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# The Homiletic Review.

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## To Our Patrons

**A Mental Index of the Bible and a Cosmic Use of Association.** By Rev. S. C. THOMPSON.

For those who have not a lifelong familiarity with the Bible contents, and wish to escape some of the distraction caused by handling a cumbersome concordance. It is a great advantage to have in mind a simple index with which chapters, passages, and the language of texts can be naturally associated and readily found. This mental classification is made possible by a study of this helpful book. Besides this ease of ready reference, it serves to keep alive a consciousness of the general and particular contents of the entire Bible. The work constitutes a complete memory system prepared specially to help in the remembering and appreciation of the Bible's contents. The fundamental principle of all reliable memory systems, that natural memory depends upon the association of ideas, has been applied to the Bible. The practical application of this idea is that a verse, text, incident, name, or chapter which may not be easily remembered, must be associated in the mind with something easily remembered. The author has arranged simple rules and directions which, if studied, are sure to greatly increase the helpfulness and usefulness of the Bible. The whole of the system is contained in a few lines. In practise it will prove simpler than it may appear to some at first.

### CLASSIFICATION.

1. Inorganic matter. 2. Things made from inorganic matter (except things built). 3. Plant kingdom. 4. Things made from vegetable material (except things built). 5. Zoological kingdom. 6. Things commonly said to be built or excavated. 7. Geographical proper names. 8. Personal proper names. 9. Human classes. 10. Abstract nouns.

To fix the above in mind easily and at once, take some example of each class similar in sound to its figure. As: One world, two tools, three trees, four

oars, five vipers, six cities, seven Severns, eight Abels, nine knights, ten tendencies.

For those of limited education a few examples of the above classes will make the method readily understood:

1. *Inorganic.* Astronomical bodies (sun, earth, etc.), physical divisions (continent, mountain, river, etc.), gases, minerals, ores, etc.

2. *Things Manufactured from the Above.* Tools, machines, ornaments, wares, etc., made chiefly from metal, except things "built." (See 6.)

3. *Trees, Plants, and Their Parts* (root, limb, thorn, fruit, etc.).

4. *Wooden Articles,* and things made from vegetable products (furniture, wine, linen, etc.), except things "built." (See 6.)

5. *Beasts, Birds, Fishes, Reptiles, and Insects.* Their parts (horn, sting, fin, etc.), and animal products (milk, honey, ivory, leather, etc.).

6. *Things "Built," or Excavated* (as distinguished from things said to be made). City, road, ship, mine, tomb, etc.

7. *Geographical Proper Names.* Asia, Nile, etc.

8. *Personal Proper Names.* Adam, etc.

9. *Human Classes.* Offices, callings, ranks, degrees, etc., e. g., king, carpenter, rabbi, son, traveler, etc.

10. *Abstract Nouns.* Love, philosophy, battle, might, etc.

Use broad common sense in classifying. *E. g.*, world, country, field, contain a variety of things; but they consist in the main of inorganic matter.

Always apply the *literal*, not the figurative, sense, except, of course, in class 10, which is unmistakably abstract.

So abundant are the things to select from that the few things about which some may doubt as to class may be avoided; or, if used, they will answer for the class to which you assign them, e. g., a box or chest—unless otherwise described—we should class as wood; or a chisel, strictly speaking, is metal, altho the handle be wood. 12mo, cloth, 300 pages. Price, 6/-.

# THE HOMILETIC REVIEW.

Vol. XXXIX.—MARCH, 1900.—No. 3.

## REVIEW SECTION.

### I.—THE CENTURY'S PROGRESS IN BIBLICAL KNOWLEDGE.

BY BENJAMIN B. WARFIELD, D.D., LL.D., PROFESSOR OF SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY IN THE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, PRINCETON, N. J.

WE have been accustomed to look upon this nineteenth century of ours with pardonable, because honest, pride, as preeminently the century of Biblical research and advancing knowledge of the Scriptures. On the whole, this impression is doubtless justified; but it is not difficult to exaggerate it into an unmeasured admiration of the Biblical attainments of our own age and a corresponding depreciation of the labors of the preceding centuries, by standing on the shoulders of which alone the Biblical learning of our time has been able to reach its present height. After all, the nineteenth century did not invent the Bible, nor did it even discover it. The merit of discovering the Bible, after its long occultation through the Middle Ages, belongs rather to the sixteenth century, and that century made this its reasonable boast. "We may most truly declare," says Calvin, "that we have brought more light to bear on the understanding of Scripture than all the authors who have sprung up among Christians since the rise of the Papacy; nor do they themselves venture to rob us of this praise."

The light that was then turned upon the Word of God has been shining steadily upon it ever since. From the moment when Judea and Greece rose from the grave, in the persons of Reuchlin and Erasmus, with the Hebrew and Greek Testaments in their hands, the treasures that they brought back to the world have been kept continuously under the scrutiny of men. There has been no flagging in the labor of investigating them; there has been no pause in the advancing understanding of them; there has been almost no limit to the accumulations of knowledge concerning them. No doubt there have been fluctuations in the point of view from which the Scriptures have been approached, and gradations in the value of the contributions of each

lean, no God to whom to pray. Our heart is empty; our soul bereft of ideal and hope. You who have the happiness of believing in a Sovereign Ruler, pray Him to reveal Himself to us, for we hunger and thirst to suffer and to die for a belief and for an idea." The souls of men cry for God. The physicist offers a stone; and the secularist a house; and the ritualist a dress; and the historian a book; and the dogmatist a doctrine. What men lack is an experience—an experience of the friendship of the Living Christ, with all its possibilities. Oh, that the preacher everywhere would strive to introduce his hearers to the Living Christ!

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#### IV.—THE LATE REV. THOMAS DWIGHT WITHERSPOON, D.D., LL.D., AS A PREACHER.\*

BY FRANCIS R. BEATTIE, PH.D., D.D., LL.D., LOUISVILLE, KY.,  
PROFESSOR IN PRESBYTERIAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, AUTHOR  
OF "RADICAL CRITICISM," ETC.

THE observant study of the personality and the methods of work followed by effective preachers affords an exceedingly useful form of homiletical research. The careful study of the best treatises on homiletics is a good thing, but to observe the preacher actually at work is often better. In any event, such study of homiletics in the concrete is a valuable addition to its investigation in the abstract.

In this article the personality and pulpit work of the late Dr. Witherspoon, Professor of Homiletics and Pastoral Theology in Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, who passed away deeply lamented a little more than a year ago, will be studied for the purpose, namely, of bringing out some useful hints that may be of value to younger ministers. We have heard many preachers in this and other lands, and we can freely say that, as a sermonizer, the subject of this article had very few equals; and as a preacher, if he had possessed a deep, rich voice, he would have had few superiors in this generation as an effective popular pulpit orator.

It was the writer's privilege to know him very intimately; and, by the courtesy of his family, he has had the advantage of access to his literary remains for this study. Such a study naturally falls into two parts. The first deals with the personality of the man, and the second with his methods as a preacher.

\* The readers of THE REVIEW are familiar, through his valuable articles on preaching, with the name of Dr. Witherspoon, who entered into rest November 3, 1898. While he was very popular as a preacher with people of the highest culture, he was equally popular with the rough mountaineers of Kentucky. His work of instruction in the Louisville Theological Seminary of the Southern Presbyterian Church was supplemented by summer evangelistic campaigns in the mountains. His varied experience makes the study of his personality and his methods of peculiar value to other preachers.

I. *The Personality of the Man.*

He was a thorough gentleman. He came from noble ancestry, having in his veins the blood of John Knox. He was dignified and courteous, and always showed this in his intercourse with all classes of people. The most cultured greatly respected him, and those in the lowly walks of life always felt at ease in his presence. In him dignity and courtesy, gentleness and strength, self-respect and consideration for others were finely blended.

Such a man had in this respect important gifts for the preacher. The pulpit always needs such men. When the call to the ministry comes to the sons of our best families, the result is one of God's noblest gifts to His Church. The Church needs men from all the walks of life, and she urgently requires that all alike be gentle and strong, refined and dignified. A boorish manner or a clownish way in the pulpit will greatly limit a preacher's usefulness. Good manners, fine feelings, and refined instincts on the part of the preacher will touch a responsive chord in all classes.

His mental gifts were superior. This appeared during his career as a student, and was evident all his life. His powers of mind were finely balanced and harmoniously developed. His logical power was good, his philosophical insight was keen, and he could think a matter through in a very thorough way. His imagination was unusually fine. It was vivid, yet always under the control of good taste and judgment. It was this faculty, with the fine poetic feeling which went along with it, that enabled him to produce profound impressions.

For the preacher all this is important. These gifts, used as they were by Dr. Witherspoon, enabled him to reach all classes. He could edify the refined city congregation, and could deeply move a gathering of peasants among the hills. The Church needs the very best minds for her service, for the day is past when these gifts, consecrated to the Master's service, can any longer be despised. Above all, to the careful cultivation of the imagination every minister should give earnest attention. This faculty gives vividness and concreteness to preaching. Its use enables the preacher to reproduce Scriptural scenes, and to illustrate the truths he presents in such a way that they stand before the audience like very pictures. The truth has color and movement given to it, and it is thus made attractive and effective. If young ministers would save themselves from getting prosy, they must cultivate the imagination.

He had a deeply sympathetic nature. He had a warm heart as well as a good head. His feelings were very kindly, so that he had sincere sympathy with people in all conditions. The result was that rich and poor, high and low felt that they had ready access to him. He could with the same natural graciousness enter the mansion of the cultured and the cabin of the mountaineer. Children were drawn to

him, and those in trouble and sorrow readily sought him in seasons of distress. This gave his preaching a warmth and pathos that ministered much comfort to those in trouble.

He was also in ardent sympathy with nature in her varying moods. Some of his most striking illustrations were drawn from this source. When moderator of the General Assembly in 1884, and at the Westminster Assembly Celebration in 1897, illustrations of this kind then used in public addresses produced effects almost electrical. This sympathy enabled him to produce many original illustrations.

Here are vital hints for the preacher. He must have warm sympathies, if he is to get near to his people and to have heart in his work. And sympathy with nature should be cultivated by every preacher. The Old-Testament prophets were deeply imbued with the influences from nature; and our Lord constantly drew on nature for His parables and illustrations. Here is a pattern for the preacher to-day.

To crown all, Dr. Witherspoon was a man of simple faith and devout piety. He came from a godly ancestry. He early devoted his life to the service of Christ in the Gospel ministry. The records of these early years serve to show how earnest he was in this purpose. He had strong and well-grounded convictions in regard to the reality of divine things. He was a firm believer in the Bible as the Word of God. He so received, and so preached it. His piety was simple, natural, and unobtrusive. His life was always marked by high devotion to principle, so that religion with him was not a mere sentiment.

Here, again, is an example worthy of imitation. The spiritual tone of the preacher has much to do with the quality of his preaching. "Like priest, like people" here means that the piety of the preacher will in the long run determine the average piety of the pew. If the preacher is to retain his power, he must have piety as well as learning. No forced utterances about piety will avail if there be not a living fire on the altar of his heart. The preacher must ever keep this fire burning; and this piety must be deeply rooted in principle, so that his life may commend the Gospel which he preaches.

These natural and gracious endowments in the subject of this paper were cultivated by him with great care and constancy. He formed good habits of study in early days, and kept them up all his life. He did not think that when college and seminary days end, hard study may be given up. He not only prepared his sermons with great care, but he continued to read widely in all directions. The stores thus gathered he poured into his sermons. This discipline enabled him to do his work rapidly and thoroughly, and it also made his sermons fresh and instructive. He could scarcely be dull if he tried. He acquired an almost faultless literary style. His sermons are models of pure English, his conversation was always elegant, his articles for the press were clear as crystal, and his letters were always so correct that they were ready for the printer.

All of this is full of meaning for the young minister. Good mental habits, severe intellectual discipline, wide reading, patient methods of study, and thorough work on sermons are simply indispensable for the preacher of the present day. The dead-line is not so much a matter of years as of habits of study. That line is sometimes crossed a few years after the young man leaves the seminary; or it may not be reached at seventy years of age, as was the case with Cuyler and Storrs, now both over seventy. Unremitting study, constant reading and meditation, ever-increasing knowledge of the Holy Scriptures are the secrets of a growing ministry. If learning without piety makes a fruitless ministry, piety without learning is sure to make an ineffective ministry.

## II. *His Methods of Work*

There now lie before the writer several thousand sermons fully written, and sermon briefs, and their perusal has been made with deep and pathetic interest. Beside the sermon books and manuscripts lie two books in which a complete record of his sermon texts and of the date and place of preaching is made. The last entry is No. 4,917, which may be taken to represent the number of his sermons. By following this record one can trace out the whole movement of his life during the almost forty years of his ministry. Some of the most touching entries are of the sermons preached when he was a chaplain in the Confederate army, mainly in Virginia. There is the record of one at Waynesburg, Pa., and another at Gettysburg, Pa., about the time of the terrible battle at the latter place. An inspection of this varied material reveals several instructive features of homiletical value.

There is everywhere evidence of most careful work. Everything about these sermons and addresses impresses one with the marked diligence and system of the work. Here are his first sermons, which were parts of trial for licensure and ordination in 1859-60, and they are in very perfect literary form, and very mature for a young man of twenty-three. Here are a dozen books filled with carefully written sermons, and for each an index, giving the text, with a fitting title for the sermon. The sermons on single manuscripts, and even the outlines of his prayer-meeting addresses, bear the same features of systematic treatment and orderly, careful work throughout.

Here is a good lesson for ministers young and old. A good systematic habit of working will save time and make the task lighter. Once in a while a genius may appear who can set all rules of order at defiance, but the average minister must be content with a genius for hard work, and a systematic habit is his best helpmeet in it. Let the young minister acquire this habit at the outset of his ministry, and he will master circumstances, and not be at the mercy of his surroundings.

Another marked feature of the materials before us is their strictly Scriptural nature. A good text, not a mere catchword, of Scrip-

ture is usually chosen, carefully expounded, and then its truth developed and applied in a direct and rational way. We do not observe a single case in which some topic of the times is taken for the sermon theme and a text gotten for it. The text is from Scripture, and its truth is brought out by careful exposition, and then applied to the conditions and needs of the time. This is a vital matter for the preacher to regard.

At the present day there is temptation for ministers to forget their true function. They are to preach to the times; but they should always be sure that the message they bear is not their own, but God's. To heed this will give directness and power to all preaching.

A further quality of the work before us is its expository character. In some cases there is a thorough exposition of some difficult texts, and in others a comprehensive exposition of connected passages. A series of sixteen sermons on the Book of Job, and one of twelve on the Minor Prophets, illustrate this feature. Much labor has been bestowed upon these expositions. They are so complete in both matter and form as to be almost ready for publication.

Here is a pertinent hint for the pulpit of to-day in regard to the nature and value of expository preaching. The people want to know what the Bible teaches. One of the healthful signs of the present time is this demand of the pew for the Bible, and the pulpit should respond promptly and fully to meet it. This means hard work, for expository preaching of the right kind needs more time and labor than any other. The careful and devout exposition of any book of the Bible in a connected way will do both preacher and people great good.

The work lying before us reveals great variety. This variety appears in different respects. In the selection of themes the whole area of religious truth and duty seems to be covered. The texts are taken from all parts of the Old and New Testaments. Doctrinal, evangelical, and practical themes appear in due Scriptural proportion. Biography, history, prophecy, parable, miracle, and promise all recur in ever-inviting variety as one turns the pages of these sermon books. Christian privileges, the duties of Church officers, and the life and work of the Church are all presented in these sermons.

This is an important feature for all preaching. There must be variety in pulpit work, and endless variety, as the Scriptures exhibit and the needs of the people demand. With Christ crucified as the central theme, the pulpit should cause all its preaching to revolve in constantly recurring variety around this theme. Here is room for endless skill, inventive resources, and patient labor. But it will make the pulpit the minister's throne, and his ministry a constantly growing power.

Along with this variety we see adaptation in the materials before us. The themes were chosen to fit the circumstances. The sermons and prayer-meeting addresses are appropriate. His sermons to chil-

dren, of which there are many, and on special academic and other occasions, are admirable in their adaptation. Those preached to the soldiers in camp, to students at the university, to people in sorrow and trouble, and to the plain mountain people are always peculiarly suitable. There is genius for adaptation always. This was one of the most marked features of his whole ministry, and never did it more plainly appear than in his later years, when, with a company of the seminary students, he went, during vacation, to the rough mountains of Kentucky to preach the simple Gospel to the people there.

This reveals a feature of his ministry that every preacher should strive to possess. Many a good man fails for lack of tactful adaptation in his preaching. A good sermon fails to hit its mark simply because the aim was not good. Endless labor, and careful study not only of the truth to be set forth in the sermon, but also of the audience to be addressed, are demanded.

There are striking courses of sermons among the material before us. Some of these courses are worth mentioning. One on the apostles and one on the prophets arrest attention. A course on some of the negatives in the Book of Revelations gives: No sin; No tears; No more pain; No more sea; No winter; No night there; No temple. Sometimes two sermons are coupled together so as to make a very vivid contrast: Crowns at the Feet; and Crowns on the Head. One series on "The Antitheses of Character" is so marked that it is worth quoting in full: I. Lot, A Worldly Choice; and Moses, A Religious Choice. II. Baalam, A Religious Sentiment; Caleb, A Religious Principle. III. Samson, Endowments Wasted; Gideon, Endowments Consecrated. IV. Jephthah, The Superstitious Vow; Ruth, The Religious Vow. V. Saul, Promotion without Piety; David, Promotion with Piety. VI. Solomon, The Seeker of Wise Counsel; Rehoboam, The Despiser of Wise Counsel. VII. Jonah, Peril in the Midst of Security; Daniel, Security in the Midst of Peril.

This will serve to mark a feature of the work of the subject of this study which is full of suggestiveness for young ministers. There will be pleasure in such work, and its result will always be fresh and instructive to the people. Let the young preacher cultivate the habit of original research into the hidden depths of the Scriptures, and let him seek to exercise in a proper way his inventive skill in framing brief courses of sermons after the manner of those quoted.

Only a closing paragraph can be devoted to the method of preparation as revealed in this material. During the early period, for perhaps ten years, there seems to have been faithful writing in full. Then evening sermons seem to have been preached from notes in an extemporaneous way, but always with vigorous thinking through of the subject. In later years he preached sometimes without writing at all, and then wrote the sermon out afterward. This seems to have been the natural growth of a disciplined and well-stored mind. It

affords a suggestion and a warning. It warns the young minister against dispensing with writing his sermons in the early years of his ministry, and it suggests that by patient effort a preacher can do his very best preaching without notes after severe reflection and careful mastery of all his materials. The subject of this study never read his sermons, and his example and advice were always against it.

"After he had served his own generation, by the will of God he fell on sleep." "And he being dead yet speaketh."

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## V.—THE CHURCH FOR THE MODERN CITY.

BY REV. ROBERT GEORGE, CLEVELAND, OHIO.

In discussing this theme it is taken for granted that the church needs a godly ministry and a godly membership. It is taken for granted that the church needs more Holy Ghost power; that no method or system will ever avail unless its purpose is to bring men to a knowledge of sin, and to nurture in their hearts the life of God; for nothing has yet been found, or will be found, that will take the place of the atoning blood of Jesus Christ. The fountain for sin and for uncleanness that God has opened up for man is the only fountain. It is taken for granted that the church for the modern city must bring men to a knowledge of sin and point them to God; but the question that is to be discussed is: How shall this be done? How shall the church reach men and be a power in the cities of men?

The city with its teeming, preponderating population; the city with its drunkenness and licentiousness, and its mobs and coarse vices and its sins; the city with its trade and its commerce, and its great financial interests; the city with its bosses and machine and ignorant voters and political power has come to the throne, and the question of this age is: Who shall sit upon that throne? God has planted His church in the midst of the city to save it and redeem it, to stay the tides of the evil that pour in upon it, to make its atmosphere sweet and pure, and to fashion it after the pattern of the Holy City, the New Jerusalem. The new wine of this new time must be put in new bottles, and it is possible that the church clings too tenaciously to old and cherished methods. Our new civilization with its new industrial and social and religious problems demands that the church keep step with the advances of the age. What is the character of the church needed for the modern city?

*First of all*, the church for such a time as this in our great centers of population should place new emphasis upon *Christ's law of service*, and have for its motto something like this: "Not the community for the church, but the church for the community."

The church can no longer depend upon its lofty spires and sweet chimes and sounding organ and dignified rituals, but in this practical age men are so irreverent as to ask the question: "What is this institution worth; what service is it rendering men?" The church has taken it for granted that since God has instituted it, and the divine ministries have been committed to its care, men should honor it and bow down before it and bring their influence and treasures into it. The church has thrown open her doors and announced her services, and possibly—and possibly not—written welcome somewhere over her portals, and then said to the community round about: "We are holding services at such hours; we cordially invite you to come and bring your pocketbook with you, for this is God's church and here are God's Word and God's ministries. God has been condescending to have this established for you people." But, sad to