Life was complex; the gospel was simple. Christ, who gave Stewart authority in his preaching, appeared as the authoritative voice of the faith. Stewart characterized his Christology as the answer to suffering and pain.

### An Urgent Existential Appeal to the Listener to Experience Personal Transformation.

The evidence presented in answer to Research Question #1 indicates that all the preachers under study crafted their sermons to appeal existentially to their listeners to experience personal transformation. Wesley's sermons contained exhortations to experience redemption in Christ. Spurgeon, being a Calvinist, preached doctrine. Nevertheless, his doctrines echoed nuances of personal transformation. Stewart began his sermons with a life problem and offered a biblical solution to it. He implied that such an answer was realized only in personal transformation. McClaren and Morgan both called their listeners to experience transformation. McClaren emphasized the need to exercise personal faith to experience transformation. Morgan, on the other hand, stressed the necessity to recognize human need before a personal appropriation of God's grace and power could occur. Toward the end of their sermons each preacher expressed his desire or hope, either implicitly or



explicitly, that his listeners would experience some kind of personal transformation.

### Findings for Research Question #1

In Research Question #1, I asked, "What traits appear consistent in the sermons of each historical preacher?" Data pertaining to this question indicate the consistent traits particular to each preacher. I present each preacher individually.

#### John Wesley, (1703-91)

John Wesley, born in Epworth, England, and the second surviving son to Reverend Samuel Wesley, an Anglican priest, and Suzanna Wesley, a Non-Conformist, founded the Methodist movement. After receiving a secondary education at Charterhouse School in London (1713-20), he entered Christ College, Oxford, and received his baccalaureate degree in 1724. He received ordination as an Anglican priest in 1728. While at Oxford as a fellow, Wesley became involved with the "Holy Club", a fellowship of men devoted to holy living and Arminian theology. In 1735, he, along with his brother Charles, went to Georgia as missionaries to the Indians. Failing to find spiritual fulfillment, and after an unsuccessful missionary journey, they returned to England in 1738. While crossing the Atlantic, Wesley met Peter Bohler and a group of German Moravians, who encouraged in his spiritual journey. On May 24, Wesley experienced his "heart strangely warmed" at a Moravian meeting on the second floor of a building on Aldersgate Street in London. This event marked the

radical change in his life and ministry. Most notably, this event affected his preaching. He typified his style of preaching by his own words: "plain truth for plain people" (Heitzenrater 500-02). The sermons in this study come from The Works of John Wesley. Wesley preached them after Aldersgate. The six studied are: "Salvation by Faith", Ephesians 2:8; "Heaviness Through Manifold Temptations", 1 Peter 1:6; "The Mystery of Iniquity", 2 Thessalonians 2:7; "The New Creation", Revelation 21:5; "On Family Religion", Joshua 24:15; and "What is Man?", Psalm 8:3-4.

Wesley's sermons contained three consistent traits: 1) an authoritative use of Scripture, 2) a Christological emphasis, and 3) an urgent existential appeal to the listener. I present each trait separately.

1) *An authoritative use of Scripture* -- In his sermons, Wesley displayed an authoritative use of Scripture in four ways. First, he began each sermon with a scriptural reference. He launched his sermons using these references as his pericopes. In "Salvation by Faith", Wesley cited Ephesians 5:8 as his pericope: "By grace are ye saved through faith." He introduced this sermon with a paragraph about grace and the Christian's benefits from it. (Works 5:7) In "The New Creation", he referred to Revelation 21:5, "Behold, I make all things new." His introductory paragraphs included a discussion of the concept and possibility of "all things being made new" (Works 6:288-89). In "What is Man?", Wesley quoted Psalm 8:3-4: "When I consider thy heavens, the works of thy fingers, the moon and stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man?"

Once again, he launched his sermon with a discussion on the benefits from reading the book of Psalms, noting that "in all ages the Psalms have been of singular use to those that love or feared God; . . . Christians in every age and nation have availed themselves of this divine treasure" (Works 7:167). Thus Wesley intentionally used his pericope as the basis and source of his sermons.

Second, Wesley blended biblical language into the body of his sermons and included numerous scriptural cross references. In "Heaviness Through Manifold Temptations", he blended scriptural language within his manuscript when he said,

In the midst of their heaviness they likewise still enjoyed the love of God, which had been shed abroad in their hearts; "whom", says the Apostle, "having not seen, ye love." Though ye have not yet seen him face to face; yet, knowing him by faith, ye have obeyed his word, "My son, give me thy heart." He is your God, and your love, the desire of your eyes, and your "exceeding great reward." Ye have sought and found happiness in Him; ye "delight in the Lord," and he hath given you your "hearts' desire." (Works 6:93)

In "Salvation by Faith", Wesley's blending of Scripture surfaced when he explained the blessings of salvation:

First. From the guilt of all sin: For, whereas all the world is guilty before God, insomuch that should he "be extreme to mark what is done amiss, there is none that could abide it;" and whereas, "by the law is" only "the knowledge of sin," but no deliverance from it, so that, "by fulfilling the deeds of the law, no flesh can be justified in his sight;" now "the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ, is manifested unto all that believe." Now "they are justified freely by this grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ." "Him God hat set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for (or by) the remission of the sins that are past." Now hath Christ taken away "the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." He hath "blotted out the handwriting that was against us, the it out of the way,

nailing it to his cross." "There is, therefore, no condemnation now, to them which" believe "in Christ Jesus". (Works 5:10)

Wesley also used Scripture as cross references. "On Family Religion" contains passages in which Wesley preached in favor of correcting children by citing Proverbs 13:24 and Proverbs 19:18 (Works 7:81) . In "The New Creation", Wesley cited Genesis 1:9 and Revelation 21:1 to make a connection between God's creation of the seas and their removal in the New Earth (Works 6:290) . "Salvation by Faith" contained six cross references from Luke, Romans, Ephesians, and 1 John which Wesley gave to clarify and connect the ideas of forgiveness and justification (Works 5:8,11,13) .

Third, Wesley's sermons also contained illustrations from Scripture, and he occasionally repeated biblical themes. The sermon, "The Mystery of Iniquity", retold the story of sinfulness. Wesley used the stories of Cain and Abel (Works 6:251), Noah and his sons (Works 6:252), and Ananias and Saphirra (Works 6:256-57) to repeat the theme of sinfulness. Moreover, Wesley amplified the themes of grace and forgiveness within these same illustrations. Likewise, in "Salvation by Faith", Wesley included numerous references to the concepts of grace, forgiveness, redemption, and justification. He saturated his sermons with scriptural language.

Finally, Wesley practiced a sound method of interpretation with no apparent use of allegory. On occasion he exegeted the original language within the body of the sermon to interpret and expose the meaning of his pericopes. In "The New Creation", he exegeted the phrase "the new heaven", and noted that

the original language used the plural instead of the singular for the word *heaven*. Thus the correct translation, according to Wesley, is "the new heavens" (Works 6:289).

In "Heaviness Through Manifold Temptations", Wesley discussed the meaning of two Greek words: λυπηθεντες, which means "made sorry", and ποιχιλοισ, which means "heaviness" (Works 6:94-95). In the case of the first word, Wesley noted,

This is the constant literal meaning of the word: And, this being observed, there is no ambiguity in the expression, nor any difficulty understanding it. The persons spoken of here were *grieved*: The heaviness they were in was neither more nor less than *sorrow*, or *grief*, -- a passion which every child of man is well acquainted with. (Works 6:94)

He understood the historical and literary context of the passage. He presumed the Bible as revelation (Works 7:172) . He based his method of interpretation upon an historical-grammatical-literary hermeneutic.

2) *A Christological emphasis* -- In the majority of his sermons, Wesley presented a Christological emphasis. He stressed Christ's redemptive work on the cross and the power of his resurrection. This emphasis became immediately apparent in "Salvation by Faith". Wesley noted,

What faith is it then through which we are saved? It may be answered, First, in general, it is a faith in Christ: Christ and God through Christ are the proper objects of it. Herein, therefore, it is sufficiently, absolutely distinguished from the faith either of ancient or modern Heathens. . . . It acknowledges his death as the only sufficient means of redeeming man from death eternal, and his resurrection as the restoration of us all to like and immortality; inasmuch as he "was delivered for our sins, and rose again for our justification." Christian faith is then, not only an assent to the

whole gospel of Christ, but also a full reliance of the blood of Christ a trust in the merits of his life, death, and resurrection;. . . .(Works 5:9)

Wesley also emphasized Christ in his Old Testament sermons. In "What is Man?", taken from Psalm 8, Wesley preached that God manifested his glory to his human creation by revealing the

. . . Son of God, that was "God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God," in glory equal with the Father, in majesty co-eternal, . . . and, being found in fashion as a man, was obedient unto death, even death on the cross" And all this he suffered not for himself, but "for us men and for our salvation." "He bore" all "our sins in his own body upon the tree," that "by his stripes we" might be "healed." (Works 8:172)

Similarly, in "On Family Religion", taken from Joshua 24:15, Wesley preached that familial faith cannot occur ". . . til we believe upon Jesus Christ whom [God] hath sent" (Works 7:78). He directed husband to love their wives

. . . even as Christ hath loved the Church, when he laid down his life for it, that he might "purify it unto himself, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing." The same end is every husband to pursue . . . . (Works 7:78-79)

Thus, whether preaching from the Old or New Testament, Wesley emphasized Christ in his sermons.

3) *An urgent existential appeal to the listener to experience a personal transformation* -- Wesley's Christological emphasis contributed to his appeal for his listener to experience a personal transformation by the power of Christ. In "On Family Religion", Wesley preached that service to God finds a close connection to obedience. Christ transforms a person and fosters that connection in a vital relationship with him. Wesley said,

Like those, "his servants" above, "who do his pleasure, who keep his commandments, and hearken to the voice of his words; "these, his servant below, hearken unto his voice, diligently keep his commandments, carefully avoid whatever he has forbidden, and zealously do whatever he has enjoined; . . . . (Works 7:78)

A prime example of this existential appeal appeared in "Salvation by Faith". Wesley noted,

. . . he is thus justified, or saved by faith, is indeed born again. He is born again of the Spirit unto a new life, which "is hid with Christ in God." And as a new-born babe he gladly receives the . . . "sincere milk of the word, and grows thereby;" going on in the might of the Lord his God, from faith to faith, from grace to grace until at length, he come unto " a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. (Works 5:12)

In "Heaviness Through Manifold Temptations", Wesley preached that temptations come to people that "they may rejoice the more, because the trial . . . increases their love. . .", and that they may "advance in holiness; holiness of heart, and holiness of conversation" (Works 6:100). He also made an appeal for a personal transformation at the end of "What is Man?" He declared, "He hath given us his Son, his only Son, both to live and to die for us! O let us live unto him, that we may die unto him, and live with him forever!" (Works 7:174). Wesley ended each sermon with an exhortation to repent and believe or to take some step towards growth in grace. He clearly based such transformation on the authority of Christ's kingship.

#### Charles H. Spurgeon, (1834-1892)

Charles H. Spurgeon preached his first sermon when he was sixteen years old. When he was twenty, he became the pastor of New Park Street

Church in London, England. Within two years, people filled to capacity the once empty church. A new building, the Metropolitan Tabernacle, was erected and by the time he was twenty two, Spurgeon was the most popular preacher in London. Scholars estimate that within a thirty four year ministry he preached to ten million people.

Spurgeon came from a free church background, independent of the Church of England. Likewise, he was a maverick in personality. A prolific preacher, from the year 1885 he wrote a weekly sermon for publication. Both preachers and scholars have noted the worth of reading Spurgeon's sermons.

Grounded in theology, staunchly Calvinist, and convincing in his preaching, Spurgeon left no question regarding his knowledge of Scripture. As one scholar notes, "These, coupled with his love for Jesus, contributed to the dynamics of his ministry" (Demaray, Pulpit Giants 139). Passionate and fluent, he captured the hearts and the ears of his congregations. The sermons in this study came from the collection preached in the New Park Street and Metropolitan Tabernacle pulpits. The six sermons are: "Consolation in Christ", Philippians 2:1; "The Royal Death Bed", Amos 3:6; "The Star and the Wise Men", Matthew 2:1,2,9,10; "Renewing Strength", Isaiah 40:31; "Daily Blessings for God's People", Psalm 68:19-20; and "The Drawings of Love", Jeremiah 31:3.

Spurgeon's sermons contained three consistent traits: 1) an authoritative use of Scripture, frequently presented as verse-by-verse exposition, 2) a Christological emphasis, and 3) a presentation of doctrinal exposition. I present



each trait separately.

1) *An authoritative use of Scripture, frequently presented as verse-by-verse exposition* -- Spurgeon displayed an authoritative use of Scripture in four ways. First, Spurgeon began each sermon with a scriptural reference. By the end of his introduction he indicated that it pertained to his pericope. He began "Consolation in Christ" by discussing the historical understanding of the idea of consolation and then launched into an exposition of his pericope, noting that "consolation can be found nowhere save in Christ" (New Park Street 7:1).

In "The Star and the Wise Men", Spurgeon immediately began an exposition of his pericope. He offered neither introductory remarks nor any kind of illustration or anecdote to relate the text to his congregation: "See, dear friends, the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, even in his state of humiliation" (New Park Street 29:3). He left no doubt about his topic or his Scripture. In "Daily Blessings for Gods' People", he cited Psalm 68:19-20 as his pericope. He immediately launched into an explanation of the psalm (New Park Street 62:3). Thus Spurgeon established Scripture as the basis and source for his sermons.

Second, Spurgeon displayed an authoritative use of Scripture in his sermons by blending scriptural language within the body of the sermon. In "The Drawings of Love" he argued that the evidence of "election" is the personal experience of feeling God drawing the elect to him by the Holy Spirit's power. He said,

Of them and to them it is that such words as these are spoken, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love"; a love far superior to

mere benevolence-towering above it as the mountain about the sea; love kindlier, deeper, sweeter far than that bounty of providence which guilds the earth with sunshine, or scatters the drops of morning dew; a love that reveals its preciousness in the drops of blood distilled from the Saviour's heart, and manifests its person, immutable favour to souls beloved in the gift of the Holy Spirit, which is the seal of their redemption and the sign of their adoption. *So the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God.* (New Park Street 63:194) (italics mine)

In "Daily Blessings for God's People" Spurgeon discussed the possibility of death as being a benefit for believers. He said, "So the Apostle tells us, 'To die is gain'; and we will look upon it as such" (New Park Street 62:7). Likewise, in "The Royal Death Bed", written on the occasion of Prince Albert's death in 1861, Spurgeon preached about the sovereignty of God. He wrote,

I hear a voice which says to me, "Preacher! be instant in season and out of season; . . . I hear a voice that speaks to the people of my charge, the members of this Christian church, "Work while it is today, for the night cometh wherein no man can work." (New Park Street 7:631)

Thus, by blending scriptural language within the body of his sermons, Spurgeon displayed an authoritative use of Scripture.

Third, Spurgeon displayed an authoritative use of Scripture in his sermons through the use of biblical cross references. He tended to use illustrations from the Bible itself. In "The Royal Death Bed" he proclaimed the way of salvation by citing Acts 16:31 -- "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved" (New Park Street 7:632). In "Consolation in Christ" he quoted Luke 9:58, "Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but I have nowhere to lay my head" to substantiate that Christ experiences our pains

of life and can thereby relate to those in need of consolation (New Park Street 7:3). Later in the sermon he illustrated the human desire for divine consolation by citing Job's plight (New Park Street 7:6). In "Daily Blessings for God's People" he recalled David's graciousness toward Mephibosheth to exemplify how God's blessing can fall on believers (New Park Street 62:4). Finally, in "Renewing Strength" he discussed the human capacity to experience physical and spiritual fatigue by describing Elijah's flight from Jezebel (2 Kings 19) to Mt. Horeb (New Park Street 29:704). These examples of scriptural cross referencing and biblical illustrations indicate Spurgeon's authoritative use of Scripture in his preaching.

Finally, Spurgeon displayed an authoritative use of Scripture in his sermons through a sound exegetical methodology. While his exposition was excellent, his exegesis proved equally brilliant. He set the literary context for a passage and took into account the grammatical and linguistic nuances of the original biblical languages.

In "The Drawings of Love", for instance, Spurgeon immediately set the context for his pericope. Anticipating questions regarding his interpretation of the biblical text, he said,

From the connection it is clear that this passage primarily refers to God's ancient people, the natural descendants of Abraham. He chose them from old, and separated them from the nations of the world. Their election fills a large chapter in history, and it shines with resplendent lustre in prophecy. . . . Without abating, however, a jot or tittle from the literal significance of these words as they were addressed by the Hebrew prophet to the Hebrew race, *we may accept them as an oracle of God referring to the entire church of his redeemed family and pertaining to*

*every distinct member of that sacred community. Every Christian, therefore, whose faith can grasp the testimony may appropriate it to himself .* (New Park Street 63:193) (italics mine)

Spurgeon proceeded to interpret his pericope using this same kind of exegesis:

Let us consider the text word by word. "I have loved thee." " Who is the speaker? "I"; the great "I AM," Jehovah the Lord. There is but one God, and that God filleth all things. "By Him all things are made, and through Him all things consist." . . . We live in him, move in him, and have our being in him." (New Park Street 63:194)

He continued this process throughout the sermon, extracting the meaning of his pericope phrase by phrase and word by word.

Spurgeon maintained his exegetical style in "Daily Blessings for God's People" and "The Star and the Wise Men". In "The Star and the Wise Men" he engaged in continuous exegesis. He exegeted such items as the nature and purpose of the star (New Park Street 29:3-6), the attitude and actions of the wise men (New Park Street 29:7-9), and the response of the reader or listener to the sermon (New Park Street 29:10-12). In "Daily Blessings for God's People" he discussed the subtle, yet important, nuances of Hebraic expressions (New Park Street 62:6).

Throughout his sermons, Spurgeon consistently gave no evidence of rampant allegorical exegesis, although he admitted to occasional spiritualizing of Scripture (Lectures to My Students 157-58). He used a methodology based on an historical-linguistic-grammatical approach to exegesis. Moreover, he left no doubt regarding his view of Scripture. In his sermons he revealed a high trust in the Bible. "God's promises are our precepts," he said in "Renewing

Strength" (New Park Street 29:706). He noted that Christians need to

. . . depend upon God alone in their church capacity. God's Word is their only creed; they do not add to it anything whatever --no, not a sentence, a gloss, or a thought. They have greatly erred who look upon anything as the authoritative standard of faith but God's own Word. . . . Nothing outside this Book is binding on a Christian man as doctrine in the least degree whatever. The Bible and the Bible alone is the religion of Christians. (New Park Street 29:700)

Thus data indicate that Spurgeon based his preaching solely on the authority of Scripture.

2) *A Christological emphasis* -- Spurgeon consistently emphasized Christ in his preaching. In five of the six sermons in this study he stressed the central role of Christ, his redemptive work on the cross, and the power of his resurrection. In "Consolation in Christ", he said, "Consolation can be found no where else except in Christ" (New Park Street 7:1). He distinguished the role of Christ from that of the Holy Spirit by saying that while the Holy Spirit is the Comforter, "Christ is the Comfort" (New Park Street 7:1). He concluded by noting that Christ is the ". . . Consolation of Israel and the joy of all his saints" (New Park Street 7:6).

Spurgeon preached "The Royal Death Bed", taken from Amos, on the occasion of Prince Albert's death. In this sermon, he wrestled with the tension between trusting in divine sovereignty and fearing a capricious fate. He concluded that those who fear fate need only believe in Christ for salvation (New Park Street 7:632). Spurgeon, though preaching from the Old Testament, maintained a Christological emphasis, asserting that even in death the Christian

can glorify Christ.

The "Star and the Wise Men" was entirely Christological. In this Christmas Eve sermon, Spurgeon reiterated the emphasis on Christ, noting that ". . . he is still distinguished by his star" (New Park Street 29:3). The star points to Christ, leads one to Christ, teaches about Christ. "Star preaching," he said, "is all about Christ" (New Park Street 29:5). In "Renewing Strength", Spurgeon encouraged his church by preaching Christ (New Park Street 29:700). In "Daily Blessings for God's People", he saw Christ as the "common bread" of our salvation\_--"Oh, the sweet benefits of being led to the Saviour" (New Park Street 62:2). Clearly, Spurgeon preached a clear Christology.

3) *A presentation of doctrinal exposition* -- Spurgeon presented several of his sermons as doctrinal exposition. "Consolation in Christ" is entirely Christological in content. In this sermon, Spurgeon championed such doctrines as redemption (New Park Street 7:2, 5-7), the power of the cross (New Park Street 7:3, 5-7), and God's sovereignty (New Park Street 7:7) . "The Royal Death Bed" dealt with predestination, juxtaposing God's sovereign will against presumed fatalism (New Park Street 7:762 ff).

In "The Star and the Wise Men" and "The Drawings of Love", Spurgeon addressed the doctrine of election. In both sermons he exhibited his strong Calvinist theology through repeated uses of the word "election". He said, "It is impossible for any of the elect of God to come to Christ and lay hold on him without divine drawing, as it would be for devils to feel tenderness of heart and

repentance towards God" (New Park Street 63:199).

James S. Stewart, (1896-1990)

James Stewart's birth took place in Dundee, Scotland where his father worked in the YMCA teaching Bible class. Stewart grew under the influence of his father's teaching and faith. An atmosphere of evangelical piety complemented his spiritual nurture. He received both the M.A. and the B.D. from St. Andrews University and successfully pastored parishes in the Church of Scotland. His last parish, North Morningside in Edinburgh, proved successful, and he became known as "Stewart of Morningside."

Stewart possessed multi-faceted talents. No one questioned his abilities as a scholar, professor, or author. He wrote a remarkable book on homiletics entitled Heralds of God. He accepted the invitation to give the Lyman Beecher Lectures at Yale from which the book evolved. His greatest achievement, however, was his preaching. Both personal and sensitive to human suffering, the eloquence of his sermons carried a note of pain. He did not offer his listeners questions without answers. He showed them the way to salvation. He often prayed, "Make us sons and daughters of the resurrection" (Demaray, Pulpit Giants 143-45; Chatfield 45-57).

One can find Stewart's sermons in several collections, most notably The Gates of New Life and The Strong Name. The sermons in this study come from these collections. The six sermons are: "Why Be a Christian?", Deuteronomy 33:29; "Sacrifice and Song", 2 Chronicles 29:27; "The True Simplicity", 2

Corinthians 11:3; "God and the Fact of Suffering: The Burden of the Mystery", Psalms 31:9; John 12:27; "The Mother of Us All", Psalms 48:12-13;72:2-3;137:5-6; Revelation 21:2; and "The Strong Name of the Trinity", 2 Corinthians 13:14.

Stewart's sermons contain three consistent traits: 1) an authoritative use of Scripture, frequently presented through an inductive homiletic, 2) a Christological emphasis, and 3) an urgent existential appeal to the listener to experience a personal transformation. I present each trait separately.

1) *An authoritative use of Scripture, usually presented through an inductive homiletic* -- Stewart displayed an authoritative use of Scripture in three ways. First, he used an inductive method of preaching<sup>2</sup> in which he presented to his listeners a life problem and then offered a biblical answer to it. In the majority of his sermons he based their authority on these biblical answers.

Upon reading his pericope in "Why Be a Christian?", Stewart asked the question: "Is there not something like the sound of a trumpet in that?" (Gates 21). He then challenged listeners to engage in vital faith, mingling his pericope within it : " 'Who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord?' So declares the Word of God. Do you agree with it" (Gates 21)? Stewart drew his listeners into a debate over the benefits of being a Christian versus the benefits of being a non-Christian. He gave several possible objections non-Christians might offer

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<sup>2</sup>For an explanation of inductive preaching see my discussion in Chapter 1, pages 5-6.



and then suggested a biblical answer to each one.

In "The True Simplicity" Stewart began with a discussion about the complexities in life: political, social, economic, etc., giving examples of each (Gates 211-13). He discussed the human desire for a life of genuine simplicity (Gates 214-16). He concluded by offering a biblical solution: a "simplicity which ought to be in the hearts of those who love and trust and follow [Christ]" (216).

In "God and the Fact of Suffering" Stewart began by addressing the problem of human suffering and pain. He examined its origin and nature (Strong Name 125-28). Next, he considered the effect of Christianity upon the actuality of human suffering:

There is no real problem of evil for the man who has never accepted the Christian revelation. He may recognize indeed the fact of suffering: but only to the believer is suffering a mystery. . . . We do well to face this fact quite frankly, that the first thing Christianity does with the problem of suffering is not to solve it, but to heighten and accentuate it. (Strong Name 129)

Stewart concluded with his personal theodicy, offering a biblical solution for suffering (Strong Name 130-35).

Secondly, Stewart displayed an authoritative use of Scripture by blending scriptural language within the body of his sermon and by using illustrations from the Bible. In *Sacrifice and Song* he encouraged his congregation to learn about the sacrifices of life: "And so I repeat, it all depends on whether our life is open to God, whether we are ready under all circumstances to say, 'O God, not my will, but Thine be done!'" (Gates 36). Further on, he discussed the human need for peace amidst sacrifice: ". . .the peace of being able to forget oneself, the

happiness of a heart content, and the serenity of God which passeth understanding" (Gates 38). As examples of those who knew this peace and found the song after sacrifice he cited Paul and Silas in the Phillipian jail (Acts 16), Mary's Magnificat (Luke 1), and Jesus' prayer in Gethsemane (Matthew 26) (Gates 39). Moreover, he repeated his pericope, in part and in whole, no less than fifteen times.

Stewart's other sermons also contained numerous examples of a blending of Scripture. In "God and the Fact of Suffering" he referred to Rachel weeping for her children, Christ's passion (Strong Name 126), and Job's lamentations (Strong Name 132) as examples of suffering. In "The True Simplicity" he blended quotes from Jesus to show his simplicity of life:

"My meat," He said, "is to do the will of Him that sent Me." There you have the one claim to which all rival claims were subservient, the one principle coordinating the whole of life, the one standard by reference to which every question as it arose was decide -- an undivided loyalty to the God of heaven. That was Christ's great simplification of life. And it works. (Gates 218)

In "The Strong Name of the Trinity" Stewart mingled scriptural language within the body of the entire sermon. A prime example of this mingling appeared when he spoke of the unity of the godhead:

Remember that when this redeeming personality of Jesus of Nazareth confronts you in judgement and in mercy, you are being confronted by God. This that happened at Bethlehem and Calvary is the divine in action for your salvation. This is the heart of the eternal brought near, made bare, for you. Receive this Jesus, and you receive into your own being the life of the spiritual world. Adore Him, and it is the everlasting Godhead you are adoring. (Strong Name 255-56)

Finally, Stewart displayed an authoritative use of Scripture by declaring the authority of Scripture forthrightly. In "God and the Fact of Suffering", he acknowledged the Bible as divine revelation. He implied the authority of Christ as equal to the authority of Scripture (Strong Name 133). He further implied a trustworthiness of Scripture when he said that suffering ". . . is as real as the stones that killed Stephen, as real as the nails they drove into the flesh of Christ" (Strong Name 134). In the "Strong Name of the Trinity" he wrestled with the theological construct of the trinity. He said,

It all began in the New Testament. It began in the experience of the post-Pentecost Church. It began quite simply and intuitively and untheologically. It began when men made this discovery--that they could not say all they meant by the name "God" until they had said Father, Son, Spirit. (Strong Name 251)

Stewart's method of interpretation proved sound with no apparent use of allegory. Unlike the other preachers, he presented his exposition through inductive preaching, offering little verse-by-verse exposition. Nevertheless, his sermons unquestionably rendered an interpretation of his pericope. His blending of Scripture and the use of biblical illustrations within his sermons confirm that he embraced the authority of Scripture.

2) *A Christological emphasis* -- Stewart consistently centered his preaching on Christ. In five of the six sermons in this study he emphasized the central role of Christ in Scripture, stressing particularly his redemptive work on the cross. Specifically, he underscored the transformational and redemptive power of Christ.

In "Why Be a Christian?" Stewart contended that Christ keeps one from experiencing a boring Christian life. He said,

Do you think the first disciples were ever bored in the company of Jesus? . . . Never! . . . What a thrilling companion he was! They would have gone through the world with Him if He had asked them. And when, after Pentecost, He did ask them, right through the world they went. He is the same thrilling Companion still. You never know what romance may happen next, when it is the Christ of God who is with you on the road. (Gates 24)

Stewart maintained a christological emphasis by noting the authority of Christ's words. In the first of three examples, he said,

The world used to say, "If you do not kill, nor steal, nor break the social code, that is all that is required of you." Then Jesus came. "I say, No!" declared Jesus. "If you have one angry thought, one scornful feeling, one hidden, lurking resentment against your brother" -- ah! how His words find us out -- "you are sinning against God!" (Gates 26)

In "Sacrifice and Song" Stewart portrayed Christ as the authoritative voice of Christianity. He asserted that,

It is the surrender of our will to a higher will. It is the crushing down of our personal inclinations that our duty to God may be supreme. It is the dedication of every dream and desire to the master of Christ. It is the consecration of life to the religion of the cross. And that is the costliest burnt offering of all. (Gates 37)

Thus Christ is the primary emphasis of every sermon because he is the authoritative voice of the faith presented in them.

In "God and the Fact of Suffering" Stewart proclaimed to his listeners an offer of release from the fear, guilt, and ignorance from suffering only because Christ alone gave him the authority to do so (Gates 133). He told them that they can find a light of victory in the midst of suffering, ". . . one light, far

steadier and brighter than all the rest: the light and love and victory of God on the face of Jesus Christ" (Gates 135). Again Christ surfaced as the focus of the sermon because Stewart presented him as the answer to life's problems and the final authority for all believers.

Finally, in "The True Simplicity" Stewart offered a thoroughly Christological sermon. Although he began with a discussion on the complexities of life, his purpose was to reveal the nature and power of Christ. At least half the sermon pertained to Christ. Over the course of four-and-one-half pages, Stewart elaborated on the simplicity one finds from following Christ. He stated that it was

. . . not primarily the simplicity that was in Jesus Himself, and that marked His earthly life; but the simplicity which ought to be in the hearts of those who love and trust and follow Him, the harmony and poise and unity of a character steel-true and blade-straight, the consistency of an undivided loyalty to the Lord of all good life. (Gates 216)

Stewart amplified further on the simplicity of Christ's life, the simplicity of Christ's speech, and the simplicity of Christ's soul (Gates 218-19). He concluded by asserting that loyalty to Christ leads to his kind of simplicity:

But see what happens when Christ comes in as the one controlling principle. Whenever a problem arises in your life, you have now one standard to refer it to for decisions; whenever any anxiety threatens, you have one unfailing refuge; and whenever rival claims grow loud, you have one Commander-in-chief of your soul to give the final ruling. That is the great simplification of life, that is the Golden Age come back again--an undivided heat at Jesus' feet. (Gates 218-19)

Evidence indicates that Stewart's sermons contained a Christological emphasis,

underscoring Christ as the authoritative voice of Christianity.

3) *An urgent existential appeal to the listeners to understand their life experiences in light of Scripture* -- Stewart's sermons contained a strong existential appeal to his listeners' need to understand their life experiences in light of Scripture. In the majority of his sermons Stewart began with profoundly important life issues: suffering, the complexities of life, disappointments, ethics, personal faithfulness to Christ, personal creeds, and so on. Within his discussions, Stewart used language meant to evoke an emotional response. The transformational power of a personal relationship with Christ surfaced as the central existential appeal in at least four of his sermons. In "Why Be a Christian?" Stewart asserted that a personal relationship with Christ gave one's life purpose and power. That purpose and power would help the Christian to live a holy life. He said,

With that purpose and that power, Christ integrates a man. No longer need he pass his days lamenting the burden and the chaos of a sadly divided personality, . . . . In Christ, he is a whole man now. Emotional health, moral health, spiritual health, they are all his. He is "holy." And for this --"who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord?" (Gates 28-29)

In "Sacrifice and Song" Stewart preached that an open life toward God made one's sacrifices meaningful (Gates 36). Nevertheless that open life could be found only in the context of a personal relationship or "friendship" with Christ. He wrote, "We need to recapture the thrill of the friendship of Jesus"(Gates 40).

For Stewart the very act of preaching carried an existential appeal. In

"God and the Fact of Suffering" he examined extensively the origins and nature of suffering. He emphatically denied that suffering comes from God, and urgently declared, "Therefore, my friend, if you have been vexing your soul with the idea that some suffering of yours is necessarily a punishment visited on you by God because of your sin, it is Christ who have given me authority to bid you put that dreadful thought away" (Strong Name 133). As the preacher claimed authority from Christ to preach, the sermon became existential in its delivery. Through preaching, Christ relates to listeners and impacts their lives profoundly.

A fine example of Stewart's existential appeal appeared in "The Strong Name of the Trinity". Albeit a doctrinal sermon, it contained existential appeals throughout. From the beginning Stewart asserted that the doctrine of the trinity did not originate strictly from within the walls of academia, ". . . but straight out of the experience of ordinary men and women" (Gates 251).

Stewart argued that redemption is the ultimate experience for the Christian. The only way to understand the concept of the trinity, or God's nature for that matter, was ". . . by standing on the vantage-point of redemption ground, by standing alone with Jesus at the viewpoint of Calvary. . ." (Gates 256).

Stewart preached this point adamantly:

You can never be absolutely sure that righteous love is on the throne of the universe, until you have met redeeming grace in the secret place of your own soul . . . you cannot experience the grace of Jesus, and ever doubt the love of God again. (Gates 258)

Stewart continued by making the distinction between believing in the trinity and

experiencing the reality of the trinity in one's life. That distinction was "God in you -- making your heart his dwelling-place" (Gates 258). He concluded with an appeal to the listener to experience personally the fullness of the trinity: "I beg you here and now to claim your rightful place within the blessing" (Gates 260). Data therefore indicate an urgent existential appeal in Stewart's sermons.

Alexander Maclaren, (1826-1910)

Alexander Maclaren was born in Glasgow, Scotland. His father, David Maclaren, a businessman and capable expositor, influenced him spiritually. In 1840, young Maclaren accepted Christ and was baptized into the fellowship of the Hope Street Baptist Church. In 1842, his family moved to London, and Maclaren enrolled in Stepney College. He became a leading student and graduated with honors in Hebrew and Greek.

In 1845, Maclaren graduated and began his ministry in Portland Chapel, a small church in an obscure location. Years later, he expressed gratitude for his time there, since it allowed him to prepare for his later ministry. In 1848, he received a call to preach at Union Chapel in Manchester, where he remained for forty five years. During that time, he earned the name "Maclaren of Manchester."

Maclaren worked hard to craft his preaching. Given to study, he read two Bible chapters a day in the original languages: one from the Old Testament and one from the New Testament. His sermon work came directly from Hebrew and Greek. Primarily an expositor, he allowed the Scriptures to



speak for themselves. He consistently used the "three point" pattern of sermon writing, although he did not force division. Maclaren did not consider himself a visiting pastor and refused speaking engagements outside his parish. A perfectionist and an idealist, he suffered from the delusion that his sermons lacked worth and would ruin the worship services and preaching meetings (Wiersbe 35-37).

The sermons in this study appeared in the three volume series, Sermons Preached in Manchester. The six sermons are: "Sons and Heirs", Romans 8:17; Faith in Christ, Acts 26:18; "What Makes a Christian: Circumcision or Faith", Galatians 5:6; "The Servant and the Son", John 8:35; The New Man, Ephesians 4:24; and The Toiling Christ, Mark 4:36-38.

Maclaren's sermons contained three consistent traits: 1) an authoritative use of Scripture, 2) a Christological emphasis 3) An urgent existential appeal to the listener to experience a personal transformation through personal faith in Christ. I present each trait separately.

*1) An authoritative use of Scripture, frequently presented as a three or four point exposition of his pericope --* Maclaren displayed an authoritative use of Scripture in three ways. First, he composed his sermons using his pericopes as their foundations. Although he usually began with introductory remarks, he established his pericope as the source of his sermons early on, sometimes within the first three paragraphs. In "Sons and Heirs" he cited Romans 8:17 as his pericope: "If children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ."

Making clear his intentions to preach solely on this verse, he stated, ". . . we shall be prepared to follow the Apostle's course of thought while he points out the conditions upon which the possession of this inheritance depends" (Manchester 1:68-69). Moreover, he referred to the passage he read as "his text", implying it as the sermon's source (Manchester 1:70).

Maclaren introduced "What Makes a Christian: Circumcision or Faith" with a discussion on the dynamics of the works/faith debate in the early Church. After a three-and-one-half page discussion, he said, "My text contains Paul's condensed statement of his whole position in the controversy. It tells us what he fought for, and why he fought, against the attempt to suspend union with Christ on an outward rite" (Manchester 2:210). Once again, Maclaren claimed the passages as "my text".

Maclaren departed from his typical introductory style in "The Servant and the Son". He began by discussing both the content and context of his passage.

Quoting John 8:35 -- "And the servant abideth not in the house forever; but the Son abideth forever." -- Maclaren established his pericope as the basis of the sermon by drawing contrasts between the nature of sonship and the nature of servanthood. He said, "Then comes the question, what application does Christ mean to be made of this general truth about the characteristic difference between service and sonship" (Manchester 3:34)? He maintained his pericope as the basis of his sermon by repeating it throughout (Manchester 3:36, 42, 47).

Second, Maclaren displayed an authoritative use of Scripture by blending scriptural language within the text of his sermons and by using biblical cross references. In "Sons and Heirs" he dealt with the impossibility of true fellowship between a Christian and a non-Christian:

"What fellowship hath Christ with Belial?" is not only applicable as a guide for our practical life, but points to the principle on which God's inheritance belongs to God's sons alone. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God;" and those only who love, and are children, to them alone does the Father come and does the Father belong. (Manchester 1:73)

In "Faith in Christ" Maclaren described the essence of faith as trust. He referred to Old Testament passages by saying, "If you look into the Old Testament, you will find constantly, 'Trust ye in the Lord forever;,' 'Put thy trust in Jehovah' " (Manchester 1:168). In "What Makes a Christian: Circumcision or Faith"? he discussed obedience as an outward expression of faith:

"Be ye imitators of God as dear children" is the pure and comprehensive dictate which expresses the aim of all devout men. "To keep His commandments" goes deeper than the mere external deeds. Were it not so, Paul's grand words would shrink to a very poor conception of religion, which would then have its shrine and sphere removed from the sacred recesses of the inmost spirit, to the dusty Bable of the market-place and the streets. (Manchester 2:212)

Maclaren's best examples of blending scriptural language appeared in "The Servant and the Son". On fourteen occasions he either blended Scripture or made biblical cross references. In this sermon he cited John 8:34 and 36 (Manchester 3:34-35, 46), Matthew 12:29, Mark 3:27 (Manchester 3:37), Romans 2:14 (Manchester 3:38), Luke 8:30ff (Manchester 3:41), Luke 4:18

(Manchester 3:43), John 8:29 (Manchester 3:43), John 1:18 (Manchester 3:43), Hebrews 7:26 (Manchester 3:44), Galatians 4:5 (Manchester 3:45), John 16:78 (Manchester 3:45), Hebrews 7:24 (Manchester 3:46), and Romans 8:15 (Manchester 3:46). In every instance, Maclaren either blended scriptural language to tie into his pericope or he used a biblical cross reference to buttress his interpretation of the pericope.

Third, Maclaren displayed an authoritative use of Scripture by engaging in sound exegesis. In "Faith in Christ" he preached from the last clause of Acts 26:18 -- "Faith that is in me." He set the context of his pericope when he explained that Christ spoke these words to Paul on the Damascus road: "The words spoken then are the germ of all Paul's epistles, the key-note to which all his writings are but the melody that follows, the mighty voice of which all his teaching is but the prolonged echo" (Manchester 1:164). Maclaren thus understood this context, not only as the context for exegeting his text but also for understanding Paul's theology.

Maclaren also engaged in sound exegesis in "What Makes a Christian: Circumcision or Faith"? He elaborated on the historical background of the works/faith debate in the early Church (Manchester 2:208), noting the theological and biblical issues. He noted in particular the central question of Christian identity: must one who is a Gentile first become a Jew in order to rightly become a Christian? Drawing from the contrasting views of James and Paul, Maclaren exegetes the theological relationship between faith and works:

The one speaks of the essential of Christianity as faith, the other as works. They are only striking the stream at different points, one at the fountain-head, one far down its course among the haunts of men. They both preach that faith must be "faith that worketh," not a barren assent to a dogma, but a living trust that brings forth fruits in the life. Paul believes as much as James that faith without works is dead, and demands the keeping of the commandments as indispensable to all true Christianity. James believes as much as Paul that works without faith are of none effect. So all three of these great teachers of the Church are represented in this text, to which each of them might seem to have contributed a word embodying his characteristic type of doctrine. (Manchester 2:217)

In "The New Man" Maclaren exegeted Ephesians 4:24: "And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." Part of his exegesis included a literary-linguistic treatment of the clause "true holiness." He demonstrated a sound exegesis when he noted the work of other interpreters:

If you will look at the margins of some Bibles, you will see that our translators have placed there a rendering, which, as is not unfrequently the case, is decidedly better than that adopted by them in the text. Instead of "true holiness," the literal rendering is "holiness of truth"--and the apostle's purpose in the expression is not to particularize the quality, but the origin of the "holiness." It is "of truth," that is, "produced by" the holiness which flows from the truth as it is in Jesus, of which he has been speaking a moment before. (Manchester 3:141)

Maclaren elaborated further that Christ is the origin of truth as revealed in the gospels. "The Gospel is the great means of this change, because it is the great means by which He who works the change comes near to our understanding and our hearts" (Manchester 3:141). Thus, the gospel carries an inherent authority.

Maclaren engaged in narrative exegesis in "The Toiling Christ". Taking Mark 4:36-38 as his pericope, Maclaren examined the humanity of Christ, noting his physical need for rest. Citing the clause in verse 36 which says, "they took him even as he was in the ship", Maclaren called upon the expertise of his contemporaries:

And many expositors suppose that in the very form of that phrase there is suggested the extreme of weariness and exhaustion which He suffered, after the hard day's toil. Whether that be so or no, the swiftness of the move to the little boat, although there was nothing in the nature of danger or of imperative duty to hurry them away, and His going on board without a moment's preparation, leaving the crowd on the beach, seem most naturally accounted for by supposing that He had come to the last point of physical endurance, and that His frame, worn out by the hard day's work, needed one thing -- rest. (Manchester 3:292)

Maclaren also demonstrated an understanding of the context of the passage in light of the book of Mark. He noted the traditional understanding of Mark's gospel as "the Gospel of the servant of God" (Manchester 3:293), thereby indicating the need to consider Christ's humanity. Maclaren recognized that in spite of its brevity, Mark's Gospel contains "a multitude of minute traits" blended within itself (Manchester 3:293). He pointed out that Mark used the words "immediately", "straightway", "forthwith" and "anon" (all King James words) interchangeably. Maclaren described these words as

. . . translations of one expression. You will find, if you glance over the first, second, or third chapters at your leisure, that it comes in at every turn. Take these instances which strike one's eye at the moment, "Straightway he forsook their nets," "Immediately his fame spread abroad throughout all the region," "Forthwith they entered into the house Simon's mother," "Anon, they tell him of her," "Immediately the fever left her," And so it goes on

throughout the whole story, a picture of a constant succession of rapid acts of mercy and love. (Manchester 3:294-95)

Maclaren's best examples of exegesis appear in "The Servant and the Son". He began by quoting John 8:35 as his pericope, setting its context at the onset:

I must first ask your attention to a remark or two on what I conceive to be the force and connection of this passage. There is nothing in the words themselves requiring explanation or illustration. They are simple and plain enough; but their bearing on what precedes and follows, and the application which they were intended to have present very considerable difficulty. (Manchester 3:33)

Once he set the historical context for his pericope, he began his exposition of the text by establishing the immediate grammatical context of his passage. He discussed the preceding verse, John 8:34, noting how its grammatical nuances related to his chosen text. Maclaren therefore clarified the meaning of the words *sons* and *servants* by repudiating the notion that they must be understood allegorically. He argued,

. . . it seems impossible to accept the ordinary explanation of the words, which wrenches them forcibly apart from the preceding verse, and disconnects them from the conclusion which our Lord finds on them in the subsequent verse, whilst it brings in a wholly irrelevant thought about the Jews being turned out of Canaan, because they were slaves and not sons of God. . . . [The] immediate application is meant to be the slaves of sin, of whom He has just been speaking, would the words so referred yield an appropriate and adequate sense? (Manchester 3:33)

Thus Maclaren's sermons offer no indication that he approached or interpreted his texts allegorically, or his texts by spiritualizing them.

2) *A Christological emphasis* -- Maclaren consistently emphasized Christ

in his preaching. In five of the six sermons in this study he stressed the central role of Christ, the authority of Christ, the preeminence of Christ, and Christ's power to transform lives. Although all sermons in this study are based on New Testament texts, Maclaren *did* preach from the Old Testament. Nevertheless, the titles of the six sermons under study indicate an implied focus upon Christ.

"*The Toiling Christ*" is entirely Christological. Maclaren wrote it to exemplify the humanity of Christ. Throughout the sermon, Maclaren offered numerous illustrations of Christ's human needs and physical limitations. He wrote it hoping to invest his listeners' lives with a sense of "that reality" (Manchester 3:291). Driving home this point, he said that Christ

. . . lived and toiled, and bore weariness and exhaustion, and counted every moment as worthy to be gained up and precious, as to be filled with deeds of love and kindness, because wherever He went, and whatsoever He set His hand to, he had the one consciousness of a great task laid upon Him by a loving Father whom He loved, and whom, therefore, it was His joy and His blessedness to serve. (Manchester 3:300).

Maclaren's sermons also indicate the preeminence of Christ in his preaching. In "*Faith in Christ*" he states unequivocally that "Christ came not to *spea*k the Gospel, but *to be* the Gospel" (Manchester 1:163). Christ stands not merely at the forefront of the gospel, but embodies the gospel. Maclaren preached,

In the first place then THE OBJECT OF FAITH IS CHRIST. "Faith that is in me," which is directed towards Christ as its object. Christianity is not merely a system of truths about God, nor a code of morality deducible from these. In its character of a revelation, it is the revelation of God in the person of His Son. Christianity in the soul is not the belief of these truths about God, still less the



acceptance and practice of these pure ethics, but the affiance and the confidence of the whole spirit fixed upon the redeeming, revealing Christ. (Manchester 1:166)

Ultimately Maclaren voiced his hope that his listeners would grasp the reality that Christ is the object of their faith rather than merely the truths recorded in Scripture. In Christ all truth finds its true context (Manchester 1:167).

Maclaren left no question regarding the preeminence of Christ. He declared in "The Servant and the Son" that a child of God must first believe in Christ (Manchester 3:36). He emphasized the preeminence of Christ when he said,

It is Christ alone who makes us sure that this universal condition [original sin] is yet an unnatural one, from which restoration is possible for us all. He alone shows us that the black walls of the prison-house where we toil, solid seeming though they be, high above our power to scale, and clammy with the sighs of a thousand generations, are undermined and tottering. Deliverance is possible. (Manchester 3:37)

In "Sons and Heirs", which dealt with the means by which God adopts his children, Maclaren also declared the absolute authority and preeminence of Christ when he said "No spiritual birth without Christ" (Manchester 1:77). He also preached that Christ alone brings life and regeneration:

Christ comes, comes to make you and me live again as we never lived before; live possessors of God's love; live tenanted and ruled by a Divine Spirit; live with affections in our hearts which we never could kindle there; live with purposes in our souls which we never could put there. And I want to urge this thought, that the centre point of the Gospel is this regeneration; because if we understand, as we are too much disposed to do, that the Gospel simply comes to make me live better, to work out a moral reformation, -- why, there is no need for a Gospel at all. If the change were a simple change of habit and action on the part of men, we could do

without a Christ. (Manchester 1:77)

Thus he implied not only the preeminence of Christ, but Christ's power to transform lives.

Maclaren drove home his point by emphasizing this transforming power of Christ in "The New Man". Basing this sermon on Ephesians 4:24, he preached that Paul intended that verse to convey "the radical transformation and renovation of the whole moral nature as being the purpose of the revelation of God in Christ" (Manchester 3:127). Maclaren asserted that biblical scholars and teachers all had one great theme among them: ". . . that we should become new men in Jesus Christ" (Manchester 3:127).

Maclaren further stated that an unchanged life and heart indicate lack of trust in the gospel. Failure to respond in faith indicates a lack of understanding Christ's purpose. He said,

The great purpose of all the work of Christ -- His life, His sorrows, His passion, His resurrection, His glory, His continuous operation by the Spirit and the Word -- is to make new men who shall be just and devout, righteous and holy. (Manchester 3:134)

Christ accomplished his purpose, Maclaren argued, by speaking his Word:

"The Gospel," he said, "is the great means of this change, because it is the great means by which He who works the change comes near to our understandings and our hearts" (Manchester 3:141). Thus Maclaren established

again the authority of Christ inherent in Scripture and that he possesses transforming power and preeminence throughout. Because Christ claims this transforming power, he therefore offers it freely.

3) *An urgent existential appeal to the listener to experience a personal transformation by way of personal faith in Christ* -- With the emphasis Maclaren placed on the transforming power of Christ, he found it natural to make an appeal to his listener to experience it. The theme of personal spiritual transformation by the power of Christ permeates his sermons.

In "The Servant and the Son" Maclaren offered a word of hope to the sinner, both notorious and obscure, saying that ". . . such a character need not be perpetual" (Manchester 3:35). The sinner need not wander in his or her condition any longer since ". . .for all freedom is possible" (Manchester 3:39). Maclaren proclaimed that freedom is found in none other than Christ, and he urged his listener to lay hold of "that living central truth of the Gospel, and [I] beseech you, dear brethren, to lay to heart the solemn fact of our need, and the blessed answer to it which is given to us all in Christ" (Manchester 3:44).

Concluding, he announced that such freedom occurs when

. . . through Christ, we receive the adoption, and "cry, Abba, Father!" This filial spirit, the spirit of life which was in Christ, and this alone, "makes us free from the law of sin and death." The only way by which a man is reclaimed from obedience to sin is by his leaning to call God Father, and by receiving into his evil nature the life, kindred with the paternal source, which owns no allegiance to his former taskmaster. The only way by which a man received that new life from God that has nothing do with sin, and that consciousness of kindred with God which makes the name "Father" natural to his heart, is by simple faith in Christ, who gives power to become sons of God to as many as receive Him. (Manchester 3:46)

Maclaren reiterated the need for personal transformation in "Sons and Heirs". As noted previously, Maclaren composed this sermon to explain how

the new birth brings one into a relationship with God through Christ. He warned his listeners that without this relationship they could not experience true communion with God (Manchester 1:73). True communion with God occurs only for those who love God. As he said,

For who can possess God but they who love Him? who can love, but they who know His love? who can have Him working in their hearts a blessed and sanctifying change, except the souls that lie thankfully quiet beneath the forming touch of his invisible hand, and like flowers drink in the light of His face in their joy. (Manchester 1:72)

Maclaren continued, saying that such a relationship signals "sonship," a result of the new birth. Nevertheless, the new birth never occurs apart from Christ. Moreover, Christ becomes involved in one's life only by faith (Manchester 1:78-79). Thus Maclaren brought into the picture an urgent existential appeal: *to experience Christ's transformational power through faith in Christ*. As he affirmed,

Unless we are wedded to Christ by the simple act of trust in His mercy and His power, Christ is *nothing to us*. Do not let us, my friends, blink that deciding test of the whole matter. We may talk about Christ forever; we may set forth aspects of His work great and glorious. He may be to us much that is very precious; but the one question, the question of questions, on which everything depends, is, Am I trusting to Him as my Divine Redeemer? Am I resting in Him as the Son of God? (Manchester 1:79-80)

Maclaren also dealt with the transforming power of Christ by preaching that experience as central to the gospel's purpose. In "The New Man", entirely Christological in focus and existential in appeal to the listeners, he said that "the great purpose of the Gospel is our moral renewal" (Manchester 3:128).

Such moral renewal is part and parcel of God's will for us. Maclaren stated further,

The Gospel is the consequence and manifestation of the love of God, which delights to be known and possessed by loving souls, and being known changes them into its own likeness, which to know is to be happy, which to resemble is to be pure. (Manchester 3:129)

The great work of Christ, he stated, "is to make just men who shall be just and devout, righteous and holy" (Manchester 3:134).

Maclaren argued that this great work should be desired and experienced by all. One's faith in the power of Christ to do such work makes it effective in one's life. Nevertheless, this desire and faith must be personal and volitional:

And for us all of us, let us see that we lay to heart the large truths of this text, and give them that personal bearing without which they are of no avail. *I* need renovation in my inmost nature. Nothing can renew *my* soul but the power of Christ, who is *my* life. *I* am naked and foul. Nothing can cleanse and clothe but He. The blessed truth which reveals Him calls for *my* individual faith. And if *I* put *my* confidence in that Lord, He will dwell in *my* inmost spirit, and so sway *my* affections and mould *my* will that *I* shall be transformed into His perfect likeness. He begins with each of us, by bring the best robe to cast over the rags of the returning prodigals. He ends not with any who trust Him, until they stand amid the hosts of the heavens who follow Him clothed with fine linen clean and white, which is the righteousness of His Holy Ones. (Manchester 3:142-43)

Thus the evidence indicates that Maclaren's sermons contained an urgent existential appeal to the listener's need to experience transformation through a personal faith in Christ.

#### G. Campbell Morgan, (1863-1945)

G. Campbell Morgan birth took place in England. The son of a Baptist

preacher in Tetbury, Gloucestershire, and reared in Wales, Morgan received exposure to Welsh preaching. He never attended college nor did he receive any formal theological education. Ironically, at an early age the Wesleyan Methodist rejected him for showing little promise in preaching. Following this rejection, he became a Congregationalist in 1888 and served two small congregations after his ordination. In 1904, he accepted a call to Westminster Chapel in London and remained there until 1917. He returned in 1933, at the age of 69.

Influenced by the preaching of Dwight Moody and Charles Spurgeon, Morgan discovered a vocation in studying and teaching the Bible. From that study, his preaching became expository. He utilized what he called the "contextual principle" while doing sermonic work. He emphasized the need to understand the context of a passage. Fundamentally, he insisted on viewing a text as part of the whole of Scripture.

A prolific writer and convincing preacher, he preached to thousands in his lifetime. He wrote eleven pamphlets and sixty books including Preaching, a homiletics text book, and The Analyzed Bible, which would later become known as the Revised Standard Version. Scholars have compiled his sermons in a ten volume series entitled The Westminster Pulpit (Demaray, Pulpit Giants 113-16; Jeter, 339-40). The sermons in this study come from that series. The six sermons are: "The Limitations of Liberty", 1 Corinthians 6:12;10:23; "The Purpose of the Advent: To Prepare for a Second Coming", Hebrews 9:28;

Peace, Isaiah 9:6; Matthew 10:34; James 3:17; "The Beginning of Sin", Genesis 3; "Short Beds and Narrow Coverings", Isaiah 28:20; "The Faith That Cancels Fear, Deuteronomy 33:27.

Morgan's sermons contained three consistent traits: 1) an authoritative use of Scripture, 2) a Christological emphasis, and 3) An urgent existential appeal, usually presented in recognition of the human need to experience relationship with Christ. I present each trait separately.

1) *An authoritative use of Scripture* -- G. Campbell Morgan displayed an authoritative use of Scripture in three ways. First, Morgan practiced a sound exegesis when he handled Scripture. His sermons revealed his mastery of Greek and Hebrew. Typically, Morgan crafted his sermons in a two-fold manner: first, an exegetical discourse and, second, an expository discourse. He utilized what he called the "contextual principle," typically beginning a sermon by setting its context, either historical or grammatical or both. By doing so he established his pericope as the source of his sermons.

In "The Limitations of Liberty", he described the historical context in which his text was written. He depicted in detail the historical setting of the Corinthian Church, noting both the sacred and the secular dynamics within it (Westminster 1:13-15). Immediately following his historical treatment of the text, Morgan addressed its grammatical and literary contexts. He dealt specifically with the Greek word *παντα*, saying, "The Apostle made use of one word, *panta*. We must understand what it means if we are to perfectly realize the

measurement of Christian liberty. It is the plural form of a Greek word which simply means 'all' "(Westminster 1:15). To buttress his exegesis Morgan referred to Joseph Henry Thayer's explication of the word:

Theyer [sic] tells us that when the word stands in the plural without the article, it means all things of a certain definite totality, or the sum of things, the context showing what things are meant. In this Epistle the expression "all things" occurs no less than thirty times, and every time it is necessary, according to Theyer [sic], to interpret the meaning by the context. (Westminster 1:15)

In "Peace" Morgan set a literary and grammatical context for his pericope. Using Isaiah 9:6, "His name shall be called . . . Prince of Peace;" Matthew 10:34, "I came not to send peace, . . . but a sword," and James 3:17, "The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable," he tied together these passages by examining their grammatical nuances. Morgan explained the Prince of Peace is called such because the grammatical structure of the Hebrew implies that he possesses an everlasting and eternal element to his being. Second, because he is eternal he is pure, and that signals judgement. Third, the Prince, himself being the pure and perfect judge, made all things pure in order to destroy that which diminishes peace (Westminster 5:9-16). Morgan concluded with a thematic application of peace in the lives of his listeners (Westminster 5:17-22).

Morgan immediately set a context for his pericope in "Short Beds and Narrow Coverings". Citing Isaiah 28:20, "For the bed is shorter than that a man can stretch himself on it; and the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself in it." he set the literary context by telling his listeners that the lan-



guage was "fine satire" (Westminster 10:9). He said,

To understand this text in its final application and in its perpetual meaning, we must first consider the context. The prophet was addressing a people who had been created as a people by God, a people who had been familiar from childhood with the law and with the testimony. He was addressing a people, moreover, who owed all their material prosperity to Him. Yet, he was speaking to a people whose life in its underlying impulses and its perpetual mode was the life of godlessness. (Westminster 10:9)

For the remainder of the sermon Morgan interpreted the passage and made personal application for his listeners.

In "The Faith That Cancels Fear" Morgan's command of the original language appeared vividly. Citing as his pericope Deuteronomy 33:27 -- "The eternal God is they dwelling place, and underneath are the everlasting arms"-- he exegeted the words *eternal* and *everlasting*.

Morgan noted that in the text the word *eternal* described God. He also noted that the writer used the "great name of God. . . Elohim" (Westminster 10:323). Nevertheless, Morgan did not exegete the name Elohim; rather he focused on the meaning of the word *eternal*. He preached,

The arresting word in the text is not the name of God. . . . The arresting word is the word which we have translated eternal. It does not mean, for instance, what the word "everlasting" means. . . the word means literally the front, whether of place or of time. Absolutely, it means the forefront. Relatively, it means the east, the place of sunrise, the place where the day began. The great concerning God which this particular word suggests is that He is the God of the beginning. . . . The eternal God, the God of the morning, the God of the morning when the stars sang together over the initiation of a new mystery in the universe on which they had never looked before--that God of the beginning is thy dwelling place. (Westminster 10:323-24)

Morgan continued his exegesis by examining the word *everlasting*. He made a connection between the first assertion in the text, "The eternal God is thy dwelling place," and the second assertion, "And underneath are the everlasting arms of God" (Westminster 10:326). He noted that the word *underneath* is found only at this place in the English Bible. The Hebrew word, however, is found in other places and must be understood in its simplicity. He said,

The root idea is that of depressing, and humbling, and beating down. Underneath is the uttermost limit of the depressing and the humbling and beating down. How far down can your imagination or your experience carry you? Those depths, those profundities of life are suffering and weakness and death--how far do you know them? How deep have you been into life? How profound has been your experience of sorrow? How far have you sink in some hour of weakness? How nigh have you come unto death? When you have reminded yourselves of that lowest level--and some soul may say, I was never deeper down than now--then listen, "Underneath," lower than that, "are the everlasting arms." (Westminster 10:326)

Morgan drove home the contrasting themes between *eternal* and *everlasting* by repeating his pericope, or parts of it, no less than nine times (Westminster 10:324, 326, 327, 329, 332, 333). In each instance he used this repetition to clarify and amplify the thrust of the sermon: *personal trust in the claims of Scripture*. Thus Morgan's exegesis displayed an authoritative use of Scripture through a sound exegesis and his mastery of Greek and Hebrew.

Morgan displayed an authoritative use of Scripture in a second way by blending scriptural language within the text of his sermons and by making numerous biblical cross references. In "The Purpose of the Advent" Morgan

made five biblical cross references to the second coming of Christ. He referred first, to 1 Thessalonians 4:16 (Westminster 1:341-42); second, James 5:8 (Westminster 1:342); third, 1 Peter 1:13 (Westminster 1:342); fourth, to 1 John 3:2-3 (Westminster 1:342); and fifth, to Jude 20 (Westminster 1:342). Morgan also referred to John 3:16 and 3:19 to explain that the purpose of the first advent was the redemption of humanity (Westminster 1:344). He cited Hebrews 9:27 to correlate the second advent with the judgment of Christ (Westminster 1:347).

In "The Beginning of Sin", based entirely on Genesis 3, Morgan drew from New Testament passages to explain its meaning. He observed that the treatment of the serpent in the New Testament gave light to understanding the serpent in Genesis 3. He said, "In the wilderness, long millenniums afterwards, I see another Man being tempted; and I hear as the first temptation, ' If thou art the Son of God, command these stone become bread" (Westminster 5:340). Morgan also made a comparison between the language of that chapter and the language of 1 John. He blended scriptural language by saying,

Let me interpret the story of Genesis by the language of the mystic Apostle John. The lust of the flesh; she saw that it was good for food. The lust of the eyes; she saw that it was pleasant to the eyes. The vain-glory of life; she saw that it was to be desired to make one wise. That was the three fold human emotion under the spell and power of which man capitulated in the presence of temptation. (Westminster 5:345)

Morgan wrote "The Faith That Cancels Fear" to help his listeners manage their fear of the future. A prime example of his blending of scriptural

language appeared when he treated the issue of Christ's return and judgement: "I go to the end of my New Testament, and I read a prophetic word concerning the Church, and it is this, He, the Son of God, the Christ of God, God manifest, He shall present her faultless 'before the presence of His glory' " (Westminster 10:330). Morgan continued to blend scriptural language and make cross references, while at the same time addressing the issue of fear:

When I turn to that third realm of fear that I hardly like to mention, our fears concerning the Christ, it is well that we let Him speak to us again, for His own words are the only words we need to hear, the only words that can be powerful: "I am . . . the Living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades." Does He seem to be dead again? Does it seem as though this age, with all its vaunted progress, has nailed Him to the Cross anew? Does it seem as though we have wrapped Him in grave clothes, and placed Him in a tomb, and rolled a stone to the door? He is saying, I am alive, I am alive forevermore. . . . (Westminster 10:330)

Morgan's use of cross references and his blending of scriptural language within the text of his sermons indicate an authoritative use of Scripture and his understanding of the authority and primacy of Scripture.

Morgan displayed an authoritative use of Scripture a third way through forthright declaration of the Bible's authority. He noted this element in three sermons. In *The "Beginning of Sin"* Morgan referred to Genesis as "the first in the Divine Library on the subject of sin," indicating the Bible's sacred origin (Westminster 5:338). In "The Limitations of Liberty" Morgan applied the exegetical principle that "Scripture interprets Scripture" to expound his pericope from 1 Corinthians 6:12 and 10:23:

I interpret the Apostle's words only by his own writing; I would not have dared to say he meant so much if I had not taken all his argument and followed the movement of the phrase to this great consummation. (Westminster 1:19)

Morgan preached with no uncertainty about his high view of Scripture. In "The Purpose of the Advent" he stated forthrightly his convictions regarding this issue:

Think of the fact stated in my text: "Christ . . . shall appear a second time." There is no escape, other than by casuistry, from the simple meaning of these words. The first idea conveyed by them is that of an actual personal advent of Jesus yet to be. To spiritualize a statement like this and to attempt to make application of it in any other than the way in which a little child would understand it is to be driven, one is almost inclined to say, to dishonesty with the simplicity of the Scriptural declaration. (Westminster 1:340)

In the following paragraph Morgan revealed his frustration with people who did not hold the same high view of the Bible:

This statement is not peculiar to the letter from which it is taken. It is the teaching of the whole of the New Testament. To the man who has given up the New Testament as final, authoritative, and infallible, I have no appeal. We have no common ground. If you are attempting to erect a Christian structure upon your philosophizing I have no time to argue with you. I respect your conviction, I believe in your honesty, but I part company with you. To me the New Testament is the living, final, absolutely infallible Word of God. (Westminster 1:340-41)

Throughout his sermons Morgan consistently practiced a methodology based on an historical-linguistic-grammatical approach to exegesis. He gave no evidence of an allegorical exegesis or a spiritualizing of Scripture. Moreover, he left no doubt as to his regard for Scripture. His sound exegesis and his blending of Scripture within the text of his sermons along with numerous biblical

cross-references and his high regard for the primacy of Scripture indicate an authoritative use of Scripture in his sermons.

2) *A Christological emphasis* -- Morgan consistently centered his preaching on Christ. Although all of his sermons related to Christ in some way, several of them gave specific indication of this characteristic. In "Peace" Morgan portrayed Christ as "the Prince of Peace". Citing Isaiah 9:6, he said,

Whatever local meaning there may have been in the words of the prophet; whatever first application there may have been in his own domestic relationships, it is quite certain that he looked through, and saw emerging, amid the mists somehow--how far I think he could not have told--the figure of One, a great and wonderful Deliverer, Whom he described by the four titles, Wonderful Counsellor, God-hero, Father of eternity, and finally Prince of peace; which titles constitute a key to interpretation of Scripture, and of all human history so far as that history has been written, either in what we call sacred or profane literature. (Westminster 5:9-10)

In the remainder of the sermon Morgan completed his portrait of Christ.

Morgan also maintained a Christological emphasis in "The Purpose of the Advent". He proposed that the first advent of Christ prepared the Church for his second: "All the things of which we have spoken as constituting the values of the first Advent were necessary in order that there should be another Advent" (Westminster 1:339). He argued that instituted our salvation at his first coming and would consummate it with his return. The second advent will occur profoundly different than the first. According to Morgan, the context of the pericope "declares that Jesus was manifested in the consummation of the ages to bear sins. That we have considered. [The writer] now says that Christ . . . shall appear a second time, apart from sin" (Westminster 1:343).

In "Short Beds and Narrow Coverings" Morgan preached about the failure of the people of Israel to maintain a vital relationship with God and how they found themselves spiritually bankrupt (Westminster 10:9-11). He observed that the Church still falls short of its potential. The remedy for such spiritual depletion is attachment to Christ:

Unless we have found rest for our souls in Jesus, we have found no rest. Unless we have taken refuge in Him, we have no covering that hides us. . . . In Jesus we may have rest today, and refuge forever. Out of Him there is no rest today, and there will be no refuge in the great and awful day of God. (Westminster 10:13-14).

The evidence presented indicates that Morgan's sermons contained a Christological emphasis.

3) *An urgent existential appeal, usually presented as a recognition of the human need to experience a relationship with Christ* -- Morgan's sermons contained an urgent existential appeal, usually presented as a recognition of the human need to experience a relationship with Christ. In some instances his language carried a sense of urgency. In "The Purpose of the Advent" he made several urgent appeals: "*Now* hear my text" (Westminster 1:345); "Christ *shall* appear. Glorious Gospel!"; "He *is* coming! That is my hope and confidence" (Westminster 1:350) ( all italics mine). He concluded with an urgent appeal to believe in Christ's return:

We stand tonight between the Advents. Our relation to the first creates our relation to the second. To receive Him as rejected is to be received by Him at His coronation. To accept His estimate of sin and share in the value of His atoning work is to enter into His coming administration of righteousness. To trust in the first is

to wait for the second. (Westminster 1:351)

Morgan made similar appeals in "Peace". He referred to the national unrest of his day, attributing it to "Forgetfulness of God and that which is the result -- the enthronement of Mammon" (Westminster 5:19). He alluded to the "empty churches, our broken-down family altars, our neglected Bibles" as symptoms of the spiritual dryness of his society (Westminster 5:19). He closed with an urgent appeal to his listeners:

And ye, let the final word this morning be the personal word. What is the Prince of peace saying to thee, to thee, Oh heart of mine, Oh soul of mine? I feel as though it were almost impossible, and as though it would be almost an impertinence to ask in the case of any other man, and yet let every man ask it, What says the Prince of peace say to thee, Oh heart of mine, Oh soul of mine? (Westminster 5:22)

Morgan's existential appeal to his listeners appeared explicitly in "Short Beds and Narrow Coverings". The entire sermon appealed to his listeners' cognizance of their own spiritual shortfalls and need to renew their relationships with Christ. As noted previously in this chapter, Morgan preached that "Unless we have found rest for our souls in Jesus, we have found no rest" (Westminster 10:13).

He stated his main thrust in the sermon and maintained this thought throughout.

Morgan introduced this existential appeal by repudiating two ideas. First, he repudiated the idea that past experience was enough for a vital Christian life. He preached,

But someone . . . will say, Ten years ago -- fifteen, twenty -- I gave myself to Christ, and I am all right. The fact that Jesus



saved them yesterday is in itself no use now. Unless I am able to link on to my past tense a present tense, then woe is me, for I am undone. . . . I am afraid the Church of Jesus Christ is full of men and women who are living on a past experience. . . . (Westminster 10:19)

Second, Morgan repudiated the idea that God was "too good" to punish anyone. He urgently warned his listeners,

Here is a man who tells me that he is trusting God, that he is casting himself on God, that God is too good to punish him. Oh, man, God is too good to let you go unpunished! There are men who if they passed into heaven as they are would turn it into hell. God writes on the portal of His home, "There shall in no wise enter into it anything unclean, or he that maketh an abomination and a lie." God is so good that He will not let anything that works abomination into His dwelling-place and home. If we will accept the conditions of His heaven, in love to heaven, in love to truth, in love to the well-being of multitudes, He must shut us out, He must visit on us the vials of His wrath, the punishment we have positively and deliberately chosen. (Westminster 10:20).

Morgan ended the sermon with this exhortation: "Turn from your false rest, and come to the true; and you will find in God all that your soul is needing now, and all that it will need in the last unutterable day" (Westminster 10:22). The evidence indicates that Morgan's sermons contained an urgent existential appeal to his listeners.

## CHAPTER 5

## Summary and Conclusions

Based on a content analysis of thirty sermons -- six each by John Wesley, Charles H. Spurgeon, James S. Stewart, Alexander Maclaren, and G. Campbell Morgan -- I identified three historic marks which define biblical preaching: 1) an authoritative use of Scripture; 2) a Christological emphasis; and 3) an urgent existential appeal to the listener to experience a personal spiritual transformation. These characteristics appeared consistently throughout the sermons under study.

Regarding an authoritative use of Scripture, I found that the preachers considered the Bible God's self-revelation and the authoritative source of their sermons. The preachers intended their sermons to interpret their pericopes. They practiced sound exegetical principles, primarily the historical-grammatical-literary approach to interpretation. Moreover, they embraced the principle that "Scripture interprets Scripture," as demonstrated by scriptural cross referencing and the use of biblical illustrations.

Regarding a Christological emphasis, I found that the preachers saw a Christological relevance to their pericopes and they expressed a Christological significance in their interpretations. Their sermons emphasized the preeminence of Christ in Scripture, the power of the cross and the resurrection, Christ's authority as the second part of the godhead, and his power to transform people's lives. They preached a simple kerygma: Christ crucified.

Regarding an urgent existential appeal to the listener to experience a

personal spiritual transformation, I found that the preachers crafted their sermons to appeal that their people experience personal transformation in their lives. They stressed both the need for and benefits of transformation. They emphasized the role of faith and the dimension of personal decision in this experience. Their appeals varied: some preachers exhorted their listeners, some implored, and some related to their listeners' own place in life. Nevertheless, they stated their appeals urgently and clearly.

#### Evaluation of Data

The historians discussed in Chapter 2 identified certain preferred qualities of biblical preachers and biblical preaching. These qualities included such elements as (1) the understanding and acceptance of the Bible as God's self-revelation, authoritative in all matters of Christian faith and practice; (2) a preferred hermeneutical methodology based on an historical-grammatical-literary interpretation rather than an allegorical interpretation; (3) a radical transformation in the lives of both the preachers and their listeners as a result of their encounter with Scripture; (4) a significant impact on the lives of their congregations by preaching in the vernacular of their day, and (5) a consistent preaching of Christocentric sermons. Data presented in this study reflected accurately the first, second, and fifth characteristics as historic marks of biblical preaching.

Data did not explicitly indicate a radical transformation in the lives of either the preachers under study in this chapter or in the lives of their listeners.

It did imply, however, that the existential appeals the preacher made to their listeners were motivated by their own spiritual transformation. Moreover, data did not explicitly indicate a significant impact on the lives of their congregations by preaching in the vernacular of the day. Because these preachers under study were English-speaking Protestants who preached in English two to four centuries after the Reformation, preaching in the vernacular is moot. Little evidence appeared in their sermons which displayed a concern for this issue. Nevertheless, occasional remarks appeared which rendered a sense of the life and times in which the preachers lived, thus making their sermons communicable.

### Synthesis of Findings

The evidence presented in this chapter indicates that the preachers regarded Scripture as divine revelation and the authoritative source of their preaching. On the whole they appeared to follow the Princeton School, treating texts as concrete and factual. All preachers began their sermons with a passage intended as their pericope. Their sermons interpreted those pericopes. On occasion their sermons contained paragraphs and sentences which consisted of wholesale declarations that Scripture was authoritative revelation (Wesley, "What is Man?"; Spurgeon, "Renewing Strength"; Stewart, "God and the Fact of Suffering"; Maclaren, "The New Man"; Morgan, "The Beginning of Sin"). Evidence found in sources other than their sermons confirms their convictions. Several of the preachers offered guidance and instruc-

tion to colleagues and students through personal letters, lectures, and textbooks.

John Wesley never questioned the authority of the Bible. He declared Scripture as divine revelation in "What is Man?" (Works 7:172). He amplified his view of scriptural authority further when he professed himself as "a man of one book:"

God himself has condescended to the way [to heaven]. He hath written it down in a book. O give me that book! At any price, give me the book of God! I have it: Here is knowledge enough for me. Let me be *homo unius libri*. (Works 5:3)

Wesley debated with Roman Catholics over the issue. He challenged the authority of the Pope and defended the sole authority of the Bible: "The Scripture, therefore, being delivered by men divinely inspired, is a rule sufficient of itself; So it neither needs, nor is capable of, any further addition" (Works 10:141). Wesley directed his preachers to preach the "whole of Scripture" (Works 11:490-93). In the preface to his "Notes on the New Testament", Wesley said,

The Scripture, therefore, of the Old and New Testaments is a most solid and precious system of divine truth. Every part is worthy of God and all together are one entire body, wherein is no defect, no excess. It is the fountain of heavenly wisdom, which that who are able to taste prefer to all writings of men, however wise or learned or holy. (Notes 403)

Like Wesley, Charles H. Spurgeon held a high view of Scripture. He believed that each sermon had a single purpose: to interpret the pericope. In Lectures to My Students he offered as a guideline that the body of the sermon

"should be congruous to the text. The discourse should spring out of the text as a rule, and the more evidently it does so the better. . ." (Lectures 115-16).

Spurgeon crafted his sermons as doctrinal expositions of his Scripture texts. His method of interpretation consisted of sound exegesis with an occasional spiritualizing of his text. He suggested that the Bible contained numerous illustrations appropriate for "enforcing the truths of the Gospel . . ." (Lectures 67).

Spurgeon refused to see Scripture as myth or pure allegory. He warned his students to "never pervert Scripture to give it a novel and so-called spiritual meaning, lest you be found guilty of that solemn curse with which the roll of inspiration is guarded and closed" (Lectures 164). He stated prophetically,

The Bible is not a compilation of clever allegories or instructive poetical traditions; it teaches literal facts and reveals tremendous realities; let your full persuasion of this truth be manifest to all who attend your ministry. It will be an ill day for the church if the pulpit should even appear to indorse (sic) the sceptical (sic) hypothesis that Holy Scripture is but the record of a refined mythology, in which the globules of truth are dissolved in seas of poetic and imaginary detail. (Lectures 165)

James Stewart also voiced his convictions regarding scriptural authority in his book, Heralds of God. He admonished his students to "let the Bible speak its own message" (Heralds of God 109). He advised them that a ministry of biblical preaching would be long lived:

Certainly, if you preach your own theories and ideas, using Scripture texts merely as pegs to hang them on, you will soon be at the end of your resources--and the sooner the better. But if you will let the Scriptures speak their own message, if you will realize that every passage or text has its own quite distinctive meaning, you

will begin to feel that the problem is not lack of fresh material, but the very embarrassment of riches. . . . (Heralds of God 46)

Moreover, Stewart, so strongly convinced of the authoritative power of the Bible, suggested that even when a sermon seemed incoherent or unrelated to the text, "the Word of the Lord on which it is based will not return unto Him void" (Heralds of God 161).

G. Campbell Morgan addressed the issues of scriptural authority and its revelatory nature in his textbook, Preaching. He said that "preachers are to preach the Word," meaning the Bible (Preaching 17). Morgan revealed his convictions about the authority of Scripture when he said,

And that is what we have to preach. God's revelation, the truth, as it has been expressed. We must enter upon the Christian ministry on the assumption that God has expressed Himself in His Son, and that the Bible is the literature of that self expression. The minute we lose our Bible in that regard, we have lost Christ as the final revelation . . . . Let me speak with profound respect of the men who have suffered this loss. Here is a man who for some reason refuses the authority of his Bible, but says he will stand by Christ. What Christ? (Preaching 18)

Morgan consistently assumed the authority of Scripture. He defined preaching as "nothing else than bringing God's message, as it is found in the Oracles Divine. When the sermon has a text which is authoritative, all the rest is to be tested by it" (Preaching 41).

Clearly these preachers under study understood Scripture as God's self revelation and authoritative in all matters of faith. Evidence of this understanding appears both in their sermons and other related primary sources. Therefore, an understanding of Scripture as God's self revelation and authoritative in

all matters of faith on the part of these preachers signals an authoritative use of Scripture and should be considered, in part, an historic mark of biblical preaching.

The preachers' understanding of Scripture as God's self revelation and authoritative in all matters of faith buttressed their preferential use of a hermeneutical methodology based on an historical-grammatical-literary interpretation. Data indicate further that each preacher practiced a sound method of exegesis, with only one few noted exceptions. Consistently, each preacher practiced the hermeneutical principle that "Scripture interprets Scripture."

Wesley's sermons contained material which indicate his concern for sound exegesis. "In Heaviness Through Manifold Temptations" Wesley deals with the meaning of the original languages (Works 6:94-95). In "What is Man?" he sets both the literary and historical context (Works 7:170-74). In "The New Creation" he defined the word *heaven* by utilizing a Greek word study (Works 6:289).

Kenneth Collins recognized Wesley's concern that the "pure Word of God be preached" in the churches. Collins cites a manuscript sermon, "On Corrupting the Word of God", wherein the young Wesley blames erroneous preaching first on the preacher by his " 'mixing it with the heresies of others or the fancies of his own brain' "; second, by his " 'mixing it with false interpretations' ," and third by adding to or detracting from it (92). Collins also notes that Wesley urged his Methodists to leave quietly any church where the fundamental doc-



trines of Scripture was not preached (92).

Wesley urged his preachers to preach the whole gospel, including both law and grace (Works 8:318). He gave this directive, not only to establish the authority of Scripture, but to help his preachers maintain a sound, biblical context. He advised them regarding interpretation, "Take care not to ramble; but keep to your text, and make out what you take in hand. Be sparing in allegorizing or spiritualizing" (Works 8:317). When confronted with a difficult passage to interpret, he said he prays for wisdom and "I then search after and consider parallel passages of Scripture, 'comparing spiritual things with spiritual' " (Works 5:3). In the preface to his "Notes on the Old Testament", he said his purpose in writing them was

. . . not to write sermons, essays, or set discourses upon any part of Scripture. It is not to draw inferences from the text, or to show what doctrines may be proved thereby. It is this: To give the direct, literal meaning of every verse, of every sentence, and as far as I am able, of every word in the oracles of God. I design only, like the hand of a dial, to point every man to this; not to take up his mind with something else, however excellent, but to keep his eye fixed upon the naked Bible, that he may read and hear it with understanding. (Notes 19)

Spurgeon, on the other hand, crafted his sermons as doctrinal expositions of Scripture, allowing his exegesis and exposition to permeate them. He counseled his students to practice sound exegesis and clear exposition: "Sound information on scriptural subjects your hearers crave for, and must have. Accurate explanations of Holy Scripture they are entitled to, and if you are 'an interpreter, one of a thousand,' a real messenger of heaven, you will yield them

plenteously" (Lectures 114).

Spurgeon's sermons contained numerous examples of his exegetical competence. In "The Drawings of Love" he exegeted the meaning of the phrase "I AM," and continuing with an exegesis of his entire pericope, phrase by phrase and word by word (New Park Street 63:194). In "The Star and the Wise Men" he exegeted the meaning of both the star and the appearance of the Magi (New Park Street 29:3-12). Herein he displayed a tendency to spiritualize the text (a discussion of this practice follows). In "Daily Blessings for God's People" he noted the Hebraic nuances of his text, giving attention to the grammatical concerns of his exegesis (New Park Street 62:6).

Spurgeon preferred expository preaching to topical and he taught his students to do likewise:

Brethren, if you are in the habit of keeping to the precise sense of the Scripture before you, I will further recommend you to hold to the *ipsisima verba*, the very words of the Holy Ghost; for, although in many cases topical sermons are not only allowable, but very proper, those sermons which expound the exact words of the Holy Spirit are the most useful and the most agreeable to the major part of our congregations. (Lectures 117)

Moreover, he regarded expository preachers as "true shepherds of the sheep" and expository preaching as the most profitable for the people (Lectures 125).

While Spurgeon practiced a sound exegesis based on an historical-grammatical-literary interpretation of his texts, he also practiced what he termed a "spiritualizing" of the text. He told his students,

Within limits, my brethren, be not afraid to spiritualize, or to take singular texts. Continue to look out passages of Scripture, and

not only give their plain meaning, as you are bound to do, but also draw from them meanings which may not lie upon their surface. . . . I counsel you to employ spiritualizing within certain limits and boundaries, but I pray you do not, under cover of this advice, rush headlong into incessant and injudicious "imaginings," as George Fox would call them. (Lectures 158)

"The Star and the Wise Men" contains examples of Spurgeon's spiritualizing of a text.

Nevertheless, Spurgeon did not succumb to wholesale spiritualizing and allegory. He warned his students not to "violently strain a text by illegitimate spiritualizing" (Lectures 158). Preachers should not manipulate a text to say what is not there. He did not tolerate such accommodation (Lectures 159-62), although he admitted guilt in doing so himself (Lectures- -see footnote on 127).

Spurgeon recognized the existence of allegory and symbolism within the Bible. Taking into account literary genre, he noted that the Old Testament contained metaphors which held spiritual meanings. Likewise the New Testament contained parables and similes which also held spiritual meanings. Moreover, he pointed to the Old Testament allusions in such books as Matthew, James, Romans, Galatians, 1 and 2 Peter and Revelation (Lectures 165-70). Nevertheless, he maintained his high view of scriptural authority and told his students they were "never to pervert Scripture to give it a novel and so-called spiritual meaning, lest you be found guilty of that solemn curse with which the roll of inspiration is guarded and closed" (Lectures 164). When Spurgeon spiritualized Scripture he simply took into account the literary genre of his pericope, which is a proper component of the historical-grammatical-literary method of interpre-

tation.

Like Spurgeon, James Stewart believed in expository preaching. He proclaimed it as "one of the greatest needs of the hour" (Heralds 109). Unlike Spurgeon, Stewart did not exposit in a verse-by-verse style. Rather, he used an inductive homiletic: "Let the Bible speak its own message" (Heralds 109).

Stewart believed that once the preacher announced his text he should "start off by expounding its Scripture setting and historical background" (Heralds 124). "Why Be a Christian?", "God and the Fact of Suffering", and "Sacrifice and Song" contain data indicating Stewart's consistent practice of this method. Stewart warned against poor exegesis, particularly eisegesis. Thus, to set the context as he prescribed,

. . . provides a corrective of that arbitrary treatment of Scripture which, breaking all the canons of exegesis, imports meanings into texts in complete disregard of what the original writer meant to say. For another thing, the historical setting, if briefly and vividly sketched, will illuminate and make doubly relevant the message of the text itself. (Heralds 124)

By setting the historical context, Stewart could address the felt need of his congregation. This practice created a natural bridge between the world of the Bible and the world in which he lived (Heralds 125-27). Stewart engaged in a sound hermeneutic wherein he interpreted his pericope to provide a biblical answer to one's problems. In many cases he set the historical context by citing biblical illustrations and using scriptural cross references to relate to the need of his listeners. Stewart exercised a sound exegesis using the historical-grammatical-literary method of interpretation.

Like his predecessors, Alexander Maclaren also engaged in sound exegesis based on the historical-grammatical-literary method of interpretation. All sermons in this study are expository. He intentionally interpreted his texts, and the abundance of biblical illustrations and scriptural cross references indicate that he followed the principle of "Scripture interpreting Scripture."

In "Faith in Christ" he exegeted his pericope by establishing its grammatical context (Manchester 1:164). In "What Makes a Christian: Circumcision or Faith" he established the historical context of his pericope by describing the works/grace debate in the early Church (Manchester 2:206). And in "The New Man" Maclaren set the literary/linguistic context for his passage before completing his exegesis (Manchester 3:141). However, in The "Servant and the Son" he set all three contexts before making his final interpretation.

Data in Maclaren's sermons indicate that he consistently practiced sound exegesis. He crafted them usually in the three or four point style. Rarely did he participate in verse-by-verse exposition. Nevertheless, his multi-volume commentary, Exposition on Holy Scripture, demonstrated his exegetical skill and revealed his interpretive competence.

G. Campbell Morgan, like Stewart and Maclaren, consistently set the historical, grammatical, and literary contexts for his pericopes. In "The Limitations of Liberty" he set the historical context for the Corinthian Church (Westminster 1:13-15). In "Peace" he cited texts from three books and established their grammatical context, thereby showing how they were inter-related (West-

minster 5:9-16). In "Short Beds and Narrow Coverings" Morgan set the literary context by identifying his pericope as "fine satire" (Westminster 10:9). In all of his sermons he demonstrated a mastery of Hebrew and Greek.

Morgan frequently used cross references and biblical illustrations as an aid in interpreting his texts. Those in "The Purpose of the Advent" demonstrated his use of the hermeneutic principle that "Scripture interprets Scripture." He advocated the use of biblical illustrations as a legitimate component of exposition, as it would ensure "a real Biblical ministry" (Preaching 42). Nevertheless, he cautioned they be used in proper context because "the context is always important" (Preaching 55).

Unquestionably, the preachers practiced an historical-grammatical-literary method of interpretation. Data supporting this prevalence appear in both their sermons and other related primary sources. Moreover, data indicate that each preacher intended his sermon to interpret his chosen text. Therefore, the practice of an historical-grammatical-literary method of interpretation by these preachers signals an authoritative use of Scripture and should be considered, in part, as an historic mark of biblical preaching.

Along with an authoritative use of Scripture in their sermons, the preachers also placed a Christological emphasis placed within them. Each preacher underscored the centrality of Christ in the Scriptures and found a Christological relevance for each passage they interpreted. Each preacher stressed the power of Christ's cross and resurrection and his ability to transform the lives of

his followers. In some cases the preacher crafted sermons entirely Christological.

Wesley maintained a concern for a Christological emphasis in his sermons. In "Salvation by Faith" he stressed the power of Christ to transform the lives of people, noting especially how personal faith (which Christ gives) brings about this transformation (Works 5:9). In "What is Man?" based on a passage from Psalm 8, he said Christ was the manifestation of God's glory to his human creation (Works 7:174).

Wesley clarified his view on maintaining a clear Christological emphasis. In "Letter on Preaching Christ", dated December 20, 1751, he advised that a proper Christology included preaching both law and gospel, both the commandments of Christ and the grace of Christ. He directed every preacher

. . . continually to preach the law; the law grafted upon, tempered by, and animated with, the spirit of the gospel. I advise him to declare, explain, and enforce every command of God; but, meantime, to declare, in every sermon (and the more explicitly the better,) that the first and great command to a Christian is, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ;" that Christ is all in all, our "wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption;" that all life, love strength, are from him alone, and all freely given to us through faith. (Works 11:489)

To preach Christ fully, both law and grace, meant preaching "the Scriptural way, the Methodist way, the true way" (Works 11:492).

Charles H. Spurgeon never failed to make a Christological emphasis in his sermons, nor did he fail to find a Christological relevance to his pericopes. In "The Star and the Wise Men" he remarked how the star points to Christ,

leads one to Christ, and teaches about Christ. "Star preaching," he said, "is all about Christ" (New Park Street 29:5). When Prince Albert died in 1861, Spurgeon preached *The Royal Death Bed*. He called attention to the need for one to trust Christ for salvation, thus enabling one's freedom from the fear of death (New Park Street 7:632).

Spurgeon advocated doctrinal preaching and recommended it to his students (Lectures 268-71). Conversion was the end of preaching; the means was to preach Christ (Lectures 266). Christ was the first and foremost doctrine in Spurgeon's sermons. He elaborated his conviction to his students:

Of all I would wish to say this is the sum: my brethren, preach CHRIST, always and evermore. He is the whole gospel. His person, offices, and work must be our one great, all-comprehending theme. The world needs still to be told of its Saviour, and of the way to reach him. . . . We are not called to proclaim philosophy or physics, but the simple gospel. . . . To win a soul from going down into the pit is a more glorious achievement than to be crowned in the arena of theological controversy as *Doctor Sufficentissimus*; to have faithfully unveiled the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ will be in the final judgement accounted worthier service than to have solved the Gordian knot of apocalyptic difficulty. Blessed is the ministry of which **CHRIST IS ALL**. (Lectures 127-129)

Spurgeon left no question regarding the Christological emphasis in his sermons.

James S. Stewart's sermons contained Christological emphases as well.

He preached the authority of Christ, amplifying his transforming power. In "Why Be a Christian?" he explained how Christ kept one's life exciting (Gates 24).

Moreover, he assessed Christ's authority as the preeminent factor in vital Christian living (Gates 26). Stewart crafted "The True Simplicity" as a sermon entirely Christological. He said that loyalty to Christ resulted in true peace and



simplicity in life (Gates 216-19). In "Sacrifice and Song" Stewart preached that Christ was the authoritative voice of the whole of Christianity (Strong Name 34).

Besides his sermons, other evidence indicates Stewart's commitment to a Christological emphasis. He wrote in Heralds of God about the nature of Christian preaching, beginning with the early Church. He noted that apostolic preaching never separated the cross from the resurrection. He said,

That is what Christianity essentially is -- a religion of Resurrection. Go back and listen to the preachers of the early Church. They never pointed men to the Cross without showing them the Resurrection light breaking behind it. (Heralds 87).

Moreover, he believed the two (the cross and the resurrection) could never be separated in true biblical preaching ((Heralds 63).

Stewart believed that the preacher must preach on the transforming power of the cross in the context of suffering ((Heralds 75). The resurrection defeated death, which all people must suffer. By its power to heal and transform, the preaching on the cross took on a personal tone. Such preaching became Stewart's vocational passion:

"I came into the town," wrote John Wesley in his Journal, "and offered them Christ." To spend your days doing that -- not just describing Christianity or arguing for a creed, not apologizing for the faith or debating fine shades of religious meaning, but actually offering and giving men Christ -- could any life-work be more thrilling or momentous? (Heralds 57)

Stewart's forthright statement demonstrated his commitment to a Christological emphasis in his sermons.

Alexander Maclaren's sermons also contained Christological emphases.

He stressed the central role of Christ in the Bible, preaching from both the Old and New Testaments. He stressed in particular the preeminence and transforming power of Christ. Maclaren underscored these elements with a theme of personal faith in Christ.

Maclaren drove home his emphasis on the transforming power of Christ in "The New Man". Basing this sermon on Ephesians 4:24, he preached that Paul intended that verse to convey "the radical transformation and renovation of the whole moral nature as being the purpose of the revelation of God in Christ" (Manchester 3:127). In *Faith in Christ* he stated unequivocally that "Christ came not to *spe*ak the Gospel, but *to be* the Gospel" (Manchester 1:163).

Similar to Maclaren, G. Campbell Morgan maintained a Christological emphasis in every sermon. He saw Christ as the central figure in Scripture; he saw Christ as the central figure in the Christian life. In "Peace" Morgan portrayed Christ as peace (Westminster 5:9-10). In "Short Beds and Narrow Coverings" he discussed how Christ makes possible a vital spiritual life (Westminster 10:9-14). In "The Purpose of the Advent" Morgan saw Christ's first coming as a the Church's preparation for his second coming (Westminster 1:339).

Morgan, like Stewart and Maclaren, believed that the ultimate goal of preaching was to present Christ to the listener. The authority of Christ equaled the authority of the Bible. To lose one meant the loss of another (Preaching 18). He warned preachers to maintain a Christ-centered homiletic:

The teaching of Christ is not the final fact about Christ, and His Person is not the final fact about Christ. We find that fact in Jesus crucified, risen, and ascended. We must approach Christ thus, and we must cling to that Christ. That is the world of God in all its fullness. Every sermon, then is a message out of the sum of totality. Any sermon that fails to have some interpretation of that holy truth is a failure. (Preaching 19).

Unquestionably, the prevalence of a Christological emphasis appeared in the sermons of each preacher. This prevalence also appeared in other related primary sources. Each preacher expounded a Christological relevance to his texts. Therefore, the prevalence of a Christological emphasis should be considered as an historic mark of biblical preaching.

While some historians have argued that a radical transformation in the lives of both the preachers and their listeners resulted from their encounter with Scripture, the sermons of the preachers under study do not explicitly indicate a radical transformation took place in the lives of either the preachers or their listeners. No forthright declaration appears. The preachers give no personal testimony to their own transformation. They do imply, however, such transformation occurred since they made urgent appeals to their listeners to experience transformation for themselves.

Each preacher included existential appeals to his listeners, urging them to experience spiritual transformation. These appeals were existential in the sense that they related to the listeners' personal experience of the moment.<sup>1</sup> In most cases the appeals appeared as exhortations to this transformation via a

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<sup>1</sup>See "Definitions," Chapter 1, p. 12.

personal faith, or trust in Christ (Wesley, Stewart, Maclaren). In other cases, the preachers asked their listeners to believe doctrine or biblical tenets (Spurgeon and Morgan). Nevertheless, the appeal for personal transformation indicates two possibilities: first, that the preachers themselves had experienced such personal transformation; and second, that they believed their listeners could experience such transformation as well. Moreover, the duration of such appeals over the course of their preaching ministry indicates that such transformation actually took place.

When asked his advice about the best general method of preaching, Wesley directed his preachers "To invite. . . To convince. . . To offer Christ. . . To Build up; and to do this in some measure in every sermon" (Works 8:317). As one scholar pointed out, Wesley preached sermons to proclaim the gospel and invite people to faith, but he wrote manuscripts to nurture and disciple his people (Collins 11). Furthermore, all sermons his Standard Sermons and his Works, Wesley preached after Aldersgate.

Spurgeon also wrote and preached his sermons to convert his listeners. His previous statement regarding the preaching of Christ reveals this desire. He believed that his appeal should be through the preaching of sound doctrine: "If we give our people refined truth, pure Scriptural doctrine . . . we would be true shepherds of the sheep, and the profiting of our people will soon be apparent" (Lectures 125). How did one preach this refined truth and pure Scriptural doctrine? -- "we should first and foremost preach Christ and him

crucified" (Lectures 266).

When Spurgeon gave his Lectures, he entitled his tenth lecture "On Conversion as Our Aim". He introduced this lecture saying that ". . . God has sent us to preach in order that through the gospel of Jesus Christ the sons of men be reconciled to him. . . . for the most part, the work of preaching is intended to save the hearers" (Lectures 264).

Stewart made his existential appeals, as well, but he used an inductive style to do so. He urged preachers to begin with their listeners' life situations and meet them on their own ground (Heralds 125). This practice enabled him to relate to his congregation and apply biblical truths to their lives. His secret for making such appeals and finding biblical answers was his daily devotional life, a result of his own spiritual transformation. He implied his experience when he advised other preachers to practice a devotional life themselves:

Like your master, you will have meat to eat that the world knows not of; and that spiritual sustenance, in so far as you partake of it daily, will strengthen your powers of resistant to the dangerous infection [of disillusionment]. (Heralds 20)

Stewart further counseled that only by living in the Bible devotionally can one hope to find the answers to people's needs (Heralds 154).

In Preaching, Morgan revealed that his own personal transformation motivated him to make existential appeals to his listeners. He believed that the preacher was "always moving in the realm of the supernatural" (Preaching 20). He defended the concept of an anointed supernatural ministry:

We have to deal with the supernatural. All preachers must.

Preachers have been told that they have been too other-worldly. When we cease to be other-worldly we lose our ability to touch this world with any healing and uplifting power. We move in the realm of truth revealed, coming to men from God. (Preaching 20-21)

Morgan recognized the role of the preacher as the messenger of grace. Through proclamation the preacher offers an experience of grace to his people (Preaching 11-12). The messenger himself must first experience grace before offering it. Morgan believed not only that the preacher must handle the text, but that the text must handle the preacher:

If he handles his text he cannot preach at all. But when the text handles him, when it grips and masters and possesses him, and in experience he is responsive to the thing he is declaring, having conviction of the supremacy of truth and experience of the power of truth, I think that must create passion. . . . Given the preacher with a message from the whole Bible, seeing its bearing on life at any point, I cannot personally understand that man not being swept sometime right out of himself by the fire and the force and the fervour of his work. (Preaching 36-37)

From this passion, the preacher can thus appeal to his listeners to experience the same transformation as his.

While the sermons did not explicitly indicate a radical transformation in the lives of either the preachers under study in this chapter or in the lives of their listeners, certainly each preacher extended existential appeals to his listeners, urging them to experience spiritual transformation. These appeals were existential in the sense that they related to the listeners' personal experience of the moment. Primary evidence, other than that from the sermons, confirms the prevalence of these existential appeals. Therefore a high probability of a radical

transformation in the lives the preachers and their listeners exists. Thus an urgent existential appeal to the listener to experience a personal transformation should be considered as an historic mark of biblical preaching, with personal transformation being its by-product.

Along with the issue of radical personal transformation, historians have observed that the use of the vernacular marked the rise of biblical preaching during the Reformation.<sup>2</sup> Protestant preachers believed that preaching in their vernacular rather than in Latin, the official pulpit language of Roman Catholicism, made their sermons effective. Because the preachers under study in this chapter were English-speaking Protestants who preached in English two to four centuries after the Reformation, the issue of preaching in the vernacular stands moot. Little evidence in their sermons appears which displays a concern for this issue. Nevertheless, occasional remarks appear which render a sense of the life and times in which each preacher lived.

In "On Family Religion" Wesley made several comments about indentured servants (Works 7:79), and the condition and quality of both public and private schools, particularly girls' schools (Works 7:83-84). Spurgeon wrote "The Royal Death Bed" on the occasion of Prince Albert's death, and he referred to the grief of Queen Victoria and the mourning of the British Empire (New Park Street 7:626). Likewise, Stewart talked about familiar members of the English nobility in "God and the Fact of Suffering". Therein he spoke freely

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<sup>2</sup>See my discussion in Chapter 2, pp. 25, 28, and 33.

about them, giving details of their daily lives (Strong Name 126-27). Although these preachers did not preach in a vernacular proper, data indicate that they spoke in colloquialisms and idioms typical of their time and location and they spoke about issues and events relevant to their listeners.

Undeniably, the preachers expressed a concern to communicate effectively in their preaching. Wesley professed that he preferred "plain truth for plain people":

Therefore, of set purpose, I abstain from all nice and philosophical speculations; from all perplexed and intricate reasonings; and, as far as possible, from even the show of learning, unless in some-times citing the original Scripture. I labour to avoid all words which are not easy to be understood, all which are not used in common life; and, in particular, those kinds of technical terms that so frequently occur in Bodies of Divinity; those modes of speaking which men of reading are intimately acquainted with, but which to common people are an unknown tongue. (Works 5:2)

Spurgeon voiced a concern to his students for preaching in simple language. He told them, "Be sure. . . to speak plainly; because, however excellent your matter, if a man does not comprehend it, it can be of no use to him" (Lectures 212). Likewise, Stewart advised preachers in a similar vein: "Be real in language. Shun everything stilted, grandiose, insipid or pedantic" (Heralds 38). He warned against "artificial eloquence," and recommended that preachers should reject "every expression that is merely florid and ostentatious. Prefer simple and even homely words to those that are abstract and difficult and pointed speech to involved circuitous sentences" (Heralds 151-52).

Clearly, preaching in the vernacular of the day made no significant



impact on the lives of their congregations. These preachers, however, used simple, plain language, as well as regional colloquialisms and idioms of their time as oratory tools for effective communication. Primary evidence, other than that from the sermons, confirms their conviction regarding this practice. Nevertheless, because this practice is not limited to biblical preachers alone, it can not be considered an identifying mark unique to biblical preaching. Moreover, although the use of the vernacular marks an historic turning point for the rise of biblical preaching, it can not be considered as an identifying historic mark of biblical preaching.

### Theological Implications

Based on the analysis and evaluation of the data, I see four theological implications. First, biblical preaching is prophetic. Biblical preachers perceive the Word of God as revelation. They accept this revelation as factual and trustworthy. They know that "All Scripture is God breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work " (2 Timothy 2:14. NIV). The biblical preachers in this study based their authority to preach on the authority of the Bible. Their sermons explained and exposed the meaning of the Written Word. Thus the biblical preacher interprets the Word of God as "a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15, NIV). Moreover, the biblical preacher maintains a vigilance to "preach the Word" (2 Timothy 4:2, NIV).

Second, biblical preaching is priestly. As priests, preachers are "Christ's ambassadors," and God makes this appeal through them: "We implore you on Christ's behalf: be reconciled to God" (Romans 5:20, NIV). Moreover, biblical preachers urge their listeners, "Do not conform to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind" (Romans 12:2, NIV). They preach God's Word invitationally. They make urgent appeals for conversion and transformation. The biblical preachers in this study preached to change the lives of their listeners. Thus, biblical preaching carries an existential element since biblical preachers rely on the Holy Spirit to make such appeals effectual.

Third, biblical preaching is kingly. Biblical preachers preach not only the principles of the Kingdom of God, but the Word of the King, as well. They preach an authoritative Word: "All Scripture is God breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work " (2 Timothy 2:14, NIV). They preach a Living Word, "sharper than any double edged sword, [that] it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart" (Hebrews 4:12, NIV). By preaching the authoritative Word of God and an authoritative Christ, biblical preachers urge people to enter the Kingdom of God and order their lives to live faithfully according to Kingdom principles.

Finally, because biblical preaching is prophetic, priestly, and kingly, it is also incarnational. Biblical preaching embodies Christ's virtues and qualities.

Biblical preachers are truly "Christ's ambassadors" (Romans 5:20, NIV), and servants of Christ, "entrusted with the secret things of God" (1 Corinthians 4:1, NIV), whom God "made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ" (2 Corinthians 4:6). One sees in their preaching "the cross of Christ shining through the pages of the open Bible" (Bloesch, Evangelical 1:53). Thus, at its core, biblical preaching is Christological.

### Academic Implications

From the content analysis of the sermons read for this study, I identified three historic marks which define biblical preaching: 1) an authoritative use of Scripture; 2) a Christological emphasis; and 3) an urgent existential appeal to the listener to experience a personal spiritual transformation. Based on this definition of biblical and the methodology I used to ascertain it, three academic implications arise.

First, the definition implies that homiletics classes should include instruction in writing manuscripts along with basic oratory skills. Data indicate the biblical preachers in this study possessed and honed skills (the handling of scriptural language, cross referencing, interpreting a chosen pericope) in sermon composition. By reading the sermons of historically biblical preachers, preaching students would likely adopt these skills. Data indicate that homiletics faculties should provide directed attention to biblical interpretation. The biblical preachers handled the biblical texts with sound exegesis. Thus,

cooperation between homiletics and biblical studies faculties would enhance the novice preacher's ability to tie exegesis to exposition and thereby preach biblically. Moreover, cooperation between homiletics and theology faculties would help the preaching student develop a biblical Christology.

Second, the definition implies that evangelists would benefit from learning how these biblical preachers made their appeals for personal transformation. All preachers in this study crafted their sermons with personal appeals to their listeners. Using this study's definition of biblical preaching, evangelism faculties and local churches can develop strategies for effective outreach. Moreover, consultants may find a correlation between biblical preaching and church growth. George Morris, former professor of evangelism at Candler School of Theology, conducted an informal study to identify the theological character of growing churches. He discovered three traits: 1) a high regard for the authority and the preeminence of Scripture; 2) a passionate Christology; and 3) a passion for the conversion of the lost. Each of these traits correlate precisely to the historic marks which identify biblical preaching (Lecture April 26, 1999).

Finally, the definition implies the need for cultural anthropologists to define effective cross cultural biblical preaching. They would benefit from a study of the role of biblical preaching in various cultural settings. By reading the sermons of historically significant preachers, missiologists would learn how these biblical preachers used regional colloquialisms to communicate effectively

the essentials of the gospel. Furthermore, missionaries could develop preaching styles and preaching programs suitable for the cultural context of their missions.

### Limitations of the Study

I placed two primary limitations on this study. First, I wanted to study preachers primarily from the Reformation to the present. Precedents in literature indicated a preponderance of biblical preaching during this time. Thus I could identify more distinctly the marks of biblical preaching. Second, I limited the study to the analysis of selected sermons of these preachers. I disregarded biographical sources pertaining to issues other than the sermons or the homiletics of the preachers. Furthermore, I conducted the research under the assumption that these sermons reflect accurately the homiletical practices and theological convictions of the preachers.

### Unexpected Findings

Four unexpected findings surfaced. First, during the two rounds of the Delphi, I discovered a few Wesleyan preachers and scholars who did not choose John Wesley as their first response. I also found a few non-Wesleyan preachers and scholars who did choose John Wesley as one of their top five responses. This finding suggests that doctrinal differences among the panel of experts made little difference in recognizing outstanding biblical preachers. It also suggests that theological distinctives among biblical preachers make little difference in their faithfulness to preaching. It suggests, still further, that

Wesley possessed Calvinist tendencies - much to the chagrin of many Wesleyans.

Second, only one American preacher surfaced as one of the top five responses from the Delphi.<sup>3</sup> The panel of experts I polled consisted entirely of American preachers and scholars. This finding indicates one of two possible explanations: first, American preachers do not preach biblically; or second, American seminaries do not teach biblical preaching because they lack an adequate definition of biblical preaching. The second explanation may precipitate the first.

Third, no non-English speaking preacher surfaced as one of the top five responses. This finding indicates one of two possible explanations: first, a possible bias against non-English preachers among the panel of experts; or second, the preponderance of biblical preaching in English. The latter explanation seems more logical.

Finally, I unexpectedly found myself drawn into the sermons. From the time I began reading them, I found myself hanging on to their insights and pointed preaching. I began using some of them in my sermons. I found myself growing more confident in my preaching. I discovered in these sermons a quarry of homiletical treasures I can mine for years to come.

#### Practical Applications and Further Studies

Using this study, preachers could learn to preach biblically. One could

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<sup>3</sup>Paul S. Rees surfaced to fourth place. See my footnote, Chapter 4, p. 65.

develop seminars which place an emphasis on sound exegesis, interpreting the pericope, finding a passage's Christological significance, and making urgent appeals to listeners. One could also devise an instrument which indicates the presence of these emphases in a sermon. Pastors could evaluate their preaching according to these historic marks of biblical preaching.

From this study scholars could launch biographical studies on the devotional lives of these preachers. Such research would help the biblical preacher maintain a vital spiritual formation preaching program. Moreover, scholars may find spiritual disciplines unique to biblical preachers. The practice of such disciplines would enhance the biblical preacher's discernment of God's activity as the twenty-first century approaches. Killinger mentions that a plethora of concerns will arise with the coming of the new millennium (24-44). He suggests that the preacher of the next century should be ready to rise to the occasion by preparing to preach the great biblical themes with which the next generation will mesh (45-72). What better way for the biblical preacher to meet those challenges than by having a vital spiritual formation.

### Epilogue

As I complete this study, I come away with one profound realization. I have been changed by it. I appreciate more the precision of academic research. I appreciate more the depth of evangelical scholarship. The realization that I can work as both pastor and scholar served as the significant turning point in my research. Furthermore, I am profoundly grateful to those biblical

preachers who blazed the trail I now walk. I am aware that I continue the work they began. As I journey onward, I find my passion for preaching increased and the fire burning brighter. "For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the Gospel" (1 Corinthians 9:15, KJV)!



## APPENDIX A

**PANEL OF EXPERTS  
CONTACTED FOR DELPHI TECHNIQUE**

**Bold font indicates respondents to Round One.**

*Italic font indicates respondents to Round Two.*

Plain font indicates non-respondents.

***Dr. David Bauer***  
***Professor of English Bible***  
***Asbury Theological Seminary***

***Mr. Donald Boyd***  
***Professor of Homiletics***  
***Asbury Theological Seminary***

***Dr. Barbara Brokoff***  
***Evangelist***  
***Florida Annual Conference***  
***United Methodist Church***

***Dr. James Buskirk***  
***Pastor, First United Methodist***  
***Church, Tulsa, Oklahoma***

***Dr. Robert E. Coleman***  
***Professor of Evangelism***  
***Trinity Evangelical Divinity School***

***Dr. Donald Demaray***  
***Professor of Homiletics***  
***Asbury Theological Seminary***

***Dr. Melvin Dieter***  
***Professor Emeritus, Church History***  
***Asbury Theological Seminary***

***Dr. Maxie Dunnam***  
***President***  
***Asbury Theological Seminary***

***Dr. J. Steven Harper***  
***Vice President/Provost***  
***Asbury Theological Seminary***  
***Orlando, Florida***

***Dr. E.V. Hill***  
***Pastor, Mt. Zion Missionary***  
***Baptist Church,***  
***Los Angeles, California***

***Dr. William Hinson***  
***Pastor, First United Methodist Church***  
***Houston, Texas***

***Bishop Earl Hunt***  
***Retired Bishop,***  
***United Methodist Church,***  
***Southeastern Jurisdiction***

***Dr. George Hunter***  
***Professor of Church Growth***  
***Asbury Theological Seminary***

***Dr. Dan Johnston***  
***Pastor,***  
***Trinity United Methodist Church***  
***Gainesville, Florida***

***Dr. Ellsworth Kalas***  
***Beeson Pastor in Residence***  
***Asbury Theological Seminary***

***Dr. D. James Kennedy***  
***Pastor, Coral Ridge Presbyterian***  
***Church, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida***

**Dr. Kenneth C. Kinghorn**  
**Vice President**  
**Asbury Theological Seminary**

Dr. Thomas Long  
Professor of Homiletics  
Princeton Theological Seminary

**Dr. John Ed Mathison**  
**Pastor, Frazer Memorial**  
**United Methodist Church**  
**Montgomery, Alabama**

**Dr. Alan Meenan**  
**Pastor, First Presbyterian Church**  
**Hollywood, California**

**Dr. J. Steven O'Malley**  
**Professor of Historical Theology**  
**Asbury Theological Seminary**

**Dr. John Oswalt**  
**Professor of Old Testament**  
**Asbury Theological Seminary**

**Dr. Haddon Robinson**  
**Professor of Homiletics**  
**Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary**

**Bishop Mack B. Stokes**  
**Retired Bishop, United Methodist**  
**Church, Southeastern Jurisdiction**

Dr. Robert Traina  
Professor Emeritus, English Bible  
Asbury Theological Seminary

**Dr. Dennis Kinlaw**  
**President,**  
**Francis Asbury Society**  
**Wilmore, Kentucky**

Dr. James Earl Massey  
Professor Emeritus of Homiletics  
Anderson School of Theology

**Dr. David McKenna**  
**President Emeritus**  
**Asbury Theological Seminary**

**Dr. Robert Mulholland**  
**Professor of New Testament**  
**Asbury Theological Seminary**

**Dr. Lloyd John Olgvie**  
**Chaplain of the Senate**  
**Washington, D.C.**

Dr. Eugene Peterson  
Emeritus Professor of Spirituality  
Regent College  
Vancouver, British Columbia

**Dr. David Seamands**  
**Retired Pastor**  
**Wilmore United Methodist Church**  
**Wilmore, Kentucky**

**Dr. Charles Swindoll**  
**Moderator, INSIGHT FOR LIVING**  
**Fullerton, California**

**APPENDIX B**

**SAMPLE LETTER  
FOR DELPHI TECHNIQUE  
ROUND ONE**

September 3, 1998

Dr. Donald Demaray  
Professor of Homiletics  
Asbury Theological Seminary  
Wilmore, KY 40390

Dear Dr. Demaray,

I am a Doctor of Ministry student at Asbury Theological Seminary and I need your help to complete my dissertation. I must compile a list of historical preachers who are considered to be biblical. Would you kindly list 5 - 8 outstanding biblical preachers, from the Reformation to the present, who made the greatest impact on your preaching and ministry?

Please use the enclosed postcard to list your choices and then return it to me as soon as possible.

Dr. Demaray, thank you for helping me with my project.

Sincerely,

Larry G. Teasley

## APPENDIX C

RESPONSES TO  
DELPHI LETTER  
ROUND ONE

(NO NUMBER INDICATES ONLY ONE OCCURRENCE)

Elizabeth Achtemeier	Robert M. McCheyne
Eric Alexander	Alexander McClaren 6
John Baille	Herbert Mekeel
Donald Gray Barnhouse	F.B .Meyer 3
Ed Bauman	Donald Miller
Andrew Blackwood	D.L. Moody
Horatio Bonar	Arthur J. Moore
Phillips Brooks 3	G. Campbell Morgan 7
John Bunyan	H.C. Morrison 2
George Buttrick 4	John Newton
John Calvin 4	Harold John Ocrenge 2
William R. Cannon	Stephen Olford 2
Thomas Chalmers	John Ortberg
Oswald Chambers	Glynn Owen
Clovis Chappell 3	S.A. Pleasant
Adam Clarke	Sandy Ray
Maxie Dunnam	David H.C. Reed
Jonathan Edwards	Paul Rees 5
Donald English	Haddon Robinson
P.T .Forsythe	W.E. Sangster 6
Harry Emerson Fosdick 3	Paul Scherer 2
Arthur John Gossip 2	M.L. Scott
Billy Graham	Charles Spurgeon 7
Leonard Griffith 2	St. Stephen
Wallace Hamilton 2	James Stewart 11
Howard Hendricks	John R.W. Stott 6
Matthew Henry	Charles Swindoll 2
J.H. Jackson	T. DeWitt Talmadge
E. Stanley Jones	Gardner Taylor
Dennis Kinlaw 2	Helmut Thielicke
John Knox	A.W. Tozer
Larry Lacour	Mark Trotter
D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones 5	John Henry Truett
Martin Luther 8	Charles Wesley
John MacArthur	John Wesley 13
Peter Marshall 3	George Whitefield
James Earl Massey	Alexander Whyte 2
Si Mathison	William Wilberforce
A.A. McCardell	Ulrich Zwingli
Clarence McCartney 3	

**APPENDIX D**

**PREACHERS LISTED  
IN RESPONSE  
TO DELPHI, ROUND ONE  
WITH THREE OR MORE OCCURRENCES  
IN DESCENDING NUMERICAL ORDER**

John Wesley 13  
James Stewart 11  
Martin Luther 8  
G. Campbell Morgan 7  
Charles Spurgeon 7  
Alexander McClaren 6  
W.E. Sangster 6  
John R.W. Stott 6  
D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones 5  
Paul Rees 5  
George Buttrick 4  
John Calvin 4  
Phillips Brooks 3  
Clovis Chappell 3  
Harry Emerson Fosdick 3  
Peter Marshall 3  
Clarence McCartney 3  
F.B. Meyer 3

**APPENDIX E**  
**SAMPLE LETTER**  
**FOR DELPHI TECHNIQUE**  
**ROUND TWO**

October 22, 1998

Dr. J. Steven O'Malley  
Professor of Historical Theology  
Asbury Theological Seminary

Dear Dr. O'Malley,

Once again I need your help to complete my Doctor of Ministry dissertation at Asbury Theological Seminary. Previously, I asked you to help me compile a list of historical preachers who are considered to be biblical. I have narrowed all responses to eighteen. Below you will find that list in alphabetical order. **Using a ranking scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the most outstanding biblical preacher and 5 as the fifth most outstanding biblical preacher,** would you kindly list your choice of numerical order for the **top 5** outstanding biblical preachers of this group?

Please use the enclosed postcard to list your choices and then return it to me as soon as possible. *Time is of the essence.*

Dr. O'Malley, thank you for your previous response and for helping me with my project once again.

Sincerely,

Larry G. Teasley

***Please choose 5 from the following:***

Phillips Brooks  
George Buttrick  
John Calvin  
Clovis Chappell  
Harry Emerson Fosdick  
D. Martyn Lloyd Jones

Martin Luther  
Peter Marshall  
Clarence McCartney  
Alexander McClaren  
F.B. Meyer  
G. Campbell Morgan

Paul Rees  
W.E. Sangster  
Charles Spurgeon  
James Stewart  
John R.W. Stott  
John Wesley

## APPENDIX F

**SCORED RESPONSES TO DELPHI TECHNIQUE  
ROUND TWO  
IN DESCENDING ORDER  
(INCLUDING THE NUMBER OF LISTINGS FOR EACH RANKING)**

PREACHER	TOTAL SCORE	TOTAL LISTINGS	CHOICE #1	CHOICE #2	CHOICE #3	CHOICE #4	CHOICE #5
Wesley	59	15	7	5	0	1	2
Stewart	50	14	6	1	2	5	0
Spurgeon	38	14	4	0	3	2	5
Rees	33	12	2	1	4	2	3
Maclaren	33	9	3	1	4	1	0
Morgan	30	12	0	4	2	2	4
Brooks	28	9	1	3	1	4	0
Stott	25	10	1	2	2	1	4
Lloyd-Jones	25	10	0	3	2	2	3
Sangster	22	9	1	3	0	0	5
Luther	17	5	1	2	0	2	0
Buttrick	10	4	0	1	1	1	1
Calvin	8	3	0	0	2	1	0
McCartney	6	2	0	0	2	0	0
Marshall	3	1	0	0	1	0	0
Meyer	2	1	0	0	0	1	0
Chappell	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fosdick	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

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