

you pain in the pulpit gives the people pain in the pews. Hurrying along, dashing words against each other in impetuous confusion until you are out of breath is painful to you and painful to the people. It destroys the sense of the sermon to your own mind and you may assume what then you do not understand it the people are pretty much in the same state.

Is it not well to pause—to make a long pause—sometimes in order to subdue unnecessary coughing in a congregation? Is it not unseemly to hurry a service to a close by giving out a psalm or hymn while the collection is being taken, and that, too, because one of the prayers has been twenty-five or thirty minutes and the sermon over an hour long, and now the people are impatient to get away.

4. *Inappropriate Readings and Announcements in the Pulpit.*—Is it necessary in our day, when all the people have books in their hands, to read a whole psalm and to expound it—as is sometimes done—in order to sing twelve lines of it? Would it not be far better, and fitted to promote devotion and spiritual life, fitted to interest all the people in the service of God's house, if we could teach them to sing with sufficient spirit and understanding to enable them to render a whole psalm of ordinary length without rending it into fragments and destroying its sense? It is no trifle, gentlemen, although some think it such, to work up the psalmody of congregations to what it should be in many parts of Canada.

Have you not sometimes heard long chapters read, which had but the remotest connection with the discourse, and so read that you were led to surmise that they had not been looked at by the preacher until turned up in the pulpit? Don't you do anything so inappropriate.

As to announcements, texts are sometimes uttered in an inaudible and an inverted order, thus, "The middle clause of the sixteenth verse of the fifth chapter of Paul's second epistle to the Corinthians." Some ministers seem to think announcements beneath their dignity, and they are right regarding many which unfortunately find their way to the pulpit; but there is no merit in doing anything in the house of God in a slovenly manner. If notices are to be read at all let it be as becometh the sanctuary.

You may safely exclude all that are not connected with the religious work of the congregation and the progress of the gospel in the world. Why should you make the pulpit the medium of advertisements which should be paid for in the secular papers of our country? And why should a minister be tormented by a bundle of badly written notices sent up after him into the pulpit? Elders and deacons should protect him from such annoyances by having the appropriate intimations ready for him in the vestry.

5. *Inaccurate Quotations, and Misapplied Texts.*—It would not be difficult to make an extended list of such.

Here are a few examples: Luke 16-23, "And in hell he lift up his eyes," often quoted "*lifted*," &c. I, of course, follow the authorised version in this instance. Rom. xii. 10, "Be kindly affectioned," sometimes read *affectionate*. Mat. xviii, 20, "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them;" to bless them and do them good, is very frequently added. Psal. 130, 3, "If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?" often quoted, "If thou, Lord, *wast strict* to mark iniquities, &c., which contains a base insinuation that the Lord connives at iniquities.

Hab. II. 2, is usually perverted into "that he who runs may read," instead of "that he may run that readeth it," *i. e.*, having stood and calmly read the words inscribed on the tablets, he is so moved by their import that he runs—not that he is running and reading at the same time as is conveyed by the incorrect citation. Persons sometimes pray regarding ministers of the gospel that "the sound of their Master's feet" (meaning Jesus Christ), "may be heard behind them," utterly regardless of the original use made of these terms. You recollect that Elisha applied them to Benhadad (2 Kings vi. 32), when he said to the elders in his house, "See ye how this son of a murderer hath sent to take away mine head? Look when the messenger cometh shut the door, and hold him fast at the door: is not the sound of his master's feet behind him?"

Let these instances suffice. Others will occur to your own minds. I only add that the habit of making such quotations manifests a want of critical observation, and perhaps culpable carelessness, in handling God's word which cannot but impair a minister's influence among intelligent and well-educated people.

6. *Punctuality and Fidelity in Keeping Appointments.*—There should be the utmost faithfulness in this respect. The people should be so trained by word and by example as to be able to say at the appointed hour of public worship what Cornelius said to Peter: "We are all here"—not two-thirds of us but *all of us*—"present before God to hear all things that are commanded thee of God."

Of course, I make allowance for the irregularities of clocks and watches and other accidents, but I am perplexed to find that these accidents always happen to the same persons, and not unfrequently to those who have only to cross the street or walk a block or two to reach the church. Be very considerate, and don't rush into a public rebuke of those who have to come seven or ten miles to hear you and occasionally come in late. It may be enough to remind them in the gentlest manner possible that it is a good thing to follow the patriarchal example, so often mentioned for some purpose in the Old Testament, of "rising up early in the morning."

But when a person has the audacity to argue in favour of want of punctuality, see that you have a conscience