

expense of his righteousness; or his righteousness at the sacrifice of his love. He will not deal with the sovereignty of God to the ignoring of the free agency of men; neither will he so constantly urge the invitations of the Gospel as to lead men to forget that the Holy Ghost is needed by them. Half-truths are the most insidious forms of error, and many of the half-truths that are so popular in these days have had their origin in the neglect of a thorough and systematic expository treatment of the Word of God.

A fourth advantage of this method is that *it will promote biblical intelligence among our hearers*. We are in great danger of overrating the Bible knowledge of our hearers. There are whole books of Scripture which are as much an unexplored territory to many of them as the interior of Africa. Ask the average worshipper to find the prophecies of Zephaniah, and see what a weary work he will make of his search. The truth is that in the closet, the parlour, and the counting-room men are overlaying the Word of God beneath the mountain of new books that are forever issuing from the press; and, therefore, ministers in the pulpit should give it only the greater prominence, and seek to increase at once the acquaintance of their hearers with it and their reverence for it.

But, as a final advantage of this method, I mention the fact, that in the course of preparation for his expository discourse, *the preacher will acquire great store of materials which he can use for other purposes, and especially will have suggested to him fresh subjects for topical sermons*. He will be able to gather up many "chips" from his expository "workshop," which after the fashion of Max Muller he can work into independent productions. In writing an ordinary sermon the preacher is giving out from a store which he had formerly accumulated; but in preparing an expository sermon he is adding largely to his resources. Besides, many topics are suggested to him by the contact of his theme for the time with his mind, as it is affected by the experiences through which he has been passing; and so he will gradually accumulate a store of subjects, which will save him from that most horrible of all drudgeries, the hunting for a text. In my own experience for many years no difficulty has been experienced by me on this score; and I trace that to the fact that I have steadily devoted one service every Lord's Day to the consecutive exposition of some portion of the sacred Scriptures.

But, in reply, to all this, it is said that such preaching is not popular. To this objection two answers may be given. First, the minister has to consult the benefit of his hearers, as well as their tastes; and when the two conflict, he has to prefer that which will promote the former, rather than that which will gratify the latter. But, second, why is this sort of preaching not popular? Is it not because too many of those who have attempted it have done so without any adequate idea of its difficulty, and have gone on with it in the most slovenly manner? They have taken to exposition because they believed it was easier than sermonizing. They have had recourse to it with the feeling of him who said: "I like to take a whole chapter for a text, because when I am persecuted in one verse I can flee to another." Now such preaching does not deserve to be popular, and it is a proof of our people's good sense that it is not popular. No man can succeed here without great labour. But here also labour, wisely carried on, will conquer all things. Let the preacher remember, however, that he must not turn the pulpit into the chair of the exegetical professor, and spend a long time in hunting down some poor Greek particle or digging up some obscure Hebrew root. Processes are for the student; results are for the pulpit. Do not gather into your discourse all the opinions of all commentators, ancient or modern, German or American; for that will both confuse the mind and exhaust the patience of your hearers. State your own conclusion, with the grounds on which it rests, and then go forward to press the practical application of your theme to the consciences of your hearers and the circumstances of your times. This sort of preaching—as the examples of many who have tried it prove—will be both popular and profitable, feeding alike both preacher and people, and giving to both a new relish for the Word of God.—*Dr. W. M. Taylor.*