

the principle on which your subject is to be divided and developed will be apparent.

When this point is reached, the really difficult work in sermon-preparation is over. The sermon lies before you in outline. What follows is the filling up, the amplification, illustration, illumination. It is here that systematic theology comes to our aid. It is here our own personal experience is of importance. Our own spiritual history, our insight into character, our knowledge of the wants and experiences of men, our sympathetic touch, our imaginative power, our wide reading, history, psychology, poetry, whatever has been thought or said or dreamed by man, is here made tributary to the preacher in his lofty work.

And so the preacher moves resolutely along the clear line of his sermon. He does not drift, the sport of every passing fancy, the victim of every untoward circumstance. He advances. And as he advances he gathers strength, takes a wider sweep, and increases his momentum. There is no waste of force. Every sentence tells. The power put into one head is gathered up and with new power infused into the next. He informs the understanding, awakens the emotional nature, and then with all the power of God's truth and his own personality he bears down upon the will. And by God's blessing his appeal will not be in vain. That God, who is Himself a God not of confusion, but of peace, who uses means, and who has made man a rational, logical being, capable of weighing evidence and choosing among ends, will not withhold the promised blessing from His servant, who brings his best powers of mind and heart, and honours God's real word to man and God's real laws written on the constitution of man, and who, in utter dependence on the Holy Spirit, travails in soul, and toils as though success depended on human effort, and yet trusts implicitly and waits as the husbandman for the early and latter rain.

Such a sermon may not be possible at first. Indeed if the standard is true and noble it will be compassed about by many difficulties, and attainable only after many failures. But if we are true and faithful every attempt brings the ideal nearer. Nor will such a sermon be an accident in the week's history; it will be the event, the resultant, the outcome of the week. It will be the sum of all that we have met. Whatever of nobleness, of truth, of