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G. Campbell Morgan and Sermon Preparation

ARTHUR F. KATT

HAT made G. Campbell Morgan the greatest Bible expositor of his day? Why was it that in his prime he could draw more people with sheer Biblical exposition than any other man in the western world?" These are questions raised by Wilbur M. Smith of Fuller Theological Seminary in attempting to analyze a man who possessed a rare combination of abilities. Dr. Morgan had both scholarly apprehension of Biblical meanings, and the ability to present them appealingly, so that record crowds came to hear him on two sides of the Atlantic for nearly half a century. The answers to these questions will be found, to a great extent, in his superior method of sermon preparation.

PREPARATION OF THE PERSON

A WILL TO WORK

G. Campbell Morgan was a man with a will to work. He once told a close friend that when young ministers asked the secret of his success, he replied, "I always say to them the same thing—work, hard work, work. . . ." This will to work he applied unstintingly to Bible study. He gave himself utterly to the Word of God day and night. In 1937 he said, "I began to read and study the Bible in 1883, and I have been a student ever since, and I still am."

A friend of the family, Dr. Hulme, spent the night with the Morgan family during the expositor's ministry at Philadelphia.

Dr. Hulme's bedroom adjoined Morgan's study. Dr. Hulme, an early waker, noticed between the chinks of the door that the study lights were on at 5:30 in the morning. He "soon found that this great expositor was morning by morning at his desk enriching his own mind and heart with the treasures of the Sacred Book."

It was a custom for Morgan, up until the last few years of his life, to be in his study close to the hour of $\underline{6:00}$ a.m. His purpose was to study the Book without interruption, for God's Word to man demanded man's best. Describing those hours of preparation, Dr. Charles Brown said that Morgan

did not go into the pulpit to stretch lame hands of faith and gather dust and chaff. He had fought the battle in his study which was his oratory, had fought his doubts and gathered strength, and found the light, and he took that light given to him from the inspired page to his congregation, and poured it full flood into their minds and hearts and consciences.³

PRAYER

Hard work alone was not able to produce great preaching. Prayer was essential to Campbell Morgan's method. The place of prayer in the life of any great preacher of the Word is always a major one. The particular habits of prayer, however, vary entirely with individuals. Morgan had heard wonderful stories of some men who had devoted many hours to prayer, of others who had spent whole nights in prayer. While he had great respect for these men, he did not adopt their practice. Behind this idea, he felt, was a false philosophy of God, a suggestion or undercurrent of feeling that in order to get Him to act, there had to be a strenuous acrobatic effort. Morgan said, "... very few men I have known pray, in some senses, less than I do; and in other senses, I very much doubt that many men pray more."4

To G. Campbell Morgan, the secret of real spiritual power in the ministry was that of personal, maintained relationship with God. Whatever habits were necessary to the individual to maintain such a relationship should, he felt, be cultivated and observed. No person could lay down rules for another in this regard. It was a practice of Morgan never to sit down to a piece

of work on his Bible without prayer for help. This did not mean that he actually kneeled or spent any prescribed length of time; but invariably, in what sometimes may not have taken a second, he sought that help. Having done that, without feeling that God needs a lot of hammering to persuade Him, he went straight to work, believing that the guidance would be granted.⁵

In the James Sprunt Lectures, Morgan indicated that the habits of prayer are two kinds which may be described as the regular and the irregular. The regular habits are those of set times and places and forms. These should be arranged according to temperament and opportunity, and then rigidly adhered to. The minister's study should be first of all his "oratory," the place into which he can go and shut the door against all intruders; and then not only, nor even first, to study, but to pray. The irregular habits of prayer are those in which the soul is trained to be perpetually Godward in thought, in purpose, and in activity. Prayer, then, would be ejaculatory, or unuttered, as to words even in thought. This Godward desire would thus be perpetually operating, and so would influence all thinking, all loving, all doing. To Morgan, nothing was more important, or more potential, than this.6

Steadfastness in prayer must be achieved in order that the minister might be steadfast in preaching. Morgan felt there must first be prayer in preparation, for the shining of the true light upon the holy page, "for the interpretation of the One Interpreter." Then there must be prayer in preaching, for the cooperation of that Spirit, through Whom the demonstration, or making plain, alone can come to the hearers. Finally, there must be prayer in all the pastoral work which follows preaching, for true wisdom in dealing with those who are to be both instructed in the Truth and led into obedience to it in every phase of life.

PREPARATION IN STUDY SELECTION OF A SUBJECT

In the selection of a subject for a sermon, Morgan was of the so-called "older school." He always had "a text or a passage of Scripture as the authority for that which he intended to explain and expound." Other subjects were not worthy of exposition from the pulpit. He believed implicitly in the divine

authority of the Scriptures. This basic question having been settled early in life, he could devote all his time and mental energy to finding the "interpretation of the One Interpreter."

Morgan's general approach to the Scriptures having been based on the assumption that they were the inspired Word of God did not preclude his having sermons of a polemic or apologetic nature. But most of his sermons were based on the aforementioned assumption. As an example, in *The Teaching of Christ*, he said, "I am not proposing a study of the words of Jesus in order to lead to Christ. I rather desire to lead those who have already found Christ to a study of His words."

SURVEY

After having selected a text, Morgan would read the entire book in which it was found, as many as forty or fifty times. Then he was able to feel the scope, the main structure, of the book. This was done before he took his pencil in hand to put down the outline of the general movements of the book. For Morgan believed the minister's work should first be original, and afterward he should consult the commentaries.

This first-hand study was done in a number of translations. More than any other, however, he valued the American Revised Version as being most accurate in light of recent manuscript discoveries, and more trustworthy than one-man translations, for a committee of men checked on each other's work.¹⁰

Morgan's many readings and intense study of his text resulted in a familiarity with his subject that produced interest and conviction in his audience. Speaking in reference to Morgan, one of his students, Dr. Horace M. Taylor, said:

Failure to convince comes from unfamiliarity with one's subject. One must be so familiar with an author as to see life from that author's viewpoint. Many fail because they pick the lesser themes and inadequately prepare; infinity cannot be magnified by mediocrity.¹¹

Dr. Taylor's statement was in agreement with Morgan's own belief that mastery of the Bible could be achieved only by a persistent study of the Word on the part of the minister. ¹² This seemed to Morgan to be so obvious as to need no argument, and yet he observed that it was at this very point that many fail.

METHODS OF INTERPRETATION

The mastery of, or familiarity with, the Bible was important to Morgan for a number of reasons, not the least of which was the fact that it would lead to the correct interpretation of his text. That he was an able interpreter was attested by the *Presbyterian Standard*, which stated that Morgan added to his thorough acquaintance with the Bible a rare insight into its hidden meaning that is almost beyond imitation. Under his skillful handling of truths, they took on a new meaning, and one wondered how he himself, though having read the passage hundreds of times, could have failed to see the same.

Not only did Dr. Morgan strive to arrive at a correct interpretation, but he was also willing to change his interpretation when further light was shown on a text. Herein he demonstrated an admirable concern for intellectual integrity. In some cases it meant destroying a sermon if he later found that his interpretation was not the right one. An example was recorded in *Winona Echoes*; the quotation was from the Apostle Paul:

"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith," O God, that you and I may so live that at the end we can write like that! Just as an aside now; I was intensely interested a month or two ago reading what Sir William Ramsay has to say about that passage: it spoiled a sermon for me; I had a great sermon on, "I have fought a good fight," and I had the soldiers marching and everything in good order: He said, "The real thought is not of the battle field but of the playground; what Paul meant to say was, 'I have played the game and like it all the better.' "14

A necessary means of arriving at a correct interpretation was keeping a text in its proper context. Arthur Marsh, minister of Westminster Chapel, London, and for many years associated with Morgan, stated that the latter always urged the importance of context, and that preachers and teachers should always set the text in the light of the context. He was fond of quoting a word in this connection often used by Dr. John A. Hutton, "A text without a context is a pretext." ¹⁵

In his work *The Spirit of God*, Morgan said, "Nothing is more to be deprecated than the habit of formulating systems upon disjointed Scripture phrases apart from their connection with the context." ¹⁶

The context considered was not only that immediately preceding and following the passage, but also the book in which it was found; thus the necessity to read the book forty or fifty times. The entire Bible was the greater context to be kept in mind. Since all of it was inspired of God and therefore all true, the various books within the Bible could shed light on each other. Morgan was fond of referring to the Bible as the "Divine Library," and he kept the whole in mind in analyzing the parts.

In the Analyzed Bible, 17 Morgan's basic system of Bible study is presented, clearly formulated on the principle of context. In this system were two methods to be used in conjunction with each other. Dr. Morgan called these methods the telescopic and the microscopic. The telescopic was the method of taking in large areas at one view, in order to see the relation of part to part and system to system. The microscopic method involved a minute and careful examination of the smallest parts, the study of words and all that goes to make for detailed accuracy. Between the two extremes were many grades. The first and fundamental was the telescopic. It was of utmost importance in the study of any book in the Divine Library to gain primarily a broad and general idea of the scope and main structure thereof. Until this was done, Morgan insisted the other methods were not safe, and much false exposition of individual texts, and of separate sections, was due to the fact that their setting in the whole scheme was not understood. In other words, texts should never be studied except in relation to their context.

A development of this system of study applied when preaching on a particular subject which required bringing together passages from various books, as when expounding Christ's teaching about God, man, the kingdom of God, etc. In these instances, he first collected the passages which gave light on the subject at hand. Of course, these passages were considered telescopically and microscopically in order to evaluate them properly. Second he made a deduction of values from each of them. Next he rearranged them; sometimes chronologically in order to show their impact on the disciples; sometimes according to subdivisions of thought. Last, he made a final deduction of values.¹⁸

ANALYSIS

The result of Morgan's contextual study was an analysis or table of contents. A summarization of his preparatory research to this point and beyond is furnished in this table given by Morgan himself in *The English Bible*.

THE FUNDAMENTAL PROCESSES19

A. Activ	B. Result	
I. Survey. II. Condense. III. Expand. IV. Dissect.	Read. Think. Work. Sweat.	Impression. Outline. Analysis. Knowledge.

The "survey" was the telescopic process, described previously, of reading the book as many as fifty times until one received a general impression of it. "Condense" and "Expand" constituted Morgan's outlining procedure. They involved use of intermediate grades of study between telescopic and microscopic. He first condensed the book into a few main headings, then expanded those headings by filling in the subpoints. The result was an analysis, or table of contents, of the book. To "dissect" was to apply the microscopic process of detailed study of words and phrases, and the result was knowledge.²⁰

The first three processes produced analyses such as those contained in Morgan's "The Analyzed Bible," a set of ten volumes. These were the fruit of analytical work done for his Friday night Bible school.²¹ The addition of the fourth process, dissecting, produced his expository work, his Sunday sermons. His books of exposition are probably taken directly from these Sunday sermons.²² He spent three years with the Gospel of Matthew and two years on the Book of Acts.

This present chapter is concerned with Morgan's preparation of sermons. But it must always be remembered that the attention to details found in his sermons was never his starting place, but always came after survey, condensing, and expansion. This procedure can be seen more clearly in an example such as the following analysis from *The Analyzed Bible*.

ZEPHANIAH²³ THE SEVERITY AND GOODNESS OF GOD

A. THE DAY OF WRATH WITH AN APPEAL i-ii	B. THE DAY OF WRATH AND ITS ISSUE iii			
Title Page 1				
I. The Day of Wrath i:2-18	I The Day of Wreth 19			
i. Announced in General	I. The Day of Wrath i. The Woe Declared 1-8			
ii. Described Particularly 7-13	ii. The Reasons Declared 2-7			
iii. Described as to	iii. The Final Word 8			
Character 14-18				
	II. The Issue of the Day 9-20			
II. The Appeal ii	i. The Gathering of a			
i. The Cry of the Nations 1-2				
ii. The Call to the Remnant 3	ii. The Remnant Ad-			
iii. The Argument 4-15	dressed 14-20			

Survey gave Morgan the impression that the theme of the book was "The Severity and Goodness of God." Condensation produced the headings "A" and "B". The subpoints of the outline issued from the expansion process.

He did not claim finality for any of these original analyses. Some of them were altered in the microscopic method and a more exhaustive study might necessitate still further alterations. Here, again, was an example of Morgan's intellectual integrity, and of his willingness to work persistently to attain the most accurate interpretation possible. He realized that no student of the Bible could deal with all its books satisfactorily to himself in a lifetime. The treasures were unsearchable, and he found that those who spent most time and toil in the fascinating work are most conscious of the vast reaches that stretch beyond them, attracting them to closer examination and profounder investigation.²⁴

Yet the very fascination of the work of interpretation might lead one astray. Morgan voiced a caution in regard to method, as a result of deep conviction that one of the gravest perils of the hour of increased interest was that of a merely carnal desire for the technical knowledge of the content of Scripture. Unless

those who devoted themselves to the study of the Word zealously and ceaselessly watched and prayed, the very delight of the discovering of the system would become a paramount motive, and wherever this was so, it resulted in disastrous failure, and an actual peril to spiritual life.

The definite system of study presented here was in keeping with Morgan's penchant for system in other matters. He could not bear unanswered letters or documents left about untidy. He practiced the most careful card indexing, filing, tabulating, and cataloging.²⁵

RESEARCH IN COMMENTARIES

After the "work" of analysis and the "sweat" of microscopic examination in which the Divine Library was its own commentary, Morgan turned to commentaries and other books for further study. He was consistent in this order of work in his own preparation. When asked how he made his sermons he would reply that two things were vital: personal, first-hand work on the text, and then all scholarly aids obtainable. He never took down a commentary until he had done the first-hand work and had made his own outline. He said, "To turn to commentaries first is to create a second-hand mentality." ²⁶

He had a great regard, however, for these commentaries. His attitude toward them was expressed in his sermon on, "The Conditions of Coming to God." He said:

I wonder how many of you young people have read Paley's *Natural Theology*. You young men, lay preachers, have you read it? I find no exercise more helpful when I am preparing a sermon than to get down some old book and read it again. I have been all through Paley's *Natural Theology* getting ready for this sermon.²⁷

Although he was very well-read, he never lost sight of the fact that the Bible was unique among other books because of its divine inspiration, not implying that all truth was stated in the Bible, nor that men had not discovered truth without it, but rather, that human thought is subject to the Word, and not the Word to human thought.²⁸

Morgan's library contained a wide range of literature. He possessed a complete set of Marie Corelli's novels—even those

widely criticized from a religious standpoint. By investigating both sides of a subject, Morgan believed he could present a stronger argument in favor of the right side. While he had no favorite author, yet, like most Englishmen, he was very fond of Dickens and the standard poets. He had some of their finest editions. His library was arranged for convenience rather than

for appearance.29

In the expository letters of Morgan,³⁰ additional information about particular books and his attitude toward them have been recorded. In regard to an unnamed New Testament in modern speech, he confessed that he began to read passages in anything but a friendly spirit for he did not appreciate some of the efforts along these particular lines. He found, however, that he was not offended, but pleased by what he read. The translation was reverent, scholarly, and sometimes beautiful. He indicated, however, he should be sorry to see even this adopted in general use, but it should be of inestimable service, especially to students of the English Bible who were not familiar with the Greek.

The International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia was considered invaluable by Morgan. He had the greatest confidence in it and recommended it to all Bible students and preachers. Its chief value consisted in the fact of its unquestioned scholarship, combined with its loyalty to the Bible as God-breathed literature. The chief editor was Dr. Orr, assisted by a very remarkable company of real scholars, loyal to the Scriptures. Morgan said, "I should advise every young man contemplating the ministry to become possessed of this encyclopaedia, for it touches the doctrinal aspects of faith from most standpoints.³¹

Other books liked by Morgan were The Fact of the Christian Church, by Carnegie Simpson and The Christian Faith in the Modern World, by J. Gresham Machen. In regard to concordances, he was convinced that the best volume enabling one to discover and follow the value of Hebrew and Greek words as used in Scripture was Strong's Exhaustive Concordance. Young's Analytical Concordance was excellent, but he felt Strong's was superior.

Of course the central book, in Morgan's life was the Bible. He said, I may say at once that I have been almost exclusively a man of one book. That, of course, is the Bible. That does not mean that I have read no other. I have read

hundreds of books; I may say, thousands; but I could not possibly tell you which have influenced me most. 32

PREPARATION OF THE BRIEF

The work of research finished, Morgan prepared the brief, or outline, for his sermon. One of Morgan's sons, Dr. Howard Morgan, said his father's method of sermon notes was "meticulous" and the arrangements of the outlines were "works of art." He further revealed that his father hardly ever wrote out a sermon in longhand word for word. "But his sermon outline was full and usually the introduction and often the conclusion was written in full. He followed the old homilectical form of Points 1, 2, and 3, etc." "33"

In phrasing he aimed at simplicity, clarity, and brevity. He used alliteration and rhythm, repetition of letters, words, and prefixes, for things are longer retained if they sing in the memory or follow an association of ideas.³⁴

As Dr. Morgan matured, so did his methods of preparation. Some had felt that in his early efforts his introductions were bulky and that alliteration was unduly stressed. In 1930, John Harries stated that Morgan's homilectical method had matured in that his introductions were briefer and more essentially introductory. Also he was no longer pointedly alliterative.

Edgar DeWitt Jones recalled a sermon preached by G. Campbell Morgan on "The Fall of Simon Peter." The texts were Matthew 16 (Peter's Confession) and Matthew 26 (Peter's Denial). The divisions of the outline were very clear as Jones recalled them.

- I. He Refused to Follow Where He Could Not Understand Matthew 16:21-24 (He could not understand Jesus' prediction of death)
- II. His Boastfulness Luke 22 (He would go both to prison and to death)
- III. Unwatchful Prayerlessness (In the garden—sleeping)
- IV. His Zeal Without Knowledge (He cut off the ear of the servant)
- V. His Knowledge Without Zeal (Peter followed afar off)
- VI. Open Disavowal Accompanied with Oaths.

Thus Morgan climaxed an hour's sermon contrasting sharply the Simon Peter of the 16th chapter of Matthew and the Simon Peter of the 26th chapter, which contained the open denial and oaths. Jones maintained:

This is great preaching and while there are some who would say the analysis is too finely drawn and in one or two instances possibly not warranted, the fact remains that such handling of a theme fixes it indelibly in the minds of his hearers. He is the teacher in the pulpit, combining pedagogics and homilectics in an original manner.³⁶

CENTRAL MODUS OPERANDI

The kind of outline a preacher will construct depends on the type of sermon he wishes to preach. G. Campbell Morgan was a man who had chosen one type of sermon and used it constantly. This basic method of preaching, his central *modus operandi*, was the expository method. Charles A. Anderson, Executive Secretary of the Presbyterian Historical Society, said, "All of his preaching was expository."³⁷

An expository discourse may be defined as one which is occupied mainly, or at any rate very largely, with the exposition of Scriptures. It by no means excludes argument and exhortation as to the doctrines or lessons which this exposition develops. It may be devoted to a long passage, or to a very short one, even a part of a sentence. It may be one of a series, or may stand by itself.

... not only the leading ideas of the passage are brought out but its details are suitably explained and made to furnish

the chief material of the discourse.38

Morgan's sermons fit this description to the finest degree.

At secular occasions he spoke on topical subjects, and did so in an excellent manner, but in the pulpit it was always exposition.³⁹

Many preachers strive to hold attention and meet the various needs of their people by varying the types of sermons used. Morgan was an exception, however, and employed the same method constantly. Andrew W. Blackwood said:

How then should a young pastor start? By preparing an expository message occasionally, perhaps one a month. Such a working schedule, quite elastic, allows him time for care-

ful preparation, and gives the people time to become accustomed to this new sort of pulpit fare—new at least to them. After six months or so the preacher can begin using such sermons more frequently, and after a year or two he may decide on one each Lord's Day, provided he has more than one service on Sunday. Only a man of unusual talent for this method, such as G. Campbell Morgan, would confine himself exclusively to this sort of pulpit work.⁴⁰

Blackwood also recommended other ways of preaching for the sake of variety. However, he indicated that a "ten-talent" man, like Maclaren in his later years, or G. Campbell Morgan in his glory, may do nothing but expository work month after month. If a less gifted interpreter did so, his pulpit work might suffer from lack of variety.⁴¹

The Presbyterian Standard was greatly impressed by Morgan's ability at the great Bible conferences in the South, and stated that he set a standard of sermonizing that would be the despair of many a preacher. However, if it made them realize that their past methods had been inadequate, then it was not in vain that they listened to him twice a day, one hour each time. "His method is the expository in the best sense." He not only gathered up the context, but he brought out the delicate shades of meaning of the original, and then he dropped off all modifying clauses and presented the bare proposition which was in every text. "Beyond comparison, he is the finest sermonizer of his day, and it was a rare privilege that we enjoyed of sitting for a week at the feet of such a Master."

Thomas H. Marsh reviewed Volume One of *The Westminster Pulpit: The Preaching of G. Campbell Morgan* and stated: "The pattern of development in the sermons is the same throughout the book. A text is given and placed in its proper setting; the central message and its application are stated, and a brief conclusion is given."

The method described by Mr. Marsh was used throughout the entire set of ten volumes of *The Westminster Pulpit* containing nearly three hundred of Morgan's sermons. He was a man of one method, but he mastered the method he chose to use.⁴⁴

PULPIT NOTES

To be considered here is the question as to whether or not Morgan used pulpit notes, and if so, what kind.

Andrew Plackwood has pointed out that almost without exception the ablest expository preachers have spoken with few notes, or none at all. He cites as an exception, William M. Taylor of Broadway Tabernacle in New York City, who read the expository sermons that later appeared as *The Parable of our Saviour* and *The Miracle of Our Saviour*; another exception was John Henry Jowett, of New York City and London, who read his sermons, including expository discourses on I Peter. He could read superbly, with a paragraph as a unit, so that he needed to glance at his paper only occasionally. Robertson took into the pulpit a few notes, at which he almost never glanced. "Maclaren and G. Campbell Morgan, like the majority of other gifted expositors, have felt that anything in the way of manuscript or notes would interfere with the sort of eye contact that always marks 'animated conversation' in its upper reaches." 45

The above quotation from Blackwood gives the impression that Morgan preached without notes. Such was not the case. Miss E. A. Thompson, who heard him speak a number of times, did bear out the fact that notes never interfered with Morgan's eye contact, but she did not give conclusive evidence on the subject at hand. She said, "If Dr. G. Campbell Morgan used extensive notes, they never disturbed the listener, as such notes sometimes do. They were . . . seldom in evidence." Miss Thompson's word "seldom" shows that at least once in a while he did use notes.

Miss Mary Holyoak, who recorded Morgan's sermons in England is much more definite:

Over very many years I reported sermons preached by Dr. G. Campbell Morgan, in Westminster Chapel, morning and evening, which were printed in *The Westminster Pulpit*, then the name of the church magazine. Dr. Morgan always gave me his pulpit notes to check with my transcription—they were very brief, mainly headings, on a couple of letter sheets.⁴⁷

Morgan himself spoke on the subject in an address entitled, "Fifty Years Preaching and More," delivered in the chapel at Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary. Edgar DeWitt Jones recorded this excerpt:

Then sometimes I am asked about methods of delivery. Well, all I can say is, as a rule, I have a brief. I never prepare sentences. I do not know when I rise to preach what my first sentence will be as to form. I know what the thing I want to say is. I speak from a brief most carefully prepared, and give myself freedom of utterance.⁴⁸

It is certain, then, that Dr. Morgan did use notes in the pulpit. A typical example⁴⁹ appears in the appendix. The sermon notes on five by eight-inch sheets were enclosed in a larger sheet of paper twice the size folded in half around them. On the inside of this larger sheet (see appendix, p. 30) he systematically noted the date, place (church or other), and town each time the sermon was preached. This sermon, entitled "Boasting in Grace," was first preached in 1913 at Westminster Chapel, London, and eighty-two times thereafter, in England, Scotland, in twenty of the United States, and five Canadian provinces. Its last presentation was again in Westminster Chapel, in 1938.

On the outside of the cover sheet (see appendix, p. 22) were two lists of hymns appropriate to the sermon, the first from the hymnal at Westminster and the second, made later in pencil and almost eradicated by time, is from a Wesleyan hymnal. Also on this page is the Scripture reading used, and, in the upper left hand corner, the sermon number for indexing and filing.

When first preached on May 4, 1913, this sermon was stenographically recorded by his secretary, and was printed, as preached, in the church paper, the *Westminster Pulpit*, dated May 16, 1913. It sold for one penny. Each week one of his Sundey sermons was published. Later these appeared in book form, and more recently a new edition has been published, *The Westminster Pulpit*, a ten-volume set.⁵⁰

The original notes of the above sermon (see appendix, p. 23f) are in Morgan's own handwriting. Later his secretary made the typewritten copy (see appendix, p. 27f) in which certain deletions were made. These deletions illustrate Harries' comment (p. 11) that in his later years Morgan's introductions were briefer and more essentially introductory. In this sermon he eliminated one and a half pages of background facts and subjective impressions. He began, then, with an evaluation of the text and an orientation of the audience as to the body of his message.

Roman numeral III in the handwritten copy was also eliminated. Under the point were three subpoints in alliterative form: "Capture by Revelation, Culture by Discipline, Comfort by Communion." In the preaching of these points, as seen in the printed sermon, the alliteration seems somewhat forced. One might wonder why this section was deleted. Probably it was not because of the forced alliteration, but rather because its subject matter was extraneous to the whole sermon. Whatever the reason, his decision to eradicate carefully worked out material in order to improve the quality of the whole certainly is to his credit.

Parallelisms are apparent in almost every division of the outline: "To the Captain, To the People, To the Chief Captain;" "Hebraism, Hellenism, Romanism," etc. Some speakers might allow this form to dominate their sermon delivery, but examination of the printed sermon shows that Morgan was the master of his outline. At times the very words of the parallelisms were used, at times substitute words (not "Hellenism," but "the Greek within him"), but in either case the logical sequence of this rhetorical technique provided the structure for his colorful choice of words. No doubt the technique aided Morgan himself to keep his outline in mind, and certainly it helped his hearers remember.

Morgan's briefs were underlined for emphasis. In the handwritten copy, underlining was done in blue pencil. The type-written notes were marked in four colors of ink. In general, the order followed was black, violet, green, and red, in order of descending importance. Main divisions, A and B, are underlined in black, large Roman numerals in violet, small Roman numerals in green, and small letters, a and b, in red. The colors are in the same order in the conclusion. In the introduction, the text is marked with black, the next explanatory sentence in red, and the two headings in violet. Even in such minute details as this Morgan was systematic, to the end that he might achieve clarity of thought in sermon presentation.

PREPARATION FOR DELIVERY

Dr. Morgan's willingness to work hard and his thoroughness were manifest also in his preparation to deliver his sermon. In his early ministry he was especially diligent. He would place his notes in front of him and preach aloud as though an audience were before him. While ministering to the churches at Stone and Rugely, he would walk in the country and preach his sermon as he walked. To some it may sound absurd to preach when an audience is not there. However, Morgan did not try to imagine an audience, but he did attempt to state aloud the things he wanted to say to a congregation. When this was done in the study he rarely sat down, but walked about and even gesticulated if he wanted to. Furthermore, he made himself listen to what he had to say and tried to say it in such a way that he could completely grasp it. This practice caused his vocabulary to grow and the ability to construct sentences was also greatly improved.⁵¹

In later years, the period of preparing for delivery was still important to him. Dr. F. A. Robinson, who was with Morgan for many days as they traveled together across Canada, commented on the fact that so few middle-age clergymen seem to study. But concerning Morgan, Dr. Robinson contrasted him with the more common preacher who

. . . could enjoy sightseeing and dining out and social converse until thirty minutes before his evening address but never once did I see Dr. Morgan neglect his sacred periods of Bible reading and preparation for even the most enticing and attractive social function.⁵²

When preaching a sermon that he had brilliantly unfolded perhaps twenty years before, that had been in print for years, Morgan was no less diligent in preparation for delivery. As an example, neighbors during the great Northfield Conferences told that when he would be speaking at the ten o'clock hour on a familiar subject, he could be seen at six o'clock in the morning, bending over a table in the garden near his cottage, giving two more solid hours to meditation upon that text!⁵³

PREPARATION FOR PUBLICATION

Morgan's sermons and expositions were not diligently studied and thought out only to perish after deliverance on a single Sunday morning or mid-week service. Rather, they have been preserved in his books. He had a certain amount of literary exactitude in the preparation of his material. Because of this ability there is a fine finish and completeness which characterizes Morgan's printed work, even though much of it was stenographically

reported.54

"He preached his books," said William R. Barbour,⁵⁵ President of Fleming H. Revell Company. Dr. Morgan had his secretary take down his sermons by dictation. After they were transcribed, Morgan would correct them and once more they would be typed. "This typed material was what we used in our publishing of his books and his final manuscripts needed practically no editorial attention." ⁵⁶

In a letter to a friend, Morgan enclosed a transcribed sermon which he had not yet edited for publication. He said:

... I thought you might like to go through it as though preparing it for publication. If you do this you will find what I always find, that the very things which make extemporaneous preaching successful cannot be put into print. I am referring to the repetitions, and colloquial forms of expression. When these are uttered with the living voice they rearrest attention and are most valuable. In all the publication of my sermons and addresses I have had to go through my transcripts, reconstructing in order to (obtain) smoother reading. It is the side of my work which has always been most laborious and distasteful, but it is necessary.⁵⁷

Morgan was concerned that readers of his publications gain the greatest possible knowledge. He gave them the following suggestions. First, before looking at Morgan's analysis, the reader was advised to read the book directly from the Bible. He affirmed the entire Bible could be read in (sixty) hours at the rate of pulpit reading. Next, the main divisions were to be marked as indicated in the analysis, in a Bible specially procured for the purpose. Then each division was to be read through separately. The third and final process was to take each division separately and mark the sub-divisions in the Bible. This knowledge was then to be passed on to one's family, friends, Sunday School and Bible classes, and to the regular ministry of the Word by the ministers.⁵⁸

CONCLUSION

"Under his skillful handling of truths, they took on a new meaning, and one wondered how he himself, though having read the passage hundreds of times, could have failed to see the same."59 That Campbell Morgan could see truths in a Bible passage missed by others who had read that passage hundreds of times is not mysterious, nor is it beyond imitation. His attitude and his method are, in a large measure, the reasons for his ability.

Morgan's attitude toward the Bible was that the entire book was inspired by God. Having asked for divine guidance, he began to study, confident that that request was granted. He was willing to work long and study persistently to achieve the most nearly correct interpretation. And he had intellectual integrity, being willing to change a conclusion when another proved to be more logical.

His method of studying any passage of Scripture began with a survey of the book in which it was found, reading it forty or fifty times to achieve an impression of its general sweep. More careful reading produced an analysis of the book; that is, an outline of the main divisions and subdivisions. Microscopic study of the words and phrases in the smaller passage originally being considered produced an expository work.

The difference between Morgan's work and that of some who had "read the passage hundreds of times" seems to be this thorough knowledge of the context. Having studied the whole Bible, book by book, by this method, he was able to keep the larger context in view, and so keep the facts in the proper relationship and perspective.

For preaching, he regrouped the important details in order to make them more clear to his hearers. He aimed at simplicity, clarity, and brevity in the adoption of titles and subtitles.

He spoke from a carefully prepared brief, after having voiced aloud his thoughts in private, in order to give clarity of utterance.

Finally after slight alterations, many of his sermons appeared in printed form extending his influence and making his contribution permanent.

FOOTNOTES

- ¹ G. Campbell Morgan, *The Westminster Pulpit*: Intro. by Wilbur M. Smith (Westwood, New Jersey: Fleming H. Revell, 1954), Vol. I, p. 8.
- ² Harold Murray, Campbell Morgan, Bible Teacher (London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, Ltd., ca. 1938), p. 73.
- 3 Jill Morgan, A Man of The Word (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1950), p. 325.
- 4 Jill Morgan (ed.), This Was His Faith (The Expository Letters of G. Campbell Morgan, Westwood, New Jersey: Fleming H. Revell, 1952), p. 26.
- 5 Ibid., p. 27.
- 6 G. Campbell Morgan, *The Ministry of the Word* (The James Sprunt Lectures delivered at Union Theological Seminary in Virginia, New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1919), p. 218.
- 7 Ibid., p. 219.
- 8 Frank Crossley Morgan, letter to the writer, Nov. 23, 1959.
- ⁹ G. Campbell Morgan, *The Teaching of Christ* (New York: Hodder and Stoughton, ca. 1913), p. 3.
- 10 Jill Morgan (ed.), op. cit., pp. 21, 22.
- 11 Horace M. Taylor, letter to the writer, Aug. 2, 1960.
- 12 G. Campbell Morgan, The Ministry of the Word, p. 203.
- 13 Presbyterian Standard, Aug. 30, 1922, p. 2.
- 14 Winona Echoes, "The Story of Demas," 1913, p. 57.
- 15 Arthur E. Marsh, letter to the writer, Nov. 25, 1959.
- 16 G. Campbell Morgan, The Spirit of God (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1900), p. 18.
- 17 G. Campbell Morgan, The Analyzed Bible: Introduction, Genesis to Esther (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1907), p. 1ff.
- 18 G. Campbell Morgan, The Teaching of Christ, pp. 4,5,8, 20, 27, etc.
- 19 G. Campbell Morgan, The English Bible (New York: Fleming H. Revell 1910), p. 3.
- 20 Ibid., p. 45. See also Don Wagner, The Expository Method of G. Campbell Morgan (Westwood, New Jersey: Fleming H. Revell, 1957), pp. 51, 52.
- 21 Jill Morgan, A Man of The Word, p. 164.
- 22 Wagner, op. cit., p. 55.
- 23 G. Campbell Morgan, The Analyzed Bible, Introduction, Job to Malachi, p. 246.
- 24 G. Campbell Morgan, The Analyzed Bible, Vol. I, pp. 2, 3.
- 25 Murray, op. cit., p. 83.
- 26 Ibid., p. 88.

- 27 G. Campbell Morgan, The Westminster Pulpit, Vol. X, p. 144.
- 28 Wagner, op. cit., p. 35.
- 29 Harpers Weekly, "The New Man of Northfield," (1901), Vol. 45, p. 1101.
- 30 Jill Morgan, (ed.), This Was His Faith, p. 31ff
- 31 Ibid., p. 33.
- 32 Ibid., p. 34.
- 33 Dr. Howard Morgan, letter to the writer, Oct. 28, 1959.
- 34 Jill Morgan, A Man of the Word, p. 163.
- 35 John Harries, G. Campbell Morgan, The Man and His Ministry (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1930), p. 80.
- 36 Edgar DeWitt Jones, American Preachers of Today, (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1933), p. 284.
- 37 Charles A. Anderson, a letter to the writer, July 29, 1959.
- 38 John A. Broadus, On the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons, (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1944), pp. 144, 149. Other types of sermons are the topical, textual, and inferential. For a discussion of these see Broadus, p. 133ff.
- 39 Harries, op. cit., p. 122.
- 40 Andrew W. Blackwood, The Preparation of Sermons (New York: Abingdon Press, 1948), p. 65.
- 41 Andrew W. Blackwood, Expository Preaching for Today (New York: Abingdon Press, 1953), p. 169.
- 42 Presbyterian Standard, Sept. 3, 1919, p. 3.
- 43 Thomas H. Marsh, Quart. Jour. of Speech, 41(1955), 84, 85.
- 44 Also see op. cit., Wagner, and Hudson Baggett, The Principles and Art of G. Campbell Morgan as a Bible Expositor. Th. D. Dissertation, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, (Aug. 1956).
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- 46 Miss E. A. Thompson, letter to the writer, Oct. 29, 1959.
- 47 Miss Mary Holyoak, letter to the writer, Nov. 25, 1959.
- 48 Edgar DeWitt Jones, op. cit., pp. 288, 289; also John Harries, op. cit., p. 244.
- 49 Jill Morgan, letter to the writer, Feb. 16, 1961. These sermon notes were made available through the courtesy of Dr. Morgan's sons.
- 50 G. Campbell Morgan, The Westminster Pulpit (Westwood, New Jersey: The Fleming H. Revell, 1954. 10 vols.)
- 51 Jill Morgan (ed.), This Was His Faith, p. 29.
- 52 Wilbur Smith, A Treasury of Books for Bible Study, (Natick, Mass.: W. A. Wilde Co., 1960), p. 131.
- 53 Ibid., pp. 131-132.
- 54 Hudson Baggett, op. cit., p. 37.
- 55 William R. Barbour, letter to the writer, July 20, 1960.
- 56 William R. Barbour, letter to the writer, Feb. 20, 1957.
- 57 Jill Morgan (ed.), This Was His Faith, p. 30.
- 58 G. Campbell Morgan, The Analyzed Bible: Introduction, Genesis to Esther, pp. 4-5.
- 59 Presbyterian Standard, Aug. 30, 1922, p. 2.

Appendix

The following pages are reproductions of G. Campbell Morgan's handwritten sermon notes which were later abbreviated for the secretary's typewritten copy also reproduced here. These notes of a typical sermon of G. Campbell Morgan were enclosed in a single sheet inscribed with the topic, Scripture and suggested hymns as shown below; and on the reverse side of the sheet was kept a record of each date and place where the sermon was delivered. This record is reproduced on the last page of the appendix (for further description see above, p. 15). These notes are reproduced with the permission of the sons of G. Campbell Morgan.

> 161. Boasting in Grace.

310 "Jake mylige + let it be" 308 "O Jesus Christ grow Lou in me" 309. "my gracious Lord, Sown Thy right 318. So let our lipo plines expresso 3/2 " Ineed There every Rous."

Nosleyen Sol Constitute of Acts xxi. 37 - xxii. 3. 25-29

NU1. 25 m 29. (MENS. XX/. By -- XXII. 3. "By He grace offers, Jam whas dong. J Cor. 75. 10.

Anthor Tucken.

These words occur in the medit of Baul's teaching In dealing with the Rosunsofin four ford, he declared that after the top from the Leadership the was concerung Aos ussedion.

seen of Cephas and of the Bireve; of five hundred aportes; not meet to be called an aportle, becourse How he accepted the Chuich of god; brokhen at once; of formos; of out the aportes; and case of act of these humself. Horny thus claumed to have adiately seen the River dows, he rejerved tophius elp as leaved of the am what I am. This was a grape word, and its officines que-tation by the chiletien agos, shows how pro-formals, it has improved whelf upon their minds of the incidental Exclamation Jome Accord Consideration has led mato theus that there balies on it of which, Dat least, I'm Essonhal Welalem

attributing everything of value in his mishon Expossence, to that Diving Grace in which he Jaux was speating in all humility, and The hafe ever recognized that in this saying had been maware. of Constanty oxulted.

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he was lagitimately borasma, and chaining never be lost dight of, is it not also true that That he had responded to the giace of for, and 30 had realized and wreated 15 whommg. White this copect of his meaning more

In these words be declayed he rand glafael be afformed, when, whichng to the galation Churches, he sawed glasses mat make word he grass Howard a Confession of a Challange. I think So; and this to ope is the new technot of have de overed mhe gayning

obs a Confession.

i I was a plad and humble acknowledgmen of the power of the Dist me gace in his Expecience.

ii Glavao au Explanation quitais he was, for course of But, Education, Export. As a challenge.

The Very fact of he Smoonly of his act monday make the olainer and the chellengs more of the resultines of blance. Then Shere mand bush bezolomation only serves to

The flory of frace. I colleupa, is to weaken the lostinous to grace. 9. Saul - By the grace ggos.

I propose then to treat the Statement as a claim and a chaeleurge; and to consider in what work this name was an itemstration of the power of grass.

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A. Laue - By the grace of for

B. Ouwelver- By hefrace offer.

A the Man.

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" His Makingliff. (See add var. na !!!).

" Jam a Jess of Sarson in Clicia - no mean ch,"

" A Mespee In Mespees.

" Jam a Jess, born in Jawas of Clicia, but brought up in Mes Ch, at the feel of fam alest.

" Jam alest."

" Jam - a Roman - born

Mus

By Bush

Hebrew. Fresh out It stronge.

By Chizerlan. Fresh out It stronge.

By Chizerlan. Fresh out It stronge.

i His Interests.

2 Hebeers. Divine Origin.
2 Hebeers. Distract tologons willby Gaillucal tologons willby Gaillucal tologons.
3 He Mystacies.
3 Homan. Headon 9th back.
3 Homan. Beach & Rucipine.
3 Johnson 9th back.

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b. Interse
c. Dominaling
d. Sewilve.

6

All these facts forces found, refined, and J. Ne man by gave.

fugues.

a Hebraism. i Nationalely.

The god of government & grace.

The Service on behay 416 Nations. The Missionary Bosowa.

b. Hellanson.
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1 Custano by Romealon. 11 Custano by Discopene. 4. The Mothers of Grace.

tolby Quimunion.

i det us first recognize that our being is B. Ourselves by the grace & Gos. ourserves.

a. Our Personal Peculianities.

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a. Jun blood,

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of By Ha Grace offor. their adjustment within the Gueuns the fordung of wequeling ghose,

wealth.

a By the cleaning of the boing 6. 13y 16 discipline of lye. " This is doces

6. Its power is absolute. C. Its Victory is constitunal. a. Its couris imperative iii Let us tomember.

Conclusion.

he great word, less we likely Grace. Jetus beware how we carelers of was In underhanded hick of cruel word. - - -An emijust decision -A mean action ~ ~ ~ of Townermy Passion. ~

Are we able to say this ?

4 not - are we - or is paa - to sterne?

Let us yiera ourserso lo goce hat we may be trituesses of grace.

READ ACK. XXI. 37 40-XXII 1-3 + 22-29.

"By the Grace of God, I am what I am." 1 Cor. XV.10.

These words constitute a Confession and a Challenge.

As a Confession.

1. It was a glad and humble acknowledgment of the power of the Divine

It was an explanation of what he was, for by this word he eliminated all other causes of Birth, Education, Grace in his experience. Effort. 11.

As a

to weaken the testimony to Grace. this acknowledgment and explanation To eliminate the note of challenge, is to weaken the testimony to Grane The greater the triumph the greater If the result was a poor one, then Challenge. The very fact of the sincerity of only serves to make the claim and the challenge more definite. Grace was to blame. glory of Grace. the

an illustration of the power of Grace. I propose then to treat the statement as a claim and a challenge; and to consider in what ways this man was

Our method will be that of attempting to see the men by the Grace of God; and deducing from the consideration the lessons of value to ourselves.

A. Paul - By the Grace of God.

Ourselves. - By the Grace of God. 6

03

The Man. Paul - By the Grace of God.

A.

To the Captain. In Greek. .

Calleia, but brought up in this To the People. In Hebrew. no mean City". b.

city - at the feet of Gamaliel." To the Chief Captain.

Greek and Pharisaic. Hebrew. Roman . By Education. By Citizenship By Birth Thus

National responsibility. 11. His Interests.

Spiritual religion. The Market Place. The Stadium. Greek. P. q

Freedom of the World. Splendour and Dignity Breadth of Empire. of Government. The Mysteries. Roman.

0

Dominating. Intense. Himself. p. d.

Sensitive.

The Man by Grace. H

The service on behalf of the Nations. The God of Government and Grace. All these facts and forces found. The Missionary Passion. and fulfilled. 1. Nationality. refined,

The service on behalf of the Saints. The Pastoral Passion. b. Hellenism. The Glory of Humanity.

C. Romanism.
The splendour of Empire.
The Service on behalf of the Kingdom. The Ecclesiastical Passion.

Captured. Ad justed. it. As to Interests.

iii. As to Himself.

Intensity under control. from alloy) Honestly that is fair. (Separated (Here the refining) Sensitiveness that is strong. Rule that is compassionate. 111 under Grace.

BEFORE AGRIREA. The Supreme Revelation

4.

If not - are we - or is Grace - to blame? Conclusion. i. Let us first recognize that our being Our Personal Peculiarities, Ourselfes by the Grace of God. The formative forces. Temperament. North. South. Capacity. of the West. Fast. God . Ourselves. of OF s of b. 8 H B

Let us therefore solemnly decide that we have no right to abuse these; nor 11.

to desire to change them. Our citizenship. Our birthplace. P.

Grace is the finding and fulfilling of these, and their adjustment within to Commonwealth By the Grace of God.

This it does . By the Cleansing of the Being. By the control of all forces. the discipline of life. Its call 1s imperative. iii. Let us remember By . 8 .0 b.

Its victory is conditional.

Its power is absolute.

p.

Let us beware how we carelessly use the great word, lest we libel Grace A Towering Passion. An underland trick. An unjust decision. A mean action. A cruel word.

Are we able to say this?

Let us yield ourselves to Grace that we may be Witnesses of Grace.

9

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Note from Internet Publisher

Donald L. Potter

November 27, 2013

I had the great privilege of studying *Homiletics* and *Speech* under Dr. Arthur F. Katt at the Cincinnati Bible College in 1967.

Our textbook was timeless standard, A Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons by John A. Broadus and revised by J. B. Weatherspoon.

Dr. Katt wrote his Indiana University Ph. D. Dissertation, *A Rhetorical Analysis of the Preaching of G. Campbell Morgan* in 1963. You will note that this article for the *Seminary Review* was published three years before he completed his dissertation.

He taught at the Cincinnati Bible College (now Cincinnati Christian University) from 1957 through 1975.

This paper on *G. Campbell Morgan and Sermon Preparation* has been one of my guiding lights as a Minister of the Word. I pray that its publication on my website www.donpotter.net will help inspire future Ministers of the Word to speak the truth boldly in love.

Preach the word; be instant in season out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. 2 Tim. 4:2.

Professor Arthur F. Katt

