

In every age of the church, Expository Preaching has been more or less practised; to a much greater extent during the 16th and 17th centuries, than in the present day. Christ himself, the great model for ministers, was eminently expository and illustrative in his preaching. It may be argued, that the simple character of his inspired addresses and parabolic sermons, was imperatively demanded by the age in which he lived, and was the only kind of preaching, adapted to the intellectual apprehension of a large proportion of his hearers. But this being granted, the very fact that these simple expository sermons, were so powerful in opening men's minds to understand the truth, and touching their hearts and consciences, is an evidence of the value of such forms of pulpit address, and should recommend it to much more general use in the present day. It will also be acknowledged, that our most valuable Theologians both in ancient and modern times, have been great expositors. Their labours in this department of sacred literature enrich our libraries, and furnish us with valuable assistance in our study of God's word from day to day. Fenelon in his dialogues, speaks of the practice of expounding the word of God continuously as admirable; Herder says, "The exposition of Scripture is in my eyes the chief and the best mode of preaching in our time especially; and I regard it in particular, as the best and the safest exercise of preaching for the young."

Dutroix Membrini says, "It were very desirable that this kind of preaching were more general. Men should have the word of God expounded continuously and not a tissue of human reasonings to which a text is made to bend. This would be a mode of preaching, more full of marrow—more scriptural—more christian. It would teach the people in what manner they ought to read the Scriptures—it explains it to them—it shows the connection between ideas, which at first sight, seem to have no relation to each other. In short, it would wander less from the word of God." One more testimony to the value of Expository Preaching, many suffice for the present. In a farewell sermon delivered by Dr. Mason, of New York, in 1821, while suggesting to his hearers the right kind of minister they should select, he adds, "Do not choose a man who always preaches upon insulated texts. I care not how powerful or eloquent he may be in handling them. The effect of his power and eloquence will be, to banish a taste of the word of God, and to substitute the preacher in its place. You have been accustomed to hear the word preached to you in its connection. Never permit that practice to drop."

The value of such a kind of preaching to ministers themselves, will be apparent by a few considerations. *It promotes systematic study of the word of God*, and thus carries out through life, the habits of earlier years in our Theological Halls and Seminaries. The continuous study of certain portions of the word of God in regular order, is as beneficial for the ministers as for the people. Every minister according to the peculiar bias of his intellect, is prone to make choice of certain texts, interesting and profitable possibly to himself, but not invariably so to his congregation; such an evil is remedied if not altogether prevented by Expository Preaching. It effectually opposes all exclusive tendencies, and leads to the presentation of a greater variety of subjects before the congregation, and in many cases better adapted to their wants. *It compels the minister to make close comparison of scripture with scripture—*