

# *Theology* on *the Web.org.uk*

*Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible*

This document was supplied for free educational purposes.  
Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit  
or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the  
copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the  
ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the  
links below:



*Buy me a coffee*

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



**PATREON**

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](#)

<https://paypal.me/robbadshaw>

---

A table of contents for the *Christian Brethren Research Fellowship Journal* can be found here:

[https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles\\_cbrfj.php](https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_cbrfj.php)

## C O N T E N T S

---

Preach Sense!	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	<i>Khadim</i>	1
---------------	-------	-------	-------	-------	-------	---------------	---

### Topic of the Issue

#### P R E A C H I N G

Preaching—Introduction	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	<i>Harold H. Rowdon</i>	2
Preaching in the New Testament	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	<i>D. R. Jackson</i>	5
Expository Preaching	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	<i>Dr. Leslie C. Allen</i>	24
A Preaching Syllabus	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	<i>Dr. John R. K. Savage</i>	35
A Family Service Syllabus	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	<i>R. Morris</i>	41
A Four-year Syllabus of Midweek Bible Addresses	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	<i>Elmfield Chapel</i>	45

## **PREACH SENSE!**

'But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.' Staggering truth, enduring comfort, penetrating challenge—if you know the meaning of the words! Of course, there isn't a word in 1 John 1:7 which isn't common usage. The meanings of 'walk', 'light', 'blood', 'Jesus', 'cleanses', 'sin'—they're crystal-clear. Wait a minute. You can walk down a street, but how do you walk in the light? Beneath the street lamps? Or does it mean that I should only go for a walk during daylight and never at night? And blood—we all know about that; cut your finger and see. But how does blood cleanse? Why not use soap or detergent? And what has the blood of Jesus got to do with it? Is His blood any different from anyone else's? And after all, where does sin come in? You either do or you don't—anyway what is it? Crystal-clear? Clear as mud, unless you're initiated. These words are loaded, loaded with a Christian connotation, and unless you know the specifically Christian usage, they're gibberish.

John Wesley was riding through the English countryside when from among the trees the dreaded but all too common highway-man emerged, and at the point of a pistol relieved the preacher of what cash he was carrying. As they parted Wesley is reputed to have cried, 'Remember, the blood of Jesus His Son cleanseth from all sin'. The words stuck, and the robber came to Christ. Say those same words to the young thug as he clobbers you in the bank, and almost certainly not a word will register.

But it's the Word of God; it's true. Yes, but truth must communicate meaning in order to be of any value. Those words meant something to Wesley's contemporary—unconverted, yet possessor of a Christian heritage of Biblical knowledge. The words made sense because he knew their Christian content. That's just what your contemporary doesn't know.

We live in a world of 'in groups' with their specialized vocabularies and precise connotations. It may be a restricted area of technology, medicine, aeronautics, space research, or a Christian church. Each has its language, and that of the Christian group is among the most exclusive. To make sense of a newspaper report written for popular consumption covering a lunar space trip one must learn a host of new terms, grasp new ideas. Similarly, to make sense of the Christian message new words, meanings, ideas must be absorbed. The task of the Christian preacher is to make this truth intelligible. We rely on the Holy Spirit to work in men's minds, but this in no way frees us from the responsibility of learning how to get our meaning across. Preaching sense is hard work!

KHADIM

**Correction:** Journal 19, page 31, last line should have read 'This brilliant work was published in 1866 . . .', not 1899, as printed.

# **PREACHING**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Everyone knows that preaching is at a discount today. There are very few outstanding practitioners of the art, and in certain respects the mood of the age is hostile to it. Dialogue, discussion, debate—these are the popular methods of communication. The idea of an individual pontificating from the pulpit—or platform—is somewhat incongruous in an age which has often been characterized as the era of the common man. At the same time, this is also the age of the expert. Specialization has proceeded at such a pace that few are able to keep abreast of developments—in science and technology, in philosophy and the arts, in theology and religion—even at the popular level. It is not only the common man but also the expert who is a key figure in society today.

In evaluating the role of preaching in the life and witness of the Church, we who are evangelicals turn instinctively to the Bible, in order to see what part this activity played, particularly in the New Testament era. This issue of the *Journal* (which is offered as a contribution to the more effective functioning of local churches as well as to the thinking and understanding of individual Christians) therefore commences with a research article on 'Preaching in the New Testament'.

The writer, D. R. Jackson, read Classics at Cambridge and Theology at the London Bible College. After spending two years in New Testament research work, he joined the staff of LBC in 1967. In addition to his lecturing and tutorial work he exercises a preaching ministry which is greatly esteemed. He is thus in a good position to write about preaching in the New Testament. His article is valuable, not only for its discussion of the act of preaching, but also for its treatment of the content. Especially useful is the summary of our Lord's teaching on the Kingdom of God. The very full notes are an invitation to further study of the theme treated in the article.

There are many types of preaching. The literary sermon, couched in language which might be termed 'flowery', and replete with literary allusions, from time to time enjoys a vogue. It has few practitioners today, and there is probably little demand or need for such delicatessen fare. The topical sermon dealing with matters which are of topical interest seems to have gone out with the old 'social gospel', though it is the standby of a few—notably Lord Soper, who is master of it. For somewhat obvious reasons, it has appealed even less than the literary sermon to Brethren audiences, though there may be a place for it. There are many other types of preaching—good, bad and indifferent—but the greatest of these is undoubtedly expository preaching.

Unimaginatively used, this method conceals pitfalls for the unwary. For a preacher to plough through long books of Scripture, chapter by

chapter, verse by verse, word by word, can become weariness to the flesh and heaviness to the spirit! Furthermore, if inadequate application is made, expository preaching can be utterly irrelevant to present needs. Enlightenment as to the situation in the eighth century B.C. or the first century A.D. may be of little more than antiquarian interest to men and women who are grappling with the issues of the twentieth century. Exposition of the text of Scripture demands not only exegesis but also synthesis with the overall teaching of Scripture and application to the needs of the congregation. To do this effectively, a scholarly approach is not enough: pastoral concern, and if possible a pastoral connection with the congregation involved, are *desiderata* (as also, it need hardly be said, are spiritual discernment and unction).

Dr. L. C. Allen serves as our guide in this area, and succeeds in making many rough places plain. Despite his predilection for Old Testament textual criticism (his Ph.D. thesis was a comparison of the Hebrew and Greek texts of Chronicles), in part, no doubt, because of it, Dr. Allen is an outstanding practitioner of the art of expository preaching. His article on that subject is drawn not only from books but also from his experience. What he has to say will be of help to preachers, Bible Class leaders and, indeed, all who are concerned to study and teach the Bible. Written with verve as well as wisdom, his contribution should serve to encourage those who are already engaged in this kind of preaching, and may well fire the interest of those who till now have been content to impart a collection of 'blessed thoughts' or indulge in undisciplined dilation upon a text or a theme.

Insofar as public preaching is a major means of conveying the gospel to the unconverted and building up the people of God in their faith, it is obviously important to ensure that 'the whole counsel of God' is imparted. Some may incline to the view that this may safely be left to the Holy Spirit, working through individual preachers. But it may very well be asked whether this is a matter which we are entitled to confide to the spiritual discernment of invited preachers. Is it not something for which we who have pastoral responsibilities are responsible?

There are few—if any—who have qualms about inviting specific men for specific ministry (at any rate at meetings other than for breaking of bread). If we feel assured that God can guide the secretary (or, better still, a small committee) in the choice of preachers, is there any valid reason why He should not guide in the choice of subjects.

All the weight of New Testament precedent and principle seems to indicate that the local church is the focal point of Christian instruction (evangelism is perhaps another matter). So the first area from which expounders of the Word should be drawn is the local church itself. Our Lord never meant to endorse the saying 'No prophet is acceptable in his own country'; and to assert that a local brother's gift would necessarily be unacceptable if exercised on any but an occasional basis is to impugn that gift. Our current practice of inviting preachers—almost as a matter of

course—from outside is bad enough. To expect them to be conversant with the spiritual needs of a local church other than that with which they are personally linked seems a piece of gross spiritual impertinence. Granted the need for most local churches to supplement such gifts as they have been given with ministry from gifted men from other local churches (whatever their ecclesiastical complexion), the necessity is incumbent upon the elders concerned to ensure that a balanced spiritual diet is provided.

This demands a preaching syllabus. Dr. J. R. K. Savage is not only a research scientist at Harwell but an elder of Norcot Mission, Reading, with wide preaching experience. He has drawn up a preaching syllabus for a two year period, covering one service on Sunday and one mid-week service, allowing six spare weeks for special occasions. Many of the topics suggested he has himself used in preaching. The particular merit of his scheme is that it shows the wide range of Bible doctrine which needs to be covered in a full-orbed presentation of the gospel.

Two other schemes have been contributed, both being attempts which have actually been made to provide a consecutive ministry in the context of a local church. Mr. R. Morris has kindly provided a list of topics covered during a period of two years in the Sunday morning Family Service held at Culver Grove Hall, Stanmore. We have also been provided with a syllabus for midweek services used at Elmfield Chapel, North Harrow, Middlesex during a period of four years. About one third of the subjects were taken, I believe, by the brethren in fellowship at that local church.

It is not suggested that one of these schemes should be treated as a model to be followed. Rather, they are intended to stimulate thought and action. It will not do for those whose responsibility it is to appoint preachers to use this as a means of abdicating all responsibility for the content of the preaching. Too often, the only control seems to be the negative one of eliminating those whose preaching—for one reason or another—is unacceptable. What needs to be done—and what some visiting preachers are the first to welcome—is to provide guidance as to the subject matter which is required. This, incidentally, should result not merely in the establishing of local churches in deeper understanding of, and fuller obedience to, the faith, but also in the enriching and enlarging of many a preacher's ministry. It is to be hoped, therefore, that those responsible for such matters will first of all take steps to ascertain how far existing arrangements meet the need. They are then invited to consider whether a syllabus (ideally implemented by gifted men from the local congregation, supplemented as may be thought necessary or desirable by men from beyond) would meet the need more adequately. The examples given may then be used as a basis for hard spiritual thinking in the construction and implementing of a syllabus that will be the means of bringing the full range of Biblical teaching to bear upon the full extent of local need.

HAROLD H. ROWDON

# **PREACHING IN THE NEW TESTAMENT**

*by D. R. JACKSON*

## **Preface**

In this article we shall attempt a survey of New Testament preaching in accordance with the following scheme:

- I Terminology
- II The Preaching of John the Baptist
- III The Preaching of Jesus
  - (a) Manner
  - (b) Substance
    - 1 The Gospel of the Kingdom
    - 2 The Responsibility of the Hearer
    - 3 The Privilege of the Believer
- IV The Preaching of the Apostles
  - (a) Missionary Preaching
  - (b) Christian Teaching
    - 1 The Privilege of the Believer
    - 2 The Responsibility of the Believer
- V The Preaching of Other Christians
- VI Summary

It is, of course, extremely difficult to do justice to such a vast subject in a single article, and the present sketch makes no pretensions to anything like an exhaustive treatment. Readers requiring a more detailed approach will, it is hoped, be helped by works mentioned in the notes.

## **I TERMINOLOGY**

To describe the act of preaching the New Testament uses some thirty different simple and compound verbs, together with associated substantives<sup>1</sup>. We shall briefly notice here only a few of the main terms<sup>2</sup>.

The verb *euangelizesthai* means *to announce good news*, and *euangelion* signifies *good news, gospel*, while *euangelistes* is a *preacher of the gospel, evangelist*<sup>3</sup>. An examination of the Old Testament background reveals that the equivalent Hebrew verb, *bissar*, has the general meaning of *proclaiming good news*, is occasionally used to signify *bringing news of victory*, and is sometimes found in close association with the words *righteousness (deliverance), salvation and peace* (e.g. Ps. 40:9; Is. 52:7). A participle formed from this verb, *mebasser*, is employed in later chapters of Isaiah to denote the messenger who announces the victory of God, the

glad news of God's kingly rule (e.g. Is. 52:7; cf. 61:1), and the expectation of such a divinely sent messenger endured as a hope in Rabbinic Judaism. In non-biblical Greek usage *euan gelion* had, among other meanings, a particular religious significance connected with the Roman imperial cult, and could refer to the *glad messages* concerning the birth of an emperor, his coming of age and his accession to the throne.

The verb *kerussein*<sup>4</sup> means *to herald forth, proclaim*, and is connected with the substantive *kerux*, which the RSV translates as *preacher* in 1 Tim. 2:7; 2 Tim. 1:11, and as *herald* in 2 Pet. 2:5. In the LXX *kerussein* is employed to describe a heralding or proclaiming which is based upon the authority of a ruler or of God Himself. In religious usage it often reflects a note of urgency or compulsion, and is a term employed in time of national emergency. It is also a term which is associated with the joyful advent of Messianic blessing (Zeph. 3:14; Zech. 9:9) and which can describe the ministry of the Servant Himself (Is. 61:1). The New Testament substantive *kerygma* means *proclamation*, and can signify both the act of preaching (e.g. 1 Cor. 2:4; Tit. 1:3) and the content of the message (e.g. Rom. 16:25; 1 Cor. 1:21). In recent years *kerygma* has been widely used by scholars as a technical term to describe the missionary preaching of Jesus and the early Church.

The verb *didaskein* signifies *to teach*, and in Jewish usage denotes especially the act of teaching with reference to the Scriptures<sup>5</sup>. The term is frequently used by the Gospel writers to describe a characteristic activity in the ministry of Jesus (e.g. Mt. 4:23; 9:35; Mk. 6:2,6; Lk. 21:37). The associated word *didache, teaching*, has also been employed as a technical term in modern discussions, often to describe instruction given to Christian converts in distinction from a *kerygma* proclaimed to non-Christian audiences<sup>6</sup>.

## II THE PREACHING OF JOHN THE BAPTIST<sup>7</sup>

Not only did John come in fulfilment of prophecy (Mk. 1:2) but he preached in a style reminiscent of the Old Testament prophet. His Elijah-like appearance was matched by an uncompromising denunciation of national wickedness and an authoritative warning of judgment to come (Mt. 3:7-12). But his condemnation was not indiscriminate. His fiercest words were uttered to those who were unwilling to repent (Mt. 3:7), for repentance was the object of his preaching. In the light of God's imminent intervention, and in the consciousness of his own divine commission (Jn. 1:23; 3:28f.; cf. 1:6), John made urgent ethical demands upon the people and proclaimed 'a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins' (Mk. 1:4). Proselytes to Judaism were required to undergo baptism to symbolize their change of life and acceptance into God's elect community, and so the significance of John's message to Israel was that Jews themselves, no less than Gentiles, needed to experience repentance and changed living in order to enter God's favour. Repentance was to lead to forgiveness and deliverance, and was to result in righteous living. In preparation for the

Coming One, whose advent he announced, John's mission was to begin forming a forgiven and upright community, a people who had entered into God's deliverance and blessing, and who governed their lives in accordance with the divine ethical requirements which had received fresh emphasis from the Baptist's preaching. John's fiery ministry could therefore be described not only by the word *heralding* (*kerusso*, Lk. 3:3; RSV *preaching*), but also by the expression *he preached good news* (*euengelizeto*, Lk. 3:18), for his message 'brought joy and a foretaste of Messianic blessedness'<sup>8</sup> to those who responded.

The main emphases of John's preaching appear to have been: the Kingdom of God (Mt. 3:2), God's appointed Person and the power associated with Him (Mt. 3:11, 12), judgment (Mt. 3:7, 10, 12), repentance (Mt. 3:2, 8; Mk. 1:4), forgiveness (Mk. 1:4; Lk. 3:3), deliverance (Lk. 3:6, 7b), and righteous living (Lk. 3:8, 10-14). It will have been apparent already that certain aspects of John's ministry correspond with characteristics which we have seen associated with the use of the words *euangelizesthai* and *kerussein*. As we proceed it will also be seen that these aspects and emphases recur in the preaching of Jesus and the apostles.

### III THE PREACHING OF JESUS<sup>9</sup>

#### a. Manner

When His disciples were trying to persuade Him to return to the scene of a successful healing ministry, Jesus announced that He had come for the purpose of preaching (Mk. 1:38; cf. Jn. 18:37). On another occasion He expressed His consciousness of being divinely commissioned to His preaching activity (Lk. 4:18, 43), and His awareness of the desperate need of men added an urgency to that commission (Mk. 1:38; cf. Mt. 9:36f.; Lk. 10:1-12). These facts alone, quite apart from His personal identity, will go far to explain the striking characteristic of authority in His preaching, which so excited the astonishment of His hearers (Mk. 1:22; Mt. 7:28). In a manner quite unlike the scribal rehearsing of traditions and appeal to different interpreters, Jesus preached with a prophetic authority of His own<sup>10</sup>. When He spoke He required a verdict, compelled a decision, often provoked a violent reaction: it was impossible to remain indifferent to His words (Jn. 6:66-69; 7:40-46; 10:19). And yet it was a quiet authority which He exercised, in words full of graciousness and winsomeness, so that the common people were eager to listen (Mk. 12:37; Lk. 4:22). A warm humanity pervaded His preaching, for 'if the Rabbis delighted to speak of *things*, He delighted to speak of *persons*'<sup>11</sup>. His verbal illustrations were easily intelligible, being drawn from everyday life (e.g. Mk. 2:17, 19, 21; Jn. 3:8), and His presentation of the truth was not coldly and baldly dogmatic, for He supported His statements and exhortations with logical, cogent reasoning (e.g. Mt. 6:25-33; 12:24-29; Mk. 12:35-37; Lk. 11:5-13). He never gives the impression of being a harsh preacher like the Baptist, although denunciation formed part of His message (e.g. Mt. 11:20-24; 23:1-36; Lk. 6:24-26; Jn. 8:34-47), and, unlike John, He used as often

as possible the opportunities of preaching in places where people normally gathered, in synagogue and temple (Mk. 1:39; Lk. 22:53; Jn. 18:20). In the synagogues He taught from the Scriptures, for such teaching, to the general public, formed part of His preaching method, and although *teaching* (*didaskein*) and *proclaiming* (*kerussein*) are not synonymous and interchangeable terms, yet there is no doubt that *teaching* may be included within the wider category of *proclaiming*, and that we can make no rigid separation between the two in the ministry of Jesus (compare Mt. 4:23 with Mk. 1:39). A description of Jesus' style of synagogue teaching is given to us in Lk. 4:16-30. Examples of our Lord's preaching to His own disciples are to be found in the connected discourses in Mt. 5-7; 10; 18, and there is nothing to prevent our believing that Jesus did in fact give instruction to His followers in such a continuous form<sup>12</sup>.

In recent years occasional attempts have been made to show that Jesus taught in a thoroughly rabbinic fashion<sup>13</sup>. Such a view of His preaching has not commended itself to many<sup>14</sup>, and does not in fact seem likely, but we are on safer ground in noticing that He does employ several techniques of teaching which occur in the Old Testament and which had become traditionally Jewish. For example, in addition to the universal teaching method of constant repetition (of phrases and of themes), Jesus makes great use of pithy and sententious sayings (e.g. Mt. 20:16; Mk. 4:24; 8:35; 10:31; Lk. 14:11), some of which employ paradox to catch the hearer's attention and impress his memory (e.g. Mk. 10:31; Lk. 14:11). It had, of course, long been current among the Jews to express moral and religious truth in pointed proverbs and maxims. Another way to secure the attention and memory of an audience was to couch teaching in poetic forms (e.g. Mt. 5:3-10; 6:9-13, 26-30)<sup>15</sup>, a method often employed by the Old Testament prophets. Jesus' occasional practice of teaching with the help of symbolic action and example (e.g. Mt. 9:33ff.; 11:13ff.; Lk. 7:18-23; Jn. 13:12ff.) also finds precedents in the ministry of the prophets (e.g. Is. 8:1-4; Ezk. 12:1-16), and His more strikingly characteristic employment of parable is also foreshadowed in the Old Testament (e.g. Judg. 9:7-20; 2 Sam. 12:1-4). The motive for using parable is similar to that which occasioned the use of proverb and paradox. The spiritual meaning of a parable is not always immediately apparent, but the story, with its vivid, pictorial character, fixes itself in the memory in its own right as a narrative, and so the hearer is then able, if he wishes, to puzzle over it and grapple with its deeper significance—a significance which will certainly not be lessened in its effect through being appreciated by strenuous thinking. A parable, then, is intended as an incentive to religious insight, a spur to spiritual perception<sup>16</sup>, although some hearers, of course, will always refuse to be spurred and will wish to see nothing more than a story<sup>17</sup>.

So far we have considered something of the manner of Jesus' preaching. What now of the substance of His message<sup>18</sup>?

#### b. Substance

1. *The Gospel of the Kingdom* Like John the Baptist, Jesus proclaimed the advent of the kingdom of God (Mt. 3:1; 4:17). In summarizing His

ministry New Testament writers declare that He travelled the country preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing (e.g. Mt. 4:23; 9:35; Lk. 8:1; 16:16). By the word *kingdom* we are to understand *kingly rule*, the almighty, sovereign purpose of God and His royal authority, with its consequences for individual and community alike. In Mk. 1:14f. Jesus comes *preaching the gospel of God*, and the substance of His message is that men must make the response of repentance and faith in view of the drawing near of God's kingdom. But this gospel of the kingdom has a still deeper significance: it bears a very close relation to the person of Jesus Himself. Jesus was conscious of His Messiahship (Lk. 4:16-21) and of His Sonship (Mt. 11:27) and of the fact that the kingdom was His Father's kingdom (Mt. 26:29). With His sense of Messianic kingship He claims that God's sovereign purposes, revealed in the Scriptures, find historical and visible realization in Himself and His ministry (Mt. 13:16f.; Lk. 10:23f.; Jn. 5:39). We may say in fact that Jesus, as the revelation of the Father (Jn. 14:9f.), is Himself the complete expression of the sovereign rule of God. He is the kingdom personified (compare Mt. 19:29; Mk. 10:29; Lk. 18:29)<sup>19</sup>. G. Friedrich has pointed out the importance of Jesus' Messianic consciousness in this connection<sup>20</sup>, for if He knew that He was the Son of God, who was to die and rise again, then He also realized that He Himself was the content of the gospel message. This brings us to the fact that the kingdom which Jesus proclaimed was totally unlike that of contemporary expectation. One theme dominates Mk. 8:27-10:45, for we are there shown Jesus teaching His disciples, in emphatic, stereotyped language, that the One whom they have acknowledged as Messiah must suffer and die (Mk. 8:31; 9:31; 10:33f.). The climax of that section is Mk. 10:45, where Jesus describes His mission in terms reminiscent of the Suffering Servant of Is. 52:13-53:12. His purpose was to serve and to die as a ransom for many, thus advancing God's kingdom, in obedience to the will of the Father (Jn. 10:11, 17, 18).

Because of His identity and His mission, Jesus invites men to Himself. Mt. 11:28, following the statement of Jesus' Messianic consciousness, makes the offer of rest to those burdened by the yoke of the Law. The good news is proclaimed to the poor and the oppressed (Mt. 11:5; Lk. 4:18; cf. Is. 61:1), and the *I am* sayings of John's Gospel are invitations to experience the divine provision for the needy. To respond to the invitation, through repentance and faith (cf. Mk. 1:14), is to experience salvation (Lk. 19:9), to enter the kingdom (Lk. 18:18, 22, 24), to gain a new and eternal relationship in the family of God (Jn. 3:3-8, 16; cf. Mt. 6:9; Jn. 20:17). But this is more than a casual invitation: the parables of Lk. 15 reveal the divine initiative in seeking and saving, and Jesus shows that initiative in action, for His purpose in coming was to make the good news known to all Israel (Lk. 4:43) and to seek and save the lost (Lk. 19:10), a purpose of which the urgency and yearning are well revealed by the lament over Jerusalem (Mt. 23:37).

2. *The Responsibility of the Hearer* Jesus is to be exalted in glory (Mk. 14:62) and is to be the final judge of men (Mt. 7:22, 23; 25:31-46). He therefore demands that men should determine their response to Him, for

to reject His offer means death (Mk. 8:34-38; cf. Mt. 7:13f.), and to ignore is to reject, for neutrality is impossible (Lk. 11:23). But once the step of discipleship has been taken, new responsibilities emerge, for ethical requirements are inherent in the message of Jesus. The offer of rest provides at the same time a new yoke of obedience (Mt. 11:29), for here again Jesus is God's royal authority personified and it is His instruction which is to be obeyed (Mt. 5:22, 28, 32, 34, 39, 44; 7:24-27), since that instruction reveals the will of the Father (Mt. 7:21, 24; Jn. 7:16f.; 14:10). Disciples of Jesus have the responsibility to live, individually and communally, in a manner worthy of their relationship to God, in humility, holiness, compassion and trust (Mt. 5:7; 18), for their relationship with the Father is one in which He reigns over the life (cf. Mt. 5:3, 9, 10, 19, 20; 6:33), and their character must consequently reflect that of God Himself (Mt. 5:48). Because of the world in which they live, disciples must bear witness to their Master (Mt. 5:13-16; Mk. 8:38), and they must fulfil lives of faithful service in view of the final judgment (Mt. 25).

3. *The Privilege of the Believer* R. H. Strachan has pointed out that since the kingdom was the Father's kingdom, Jesus taught an identity of purpose and activity between the kingship and the fatherhood of God<sup>21</sup>. Those who submit to the kingdom are brought to the Father (Jn. 14:6), and they know the experience of divine forgiveness (Mt. 18:23-35; Mk. 2:5-11; Lk. 7:40-48) and peace (Jn. 14:27). Believers have the sovereign protection and provision of the heavenly Father (Mt. 6:25-34; 7:7-12; Lk. 12:4-7, 22-32), a loving care which not only removes anxiety throughout life, but which is eternal in its scope (Jn. 10:29). The depth of relationship with the Father into which the message of Jesus brought His followers is reflected in their use of the intimate term *Abba* (Mk. 14:36; Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:6). Jesus speaks not only of His disciples' privileged position as children of the Father, but also of the instruction and guidance which they may expect from the Holy Spirit (Lk. 11:13; 12:11f.; Jn. 14-16), who provides the power which is necessary for living the life of the kingdom (Ac. 1:18). And finally Jesus tells of the future blessedness which awaits His followers, when they will share the glorious consummation of His own kingly authority (Lk. 12:32; 22:29f.) and the eternal security of His Father's home (Jn. 14:1-6).

#### IV THE PREACHING OF THE APOSTLES

It will be convenient to consider the apostolic gospel message under the two familiar classifications: missionary preaching (*kerygma*) and Christian teaching (*didache*), although it must not be supposed that these two aspects of the message were always rigidly distinguished.

##### a. Missionary Preaching

The apostles, too, announce the kingdom of God (Ac. 1:3; 8:12; 19:8; 20:25; 28:23, 31). And for them, also, Jesus is the kingdom personified, for the person and work of Christ are very frequently the grammatical

objects of the verbs *euangelizesthai* (e.g. Ac. 5:42; 8:35; 11:20; 17:18; Gal. 1:16; Eph. 3:8; 1 Pet. 1:11f.) and *kerussein* (e.g. Ac. 8:5; 9:20; 19:13; 1 Cor. 1:23; 2 Cor. 4:5)<sup>22</sup>. In contrast to the *glad messages* of the imperial cult, there is now proclaimed the one Christian *euangelion* of the kingdom of God, a message of which some might be ashamed (cf. Mt. 11:6; Rom. 1:16; 1 Cor. 1:17, 23), since it is so essentially connected with the person and history of Jesus. It is not naturally accepted (2 Cor. 4:3), but needs to be accompanied by the revelatory power of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 1:17; cf. 2:4; 1 Pet. 1:12).

In his gospel preaching to pagans (Ac. 14:15-17; 17:22-31) Paul seeks to present the Christian message in the way most appropriate to his hearers' circumstances and cultural background<sup>23</sup>. The same is true of the missionary sermons made to Jews and God-fearers in chapters 2, 3, 5, 10 and 13 of Acts, but it has often been noted that in these addresses we find the frequent occurrence of certain definite themes. The question of a stereotyped kerygmatic pattern has been much discussed. Among scholars who support some form of stereotyped *kerygma* are: Grosheide<sup>24</sup>, Dibelius<sup>25</sup>, Dodd<sup>26</sup>, Hatch<sup>27</sup>, Hunter<sup>28</sup>, Leijs<sup>29</sup>, Glasson<sup>30</sup>, Gärtner<sup>31</sup>, Ward<sup>32</sup>, Russell<sup>33</sup>, Bartels<sup>34</sup>. These writers often differ widely from one another in their analyses, but the work of C. H. Dodd has had great influence upon English-speaking scholars. T. F. Glasson has modified Dodd's analysis to list the essential kerygmatic elements as: (1) the resurrection, (2) the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy, (3) the death of Christ, (4) the offer of forgiveness, (5) the apostles as witnesses. Among scholars who would reject, wholly or partially, a rigid kerygmatic pattern are: Evans, Filson, Wood, Mounce, Sweet. F. V. Filson<sup>35</sup> analyses the *kerygma*, but maintains, as does H. G. Wood<sup>36</sup>, that *kerygma* and *didache* were frequently intermingled in Christian preaching, while C. F. Evans<sup>37</sup>, followed by J. P. M. Sweet<sup>38</sup>, prefers to think of many differing *kerymata* (plural) rather than of *one message, the kerygma*. R. H. Mounce<sup>39</sup> maintains that the reconstructed *kerygma* pattern does not in fact constitute the outline of any individual sermon in Acts: instead it simply represents our systematization of the theology of the early Church as revealed in the early preaching, a conveniently arranged modern survey of primitive Christology. In the present article it is assumed that by his presentation of frequently repeated themes in the Acts sermons Luke wished us to understand that these were the characteristic emphases of apostolic missionary preaching. It is also assumed that the essential *kerygma* consists of the elements which are most commonly preached, for it appears to be a sound method to follow Glasson's principle of including only the items that are most frequently mentioned, rather than to form a synthesis (as some writers have done) by utilizing each different single particular which may be discovered.

We notice first, however, that a kerygmatic structure has been claimed also for other parts of the New Testament, particularly for certain 'traditional' passages in Paul's epistles<sup>40</sup>. One passage of especial importance for Paul's understanding of the *kerygma* is 1 Cor. 15:1-11, which we shall

examine in more detail. In verse 2 Paul says that he will remind his readers *in what terms* he had preached to them, an expression which is understood by Russell to mean that the gospel had been communicated in some kind of official formula<sup>41</sup>. More convincing, however, is Paul's use, in verse 3, of the technical vocabulary employed in Judaism for transmitting and receiving tradition, which might well suggest the existence of an authoritative pattern for Christian preaching<sup>42</sup>. Jeremias, therefore, among others, maintains that Paul is here claiming, not to have formulated the *kerygma* delineated in 1 Cor. 15:3ff., but rather, to have communicated the facts and doctrines which had been given form by his predecessors in the faith<sup>43</sup>. Paul does in fact explicitly claim the same preaching as the other apostles (v.11; cf. Gal. 1:8; 2:1-9). What then is that preaching? We find: a statement of the death of Christ (vv. 3f.), an allusive reference to the forgiveness and salvation offered by God (*for our sins*, v.3), an emphasis upon Scriptural evidence (vv. 3f.), a stress upon the resurrection, corresponding to what is perhaps the most characteristic emphasis of the Acts sermons (vv. 4-8), an insistence upon apostolic witness (vv. 5-8; cf. v. 15). It is apparent that there is an inherent logic in this combination of facts and doctrines. The death of Christ, the first article in Paul's summary, was from the beginning a fact of the utmost importance, if not as a soteriological event, certainly as an apparent mystery requiring some explanation and apology. The resurrection, therefore, provided an emphatic vindication of Jesus, an overwhelming proof that He was not a rejected sinner, but the appointed Christ of God. This argument is then complemented by the fact of apostolic witness, which furnishes yet stronger evidence for the validity of the *kerygma*. The further proof, from the Scriptures, would be an essential element of apologetics in a Jewish milieu: with the Jews' strong awareness of God's action in past history, Christian preachers would need to demonstrate that their message was the culmination of the previous revelatory activity of God. It seems therefore both natural and logical that apostolic missionary preaching, as thus far examined, should consist of a reference to the death of Jesus, three proofs of the validity of the *kerygma*, and a concluding statement of the significance of the events preached: that forgiveness of sins is now offered to those who believe. It is of course apparent that these five themes correspond to the items in T. F. Glasson's analysis of the *kerygma*. But we should notice that there may be yet another argument reflected within 1 Cor. 15:1-11. It is not certain where Paul's reporting of the traditional *kerygma* ends and where his own words begin<sup>44</sup>. But it is at least possible that verses 8-10 are more than merely a personal digression, for here, before the climax of his conclusion in verse 11, Paul is telling his readers that he, like the other apostles, has experienced not only the vision of the resurrected Christ, but also the supernatural help of God in his life. Such a statement, set in general terms—that men can experience supernatural power, and that this power has a connection with Christ—would be another very strong argument for the validity of the Christ-centred *kerygma*, and so we should not be surprised to find that such a proof is sometimes used in close conjunction with the other elements mentioned above. We may therefore summarize six themes under the following titles: (1) Death-theme,

(2) Resurrection-theme, (3) Witness-theme, (4) Scripture-theme, (5) Power-theme, (6) Forgiveness-theme.

The above emphases form the essence of the missionary message in Acts as it is proclaimed to predominantly Jewish audiences. The themes occur as follows:

- (1) Death-theme: 2:23, 36; 3:13-15; 4:10f.; 5:30; 10:39; 13:28f.; cf. 26:23;
- (2) Resurrection-theme: 2:24-36; 3:15; 4:10f.; 5:30f.; 10:40; 13:30, 33-38; cf. 26:23;
- (3) Witness-theme: 2:32; 3:15; 5:32; 10:39-42; 13:31; cf. 26:16, 17, 22;
- (4) Scripture-theme: 2:17-21, 25-28, 34f.; 3:18, 21-25; 4:11; 5:30f.; 10:43; 13:16-23, 27, 29, 33-36, 40f.; cf. 26:22;
- (5) Power-theme: 2:15-20, 22, 33, 38; 3:12f., 16, 19-21; 4:9f.; 5:32; 10:38; 13:17-23, 40f.; cf. 26:22;
- (6) Forgiveness-theme: 2:21, 38-40; 3:19, 26; 4:12; 5:31; 10:43; 13:38f.; cf. 26:23.

A careful examination of the passages will show that the themes are presented with great flexibility, in the ways most appropriate to the particular audiences addressed<sup>45</sup>. For example, in Acts 2 and 3 the statements about the death of Jesus effectively contrast the crime of the hearers with the attitude of God; in Acts 10 and 13 more detailed information is given about Jesus and His disciples than was necessary in Jerusalem; and in Acts 13 the allusions to Old Testament facts and to God's sovereign power are worked into a typical form of synagogue address<sup>46</sup>.

What, then, is the origin of these particular emphases? Bo Reicke has stated that historical research does not indicate any creation *ex nihilo* of external forms for preaching<sup>47</sup>, and Rétif has pointed out that certain elements of the apostolic message can be found also in the preaching of John the Baptist<sup>48</sup>. But the obvious source to whom to look would be Christ Himself. Reicke notes that Jesus sent the disciples on preaching missions in the Gospels and it would be natural to assume that their preaching then was modelled on His, especially as they were His representatives and were therefore considered in Jewish thinking as an extension or multiplication of His person<sup>49</sup>. Some scholars have argued for an even closer connection between the teaching of Jesus and that of the apostles. B. Gerhardsson, for example, maintains that Jesus taught in rabbinic fashion, with extensive use of memorization, and that the apostles and early Church transmitted fixed forms of tradition derived from Christ, in the way that Judaism transmitted the oral Torah<sup>50</sup>. Gerhardsson's thesis has been widely criticized and it seems improbable in its detailed outworking<sup>51</sup>. But the practice of memorization was so much an accepted feature of ancient education, that it does seem possible that the disciples would have learned at least some parts of Jesus' teaching by heart<sup>52</sup>. Grosheide maintained that it was the general custom of teachers to repeat their teachings, which often therefore assumed a stereotyped form<sup>53</sup>, and he notes that Bousset had drawn attention to the stereotyped nature of the predictions of the Passion<sup>54</sup>. Barclay has also argued that the actual

wording of teaching was highly regarded by the Jews, as being the essential vehicle of a speaker's thought, and that the sermons of Jesus and the apostles, being intended to move the hearers to action, would have been stored in the memory and repeatedly discussed<sup>55</sup>. However likely that may be, it does at least appear that many items of the apostolic message may be traced back to Jesus. We may note the following: Servant of God, and Messiah (Mk. 10:45; 14:61f.), the argument from supernatural power (Mk. 2:9ff.; Lk. 11:20), the importance of personal testimony (Mt. 10:27; Mk. 4:19; 10:38), stereotyped references to Jesus' death and resurrection (Mk. 8:31; 9:31; 10:33f.), proof-texts from the Old Testament (Mk. 12:10f., 35ff.)<sup>56</sup>. The most common kerygmatic elements occur also in Lk. 24:19f., 25-27, 44-49. C. F. Evans holds that Luke has simply read back the *kerygma* into the Gospel and has presented it in a dramatic form in preparation for the Acts sermons<sup>57</sup>. But it does not in fact seem unreasonable to hold that Lk. 24 is an accurate record of events, that the risen Christ answered His disciples' questionings, and that the emphases of His explanation later found expression in their preaching.

But our concentration upon particular emphases of the missionary gospel must not blind us to the fact which we have noticed at the beginning of this section, that the one central theme, dominating and unifying all the secondary themes, is Christ Himself. The gospel is the gospel of the glory of Christ (2 Cor. 4:4).

That fact, however, is perhaps less apparent in Paul's two recorded missionary addresses to pagans (Ac. 14:15-17; 17:22-31). We should take into account that the immediate purpose of the Lystra speech was to stop an idolatrous sacrifice being performed: the speech does, even so, contain themes which are to be developed in the address at Athens and which seem to have been generally characteristic of Paul's evangelistic approach to Greeks (cf. 1 Thess. 1:9f.). At Athens itself Paul was interrupted when he entered upon the specifically Christian theme in his message. It is obvious, however, that the Athenian speech is completely different from the *kerygma* presented to Jewish audiences. Paul did not have a wooden approach. In Ac. 17 we find no direct quotations from the Old Testament: instead there are allusions to pagan poetry<sup>58</sup>. The address is also characterized by a literary, elegant style of language<sup>59</sup>, and there are other differences from the Jewish *kerygma* type which go deeper than superficial literary touches, for Norden has argued that, for missionary addresses of any sort, the ancient pagan world was familiar with a stereotyped form to which Ac. 17:22ff. conforms<sup>60</sup>. Norden originally denied the Pauline origin of this speech, and Dibelius also claims that the speech is at variance with Paul's thought in the epistles and in fact reflects Stoic philosophical concepts<sup>61</sup>, but Gärtner, in a remarkable study, has shown convincingly that the thought is derived rather from the Old Testament and is completely consonant with Paul's writings<sup>62</sup>. In the preparatory part of the sermon, before reaching the subject of the person and significance of Jesus, Paul has in fact succeeded in presenting Jewish monotheism in a form superbly adapted to a cultured pagan audience. F. F. Bruce remarks that Paul was

more versatile than has sometimes been believed<sup>63</sup>. Other scholars have shown that the apostle's rhetorical ability was by no means negligible, and that an examination of his epistles reveals a fairly frequent and effective use of techniques derived from the Stoic diatribe<sup>64</sup>. There is evidence that instruction in Greek culture was given by the rabbis to young Jews at Jerusalem<sup>65</sup>, and it would seem that Paul had made good use of his training under Gamaliel to enable him to understand and approach the educated pagan.

But, whether to Jews or Greeks, the preaching of the apostles was far more than merely the recitation of certain basic facts or the application of certain techniques. Mounce, for example, has emphatically reminded us that the apostolic preaching was essentially characterized by a polemic quality (e.g. Ac. 9:22, 29; 17:2f.; 18:4f.; 19:8f.), by urgency (1 Cor. 9:16; 2 Tim. 4:2), and by crystal clarity under the controlling power of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 1:23f.; 2:1-5; 2 Cor. 4:2ff.; 1 Thess. 1:5; 2:4ff.). The reaction produced was 'either a revival or a riot'<sup>66</sup>.

### b. Christian Teaching

There is not much direct evidence about instructional preaching to Christians by the apostles. But it is, of course, legitimate for us to use the epistles to gain the substance of such apostolic preaching. The epistles were intended to be read aloud in the churches (Col. 4:16), and may be regarded as written substitutes for personal addresses. We have already noted that some writers have stressed the affinities between Paul's epistles and the Stoic manner of preaching, and it is obvious to every reader that Paul frequently employs such direct locutions as *brethren*, *I say*, or *you know yourselves*<sup>67</sup>.

1. *The Privilege of the Believer* Paul possessed an overwhelming sense of the privileged position granted to him by the grace of God (Eph. 3:8), and not to him only, but to all believers, for the good news of Christ is that the priceless blessing of salvation is a free gift (Rom. 3:24; 6:23), given by the grace of God (Eph. 2:8; cf. Ac. 20:24) to all who will accept it by faith (Rom. 3:22, 25). This gospel is God's secret which He has made known to His people (Eph. 6:19; Col. 1:26). It brings salvation (Eph. 1:13; cf. 1 Cor. 15:2), for it is God's own power for saving (Rom. 1:16): it reveals the righteousness of God, i.e. that gracious delivering activity by which God rescues the sinner and justifies the ungodly (Rom. 1:17; 3:26; 4:5). A stress upon justification, God's gracious, free acquittal of guilty sinners who trust in Christ, is especially characteristic of Paul's presentation of the gospel message (e.g. Rom. 4:5ff.; 8:34; cf. the Greek of Ac. 13:39). The gospel tells of forgiveness and of reconciliation with God achieved through the cross of Christ (2 Cor. 5:19; Rom. 5:10f.), for Christ made reconciliation and came proclaiming the good news of peace (Eph. 2:16, 17; cf. 6:15). Just as the appearance of Christ on earth was *the beginning of the gospel* (Mk. 1:1; cf. Ac. 1:1), so in the context of

Eph. 2:15-18 the total work of Christ is summarized in the words *He preached peace* (cf. Is. 52:7; 57:19). That peace is available for the whole of humanity, for the good news unites Jews and Gentiles and mediates salvation to both alike (Eph. 3:6). All believers have experienced spiritual rebirth from God (1 Pet. 1:3; 1 Jn. 3:9; cf. Jn. 3:3), know the privilege of adoption as God's own sons (Rom. 8:15ff.; Gal. 4:5f.; Eph. 1:5), and are set in a new order of existence (2 Cor. 5:17), for there is *a new creation*: the believer is *in Christ*; he is united with Christ (Rom. 6:1-11); he is in *the kingdom of God's beloved Son* (Col. 1:13). In this new life in God's family the gospel brings the news of the strength which comes from God (Rom. 16:25), for the gift of the Holy Spirit enables believers to live in a way that pleases God (Rom. 8:1-17, 26f.). The writer to the Hebrews reminds us that Christians also have constantly the help and care of Christ as the perfect High Priest, who fully understands and sympathizes with the character and circumstances of His people (Heb. 2:14-18; 4:14-16), and in 1 Pet. 2:21-25 we are also reminded of the understanding which Christ has for His afflicted followers (cf. 1 Pet. 5:10). The Christian is already triumphantly secure in the loving care of God, from which nothing can separate him (Rom. 8:28-39), and he is equally secure after death (2 Cor. 5:1-8). Christ is exalted in glory over the whole universe (Eph. 1:20ff.; Phil. 2:9; Col. 1:15-18); believers share already in His exaltation (Eph. 1:3; 2:6), and are yet to share in His future majesty in the restored universe (Rom. 8:17-19; 1 Cor. 15:20; Col. 1:5, 27; 2 Tim. 2:12; Heb. 2:10).

2. *The Responsibility of the Believer* In apostolic teaching, as in that of Jesus, ethical requirements are inherent in the gospel message. The new and privileged position which the believer has received by God's grace is intended to lead directly to righteous living (Eph. 2:10). We should note the clear ethical implications of the words found in 2 Cor. 5:21; Col. 1:22f.; 2:6f.; Tit. 2:11-14. The gospel is *the glorious gospel of the blessed God* (1 Tim. 1:11); it is God's address to man, and when God thus speaks, man must listen and yield obedience (2 Cor. 9:13; cf. Rom. 1:5; 16:26). The believer must lead a life which is equally *worthy of God* (1 Thess. 2:12) and *worthy of the gospel of Christ* (Phil. 1:27). In his ethical teaching Paul often argues explicitly from the well-known facts of the gospel proclamation by which the churches were first established. For example, based on such essential facts about Christ are the exhortations to mutual concern (Rom. 15:1-3), to humility and brotherly love (Phil. 2:1-11), to forgiveness (Eph. 4:32), to conjugal love (Eph. 5:25ff.), to holiness and purity (Rom. 6:4; 1 Cor. 6:15-20), and to confidence and hope (1 Cor. 15:20; 1 Thess. 4:13f.). Christians are *called to be saints* (Rom. 1:7); they are united with Christ (Rom. 6:1-11); they must therefore lead a sanctified life. Their union with Christ involves other responsibilities too. Christ has suffered, and His followers must share that experience (Rom. 8:17; 1 Pet. 2:21). Christ has brought the gospel, and now Christian believers, who have responded to that good news, must themselves bear it to others (Rom. 10:15; cf. Is. 52:7; Eph. 6:15; 2 Tim. 4:5). In our consideration so far an identity of purpose has thus been apparent in the apostolic teaching

and in that of Jesus. Sometimes actual words of Jesus' are employed in ethical instruction (e.g. Ac. 20:35) and sometimes we find striking similarities to the Sermon on the Mount (e.g. Jas. 1:2, 4, 5, 20, 22; 2:10, 13; 3:18; 4:4, 10ff.; 5:2ff., 10, 12). Finally, as in the teaching of Jesus, there is an insistence upon future judgment: the message of judgment is intrinsic to the gospel (Rom. 2:16), and believers are to live constantly in the light of the judgment seat of Christ (Rom. 14:10; 1 Cor. 3:10-15; 2 Cor. 5:9f.; 1 Pet. 5:4; cf. 2 Pet. 3:11f.)<sup>68</sup>.

## V THE PREACHING OF OTHER CHRISTIANS<sup>69</sup>

Comparatively few evidences are available for the preaching activities of the many ordinary church-members who had, like the apostles, experienced the divine commission to evangelism (Rom. 10:15). Ac. 8:4 tells us that the Jerusalem Christians who had been scattered through persecution went about *preaching (euangelizomenoi) the word*, and we read later of the same scattered company, now more widespread, *speaking the word* (11:19), an expression which could possibly hint at an informality of manner and spontaneity in much early preaching (cf. 8:25; 14:25; 16:6). Evangelistic preaching was undertaken with great effectiveness by the Thessalonian converts, who seem to have modelled themselves upon the apostle's example (1 Thess. 1:6-8). It is possible also that preaching for conversion is hinted at in 1 Cor. 14:24f., for conversion is certainly envisaged as the result of the congregation's activity.

Instructional and hortatory preaching is mentioned in, for example, 1 Tim. 4:11-13; 2 Tim. 4:2 and Tit. 2:7f., 15. The wording of 1 Tim. 4:13 suggests that this preaching was based upon Scripture reading and exposition. Extempore preaching is referred to in 1 Cor. 14:26ff. Not only was a special divine enabling given for Christian teaching (Rom. 12:6f.; 1 Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:11), but great care was taken that teachers should proclaim sound and orthodox doctrine (e.g. 2 Tim. 1:13; 2:2; Tit. 1:9)<sup>70</sup>.

## VI SUMMARY

With reference to the manner of preaching, we have seen evidence for a degree of continuity between traditional Jewish forms and those employed by Jesus, the *mebasser* foretold in the Old Testament. We have also noticed a continuity between Jesus and the framework of the *kerygma* proclaimed by His followers, who, in union with the *mebasser*, are continuing His work. At the same time we have seen a skilful adaptation of forms to meet the needs of the different audiences addressed. With reference to the substance of the preaching, we have seen that the message of Jesus is ultimately an invitation to men to commit themselves wholeheartedly to Him, and to experience fully the relationship with the Father which is ensured by that discipleship. The message of the apostolic Church is the same, but has now been filled out, from a deepening Christian experience, with the proclamation of all the saving activity of God revealed in the total ministry (past, present and future) of Christ, who is the climax of all God's purposes (cf. 2 Cor. 1:20).

## ABBREVIATIONS

AA	F. F. Bruce, <i>The Acts of the Apostles</i> (2nd ed. 1952)
BA	F. F. Bruce, <i>The Book of the Acts</i> (1954)
BC	F. J. F. Jackson & K. Lake, <i>The Beginnings of Christianity</i> (1920-1933)
BRE	<i>Baptist Review and Expositor</i>
DR	<i>Downside Review</i>
ENP	R. H. Mounce, <i>The Essential Nature of New Testament Preaching</i> (1960)
EQ	<i>Evangelical Quarterly</i>
ET	<i>Expository Times</i>
Exp	<i>The Expositor</i>
HJ	<i>The Hibbert Journal</i>
IB	<i>Interpreter's Bible</i> (1951-1955)
ICC	<i>International Critical Commentary</i>
JBL	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
JTS	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
NRT	<i>Nouvelle Revue théologique</i>
NTS	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
SEP	Bo Reicke, 'A Synopsis of Early Christian Preaching', in A. Fridrichsen, <i>The Root of the Vine. Essays in Biblical Theology</i> (1953)
SIA	M. Dibelius, <i>Studies in the Acts of the Apostles</i> (Eng. tr. 1956)
TDNT	G. Kittel, <i>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament</i> (Eng. tr. 1964- )

## NOTES

- 1 The verbs are listed by G. Friedrich, TDNT, III, 703.
- 2 A brief account of the terms used in the book of Acts is given in F. D. Coggan, *The Ministry of the Word* (rev. ed. 1964), 62-64.
- 3 For *euangelizesthai* and related words see further G. Friedrich, TDNT, II, 707-737.
- 4 For the group of words around *kerussein* see further G. Friedrich, TDNT, III, 683-718; ENP, 14-18; J. R. W. Stott, *The Preacher's Portrait* (1961), 29-52.
- 5 For *didaskein* and associated words see further K. H. Rengstorf, TDNT, II, 135-165.
- 6 C. H. Dodd, *The Apostolic Preaching and Its Developments* (1936), 3-6, distinguishes strictly between *kerygma* and *didache*. On his interpretation, *kerygma* is the public proclamation of Christianity to the non-Christian world, while *didache* is, in a large majority of cases, ethical instruction. Not all later writers have fully accepted Dodd's separation of the two terms.
- 7 For an expansion of some of the remarks in this section see ENP, 19-27; F. D. Coggan, *op. cit.*, 34-47.
- 8 ENP, 25.
- 9 With reference to the preaching of Jesus the following have been found helpful: G. B. Stevens, *The Teaching of Jesus* (1901), 33-46; T. W. Manson, *The Teaching of Jesus* (2nd ed. 1935); R. H. Strachan, 'The Gospel in the New Testament', IB, VII (1951), 3-31; SEP, 128-160; ENP, 28-51; F. D. Coggan, *op. cit.*, 19-33. It is not possible to examine here the question of the authenticity of the New Testament account of the words of Jesus. For a very useful critique of the form-critical approach see D. Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction, Gospels and Acts* (1965), 178-194. In the present article it is assumed that the New Testament gives us an adequate and accurate picture of the preaching of Jesus.

- 10 SEP, 129, in fact suggests that Jesus may have drawn some of the forms of His preaching from Old Testament prophecies, as well as from such Messianic proclamations as those in the *Book of Enoch* or *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*.
- 11 F. D. Coggan, *op. cit.*, 32.
- 12 SEP, 144f. Reicke draws attention to analogous pre-Christian discourses delivered by religious leaders: cf. *idem*, *The Jewish ‘Damascus Documents’ and the New Testament* (1946), 9ff.
- 13 E.g. H. G. Riesenfeld, *The Gospel Tradition and Its Beginnings* (1957); B. Gerhardsson, *Memory and Manuscript* (1961), and *Tradition and Transmission in Early Christianity* (1964).
- 14 Critics of the thesis have included: C. K. Barrett, JTS, XIV (1963), 446-449, and JTS, XVI (1965), 488f.; Morton Smith (sometimes by unfair arguments), JBL, LXXXIII (1963), 169-176; W. D. Davies, *The Setting of the Sermon on the Mount* (1964), 464-480.
- 15 J. R. Harris, Exp. VIII, XX (1920), 196; C. F. Burney, *The Poetry of Our Lord* (1925); T. W. Manson, *op. cit.*, 50-56; C. L. Mitton, ‘Threefoldness in the Teaching of Jesus’, ET, LXXV no. 8 (1964).
- 16 T. W. Manson, *op. cit.*, 73; A. M. Hunter, *Interpreting the Parables* (2nd ed. 1964), 14.
- 17 The apparent harshness of Mk. 4:11, 12 is mitigated by an examination of Is. 6:9f., which is the source of the quotation in Mk. 4:12. In Is. 6:9f. God is speaking ironically, and expresses the *result* of Isaiah's mission in the form of a *command* to the prophet. Such a linguistic usage is a typically Semitic idiom of irony. In view of the similarity between the situation and effects of Isaiah's ministry and His own, Jesus employs the ironic words in a similar idiom in Mk. 4:12, using a statement of *purpose* to express a *result*. See Vincent Taylor, *The Gospel according to St. Mark* (1952), *ad. loc.*
- 18 Bo Reicke distinguishes four aspects of New Testament preaching: (1) conversion, (2) instruction, (3) ‘testament’, or farewell discourse, (4) ‘revelation’, giving the preacher's experience of the supernatural world. Basing his view on the work of J. Munck, Reicke argues that farewell discourses formed a distinct category, with definite conventions governing their form. In the Old Testament, for example, Gen. 49 and Josh. 23-24 would fall within this category, and in the New Testament the discourses of Jn. 13-17. In the class of relevatory preaching Reicke would include eschatological and metaphysical statements which differ from other teaching in presupposing direct supernatural experience of another world. Mt. 24 and its parallels are so regarded by Reicke. These interesting suggestions will not be followed up in the main body of this present article; see further J. Munck, ‘Discours d'adieu dans le N.T. et dans la littérature biblique’, *Aux sources de la tradition chrétienne. Mélanges offerts à M. Goguel* (1950), 155-170. SEP, 130f., 153f., 156f.; see also notes 68 and 70 below.
- 19 See further K. L. Schmidt, TDNT, I, 589.
- 20 TDNT, II, 728.
- 21 IB, VII, 13.
- 22 See further F. D. Coggan, *op. cit.*, 62-65.
- 23 The authenticity of the Acts speeches has been much discussed. Conservative scholars, with variations of emphasis, have regarded them as reflecting the original sermons preached, while more radical scholars, again with many variations, have held them to be mainly Luke's own compositions, perhaps based upon a preaching pattern current at the end of the first century A.D. Among conservative treatments the reader may see: C. H. Dodd, *op. cit.*, 30ff.; A. M. Hunter, *The Unity of the New Testament* (1943), 22f., cf. *idem*, ET, LVIII (1946-7), 229, and *Introducing New Testament Theology* (1957), 65; F. F. Bruce, *The Speeches in the Acts of the Apostles* (1944), cf. AA, 18-21; R. Leijss, NRT, LXIX (1947), 605ff.; R. H. Strachan, IB, VII (1951), 5; SEP, 140; B. Gärtner, *The Areopagus Speech and Natural Revelation* (1955), 26ff.; F. V. Filson, *Jesus Christ the Risen Lord* (1956), 38f.; C. S. C.

Williams, *A Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles* (1957), 36-48. Among the more radical treatments are: P. Gardner, in H. B. Swete (ed.), *Cambridge Biblical Essays* (1909), 146; H. J. Cadbury, BC, V (1933), 426; M. Dibelius, *A Fresh Approach to the New Testament and Early Christian Literature* (1936), 262; cf. SIA, 182ff.; W. L. Knox, *Some Hellenistic Elements in Primitive Christianity* (1942), 17, 29; C. F. Evans, JTS, n.s. VII (1956), 27f.; J. P. M. Sweet, ET, LXXVI no. 5 (1965), 145. The present article is based upon the view that the Acts speeches, while not full verbatim reports, are, nevertheless, accurate synopses of what was actually spoken. Not every speech is relevant to our theme in this article: the forensic speeches, for example, will fall outside our scope. See F. F. Bruce's fourfold classification of the speeches in his very helpful monograph mentioned above.

- 24 F. W. Grosheide, 'The Synoptic Problem. A Neglected Factor in Its Solution', EQ, III (1931), 62-66. Following Dieterich and Norden, Grosheide pointed out that the ancient world was extremely familiar with stereotyped forms of public speech, and maintained that the apostles employed a repetitive, stereotyped preaching of the words and works of Jesus, a manner of preaching which probably went back to Jesus Himself, and which formed the basis of our written Gospels, besides revealing itself in the epistles of Paul.
- 25 M. Dibelius, *From Tradition to Gospel* (Eng. tr. 1934), 15-30, drew attention to the repetition of the same outline in the kerygmatic passages of Acts and of the Pauline epistles. He stated that in the missionary speeches of Ac. 2, 3, 5, 10, 13 an introduction showing the situation at the time is regularly followed by a *kerygma* of Jesus' life, passion and resurrection, to which is added evidence from the Scriptures and an exhortation to repentance. Dibelius' approach is further developed in SIA, 165ff., 178.
- 26 C. H. Dodd, *The Apostolic Preaching and Its Developments* (1936), 36-46, summarizes the pattern of the apostolic *kerygma* in Acts under the six following heads: (1) The dawning of the age of fulfilment: the fulfilling of the prophetic Scriptures; (2) The reason for point (1): the ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus. The course of events is briefly narrated, together with proof from the Scriptures that all took place through the 'determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God'; (3) Jesus' exaltation, by virtue of the resurrection, at the right hand of God as Messianic head of the new Israel; (4) The Holy Spirit in the Church as the sign of Christ's present power and glory; (5) The speedy consummation of the Messianic age in the return of Christ; (6) The need to repent and to accept the offer of forgiveness, the Holy Spirit and salvation by entering the elect community.
- 27 W. H. P. Hatch, 'The Primitive Christian Message', JBL, LVIII (1939), 1-13, brought forward some nine points as constituting the subject-matter of the *kerygma*: these included the foreordained death of Christ, the resurrection, the exaltation, the gift of the Spirit, the parousia, the present Messiahship and Saviourhood of Christ, the proffered salvation and the need for faith.
- 28 A. M. Hunter, *The Unity of the New Testament* (1943), 23-25, reconstructed the early preaching under three heads: the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy, the saving events connected with Jesus, and the summons to repent and receive forgiveness. In ET, LVIII (1946), 228-231, Hunter adds nothing to his previous scheme, while in *Introducing New Testament Theology* (1957), 65f., he sets out the *kerygma* in the form of a comprehensive summary, although not this time under clearly defined headings.
- 29 R. Leijjs 'Prédiction des Apôtres', NRT, LXIX (1947), 606ff., favours five common themes, one of which is 'l'accession des gentils eux-mêmes' to the promises made to the Jewish fathers.
- 30 T. F. Glasson, 'The Kerygma: Is our Version Correct?', HJ, LI (1952-3), 129-132. Glasson's work is considered in the main body of the present article.

- 31 B. Gärtnér, *The Areopagus Speech and Natural Revelation* (1955), 30-32, in a very comprehensive summary, distinguishes seven standard topics as 'the most essential part' of apostolic preaching. These are: the saving activity of the historical Jesus, the fulfilment of prophecies, the present lordship of Jesus, the offer of salvation to the Gentiles, the expectation of the parousia and judgment, the exhortation to conversion, and the bearing of witness.
- 32 W. E. Ward, 'Preaching and the Word of God in the New Testament', BRE, LVI (1959), 20-30, does little more than restate Dodd's scheme.
- 33 R. Russell, 'Modern Exegesis and the Fact of the Resurrection', DR, LXXVI (1958), 329-343, pays particular attention to stereotyped formulations centring around the fact of the resurrection.
- 34 R. A. Bartels, *Kerygma or Gospel Tradition—Which came first?* (1961), 97-112, favours a sevenfold list of topics, which is not identical with that of Gärtnér, although to some extent influenced by the Swedish scholar.
- 35 F. V. Filson, *Jesus Christ the Risen Lord* (1956), 41-54, claims a fivefold division for the *kerygma*, but in fact presents only four points: that God has begun to fulfil His promises, that the promised new age of God's effective rule has begun, that all this is through the historical Jesus, and that the hearers are summoned to repent and believe. In Filson's treatment the third section, concerning the life and work of Jesus, is developed in great detail.
- 36 H. G. Wood, 'Didache, Kerygma and Evangelion', in A. J. B. Higgins (ed.), *New Testament Essays. Studies in Memory of T. W. Manson* (1959), 306-314, maintains that some elements of the teaching of Jesus may have been incorporated in the Christological *kerygma* from the first. After remarking that Dodd's study of the *kerygma* contains no direct reference to the sayings of Jesus, and that Paul's preaching omits also any reference to the mighty works, Wood maintains that it would be unwise to assume that the primitive Christological preaching was at any time confined within such limits.
- 37 C. F. Evans, 'The Kerygma', JTS, n.s. VII (1956), 25-41, holds that the Acts speeches are largely Luke's own dramatic and thematic compositions, and consequently argues that we do not in fact possess any authentic record of the primitive preaching, which must have been much more heterogeneous than Luke suggests.
- 38 J. P. M. Sweet, 'The Kerygma', ET, LXXVI no. 5 (1965), 143-147, maintains that the NT writers made no distinction between *kerussein* and *didaskein*, and that early preaching to outsiders must have contained much of what Dodd separates off as *didache*. He also states that Glasson's scheme raises the suspicion of being 'too tidy', and that Dodd and Glasson together exact more precision from the data of Acts than can in fact be legitimately gained.
- 39 ENP, 60-86. (cf. J. P. M. Sweet, *art. cit.*, 146, who describes the *kerygma* as an '*a posteriori* construction'). Mounce attacks the impression, sometimes gained from Dodd's analysis, that the primitive *kerygma* was nothing but a standard six-point sermon. He prefers to make a consideration of early preaching within an existential, rather than a static, frame of reference. He also attacks Dodd's emphasis on the arrival of the Messianic age as an important item in the *kerygma*.
- 40 E.g. Rom. 1:3f.; 4:24f.; 8:34; 10:9; 1 Cor. 15:3ff.
- 41 *Art. cit.*, 260.
- 42 Corresponding to the Jewish terms *qibbel* and *masar* are the words *I delivered* (*paredoka*) and *I received* (*parelabon*).
- 43 J. Jeremias, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus* (1955), 128ff.; cf. A. Robertson and A. Plummer, ICC, *I Corinthians* (1911), 333; E. Stauffer, *New Testament Theology* (Eng. tr. 1955), 158.

- 44 ENP, 91f., accepts only verses 3b-5 as forming the traditional *kerygma*. Goguel, *The Birth of Christianity* (1946), 42, holds that verses 3b-5, 7 are traditional, but J. Héring, *The First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians* (Eng. tr. 1962), 158, so regards only verses 3 and 4.
- 45 F. F. Bruce's commentaries, for example, may be profitably studied for evidences of this fact.
- 46 I. Abrahams, *Studies in Pharisaism and the Gospels* (1924), 18; cf. C. H. Dodd, *op. cit.*, 62; H. J. Cadbury, BC, V, 409; J. W. Doeve, *Jewish Hermeneutics in the Synoptic Gospels and Acts* (1953), 172-176; J. W. Bowker, 'Speeches in Acts: A Study in Proem and Yelammedenu form', NTS, XIV no. 1 (1967), 96-105.
- 47 SEP, 129.
- 48 A. Rétif, 'Qu'est-ce que le kérygme?', NRT, LXXI (1949), 912.
- 49 SEP, 128f., 133.
- 50 See note 13 above.
- 51 See note 14 above.
- 52 Cf. F. H. Chase, *The Credibility of the Acts of the Apostles* (1902), 117ff.; D. L. Clark, *Rhetoric in Greco-Roman Education* (1957), 65; W. Barclay, 'Great Themes of the New Testament: IV', ET, LXX no. 7 (1959), 197f.
- 53 *Art. cit.*, 62.
- 54 W. Bouisset, *Kurios Christos* (2nd ed. 1921), 9.
- 55 *Art. cit.*, 198.
- 56 For this last item in relation to apostolic preaching, cf. J. R. Harris, *Testimonies*, ii (1920), 80.
- 57 *Art. cit.*, 37.
- 58 A quotation from Aratus and a reminiscence of Epimenides occur in verse 28. See BC, IV, 217; AA, 338; BA, 359f.; and cf. SIA, 187.
- 59 See BC, IV, 209, 215.
- 60 E. Norden, *Agnostos Theos* (1913), 3-30, 125-140. Norden maintained that the apostle could never have given such an address: he was, however, later convinced by E. Meyer that Paul indeed had the ability to make a speech in that particular form (E. Meyer, *Ursprung und Anfänge des Christentums*, iii (1923), 92n., 105).
- 61 SIA, 26-77.
- 62 *The Areopagus Speech and Natural Revelation* (1955), *passim*; cf. the brief remarks of F. C. Burkitt, JTS, XV (1913-14), 462, who points out that, with all the Hellenistic illustration, the basic message of the speech is simply, 'The kingdom of God is at hand: repent and believe the tidings'.
- 63 *The Speeches in the Acts*, 16. Cf. 1 Cor. 9:19ff.
- 64 W. L. Knox, *Some Hellenistic Elements in Primitive Christianity* (1942), 31-34, adduces evidence that Paul was well able to write in an Asianist rhetorical style. R. Bultmann, *Der Stil der paulinischen Predigt und die kynisch-stoische Diatribe* (1910), followed by R. Leijss, NRT, LXIX (1947), 610-618, refers to the striking similarity between the epistles of Paul and the widespread genre of the Stoic diatribe. Such facts as these must obviously be given consideration in any interpretation of 1 Cor. 2:1.

- 65 W. L. Knox, *op. cit.*, 30. Such instruction was certainly given by R. Gamaliel II, and it would have been equally necessary in the time of R. Gamaliel I, for, as Knox points out, the rabbis of the first century A.D. were conscious of the importance of training in Greek language and culture, since the prestige of Jerusalem would require that any emissaries sent to the Diaspora should be able to speak with a style and content that would be acceptable to educated Jews and interested pagans.
- 66 ENP, 55-59; cf. F. D. Coggan, *op. cit.*, 77-111.
- 67 SEP, 145ff. Reicke also refers to the modern tendency to see the influence of baptismal addresses upon certain of the New Testament epistles.
- 68 Within the category of Testament addresses Reicke would place Ac. 20: 17-38, (as well as the epistles of 1 Tim., 2 Tim. and 2 Pet.). Under the class of relevatory preaching he would include Ac. 11: 4-17; 22: 3-21; 26: 9-20; cf. 2 Cor. 12: 1-5. SEP, 154f., 158.
- 69 SEP, 143, 150.
- 70 Reicke states that ordinary church members did not leave farewell discourses to posterity but that revelational preaching on the other hand was extremely popular and widespread in the early Church. He draws evidence from the existence of a class of Christian prophets (Ac. 11: 27; 13: 1; 15: 32; 21: 9-10; 1 Cor. 12: 28f.; Eph. 4: 11), and maintains that they must have played an important part in early Christian preaching since they are mentioned so frequently. Sometimes, as at Corinth, the gift of prophecy was widely experienced in a local congregation (1 Cor. 12: 8ff.; 14: 26-40; cf. Rom. 12: 6. SEP, 155, 158f.

# **EXPOSITORY PREACHING**

*by LESLIE C. ALLEN*

Assembly folk are often commended by their 'separated brethren' with the tribute 'They know their Bibles'. Many a non-conformist minister looks back in gratitude to an assembly as his training ground in knowledge of the Scriptures. Those of us who from time to time occupy the pulpits of the Free Churches have learned to appreciate the open Bible upon every lap back in the assembly and the ready reception of a Bible-based message without need of apology or justification. Of course, these very boons carry with them drawbacks, of which more anon, but boons they remain.

You are invited to speak at such and such a place. Down goes the date in your diary. As it draws nearer, some text or some passage comes knocking at the door of your mind, demanding admittance in God's name. Alternatively, it may be some broad theme or a current problem, destined to range over a variety of different passages, but, if so, this article is not primarily for you. Expository preaching means interpreting a single text or a continuous passage of Scripture in such a way that the full impact of God's Word flows through the speaker to the congregation.

## **EXEGESIS**

Obviously the first question to ask of the text or passage is: what does it mean? Less obviously, the question must be framed in the form, not what does it mean to me here and now, nor what should it mean to the congregation, but what does it mean in its original setting? The would-be preacher must be prepared to travel back in mind to the first century A.D. or the seventh century B.C. and reconstruct the circumstances in which the human writer and the first readers or hearers lived and thought, if he takes seriously the fact that revelation is grounded in human history. The spadework of disinterring the background of ancient customs and concepts may seem an unnecessary chore for a twenty-five minute talk, but there is no shorter way. Exegesis must precede exposition. The preacher must first retire into the past and stand alongside the Biblical writer before he can bring the message up to date and stand with his audience. Exegesis draws out of the scriptural material what God has put there. Its deadly foe is *eisegesis*; reading into the text what has never been there. Pay heed to the warning couplet:

‘Wonderful things in the Bible I see,  
Some put there by you and some put there by me.’

C. S. Lewis was aware of this danger: ‘What we see when we are looking into the depths of Scripture may sometimes be only the reflection of our own silly faces’.<sup>1</sup>

Sit quietly with your Bibles—note the plural—around you, and hear what the text has to say. Let the words seep into your mind by repeated reading and meditation. As a general rule, the Revised Standard Version

will be the best basis for study, but other versions will also throw light on the text. The aim is to get as near as possible to the meaning of the Hebrew, Aramaic or Greek words originally used in the passage. This aim demands a version as close as possible to the text and meaning of the original, or in other words a version based on the best possible readings of ancient manuscripts and incorporating up-to-date knowledge of the Biblical languages. Strange though it may seem, much more is now known about the Biblical languages than ever was known a century ago. Moreover, discovery of early manuscripts and study of ancient versions have clarified the exact wording of the original text. It is galling to discover after much labour that your masterpiece of a message rests upon the flimsy foundation of a mistranslation or an inferior reading. It is even more galling for people in the congregation to realize it—and your ignorance of the fact.

Of course, the optimum is to read the Bible in the original languages, but comparatively few of us have both time and talent for this task. The man who is not good at languages or who does not feel impelled to pore over grammars will be best advised to rely upon secondary helps. If you must learn a Biblical language, learn it well and do not just dabble: ‘a little knowledge . . .’ Obviously one must know any foreign language very well in order to get more out of reading the original than out of a translation. For the non-specialist, knowledge of the Biblical languages will not so much shed immediate light on the Word as lead him to an intelligent use of lexicons, academic commentaries and such books as C. F. D. Moule’s *An Idiom-Book of New Testament Greek*. For the rest of us, not given to language work, the time will be better spent on other aids. We must read our versions and paraphrases diligently. The meaning will gradually come glimmering through the welter of words. Welter, not just because the same verse or verses are being read in different translations, but because the context is being allowed to colour the passage.

### KEEPING IN CONTEXT

The maxim is old but unfortunately not out of date: a text out of context becomes a pretext. The danger is always lurking close at hand, to to misquote Lewis Carroll, that ‘when I use a text it means just what I choose it to mean, neither more nor less’. The context acts as a brake on such subjectivity. Bible study involves a vicious circle that can only gradually be broken, but the effort must continually be made. One cannot know the meaning of a part before one knows the meaning of the whole; one cannot understand the whole until one has grasped the sense of the component parts. Ultimately a particular passage yields its full meaning only in the context of a whole book and the larger context of the whole Bible.

Study of the immediate context will save from many pitfalls of eisegesis. For example, the context shows that Philippians 4:19 is not a blank cheque for any Christian to draw upon. The preceding verse has filled in who the recipients are to be: God helps those who help others. Always ask yourself: why is this verse next to that one? Try to grasp the logical

connection between the two. Sometimes the link is not obvious and one has carefully to read between the lines to perceive it. Sometimes the writer jumps back to an earlier point.

Verse divisions are an indispensable boon for quick reference, but such a bind upon exegesis. We must learn to think in terms of paragraphs, of literary units dictated by the sense rather than by any mechanical system. The juxtaposition of different incidents or themes can cast light upon the intent of the writer. Look at the way that Luke follows the parable of the Good Samaritan with the story of Martha and Mary, 'the former teaching that religion which does not express itself in practical attempts to alleviate the sufferings of humanity is religiosity, and the latter proclaiming the complementary truth that the philanthropic service rendered by the Marthas of the world tends to become fussiness, unless there lies behind it something of the contemplative and devotional attitude of Mary'.<sup>2</sup>

Once this truth about Luke 10 has been pointed out, it is immediately obvious and makes one wonder why one did not think of it oneself. The answer is partly that we have not learned to read consecutively; partly too that there is a limit to what one individual can grasp in the unaided reading of Scripture. But before turning to the question of aids in the form of commentaries and allied material, the need to link scripture with scripture should be further stressed. A Bible without references at the bottom or in the margin is of little use in the study. Look them up; see what parallel or related passages have to say. Romans and Galatians will often provide a helpful commentary upon each other in Paul's own words. Add your own cross-references as you light upon them from time to time, for instance comparing Ps. 130 and Eph. 1:7, Mal. 3:16-18 and Heb. 10:23-25, or contrasting Gen. 3:6 and Mt. 26:26, Mal. 3:17 and Rom. 8:32. A concordance will augment the marginal references and show the range of meaning of key-words. But one must be careful not to lose sight of the passage, not to confuse throwing light on a passage with submerging it among a mass of other scriptures which have other things to say.

### EXTRACTING THE IMPLICIT

By this time material has been building up. One can jot down in one's own words what the text means and trace the development of the argument or the sequence of ideas. Recurrence of a word or of a refrain has been duly noted as a natural guideline. Implicit truths may be brought out by setting to work Rudyard Kipling's 'six honest serving-men':

'Their names are What and Why and When  
And How and Where and Who.'

They will usually be of more value in the preparation of a message than in the presentation. Stating a positive truth in a negative form will help to uncover latent implications. Scripture sometimes does this explicitly, for example, 'Take heart . . . do not fear', 'not to please men, but to please God', 'you are living in idleness, . . . not doing any work'. Paul

does the very thing here recommended in the exposition of Rom. 4, which surely originated in a synagogue sermon or series of sermons. He is there expounding Gen. 15:6: ‘Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness’. He makes four points, alluding to his text each time. The first three are: (i) faith justifies, not works; (ii) faith justifies, not circumcision; (iii) faith justifies, not the Law. By these contrasts he brings out the character and importance of faith, and incidentally gives an object-lesson to his preaching brethren.

### LITERARY AIDS

Eventually one reaches the limit of one’s ability to understand a passage. But questions still remain unanswered, or one is not sure whether the right questions have been asked of the text. Oh for a Philip to come alongside and say, ‘Do you understand what you are reading?’! Every Bible student has fellow-feeling with the Ethiopian’s counter-question: ‘How can I, unless someone guides me?’ Brethren tend to be do-it-yourselfers and there is often much to be commended in this attitude. But one must beware of taking it too far and of misapplying it. It is tragically possible to confuse reliance on the Spirit with self-reliance and laziness. Was not Spurgeon speaking partly of our movement when he said, ‘It seems odd that certain men who talk so much of what the Holy Spirit reveals to themselves should think so little of what He has revealed to others’? At least the cap has often fitted some of our number—including us at times. What do you think of this sentiment, also from that prince of preachers? ‘No, my dear friends, you may take it as a rule that the Spirit of God does not usually do for us what we can do for ourselves, and that if religious knowledge is printed in a book, and we can read it, there is no necessity for the Holy Ghost to make a fresh revelation of it to us in order to screen our laziness.’

The simple truth of the matter is that God has set teachers in the Church, and some of them have committed their teaching to writing. One might feel competent to do as well or better, if one had the time at one’s disposal. *Perhaps* one could, but there’s the rub: if . . . Why spend our limited time re-doing what a specialist has toiled for months or even years to produce? There is, of course, a danger of turning into a ‘secondhand Rose’, but heeding the advice given earlier will ensure that literary helps are accessories and stimulants to one’s own thinking, and not substitutes.

What of ‘unsound’ books, books marked with or without an asterisk in certain lists? Here ‘I speak as to wise men; judge for yourselves what I say’. It is hoped that a man conscious of a gift for teaching, evangelizing or exhorting will become sufficiently mature to ‘test the spirits to see whether they be of God’. At the tender age of seventeen the present writer borrowed from the school library C. H. Dodd’s *The Epistle to the Romans* and, reading it with reservations, received insight into the vast significance and broad sweep of the letter. It kindled a love for Romans which has never waned, and a longing to learn more. Two points may profitably

be made. First, it is a paradoxical truism that the Bible is not only a divine book but also a human one. As a work of literature, it may be understood to a considerable extent by applying the canons of literary criticism, in the best sense of the term. Secondly, we are sometimes too ready to think in terms of black and white. The mentality that thinks exclusively in blanket terms of 'sound' or 'unsound' authors is often paralysed by nervous fear. 'Test everything; hold fast what is good, abstain from every form of evil': this is surely a valid principle here. Some fellow-Christians who have come to appreciate the spiritual warmth and vigour of the expositions of a certain contemporary scholar might rush to burn them if they discovered that he does not accept the virgin birth. One hopes for their own sakes that they do not make the discovery. Of course, a caveat must again be entered. The lazy and the immature will be tempted to jump from 'That author is very helpful on this point' to 'He is so good here that I am prepared to accept all that he says'. Gullibility and growth in knowledge rightly so called are poles apart.

Build up a good range of exegetical aids; keep in touch with a well-stocked library to supply the deficiencies of your own shelves. Mention of individual books is an invidious task, for 'time would fail me to tell of' all that have proved personally helpful. The New Bible Dictionary is a must, and so is the New Bible Commentary in the forthcoming revised edition which will repair the patchiness of the old. A N.T. Commentary shortly to be published by P. & I. and written by brethren from the Assemblies should prove to be a valuable tool. But these are no substitute for commentaries on individual books. Both the New London commentaries and the smaller Tyndale commentaries will yield much exegetical fruit. Complete sets should not be bought, for they are never all of uniform value. F. J. Leenhardt on Romans, Robert Law on the first letter of John (*The Tests of Life*), A. B. Rhodes' little paperback on the Psalms: these commentaries spring to mind as real treasure chests. Oscar Cullman, *The Christology of the N.T.*; H. L. Ellison, *Men Spake From God*; A. M. Hunter, *Interpreting Paul's Gospel*; Fleming James, *Personalities of the O.T.*; L. H. Marshall, *The Challenge of N.T. Ethics*; T. C. Vriezen, *An Outline of O.T. Theology*—these can bring theological balance to one's exposition of many a passage. *The Book of the Acts of God* by G. E. Wright and R. H. Fuller gives an overall survey of the theological intent of the Biblical writers. Such aids as these, used with discrimination, will widen and deepen the preacher's knowledge and appreciation of the Scriptures.

## MAIN ROAD PREACHING

It is advisable to keep on the main roads of basic Biblical teaching rather than risk getting lost in the byways of obscure texts and the alleys of controverted passages. Test your bright ideas against the standards of customary interpretation among the pundits, and be grateful if you discover that you are on the wrong track. In Bible study humility must go hand in hand with truth. Confronted with a congregation that knows its Bible well, one may be tempted to resort to novelty. Spurgeon was fully

aware how addicted assembly speakers were to this fault in his day, and his caustic words can still find contemporary application, sad to say: 'Plymouth Brethren delight to fish up some hitherto undiscovered tadpole of interpretation and cry it round the town as a rare dainty; let us be content with more ordinary and more wholesome fishery.' The same warning has been sounded from within our ranks. 'Keep among the great themes of the Bible,' J. B. Watson once said. 'Don't become a trifler with pretty little texts, with dainty little morals, or a clever weaver of wordy nothings hung on obscure phrases in the Minor Prophets. Suburban preaching is a plague. Get to the Citadel and from its noble towers cry aloud the things that matter.' No church can thrive on a dilettante diet.

### SIFTING AND SORTING

So far, to borrow James Black's gardening metaphors, we have used not only the spade, to dig with and get down to the basic meaning of the passage, but also the rake, to gather about us everything that may be useful; now we must use the riddle to sift and sort things out. One will never make use of all the material one collects. But the labour of research will not be wasted. It will colour one's thinking and give the right orientation. And store all those notes and jottings: they will come in handy for another day.

Meditation and study provide the raw materials for preaching. The iron ore diligently dug out needs to be smelted into serviceable metal. Do not throw indigestible lumps of Scripture or doctrine at the heads of the poor people. Sometimes one hears a legitimate complaint laid at the door of speakers who have undergone some degree of intellectual training, that they take too much for granted and assume that ground familiar to themselves need not be traversed again. This assumption imposes too great a strain on the average congregation. What is obvious to the speaker, fresh from study, will be hazy to them. If he is commendable to them on other scores they will call him 'deep', but if not, they will accuse him of talking over their heads. In either case they will go away little the wiser for his erudition. The considerate preacher 'brings out of his treasure things new and old'.

Hefty quotations, and still more hefty tomes brought on to the platform, will betray inadequate use of the sieve. Imagine reading out the quotation cited earlier from Tasker about the contrasting pericopes of the Good Samaritan and Martha and Mary! It is styled in a literary form, which in the book may be read slowly and perhaps re-read; but as an oral quotation it will not make immediate impact and will be wasted breath. Resist the temptation to ramble on for an hour repeating a bit of Bruce, a bit of you, a bit of Cullmann, and so on. One can pick up treasures in second-hand shops with long browsing, but in the realm of preaching it is too wearying a task to be inflicted upon the congregation. The speaker must impose his own unity, pattern and purpose upon his diverse material. If you do not have time to think through the material and make it your own,

you must have made a mistake in accepting the invitation to speak in the first place. A hasty picking of other people's brains, a shoddy re-hash, run counter to the ideal of 'a workman who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth'.

## BE YOURSELF

Seventy years ago Phillips Brooks aptly defined preaching as 'truth through personality': 'Every preacher should utter the truth in his own way and according to his own nature.' He does not merely repeat Scripture. He is no mechanical loudspeaker. He does not hide behind the Word in such a way as to lose his distinctive God-given individuality. Paul never ceased to be Paul, easily distinguishable from Peter. The God who made him what he was, providentially ruling and overruling in his life, did not suddenly turn him into a robot for the purposes of inspiration. Likewise the Christian preacher is called as a whole man to testify to his knowledge of the God revealed in the Scriptures. His words will dovetail with his own experience. 'We speak that we do know' will be his watchword, and congregations will be quick to detect counterfeit claims. His preaching will reflect his background, his training, his thinking. He will aim to be not a Spurgeon, a Lloyd Jones, a Howley, a Harpur, but himself. This is not to say that he may not study the preaching methods of others to profit, but he will not model himself upon someone else. Equally, this is not to say that preaching is simply self-expression: it is the impact of the divine Word upon mind, heart and conscience of a dedicated Christian.

## APPLICATION

'Keep close to life and remain close to the text' is Karl Barth's advice to the preacher. The first half is as important as the second. There is a temptation to neglect it in facing a congregation used to a Biblical message. An assembly can develop into an antiquarian society delving into well-worn Bibles and mulling over a remote past full of molten calves and miracles with never a thought for the world hurrying by or for their own tangled lives. Bible study can degenerate into a mere substitute for the television addiction of other evenings, taking one's mind off reality and giving oneself a rest from the harshness of life. There are other churches where the preacher has to justify an exegetical message and plead hard for its relevance to modern life. There the Bible cannot be used as a means of escapism, nor will repetition of its texts call forth sympathetic nods from minds soothed by the *old, old* story. To which of the two types of congregation is it easier to preach? Ah, but to which congregation is the Biblical preacher being more faithful? The preacher to be praised is the one who builds a bridge from 700 BC or AD 35 to the present day, from the first hearers to the present ones.

The Bible itself envisages a grim situation when 'the word preached did not profit them that heard it'. Scripture stresses its own profitability—'profitable for preaching, for reproof, for correction and for training in

righteousness'. In other words, its self-avowed purpose is to present what to believe and how to behave, both negatively and positively. Does this expository message of ours for next Sunday or next Wednesday reflect this purpose? Will it be a monologue recited to parade one's Biblical knowledge? Or will it come home to the hearers as God's word to them personally, applied to their own deepest needs, drawing out the desire to

'In purer lives Thy service find,  
In deeper reverence praise'?

What dross so much of one's past ministry seems in the light of these high ideals! It is so easy to keep one's Bible and one's sermons in a polythene bag, insulated from life, and so, insulated from effectiveness. At every point the preacher must ask of his text a reverent 'so what?' Before every address he must ask concerning his congregation: who are they? What will help *them*, not some hypothetical congregation of my own inventing?

### SIMPLICITY

We who so stress simplicity in church order often need to learn true simplicity in our preaching. Not the simplicity that loses all the fullness of the Word and reduces waters to swim in to a dull little pint pot measure, but a simplicity that breaks down the complex into its component parts, that presents the unknown by means of the known, and that imaginatively fits the exposition to the experience of the hearers. 'I sometimes wonder,' writes J. B. Phillips, 'what hours of prayer and thought lay behind the apparently simple and spontaneous parables of the Gospels.'<sup>13</sup> Occasionally one hears an address which says precisely the same thing as the text in more complicated language. The preacher in his own study has obviously learned a lot from his text, but he has not managed to communicate it, either because his mental vocabulary is too highbrow for his audience or because he puts on an affected style to impress them that he is more clever than he really is. Whatever the cause, the congregation is not edified. The preacher who claims to have heard God speaking His word to his soul must in turn cultivate a tape-recorder ear for the way that people speak, if he is to impart that word. Writing out the address or making extensive notes—so valuable an exercise for clarifying thought—can encourage a literary style instead of an oral one. The ear and the eye tend to have different standards. If the preacher does write beforehand, he must hear the words ringing in his ears as he writes them.

Edward Harwood's eighteenth century paraphrase of the parable of the Prodigal Son is worth citing as a warning to the twentieth century interpreter. 'A gentleman of a splendid family and opulent fortune had two sons. One day the younger approached his father, and begged him in the most importunate and soothing terms to make a partition of his effects betwixt himself and his elder brother. The indulgent father, overcome by his blandishments . . .' One cannot continue: the story is so longwinded. Gone is the simplicity, and with it the sparkle.

Eradicate polysyllabic circumlocutions of Latin and Greek derivation! 'Pelt the devil with Anglo-Saxon,' said Spurgeon to his students, 'and he

will soon shift his quarters.' Sentences of simple structure and short words well within the hearers' range—these are the everyday tools of the preacher's craft. As he reads, listens and observes life, he will be constantly on the look-out for good definitions, for apt illustrations, for ideas put over with a punch. What impresses him will be transferred to quotation books, to be read over periodically to train his own powers of expression and to be cited, where relevant, to enrich the congregation's understanding of the Bible.

Adjectives like 'eschatological' and 'Christological' will be commonplace to the preacher in his study, but they will rarely, if ever, cross his lips on the platform. He will avoid such statements as 'in the original Greek', 'the Hebrew means', let alone quoting the original words. It would be resented as a pretentious parade of learning, even though the speaker's motives may be of the purest. Instead he may safely wrap up the truth in a more subjective guise as 'I like the rendering . . . it gets to the heart of the meaning' or say, 'What Paul meant, what Paul's actual word means . . .' But those words 'Greek', 'Hebrew', not to say 'Aramaic', can be red rags antagonizing the audience.

As to which version to preach from, the preacher must weigh up his congregation. If most of his listeners are emotionally wedded to the King James' Version he may only arouse hostility if he uses another. There are those to whom only that version can really be the Bible: they heard it from their mother's knee and through it have come to know God and His salvation. The matter is worth enquiring about before going onto the platform. Obviously the preacher should not expect to address only those who are enlightened like himself. His divine commission is not merely to preach to those who dot his i's and cross his t's. He will be wise to respect certain deep-seated foibles rather than attempt rigorous re-education, only succeeding in getting himself crossed off the list of speakers. One can pay lip-service to the AV in the reading and incorporate other, truer renderings in the address. But beware of continually disparaging the old version with 'This is inaccurate', 'We must omit this and that', or else you may tie up your listeners in emotional knots so that they can no longer regard you as the channel of God's word to them.

## PATTERN IN PRESENTATION

The preacher must get a pattern into his exposition and arrange it in an orderly fashion. He should not potter through the passage like a tape-recording of a conversational Bible reading. The congregation expects and deserves a different method from the solo expositor. He may well have to refrain from imparting all he knows about the passage, lest the message be jerky and chock-a-block. If too much is thrown at the audience, they will catch little. The expository material should be logically arranged under several heads, and all matter extraneous to this scheme rigorously

excluded. A bewildering array of mixed material will soon leave behind the hearers, day-dreaming and clock-watching.

The scope of each section of the address can be underscored by headings, so useful as signposts for the listener to prevent him losing his way. ‘Alliteration’s artful aid’ can be a hindrance. If you are reduced to scouring the pages of *Roget’s Thesaurus*, then alliteration is probably not for you, in this address at any rate. On the other hand, if it comes naturally and easily out of the passage, then it will help to drive the message home. A case in point is John’s triad of life, light and love, although it is purely an accident of English since the Greek lacks the alliteration. Eschew long words as headings, alliterative or not. The point of the heading is to fix the subject matter more clearly in the congregation’s minds, but if it is lengthy and abstract it will defeat its purpose, even if it does begin with a p. The stock example of what not to do is the following quartet of headings for Psalm 55:6: prudent celerity—innocent simplicity—devout sublimity—permanent security. What a travesty of exposition of ‘Oh that I had wings like a dove . . .’ But at least that bad example does illustrate a trick of parallelism that can be put to better use. Repetitive parallelism can yield headings that stick yet do not require hectic thumbing through a dictionary. Henry Drummond’s famous exposition of I Corinthians 13, ‘The Greatest Thing in the World’ had these headings: love contrasted, love analysed, love defended. The common factors in these labels are love + passive participle, and the difference lies in the verb used in each case. Occasionally one may be inspired to more ambitious repetitive parallelism, such as the following headings for an expository talk on Romans 5: 1-11: grace that does not let us fall, hope that will not let us down, love that will not let us go. Obviously the third was the first one to spring to mind, then the second and the first followed in due course.

George Matheson’s hymn gave the initial inspiration. That hymn could well be used in the service, and reference to it would help to bind together the worship and the word into an integrated whole. If the hymn to which reference is made is well known to the audience, quoting from it will evoke a desirable emotional response; it will provide a helpful link between a well loved hymn and a perhaps less appreciated text.

## IMAGINATIVE PREACHING

Perhaps the preacher’s greatest asset in the preparation of an expository message is imagination. In the role of fancifulness it is a bad master, but under proper control it serves the preacher well. He will develop an imaginative approach to the text or passage. If it is set in narrative, he will make a mental film of the scene after researching into the background. If it is set in a prophetic or epistolary context, he will visualize the issues at stake and the people involved. The preacher must not only read the text but see it. In Amos 1 he will conjure up the scene of a market-day crowd applauding a soap-box orator—a farmer like themselves—as he denounces foreign war crimes: ‘Down with Damascus, down with Gaza . . .’ until his accusing finger falls from distant horizons to point at his jingoistic

audience. In Luke 19 he will read the mind of our Lord and think back to the politics of thirty years before when King Herod's will had been read out in the amphitheatre at Jericho—the very town Jesus and the disciples were just leaving. Prince Archelaus, nominated partial heir, had to go off to Rome to get his father's bequest ratified by the Emperor and returned to massacre the leading reactionaries. The commentaries will help to supply the bare bones of these things but the preacher must conjure them up into a living scene which he may set before his hearer's eyes.

The expositor needs, too, a sympathetic imagination. The writer to the Hebrews knew about this when he counselled: 'Remember those who are in prison, as though in prison with them'; so did Paul with his injunction to 'rejoice with those that rejoice, weep with those who weep'. The power to enter sympathetically into the thoughts and feelings of those to whom one ministers is a precious possession not easily acquired. The interpreter needs a twofold skill, an understanding of two cultures, two languages, two worlds; so, too, the Biblical interpreter stands between the Word and the world around, between God and the needy individual. According to the measure in which he is at home in both realms, the inspired Word will become flesh and come to dwell in the hearts of his hearers, full of God's grace and truth.

LESLIE C. ALLEN

#### NOTES

1. *Reflections on the Psalms*, Fontana edition, p. 102.
2. R. V. G. Tasker, *The Nature and Purpose of the Gospels*, p. 58.
3. *Making Men Whole*, Fontana edition, p. 76.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- G. R. Beasley Murray, *Preaching the Gospel From the Gospels*.  
James Black, *The Mystery of Preaching*.  
A. W. Blackwood, *The Preparation of Sermons*.  
J. A. Broadus, *On the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*.  
E. P. Clowney, *Preaching and Biblical Theology*.  
J. R. Hill, *Preaching the Word*.  
W. E. Sangster, *The Craft of the Sermon*.  
C. H. Spurgeon, *Lectures to My Students*.  
C. H. Spurgeon, *Commenting and Commentaries*.  
A. M. Stibbs, *Understanding God's Word*.  
A. M. Stibbs, *Expounding God's Word*.  
R. A. Ward, *Royal Sacrament*.  
John Wood, *The Preacher's Workshop*.

## A PREACHING SYLLABUS

John R. K. Savage

*'I shrank not from declaring unto you the whole counsel of God'* Ac. 20:27

Such was Paul's testimony to the Ephesian elders. I wonder how many assemblies today can claim such a spiritual diet—'the whole counsel of God'? Very few I should judge, for it is an inescapable fact that there is a gross ignorance of many Christian doctrines amongst our church members which is making them easy prey to the winds of changing doctrine so prevalent today.

Part of this is due to the artificial distinction frequently made between what constitutes 'gospel' and what 'ministry'. This means that a very small area of doctrine is hammered home Sunday by Sunday, at what is in most assemblies the best attended meeting, and to a smaller congregation mid-week is given some other parts of the Christian faith, usually, however, in a piecemeal and haphazard fashion. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that the modern 'gospel', padded out with gimmicks and bright ideas, is singularly ineffective in producing God-fearing men and women, growing in grace and in the knowledge of Christ. They are just not getting enough food.

One obvious way to combat this state of affairs is to ensure that the whole Christian faith is covered in a systematic way. And to do this, a plan or syllabus is required.

In this contribution, just such a syllabus is offered. It covers two years, 46 weeks per year, allowing 6 spare Sundays for special services and activities. A main topic<sup>1</sup> is suggested for the Sunday evening service. At first glance it may seem that many of the topics would be most unsuitable for a 'gospel' service. However, a little thought will show that virtually all of them have important bearings upon some aspect of God's plan of salvation, and with due expansion and exposition lead naturally to a situation requiring some response on the part of the hearer. The writer has used quite a number of them in this way.

In addition to the main topic, a suggestion is given for a follow-up or amplification topic suitable for the mid-week meeting. The selection of these mid-week topics has been made with the younger believers in mind. It is absolutely essential that we not only ground them in the faith but also provide them ammunition with which to defend the faith and an opportunity to discuss freely the theology of and reasons for our beliefs. Some may feel that a number of the topics would better be left undisturbed or unmentioned. I can only say that it has been my experience to hear

virtually all of them discussed at one time or another amongst our young people.

Systematic preaching is, to a large extent, a feature of the past. The great exponents are to be found amongst the Reformers and the Puritans who followed in their wake. What giants in the faith were produced under their ministry, and what piety and power were found in their congregations! Most of them preached to a plan, usually one of the great confessions or catechisms. In later years, it frequently followed in outline the famous Westminster Confession of 1646 or the Shorter Catechism derived from it (1647). These great confessions aim to cover Christian doctrine in a systematic way, and therefore form an ideal background for any preaching syllabus having the same aim. I have drawn freely from them in constructing the syllabus that follows.

Finally, I am convinced that a return to systematic presentation of the truth of God is the only way to stem the spiritual drift of the present day, and build up strong and virile Christians.

1. It should be noted that the suggestions made are subjects, *not* titles.

## YEAR I.

WEEK	SUBJECTS FOR SUNDAY	SUBJECTS FOR MIDWEEK
1	“God has spoken.”	The canon of Scripture.
2	The origin and inspiration of Scripture.	Relation of old and new testaments.
3	The only rule of Faith and Conduct.	Understanding and interpreting God's Word.
4	The Lord's use of Scripture.	The right of private judgment.
5	Can God be known?	Methods of studying the Bible.
6	The nature of God: His spirituality.	The use of Scripture in worship.
7	The nature of God: His infinity and eternity.	The names of God—Old Testament.
8	His immutability.	The names of God—New Testament.
9	His knowledge and wisdom.	Foreknowledge/foreordination.
10	His will.	Guidance.
11	His power.	Can God do everything?
12	His holiness.	Can man thwart God's will?
13	His justice.	God's moral government: why does God allow . . .?
14	His goodness.	God's love—general benevolence or dynamic power?
15	His truth.	The Bible frequently ascribes change to God.
16	His sovereignty.	The Kingdom of God.
17	The Trinity: A Christian doctrine.	Heretical views.
18	The Trinity: Mutual relationships and activities of persons.	The Nicene doctrine.
19	The Fatherhood of God.	Modernist views—universal fatherhood and brotherhood.
20	The Son of God: His divinity.	Christ's pre-existence, O.T. aspects.
21	The Son of God: His manhood.	Modernist views of Christ.
22	The Holy Spirit: His personality.	Modernist views of the Spirit.
23	The Holy Spirit: His work in redemption.	The Holy Spirit in the Old Testament.

24	The Holy Spirit: His work in sanctification.	Pentecost, its implications.
25	The Holy Spirit: His work in the world—common grace.	The gifts of the Spirit.
26	The Holy Spirit: His work in the Church.	Grieving and quenching the Spirit.
27	God's decrees.	All events included.
28	God's decrees in action—Creation.	Modern objections.
29	God's decrees in action—Providence.	Providence in my life.
30	God's decrees in action—Miracles.	Do miracles happen today?
31	God's decrees in action—Election and Reprobation.	Is God unfair?
32	Man—his original state.	The Soul.
33	Man—his fall.	The consequences today.
34	Sin—original and actual.	False theories of Sin.
35	Total depravity.	The bearing of total depravity on evangelism.
36	The covenant of works.	The relation of Law to the Christian.
37	The covenant of grace.	The plan of salvation.
38	The Mediator of the covenant.	Christ: human and divine.
39	His Mediation: As Prophet—His teaching.	Comparison of O.T. prophets and prophecy.
40	His mediation: As Priest—His perfect life.	Can Christ's teaching be lived today?
41	His mediation: As Priest—His atoning death.	Objections to the evangelical view of substitution.
42	His mediation: As Priest—His resurrection.	For whom did Christ die?
43	His mediation: As Priest—His intercession.	Aaronic and Melchizedek priesthood as types.
44	His mediation: As King—His dominion and kingdom.	Characteristics and duties of citizens.
45	Lord of the Church.	His body—His bride.
46	His triumphant return.	'When shall these things be—What shall be the sign?'

## YEAR II.

WEEK	SUBJECTS FOR SUNDAY	SUBJECTS FOR MIDWEEK
1	The Christian's death and resurrection.	The present state of the dead.
2	Heaven.	The Old Testament concepts of Paradise, Sheol, Hades.
3	Hell.	The error of purgatory.
4	The 'good news'—its content.	Is there a second chance?
5	The call of God — general and effectual.	The gospel in the Old Testament.
6	Regeneration.	Preaching in the New Testament: Preparation and delivery of sermons.
7	Repentance.	The marks of true repentance.
8	Faith: Saving and Dead.	The relationship of faith and prayer.
9	Faith and Works.	Good works.
10	Assurance.	When is assurance not presumption?
11	Justification.	Comparison and contrast of Roman Catholic and Protestant views.
12	Sanctification—Its nature.	Is perfection possible in this life?
13	Sanctification—Its progress.	The marks of Christian maturity.
14	Christian character.	'Dress' inward and outward.
15	The Law of God: Introduction.	'Law and Grace.'
16	1st Commandment	Modern substitute gods.
17	2nd Commandment	'A Jealous God.'
18	3rd Commandment.	'Vows and oaths.'
19	4th Commandment.	How should we use Sunday?
20	5th Commandment.	My place in the home.
21	6th Commandment.	The problems of war.
22	7th Commandment.	Christian courtship and marriage.
23	8th Commandment.	Integrity in business.

24	9th Commandment.	My responsibility to state law.
25	10th Commandment	The spiritual nature of the Law—its function.
26	A new commandment.	Does love render the rest of the law irrelevant?
27	The Christian's enemies: Satan—person and work.	Objections to a personal devil.
28	The Christian's enemies: Satan—his defeat.	Temptation—our Lord's experience.
29	The Christian's enemies: The world.	Temptation—its recognition.
30	The Christian's enemies: The flesh.	Spiritual discipline.
31	Means of grace: The Word.	Bible Study methods.
32	Means of grace: Prayer.	Prayer problems.
33	Means of grace: Fellowship.	Relations with Christians of other denominations.
34	Means of grace: Breaking of Bread.	Necessary preparation for the morning meeting.
35	Means of grace: Baptism.	Why don't we baptise infants?
36	The Christian in the world.	Social commitments.
37	The Christian in his job.	'Full time service.'
38	The Christian in his home.	The problems of a non-Christian home.
39	The Christian citizen.	The N.T. Church's contacts with 'the powers that be'.
40	The Christian in his Church.	The requirements for office bearers.
41	The Christian under trial.	Must I expect persecution?
42	The Christian pilgrim.	'No continuing city.'
43	The Christian and his possessions.	'Tithing.'
44	The Christian and his time.	'Priorities.'
45	The Christian hope: The Lord's return.	How should it affect me now?
46	The Christian hope: A new heaven and earth.	Safeguards against apostacy.

## A FAMILY SERVICE SYLLABUS

We started the Family Service a couple of years ago. It begins at 11 o'clock each Sunday and runs for three-quarters of an hour. Its aim is twofold: (i) to convey the Christian message to outsiders at a time judged to be convenient to them; and (ii) to provide a planned substitute for the traditional ministry after the Lord's Supper, which we celebrate from 10 to 10.45 in an adjoining hall.

The short service includes a five-minute children's talk and a message to the adults lasting a quarter of an hour or so. The theme of the latter is planned by a committee of seven, including one lady and a chairman elder. The committee has proved an invaluable source of stimulating and varied ideas and a practical check on the hobby horses and high-faluting notions of individuals. We aim to provide a balanced and wholesome diet, marked by both continuity and variety. The Bible is studied at the level of verse, paragraph, chapter, book and character study. The doctrines of the faith are presented. Ample room is made for personal testimony, to show the outworking of faith in individual lives (very popular). We exploit the traditional church calendar of Easter, Whitsun, etc. Remembrance Sunday in 1967 provided a theme for the whole month. But there is need to guard against stereotyped repetition: so in 1968 we thought it wise to break entirely away from the theme. For a fortnight in the summer we receive help from a CSSM team during their campaign in the district. One month in the year is left open and no subject is specified. This gives scope to those of our gifted brethren who prefer not to be committed to a subject they have not chosen. Generally there is a different speaker each week, appropriately 'primed', if need be, and frequently provided from resources within the assembly. In November 1968 it was deemed wise for one person to take responsibility for the whole month to preserve homogeneity in the treatment of a complex subject.

Advance publicity is achieved by the judicious distribution of attractively printed cards and folders. Much thought is therefore given to appealing titles, although one has to beware of false series in which ill-matched material is pushed together under related headings. In this and other respects we are learning as we go along in this rewarding venture.

R. MORRIS, *Chairman, Family Service Committee*

1967

### JANUARY

- |    |                    |
|----|--------------------|
| 1  | New Year's Message |
| 8  | I am the Way       |
| 15 | I am the Truth     |
| 22 | I am the Life      |
| 29 | Peace              |

<b>FEBRUARY</b>	<b>FAMILY PROBLEMS</b>
	5 The Delinquent Son
	12 The Troublesome Twins
	19 A Misguided Mother
	26 An Indulgent Father
<b>MARCH</b>	<b>THE LORD JESUS CHRIST</b>
	5 The Boyhood of Christ
	12 The Manhood of Christ
	19 The Death of Christ
	26 The Resurrection of Christ
<b>APRIL</b>	<b>FOLLOWERS OF JESUS</b>
	2 Peter the Impulsive
	9 Mary the Devoted
	16 Stephen the Martyr
	23 Lydia the Hostess
	30 Thomas the Doubter
<b>MAY</b>	<b>MY FAITH AND MY JOB</b>
	7 A Police Inspector
	14 A Bank Manager
	21 A Scientist
	28 A Company Accountant
<b>JUNE</b>	<b>WALKS WITH JESUS</b>
	4 By the Sea
	11 Through the Fields
	18 Up the Hill
	25 Along the Road
<b>JULY</b>	<b>BIBLE WEATHER</b>
	2 Morning Dew
	9 Mid-day Sun
	16 A Storm at Sea
	23 Red Sky at Night
	30 Service taken by CSSM team
<b>AUGUST</b>	6 Service taken by CSSM team
	<b>CAN WE ASK GOD?</b>
	13 For Help
	20 For Guidance
	27 For Forgiveness
<b>SEPTEMBER</b>	<b>PARABLES OF THE FIELDS</b>
	3 A Field Furrowed
	10 A Seed Sown
	17 A Plant Produced
	24 A Harvest Home

<b>OCTOBER</b>	<b>STUDIES IN I TIMOTHY</b>
	1 A Faithful Saying
	8 One God and One Mediator
	15 The Mystery of Godliness
	22 The Saviour of all Men
	29 Godliness with Contentment
<b>NOVEMBER</b>	<b>REMEMBRANCES</b>
	5 A Book of Remembrance
	12 Remembrance Day Service
	19 Have These Things always in Remembrance
	26 This do in Remembrance of Me
<b>DECEMBER</b>	<b>GUEST SPEAKERS</b>
	3
	10
	17
	24
	31

## 1968

<b>JANUARY</b>	<b>ALL THINGS NEW</b>
	7 A New Birth
	14 A New Life
	21 A New Command
	28 A New Purpose
<b>FEBRUARY</b>	<b>4 For Doctrine</b>
	11 For Reproof
	18 For Correction
	25 For Righteousness
<b>MARCH</b>	<b>A LIFETIME WITH THE SAVIOUR</b>
	3
	10
	17 Guest Speakers
	24
	31
<b>APRIL</b>	<b>EASTER TIDE</b>
	7 The Triumphal Entry
	14 The Empty Tomb
	21 The Lord Revealed
	28 The Emmaus Road

<b>MAY</b>	<b>SONGS OF FAITH</b>
	5 Psalm 2      The King
	12 Psalm 3     The Refugee
	19 Psalm 23    The Shepherd
	26 Psalm 121   The Pilgrim
<b>JUNE</b>	<b>THE HOLY SPIRIT</b>
	2 The Gift of the Spirit
	9 The Fruit of the Spirit: Love, Joy, Peace
	16 Patience, Kindness
	23 Goodness, Faithfulness
	30 Gentleness, Self-control
<b>JULY</b>	<b>HYMNS AND THEIR MESSAGE</b>
	7 Rock of Ages
	14 When Peace like a River
	21 Now thank we all our God
	28 Service taken by CSSM Team
<b>AUGUST</b>	
	4 Service taken by CSSM Team
	11 Guest Speaker
	18 Guest Speaker
	25 Guest Speaker
<b>SEPTEMBER</b>	<b>SOLDIERS OF THE LORD</b>
	1 Joshua
	8 King Saul
	15 Naaman
	22 Cornelius
	29 Harvest Thanksgiving
<b>OCTOBER</b>	<b>MY FAITH AND MY JOB</b>
	6 A Research Scientist
	13 A Medical Practitioner
	20 A Solicitor
	27 A Bible College Lecturer
<b>NOVEMBER</b>	<b>JESUS IS COMING AGAIN</b>
	3 The Promise
	10 The Purpose
	17 The Problem
	24 The Preparation
<b>DECEMBER</b>	<b>JESUS</b>
	1 Mary's Secret
	8 Joseph's Care
	15 Herod's Rival
	22 God's Gift
	29 My Saviour

# **A FOUR YEAR SYLLABUS OF MIDWEEK BIBLE ADDRESSES**

## **Studies in the Epistle to the Romans**

1. The Thesis, chapter 1
2. Jew and Gentile alike guilty, chapter 2
3. Justification by Faith, chapters 3 and 4
4. Two Races and Two Heads, chapter 5

## **Studies in the Life of King Asa**

1. Asa and Zerah
2. Asa and Azariah
3. Asa and Benhadad
4. Asa and Hanani

John Hooper—Reformation Martyr

‘Pray without ceasing’

‘Quench not the Spirit’

‘Prove all Things’

## **Characters in Genesis**

1. Abraham
2. Isaac
3. Jacob
4. Joseph

## **The Doctrine of God**

1. The Existence and Nature of God
2. Divine Names and Attributes
3. The Decrees of God
4. The Holy Spirit

## **Further Studies in Romans**

1. The Two Laws, chapters 6 and 7
2. The Life of the Spirit, chapter 8
3. Salvation to Jew and Gentile, chapters 9 and 10
4. The Wisdom of God, chapter 11

Shipwrecks

More Shipwrecks

## **‘By Hook or by Crook’**

1. The Secret of Successful Soulwinning
2. The Secret of Successful Shepherding

The House of Esau

The House of Jacob

Richard Baxter—Puritan Divine

In the 30th Year

The Consecrated Life

## **New Testament Assembly Principles**

1. HOLY—Membership—Order
2. CATHOLIC—Independent—Reception
3. APOSTOLIC—Scriptural versus Tradition
4. ONE—Unity etc.

## **Holiness**

1. What Holiness is
2. The Cost of Holiness and how it is developed
3. Holiness in Practice

## **Four Conversational Bible Readings on the Sermon on the Mount**

### **Further Studies in Romans**

1. The Surrendered Life, chapter 12
2. Christian Subjection, chapter 13
3. The Weaker Brother, chapters 14 and 15
4. Christian Commendations, chapter 16

### **Jeremiah—the Prophet and the Nation**

1. His Times and Call, chapter 1
2. Judah's Unfaithfulness, chapters 2-6
3. The Temple and the Covenant, chapters 7-12
4. The Divine Sovereignty, chapters 13-20

George Müller

Anthony Norris Groves

'It is required of a Steward'

'There will your Heart be also'

### **Man and Sin**

1. What is Man ?
2. Man the Fallen Creature
3. Man the New Creation
4. God's Covenants with Men

## **Two Studies on Good Works**

Between Malachi and Matthew

### **Jeremiah—Judgment Foretold and Fulfilled**

1. The Prophet, the Prophets and the King, chapters 21-25
2. Jeremiah in Conflict, chapters 26-29
3. Hope on the Horizon, chapters 30-34
4. The Day of Reckoning, chapters 35-39

### **The Holy Scriptures**

1. The Inspiration of Scripture
2. The Authority of Scripture
3. The Canon of the Old and New Testaments
4. Principles of Interpretation

### **Jeremiah—the Remnant and Foreign Powers**

1. Intrigue and Treachery, chapters 40-42
2. Flight to Egypt, chapters 43-46
3. The Fate of the Nations, chapters 47-50
4. Babylon's Prospect and Jerusalem's Retrospect, chapters 51, 52

### **The Sufferings of Christ**

### **The Glories of Christ**

### **The Christian Home**

1. The Christian and Courtship
2. Husband and Wife
3. Hospitality and Witness in the Home
4. Bringing up Children
5. The Family of God

### **The Life of Christ—Childhood and Early Ministry**

1. The Thirty Years of Preparation
2. Early Judean and Samaritan Ministry

### **Three Conversational Bible Studies on Malachi**

### **The Life of Christ—His Public Ministry**

1. The Galilean Ministry
2. The Later Judean and Peraean Ministries

### **Two Conversational Bible Readings on Malachi**

### **Studies in the Psalms**

1. The Nesting Place, Psalm 84
2. The Meeting Place, Psalm 85
3. The Dwelling Place, Psalm 90
4. The Hiding Place, Psalm 91

### **Studies in the Gospel of John, chapters 1-7**

1. 'He was—He came—He gave'
2. 'Come see a Man'
3. 'What Sign shewest Thou?'
4. 'Will ye also go away?'
5. 'Never Man spake like this Man'

### **The Person and Work of Christ**

1. The Son of God
2. Two Natures in One Person
3. The Humiliation of Christ
4. The Exaltation of Christ
5. Prophet
6. Priest
7. King

## **Two Studies on the Reformation in England**

### **Practical Christianity, Studies in Titus**

1. Good Churchmanship
2. Good Housekeeping
3. Good Works

### **Further Studies in the Gospel of John**

1. Light, Sight, chapters 8 and 9
2. Security, Victory, chapters 10 and 11
3. Devotion, Humility, chapters 12 and 13
4. Words of Comfort, chapter 14

## **Four Conversational Bible Studies on 1 Thessalonians**

### **Joshua, Leader of God's People**

1. His Training
2. His Trust
3. His Testing and Triumph
4. His Testimony

### **Chronological Study of the Life of St. Paul**

1. Early Christian Experiences
2. Apostle to the Gentiles
3. His Last Battles

### **Further Studies in the Gospel of John**

1. The True Vine and the True Guide, chapters 15 and 16
2. The Lord's Prayer, chapter 17
3. Gethsemane, Gabbatha and Golgotha, chapters 18 and 19
4. The Resurrection and the Appearings

### **The Gracious Activities of the Holy Spirit**

1. The Baptism of the Spirit
2. The Indwelling of the Spirit
3. The Fullness of the Spirit
4. The Earnest of the Spirit

The Four Provinces

The Four Principles

### **The Means of Grace**

1. Prayer
2. Bible Reading and Ministry of the Word
3. Worship
4. The Sacraments

Study Groups

### **The Doctrine of the Last Things**

1. Intermediate and Final States of the Righteous and the Wicked
2. and 3. The Second Coming of Christ
4. The Great White Throne and the Judgment Seat of Christ

### **Themes from the Epistle to the Ephesians**

1. Blessed with all Spiritual Blessings
2. Knowing the Mystery of His Will
3. Building up and Growing up
4. Putting off and Putting on

### **The Christian's Priorities**

1. The Allocation of Time
2. The Application of Abilities
3. The Apportioning of Money
4. The Abundance of Life

Study Groups

### **Two Conversational Bible Studies on James 1 and 2**

Martin Luther

Amos

The Guided Life

The Disciplined Life

John Calvin

Micah

### **Authority in the Church**

1. The Lord, the Apostles, Scripture
2. Bishops, Deacons, Priests, Ministers, Evangelists

Study Groups

### **Three Conversational Bible Studies on James 3-5**

Joel

### **Studies in the Prophecy of Ezekiel**

1. The Making of the Prophet
2. The Consequences of Israel's Sins
3. The Consequences of the Nations' Sins
4. The Restoration of Israel

Science and Faith

Miracles

Zechariah

Study Groups

The Christian Approach to Marriage

Ethics in Christian Marriage

Study Groups

### **Three Conversational Bible Studies on the Book of Jonah**

# THE CHRISTIAN BRETHREN RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP

:::::::::::::::::::

*Secretary:* Philip Handley Stunt, 71 Duke Street, Chelmsford, Essex.

*Treasurer:* J. W. Tumbridge, 51 Queen Anne's Grove, Bush Hill Park, Enfield, Middlesex.

*Editors of Journal:* F. Roy Coad, 18 King's Avenue, Carshalton, Surrey.  
Paul W. Marsh, 14 Hillcrest Rd., Purley, Surrey.

*Members of Council:* Ward Gasque  
C. G. Martin  
A. R. Millard  
Dr. J. P. Redfern  
Dr. H. H. Rowdon  
Dr. J. R. K. Savage  
D. H. Thompson (Chairman)

Publications available from the publications office, (34 Tewkesbury Ave., Pinner, Middlesex), all at 5/- each, post paid (unless otherwise stated).

## Occasional Papers

1. The Ministry of the Word. Stephen S. Short, B.D., M.B., Ch.B. (3/-)
2. Prophetic Developments, with particular reference to the early Brethren Movement. F. Roy Coad. (3/-)

## Back numbers of the Journal.

- No. 7 The Church and Education.
- No. 9 Pentecostalism.
- No. 10 On Being with the Brethren.
- No. 11 Aspects of the Christian's Social Responsibility.
- No. 12 Members' Issue.
- No. 13 Christian Missions Today.
- No. 14 A Settled Ministry.
- No. 15 Liturgy.
- No. 16 Members' Issue.
- No. 17 Aspects of Biblical Interpretation.
- No. 18 Common Grace.
- No. 19 Science and Faith