

RICHARD FULLER AND HIS PREACHING

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RICHARD FULLER AND HIS PREACHING

A Thesis

Presented to

the Faculty of the Graduate School
Southern Baptist Theological Seminary
Louisville, Kentucky

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Theology

by

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November 1953

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PREFACE

PREFACE

There have been many preachers in various sections of the world who would be worthy subjects for a graduate thesis in the Department of Preaching; however, my selection was not a difficult task. There were two qualifications that governed my selection. The first was that the preacher should be noted for his preaching and, second, that he should be a Southern Baptist. Richard Fuller met both these requirements. He was a prominent preacher among Southern Baptists for the first thirty years of their Convention's history. This study of his life and preaching has been very fruitful.

In the writing of this thesis I am indebted to Doctor Jesse Burton Weatherspoon, my major professor, for his guidance and valuable suggestions. His ability to elucidate and his gracious Christian spirit will remain with me and will always be appreciated. I want to thank Doctor V. L. Stanfield for his many acts of kindness and particularly for the consideration he has shown me during the writing of this thesis. I appreciate the instruction of Doctor E. A. McDowell and Doctor Clyde Francisco in my minor Seminars. Doctor Leo Crismon and his library staff have been most helpful in making the materials for

this study available. I am indeed grateful to them for their efficient help.

Richard Fuller and His Preaching is submitted here with the hope that it will be of some value for the preservation of Baptist History and the elevation of Christian Preaching. It is my desire that in the years to come it may prove a blessing to others and bring honor to our Lord Jesus Christ.

George Alexander Jones

Louisville, Kentucky

November, 1953.

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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

This study was made on the subject Richard Fuller and His Preaching. In the Department of Preaching of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky, graduate study was made in the history and art of Christian preaching. The objective of this study was to consider the Christian preachers, their lives, the period of history in which they lived, and to analyze their preaching. The purpose was to understand the preacher and his preaching in his historical environment, and to derive from the study principles of permanent value for preaching in the present and future.

THE PROBLEM

Two factors governed the selection of a preacher to be studied in preparation for this thesis. The first consideration was the selection of a preacher who was prominent in his day but whose life and preaching had not been recorded in a formal way for the benefit of students of the present and future. The second consideration was prompted by the fact that Southern Baptists have not always recorded the biographies of their preachers and made them available for students of church history. Therefore, a Southern Baptist preacher was

sought as subject for this study. Richard Fuller met both these requirements. He was one of the foremost preachers of the nineteenth century in America; a leader in the Baptist Triennial Convention; one of the organizers and later president of the Southern Baptist Convention; and preacher for almost thirty years at the annual meetings of the Southern Baptist Convention. He was called upon to deliver sermons and addresses at meetings which were national and ecumenical in their scope. His fame as a controversialist was recognized in America and Europe. He was considered a leading pastor. Each of the churches that were successively under his care became known for its growing membership and for leadership in Sunday Schools, missions, and benevolences. John A. Broadus considered Fuller to be one of the most distinguished preachers in America.¹ This opinion was shared by many of the historians of the nineteenth century.

The lives and works of many leading preachers of the nineteenth century, including Phillips Brooks, Henry Ward Beecher, Dwight L. Moody, Horace Bushnell, and others, were recorded for posterity and are well known today by students of church history; but the life and preaching of

¹ John A. Broadus, On the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons, revised by Jesse Burton Weatherspoon (New York: Harpers, 1943), p. 120.

W. R. L. Smith, A Great Trio (Louisville: University Press, 1896), p. 42.

Richard Fuller, the Southern Baptist leader of the nineteenth century, are known by only a very few today due to the fact that no thorough study had been made of the man and his preaching.

The varied abilities, successes, attitudes and beliefs of this prominent preacher of the last century presented a challenge for this study in the twentieth century.

THE MATERIALS

The materials for this study were abundant but scattered. A biography of Richard Fuller's life was prepared by his nephew, J. H. Cuthbert,² and published soon after Fuller's death. There were short biographical accounts of Fuller in the religious periodicals of America and in the histories of preaching that have been written in America. The materials most valuable for this study were Fuller's own productions. He contributed a large number of editorials to the True Union and the Religious Herald while he served as associate editor of these two papers. He also prepared three volumes of his sermons which were published after his death. His two famous debates were published in Domestic Slavery Considered as

² J. H. Cuthbert, Life of Richard Fuller (New York: Sheldon and Company, 1879), pp. 1 ff.

a Scriptural Institution and Letters Concerning the Roman Chancery. Some of his sermons and articles were printed in pamphlet form. These materials are all found in the Library of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky. The general homiletical texts and the histories of preaching were referred to often and used as guides in this study.

THE METHOD

The body of this thesis contains four chapters and a conclusion. Chapter I, The Formative Years and Ministerial Career of Richard Fuller, was a biographical study dealing with the formative years of his life, his ministerial career, and his controversies. Chapter II, Richard Fuller's Theology, Ethical Principles and Conception of Preaching, contained his major theological beliefs, his ethical principles, and his conception of Christian preaching. Chapter III, The Sermons of Richard Fuller, was an analytical study of the content and factors in arrangement of his sermons. Chapter IV, The Persuasive Characteristics of Richard Fuller's Preaching, included a study of his use of rhetorical principles, his style, his pulpit appearance, and his central preaching idea. The Conclusion presented the incidents of his life that were of historical importance, an evaluation of his method of preaching, and his use of rhetorical principles as applicable for preaching today.

CHAPTER I

THE FORMATIVE YEARS AND MINISTERIAL CAREER OF RICHARD FULLER

CHAPTER I

THE FORMATIVE YEARS AND MINISTERIAL CAREER OF RICHARD FULLER

This chapter was a result of a biographical study of Richard Fuller. The subject of this thesis was Richard Fuller and His Preaching, therefore a biographical study was required. The approach was to study his life in three main divisions: The formative years, his ministerial career, and his debates.

The formative years were considered the years prior to his call to the ministry. He entered the ministry at the age of twenty eight, therefore this division covered the first twenty eight years of Fuller's life. This period was discussed under the following headings: Birth and Family, Formal Training, Profound Life Experiences, and Physical Appearance. In the second division of this chapter the ministerial career of Richard Fuller was discussed. This section presented a chronological account of his career as pastor and leader under the following topics: The Pastor and Leader, The Personal Habits of the Preacher, and The Published Works of Richard Fuller. The third division presented Fuller the Controversialist. Richard Fuller was known as a controversialist because much of his public ministry was spent in controversy.

Considered in this section were: The Catholic Debate, The Slavery Debate, and three minor debates in which Fuller engaged.

THE FORMATIVE YEARS

Birth and family. Richard Fuller was born at Beaufort, South Carolina, April 22, 1804, the son of Thomas Fuller and Elizabeth Middleton Fuller. The Fuller family and the Middleton family were among the first families of South Carolina in culture, wealth and position.¹ Beaufort was a wealthy anti-bellum seaport town of the typically old South, a residential town for the plantation owners. The owners held large plantations inland, manned by slave labor, but they lived in this coastal town because the climate was better for their health. Thomas Fuller was one of the wealthy plantation owners.² The residents of Beaufort, known for their wealth and culture, offered their children the very best in cultural advantages. The religion of Beaufort was primarily that of the colonial Episcopal church and many of the people knew only the form of true religion.³ The year before the birth of

1 J. H. Cuthbert, Life of Richard Fuller (New York: Sheldon and Company, 1879), p. 15.

2 Henry C. Fish, Pulpit Eloquence of the Nineteenth Century (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1871), p. 347.

3 Cuthbert, op. cit., p. 12.

Richard Fuller, his father, Thomas, experienced a remarkable conversion, and after this experience he left the Episcopal Church and united with the Baptist Church. The Baptist Church at Beaufort was small and many of the people of Beaufort were strongly prejudiced against the Baptists.⁴ Richard Fuller's mother was also deeply religious but did not follow her husband into membership of the Baptist Church. Into this family Richard Fuller was born and under these influences of culture, wealth and religion he grew up. Nine of the children of Thomas Fuller reached maturity, many of them excelling in their chosen vocations. Two of Richard Fuller's brothers were medical doctors, another a colonel in the Army. One of the sisters married a lawyer, one a planter, one a Baptist pastor, and two of the sisters remained unmarried. All these children united with the Baptist Church and were outstanding religious leaders in their own communities.⁵ Richard Fuller was the eighth child of Thomas Fuller and not only was he influenced by his parents and the community environment, but also by his older brothers and sisters.

In August 1831 Richard Fuller married Charlotte Bull Stuart, a cousin, and also a native of Beaufort.⁶ Her

4 Ibid., p. 13.

5 Ibid., pp. 23-30.

6 Ibid., p. 57.

family background was similar to that of Fuller's and she grew up in the same cultural environment. Being of a more reflective nature than Fuller, she gave balance to his life. She outlived her husband, being to him a faithful helper in the home and in his ministry, and serving as his amanuensis out of necessity because no one else was able to read his writing.⁷ Three daughters were born to the Fuller family. Two of them died in young womanhood soon after their marriage. The older daughter remained unmarried, being a constant help to her father and mother until their death.⁸

Formal training. Richard Fuller received private instructions in his home until he was ready for high school. The high school in Beaufort was called Beaufort College or Academy, and W. T. Brantly, Sr., was president of the school and pastor of the Baptist Church.⁹ Fuller did not show signs of genius in this school, although he was well equipped to enter Harvard College at the age of sixteen after finishing the Beaufort school. Fuller entered Harvard College at this early age and soon became a leader

7 Loc. cit.

8 Ibid., pp. 59-60.

9 Ibid., pp. 33-34.

in his class.¹⁰ His classmates in later years gave their impressions of Fuller while he studied at Harvard. Some of them considered him unsocial because he spent so much of his time studying. If he were called upon to begin the recitation, he would recite verbatim page after page of the lesson. His prodigious memory, figurative language, and fluent speech lingered in the minds of his classmates.¹¹ In the exhibition of the school in October 1822, Fuller took part in the Greek dialogue which showed that he was a good scholar.¹² At the mid-term of his second year he was forced to leave Harvard because of a lung ailment. When his class came to graduation in 1824 the faculty voted to give Fuller his degree although he had been absent for five terms. This unusual action indicated the opinion of the faculty in regard to Richard Fuller.¹³ He

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 36.

Richard Fuller, "Editorial," True Union (Baltimore and Washington: Vol. III, No. 31), August 5, 1852.

(Hereafter in this thesis references made to editorials by Fuller in the True Union and the Religious Herald will be designated by the name and date of publication. From 1851-1861 Fuller was associate editor of the True Union, published in Baltimore and Washington, D. C.; and from 1869-1877 he was associate editor of the Religious Herald, published in Richmond, Virginia. The editorials from October 1876-May 3, 1877 were published posthumously. The date will represent the volume, series number, and page for each issue. Page numbers were not given in some issues; and due to a change in series for both papers, the date was considered the most accurate method of documentation.)

¹¹ Cuthbert, op. cit., pp. 37-38.

¹² Ibid., p. 36.

¹³ Loc. cit.

was awarded the Bachelor of Arts degree in 1824 from Harvard College¹⁴ and in 1853 Harvard conferred upon him the honorary Doctor of Divinity degree.¹⁵

Being admitted to the bar at the age of twenty one, Fuller returned to Beaufort, opened a law office, and began the study and practice of law,¹⁶ a profession in which he continued from 1824 until 1832.¹⁷ In applying himself to the law profession he not only acquired a working knowledge of law, but also developed speaking and thinking abilities. This practice of law contributed to his training in leading him to search for accuracy in speech and to be lucid in arrangement.¹⁸ He was quite successful in this profession and soon gained a statewide reputation, being employed in one term of court in one hundred and fifty cases.¹⁹

14 Harvard University, Quinquennial Catalogue (Cambridge: Harvard University, 1930), p. 1293.

15 Loc. cit.

16 Cuthbert, op. cit., p. 48.

17 Ibid., p. 75.

18 Ibid., p. 50.

T. H. Pattison, The History of Christian Preaching (Philadelphia: The American Baptist Publication Society, 1916), p. 380.

19 Lewis O. Brastow, The Modern Pulpit (New York: Hodden and Stroughton, 1906), p. 375.

Fish, op. cit., p. 347.

Fuller's formal training prior to entering the ministry was in Beaufort College, Harvard College, and the study and practice of law for eight years.

Profound life experiences. Richard Fuller's profound life experiences studied in this section were those which occurred prior to his call to the ministry. John A. Broadus believed that life experiences were basic and valuable for the preacher in the inventive process²⁰ and certainly this was true of Richard Fuller. Three of his profound experiences were studied: His illness at Harvard, his disgust for the law profession, and his religious conversion.

Richard Fuller entered Harvard College in 1820 but was forced to leave Cambridge at the mid-term of his second year by a hemorrhage of the lungs.²¹ This restricted him for more than two years, giving him time for meditation and mental reflection. During these months he became acquainted with disappointment and suffering, and he felt the physical and emotional effects of this experience to the end of his life. Fuller suffered a recurrence of this

20 John A. Broadus, On the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons, revised by Jesse Burton Weatherspoon (New York: Harpers, 1943), pp. 76, 82.

21 Cuthbert, op. cit., p. 41.

illness soon after he entered the ministry. During the years of 1834-1835 he was quite ill, even to the point of death, suffering from consumption.²² He spent the year of 1836 in Europe for rest,²³ apparently recovering from the disease but always bearing the marks of his suffering. In later years he wrote on suffering, setting forth the value of it for the soul,²⁴ believing that it was indispensable medicine for hearts like his. He considered suffering punitive and felt that it served as a necessary preventive check upon the soul.²⁵ This experience with suffering mellowed Fuller's emotional life and gave him the ability better to understand and sympathize with the suffering of others.

Another profound experience that altered Richard Fuller's life was his utter disappointment with the law practice.²⁶ Fuller's natural bent prompted him to search for truth; hence, he met the dilemma of defending a client

22 Richard Fuller, "Letters to Basil Manly, Jr., 1834-1835," (Library of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky).

23 Cuthbert, op. cit., p. 85.

24 Religious Herald, April 15, 1875.

25 Ibid., May 27, 1875.

26 Cuthbert, op. cit., p. 51.

who was guilty of the indictment. He could not bring himself to defend one whom he considered guilty, so he sought to take cases where he was sure of his client's innocence.²⁷ This he was able to do for some time but then he was deceived in a murder case.²⁸ A young man was charged with murder. Fuller, believing him innocent, took the case and threw all his power and ability into the defense of the young man. Taking the case to the State Court of Appeals, he gained an acquittal for his client. Later, evidence was revealed proving that the man was guilty of murder in this case, and before he could be arrested he murdered his wife and fled unpunished.²⁹ This revolting experience, along with others, influenced Fuller greatly.³⁰ After these events he made a profession of religion and united with the Episcopal Church and requested baptism by immersion.³¹ He later wrote that this act was an imperfect beginning and soon the world had

27 Richard Fuller, "Reminiscence," Ford's Christian Repository (Louisville: Bradley and Gilbert, January 1872), Vol. XI, No. 2, p. 512.

28 Cuthbert, op. cit., p. 55.

29 Fuller, Ford's Christian Repository, Vol. XI, No. 2, January 1872, p. 512.

30 Loc. cit.

31 Cuthbert, op. cit., pp. 71-72.

reasserted itself and assumed control of his life.

The last experience which was considered in this relation was Fuller's religious conversion. His home life was conducive to religious thinking but he had not taken religion very seriously or openly; however, in his autobiographical³² statement concerning his conversion, he stated that he had prayed for the new birth from childhood. Following his disappointment with the law profession he had a serious illness which gave him much time for thinking.³³ Some time during these years he was called to the bedside of a dying Baptist preacher, Mr. Benjamin Scriven, and Scriven pleaded with the young lawyer to accept Christ. This experience left a great impression on Fuller.³⁴

In 1831-1832 a revival spread over the Carolinas and Georgia under the leadership of Mr. Daniel Baker. In Beaufort he preached at the Baptist and Episcopal Churches, and the entire town experienced a revival.³⁵ In this meeting Richard Fuller, bowed on his knees with a small group who were praying, suddenly was filled with wonderful emotions. Conscious of the new birth, he arose

32 Ibid., p. 69.

33 Fish, op. cit., p. 347.

34 Cuthbert, op. cit., pp. 63-64.

35 Ibid., p. 67.

filled with great joy and for days his spiritual joy was as much as he could endure. He did not eat nor sleep. He exclaimed to Mr. Baker, "O sir, I have an ocean of joy!"³⁶ This personal encounter with Christ was the most important event in Fuller's life, according to his own account.³⁷ It was as definite as his physical birth, so he wrote in his Bible "Richard Fuller, born April, 1805; born again, April 27, 1832."³⁸ He was now twenty-eight years of age and outwardly a successful lawyer. Having become dissatisfied and discouraged with his profession, he no longer sought fame in law but turned to the solace of religion which was to change him and open up to him a new life of service. This great change led him to see God's will for his life, and he united with the Baptist Church and was baptized. He did not believe the first immersion was valid because he was not a Christian at that time,³⁹ and he wanted to make public his call to the ministry.⁴⁰

36 Thomas Armitage, A History of the Baptists (New York: Bryan, Taylor and Company, 1837), p. 760.

37 Religious Herald, August 15, 1875.

38 W. T. Brantly, Richard Fuller, Recollections of His Life and Character (Baltimore: J. F. Weishampel, Jr., 1876), pp. 11-12.

39 Richard Fuller, Baptism and the Terms of Communion (Baltimore: Cushing and Brothers, 1850), p. 86.
Cuthbert, op. cit., p. 74.

40 Fish, op. cit., p. 347.
Cuthbert, op. cit., pp. 72, 75.

These three profound experiences -- his illness and disappointment at Harvard, his dislike for the legal profession, and his vital religious conversion -- led Fuller to the gate of a new life and the Gospel ministry.

Physical appearance. Richard Fuller, as has been noted, suffered two severe illnesses in his early life, but these did not impair his body nor his appearance. He was over six feet tall with a well proportioned, manly form,⁴¹ which gave to him a commanding physical appearance as he arose to preach or went about his public work. He carried his body in a dignified and stately manner; and all through his life, even in old age, his figure was straight and erect.⁴² His hands and feet were well suited for graceful bearing. His head was large, with a high, massive forehead, described by one who saw him as "mountainous"⁴³ and by another as "lofty . . . with a God-like brow."⁴⁴

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 314.
Fish, op. cit., p. 347.

⁴² Cuthbert, op. cit., p. 314.
Fish, op. cit., p. 347.

⁴³ William E. Hatcher, Along the Trail of the Friendly Years (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1910), p. 124.

⁴⁴ S. S. Ford, "Richard Fuller," Ford's Christian Repository, Vol. XXI, No. 6, December 1876, p. 466.

His hair was dark brown and curly, piled loosely upon his head, even tousled to the point of confusion,⁴⁵ and at times while he was preaching, he would run his hand through it adding to its confused arrangement. His eyebrows were heavy and dark; his face, far from being handsome, was open and frank.⁴⁶ One could see in his face the expression of his heart and the emotion of his message, a distinct advantage for the orator.⁴⁷

His eyes were a distinguishing mark of his appearance and contributed greatly to his impressive looks and actions. They have been variously described as flashing,⁴⁸ brilliant and piercing,⁴⁹ kindly,⁵⁰ and

45 Hatcher, op. cit., p. 124.
 Fish, op. cit., p. 347.
 J. L. Reynolds, "The Bar and the Pulpit," Ford's Christian Repository, Vol. XII, No. 2, August 1872, p. 113.
 Cuthbert, op. cit., p. 314.

46 W. T. Brantly, Jr., "Richard Fuller," The Christian Index (Atlanta: Franklin Printing House, November 2, 1876), Vol. LV, No. 42, p. 2.
 Fish, op. cit., p. 347.
 Cuthbert, op. cit., p. 314.

47 Pattison, op. cit., p. 380.
 Brantly, The Christian Index, Vol. LV, No. 42, November 2, 1876, p. 2.
 Fish, op. cit., p. 347.

48 Ibid., p. 347.

49 Reynolds, op. cit., p. 112.

50 Ford op. cit., p. 466.

incomparable.⁵¹ "They shot, flashed and glowed almost to my terror," declared William E. Hatcher.⁵²

In addition, he possessed a well trained voice, harmonious with his physical appearance,⁵³ strong and clear, capable of filling even the largest auditorium. It could be used to express every shade of emotion or thought and was capable of the most varied modulations -- clear and deep, gentle and tremulous, or powerful and explosive.⁵⁴

Richard Fuller's physical appearance and natural endowments were most fitting for the orator and gospel preacher.

MINISTERIAL CAREER

Pastor and leader. Soon after Richard Fuller made public his call to the ministry, the members of the small Baptist Church at Beaufort called him to be their pastor.⁵⁵

51 Hatcher, op. cit., p. 124.

52 Ibid., p. 125.

53 Brantly, The Christian Index, Vol. LV, No. 42, November 2, 1876, p. 2.

Cuthbert, op. cit., p. 314.

Fish, op. cit., p. 347.

54 Ibid., p. 347.

Brantly, The Christian Index, Vol. LV, No. 42, November 2, 1876, p. 2.

Cuthbert, op. cit., p. 314.

55 Fish, op. cit., p. 347.

Cuthbert, op. cit., p. 79.

He accepted in 1832 and remained with them until 1847. It was necessary for Fuller to study for the ministry while in the pastorate, and this he did diligently during the years at Beaufort.⁵⁶ One of the immediate needs of the church was an adequate church building as the old building had been declared unsafe for use, so he set himself to the task and soon a new building was erected. Fuller spent his time in study, visitation, teaching and preaching.⁵⁷ He organized a system of missions through which the slaves could be given religious care, and in this work the church employed as many as six helpers for him.⁵⁸ As young men were called to preach, they were taken into the pastor's home and given a course of study which, in some cases, was all the theological training they received.⁵⁹

While serving as pastor in Beaufort, Fuller assumed a place of prominence in the work of the Triennial Baptist Convention. It was before this convention in 1841 that he preached his famous sermon on "The Cross."⁶⁰ He was also

56 Fish, op. cit., p. 347.

57 Loc. cit.
Cuthbert, op. cit., p. 82.

58 Richard Fuller, Francis Wayland, Domestic Slavery Considered as a Scriptural Institution (New York: Lewis Colby, 1845), p. 160.

59 Cuthbert, op. cit., p. 114.

60 Fish, op. cit., p. 347.

active in the organized Baptist life in South Carolina and Georgia, giving himself to extensive evangelistic work among the churches. The evangelistic efforts were very successful and many men were converted in these meetings, among them James P. Boyce and H. A. Tupper.⁶¹ In 1845 when the Southern Baptist Convention was organized, Richard Fuller was one of the main leaders in its organization and work,⁶² preaching the first annual convention sermon in Richmond, Virginia, on June 10, 1846.⁶³

The church at Beaufort continued to grow in every phase of its life. By 1847, when a call came from the Seventh Baptist Church of Baltimore to Fuller to become its pastor, the membership of the Beaufort Church had increased to 2,600 members, 200 of whom were white and 2,400 colored.⁶⁴ Fuller had been in Baltimore and knew the circumstances of the church. With 87 members, a very small building, and having issued the call to quite a few

61 Cuthbert, op. cit., p. 134.

62 Proceedings of Southern Baptist Convention (Richmond, Virginia: H. K. Ellyson, Printer, 1845), pp. 11-13.

63 Fish, op. cit., p. 347.

64 Armitage, op. cit., p. 760.

only to be refused by them, they called Richard Fuller.⁶⁵ He accepted the church on the condition that a suitable building would be erected before he arrived in Baltimore. The members agreed and as soon as the building was ready for use, Fuller moved to Baltimore.⁶⁶ This church was soon recognized for its membership, its Sunday School and benevolences.

Fuller continued his work in the Southern Baptist Convention, serving as president from 1859 to 1861.⁶⁷ Due to the Civil War he was not able to attend the session in 1863, and the Convention went ahead with the election of a new president.⁶⁸ It was understood that Fuller would preach each year at the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention,⁶⁹ which he did for over twenty meetings of the Convention. He was called upon to serve on the boards and committees of the Convention as long as he was able to attend. Fuller served on the Board of Trustees

⁶⁵ Loc. cit.
Cuthbert, op. cit., p. 162.

⁶⁶ Ibid., pp. 162 ff.

⁶⁷ C. H. Toy, "Richard Fuller," Proceedings of Southern Baptist Convention (New Orleans: A. H. Nelson, 1876), p. 35.

⁶⁸ Proceedings of Southern Baptist Convention (Macon, Georgia: Barke, Boykin and Company, 1863), p. 11.

⁶⁹ Cuthbert, op. cit., p. 181.

of Furman University while in South Carolina.⁷⁰ Later he served on the Foreign Mission Board of the Triennial Convention.⁷¹ In the Southern Convention he was for a long time on the Home Mission Board, then later the Foreign Mission Board.⁷² Fuller was a staunch supporter of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary first at Greenville, South Carolina, then later at Louisville, Kentucky.⁷³ James P. Boyce was converted under his ministry, and Basil Manly, Jr.⁷⁴ and John A. Broadus⁷⁵ were close friends of Fuller. All the work of Southern Baptists was actively supported by Richard Fuller.

While in Baltimore Fuller served as associate editor of the True Union. This was an attempt at establishing a Baptist paper for Maryland and Washington, D. C. After some years this publication was abandoned

⁷⁰ Minutes of State Convention of Baptist Denomination in South Carolina, 1840, p. 19.

⁷¹ W. W. Sweet, The Story of Religion in America (New York: Harpers, 1939), p. 428.

⁷² Proceedings of Southern Baptist Convention, 1845-1876.

⁷³ Religious Herald, March 19, 1874.

⁷⁴ Fuller, "Letters to Basil Manly, Jr., 1834-1835."

⁷⁵ A. T. Robertson, Life and Letters of John A. Broadus (Philadelphia: The Judson Press, 1938), pp. 181, 196, 229, 301, 305.

and their efforts were united with the Virginia Baptists in the publication of the Religious Herald in Richmond, Virginia.⁷⁶ Fuller served as an associate editor of the Religious Herald from 1869 until his death. In his editorials in the True Union and the Religious Herald, Fuller's opinions and ideas were expressed on almost every religious subject.⁷⁷

Fuller was called to speak for and give his aid to many causes outside the Baptist circle. He was one of the principal speakers for the famous meeting of the American Colonization Society in Washington, D. C., January 21, 1851, when he spoke on the subject Our Duty to the African Race.⁷⁸ At the first grand meeting of the Harvard Alumni, July 22, 1852, he was asked to speak and his address that day was on Education and Religion.⁷⁹ Again when the World Protestant Ecumenical Council of the Evangelical Alliance met in New York in October 1873, Richard Fuller gave an address on Personal Religion, Its Aids and

76 Cuthbert, op. cit., p. 243.

77 True Union, July 22, 1852.

78 John D. Wade, "Richard Fuller," Dictionary of American Biography (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1931), Vol. III, p. 62.

79 True Union, August 5, 1852.

Hindrances.⁸⁰ At the meeting of the Society for Inquiry at Madison University, Hamilton, New York, on August 15, 1847, he spoke on the Benevolence of the Gospel Toward the Poor.⁸¹

The last five years of Fuller's life were spent as pastor of the Eutaw Place Baptist Church of Baltimore, Maryland. By 1869 the Seventh Baptist Church had reached a membership of 1200.⁸² Fuller considered this number too large for the care of one pastor, so he started a movement for a new church.⁸³ The Seventh Church erected a building, and a new church was organized on April 2, 1871. The church began with 120 members, who called Richard Fuller to the pastorate of their church.⁸⁴ After twenty-four years with the Seventh Church, Fuller accepted the Eutaw Place Church. This was a great decision for him to make after the long and pleasant tenure of the Seventh Church.

⁸⁰ Cuthbert, op. cit., pp. 210 ff.
Religious Herald, August 15, 1872; September 5, 1872; September 15, 1872.

⁸¹ Richard Fuller, Benevolence of the Gospel Toward the Poor (Baltimore: George F. Adams, 1848), pp. 1 ff.

⁸² Armitage, op. cit., p. 760.

⁸³ Cuthbert, op. cit., pp. 277 ff.

⁸⁴ Ibid., pp. 282 ff.

He carried on the work at Eutaw Place Church in the same manner as he had at the Beaufort and the Seventh Churches. This church began to grow and at Fuller's death had a membership of 452.⁸⁵

The personal habits of the preacher. To understand Richard Fuller a knowledge of his personal habits as a preacher was needed. In this section his physical habits, study procedure, and devotional life were discussed. The habits of a man reflect his own personality as well as influence his life. This was true in the life of Fuller, whose habits reflected the personal traits of being systematic, prodigious, and thorough. Fuller's habits showed his conception of the importance of the physical, mental, and spiritual.

The physical endowments and many natural advantages of Fuller, as discussed above, were appreciated by him⁸⁶ and were dedicated to the service of Christ. He considered them a sacred trust and sought to care for them in a consecrated manner.⁸⁷ He realized that there should be a sound body for a sound mind, and that for the preacher

⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 286.

⁸⁶ Cf. ante, pp. 16-18.

⁸⁷ Brantly, The Christian Index, Vol. LV, No. 42, November 2, 1876, p. 2.

to fulfill his offices, he must have a sound body.⁸⁸ Physical health was a most desirable qualification for the preacher in Fuller's estimation. The preacher cannot be the comforter, the proclaimer of glad tidings, the vigorous warrior, if he is ill.⁸⁹ His mind and spirit will sympathize with his ill body and he will fail in his calling.⁹⁰

Fuller allowed no particle of food nor any luxury to impair the organs of his body.⁹¹ He believed that many preachers destroy their nerves and their lives by sensual indulgences, two of the most common for preachers being the use of tobacco and over-eating.⁹² He followed a strict diet, regular work and rest. In early life Fuller was forced to rest, once at Harvard and again soon after he entered the ministry.⁹³ These two instances taught him the importance of rest, for both illnesses were due to over-work. It took three years to recover from his Harvard breakdown, and he spent a year in Europe recovering from

88 Religious Herald, May 3, 1877.

89 Ibid., May 3, 1877.

90 Loc. cit.

91 Brantly, The Christian Index, Vol. LV, No. 41, October 26, 1876, p. 2.

92 Religious Herald, May 3, 1877.

93 Cuthbert, op. cit., p. 85.

the second one.⁹⁴ From the time of the second illness until his death he took a two months' vacation each year, either to the beach or to the mountains. He realized that not only should he care for his body in reference to eating and pleasure but also in the matter of rest.⁹⁵ In the pastorate he worked all day, in the morning writing and studying, and in the afternoon and evening in visitation.⁹⁶ This rigorous pattern of work and the desire for a strong body for the best preaching led Fuller to care assiduously for his physical welfare.⁹⁷

Fuller also followed strict study habits. He spent the mornings in his study, writing for the press or preparing sermons.⁹⁸ At Beaufort he spent more time in his study than he did at Baltimore, spending all day in the study regularly. This was due to the fact that he had not studied theology when he entered the pastorate and it was necessary for him to prepare for the ministry while serving as pastor at Beaufort. When he reached Baltimore he established the habit of writing and studying all the

94 Loc. cit.

95 Ibid., pp. 177, 301.

96 Ibid., p. 172.
 Brantly, Richard Fuller, Recollections of His Life and Character, p. 8.

97 Loc. cit.

98 Armitage, op. cit., p. 761.

morning.⁹⁹ He conceived of education as being a life-long process and believing this, he was a student all his days,¹⁰⁰ even to the last weeks of his life.¹⁰¹ In study he sought above everything else to ascertain the meaning of the Scriptures and what they required him to preach.¹⁰² Fuller sought the help of others by way of their books and papers as he studied. His classical training at Harvard, his law training, and his theological study gave to him not only a storehouse of factual knowledge but also equipped him with the disciplinary habits of study so necessary for a preacher.

With proper mental habits whereby the mind was saturated with knowledge, and good physical habits whereby this mind was housed in a strong, animated body, there was still one thing needed and that one thing depended on the devotional life of the preacher. For Fuller, the mind and the physical were null and void unless they were ablaze with spiritual fervor.¹⁰³ This spiritual power was available to the preacher who spent many hours in meditation and prayer.¹⁰⁴ The preacher was not ready, neither was the

99 Ibid., p. 8.

100 Religious Herald, November 10, 1870.

101 Ibid., September 21, 1876; October 19, 1876.

102 Armitage, op. cit., p. 760.

103 Religious Herald, April 14, 1870.

104 Loc. cit.

sermon prepared, nor did it contain the proper substance unless spiritual fervor was in it. This spiritual power came only through prayer.¹⁰⁵ The most important element in preaching was faith that drew one into vital communion with God. He considered this communion the grand element in sacred eloquence:

The grand element in sacred eloquence -- we mean a living faith, and close, vitalizing, purifying, elevating communion with the "Father of Lights", with Jesus in whom dwells "all the fulness" of divine grace and truth, and with that Spirit whose office it is to inspire our minds, to touch our lips, to illumine what is dark in us, and what is low to raise and support. . . . It makes a man brave to undertake anything, and arms him with a strange, unearthly eloquence to advocate and secure anything he attempts.¹⁰⁶

One of Fuller's close associates, W. T. Brantly, said that the power chiefly felt in Fuller's preaching was the result of devotional habits for he lived in prayer and in the presence of Jesus.¹⁰⁷ Fuller always reserved the time immediately before he preached, for prayer. He would not allow anyone to take that hour away from him or to distract him.¹⁰⁸ It was a habit he started early in his

105 Loc. cit.

106 Religious Herald, April 28, 1870.

107 Brantly, The Christian Index, Vol. LV, No. 42, November 2, 1876, p. 2.

108 Reynolds, op. cit., p. 113.

ministry and continued throughout his life. His spiritual power was the result of his devotional habits, his prayer and meditation.

Richard Fuller's strict personal habits kept his body strong and animated, his mind full and alert, and his soul ablaze with spiritual power.

The published works of Richard Fuller. In this section the published works of Richard Fuller were presented in chronological order and by title. The content, ideas, and style of these works were discussed in other sections of this thesis.

The first volume, Letters Concerning the Roman Chancery, contained the debate between Richard Fuller and John England, Bishop of Charleston, South Carolina, and was published jointly by the authors in 1840.

Domestic Slavery Considered as a Scriptural Institution was the next volume to be published. This book, like his first, was jointly published in 1840 by its authors, Fuller and Francis Wayland, Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island, and contained the debate carried on in correspondence by the two men over slavery.

In 1850, Fuller published a book Baptism and the Terms of Communion, an Argument. In this book he set forth the Baptist interpretation of the ordinances of the

New Testament.

J. B. Jeter, pastor of the First Baptist Church, Richmond, Virginia, and Fuller, who was then pastor of Seventh Church, Baltimore, Maryland, published in 1854 a hymn book for Baptist Churches, The Psalmist, which was designed to encourage social worship.

Richard Fuller prepared three volumes of his sermons for publication, the first volume, Sermons by Richard Fuller, being published in 1859. The other two volumes were published posthumously at his request. These three volumes were published in a set in 1877 and entitled Sermons by Richard Fuller, First Series, Second Series, and Third Series, the Third Series being a revision of the one that was published in 1859.

The following sermons and addresses were published in pamphlet form: The Cross, 1841; Intrepid Faith, 1845; The Desire of All Nations, 1846; The Benevolence of the Gospel Toward the Poor, A Speech, Tract Society, 1850; A Solemn Question, To One Who Has Hope in Jesus, 1870; and Personal Religion, Its Aids and Hindrances, 1873. These are in the Library of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky.

In addition to his published works Fuller contributed many articles and editorials to papers and magazines during

his ministry. The most important ones for this study were his editorials in the True Union, a Baptist paper, published in Baltimore, Maryland, and Washington, D. C., from 1851 to 1861, and his editorials in the Religious Herald, a Virginia Baptist paper published in Richmond, Virginia, from 1869 to 1877. These are also in the Library of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky.

RICHARD FULLER THE CONTROVERSIALIST

Richard Fuller gained the reputation as a controversialist early in life and sustained that reputation throughout his public life. It was not his avowed purpose to debate but he found it necessary on many occasions to bring all his ability into a debate in an effort to defend his positions.¹⁰⁹ Throughout his public ministry Fuller was engaged in one controversy after another. In this division his two major debates were presented and some of the important minor ones. The Catholic debate was first considered, next the long slavery controversy, and then three of the minor controversies. Controversies consumed a major portion of the public ministry of Richard

¹⁰⁹ True Union, January 29, 1852.

Fuller, therefore they were important to this study.

Catholic debate, 1839-1840. One of the debates in which Fuller participated was with John England, Roman Catholic Bishop of Charleston, South Carolina. There had been a special meeting of the Prince Williams' Temperance Society on July 22, 1839, which drew up a resolution to be presented to the South Carolina State Legislature on the sale of ardent spirits. It was a plea for prohibition by the state of the manufacture and sale of alcoholic beverages. In this resolution the Roman Chancery was mentioned as formerly selling indulgences for sin,¹¹⁰ and when this Resolution appeared in the Charleston Courier, Bishop England immediately challenged Mr. Albert Rhett, Esquire, for proof of his assertion. Mr. Rhett, a member of the State Legislature, was a member of the Temperance Society but did not write the Resolution. Fuller took the responsibility for writing the Resolution.¹¹¹ This started a series of letters to the Courier by the two men on the Roman Chancery. The arguments were very involved and digressions were the rule. Fuller came to the point in his letter, that the Roman Chancery did sell indulgences.

¹¹⁰ Richard Fuller and John England, Letters Concerning the Roman Chancery (Baltimore: Fielding Lucas, Jr., 1840), p. 9.

¹¹¹ Ibid., p. 15.

He emphasized the word formerly and suggested that Bishop England join in the Prohibition effort. This invitation was ignored by England who sought to explain the various procedures of the Roman Church. He denied that the Roman Church was ever guilty of error, and in every letter introduced new material not relevant to the question involved. Fuller's letters were short and to the point, while England's letters were long and involved.

Fuller once broke off the debate when he realized that England was never coming to the question involved.¹¹² Later he wrote one more letter after England had written three more, and the editors of the Courier gave notice that they would give no more free space to the debate. England wrote two more letters finally bringing his argument to the present (1839) conflict between Protestants and Catholics in Ireland. This debate was copied from the Courier by the United States Catholic Miscellany,¹¹³ the Baltimore Literary and Religious Magazine,¹¹⁴ and portions of it were carried by other papers in America and some in Europe.¹¹⁵ It created a great deal of discussion and the

112 Ibid., pp. 154, 205.

113 Ibid., p. 5.

114 Ibid., p. 274.

115 Ibid., p. 5.

non-Catholic people proclaimed Fuller the winner. Cathcart¹¹⁶ said that Fuller was established by the debate as a thoroughly equipped and skillful controversialist by all who read the articles. In this debate young Fuller was at once the lawyer, the historian, and the Gospel preacher. His legal acumen gave him a sharp sword for argument, his scholarly nature led him to find the historical facts, and his spiritual power gave him the unction to call the famous Bishop to faith in and obedience to God's Word.¹¹⁷

Slavery debate 1841-1869. Fuller had little time to recuperate from the debate with Bishop England for another debate was already raging in the Baptist denomination in America. It was the slavery question primarily which was to divide the Baptists as well as other religious denominations and even the nation, resulting in civil war and many years of suffering. The consideration here was with Fuller's part in the national debate on slavery.

Richard Fuller was a slaveholder from South Carolina; he was a Christian slaveholder who sought to

¹¹⁶ William Cathcart, "Richard Fuller," Baptist Encyclopedia (Philadelphia: Lewis H. Everts, 1883), Vol. I, p. 423.

¹¹⁷ Fuller, England, op. cit., p. 186.

provide for the spiritual welfare as well as the physical welfare of his slaves. In considering Fuller's part in the slavery debate, it was necessary to start with the meeting of the Baptist Triennial Convention at Baltimore in 1841 and continue the study with the Convention of 1844, the debate with Francis Wayland in the winter of 1844-1845, the organization of the Southern Baptist Convention in May 1845, his address before the American Colonization Society at Washington, D. C., in January 1851, the "Savannah Resolution" of the Southern Baptist Convention in 1861, and then his editorial on the "Savannah Resolution" in the Religious Herald in 1869. A period of twenty-eight years, over a third of Richard Fuller's life, was consumed with the slavery question.

At the meeting of the Triennial Convention in Baltimore in 1841 the slavery question was one of the main issues. Some of the Northern brethren had been outspoken against slavery, especially one member of the Foreign Mission Board, Mr. Elon Galusha, so the Southerners were very anxious to have him removed. With the help of Northern moderates Galusha was removed and Richard Fuller elected to take his place on the Board.¹¹⁸ Fuller, along with the moderates from the North and the South, thought

118 Sweet, op. cit., pp. 428-429.

that a general understanding by the Convention that slavery would not be discussed in the Convention was all that was needed to table the whole issue,¹¹⁹ although extremists on both sides were not satisfied. William B. Johnson, a Southern leader, violently disagreed with Fuller on this point.¹²⁰

In the three years before the meeting of the Triennial Convention in 1844, the slavery question was gaining momentum. At this meeting Richard Fuller took the lead in the Convention to pass a resolution that slavery was not an issue for the Convention to take sides on, and that it would not be so considered by the Foreign Mission Board.¹²¹ The Home Mission Board took the same stand, acting on a motion offered by Richard Fuller.¹²² The contention was made by the Southerners that slavery was not a sin but a great evil.¹²³ So the Baptists left Philadelphia in May 1844 with the moderates in control and the moderates thinking that as far as the Convention

119 Ibid., p. 429.

120 Hortense Woodson, Giant in the Land (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1950), p. 96.

121 Sweet, op. cit., p. 430.

122 Woodson, op. cit., p. 108.

123 Sweet, op. cit., p. 430.

Woodson, op. cit., p. 117.

Ford, op. cit., Vol. XXI, No. 1, January 1876,
p. 31.

was concerned, the slavery issue was under control. Two events were to follow quickly to show that the slavery question was still very much alive. The Home Mission Board in October 1844¹²⁴ refused to appoint a Southerner because he was a slaveholder, and the Foreign Mission Board on December 17, 1844,¹²⁵ declared that it could not send out as a missionary a slaveholder and could not in any way give approbation of slavery. At this same time, the debate on Slavery between Francis Wayland, president of Brown University and president of the Triennial Convention, and Richard Fuller was in progress. This debate declared the position of not only the two men but also that of the northern Baptists and southern Baptists on slavery.

The debate on domestic slavery between Richard Fuller and Francis Wayland constituted the second nationally famous debate for Richard Fuller. At the request of the editor of the Christian Reflector of Philadelphia,¹²⁶ Richard Fuller wrote a letter for publication stating that the Scriptures

124 Sweet, op. cit., p. 431.

125 Ibid., p. 432.

126 Fuller, Wayland, op. cit., p. iii.
Cuthbert, op. cit., p. 154.

sanctioned domestic slavery, and slavery therefore was not always a sin. In this letter he quoted William E. Channing and Francis Wayland. Channing was dead so Wayland considered it his obligation to answer Fuller.¹²⁷ A correspondence between the two men was started and published in the Christian Reflector. Fuller wrote nine letters and Wayland seven letters. These were later published by the two men in a one-volume work, Domestic Slavery Considered as a Scriptural Institution. The statement quoted by Fuller on Wayland's position was that the precepts of the Gospel condemn slavery, and it was therefore criminal.¹²⁸ Fuller took exception to this statement. Fuller's position was evident throughout the debate. The Scriptures sanctioned slavery and therefore slavery was not always in every case a sin. This was all that he sought to establish. Wayland held the position that the Gospel precepts set forth principles that were diametrically opposed to slavery, therefore slavery was immoral and sinful.¹²⁹ In the debate Wayland relied on

¹²⁷ Francis Wayland and H. L. Wayland, A Memoir of the Life and Labors of Francis Wayland (New York: Sheldon and Company, 1868), p. 57.

¹²⁸ Fuller, Wayland, op. cit., p. 4.
Francis Wayland, The Elements of Moral Science (Boston: Gould and Lincoln, 1867), p. 225.

¹²⁹ Fuller, Wayland, op. cit., p. 26.

principles¹³⁰ set forth by creation, Christian revelation,¹³¹ and as set forth in the Declaration of Independence.¹³² All men are created equal, Christ shows us that all men are fallen, all are equal before the Gospel, and in the Declaration of Independence the inalienable rights were understood for all. Slavery was opposed to all these, therefore was wrong, sinful and immoral.

Fuller's position was that the Old Testament sanctioned slavery in the time of the Fathers, in the Law of Moses, and gave instructions for its regulation. The New Testament shows that Christ never made an explicit statement against slavery, that the Apostles recognized slavery, gave regulations for both master and slave, that the slaveholder was taken into the churches and called a brother beloved. Therefore, what the Holy God sanctioned in the Old Testament,¹³³ what Christ and the Apostles recognized and never uttered an explicit statement against, what the Holy Spirit inspired and preserved in the Bible for the regulation of slavery, and what was not made a test question in church membership, was not a sin. Wayland

130 Ibid., p. 52.

131 Ibid., p. 89.

132 Ibid., p. 33.

133 Ibid., pp. 182 ff.

held his position on moral and spiritual principles answering all objections from his standpoint. Fuller, realizing that Wayland was not going to rely on literal and verbal methods of interpretation, changed his approach. When Wayland would not prove verbally from the Bible, Fuller sought to take up each passage.¹³⁴ The debate lasted for three months and gained national recognition.

Fuller was considering slavery from his own definition, not abstract slavery. He had inherited slaves; they constituted a responsibility both spiritual and physical.¹³⁵ He refused to see the principles inculcated by Wayland which were the true principles of the Gospel.¹³⁶ Fuller relied on literal and verbal interpretations rather than seeing the principles of progressive revelation and the principles of the Gospel reaching their logical and intended consummation. He believed that slavery should be abolished,¹³⁷ but he did not at that time formulate a policy on abolition except to say that the slave was not ready for full freedom¹³⁸ and that the attitude of most Northerners would only lead to violence.

134 Ibid., p. 169.

135 Ibid., p. 222.

136 Ibid., pp. 64, 70 f.

137 Ibid., p. 157.

138 Loc. cit.

Wayland was not acquainted with Southern slavery, never having been to the South. He lacked firsthand knowledge of the situation. He called upon Fuller and all other slaveholders to free the slaves but did not set forth a way or a policy on abolition. For Wayland, abstract slavery was unchristian and should be abolished, but he did not present a method for doing so, nor was he willing to make a test question out of slavery. The Southern slaveholder could be a church member, and the Convention and the Board were not to deal with the slavery question.¹³⁹

Fuller seemed to have a more realistic approach in the midst of a social evil -- to elevate the slave spiritually, intellectually, and physically, and depend on civil legislation to work out gradually a reasonable solution.¹⁴⁰

The formal debate was over but the slavery issue was still pressing. Wayland furnished the Northern Baptists with a Christian approach to slavery and a weapon for battle.¹⁴¹ Fuller furnished the Southern Baptists with a Biblical apology on slavery and also a defense in the raging battle. Unintentionally, Wayland spoke as

139 Ibid., pp. 229-230, 253.

140 Ibid., pp. 222-223.

141 J. O. Murray, Francis Wayland (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1891), p. 264.

president of the Triennial Convention and Fuller as the champion of the slaveholder. With the action of the Home and Foreign Boards and the implications of this debate, the action in Augusta, Georgia, in May 1845 by the Baptists of the South was only a natural sequel.¹⁴²

As a result of the slavery question and other problems the southern Baptists decided to form their own Convention. It was Richard Fuller who made the motion to appoint a committee to draw up a preamble and resolutions for the action of the body.¹⁴³ Fuller was appointed chairman of this committee and when his committee reported to the Convention, the resolution to withdraw from the Triennial Convention and organize a society for the propagation of the Gospel was presented and adopted.¹⁴⁴ Fuller was also chairman of the committee which wrote the constitution for the new Convention.¹⁴⁵ Fuller was selected as a member of a committee of three to make a

¹⁴² "Richard Fuller," The International Encyclopedia, Second Edition (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1915), Vol. IX, p. 341.

¹⁴³ Proceedings of the Southern Baptist Convention, 1845, p. 11.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 13.
Woodson, op. cit., p. 121.

¹⁴⁵ Proceedings of the Southern Baptist Convention, 1845, p. 13.

statement to the public setting forth the reasons for the organization of the Southern Baptist Convention.¹⁴⁶ He took a leading part in providing the slaveholding Baptists of America with a Convention.

The next public pronouncement by Richard Fuller on slavery was a speech before the American Colonization Society at Washington, D. C., January 1851.¹⁴⁷ Mr. Henry Clay presided over this meeting, making one of the principal addresses. President Millard Fillmore was also on the platform. Fuller followed Mr. Clay and spoke on the solution to the slavery problem offered to America by the Society. In this address he set forth his method for the abolition of slavery. In introducing his solution he deprecated the impatience of the North and the oversensitiveness of the South. He advised the North to take a realistic attitude toward the present condition of the African in the South, and at the same time advised the South to admit the evils of slavery, and both North and South to unite in brotherly love and seek to carry out a peaceable abolition of slavery.¹⁴⁸ Here was the plan which Fuller advocated: Congress should appropriate money

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 15.
Woodson, op. cit., p. 128.

¹⁴⁷ Cuthbert, op. cit., p. 194.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 196.

to redeem the African and resettle him in Africa.¹⁴⁹ This should be a united act of philanthropy and benevolence on the part of Congress for the good of the African and the preservation of the Union. Fuller urged that they lay aside sectionalism and with faith in God as a nation, do what the Colonization Society had started to do with private funds. It would be a blessing to America to unite in a cause like this; it would be an unlimited blessing to the slave and for the continent of Africa. America was well able with money and ships to perform this act of mercy. Fuller could already feel the volcano of civil strife that would erupt unless action was taken immediately.¹⁵⁰ His argument was for the good of the slave and the Union when he called upon all to unite behind Congress and carry out this peaceable solution to the abolition of slavery in America. It was evident that Fuller had wrestled with this problem and in this opinion had reached a reasonable and peaceable solution.

The sectional strife continued, growing in momentum until the war started. In 1861, when the Southern Baptist Convention met in Savannah, Fuller was president of the Convention. At this meeting the famous "Savannah

149 Ibid., p. 197.

150 Ibid., p. 200.

"Resolutions" were adopted by the Convention.¹⁵¹ These resolutions placed the blame for the war on the government at Washington, gave full approval to the Confederate Government, declared full sympathy to the cause of the South, and prayed for victory for the Southern army.¹⁵² Now in the war, Fuller was still considered the leader of the slaveholding Baptists. He lived in Baltimore, a border city under Union control. When he returned to Baltimore, all the Northern papers credited Fuller with the "Resolutions" and called for vengeance upon him.¹⁵³ He bore all the burden of the war years with the general public considering him the author of the "Savannah Resolutions" and the leader of the Southern slaveholders. It was not until 1868 when the Southern Baptist Convention met in Baltimore, Maryland,¹⁵⁴ that the people and the press seemed to relieve Fuller of some of the blame for the "Resolutions."

For over one-third of his life he was considered the leader of the Baptist slaveholders in the South. When the war was over and the slaves freed, Fuller accepted his

151 Proceedings of Southern Baptist Convention, 1861, pp. 62-64.

152 Sweet, op. cit., p. 453.

153 Religious Herald, May 27, 1869.

154 Cuthbert, op. cit., p. 263.

place as one of the rebuilders of the nation and set himself to work for the elevation of the Negroes who had so recently been slaves.¹⁵⁵ He lamented the fact that emancipation was a military stratagem and not the result of the gradual working of the Gospel.¹⁵⁶ He was happy that slavery was gone,¹⁵⁷ and he believed that the problem of the Negro could not be solved by legislation, so he urged the Northern and Southern Baptists to unite for the purpose of taking the Gospel to the Negroes, now equal citizens of the American Republic.¹⁵⁸

Other controversies. Richard Fuller entered many controversies but only two of them were national in scope, the Catholic and the Slavery Debates. One of the other controversies was with the Methodist paper, The Protestant.¹⁵⁹ Fuller had written a book in 1850 on Baptism and the Terms of Communion, an Argument.¹⁶⁰ In this book he set forth the Baptist position on baptism and communion. He believed that Christian baptism was for the believer¹⁶¹

155 Religious Herald, April 29, 1875.

156 Ibid., June 11, 1874.

157 Loc. cit.

158 Ibid., June 25, 1874; October 1, 1874.

159 True Union, October 9, 1851.

160 Richard Fuller, Baptism and the Terms of Communion, an Argument, pp. 1 ff.

161 Ibid., p. 94.

(the disciple), that it was an act of obedience, that the mode was immersion,¹⁶² and that it was the door to the visible church.¹⁶³ He followed this with the idea that only baptized church members were eligible for communion.¹⁶⁴ The book drew a response from the other churches, especially the ones in Baltimore. The Lutheran Observer¹⁶⁵ and the Methodist Protestant were quick with their denunciation of Fuller's position. One Lutheran pastor in Baltimore considered Fuller's book the foremost Baptist work so he wrote an answer to it.¹⁶⁶ Fuller's book contained 204 pages; the Lutheran answer to it by Mr. J. A. Seiss contained 403 pages. This work of Seiss was a bitter denunciation of Fuller, of the Baptists, and the Baptist practice of baptism and communion.¹⁶⁷

Soon after Fuller published his book, a Mr. Isaac Cole, Methodist pastor, was converted to the Baptist position and Fuller baptized him.¹⁶⁸ When this was published in the papers, the Methodist Protestant began a series of

162 Ibid., p. 17.

163 Ibid., p. 186.

164 Ibid., p. 192.

165 J. A. Seiss, The Baptist System Examined (Baltimore: T. Newton Kurtz, 1858), p. 5.

166 Ibid., p. 10.

167 Ibid., pp. 11, 14, 386.

168 True Union, October 2, 1851.

articles on Fuller and the Baptists.¹⁶⁹ Fuller answered the Protestant in the True Union of which he was associate editor.¹⁷⁰ This controversy was short lived and Fuller went on making converts in Baltimore.¹⁷¹ He entitled his editorials in the True Union, "Who Are the Baptists?" In July and August of 1872 he repeated this series "Who Are the Baptists?" in the Religious Herald as he was then associate editor of the Virginia paper.¹⁷²

Fuller entered into a debate with some of the Southern Baptist brethren in 1857 on the subject of "Re-Baptizing". He believed that persons should not be rebaptized when their former baptism was valid and that it should not be repeated even if the candidate wished it.¹⁷³ This discussion was of short duration also.

Another controversy which effected Tennessee Baptists as well as the Southern Baptist Convention centered in J. R. Graves, editor of the Tennessee State Baptist paper. The part of this controversy in which Fuller was involved called

169 Ibid, October 9, 1851.

170 Loc. cit.

171 Cuthbert, op. cit., p. 170.

172 Religious Herald, July 4, 1872; July 18, 1872; August 1, 1872.

173 True Union, July 23, 1857.

for attention here. Graves went back to Nashville after the Southern Baptist Convention in Baltimore in 1853 and criticized Fuller in a very abusive way.¹⁷⁴ He declared that Fuller's sermons and addresses were disorganizing, that Fuller was apeing Catholics in his proceedings, that Fuller was a Pharisee, and that Fuller prayed in public to be seen of men, to mention only a few of his remarks.¹⁷⁵ Others brought charges against Graves in civil and church courts but not Fuller. He wrote Graves giving his full absolution, stating that he held no resentment, admitting that some of his peculiarities were injurious to his influence among Baptists, and closed by saying that if others knew him as well as he knew himself no one would love him.¹⁷⁶ The charges by Graves and the letters by Fuller were all presented in the various trials of Graves. Fuller was in the controversy but only in name for both Graves and his opponents used the evidence mentioned above.¹⁷⁷

Richard Fuller was a controversialist without wanting to be one. He sought only to present truth as he saw truth;

¹⁷⁴ R. B. C. Howell, et. al., Both Sides, Graves vs. Howell (Nashville: Graves, Marks and Company, 1859), pp. 152-153.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 153.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 155.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., pp. 150-156.

but when his life was examined, it was found that he was called upon many times to defend his position. He was a trained lawyer which equipped him for controversy, a called preacher who loved truth, a Baptist from convictions, and he lived in a period of history that made controversy necessary for a man of his ability and in the various positions he was called upon to fill.

CONCLUSION

This first chapter was biographical and foundational, including a study of Richard Fuller's life, the formative years, his ministerial career, and his controversies. This was foundational in that a knowledge of the man and his career was essential for the following study of Fuller's beliefs and preaching.

CHAPTER II

RICHARD FULLER'S THEOLOGY, ETHICAL PRINCIPLES, AND CONCEPTION
OF PREACHING

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In making a study of Richard Fuller and His Preaching it was necessary to analyze his theology, ethical principles, and his conception of Christian preaching. The approach to this study was made under the following divisions: The Theological Concepts of Richard Fuller; The Ethical Principles of Richard Fuller; and Richard Fuller's Conception of Preaching. The primary materials for this study were Fuller's written articles, his editorials, three volumes of Fuller's Sermons, and biographical records.

THEOLOGICAL CONCEPTS OF RICHARD FULLER

Theology constituted a major element in the preaching of Richard Fuller. He lived in the nineteenth century during the time of the frontier revivals,¹ the development of the liberal movement in theology, the unitarian development,² new denominations and sects, and

1 W. W. Sweet, The Story of Religion in America (New York: Harpers, 1939), pp. 333 ff.

2 W. W. Sweet, Religion in the Development of America Culture (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1952), pp. 193 ff.

the religious as well as secular debates.³ All these influences, in addition to his own personal experiences and beliefs, converged to make theological subjects permeate the sermons of Fuller. There was discussed in this section his idea of the use of theology in preaching; the fact that his theology was Biblical; his doctrines concerning the Trinity, man, the Gospel, and the church; and his Baptist beliefs.

The use of theology in preaching. In discussing the theology of Richard Fuller it was necessary to consider his conception of the use of theology in preaching. Fuller did not believe that scholastic theology had a place in the pulpit.⁴ He made a distinction between the religion of Jesus and a dogmatic system of orthodoxy. The religion of Jesus is love, faith and life, and the Christian preacher should engage in the positive proclamation of this Gospel.⁵ In his own preaching as found in the study of his sermons,⁶ Fuller was always urging theological truths not as

3 Cf. ante, pp. 32 ff.

4 True Union, August 5, 1852.

5 Loc. cit.

6 Richard Fuller, Sermons by Richard Fuller (Baltimore: J. F. Weishampel, Jr., 1877), First, Second, Third Series.
 (Hereafter in this thesis references made to Fuller's Sermons will be designated as Sermons, I, II, or III.)

scientific theology, metaphysical polemics, or scholastic theology, but as living vital spiritual truths. He believed that systematic theology had its function, exposing error and heresy, but not in the pulpit.⁷ He believed that scholastic theology, controversial divinity and dogmatic orthodoxy in the pulpit was dangerous to true devotion and would kill piety and confuse the people.⁸ He did not urge an abstract system of theology in his preaching and expressly denounced the use of it in the pulpit.⁹

Biblical theology. Fuller's theology was Biblical. In his study he sought the message of the Bible and when he found it, accepted it as his theology and his message to preach.¹⁰ Fuller believed that the Bible was the record of God's revelation and the final authority in religion.¹¹ The Old and New Testaments were essentially one, and had one theme, the salvation of men.¹² He believed that there were no contradictions in the Bible,

7 Ibid., II, 8-9.

8 Ibid., III, 54.

9 Ibid., II, 8-9.

10 Thomas Armitage, A History of the Baptists (New York: Bryan, Taylor and Company, 1837), p. 761.

11 Sermons, III, 179.

12 Religious Herald, October 10, 1872.

that all the doctrines harmonized with each other. Every truth in the Word of God agreed with the other truths.¹³ Where he saw the plain teaching of the Scriptures, he moved on; when the Word was lacking, he stopped.¹⁴ The main inquiry for Richard Fuller in his debates, in his preaching, and in his theology, was what saith the Word. All human creeds, teachers, and ideas were set aside and the words of Jesus sought. He believed that all the confusion in theology stemmed from a failure to turn to the inspired word for instruction.¹⁵ When the Bible spoke he did not question, argue, or seek to prove; he took the Scriptures as being ample and all sufficient.¹⁶ The words of life, love, and light have been recorded by the Holy Spirit in the Bible.¹⁷

With these convictions concerning the Bible and his adherence to these beliefs, Fuller's theology was Biblical. Whatever the question of belief or practice, he took the Bible as final and authoritative. The Bible furnished him with the theological concepts which he used

13 Sermons, I, 32; III, 209.

14 W. T. Brantly, Jr., Richard Fuller: Recollections of His Life and Character (Baltimore: J. F. Weishampel, Jr., 1876), p. 11.

15 Religious Herald, July 18, 1872.

16 Sermons, I, 66; III, 38, 196.

17 Ibid., I, 33.

in his sermons, books, debates, and addresses.

The main doctrines. The theological doctrines found most frequently in Fuller's writing and preaching centered around four doctrines: The Trinity, Man, the Gospel, and the Church. These four theological doctrines were discussed in this section as constituting the main body of the theology of Richard Fuller.

Richard Fuller believed that there was one God, but that the Bible and experience revealed that this one God existed in three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.¹⁸ Fuller realized that no religionists denied the unity of God but that some did not believe that the one God existed tripersonally.¹⁹

Richard Fuller's conception of man was what the Bible revealed. He looked not to natural science nor philosophy to understand man, He knew the Bible and he knew himself. Man was created by God. God made man the crowning act of creation. Man was created in the image of God; this divine image gave to man personality, intelligence, and choice.²⁰ Man was immortal, and all

18 Ibid., III, 97-98.

19 Ibid., III, 14.
Religious Herald, October 17, 1872.

20 Sermons, I, 17-18, 312.

men were created equal. God made men all equal in creation, equal before the Gospel, and equal before the judgment.²¹

Man is depraved by choice, the first man sinned, sin entered the blood stream of humanity. Man then is sinful by nature.²² All the inclinations of the human heart are sinful. Man deliberately turned away from God, wrecking the harmony between God and man, man and man, polluting the nature of man and even corrupting the natural order.²³ In this depraved condition man is not able to save himself or to better his condition.²⁴

Man is the beneficiary of creation and revelation. In God's love the Gospel was revealed to him.²⁵ The only hope for man in this life or in the life hereafter was in the Gospel. To man in his depravity, Christ came to save him, to give him a holy disposition for living, citizenship in God's Kingdom, and heaven for eternity.²⁶ All the benefits of the Gospel were for man. The Gospel is individual and social in its power, it reconciles man to God, and man to man, bringing light and life into the

21 Richard Fuller, The Benevolence of the Gospel Toward the Poor (Baltimore: George F. Adams, 1848), pp. 7, 15, 20.

22 Sermons, III, 76, 264.

23 Ibid., III, 119.

24 Ibid., II, 98.

25 True Union, August 5, 1852.

26 Sermons, I, 33; II, 49 ff, 311.

social order.²⁷

Fuller believed that God was all holy, righteous, and just, and that His main attribute was Love. "God is Love."²⁸ He saw God as creator; God created the universe, the worlds, and all that were in them. Man was the highest creation of God, being created in the image of God. God not only created the world but he sustained a Fatherly relation to the world.²⁹ God had revealed Himself to man in creation. The revelation of nature was evident, but for Fuller not sufficient.³⁰ God's revelation was expanded in the Law and the Prophets of the Old Testament, and God used the Old Testament revelation to school Israel.³¹ Then in time God revealed Himself in flesh, Deity took on flesh and entered time, to live, to die, and to rise again.³² God, the Holy Spirit, preserved and empowered this revelation for man, for it was the complete and final revelation of God. Now the purpose of this revelation, the Gospel, was for the salvation of men in the eternal Kingdom of God.³³

27 Ibid., III, 164, 264.

28 Ibid., I, 31-32, 78.

29 Ibid., I, 17.

30 Ibid., I, 14.

31 Religious Herald, December 5, 1872.

32 Sermons, I, 29, 151.

33 Ibid., I, 14, 99, 187.

Fuller believed that the Gospel was the basis for the final judgment.³⁴ The call of God to Fuller was to proclaim this revelation to men, urging them to believe it and to live accordingly. Man was spiritually born in the Gospel for a new life on earth and in heaven. Without the Gospel man remained in his depraved state here, out of harmony with God and creation, and his eternity without the Gospel is in Hell, separated, doomed, and damned.³⁵

The doctrine of the Gospel of Christ was evident in every sermon and address of Richard Fuller. His conception of the Gospel was discussed under four ideas: Its origin, its revelation, its power, and man's relation to the Gospel.

The origin of the Gospel was with God. Out of God's very nature the Gospel came forth, for God so loved.³⁶ God the Father so loved that He gave His Son. The second person of the Trinity came from the Father to the earth. Man did not originate the Gospel, nor through any act of man was the Gospel revealed. It was not an after-thought with God, for before creation the Gospel resided in God.³⁷

The revelation of the Gospel was in time, made by

34 Ibid., II, 138-153.

35 Ibid., I, 61, 74, 75, 189.

36 Ibid., I, 29.

37 Loc. cit.

Deity taking on flesh and dwelling on the earth.³⁸ The incarnation of Deity, Jesus Christ, was both man and God. Christ lived on the earth as man, subject to all the forces that exist, yet without sin. The incarnation was God and humanity in one.³⁹ This God-man, being innocent, gave Himself, a substitution for man, and died on the Cross -- the Innocent for the guilty, the Holy for the depraved, man dying for sin, and Deity giving this death eternal efficaciousness.⁴⁰ Christ died for sin, He entered death, only to conquer death and rise again. He arose from death, ascended back to the Father's throne, and became the Great High Priest for man.⁴¹

The power of the Gospel was for everyone who believed it. By faith the benefits of the new birth, holy character, new life, salvation, and heaven, could be experienced by man.⁴² Man was dead, lost, depraved, and on his way to Hell without the Gospel.⁴³ The Gospel received by faith

38 Ibid., III, 95, 96, 158, 277.

39 Ibid., I, 199; III, 97-98.

40 Ibid., I, 29, 322-324; III, 21.
Religious Herald, September 19, 1872.

41 Sermons, I, 317-318; III, 16.

42 Ibid., I, 31; II, 145, 254, 331.

43 Ibid., I, 299.

made real the power of the Resurrection in the believer's heart.⁴⁴ The power of the Gospel was individual, but not only individual, it was social as well. It has power to save man and society.⁴⁵ Man's relation to the Gospel was a faith relationship. Man could only believe the Gospel, receive the Gospel, proclaim the Gospel, or reject the Gospel with all the implications of rejection.⁴⁶ To Fuller the Gospel was essential, free, sufficient, and eternal.⁴⁷

The Church entered largely into the theology of Fuller. His own personal experiences, his debates, and his love for the Bible caused Fuller to formulate his conception of the church and to teach the Bible doctrines as he found them.⁴⁸

Fuller found in the Bible a spiritual body, a catholic or universal church. All the saved were spiritually born into this spiritual body.⁴⁹ This spiritual body was the Kingdom of God.⁵⁰ He believed that the doctrine of a visible

⁴⁴ Ibid., I, 50.
Religious Herald, April 11, 1872.

⁴⁵ Sermons, I, 78, 284; III, 264.

⁴⁶ Ibid., II, 115.

⁴⁷ Ibid., II, 124.

⁴⁸ Cf. ante, pp. 54-55.

⁴⁹ Religious Herald, July 4, 1872.

⁵⁰ Loc. cit.

universal church was unscriptural and unchristian.⁵¹ The universal church of Christ was invisible and spiritual. To speak of the universal church as visible, or to identify the Kingdom of God as a visible carnal body was a great mistake.⁵²

The other idea of the church was a society meeting in any place for religious purposes,⁵³ and local in its membership. He believed that the New Testament churches were independent societies, moving in a restricted sphere of action, but cooperating to contend for the faith once delivered to the saints.⁵⁴ Members entered the local church by profession of faith and baptism.⁵⁵ The members were to be an example in faith and holy living.⁵⁶ The church ordinances were baptism and the Lord's Supper. Both ordinances are to be kept by the local church; baptism was by immersion and preceded participation in church membership and the Lord's Supper.⁵⁷ The ordinances were

51 Richard Fuller, Baptism and the Terms of Communion, An Argument (Baltimore: Cushing and Brothers, 1850), pp. 222-224.

52 Religious Herald, July 4, 1872.

53 Fuller, Baptism and the Terms of Communion, An Argument, pp. 220 ff.

54 Religious Herald, January 22, 1874.

55 Ibid., July 4, 1872.

56 Ibid., August 15, 1872; September 5, 1872; September 19, 1872.

57 Fuller, Baptism and the Terms of Communion, An Argument, pp. 225 ff.

symbolic in nature and were to be observed by all obedient believers in Christ. The local church, the ordinances, ministers, and members were only valuable as they promoted personal holiness.⁵⁸

All the functions of the church were comprehended in the Great Commission. This commission constituted every Christian a missionary and every church a missionary church.⁵⁹ These four doctrines--the Trinity, Man, the Gospel, and the Church--were centers in the theological concepts of Richard Fuller. He believed them, he taught them, and he proclaimed them.

Baptist beliefs. Richard Fuller became a Baptist by degrees. His father united with the Baptists about the time of Richard's birth. The Episcopal was the dominant church in Beaufort. As Fuller grew up he did not unite with any church. While practicing law as a young man, he was moved to profess religion and united with the Episcopal Church.⁶⁰ At that time he insisted on immersion by the Episcopal minister. Some years later he was powerfully converted and then, with his former prejudices laid aside,

58 Religious Herald, August 15, 1872.

59 Ibid., January 8, 1874.

60 Cf. ante, p. 13.

he united with the Baptist Church, being baptized at that time by the Baptist pastor.⁶¹ He was convinced that the Baptists were right on baptism but not on communion. He set about to correct what he believed was a mistake in the Baptist doctrine, but upon studying the Bible he reached the conviction that the practice of close communion was right.⁶² Step by step his convictions on doctrine and practice were formulated, and they coincided with the main body of the Baptists. "We are Baptist because, against all our prejudices, the force of truth constrained us."⁶³

In general Fuller believed that the Baptists were people who wished to carry out the great principle of the Reformation. The Reformation was a great struggle of the human intellect for spiritual freedom. The Baptists sought to carry this struggle on to consummation.⁶⁴ He believed that the Baptists were in line with the New Testament churches, the principles of the Reformation, of Roger Williams and all the martyrs of all ages who refused to

61 Cf. ante, p. 15.

62 Fuller, Baptism and the Terms of Communion, An Argument, p. 219.

63 Religious Herald, August 1, 1872.

64 Ibid., July 4, 1872.
True Union, October 9, 1851.

bow to society or to a priesthood, either Catholic or Protestant.⁶⁵ The religion of the Baptists was a change of heart showing itself in a life of obedience.⁶⁶

He set forth four distinctives of the Baptists as over against the teachings of other denominations. First,⁶⁷ the views of the Church: The Baptists believed that the Kingdom was not of this world, the Church of Christ was a spiritual body, and the visible church a local, self-governing body. Second, his views were not sacramental in reference to the church and the ordinances. The Christian would observe the ordinances because he was obedient. Third,⁶⁹ the Baptists believed in individual responsibility to God; they allowed for no priesthood, either human or material. Therefore, Baptists were different from Catholics and other Protestants, Fourth,⁷⁰ Baptists took the New Testament to be the final rule and authority in religion. Human teachers must stand aside; Baptists had one master, Jesus, and one rule, the inspired Scriptures.

65 Religious Herald, July 4, 1872.

66 True Union, October 9, 1851.

67 Religious Herald, July 18, 1872.

68 Loc. cit.

69 Loc. cit.

70 Loc. cit.

Richard Fuller was a Baptist by conviction and was a leader in the proclamation of the doctrines held by the Baptists.

THE ETHICAL PRINCIPLES OF RICHARD FULLER

This section of the chapter dealt with the ethical principles of Richard Fuller as revealed in his preaching. He saw fallen humanity in a sinful world. The hope for the individual, for the social order, and for the political and economic was spiritual regeneration, first, of the individual, then second, through the individual to permeate all phases of life. Fuller applied the ethical principles of the Gospel of Christ to every section of life. His ethical idea would be defined as Christian ethics. Richard Fuller believed that the very mission of the Gospel was the regeneration of a ruined world.⁷¹

The individual. The individual man in his normal condition was a being who adored the Creator and loved his fellow man with tender affections.⁷² This was not the natural condition of fallen man -- he was abnormal, did not adore God nor love his fellow man. There must be a

71 Sermons, I, 284; II, 204.

72 Ibid., III, 74-77.

regeneration to produce a true decision of character which would restore man to ethical righteousness. This sublime moral character was the result of a simple trust in God, and this trust in God was the most essential ingredient in true moral character.⁷³ The divine image must be reimpressed upon the soul of man giving him true character, character which would reflect the Moral Ruler of the Universe.⁷⁴

Trust or faith in God was the source of decisive character and true ethical rightness.⁷⁵ The new character by faith was bound to the truths of the atonement of Christ. God in reconciling the world by Christ infused a new character into the individual through faith in the atonement. The purifying efficacy of the atonement reached the springs of character and controlled the life.⁷⁶

The individual so regenerated by faith in God and reconciled by the atonement of Christ will be guided by certain moral principles. These principles were inherent in true moral character, Christian character. The first principle was an inflexible and controlling adherence to

73 Ibid., III, 83.

74 Ibid., III, 74 ff.

75 Ibid., III, 83-84.

76 Ibid., II, 206; III, 115.

the will of God in all things and at all times.⁷⁷ The first question for the Christian was, is it the will of God? After determining what the will of God was, the regenerated character had no further question to ask, the will of God was his will. The second ethical principle was a spirit armed and intrepid in facing danger and in meeting the responsibility of his station in life.⁷⁸ The Christian armed with decisive character was resolute and unafraid to live out the will of God. The third principle of ethical conduct was a brave disregard for consequences.⁷⁹ Knowing God's will and applying God's will to every phase of life without regard to consequences was the true decisive character of the Christian. This was the ethical concept of Fuller relative to the individual.

The social obligation. Richard Fuller in his sermons advocated Christian ethics for the social order. The individual was to live as a Christian in society.

Man was a social being and as such there were ethical requirements in his relations with his fellow man. Society was ordained by God. There was room in the universe

77 Ibid., III, 80.

78 Ibid., III, 81.

79 Ibid., III, 82.

of God to place men apart from each other in selfish isolation; but God ordained a social distinction which caused them to touch each other, to be closely knit to each other.⁸⁰ In this social order the Christian recognized the dignity of man as Christ did, because he was man.⁸¹ Jesus came from heaven to show the value of the soul and He taught man to love man because he was man. This love was not of the earth, Christ brought it with Him from heaven. This love penetrated the rags of the poor, and honored the soul as of more value than the whole material universe.⁸² The Christian seeing man through the eyes of Christ will honor and love man because Jesus came to save man and society.⁸³ Love for man was the evidence of conversion.⁸⁴ Love for man because he was man was not natural with man, in his fallen state. It must be cultivated. It was a principle, a fruit of the spirit, and was to be habitually nourished and strengthened.⁸⁵ Fuller believed the Christian would love man also because

80 Ibid., I, 82.

81 Ibid., I, 185.

82 Loc. cit.

83 Ibid., I, 78.

84 Ibid., I, 304.

85 Ibid., III, 72.

he was the image of God. "We will love the image of God, and this, let me say, upon whatever metal that image is engraved, whether precious or base, and whether it be cut in ivory or in ebony."⁸⁶ Fuller believed that the evil of slavery was the failure to recognize the slaves as members of a common fatherhood and brotherhood.⁸⁷ The "new commandment" of the New Testament was something historically and ethically new, to love man because he was man.⁸⁸

The Christian had another ethical obligation to his fellow man, that of example. He was to be the light of society.⁸⁹ Men have a right to expect more of a Christian than of others.⁹⁰ His temper, actions, and conduct must exemplify his heavenly calling; he must excell the ethics of the world.⁹¹ The Christian was to exemplify the Christian ethics in all his social intercourse. Fuller suggested five maxims to guide the Christian in the determination of his social activities for pleasure. The first⁹² maxim: Any pleasure which was a direct violation

86 Ibid., I, 312.

87 Ibid., I, 220.

88 Ibid., I, 314.

89 Ibid., I, 284.

90 Ibid., I, 286.

91 Loc. cit.

92 Ibid., III, 124.

of the Ten Commandments, or which involved such a violation, was sinful. Second:⁹³ Any pleasure which took and kept the heart away from God was sinful. Third:⁹⁴ Any pleasure which increased or nourished disorders of the passions was sinful. Fourth:⁹⁵ Any pleasure which made man unfit for communion with God was sinful. Fifth:⁹⁶ Any pleasure was criminal which confirmed the empire of man's besetting sin.

The social obligation of the Christian was to love man because he was man, to be an example to society in holy living, and to set forth the principle of Christian conduct in all social activities. Richard Fuller applied Christian ethics to every part of the social order.

Civil obligation. Richard Fuller believed that civil government was ordained of God for strictly temporal purposes. The Christian had civil obligations which must be discharged according to Christian principles.

The New Testament enjoined obedience to government.⁹⁷ Fuller stressed the importance of true patriotism. In temporal matters where conscience was not violated, the civil

93 Ibid., III, 125.

94 Ibid., III, 126.

95 Ibid., III, 127.

96 Loc. cit.

97 Ibid., III, 78-79.

authority was to be obeyed.⁹⁸

Again the government had no jurisdiction over conscience.⁹⁹ Fuller believed that whenever government attempted to propagate religion, it was always a false religion.¹⁰⁰ The church under the commission of Christ was to propagate religion, not the state. It was the duty of Christians to keep the principle of separation of church and state. "The Union of Church and State is, therefore, as incongruous a thing as would be the combination of a church and a gas company or a railroad corporation."¹⁰¹ He believed that religious freedom of thought was not only a privilege but also a duty.¹⁰²

Christian ethics also required the individual to live righteously in the state.¹⁰³ Fuller defined righteousness as the true religion, the doctrine and spirit of the Gospel.¹⁰⁴ The Christian was to live out the Gospel as a righteous citizen under civil government. He believed in separation of church and state, but he did not believe

98 Ibid., III, 78.

99 Loc. cit.

100 Ibid., II, 203; III, 77.

101 Ibid., I, 213.

102 Ibid., III, 49.

103 Ibid., I, 213.

104 Ibid., I, 214.

that the state, any more than the individual, should be without religion.¹⁰⁵ Civil law and philosophy could not repress the depravity of man's nature, there must also be the controlling fear of God in the civil establishment.¹⁰⁶

Christian ethics required the citizen to be obedient to government, to advocate religious freedom, to live righteously in the state, and to show forth true reverence for God.

The moral condition of his day. Richard Fuller viewed the moral conditions of his day through the eyes of a Christian. He advocated the moral character that actuated the Christian ethic, but he did not find this character predominant in his society. The following examples revealed Fuller's ethical concepts as he applied them to the moral problems of his day: He believed that the principles of the Gospel were the ethical norms for all phases of life. If in any phase of life the practice or the principle fell below the Christian ethic, Fuller branded it as sin. In one sermon he catalogued "Our Sins".¹⁰⁷ These were reviewed in this section to show

105 Ibid., I, 213.

106 Ibid., I, 213; II, 203.

107 Ibid., I, 218 ff.

Fuller's application of his ethical concepts in his preaching.

In observing the moral conditions of his day, he first considered the Federal Government. The constitution on which the government was based had no mention of God in it, no recognition of God. To Fuller, it was atheistical and, therefore, the Christian should be alarmed.¹⁰⁸ It could have been written by a pagan or an atheist. The Christian should be filled with sorrow over this omission of the Divine Ruler from this instrument of Government.

The elected officials for the previous forty years, Fuller believed, were not selected for piety, virtue, or disinterestedness, but on the basis of party loyalty and their worth to the party.¹⁰⁹ The weapons common among the office seekers were bribery, corruption, and the traffic in votes.¹¹⁰ The traffic in votes was a business equal to the mercantile industry. Fuller described as follows the deplorable conditions in Washington:

There the Sabbath has been openly despised. There the name of God is everywhere blasphemed. There pride, luxury, licentiousness, have held their carnivals. There power and patronage have been abused for selfish and mercenary objects. There vast sums extorted from honest

108 Ibid., I, 218.

109 Ibid., I, 219.

110 Loc. cit.

industry have been most profligately wasted and often embezzled. And there--in the very halls which ought to be consecrated to calm wisdom and true patriotism, to the good of mankind and the fear of God, there has been exhibited a ruffianism which would have disgraced barbarians.¹¹¹

Fuller saw these unchristian practices and the moral degeneracy as national sins.

From the Federal Government Fuller turned to the State governments. He saw the same sins as mentioned above concerning the Federal Government with the addition of slavery.¹¹² He did not believe that his generation was responsible for the introduction of slavery, nor did he believe that the slave was ready for immediate emancipation.¹¹³ The sin mentioned here was the treatment of the slave by the owners. He was not treated as one with a common Father and one in a common brotherhood. His body, mind and soul had not been given the things that were equal and just.¹¹⁴

In the churches Fuller saw worldliness, pride, covetousness, and selfishness, which had removed the line of demarkation between the church and the world.¹¹⁵

111 Loc. cit.

112 Ibid., I, 220.

113 Loc. cit.

114 Loc. cit.

115 Loc. cit.

The government and the churches were reflections of the individuals, therefore the basis of the moral corruption resided in the individuals. He enumerated the prevalent sins as: Practical atheism; ingratitude; degeneracy in true love for country and liberty; contempt for the revelation of the Bible, the Sabbath, and the Sanctuary; and covetousness.¹¹⁶ He believed the most besetting sin for the individual American was the reckless lust for money.¹¹⁷ The mercantile code was not based on the principles of Jesus but those of Machiavelli. To be successful was merit but to fail was criminal. The laws of trade were not found in the word of God but in the low calculations of expediency and profit.¹¹⁸ Honesty was a good policy as long as it was profitable, but otherwise it was too costly a commodity in which to deal.¹¹⁹ Fuller condemned the dual standard of hypocrisy; a man may be a good citizen and a pious church member yet in politics and business an unscrupulous knave.¹²⁰ Again the state licensed alcoholic beverage which destroyed and confined

116 Ibid., I, 222-223.

117 Ibid., I, 223.

118 Ibid., I, 224.

119 Loc. cit.

120 Loc. cit.

so many to misery and death, yet claimed to be the upholder of law and order. Drunkenness was rife everywhere, a curse to the individual, the homes, and to the nation.¹²¹

Fuller's firm conviction was that the Gospel principles of ethical and moral righteousness were the divine answers to all the ills both of the individual and of the social order.

RICHARD FULLER'S CONCEPTION OF PREACHING

In this division there was discussed Richard Fuller's conception of preaching. Fuller had formulated definite principles in regard to Christian preaching. All that was discussed in this division pertained to the Christian preacher and his task. In a series of editorials in the Religious Herald, Fuller revealed his conception of preaching, and these editorials were the main source for this study. In a few sermons he commented on preaching, but his formal statements on preaching were in the editorials. His conception of preaching was discussed under the following topics: The Call of the Preacher; The Central Theme for Preaching; Reciprocal Relations; Ideas on Style; and Extemporaneous Preaching.

¹²¹ Ibid., I, 225.

The call of the preacher. Richard Fuller believed that preaching was a divine ordinance.¹²² Preaching was necessary for Christianity because God instituted preaching for a definite function.¹²³ Preaching was an ordinance of God; men were commissioned to preach by a divine call. He had this to say of the call to preach:

That it is a divinely appointed mission, a heavenly vocation, so distinctly felt that he who assumes this office knows that Jesus has put him in the ministry, and so urgent, that a necessity is laid upon him. The credentials of such a herald are in his own consciousness. If God calls a man into the ministry there will be those graces and gifts which qualify him for his work.¹²⁴

The preacher was called into the ministry by a definite call, and after this initial call his activities were also divinely directed. Fuller gave a personal experience in this connection. When he was first called to preach, he believed that he would devote his full energy to the slaves. Then a divine necessity was laid upon him to move in other areas and finally to move to Baltimore.¹²⁵ God called the preacher and then directed his moves while in the ministry. Fuller believed that the divine call was

122 Ibid., I, 43, 102.

123 Ibid., I, 102.

124 Religious Herald, July 22, 1875.

125 Ibid., October 1, 1874.

fundamental to Christian preaching.

The central theme for preaching. God had appointed preaching for one function, that of proclaiming the Gospel of Christ to the world. Fuller believed that the world needed in every age just what it needed in the first century, Christ and Him crucified.¹²⁶ No addition had been made to the plan of salvation; Christ crucified was the wisdom and the power of God. This was the only theme for the pulpit, the preacher's wisdom and power, his only religion.¹²⁷ The preacher's task was to take every sinner to Calvary, to the crucified Christ.¹²⁸ Fuller did not believe that a man was a real preacher unless the cross was central in his message. The theme for every Christian preacher was one: Christ Crucified.¹²⁹

Fuller believed that the key to successful preaching was the theme of the crucifixion foremost in the preacher's mind, heart, and message.¹³⁰ He once wrote that if he were writing a treatise on successful preaching, every

126 Ibid., November 10, 1870.

127 Sermons, I, 141.

128 Ibid., I, 102.

129 Religious Herald, November 10, 1870.

130 Sermons, I, 144-145.

chapter, every page, and every sentence would but repeat the theme, Christ, the Lamb Crucified.¹³¹ All the art of preaching, the whole system of homiletics, everything that is Christian preaching was comprehended in the all sublime theme, The Crucified Christ.¹³²

Reciprocal relations. Fuller believed that a preacher should not preach before the congregation but into the congregation.¹³³ There must be reciprocal relations between the preacher and the congregation.¹³⁴ The fruitfulness of a sermon depended more on what the hearer brought than on what the preacher brought.¹³⁵ There must be a reciprocal relation between the preaching and the believing. The results of the sermon depended more on the ear of him who heard than on the tongue of him who spoke.¹³⁶

The very aim of preaching was to persuade man, one soul persuading another soul.¹³⁷ God ordained that the

131 Loc. cit.

132 Loc. cit.

133 Religious Herald, May 12, 1870.

134 Ibid., May 26, 1870.

135 Loc. cit.

136 Sermons, I, 37; II, 235, 319.

137 Religious Herald, March 3, 1870.

human voice should address the mind, heart, and conscience.¹³⁸ It was man to man, a personal relationship. The Holy Spirit prepared the willing heart, then the human voice gave lodgment to saving eternal truth in the hearts of the hearers.¹³⁹ This human relationship must be developed by the preacher outside the pulpit through visitation, through actual contact with humanity. Fuller believed that for a man to be a real preacher he must also be a good pastor.¹⁴⁰ Then when he came to the pulpit, he was better prepared to persuade the hearer.

The aim in preaching was to persuade men, immediately.¹⁴¹ When the preacher knew the people through visitation and had allowed the truths of the Bible to pass through his own heart and to become an element of power in his personal experience, he was then ready to master hearts.¹⁴² He was to throw himself completely into the objective of immediate persuasion of the hearer. All his learning, scholastic, classical and theological, was to be used in the art of persuading men.¹⁴³ The reciprocal emotional

138 Ibid., February 4, 1869.

139 Ibid., March 3, 1870.

140 Ibid., January 8, 1874.

141 Ibid., April 16, 1874.

142 Loc. cit.

143 Loc. cit.

response was a most important instrument in preaching.¹⁴⁴
 The human voice addressed the human heart with spiritual truth, seeking to persuade the heart to act immediately -- one preaching, the other believing. This reciprocal relationship was necessary in Fuller's conception of Christian preaching.¹⁴⁵

Ideas on style. Richard Fuller believed that the style of the preacher should be governed by his own taste and abilities. Every preacher would have his own style, following his individual mind and constitution.¹⁴⁶ Fuller suggested, though, some general ideas on style. The preacher should be deeply in earnest at all times, doing his best, without being influenced by the size of the congregation or the fact that some of them might be asleep.¹⁴⁷ The preacher should also cultivate enthusiasm, for the congregation will never be more enthusiastic about the theme than the preacher. Not only should the preacher cultivate enthusiasm, he should also pray for it; pray until he is all on fire.¹⁴⁸

144 Ibid., May 26, 1870.

145 Ibid., October 17, 1872.

146 Ibid., May 12, 1870.

147 Loc. cit.

148 Ibid., April 16, 1874.

The preacher's enthusiasm was not to be turned loose, but kept within the bounds of the design of the sermon. The ambassador of God must engage in close, clear, convincing argument. With his argument filled with emotion and enthusiasm he would convince all that he was master of the situation and the master of their hearts.¹⁴⁹

Again the preacher should not be on stilts but talk easily and naturally. Fuller said to speak well anywhere, one must be simple and natural.¹⁵⁰ The preacher was to speak for time and eternity; the more simply the Gospel was preached, the more that would be done for eternity.¹⁵¹

Fuller was an advocate of brevity and simplicity in speaking. He believed that the two glaring faults of the American pulpit were prolixity and bombast.¹⁵² He compared the voluminous outpouring of words without thoughts and appeals which arrest the mind, heart and conscience, to the water pouring from a marble statue in the city park.¹⁵³

He defined bombast as an insatiable craving after metaphors and ornaments, scraps of poetry to fill the

149 Loc. cit.

150 Ibid., May 12, 1870.

151 Ibid., November 10, 1870.

152 Ibid., March 27, 1873.

153 Loc. cit.

"pause the nightingale has made."¹⁵⁴ The use of ornaments in oratory was permissable provided these ornaments grew out of the matter on hand and in the moment where they would carry the message to the heart of the hearer.¹⁵⁵ Fuller recommended the study of the Biblical addresses and the orations of Demosthenes as worthy illustrations of the virtues of brevity and simplicity.¹⁵⁶ These were some of the general ideas on style which Fuller advocated for the preacher.

Extemporaneous preaching. Richard Fuller was an advocate of extemporaneous preaching, and he wrote a number of articles in the Religious Herald on this type of preaching.¹⁵⁷ The term extemporaneous preaching as used by Fuller should properly be called free delivery, preaching without notes or manuscript after careful preparation. In his early ministry he used notes in the pulpit but later he dispensed with them altogether and became an advocate of free delivery.¹⁵⁸ His use of the

154 Ibid., April 10, 1873.

155 Loc. cit.

156 Ibid., March 27, 1873.

157 Ibid., March 3, 1870, March 17, 1870, March 31, 1870, April 7, 1870, April 14, 1870, May 12, 1870.

158 J. H. Cuthbert, Life of Richard Fuller, D.D. (New York: Sheldon and Company, 1879), p. 114.

term, extemporaneous, was followed in this section.

There can be no question that to persuade men, the most effective the only natural address is the direct, extemporaneous appeal, in tones, with looks, the gestures, the action of a speaker burning with his theme.¹⁵⁹

The greatest danger coming from the extemporaneous method was diffuseness--words and reiterations that were insufferably tedious.¹⁶⁰ The human mind demanded thoughts, not just words. The extemporaneous preacher must keep in mind the aim of the sermon, to persuade men.¹⁶¹ A sermon was not just a collection of words, but thoughts arranged with a purposeful design. The design of a sermon was the immediate persuasion of the hearer. Faith was full persuasion.¹⁶²

Fuller suggested some hindrances to extemporaneous preaching: First, the habit of reading the sermon. The use of a manuscript did not liberate the whole man; he was in bondage of body, mind, and heart to so many leaves of paper scribbled over with black marks.¹⁶³ Fuller believed that although a man may be effective with a written

159 Religious Herald, March 17, 1870.

160 Loc. cit.

161 Ibid., March 3, 1870.

162 Ibid., March 17, 1870.

163 Loc. cit.

discourse, he would be more powerful in the unfettered use of his oratory.¹⁶⁴ He recommended writing in the study as the proper employment of the intellect, and he believed that nothing contributed more to correct speech than careful composition.¹⁶⁵ The written composition should not be memorized nor should it be read from the pulpit, both methods would fail to liberate the whole man for persuading men.¹⁶⁶ Second, an entire misapprehension of the whole task. The extemporaneous preacher was not speaking with an abundance of words but with thoughts prepared and arranged designedly for persuasion.¹⁶⁷ The preparation for an extemporaneous preacher required more intense preparation, more careful mental discipline, and an ampler furniture than any other style for public address.¹⁶⁸ His preparation must not be narrow nor limited nor confined to perscribed courses, but the preparation must be that of close previous self-education. It must be the fruits of years of study by which the judgment has been matured, the taste refined, and a

164 Ibid., March 3, 1870.

165 Ibid., March 17, 1870.

166 Loc. cit.

167 Ibid., March 31, 1870.

168 Loc. cit.

storehouse of knowledge treasured up. Also there must be long and prayerful study upon the sermon to be preached.¹⁶⁹

The preacher ought to consider his literary reputation but he must not to the extent of making it his sole objective. Fuller believed this to be the third hindrance to extemporaneous preaching. Oversensitiveness about literary reputation had caused many men to refuse the extemporaneous style of preaching. He believed that the most chaste eloquence was that which persuaded men in reference to truth.¹⁷⁰

Another hindrance to extemporaneous preaching was failing to trust one's memory or requiring too much from the memory. Fuller said of the memory, "A faculty, by the way, most generous if we give it our entire confidence, but really appears to resent any distrust in either its retentiveness or fidelity."¹⁷¹ If the preacher saturated his mind and heart with his theme, if his mind was serene in the conscious mastery of the subject, let him then not think about his vocabulary.¹⁷² The thoughts would be

169 Loc. cit.

170 Ibid., March 31, 1870.

171 Ibid., April 14, 1870.

172 Loc. cit.

clothed with the words most eloquent.

The fifth hindrance to extemporaneous preaching was the fear of leaving out some important thought or altering the sequence of design.¹⁷³ Fuller thought that when truth was felt, it would be urged with real earnestness; when thus felt and urged, it would gradually become logic on fire. The fusion of energy and vehemence with clear, cogent, dialectics was a living, irresistible power. The highest attainment of eloquence was the consciousness of truth combined with self-command.¹⁷⁴

In the last editorials on extemporaneous preaching Fuller gave three requisites for extemporaneous preaching. The first requisite was to cultivate the habit of condensation--every word must count.¹⁷⁵ The staple of the sermon must be condensed Scriptural truth, the preacher will then feel that a single word, a look, a gesture, even a pause will utter more than a whole hour of careful composition.¹⁷⁶ The extemporaneous preacher will make every word contribute to the great aim of persuasion.

173 Loc. cit.

174 Ibid., April 14, 1870.

175 Ibid., April 28, 1870.

176 Loc. cit.

Another requisite for the extemporaneous preacher was to keep the aim of preaching before him, to persuade and convince the audience at that very time.¹⁷⁷ The minister of Jesus Christ was not a scholar retreating into some secluded place with a select class of students; he was God's ambassador, the herald of salvation to a lost world.

The last requisite for extemporaneous preaching, according to Fuller, was the most important one, communion with God, with Jesus in whom dwells grace and truth, and with the Spirit, who inspired the mind, touched the lips, and made him brave to undertake anything. This communion armed the preacher with a strange unearthly eloquence to advocate and secure anything he attempted.¹⁷⁸ These requisites for extemporaneous preaching then were: Mastered truth, definite aim, and spiritual fervor.

In this section, Richard Fuller's conception of preaching was discussed. He advocated these concepts for the Christian preacher as most beneficial for the fulfillment of the divine call to preach the Gospel in all the world.

177 Loc. cit.

178 Ibid., April 27, 1870.

CONCLUSION

This ideological study of Richard Fuller did not consider all the concepts or thoughts of Richard Fuller but only those most important to a study of Richard Fuller and His Preaching. An analysis of his theology, ethical principles, and conception of preaching was necessary for a study of the man and his preaching. Chapter One was a biographical study revealing the outward life of the man. Chapter Two was an ideological study revealing the inward man, his thoughts and beliefs. These two chapters were basic to the following chapters on Fuller's preaching.

CHAPTER III

RICHARD FULLER'S SERMONS

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This study was made on the subject Richard Fuller and His Preaching. The man and his beliefs have been studied and the findings presented in Chapters I and II. In this chapter an analysis of Fuller's sermons was given. Fuller published one volume of sermons during his lifetime but had two other volumes prepared for publication, and at his request these were published after his death.¹ These three volumes of sermons formed the primary basis for this study. The divisions of this chapter were made under the following headings: Fuller's Method of Sermon Preparation, The Content of Richard Fuller's Sermons, and Factors in the Arrangement of Richard Fuller's Sermons.

FULLER'S METHOD OF SERMON PREPARATION

The general preparation of the sermons of Richard Fuller was considered first. Fuller was a diligent student all his life.² He was well trained, had had those experiences which qualified him in an unusual way for the

1 Sermons, I, II, III.

2 W. T. Brantly, Jr., Richard Fuller, Recollections of His Life and Character (Baltimore: J. F. Weishampel, Jr., 1876), pp. 5, 8.

preaching task, and he believed the Bible with all his soul.³ In the preparation of a sermon he marshalled all that he had and all that he was for the message he was preparing.⁴ Some men believed that his ability in the pulpit was a gift extempore.⁵ because he was an advocate of extemporaneous preaching, but this was not true for he carefully prepared every sermon. In his early ministry at Beaufort, without seminary training, he spent many hours in his study. He also had young ministers come into his home for a period of study -- a school of the prophets in his house.⁶ While in South Carolina he told a pastor friend that his sermons cost him three full days of work, from early morning to late evening.⁷ After moving to Baltimore he spent the morning of each day in his study.⁸ Whatever was to be delivered, a sermon or a short address, it was prepared after a painstaking study to ascertain

3 Cf. ante, pp. 28-29, 54-55.

4 Thomas Armitage, A History of the Baptists (New York: Bryan, Taylor, and Company, 1837), pp. 760-761.

5 Loc. cit.

6 J. H. Cuthbert, Life of Richard Fuller (New York: Sheldon and Company, 1879), p. 15.

7 Brantly, op. cit., p. 8.

8 Loc. cit.

just what the Scriptures required him to say.⁹

The specific creation of a sermon was described by two men who had opportunity to see him in action in his study: J. H. Cuthbert, a nephew and later pastor of the First Baptist Church, Washington, D. C.,¹⁰ and W. T. Brantly, Jr., who was the son of Fuller's early pastor and his successor at the Seventh Baptist Church, Baltimore, Maryland.¹¹

Cuthbert was one of the young ministers who studied in Fuller's home. One day Fuller showed the young men his method of sermon preparation.¹² After prayerful and careful study the sermon was written in condensed form on two sheets of paper, divided into four columns.¹³ This was possibly the form of a lawyer's brief. Fuller took this condensed form of the sermon into his pulpit in his early preaching but later dispensed with notes altogether.¹⁴ This was the method he used in his early ministry while in South Carolina.

9 Armitage, op. cit., p. 761.

10 Brantly, op. cit., p. 24.

11 Ibid., p. 20.

12 Cuthbert, op. cit., p. 115.

13 Loc. cit.

14 Loc. cit.

Brantly gave this account of Fuller's method in his mature years after moving to Baltimore:

He usually selected his text on the Sunday or Monday previous, and to the study of this text the morning of each day was entirely devoted. . . . One who entered his study at this time of day, would have seen a number of books scattered on the floor, or lying open on the table, and enclosing a sheet of foolscap paper, covered with the most singular hieroglyphics, among which a real letter might here and there be discovered, amid scratches and curves and figures shaped like partially inflated balloons.¹⁵

Fuller never wrote out a sermon in full before he preached. Later, if requested or for publication, he would fill in the outline which he habitually made before preaching.¹⁶

After the sermon was prepared and the outline made, the sermon was not ready for delivery until the preacher was prepared. Fuller believed that the preacher must be as properly prepared as the sermon.¹⁷

¹⁵ W. T. Brantly, Jr., "Richard Fuller," Christian Index (Atlanta: Franklin Printing House, LV, 42, November 2, 1876), 2.

¹⁶ Henry C. Fish, Pulpit Eloquence of the Nineteenth Century (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1871), p. 347.

¹⁷ Cf. ante, p. 89.

THE CONTENT OF RICHARD FULLER'S SERMONS

Forty-nine of Richard Fuller's published sermons were under consideration in this study.¹⁸ The content of these sermons was divided into four divisions: The Biblical, the Theological, the Ethical, and the Extra-Biblical.

Biblical content. Richard Fuller had one source book for his preaching, the Bible. With all his soul he believed in the Bible as the unerring record of God's revelation. He studied to ascertain the truth of the Scriptures, and what they taught, he preached.¹⁹ He believed that it was the duty of God's ambassador to deliver the message he had received from God as recorded in the Bible. With this exalted conception of the Bible, Fuller made wide use of it in his sermons. The major portion of his sermons was Biblical material.

For every sermon there was an appropriate text. The sermon was either an exposition of the text or the text furnished the subject or topic for the sermon.²⁰

18 Cf. ante, p. 31.

19 Cf. ante, pp. 92-93.

20 Cf. ante, pp. 54, 55.

Fuller used his sermons to interpret the Scriptures, to illustrate the Bible doctrines, to apply the truths of the Bible to the hearer, and to persuade the people to believe and practice the truths found in the Record.

In every point, division, topic, and almost every paragraph, the Biblical content was evidenced in his sermons. He quoted directly from the Bible. The thought content was Biblical in every point and phrase. He used the Bible to illustrate or substantiate the thoughts and ideas which he was advocating.²¹ Sometimes he took the liberty to restate or paraphrase some parts of the Scripture, but in all his use of the Bible it was the record of God's revelation and the only authoritative source book for the preacher. In Fuller's printed sermons, the titles reflected a Biblical idea, the texts were from the Bible, the propositions were all Bible truths, and the thought content was Biblical.

An example of his use of the Bible was found in the sermon "The Lonesomeness of the Redeemer,"²² the text, "I have trodden the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with me;" . . . Isaiah 63:3. He interpreted this

²¹ Sermons, "Simeon's Faith and Consolation", I, 346; "The Kingdom of God cometh not with Observation", II, 64; "Strength as our Day", II, 227.

²² Ibid., III, 9.

verse as setting forth the lonesomeness (uniqueness) of the Redeemer in his mediatorial work.²³ The divisions of this sermon set forth Christ's uniqueness as being the Son of God,²⁴ the Son of Man,²⁵ and the victories of his action and work.²⁶ Fuller made sixty-eight direct Biblical quotations in this sermon along with other allusions to the Scriptures.

"The Sympathizing High Priest"²⁷ contained thirty-nine direct quotations, and "The Star of Bethlehem"²⁸ contained thirty-four direct Biblical quotations.

This pattern of using the Bible was followed in all his sermons. The sermons of Richard Fuller were Biblical in content for the Bible furnished him with the message which he gladly proclaimed.

Theological content. The theology of Richard Fuller was discussed in Chapter II of this study.²⁹ The purpose here was to set forth the use that he made of

23 Ibid., III, 10.

24 Loc. cit.

25 Ibid., III, 16.

26 Ibid., III, 27 f.

27 Ibid., III, 139.

28 Ibid., I, 35.

29 Cf. ante, pp. 52 ff.

theology in his sermons. Fuller was a Bible preacher. He sought to expound the doctrines of the Scriptures, and in so doing filled his sermons with theological concepts. He sought to elucidate Christian doctrines in his preaching, not for the sake of systematic theology, but for the conviction and edification of the congregation.³⁰

The titles in many of Fuller's sermons set forth a theological truth: "The Gospel not a Philosophy but a Revelation,"³¹ "Bible Testimony the Best Testimony,"³² "The Lamb of God,"³³ "Christ our Passover,"³⁴ "Predestination,"³⁵ "The True Christian,"³⁶ "The Judgment,"³⁷ "The Deity of Christ,"³⁸ "The Sympathizing High Priest"³⁹ were examples of sermon titles with theological content. The subjects and propositions of these sermons followed the title with theological implications. In the sermon "The

30 Cf. ante, pp. 53-54.

31 Sermons, I, 13.

32 Ibid., I, 55, 66.

33 Ibid., I, 80.

34 Ibid., I, 317.

35 Ibid., II, 7.

36 Ibid., II, 112.

37 Ibid., II, 130, 142.

38 Ibid., III, 94.

39 Ibid., III, 139.

Deity of Christ" his statement of subject and proposition was:

The proper deity of Jesus Christ, is however, a subject which ought to engage our hearts and minds oftener than it does. Just reflect upon the importance of this great truth. It is the keystone in the arch of Christianity; on it as the sub-structure depend all our hopes; from it are derived all the glory of the Gospel and the magnificence of the atonement. I, therefore, make this fundamental doctrine the topic for our meditation today.⁴⁰

In the sermon "The Gospel not a Philosophy but a Revelation," he stated his subject as follows:

And, entering at once into the subject, I remark that Christianity is not a complement of natural religion, not a new phase, a perfect development of truths partially known before, but a distinct message, a peculiar interposition, a direct communication from God, of things entirely novel.⁴¹

For one other example, "Christ our Passover;"

The atonement--the vicarious sufferings of the Redeemer--is the great central truth in the Gospel system. To deny this doctrine is not to misunderstand, but to reject the revelation which God has given to man . . . This great fundamental doctrine it is not necessary for me to establish, standing where I now do. I thank God that you not only know its certainty, but rejoice in its celestial consolations. I design simply to offer you a commentary on our text, in which, as you perceive, the sacrifice of Calvary is taken for granted,

⁴⁰ Ibid., II, 95.

⁴¹ Ibid., I, 14.

and is illustrated by a most significant emblem--the Paschal Lamb.⁴²

These statements are illustrative of the direct use Fuller made of theology in his sermons. His great aim was to persuade men to act on the truth, and all through his sermons the theological element was evident.⁴³ He saturated his sermons with theological concept to make truth lucid, believable, and usable.

Ethical content. Richard Fuller applied Christian ethics to every phase of life in his preaching.⁴⁴ His sermons dealt with the ethical problems of the individual and of the social order. He believed that the individual need and the social need were the same, a spiritual regeneration. Fuller also believed that a Christian would live and act as a Christian at all times.⁴⁵ He advocated a regenerated morality that would permeate society in all its phases. Throughout his sermons the principles of Christian ethics were found.

⁴² Ibid., I, 317-318.

⁴³ Cf. ante, pp. 52-66.
Cf. post, pp. 158-160, 172-176.

⁴⁴ Cf. ante, pp. 66-77.

⁴⁵ Cf. post, pp. 128-130.

In "Christians to be Lights and Examples"⁴⁶ he said:

The regeneration of a ruined world is the very mission of the Gospel of Christ. The Church and the world are, therefore, antagonistical societies. They are under such opposing influences, that there ever has been and ever must be, a settled, uncompromising conflict between them. Nor, in this controversy is there any argument so conclusive as that which is furnished in the lives of true devoted Christians.⁴⁷

This theme of Christian living was also the subject of "Love to Christians an Evidence of Conversion."⁴⁸ In the sermon "The True Christian"⁴⁹ he dealt with the fact that a Christian was a new man in Christ and that in his political, business, and social relations he would show that he was a Christian.

In the three sermons preached on days of national fasting and prayer,⁵⁰ he applied Christian ethical principles to sin and immorality which he found in the national government, the state government, and the churches, as well

46 Sermons, I, 284.

47 Loc. cit.

48 Ibid., II, 112.

49 Ibid., II, 112-113.

50 Ibid., "Dispositions Under National Judgments," II, 171 ff; "A City or House Divided against Itself," II, 196 ff, and "Mercy Remembered in Wrath," I, 211 ff.

as in individual lives.⁵¹ In all these he called for righteous living. By righteous living he meant the spirit and the doctrines of the Gospel.⁵²

The sermon "The Three Hebrews in the Furnace"⁵³ was a discussion of true moral character as being character solely devoted to the will of God.⁵⁴ Also the moral responsibilities of government were discussed in this sermon.⁵⁵ Christian principles were applied to acquiring and using money in the sermon "The Insane Rich Man,"⁵⁶ and the people were urged to take them into life as living principles.⁵⁷ In "Sinful Pleasures"⁵⁸ he advocated the proper conduct of the Christian in social pleasures and set forth certain principles for the Christian to follow in selecting his activities.⁵⁹

The principles of Christian ethics were found in Fuller's sermons generally. At times he would devote one

51 Cf. ante, pp. 73-77.

52 Cf. ante, pp. 66-68.

53 Sermons, III, 74.

54 Ibid., III, 80.

55 Ibid., III, 77 ff.

56 Ibid., III, 157 ff.

57 Ibid., III, 172-173.

58 Ibid., III, 120 ff.

59 Ibid., III, 124-127.

sermon to a certain problem, but in general the principles were in evidence as he applied truth to the Christian. The ethical content of his sermons was not as great as was the theological content but considering the period in which he lived, it was quite prevalent.

Extra-Biblical content. Richard Fuller was primarily a Biblical preacher, theology and ethics being the main emphases of his sermons. However, it was found that Fuller also used non-Biblical or secular material in the content of his sermons. This content was designated extra-Biblical, and an analysis of the material has been made in this section.

Fuller was acquainted with history, law, languages, philosophy, literature, and science through his study at Beaufort College, Harvard College, in the practice of law, his visit to Europe, and his strict study habits.⁶⁰ These furnished him with a storehouse of knowledge, both classical and modern. From this storehouse he drew the materials he needed to enforce truth in his sermons. The Biblical material was predominant in his sermons and the extra-Biblical filled a minor place.

There were found in his sermons legal phrases,

⁶⁰ Cf. ante, pp. 27-28.

Latin quotations, poetry, history (secular and ecclesiastical), and many references to men of every historical period. Discussed in this section were the uses that Fuller made of history, religions and philosophy, and poetry. These made up the major extra-Biblical content of Fuller's sermons. A partial list of the various men to whom he referred in his sermons was included.

(1) History. Fuller used historical materials to illustrate, to enforce an idea, and to attract attention. Some of the instances where he employed historical material were given.

In the sermon "What Will You Do With Jesus?" he was talking about the Kingdom of Christ and made this contrast:

Without wealth, without arms, without intrigue or violence; with the wealth, the arms, the intrigue and violence of the whole world in deadly hostility to Him, He has triumphed gloriously. The empires founded by Alexander, Charlemagne, Napoleon soon crumbled away, but in each succeeding age Jesus has been extending his kingdom.⁶¹

In the sermon "Dispositions Under National Judgments" the point under discussion was national judgment:

Sooner or later, violations of public faith are sure to avenge themselves on a guilty people; and sometimes the judgments which scourge them are the striking, palpable re-bounds of their sins. We see at once the connection between the destruction of the first-born of Egypt, and the murder of the first-born

⁶¹ Sermons, I, 99.

of the Israelites. The accumulated miseries of the French Revolution had their origin, remotely but clearly, in the massacre of St. Bartholomew, and the revocation of the edict of Nantes.⁶²

In the famous sermon "The Cross," preached at the Triennial Convention, Fuller used the historical account of Eusebius concerning the vision of Constantine. When Constantine was going into battle with Maxentius, he prayed for God's help. He saw in a vision a flaming cross above the sun with these words on it, "By this sign thou shalt conquer."⁶³ Fuller did not examine the credibility of this vision, his subject was "The Cross," and he used this idea of the vision as an illustration of the power of the cross. This attracted attention as well as introduced his subject.

In "The Deity of Christ" Fuller used this illustration of love:

Tigranes, king of Armenia, not only offered a thousand talents, but surrendered himself in person, that he might redeem his wife, who had been taken captive. This devotion so touched Cyrus, in whose power they were, that he released them both freely. Being asked, on her return home, as to the person of so princely a conqueror, the wife replied, "I did not see him; my eyes beheld only the man who so loved me as to offer such a price, and expose himself to such a death for my sake." Shall the kindness of an earthly benefactor thus inflame the heart, and shall not

62 Ibid., II, 188.

63 Ibid., III, 240.

the love of Christ blind us to all earthly objects, and turn and fix our adoring gaze on him, who for our ransom poured out his blood, and humbled himself unto death, even the death of the cross.⁶⁴

The sermon on "The New Commandment" stressed the need for a new, divine principle of love, stating that material and outward events would not bring this unity of love. Fuller cited this example:

If any events could unite men together as brothers, they were the trials and triumphs of the American Revolution. Yet scarcely had independence been achieved, when an enemy more formidable than any foreign army at once appeared, and intestine strife threatened to rend into hostile fragments that noble confederation.⁶⁵

These examples illustrated the use that Fuller made of history in his sermons.

(2) Religious and Philosophical Systems. In the extra-Biblical material found in Richard Fuller's sermons, references were made to various religious and philosophical systems. He made use of them to illustrate a point, to refute an idea, or to establish truth.

In the sermon "The Cross," Fuller was speaking on the power of the cross to displace the world and give

64 Ibid., III, 118.

65 Ibid., III, 57-58; cf. also, "Sinful Pleasures," III, 135; "The Insane Rich Man," III, 168; "The New Commandment," III, 59; and "The Desire of All Nations," III, 268-269, 278-279.

assurance of immortality when he made this statement on the failure of philosophical systems to give this assurance in response to the question as to their ability to give the needed assurance:

From the books of philosophers? But, besides that their lessons are such subtleties as the multitude could never understand, the truth is, the philosophers themselves felt but little confidence in their own reasonings. Socrates, when dying, said, "I am going out of the world and you remain in it, but which is better is known only to God. I hope," continued the old man, "I hope there is something reserved for us after death." Cicero confesses himself to be unable to decide anything here; and introduces one complaining "that while he was reading the arguments for immortality, he felt convinced, but as soon as he laid aside his books, his belief was gone." And Seneca well remarks, that "the philosophers rather promised than proved an existence beyond the tomb."⁶⁶

The doctrines of the Socinians and Unitarians were refuted in "The Deity of Christ":

These are the revealed facts. And now these facts thus established, I say a child can refute the arguments of Socinians who pretend that the Scriptures assert, and that Jesus himself proclaims the superiority of the Father.⁶⁷ . . . It is manifest that, so far as the testimony of the Bible is concerned, to deny the divinity of Jesus Christ is to deny that there is any Deity at all. Socinians are forced to this single and terrible dilemma.⁶⁸

⁶⁶ Ibid., III, 243.

⁶⁷ Ibid., III, 98.

⁶⁸ Ibid., III, 113.

Again in speaking of the humanity of Jesus in the sermon "The Sympathizing High Priest" he said:

It is because we do not fully receive the doctrine of Christ's real humanity, that we feel I know not what shrinking from this truth, and thus give the Unitarians an advantage over us. The Saviour was as truly human as he was divine; it is no irreverence, it is only uttering the plain language of the Scriptures, to say, that as a man, he had a human intellect.⁶⁹

In this same sermon he drew a contrast between the Christian and other religionists:

It is in thus approaching God through this new and living way that the Christian is entirely unlike all other men. In this view, he scarcely differs more widely from the Mohammedan and Brahmin, than he does from the moralist, the formalist, and the sacramentalist.⁷⁰

These examples revealed the manner in which Fuller brought the religious and philosophical groups into his sermons. They were brought in only as illustrations of and arguments for the truth which he sought to establish. He was not parading his learning but establishing truth and refuting error.

(3) Poetry. Poetry was part of the extra-Biblical material which Fuller used in his sermons. He never gave

⁶⁹ Ibid., III, 143.

⁷⁰ Ibid., III, 154; cf. also, "The Good Samaritan," I, 76; "The Lonesomeness of the Redeemer," III, 135, 137; "The Sympathizing High Priest," III, 143.

the authors' names of the poems he used. He used the poems in different parts of the sermon, in the introduction, in the discussion, and in the conclusion. However, he made the greatest use of poetry in the conclusion. Fuller had a definite purpose for each poem he used. They were appropriately placed in the sermon and the content contributed to unity of thought in its place.

The main purposes for which Fuller used poetry were to illustrate his point, to challenge the congregation to action, and for style, giving a finish to the sermon.

Fuller preached on "The Christian Delivered From Fear of Death" on Sunday after the death of one of his daughters. She had died victoriously although in great pain, and she had no fear of death as it drew near.⁷¹ In the sermon he spoke on the fact that all must die and urged his hearers to trust Christ in order to be ready for the event of death. He closed the sermon with a poem of eight verses, which gave a finished style to the sermon and contained the theme of the entire sermon.

Ah! I shall soon be dying,
 Time swiftly glides away;
 But on my Lord relying
 I hail the happy day.

71 Ibid., I, 235-236.

The day when I must enter
 Upon a world unknown,
 My helpless soul I venture
 On Jesus Christ alone.⁷²

These two verses illustrated the appropriateness of his use of poetry.

In discussing the point that God will supply strength for each day, Fuller quoted two short poems in the sermon entitled "Strength As Our Day." The first was on faith to try the impossible,⁷³ and the other was on the importance of making the most of each day's opportunities.⁷⁴

Fuller asked the congregation to think of the brevity and uncertainty of human life when he used this poem to enforce his point in the sermon "The Insane Rich Man:"

With noiseless step death steals on man,
 No plea, no prayer delivers him,
 From the midst of life's unfinished plan,
 With sudden grasp it severs him.
 And, ready, or not ready, no delay,
 Forth to his Judge's bar he must away.⁷⁵

The length of the poems varied. In the "Desire of All Nations" he pictured Christ's victorious return with all the people assembled before him, and described the assembly in these lines:

72 Ibid., I, 261.

73 Ibid., II, 227.

74 Ibid., II, 232.

75 Ibid., III, 159-160.

An assembly such as earth
Saw never, such as heaven stoops down to see.⁷⁶

Fuller used poetry for praise in the sermon on "The Cross":

O for this love let rocks and hills
Their lasting silence break,
And all harmonious human tongues
The Saviour's praises speak.⁷⁷

In the sermon "The Walk to Emmaus" he used the poem "Sun of My Soul" at the end of the sermon for the concluding prayer.⁷⁸

In "The New Commandment" he used a poem as a prayer of humility and confession.⁷⁹ The sermon "The Three Hebrews in the Furnace" contained a poem for encouragement.

"Through night to light" and "Through Cross to Crown" were two main ideas of this poem.⁸⁰

Fuller used poems in his sermons, every one appropriate in its place, to illustrate the point, to motivate the hearer, or as a finish to the composition of the sermon.

Richard Fuller was not limited in his sources of

76 Ibid., III, 281.

77 Ibid., III, 253.

78 Ibid., III, 195.

79 Ibid., III, 62.

80 Ibid., III, 93; cf. also, "The Law and the Gospel," II, 111; "The Three Hebrews in the Furnace," III, 82; "Sinful Pleasures," III, 138; "The Saviour's Temptation," III, 217-218; "Jacob's Ladder," III, 235; "The Cross," III, 256, 262; "The Desire of all Nations," III, 275.

material to one field or branch of learning. He referred to or quoted men of history, poetry, religion, the church, the military, the judiciary, philosophy, and science. A partial list of names that appeared in Fuller's sermons, to illustrate the scope of his sources, included the following: Lord Bacon, John Wesley, Augustine, Scott, Chalmers, Adams, Bunyan, Rosseau, Pliny, Archbishop Leighton, Milton, De Troquerville, Lord Broughton, Channing, Mr. Jay, Cowper, Tacitus, Hegel, Josephus, Eusebius, Washington, Luther, Julius Ceasar, Celsus, Mr. Hume, Malanethon, Wayland, Webster, Oldhousen, Livingston, Alexander, Charlemagne, Napoleon, Huffman, Andrew Fuller, Missionaries Elliott and Brainard, Richard Baxter, Mr. Locke, Galileo, Mr. Pitt, and General Sherman.

Fuller's use of the extra-Biblical material was in line with his aim -- to preach the truths of God's revelation and persuade men by so doing. This material was secondary in the content of his sermons, serving only as a supplement to the Biblical content. He did not make great use of extra material, but when he did, it was appropriate and beneficial. He used this material to illustrate the truth, as an aid in argument, to motivate the hearer, and to give polish to his style.

FACTORS IN THE ARRANGEMENT OF RICHARD FULLER'S SERMONS

The method of preparation and the content of Fuller's sermons have already been considered. In this section factors in the arrangement of his sermons were discussed. His sermons were classified in the first division according to type; the objectives of the sermons were studied in the second division; and the formal elements of introduction, discussion, and conclusion were analyzed in the final division.

Classifications of types of sermons. The content of Fuller's sermons was discussed in the section above; and in this section, the types of sermons which were found in Fuller's printed works were considered. Fuller was a Bible preacher and the thought and content of all his sermons was Biblical. Every sermon was based on a Bible passage and was directly related to the passage. He did not confine himself to the text under consideration but used any other that would contribute to an explanation of the topic.

The sermons of Fuller were classified as subject, text, and expository sermons. The subject sermon was designated as one in which the points of division were derived from the subject. The expository sermon was a sermon that gave an exposition of the Scripture under

consideration in an orderly manner, and the text sermon was one in which the points of division were drawn directly from the text.

Fuller's subjects were always drawn from the Scripture text which he had selected from the sermon, or if he selected the subject first, the Scripture which he used contained the subject of the sermon. Some examples of his subject sermons included: "The Lamb of God,"⁸¹ from the text John 1:35-36, in which his subject was the exclamation of John, . . . "Behold the Lamb of God!" Concerning his subject, Fuller said:

"Behold the Lamb of God!" this was the all engrossing topic of the Baptist; this is the all engrossing topic for us; this is the abridgement of all sermons, the epitome of all doctrines, the substance of all exhortations, the whole body of evangelical divinity.⁸²

The divisions of this subject were: First, "Behold the Lamb" in his earthly life;⁸³ second, "Behold the Lamb" in his atonement for man;⁸⁴ and third, "Behold the Lamb" as an example.⁸⁵ These divisions were three ways of looking at the subject.

81 Ibid., I, 127 ff.

82 Ibid., I, 128.

83 Ibid., I, 128, 129.

84 Ibid., I, 135, 136.

85 Ibid., I, 143, 144.

Fuller preached two sermons entitled "Bible Testimony, The Best Testimony."⁸⁶ The Bible background for these sermons was the parable of the rich man and Lazarus in Luke 16:19-31. In his introduction to the first sermon he pointed out that there were many lessons taught in this parable, but in these sermons he would consider only one. The subject of the sermons was derived from Abraham's statement, God's revelation is abundantly sufficient.⁸⁷ His subject then was that the Bible revelation was the best and most sufficient revelation. He submitted two propositions:

First, I say, that a man living in Jerusalem, in the days of the apostles, had evidence of the truth of the revelation given us by God, superior to any which could have been furnished by an apparition from the grave. Secondly, we, living at this day, have evidence as to revealed truth superior to any which could have been possessed by a man living at Jerusalem in the days of the apostles.⁸⁸

In the first sermon, on the first proposition, he gave evidence that man had more conclusive proof from God's revelation than one could give or ever show by returning from the dead.⁸⁹ In the second sermon he considered the

86 Ibid., I, 55, 66.

87 Ibid., I, 56.

88 Loc. cit.

89 Ibid., I, 57.

second proposition. Fuller advanced the idea that the people of his day had in addition to what the Apostles had, the New Testament and the accumulation of years of Christian history. The Bible testimony was the best testimony and one returning from the dead could not add anything of value to its revelation.⁹⁰

The sermon on "Predestination"⁹¹ with Acts 27:22-24, 30, 31, for the Scripture passage, had this plan: "I am going to offer you some thoughts upon this difficult subject, treating it first doctrinally, and then practically."⁹² This sermon had only two points, the doctrine of predestination,⁹³ and the practical lessons for the Christian relative to this doctrine.⁹⁴

Fuller used the text, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me," John 12:32, in the sermon "The Cross".⁹⁵ He drew only his subject from the text. His proposition was:

Still it is true (and I here indicate the subject and division of my whole discourse,)

90 Ibid., I, 66.

91 Ibid., II, 7.

92 Ibid., II, 8.

93 Ibid., II, 9.

94 Ibid., II, 24.

95 Ibid., III, 240.

still it is true, that whatever the intellect of a man, there is an argument in the cross to convince him; whatever the heedlessness of a man, there is an energy in the cross to rouse him; in fine, whatever his guilt, there is in the cross a magnetism to draw, and a magic to change, and a mystery to save him.⁹⁶

The subject was treated in three divisions: First, the Cross contained an argument to convince;⁹⁷ second, there was energy or motive to arouse man;⁹⁸ and third, the Cross was the wonder-working power of God to save man.⁹⁹

Another subject sermon "The Desire of all Nations,"¹⁰⁰ using Haggai 2:7 "And the desire of all nations shall come," was treated in this way: Fuller interpreted the text as referring to Christ, the desire of all nations.¹⁰¹ Then he took the word desire from the text and defined it as meaning expectation, wants, and happiness. He explained that Christ was the expectation, the want, and the happiness of the whole human family.¹⁰² These three

96 Ibid., III, 241, 242.

97 Ibid., III, 242.

98 Ibid., III, 247.

99 Ibid., III, 254.

100 Ibid., III, 263.

101 Ibid., III, 264.

102 Loc. cit.

definitions constituted the divisions of this sermon.¹⁰³

The second type of sermon that Fuller used was expository. This sermon was an exposition of the Scripture passage under consideration. The length of the Scripture passage varied from a few verses to a whole chapter. An illustration of this type was found in the sermon entitled "The Three Hebrews in the Furnace."¹⁰⁴ This was an exposition on the third chapter of Daniel. There were four divisions in this sermon: The first one dealt with degeneracy and corruption of human nature as exemplified in Nebuchadnezzar's character;¹⁰⁵ the second showed an example of true character in the conduct of the Hebrews;¹⁰⁶ the third set forth the results and lessons of this fiery

103 Ibid., III, 264, 271, 275.

For other examples of this type cf. "The Gospel not a Philosophy but a Revelation," I, 13-34; "Mercy Remembered in Wrath," I, 211-234; "The Christian Delivered from Fear of Death," I, 235-264; "Prosperity and Adversity," I, 263-283; "Christians to be Lights and Examples," I, 284-302; "Christ our Passover," I, 317-332; "Danger to the Soul from Lawful Things," II, 32-48; "The Judgment," II, 130-141, 142-154; "Former Days," 155-170; "Dispositions under National Judgments," II, 171-195; "A City or House Divided against Itself," II, 196-213; "The Gospel Stifled by Covetousness," II, 235-250; "Fellowship in Christ's Sufferings," II, 269-289; "Elijah's Faith and Defect," II, 290-309; "A Precious Saviour," II, 330-349; "The Lonesomeness of the Redeemer," III, 9-34; "The New Commandment," III, 54-73; "The Deity of Christ," III, 94-119; "Sinful Pleasures," III, 120-138; "The Sympathizing High Priest," III, 139-156; "The Insane Rich Man," III, 157-175; and "The Saviour's Temptation," III, 196-220.

104 Ibid., III, 74.

105 Ibid., III, 75.

106 Ibid., III, 79.

ordeal;¹⁰⁷ and the fourth dealt with the encouragement the narrative gave for faith and constancy.¹⁰⁸

Another expository sermon was on Matthew 2 entitled "The Star of Bethlehem."¹⁰⁹ The first division of this sermon was an exposition of the Scripture passage as a whole.¹¹⁰ In the second division he analyzed the conduct of Herod, the Priests, and the Magi, in relation to Christ.¹¹¹ His proposition was that the Gospel received the same treatment in his day as was illustrated in the conduct of Herod, the Priests, and the Magi.¹¹²

"The Good Samaritan"¹¹³ was an exposition of the parable from Luke 10. The sermon divisions were made by analyzing the conduct of the Priest,¹¹⁴ the Levite,¹¹⁵ and the Samaritan.¹¹⁶ "John's Message to Jesus"¹¹⁷ was an exposition of Matthew 11:3,4. The first division of this

107 Ibid., III, 85.

108 Ibid., III, 89.

109 Ibid., I, 35.

110 Loc. cit.

111 Ibid., I, 40.

112 Ibid., I, 35.

113 Ibid., I, 76.

114 Ibid., I, 78.

115 Ibid., I, 84.

116 Ibid., I, 89.

117 Ibid., I, 169.

sermon was John's question,¹¹⁸ and the second division was the answer Jesus sent to John.¹¹⁹ In "The True Christian"¹²⁰ on II Corinthians 5:14-17, Fuller stated his proposition as follows:

Our text is one of these glorious portions of the Bible. It contains in itself the entire Gospel. It deserves our most careful attention, because it announces God's judgment as to the character and destiny of every child of Adam. "We thus judge" -- this is the final, irrevocable decision; and what is this decision? It comprehends three propositions, which will be the subject of our commentary today. The first is that a Christian is a man in Christ; the second is, that a Christian is a man for Christ; and the third is, that a Christian is a new man.¹²¹

The third classification of Fuller's sermons was text sermons. In these the text furnished the points of division for the sermon. Some of these text sermons were:

"Lord, to whom shall we go?"¹²² from the text

118 Ibid., I, 170.

119 Ibid., I, 182-183.

120 Ibid., II, 112.

121 Ibid., II, 113.

For other examples of this type cf. "The Penitent of Nain," I, 111-126; "The Redeemer's Agony and Prayer," I, 151-164; "Joy in the Lord," I, 190-210; "Love to Christians as Evidence of Conversion," I, 303-316; "Simeon's Faith and Consolation," I, 333-348; "The Mortification of Sin," II, 251-268; "The Walk to Emmaus," III, 176-195; and "Jacob's Ladder," III, 221-239.

122 Ibid., II, 310.

"Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life and we believe and are sure, that thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," John 6:68,69. Fuller derived three points from this text. The first was on eternal life as the want of humanity and the assurance of man's spirituality and immortality.¹²³ The second point was that Jesus was the only one who could satisfy the want of humanity;¹²⁴ and the third was the confidence that Peter had in the Saviour and in eternal life through Him.¹²⁵

In the sermon "Jesus and the Three Disciples in Gethsemane"¹²⁶ from Matthew 26:45, 46, "Then cometh he to his disciples and saith unto them, Sleep on now and take your rest; behold . . . the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us be going. . . ." The text suggested four points to Fuller: First, Christ was still being betrayed by his professed disciples;¹²⁷ second, while the false friends betrayed Jesus, his true friends

123 Ibid., II, 311.

124 Ibid., II, 315.

125 Ibid., II, 318.

126 Ibid., II, 68.

127 Ibid., II, 69.

were criminally asleep;¹²⁸ third, the irreparable loss suffered from sleeping;¹²⁹ and fourth, the past could not be restored but the future was ahead, "Rise, let us be going."¹³⁰

In the sermon "The Incredulity of Thomas"¹³¹ from John 22:26-28, the text yielded two ideas -- the unbelief of Thomas,¹³² and the Saviour's treatment of the skeptical apostle.¹³³

Another text sermon was "Strength as our Day"¹³⁴ from Deuteronomy 33:25, "As thy days so shall thy strength be." This text rendered three ideas: First, man was weak and needed supernatural succor;¹³⁵ second, in God's economy there was a supply of needed strength;¹³⁶ and third, the text promised assurance, strength, and consolation.¹³⁷

128 Ibid., II, 77.

129 Ibid., II, 80-81.

130 Ibid., II, 85.

131 Ibid., III, 35.

132 Ibid., III, 36.

133 Ibid., III, 44.

134 Ibid., II, 214.

135 Ibid., II, 215.

136 Ibid., II, 220.

137 Ibid., II, 224.

For other examples of this type cf. "What will You do with Jesus?", I, 95-110; "The Kingdom of God cometh not with Observation", II, 49-67; "The Law and the Gospel", II, 89-110.

These three types of sermons were found in Richard Fuller's preaching. He selected the type sermon in line with his aim to elucidate truth and persuade the hearer. There was unity of thought and an orderly development in his sermons.

The objectives of his sermons. In this section the objectives of Fuller's sermons were discussed. In analyzing these sermons the questions were asked: For what purpose was the sermon preached? What was the objective? His sermons contained some general objectives: The desire to preach Bible truths, and the application of the sermon to the congregation, both the saved and the unsaved. Fuller's sermons for this study were classified by the one main objective found in each sermon. Five major objectives were found in them: To indoctrinate, to evangelize, to encourage, to motivate for Christian living, and to challenge for a special task. In no one sermon was the main objective found to the exclusion of all others. They were classified according to the main objective.

(1) To indoctrinate. The objective to indoctrinate the hearer was one of Fuller's main objectives. There was both a positive and a negative side to the objective. The positive side of this objective was to proclaim truth, and to implant it in the hearts and minds of the hearers

for belief and action. The Bible contained the truth and it had to be taught. The negative side of this objective was to refute error. In doing this he exposed the error and then implanted the truth.

"The Gospel not a Philosophy but a Revelation"¹³⁸ was a sermon in which Fuller sought to remove the false ideas and implant the true. He summed up his sermon with the conclusion:

In conclusion, let me remind you that the Gospel is not a system of philosophy or morality or theology submitted to our judgments, but a religion, "the testimony of God", addressed to our faith.¹³⁹

In the sermon "Predestination"¹⁴⁰ he stated his objective as follows:

As, however, men affecting to be wits and geniuses are, in books and in conversation, forever parading their flippancies on the question of predestination and free-agency, it is worth while to show them, once for all, how little they can take by their infidelity and ribaldry.¹⁴¹

The sermon "The Deity of Christ" contained this statement concerning the subject, "The proper deity of Jesus Christ is, however, a subject which ought to engage our hearts and minds oftener than it does."¹⁴² It was Fuller's

138 Ibid., I, 13.

139 Ibid., I, 32.

140 Ibid., II, 7.

141 Ibid., II, 9.

142 Ibid., III, 95.

objective to indoctrinate the people with the revealed truth, and in all his sermons the truth was expounded. In some sermons the main objective was to elucidate only one doctrine.¹⁴³

(2) To evangelize. Fuller was a Gospel preacher, and in his sermons the good news was proclaimed with a challenge for the hearer to believe the Gospel. In some sermons the objective to evangelize was predominant. "What will You do with Jesus?"¹⁴⁴ illustrated Fuller's objective to evangelize. He used the text, "What shall I do then with Jesus?" Matthew 27:22. In the introduction he gave the context of his text and asked the question, "What will Jesus do with us in the day of judgment?"

In that day what will Jesus do with us? Nor need we be at a loss to answer this enquiry; for the decision then is suspended upon the practical reply we give to the question now submitted to each of us, "What are you doing, what will you do with Jesus."¹⁴⁵

In the first division of the sermon he asked this question relative to the earthly life of Jesus, as a historical fact.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴³ Ibid., cf. "Bible Testimony the Best Testimony," I, 55-65; "The Penitent of Nain," I, 111-126; "The Kingdom of God cometh not with Observation," II, 49-67; "The Law and the Gospel," II, 89-113; "The Judgment," II, 130-141, 142-154; "The Mortification of Sin," II, 251-268; "Fellowship in Christ's Sufferings," I, 269-289; "The Incredulity of Thomas," III, 35-53; "The Sympathizing His Priest," III 139-156.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., I, 95.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., I, 95-96.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., I, 96 ff.

The second point was relative to his death, "and, now, what will you do with this injured, crucified Jesus?"¹⁴⁷ The third dealt with the Lordship of Jesus over the living and the dead. "What do you say to this demand? What will you do with Jesus who now asserts his right to this lordship over you?"¹⁴⁸ And the fourth dealt with man's affections, "What will you do with this one who was altogether lovely, a precious, amiable Redeemer?"¹⁴⁹ In conclusion, he asked the unbeliever this question:

What will you do with him? Do with him, did I say? O what, what will you do without him? what, when affliction and anguish shall come upon you? what when closing your eyelids in death? what, when appearing before the awful judgment seat?¹⁵⁰

He then gave a personal testimony from his own experience:

Yes, we have throned him in our minds and hearts--the cynosure of our wandering thoughts--the monarch of our warmest affections, hopes, desires. This we have done. And the more we meditate upon his astonishing love, his amazing sacrifice, the more we feel that if we had a thousand minds, hearts, souls, we would crown him Lord of all. Living, we will live in him, for him, to him.--Dying, we will clasp him in our arms, and with Simeon, welcome death as the consummation of bliss.¹⁵¹

147 Ibid., I, 101.

148 Ibid., I, 103 ff.

149 Loc. cit.

150 Ibid., I, 109.

151 Ibid., I, 109-110.

This sermon was typical of Fuller's evangelistic sermons, the objective of which was to evangelize.¹⁵²

(3) To encourage. Fuller realized the commission of God to comfort and to encourage the people. This objective was felt in many of his sermons. There was encouragement for all classes of people and in every condition of life. For the lonely there was the sermon "Joy in the Lord;"¹⁵³ for the discouraged "John's Message to Jesus;"¹⁵⁴ for the weak "Strength as our Day;"¹⁵⁵ for the tempted "The Saviour's Temptation;"¹⁵⁶ and for those facing death or those who mourned "The Christian Delivered from Fear of Death."¹⁵⁷

"The Christian Delivered from Fear of Death," from Hebrews 2:14, 15, was preached on Sunday, December 1, 1861, the Sunday following the death of one of his daughters who had died at a very early age. In the introduction he

152 Ibid., cf. "The Star of Bethlehem," I, 35-54; "Bible Testimony the Best Testimony," I, 66-75; "Mercy Remembered in Wrath," I, 211-235; "Christ our Passover," I, 317-332; "Simeon's Faith and Consolation," I, 333-348; "Lord, to whom shall we go?" II, 310-329; "The Lonesomeness of the Redeemer," III, 9-34; "The Walk to Emmaus," III, 176-195; and "Jacob's Ladder," III, 221-239.

153 Ibid., I, 190.

154 Ibid., I, 169.

155 Ibid., II, 214.

156 Ibid., III, 196.

157 Ibid., I, 235.

related the facts concerning her death and the glorious victory that she experienced in Christ as she died.¹⁵⁸

This prompted him to share this experience with the church for the purpose of encouraging the ones who were in mourning or strengthening those who were facing death,¹⁵⁹ and to show all that Christ gave the believer victory over death.

Fuller interpreted all events in the light of Christian doctrine and his sermons were preached with the objective in mind of meeting the needs of the people. Encouragement was one of his objectives in preaching.¹⁶⁰

(4) Christian living. Fuller knew that he was to guide the people in Christian living. This objective was found in his sermons. He believed that the Christian was a new man in Christ, and he was to live, act, and work as a Christian. Fuller set forth in his preaching what a Christian should be, how he should live, and what his attitudes and motives should be. Some statements from the sermon "Christians to be Lights and Examples"¹⁶¹ illustrated Fuller's preaching on the objective of Christian living:

158 Ibid., I, 235,236.

159 Ibid., I, 250 ff.

160 Cf. Sermons, "Prosperity and Adversity," 263-283; Elijah's Faith and Defect," II, 290-309; "A Precious Saviour," II, 330-349.

161 Ibid., I, 284.

I know, with shame I confess, that there have been, and still are most unworthy members in the communion of all the churches; but this is not the fault of the Gospel. Bad as these men may be rest assured they would have been much worse without the restraints of religion. And if in the eyes of the world their profession seems a foil to their defects, setting them off in strong exaggerated colors, this fact is itself a concession of the glory of the Gospel. "What do ye more than others." Men expect more--they are justified in demanding more of a Christian than of others. In him, therefore, blemishes will be observed and condemned which would not be noticed in other men. All this is so, however, simply because the Christian's faith is so holy. A spot on the sun's disc attracts our attention because there is darkness where we had a right to expect that all would be bright.¹⁶²

Another statement on this subject was as follows:

We sometimes express surprise at the little success of the Gospel; that after eighteen hundred years, it has achieved no wider conquests, and has still daily to renew a conflict in which it seems often to be baffled. We are even tempted to doubt whether it can make good all which it promises. But when we look at the organizations called churches, and examine the conduct of most of the people called Christians, the real wonder is that the Gospel has done so much. Take the most evangelical of our churches; take this church. We make our boast of orthodoxy, and are confident that we are guides to the blind, the lights of those which dwell in darkplaces. But if Paul were here, would he not find too abundant cause to remonstrate with us--as he formerly did with the Jews--for resting in a knowledge of the truth which is miserably unproductive? On all sides he

¹⁶² Ibid., I, 286.

would see much skill in expounding evangelical doctrine, with but little practical conformity to it; he would hear us exposing human depravity by overwhelming demonstrations, while deplorably unconscious of the burden of our own ungodliness; he would behold too many expatiating on the atonement and righteousness of Christ, without having savingly embraced them; and loudly insisting on the necessity of holiness, while wretchedly delinquent in all those graces which are the fruits of the spirit.¹⁶³

The world places little value upon exterior precision; it does not understand faith, orthodoxy, spirituality; but it does comprehend and reverence meekness, humility, honesty, purity; and if these be wanting, our sanctimoniousness will inspire only a deeper contempt for us, and religion will be involved with us in this contempt.¹⁶⁴

These statements revealed Fuller's method of urging Christian living, and this was one of his objectives in preaching. His sermons showed evidence of his keen sense of what a Christian should be before the world and in the world.¹⁶⁵

(5) To challenge for a special task. Fuller preached many special sermons, before conventions, schools, missionary

¹⁶³ Ibid., I, 295.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., I, 300.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., cf. "The Redeemer's Agony and Prayer," I, 151-168; "Love to Christians an Evidence of Conversion," I, 303-316; "Danger to the Soul from Lawful Things," II, 32-48; "The True Christian," II, 112-129; "Dispositions under National Judgments," II, 171-195; "A City or House Divided against Itself," II, 196-213; "The New Commandment," III, 54-73; "The Three Hebrews in the Furnace," III, 74-93; "Sinful Pleasures," III, 120-138; and "The Insane Rich Man," III, 157-175.

organizations, and in other places. On these occasions his special objective was to challenge that particular group for a special task.

The general objective of "The Cross," the sermon he preached before the Triennial Convention, was to preach a message on the Cross. The particular objective had to do with the fact that the Convention, as well as the nation, was ready to divide into separate and hostile groups. He held up the Cross as the power to unite the Baptists. In answer to the question of who shall separate, he said, "No, the Cross which lifted the Saviour from the earth lifts us high above these petty tumults and distractions."¹⁶⁶ His objective was clear in this case, that the Convention should stay close to the Cross, united in the bonds of peace and brotherhood.

At the first annual session of the Southern Baptist Convention, held in Richmond, Virginia, on June 10, 1846, he preached on "The Desire of all Nations."¹⁶⁷ This was a missionary sermon. His objective was to give the infant Convention the missionary impulse it needed. "Is Christ the Desire of all Nations? Then, my brethern, let us preach Christ, and let our missionaries preach Christ."¹⁶⁸

166 Ibid., III, 260.

167 Ibid., III, 263.

168 Ibid., III, 280.

This sermon was well adapted for his objective.

Another sermon with a special objective was "The Good Samaritan."¹⁶⁹ He was speaking in behalf of the "Ladies' Home Mission Society." His objective was to gain the support that the Ladies needed for their work by comparing the work of the Ladies' Society to the Samaritan.¹⁷⁰

In every sermon there were major objectives--to teach, to evangelize, to comfort, and encourage, to prompt Christian living or a special objective. But in all of them he relied on the Biblical revelation and preached Christ as the motive and object of all faith and love.

The formal elements of his sermons. The content of Richard Fuller's sermons, the classifications or types and the objectives of his sermons have already been discussed; and to complete the study, an analysis of the formal elements was required. In this section the formal elements of Fuller's sermons -- the introduction, the discussion, and the conclusion -- were analyzed.

(1) Introduction. Fuller realized the importance of attention and sought to use his introduction to gain attention. He made this statement:

The great thing in a preacher is to secure earnest attention. The cry we constantly

169 Ibid., I, 76.

170 Ibid., I, 77.

repeat is, "O earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord!" but "how can they hear without a preacher?" All our studies, visits, labors are vain, unless we are bringing truth to bear on the intellects, consciences, hearts, of the people. But it is no easy thing for us, especially if we have been with the same congregation for many years, to gain and keep their ears every Sabbath. . . . It is granted to those who carefully, prayerfully, cultivate the powers confided to them as instruments with which to do the work of the ministry.¹⁷¹

The introductions of Fuller's sermons were designed to capture attention and to lead the congregation into the thoughts of the sermon.

With title and text given, he began to introduce his subject. The length of his introductions was from one¹⁷² to five paragraphs,¹⁷³ depending on the particular need for each sermon. Fuller did not always directly state his subject and plan, but in most cases he did. Some examples of the manner in which he stated his subject in the introduction were:

"That ye love one another." Let us meditate upon this great truth; and then enquire why this commandment is called "new."¹⁷⁴

¹⁷¹ Cuthbert, op. cit., pp. 245-246.

¹⁷² Sermons, "Simeon's Faith and Consolation," I, 333; "The Redeemer's Agony and Prayer," I, 151.

¹⁷³ Ibid., "The Good Samaritan," I, 76; "The Incredulity of Thomas," III, 35.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., III, 55.

The passage (I John 3:14) which I have just read is familiar to you all; but on that very account it may not have received from you the attention it deserves. I am going to make it the subject of our meditations this morning.¹⁷⁵

These last words are our text; they speak of the lonesomeness of the Redeemer in his mediatorial work; and it is this thought which I propose as the subject of our present meditations.¹⁷⁶

In his introduction the subject was stated or inferred and the content of the introduction was in line with the subject.

In many of his introductions the plan of the sermon was also given. In the sermon "Predestination" he stated his plan, "I am going to offer you some thoughts upon this difficult subject, treating it first doctrinally, and then practically."¹⁷⁷ In "The Penitent of Nain" his plan was stated as follows:

The passage just read as our text was written almost nineteen centuries ago, yet it appeals to our hearts as if recorded yesterday. And especially is this true of those features in this narrative to which I invite your attention and which will constitute the subject and division of our discourse.¹⁷⁸

In "John's Message to Jesus," he presented the following plan: "This question and its answer are so remarkable,

175 Ibid., I, 303.

176 Ibid., III, 10.

177 Ibid., II, 8.

178 Ibid., I, 112.

that I shall make them the subject of our meditations today."¹⁷⁹ In the sermon "The True Christian" he drew his plan from the text:

It comprehends three propositions, which will be the subject of our commentary today. The first is, that a Christian is a man in Christ; the second is, that a Christian is a man for Christ, and the third is, that a Christian is a new man.¹⁸⁰

Again, in the sermon "The Star of Bethlehem" his statement of plan was:

The star in the East was an emblem of that Gospel which, coming down from heaven, is "a light shining in a dark place" to guide us to the Redeemer of our souls. The treatment which the Gospel receives is strikingly illustrated by the conduct of Herod, the Priests, and the Magi; and it is this last thought which shall engage our attention today.¹⁸¹

Fuller made good use of his introductions by following the practice of stating his subject and plan in them.

In some introductions he gave a definition relative to the subject. In "Jacob's Ladder"¹⁸² he used four paragraphs to define the proper method for the preacher to use in interpreting an Old Testament passage such as the one on Jacob's vision of the ladder. In other cases a

179 Ibid., I, 170.

180 Ibid., II, 113.

181 Ibid., I, 35.

182 Ibid., III, 221.

theological definition was given in the introduction. In "The Star of Bethlehem"¹⁸³ and "The Desire of all Nations,"¹⁸⁴ the doctrine of the Incarnation was stated; in "Christians to be Lights and Examples,"¹⁸⁵ the purpose of the Gospel was given; and in "Christ our Passover"¹⁸⁶ a long statement on the doctrine of the Atonement was made.

The opening paragraph in some introductions contained a reference to a sermon he had formerly preached and connected the two. Examples of this were "The Deity of Christ,"¹⁸⁷ "Bible Testimony the Best Testimony,"¹⁸⁸ and "The Judgment."¹⁸⁹

The occasion on which the sermon was preached was frequently used in the introduction. The sermon "A Precious Saviour"¹⁹⁰ was preached at the observance of the Lord's Supper; hence, the first paragraph introduced the subject for this occasion. During the Civil War period when he

183 Ibid., I, 35.

184 Ibid., III, 263.

185 Ibid., I, 284.

186 Ibid., I, 317.

187 Ibid., III, 94.

188 Ibid., I, 66.

189 Ibid., II, 142.

190 Ibid., II, 330.

preached on national days of prayer and fasting, the introduction dealt with the occasion;¹⁹¹ and in "The Good Samaritan,"¹⁹² preached before the Ladies' Home Mission Society, the introduction referred to the society and its work.

Using another method, he explained the text or gave an exposition of the narrative from which he drew his text or subject.¹⁹³ In some sermons he gave a description of the writer of the text he was using.¹⁹⁴

The introductions of his sermons met the requirements of brevity, of having one thought, of being appropriate for the sermon, and of commanding attention. In the few introductions where a theological definition was given, his introductions were too involved for the average congregation.

(2) Discussion. In line with Fuller's aims and objectives, unity and order were found in his sermon discussions. He had one subject and one aim, and every part of the sermon contributed to the accomplishment of his aim and objective. All of Fuller's sermons moved in

¹⁹¹ Ibid., "Dispositions under National Judgments," II, 171; "A City or House Divided against Itself," II, 196.

¹⁹² Ibid., I, 76.

¹⁹³ Ibid., "John's Message to Jesus," I, 169; "Love to Christians and Evidence of Conversion," I, 303.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid., "The Lamb of God," I, 127.

the same direction, to the heart and mind of the hearer.

Fuller selected one subject for each sermon and his discussion was on that one subject. His law experience probably aided him in following one line of reasoning to the conclusion. Each part of the discussion had a vital relation to the subject.

Fuller had no set rule as to the number of divisions or points in his sermons. The text, subject, time, and place governed him in this respect. The divisions of the sermons were marked by a statement or numeral. Fuller did not break his thoughts down into subdivisions as such. He was an extemporaneous preacher, caring little for minute divisions. His sermons consisted of two, three, or four thoughts relative to the subject, and he discussed in each division the one main thought.

In the two sermons on "Bible Testimony the Best Testimony"¹⁹⁵ there was only one main point in each sermon. He had sermons with two main points. "Predestination,"¹⁹⁶ "John's Message to Jesus,"¹⁹⁷ "The Kingdom of God cometh not with Observation,"¹⁹⁸ and "Simeon's Faith and

195 Ibid., I, 55-66.

196 Ibid., II, 7.

197 Ibid., I, 169.

198 Ibid., II, 49.

Consolation"¹⁹⁹ were examples of this. The majority of his sermons contained three points, and some few contained four.

In preaching he moved from one point to the next naturally and with simplicity. This transition was accomplished by making some reference to the fact that he had finished with one point and was beginning another point.

The following outline illustrated Fuller's method of discussing the subject: "The Gospel not a Philosophy but a Revelation"²⁰⁰ from the text, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit," I Corinthians 2:9-10. His subject was the doctrine of the Gospel; his proposition was that the Gospel was a direct revelation from God. His divisions were:

I. The disclosures of the Gospel are the things indicated in the passage before us. And, entering at once into the subject, I remark, that Christianity is not a complement of natural religion, not a new phase, a perfect developement of truths partially known before, but a distinct message, a

199 Ibid., I, 333.

200 Ibid., I, 13.

peculiar interposition, a direct communication from God, of things entirely novel. It is news, "glad tidings of great joy," sent immediately from heaven to earth. It is intelligence confirmed by the divine veracity, and therefore announced dogmatically to the reciprocity of faith.²⁰¹

II. I pass now to our second article, and affirm that the truths of the Gospel are not only things of which Nature had given no previous intimation, but things as to which Nature never could have conceived any sort of presentiment.²⁰²

III. Up to this point, I have been speaking generally of the Gospel and its preternatural disclosures; let us come now closer to "the things" of which our Apostle treats. A glance at one or two of these mysteries of godliness, is all which the time allows; but the most cursory view will show how infinitely they transcend all unaided human--nay, angelic conceptions.²⁰³

IV. Having shown you that the Gospel is not a developement of natural religion, but a direct communication from God,--a revelation of things as to which nature and reason never gave and never could have given any information. I ought now to dwell upon the fact that the treasures of the Gospel are God's provisions for all who love him.²⁰⁴

This discussion was one unit of thought, the Gospel is not a philosophy but a revelation. The divisions were clear and distinct, each one sustaining a close relation to the subject, and to each other. The logical arrangement

201 Ibid., I, 14.

202 Ibid., I, 18.

203 Ibid., I, 21.

204 Ibid., I, 29.

of the points was convincing. His transitions were clear and informative as to what had gone before and what he proposed to do next, also there was a recapitulation in the second, third, and fourth transitions. There was a lack of proportion in the length of the divisions; the third division took nearly half the sermon time.

In the sermon "John's Message to Jesus"²⁰⁵ from the text, "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another? Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see," Matthew 11:3, 4. Fuller's subject was, "This question and its answer are so remarkable, that I shall make them the subject of our meditations today."²⁰⁶ His points of division were:

I. "Art thou he that should come or do we look for another?" This enquiry furnishes our first topic; and it deserves our closest attention, for what was John's motive in sending such a message.²⁰⁷

II. "Now when John had heard in prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples, and said unto him, Art thou he that should come, or look we for another?" We have examined the message which certainly proceeded from some painful questionings in the mind of John himself. From the message let us turn to the answer; let us see how Jesus dealt with this case of a staggered and almost expiring faith.²⁰⁸

205 Ibid., I, 169.

206 Ibid., I, 170.

207 Loc. cit.

208 Ibid., I, 182-183.

In the two divisions of this sermon there were directness and simplicity. The discussion dealt with the question of John and the answer Jesus gave to his question. The objective of the sermon was to comfort and encourage the people and to show them that Jesus would still answer the discouraged and give reassurance for faith. The text was adequately explained and the truth applied.

Considering the sermon "The Three Hebrews in the Furnace"²⁰⁹ on the text Daniel 3:19, 20, and with the whole third chapter of Daniel as the background for the sermon, his method of division was examined in the use of this Biblical narrative. His introduction dealt with the cynics who boasted of their own infidelity and insinuated that true piety was impossible. His desire was that they would study this narrative on the Hebrews. He believed that, and this was his purpose, "A true soul will turn from the record of such undaunted loyalty to God and conscience, with a fresh outfit of faith and hope."²¹⁰ He used this part of the Scripture for encouragement when he was discouraged and dejected. After this short introduction of two paragraphs, the divisions were:

209 Ibid., III, 74.

210 Loc. cit.

I. In unfolding the lessons of the text, let us begin with the narrative, let us analyze this passage in the history of our race; for there are several desultory but very instructive reflections which it at once suggests to our minds. And, first, who can look at the scene here portrayed, without blushing for the degeneracy and corruption of human nature.²¹¹

II. And this brings me from these desultory remarks to consider more directly the conduct of these Hebrews, and the example which God here proposes of that constancy and decision of character, without which we can neither be true to truth, to Jesus, nor to ourselves.²¹²

III. It only remains that I say something as to the result of this fiery ordeal; and impress upon you the great lesson it teaches--that when the child of God is called to enter the furnace, to endure some great trial, or make some noble sacrifices for truth, he will not be forsaken, sufficient grace shall be given him, his strength shall be as his day; not only shall he be supported, but he "shall come out with great substance," and shall glorify God in the fires. Renew your attention and honor me still for a few minutes.²¹³

IV. You have now, my friends, heard truths calculated to save you, urged with all simplicity and affection; let us ponder these truths and gather the fruit they ought to yield. And first, let this narrative reinforce our faith and constancy.²¹⁴

The objectives of this sermon were an exposition of this Scripture narrative and to implant the truth in such

211 Ibid., III, 75.

212 Ibid., III, 79.

213 Ibid., III, 85.

214 Ibid., III, 89.

a way as to enforce the faith and constancy of the hearer. There was unity and simplicity in the plan, arranged in logical order to accomplish this objective. The transitions in this outline were natural and clear due to his choice and arrangement of the words.

Another sermon that illustrated his method of discussion was "The Walk to Emmaus"²¹⁵ from Luke 24:32. In the introduction he gave an account of the two disciples as they left the city and the events along the way until they reached Emmaus. His plan was, "I have been reflecting on this walk to Emmaus, and I now offer you one or two thoughts which have suggested themselves to my mind."²¹⁶

The divisions were:

I. And, first--the first truth taught us by this narrative--see here the importance of searching and understanding the Scriptures, and how a neglected or perverted Bible will bring sin and sorrow into the soul.²¹⁷

II. As these two disciples pursue their melancholy journey--the deepening shadows of evening a feeble type of the gloom gathering on their souls--we have seen a third join them. Let us now turn our attention to this stranger. His fellow-travellers knew him not, but we know him. It is the same Being who entered the furnace with the three Hebrews, and he is ever near his people when "they walk and are sad."²¹⁸

215 Ibid., III, 176.

216 Ibid., III, 177.

217 Loc. cit.

218 Ibid., III, 183.

III. What is the effect of this interview upon these two disciples? Their souls are first consoled, then warmed, then heated. While Jesus is speaking the fire kindles; his words fell upon train after train of memory and hope and love, until everything is in a glow, and their hearts are burning within them.²¹⁹

IV. In finishing this discourse, let us extract from this history two lessons, and let the first be, The duty of living by faith, not by sight. . . .

Another lesson. Let us seek burning hearts. Faith is a great word; but there is a greater, more imperial word, it is Love.²²⁰

This sermon revealed the directness of Fuller's sermons as well as the lucidity and simplicity of arrangement in the discussion. The narrative gave Fuller three truths: The disciples were downhearted because they had neglected the Scriptures; Jesus joined the discouraged disciples and made their hearts burn with faith and love; therefore, people need to live by faith, letting their hearts burn by walking with Jesus.

One more example was "The Mortification of Sin"²²¹ from Romans 8:13. The introduction dealt with what Fuller called real liberty, perfect obedience to the will of God, in the first paragraph. In the second paragraph he set

²¹⁹ Ibid., III, 186-187.

²²⁰ Ibid., III, 193.

²²¹ Ibid., II, 251.

forth the duty of every Christian to mortify sin, oppose and subdue it, because sin was opposed to the will of God, contrary to spirituality and real life. The purpose of this sermon was to advocate Christian duty, and the divisions were as follows:

I. In unfolding this passage, I desire first to call your attention to the great indispensable, life-duty of every Christian, --the mortification of sin in himself.²²²

II. You see, then, that the mortification of sin is the work only of a Christian, and that it is the indispensable work of every Christian. I pass, now, to the motives by which that duty is enforced in our text; for the apostle declares, that it is nothing less than a matter of life and death to the soul. "If ye live after the flesh ye shall die, but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body he shall live."²²³

III. There is time for me to urge but one more truth contained in the text. I refer to the assistance by which alone the mortification of sin can be achieved. "If ye by the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." And unless we are wholly blinded, this topic must be to us not only a subject of profound interest, but a source of unspeakable consolation.²²⁴

The logical order of this discussion was outstanding for its argument and simplicity. The first point was the duty to mortify sin; the second was the motive for the

222 Ibid., II, 252.

223 Ibid., II, 256.

224 Ibid., II, 261.

duty; and the third brought out the fact that the help of the Holy Spirit was assured in mortifying sin. The conclusion and application in this arrangement were natural and logical.

The discussion in Fuller's sermons had many outstanding qualities. There was only one subject in each discussion; the divisions were distinct and sustained the proper relation to the subject and to each other; the arrangement of the divisions was simple in statement, direct in argument, and logical in plan; and the transitions were graceful and natural. Some of the divisions were noticeably out of balance as far as length was concerned. Fuller selected his subject, then arranged the discussion to accomplish his aims and objectives, that of persuading the congregation to believe and act immediately.

(3) Conclusion. In analyzing the conclusions of the sermons of Richard Fuller, there were certain characteristics found in all of them. The conclusion was appropriate, and the subject of the sermon was evidenced in the conclusion in a definite way. Each conclusion belonged to the sermon to which it was attached and it was not forced, but natural. Another characteristic of his conclusions was the personal nature of each one, the personal pronouns I and you were plentiful in every conclusion. The application of the subject was definitely

personal. The statement of each appeal, thought, or expression was clear so that everyone knew the desire of the preacher. Fuller believed in a good finish, and there was evidence that the conclusion in his sermons was well planned. The entire sermon moved to the conclusion, and the preacher reserved his energy for that part of his sermon, so that it would be vital and energetic and the crowning climax of all his efforts. The pathos and power of his appeals, warnings, exhortations, and encouragements were turned loose in the conclusion. The last general mark of all the conclusions of Fuller's sermons was the presentation of Christ. He preached Christ in every conclusion; the subject led up to Christ, and Fuller sought to relate every hearer, unbeliever and believer, properly to the Saviour. Those were general characteristics of Fuller's conclusions.

The length of his conclusions varied from one paragraph²²⁵ to fourteen paragraphs,²²⁶ the average length being from five to seven. There was a definite mark of transition from the discussion to the conclusion. He used phrases such as "In conclusion,"²²⁷ "It is time for me to

225 Ibid., "The Penitent of Nain", I, 125-126.

226 Ibid., "The Precious Saviour," II, 345-349.

227 Ibid., "The Redeemer's Agony and Prayer," I, 166; "Christ our Passover," I, 329.

finish,"²²⁸ "In finishing this discourse,"²²⁹ "But my heart is too full, I must stop,"²³⁰ "But, I must draw these remarks to a close,"²³¹ to mark the transition.

His methods of concluding varied. In some he would restate the subject of the sermon before applying the truth to the hearer. In the sermon "The Gospel not a Philosophy but a Revelation"²³² he started the conclusion in this way:

In conclusion, let me again remind you that the Gospel is not a system of philosophy or morality or theology submitted to our judgments, but a religion, "the testimony of God," addressed to our faith.²³³

Another method of conclusion was found in "Jesus and the Three Disciples in Gethsemane"²³⁴ when the application was made to the unbeliever and the Christian in this manner:

To those who have hitherto been neglecting the great salvation, the truth just urged

228 Ibid., "The Christian Delivered from Fear of Death," I, 257.

229 Ibid., "The Walk to Emmaus," III, 193.

230 Ibid., "The Cross," III, 261.

231 Ibid., "Danger to the Soul from Lawful Things." II, 45.

232 Ibid., I, 13.

233 Ibid., I, 32.

234 Ibid., II, 68.

comes with intense emphasis. Life is full of crises in which souls are lost; it is a scene in which perils lie in ambush all around you; and Jesus bids you stand upon your guard and secure the succors he proposes. If you suffer temptation to assail you in carelessness and prayerlessness, you are undone forever. Awake to your danger and your duty. In the spirit of the prodigal say, "I will arise and go to my Father." . . .

But the truth before us is especially for Christians. To us, my brethren, Jesus says, "Rise, let us go." He seeks to rouse us up thoroughly to things which might shake the sheeted dead from their repose. The soul, salvation, perdition, death, the judgment, heaven, hell, a fallen world sinking into the gulf, a divine victim expiring--these, these confront us. Where can be found such arguments to raise us above sloth and selfishness? What can make us serious if these fail?

Not only serious. We are summoned to activity, to co-operate with Jesus. True, God's will shall be done, whether we wake or sleep; but God's will must be done by us, if we are to be Christians.²³⁵

The personal application was felt in "The Kingdom of God cometh not with Observation,"²³⁶

My beloved hearers, this Kingdom has been ushered into the world; it is now extending over the earth, and, all around you, your friends and families are hailing the sceptre of the Prince of Peace. How is

235 Ibid., II, 87, 88.

236 Ibid., II, 49.

it with you? Is the Kingdom of God within you? Has Jesus entered and set up his empire in your soul?²³⁷

In "Christ Our Passover" he said:

In conclusion let me ask each of you whether this blood is upon your door as a token for you? Have you, under a deep sense of sin, and in view of the wrath to come, received a crucified Jesus into your heart, and committed your soul to his keeping?²³⁸

The personal appeal was well illustrated in "Simeon's Faith and Consolation:"

My poor impenitent hearers, what will become of you in that solemn hour? Without Christ, you are without hope or consolation now, and how terrible to you the fast approaching hour of your departure. What will you do then without Jesus? What will become of you? Who will welcome your soul in eternity? God is my record how I long after you. O, if there be any consolation in Christ, if any bowels and mercies, fulfill ye my joy, come to this Saviour and accept the blessedness he waits to give you.

Christians, remember the title of him who is the strength of your heart and your portion forever. He is "the Consolation of Israel;" this is his name; let this name make him increasingly dear to you.²³⁹

In "The Gospel Stifled by Covetousness" Fuller was warning concerning earthly riches and urging his hearers to secure heavenly riches, to be rich through the atonement:

237 Ibid., II, 66.

238 Ibid., I, 329.

239 Ibid., I, 348.

This, wealth, purchased for you at such an amazing cost, is now offered to you. It will satisfy all the boundless, immortal aspirations of your soul, enriching you with spiritual pleasures now, raising you hereafter to a sceptre, a crown, a throne. Come, then to Jesus; and come now. Come just as you are, "wretched and miserable and poor and naked," and receive from him "gold tried in the fire that you may be rich"--that you may be "rich toward God"--rich for eternity, rich in "an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you."²⁴⁰

These examples illustrated Fuller's method of conclusion. He would repeat the subject, apply the truth, appeal, invite, exhort, warn, and encourage.

The final words of the conclusion were a prayer in most of his sermons. In "The Walk to Emmaus"²⁴¹ he used "Abide with us, O Saviour; Redeemer of our souls, leave us not. Abide with us; for without thee, life is no longer life; with thee, death is no longer death."²⁴² He repeated the text for the final words in "Lord, to whom shall we go?"²⁴³ In some he would quote a verse of Scripture which had not been his text²⁴⁴ and it would be one of benediction and praise. In others he would close

²⁴⁰ Ibid., II, 250.

²⁴¹ Ibid., II, 176.

²⁴² Ibid., III, 195.

²⁴³ Ibid., II, 329.

²⁴⁴ Ibid., I, 150, 348.

with a poem.²⁴⁵ One of his most elaborate conclusions was found in the sermon "Love to Christians an Evidence of Conversion:"

O God, the uncreated, absolute essential Love; O Jesus, incarnate, suffering, bleeding, dying, risen, ascended, glorified Love; O Holy Spirit, author and giver of Love;--inspire us more and more with this celestial grace; that we may "be made perfect in love," and may thus know that we have now passed from death unto life, and that soon we shall pass to glory, honor, and immortality beyond the skies. God grant us this unspeakable blessing. To him be glory forever. Amen.²⁴⁶

The conclusions of Fuller's sermons had the good qualities of preserving unity, of being personal and definite, of being energetic to the point of a powerful climax, and containing appeals, warnings, exhortations, and direct applications. Some of his conclusions were too elaborate and contained too much pomp and polish.

CONCLUSION

The first section of this chapter dealt with Fuller's method of sermon preparation. In the mature years of his ministerial career he set aside the morning of each weekday for study in the preparation of his sermons. His

²⁴⁵ Cf. ante., pp. 108-111.

²⁴⁶ Sermons, I, 316.

method of study, that of ascertaining the meaning of the Scriptures and building his sermons upon Bible truths, was also discussed. He used books and other helps in his study. All these study practices were contributing factors to the success of Fuller's preaching, and such practices have always contributed to successful Christian preaching.

The content of Fuller's sermons was Biblical, theological, ethical, and extra-Biblical. He believed and preached that the Bible was the sole basis for belief and practice. This close adherence to the Scriptures was a notable trait in Fuller and one that contributed to his success as a preacher. Although the major content of his sermons was derived from the Scriptures, he did not neglect the extra-Biblical materials that were available. He used materials from history, philosophy, religions, poetry, and other sources.

Fuller's sermons were subject, expository, and text sermons. He developed the type best suited to interpret the Scripture and to meet the needs of the people. The formal elements of introduction, discussion, and conclusion were clearly set forth, and there were unity of thought and orderly arrangement in each sermon. In some sermons a lack of proportion was noted, and in

others, the statement of his outline in the sermon and his marks of transition were at times disruptive to the composition of the sermon. Fuller's sermon forms were not as minute and rigid as those of the Reformation, nor as simple as the ones generally followed in the twentieth century. He was more classical in arrangement than his contemporaries -- Brooks, Broadus, Beecher, and others. Fuller's sermons would have been better had he sought more simplicity in thought content and arrangement. The content, phraseology, and arrangement gave an archaic note to some of his sermons.

Fuller's life was discussed in Chapter I, his beliefs in Chapter II, and in this chapter an analysis of his sermons was given. Each chapter formed a part of the over-all study of Richard Fuller and His Preaching and was foundational to the study of the persuasive characteristics of his preaching, which were discussed in the succeeding and final chapter of this thesis.

CHAPTER IV

THE PERSUASIVE CHARACTERISTICS OF RICHARD FULLER'S PREACHING

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In a study of Richard Fuller and His Preaching it was necessary to study the man, his ideological conceptions, his extant sermons, and the persuasive characteristics of his preaching. The man, his beliefs, and his sermons were presented in the preceding chapters. This chapter dealt with the persuasive characteristics of Richard Fuller's preaching. The materials for this chapter were his sermons, his editorials, and the available biographical materials.

The divisions of this chapter were the rhetorical elements of explanation, argument, illustration, and application found in his sermons; the characteristics of his style; his pulpit appearance; and his one central preaching idea.

RHETORICAL ELEMENTS

Richard Fuller had many natural advantages as an orator, and he developed his abilities according to the accepted principles of rhetoric. He studied rhetoric, cared for his voice, and sought to be a master in the art of speech. These natural oratorical abilities and his knowledge of rhetorical principles were employed in his

preaching to an unusual degree. His use of these principles was not for display but in line with his aim to illuminate revealed truth and persuade the hearer.

Explanation. Explanation was one of the rhetorical elements found in the preaching of Richard Fuller. Fuller based all his preaching upon the revelation found in the Bible. He was a Bible preacher, hence, all his sermons¹ were a discussion of some Bible truth. The importance of the Bible, Fuller's evaluation of the Bible, and the Biblical content of his preaching were discussed in the preceding chapters.² The rhetorical element of explanation governed the types of sermons Fuller preached. Some of his sermons were subject sermons, some expository, and some text sermons. He selected the type best suited for explaining the truth of the particular Scripture.³ The purpose here was to present Fuller's methods of explanation. He had truth to explain and would vary the method of explanation to meet the needs of the text and the occasion.

Exegesis was employed as his method either directly or indirectly in all his preaching. He sought to know the

1 Sermons, I, II, III.

2 Cf. ante, pp. 54-55, 95-97.

3 Cf. ante, pp. 113-123.

meaning of the text in its context and in its original language.⁴ In some sermons the exegesis was directly revealed in the composition.

The sermon "The Gospel not a Philosophy but a Revelation"⁵ on the text, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit," I Corinthians 2:9-10, was an example of Fuller's use of exegesis. In the introduction he gave the context of the text by reviewing Paul's visit to Athens and his failure to persuade the Athenians, and telling of Paul's move to Corinth with a determination to preach Christ and Him crucified.

In this Chapter the Apostle vindicates his course; declaring that the doctrines of the Gospel are not theories of human discovery, nor theses for human speculation, but truths revealed directly by the Spirit; truths not to be established by reasoning, by "the excellency of speech or of wisdom," but truths resting where a true religion must rest--upon "the testimony of God." The text is often quoted, as if it referred to the invisible glories of heaven; this is a palpable mistake, for the things here spoken of have been revealed.⁶

4 Cf. ante, pp. 92-93.

5 Sermons, I, 13 ff.

6 Ibid., I, 14.

In the discussion he gave the meaning of the words and ideas in the text. He analyzed the importance of the eyes and ears as avenues of knowledge of the natural phenomena. He identified the phrase "heart of man" as meaning the mind and its functions.⁷ These natural avenues were not sufficient to discover the revelation of God. The wisdom and reason of man did not discover the Gospel;⁸ hence, nature could not be a channel of the Gospel. Fuller went a step beyond the fact that nature did not reveal the Gospel and asserted that nature did not have the power to lead man to salvation. There was nothing in the whole panorama of nature to give one ray of light on the Gospel plan of salvation.⁹ Next, he considered the phrase "the things" and gave an explanation of these things, the mysteries of godliness. These things were the Gospel plan of salvation and the counsels of God.¹⁰ In the last place he dealt with the phrase "God hath prepared for them that love him."¹¹ This was the basis for the reception of the Gospel and the enjoyment of its benefits. By exegesis he explained the verse of Scripture,

7 Ibid., I, 15.

8 Ibid., I, 16.

9 Ibid., I, 19.

10 Ibid., I, 21.

11 Ibid., I, 29.

set forth proof that the Gospel was not a system of philosophy but a direct divine revelation, and used those truths to instruct the hearer. He applied these truths with a call to receive the Gospel by faith and to enjoy the benefits of the Gospel by loving God.¹²

Fuller's method of exegesis was well illustrated in this sermon. He sought the truth of the Scripture by exegesis but then he synthesized the truth thus found into a pointed truth for exposition, discussion, and application. He left his lexicons, commentaries, and dictionaries in his study. He had found the truth of the passage, and all that he put in the sermon were those things necessary for explanation.¹³

Narration was also used by Fuller in explanation. His imagination was vivid and well disciplined for the purpose of narrating the historical incidents of the Scripture. He could retell the stories and happenings with power and pathos. Whenever it was appropriate he would give a brief narrative in the introduction of the sermon,¹⁴ and in some sermons the narration was carried

¹² Ibid., I, 32-33.

¹³ Ibid., cf. "Joy in the Lord," I, 190 ff; "The Kingdom of God Cometh not with Observation," II, 49 ff; "The Lonesomeness of the Redeemer," III, 9 ff; "The Desire of all Nations," III, 263 ff.

¹⁴ Ibid., cf. "Jesus and the Three Disciples in Gethsemane," II, 68-69; "The Incredulity of Thomas," III, 36.

along in the discussion.¹⁵ Fuller always gave as much of the narrative as was necessary for his aim and objective.

An example of his method of narration and his ability to narrate was found in the introduction to the sermon "The Walk to Emmaus":¹⁶

It is now the third day after the crucifixion. On the afternoon of that day two men leave Jerusalem, and take the path to Emmaus--a small village a few hours' walk from the city. They are not apostles, but probably of the seventy. One of them is Cleopas; as to the other, there have been many speculations, but we know not his name. Instead, therefore, of wasting time in idle conjectures, put yourself in his place and proceed on the journey. It is spring, and parting day lingers along the summits and glades through which their road passes;--but they heed not the beauty of the landscape. These two travelers are in earnest conversation, and everything about them--voice, countenance, gesture--shows that it is no ordinary topic which is absorbing their minds. It (is) plain, too, that the subject which engages their thoughts has cast a gloom over them for they neither laugh nor smile, but are greatly dejected.

About midway between the city and the village, these two disciples are overtaken by another traveler--a stranger who joins them and asks, "What manner of communications are these that they have one with another as they walk and are sad?" At first this intruder is most unwelcome, for theirs is a sorrow with which a stranger intermeddleth not; and besides, who knows if he be not some spy, seeking to

¹⁵ Ibid., cf. "The Star of Bethlehem," I, 35 ff; "The Good Samaritan," I, 76 ff; "Jacob's Ladder," III, 221 ff; "Elijah's Faith and Defect," II, 290 ff.

¹⁶ Ibid., III, 176-177.

wind himself into their confidence that he may betray them. Such at first are their thoughts, but soon their feelings are entirely changed. Scarcely has this stranger begun to speak, before they are conscious that a spell is upon them. In his looks, his tones, there is something which immediately awes and fascinates them. They cease speaking. They hang upon his words with palpitating bosoms. He has probed the very source of their griefs. How he counsels them and cheers their heart; how hope begins to take the place of despondency; how clear are the Scriptures as he unfolds them; how "foolish and slow of heart to believe had they been."--This sympathy, this love, this tenderness, these glorious prophecies thus explained, cause their hearts to burn within them? Who is this stranger? They cannot part from him. He must stay with them, that the night may be spent in such sweet discourse. "They constrain him, saying, Abide with us, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent." Nor does he refuse. He goes in to tarry with them. But I will not detain you with the history; it is familiar to you all.¹⁷

Fuller kept the narrative within the bounds of its true context and meaning and would use only the portion of the account that was necessary from the standpoint of the Scripture involved and the audience. He adapted the narrative to the design of the sermon, giving only the necessary parts of the story.¹⁸

17 Loc. cit.

18 Ibid., cf. "The Penitent of Nain," I, 112 ff; "Elijah's Faith and Defect," II, 290 ff; "Jesus and the Three Disciples in Gethsemane," II, 68-69; "The Three Hebrews in the Furnace," III, 79 ff.

Description was also a method used by Fuller in explanation. His power of description excelled his other abilities, and he made more use of description than any other function used in explanation. Some who heard him preach believed that his power to visualize the personages and events of the past was his most striking ability.¹⁹ Fuller had natural ability for description, which he developed by training and use.

Descriptive words were common in Fuller's preaching. In speaking of the death angel that passed over Egypt, he said, "While the strong-winged angel of death was sweeping through the land of Egypt, there was but a single shelter."²⁰ These words "strong-winged," "sweeping," "single," were used by Fuller to describe that event in a vivid manner. He described the career of John the Baptist as being "as brief as it was brilliant."²¹ He asked his hearers to evaluate the things of the world in the light of the Judgment in this manner, "The world and the things of the world which now charm and intoxicate us, what are they? Only a stupendous magazine of fuel."²² He described the

19 W. T. Brantly, Jr., "Richard Fuller," Christian Index (Atlanta: Franklin Printing House, Vol. LV, No. 42, November 2, 1876), p. 2.

20 Sermons, I, 323.

21 Ibid., I, 128.

22 Ibid., II, 140.

people as they watched Elijah on Mount Carmel praying for fire to come down from heaven, "While the prophet is preparing his offering, and during his fervent supplication, every eye is riveted upon him; not a whisper is heard; the very air is mute with expectation."²³ Fuller's descriptive words were pungent, vivid, and suited to the thought. Here he spoke of prayer being fervent, eyes riveted, all being silent, even the air mute with expectation. These illustrations exemplify Fuller's use of descriptive words.

When preaching on the cross and its power to draw men, he gave this description:

No sooner was it erected, than all nature felt and confessed its instigations. The earth heaved, the veil of the temple was rent from the top to the bottom, it agitated the rocks, it shook the sheeted dead from their slumbers, and disturbed the sun himself. Nor hath it lost its power. I care not what the man is; let him be ever so desperate and wrapt in marble; let him be invulnerable to the most terrifying denunciations, and inaccessible to the most touching remonstrance; let vice fix her gorgon eye upon him, until he be petrified and frozen into flint;--I care not. He may be proof against all else; but when this tear-compelling story is unfolded, when there is mustered before him all the tempest which beat upon that sacred head, and all the love which welcomed that tempest for the

23 Ibid., II, 301.

poor man--O, he will not, he cannot be proof against that.²⁴

He described the funeral for the world in "The Judgment,"²⁵ and in so doing he exalted Christ for salvation and the greatness of God:

And then, before such a catastrophe--at such a funeral--with the sun blackened as sackcloth of hair, and the moon changed into blood, and the stars falling from heaven, and the powers of the heaven shaken, and the heavens passing away with a great noise, and the elements melting with fervent heat, and the earth consumed and all that is therein--then, O then, how contemptible will all human greatness appear. There, there, how will everything preach to us of the grandeur of Jesus and of the redemption in Jesus.

Winds, storms, tempests, thunders, lightnings, raging flames, dissolving elements, the archangel's trump smiting the silence of the tomb, the universal air blazing with disastrous splendors, "the tribes of the earth mourning and beating their breasts," the wicked "calling on mountains and hills to fall upon them and cover them, the shouts of the saved, the howlings of the damned--all, all will then utter one voice, all will pierce our very souls with their tones; all will repeat these words, God alone is great, and God's salvation alone deserved the cares, toils, sacrifices of an immortal spirit."²⁶

In this description he drew some material from the Bible, but the remainder was the product of his ability to

²⁴ Ibid., III, 248.

²⁵ Ibid., II 130 ff.

²⁶ Ibid., II, 141.

describe an event such as the Judgment. In another sermon on "The Judgment"²⁷ a picture was given of the march to the Judgment:

We are all approaching that dread tribunal. However diversified our paths, they all converge toward the common centre. The young, with their elastic tread, are striding to the Judgment; the old, with their tottering limbs, are creeping to the Judgment; the rich in their splendid equipages are driving to the Judgment; the poor, in rags and barefooted, are walking to the Judgment. The Christian, making God's statutes his song, is a pilgrim to the Judgment; the sinner, treading upon the mercy of Jesus and trampling upon his blood, is hastening to the Judgment.²⁸

His choice of words was suited to the age group which he was describing.

In the sermon "The Three Hebrews in the Furnace"²⁹ many vivid descriptions were found. When the time arrived for the people to bow and worship the image, Fuller described it in this manner:

Then all at once peals forth the full burst of that magnificent orchestra, pouring floods of music which roll along the plain; and down, down to the earth, that whole multitude fall prostrate on their faces; only these three young men are left still standing erect--a flush upon their brows, heaven in their eyes, Christ in their hearts, and the whole world under their feet.³⁰

27 Ibid., II, 142.

28 Ibid., II, 153.

29 Ibid., III, 74 ff.

30 Ibid., III, 84.

In the same sermon he gave this description of the furnace experience:

It is said, "they fell down into the midst of the burning fiery furnace;" no doubt they anticipated the most exquisite torture; what is their amazement when they experience only the most delightful sensations.--They were cast in "bound hand and foot;" the fire consumed nothing but their cords; and they walk about--knee deep in those red horrid ashes, the fire all around, above and beneath--darting, shooting, surging, combing, roaring--but they fanned by celestial breezes, satiated with celestial pleasures.³¹

When speaking of the transforming power of the cross in the sermon "The Cross,"³² Fuller gave this description of Paul's conversion:

Look at Saul of Tarsus. What aileth him there at the gate of Damascus? What is the internal and spiritual revelation of a crucified Savior, ("in me," as he says,) which in a moment transfixes that proud and haughty fire-soul, and beats him to the ground, and wrings from him the cry, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" and, riveting his gaze on a single object, sends him through the world, exclaiming, "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ;"--who can tell what this is?³³

He saw the wrath of God poured out upon the angels who sinned, and described their fall:

Radiant cherubin and seraphin, the choice and prime of all celestial hierarchy, withered

31 Ibid., III, 86.

32 Ibid., III, 240 ff.

33 Ibid., III, 254.

into devils, and sank all flaming into hell, flung from eternal splendors down to bottomless perdition, where they now lie, "reserved in everlasting chains, under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day."³⁴

When describing the incarnation in "The Desire of all Nations,"³⁵ Fuller declared, "O, when the Invisible steps forth upon this scene of visible things, on such a mission and in such a form, must not our hearts yield, melt, love, worship, adore?"³⁶

Fuller used his descriptive power to explain ideas and subjects with the same force that he described men and events. Some of his descriptions were long, others consisted of only one word. He had the power to see the object he was describing and then set it forth vividly and suggestively. Some of his descriptions were elaborate, bordering on display. His feelings were very strong, hence, his strong and powerful descriptions.

Fuller would define his subject or the idea involved in some instances. In "Predestination"³⁷ he used the first part of the sermon to define the beliefs of the opposing groups, the Libertarians³⁸ and the Necessarians.³⁹

34 Ibid., III, 274.

35 Ibid., III, 263 ff.

36 Ibid., III, 277.

37 Ibid., II, 7 ff.

38 Ibid., II, 9.

39 Ibid., II, 14.

The Libertarians denied that God had fore-ordained all things, and the Necessarians believed that God fore-knew and fore-determined all things. He did not try to reconcile these two doctrines, but his definition of the final problem was:

For my own part, as I contemplate these two grand doctrines I seem to see two parallel lines stretching away into eternity, with thousands of other lines, all of which my vision can pursue but a little way. How they can ever meet, or whether they meet at all, I have no means of deciding. They appear to be ultimate facts, between which we can discover no links, but which are perfectly harmonious in the Divine Mind. We can discern no connection between them; but it is preposterous to affirm that there is collision:--pre-posterous in the exact meaning of the word, since a prerequisite to such an assertion is a knowledge which we cannot possess.⁴⁰

In other places his definitions were shorter. In "Lord to whom shall we go?" he gave his definition of eternal life: "'Eternal life,' means, of course, something more than endless duration. In the Scriptures the import of that phrase is, everlasting glory and blessedness."⁴¹ In "Christ our Passover"⁴² he defined the atonement, "The atonement--the vicarious suffering of the Redeemer--is the great central truth in the Gospel system."⁴³ His use of

⁴⁰ Ibid., II, 22.

⁴¹ Ibid., II, 316.

⁴² Ibid., II, 317.

⁴³ Loc. cit.

definitions as such was not as great as his use of some other methods; but when the necessity arose, he used the method ably.

In some cases Fuller made divisions of the subject so as to explain the ideas involved. He was speaking of the condition of a man living his life only for material gain in "The Insane Rich Man."⁴⁴ This condition was explained by giving three divisions of the subject, insanity, restlessness and unhappiness, and ruination.⁴⁵ In "The Desire of all Nations,"⁴⁶ he defined desire as meaning expectation, wants, and happiness. His subject was the desire of all nations, so his discussion was centered around these three divisions: expectation, wants, and happiness.⁴⁷ He also used examples⁴⁸ and comparisons⁴⁹ for explanation.

Fuller had truth to explain and he employed methods best suited to the particular ideas, to the congregation, and to his own natural ability. He used the methods of

⁴⁴ Ibid., III, 157.

⁴⁵ Ibid., III, 158.

⁴⁶ Ibid., III, 263 ff.

⁴⁷ Ibid., III, 264 ff.

⁴⁸ Ibid., III, 217-218; I, 142.

⁴⁹ Ibid., II, 176, 235.

exegesis, narration, and description more often than the methods of definition, division, example, and comparison. He desired to know the Scriptural truth, so the method of exegesis was a major in his preaching. His natural ability and training prompted his wide use of narration and description. Explanation was a very important rhetorical element in Fuller's preaching.

Argument. Argument was another rhetorical element in the preaching of Richard Fuller. He did not as a rule care for involved lines of reasoning in his sermons. He saw the conclusion of a line of reasoning and presented the application rather than dealing with the minute parts of argument in the pulpit.⁵⁰ His argument in all sermons rested on the testimony of the Bible. He did not consider it the purpose of the preacher to prove what God had said; he was only to elucidate and enforce God's word.⁵¹ Fuller's method of argument in debate was discussed in Chapter I.⁵² In this division his method of argument in the pulpit was discussed. Fuller employed testimony,⁵³ induction,⁵⁴

⁵⁰ Brantly, Christian Index, Vol. LV, No. 42, November 2, 1876, p. 2.

⁵¹ Sermons, I, 56.

⁵² Cf. ante, pp. 38-42.

⁵³ Sermons, I, 56; III, 12, 13, 97.

⁵⁴ Ibid., III, 98, 102, 104, 197.

deduction,⁵⁵ and analogy⁵⁶ for argumentation in preaching. His most common practice was the accumulation of evidence or testimony from the Scriptures.

In "The Deity of Christ"⁵⁷ Fuller's method of argument was found with many of the forms of argument which he employed. This sermon was preached to refute the error of the Socinians and to inculcate the true deity of Christ. In the introduction he made the statement that the congregation did not need to be convinced of the truth of the deity of Christ, they needed only to think more upon the subject.⁵⁸ Then he opened the discussion by quoting a number of verses of Scripture setting forth the deity of Christ. His first argument was to affirm that any one who would wrest these plain passages would wrest all the Scriptures in their prejudice. From the particular fact that they would wrest one, he generalized that in their prejudice they would wrest all. Here he used induction.⁵⁹ He continued to set forth the Bible testimony concerning the Unity of God, the Incarnation, and the Trinity.⁶⁰ In this his argument was

55 Ibid., I, 153; II, 26; III, 101.

56 Ibid., III, 128.

57 Ibid., III, 94 ff.

58 Ibid., III, 94, 95.

59 Ibid., III, 95.

60 Ibid., III, 96, 97.

based on testimony. As he moved into the argument he advanced certain Scriptures and explained them in order to establish his contentions. The Socinians said that Jesus was in the form of man, therefore was man. Fuller replied that if being in the form of man meant that he was man, being in the form of God meant that he also was God.⁶¹ The Socinians stated that Jesus said, "My Father is greater than I." Fuller replied with the idea, why would a mere man compare himself with God? And "Does the Holy Spirit ever deem it necessary to assure us that John or Paul was a man?"⁶²

He presented the dilemma as he saw it at this point: Those who took the Bible must either believe that God was in Christ or strip all the passages out of the Scripture, as dealt with in his argument so far, and make Jesus only a man.⁶³

He then gave his plan for the discussion or argument on the subject of the deity of Christ. He did not amass many Scripture verses but took the position of his opponents, which he believed would be the most direct and summary way of refuting their heresy.⁶⁴ Their contention was that they

61 Ibid., III, 98.

62 Ibid., III, 100.

63 Ibid., III, 99.

64 Ibid., III, 101.

were not infidels, they believed the Bible to be a blessing to the human race, they condemned impiety and skepticism, yet they believed that Jesus was only a good and wise man.⁶⁵ This was their concession and his premise. With this premise he advanced four propositions by way of deduction:

The first proposition was that if Jesus Christ were only a man, the Bible was no blessing at all but a cause for idolatry to be spread over the earth.⁶⁶ In this conclusion the Bible led people to worship a mere man and made a human an idol for worship. If Jesus were only a man, the Bible taught (a priori) idolatry. Here again a dilemma was presented, for if the Bible were true, they had dethroned and dishonored the Lord of Glory.⁶⁷

The second proposition that he deduced from this premise was that Jesus being only a man, yet claiming to be Deity incarnate, was a most presumptuous imposter and systematic blasphemer, and deserved to be crucified.⁶⁸ The logical conclusion of this contention in the light of the facts reduced this argument to the absurd.

Another proposition deduced here was that God had

65 Loc. cit.

66 Ibid., III, 102.

67 Ibid., III, 104.

68 Loc. cit.

busied Himself to secure supreme homage for a creature. The Socinians claimed not to be infidels and to believe the Bible, yet they denied the deity of Christ. Fuller challenged them to open the Bible and they would find that God had exalted Jesus Christ as the object of human worship; therefore, God was not consistent, He was in error.⁶⁹ At the conclusion of this proposition Fuller addressed the congregation "ad hominen" to see if this conclusion was in line with their own beliefs and inner feelings.⁷⁰ The last proposition from this premise was that if one denied the divinity of Jesus Christ, he denied, that the Scripture contained evidence of the existence of any God at all.⁷¹ His line of reasoning was that Jesus, a man, had all the attributes of God that were revealed in the Scriptures. The Bible testimony ascribed all the divine characteristics to Jesus, the creature. To deny that the testimony of the Bible ascribed divinity to Jesus was to deny that there was any Deity at all.⁷²

All this they must affirm; and to affirm all this, what is it to say that all proofs found in the Bible of the existence of God, only prove the existence of a creature, and

69 Ibid., III, 107-108.

70 Ibid., III, 111.

71 Ibid., III, 111 ff.

72 Ibid., III, 113.

disprove the existence of a God; which is to say, that the Bible, which is given to reveal God to man, shuts up man to atheism.⁷³

In this sermon Fuller followed the methods of testimony, induction, and deduction. The form of this argument was a statement of testimony, the dilemma, the concession, a priori, ad hominem, and reductio ad absurdum.

In "Predestination"⁷⁴ he used a syllogism to conclude his doctrinal treatment of the subject. The Scriptures were true. He found in the Scriptures fore-ordination and free-will; therefore, both of these doctrines were true.⁷⁵

Fuller's line of argument consisted primarily in the plain testimony of the Scriptures, and his objective was to proclaim the truth contained in this revelation. When necessary he resorted to the rhetorical element of argument, advocating a logical line of reasoning to refute error and establish truth. Other than his debates, there was very little evidence of fine argumentation in Fuller's preaching.

Illustration. Illustration properly speaking is auxiliary to explanation, argument, and application; but

73 Loc. cit.

74 Ibid., II, 9.

75 Ibid., II, 23.

due to the nature of illustration, it was treated as a separate rhetorical element in this study. The extra-Biblical material in Fuller's sermons was discussed in Chapter III of this thesis.⁷⁶ The objective in this section was to relate the sources and the use that Fuller made of illustrations in his preaching.

The Bible furnished Fuller with the majority of his illustrations. His sermons were saturated with Biblical truth, quotations, and illustrations.⁷⁷ He used Bible illustrations to explain doctrine or interpret a passage of Scripture.⁷⁸ In argument he relied upon the testimony of the Scripture, and the accumulation of Biblical facts to sustain his contention.⁷⁹ In "Sinful Pleasures"⁸⁰ he was speaking of the deceptiveness and the sureness of death which sin yields when he used the experience of Jael and Sisera to illustrate his point. Jael brought milk and butter to Sisera, delighting his passions, but then she put her hand to the nail, took the hammer, and smote him. He fell dead at her feet.⁸¹ In "Simeon's Faith and

76 Cf. ante, pp. 103-112.

77 Cf. ante, pp. 95-97.

78 Sermons, III, 99.

79 Ibid., II, 124, 179; III, 250.

80 Ibid., III, 120 ff.

81 Ibid., III, 135.

Consolation"⁸² he pictured Simeon as an aged man rejoicing that he had served his time on earth. To illustrate this he cited two other instances in the Bible similar to this one--that of Jacob going to Egypt to see Joseph, and that of Barzilla rejoicing that David had been restored to his throne.⁸³

Another source of illustrations for Fuller was history.⁸⁴ He was acquainted with the full scope of history, ancient, medieval, and modern, and was able to select the parts that would illustrate his point or serve the objective he had in mind. In "The Cross"⁸⁵ he began the introduction by giving Eusebius' account of Constantine's vision of the Cross. This illustration was used to gain attention and to impress his subject upon the memory of the hearer. In "The Desire of all Nations"⁸⁶ the power derived from the Cross was his topic. He stated that it was necessary for a Christian to keep his eyes on the Cross. To illustrate this he used an account in Roman history concerning Manlius, a soldier, who in one desperate battle saved the capitol.

82 Ibid., I, 333 ff.

83 Ibid., I, 343.

84 Cf. ante, pp. 104-106.

85 Sermons, III, 240.

86 Ibid., III, 263 ff.

Later Manlius was tried on some accusation but could not be convicted, because for his defense he would point to the capitol and that was argument sufficient. So with the Cross, there was power sufficient.⁸⁷ The Civil War in the United States furnished him with modern illustrations.⁸⁸ These examples illustrated Fuller's use of history as a source for illustrations.⁸⁹

Fuller also drew from the philosophers in many instances.⁹⁰ In "Sinful Pleasures"⁹¹ when he spoke on the brevity of life, he alluded to the custom of the Epicureans to bring a skeleton to their banquets to remind them "to eat and drink for tomorrow we die."⁹² He was familiar with the various philosophical systems and used them in his preaching. Other sources of illustrative materials were his travels in Europe, general classical knowledge, the people to whom he ministered, and nature.⁹³

87 Ibid., III, 268.

88 Ibid., III, 196-197.

89 Ibid., cf. "sinful Pleasures," III, 135; "The Insane Rich Man," III, 118; "Dispositions under National Judgments," II, 188.

90 Cf. ante, pp. 106-108.

91 Sermons, III, 120.

92 Ibid., III, 135.

93 Cf. ante, pp. 8-13.

Anecdotes were rarely used in his preaching; but when they were used, the point was well illustrated.⁹⁴ In the sermon "The Gospel not a Philosophy, but a Revelation"⁹⁵ Fuller spoke of people who read the Scriptures devoutly yet who failed to believe them or to know the Gospel and rejoice in its blessing. To illustrate this danger he repeated the story of a man in London who was depressed by habitual melancholy. The medical advisor counselled him to go and hear a celebrated actor who was thrilling the crowds each evening with mirth. The man replied, "Alas, I am that actor."⁹⁶ Another example was found in "The Saviour's Temptation"⁹⁷ when he related the conversation between a bishop and a peasant. The peasant had rebuked the bishop for his use of profanity, and the bishop replied that he did not swear as a bishop but as a lord. The peasant asked the question, when the lord was in hell for blasphemy, where would the bishop be?⁹⁸ Fuller's application in this instance was that the Christian

⁹⁴ Sermons, II, 196, 197; cf. also "The Insane Rich Man," III, 173.

⁹⁵ Ibid., I, 13.

⁹⁶ Loc. cit.

⁹⁷ Ibid., III, 196 ff.

⁹⁸ Ibid., III, 127.

should not yield to temptation and say that it was the flesh.

The illustration was a rhetorical element in Fuller's preaching used as auxiliary to his aim to elucidate the Scriptures and persuade the hearer.

Application. Application was a rhetorical element in the preaching of Fuller that was evident from the introduction of the sermon to the conclusion. Fuller knew the importance of the reciprocal relationship in preaching,⁹⁹ and he began at the very first of the sermon to speak to the audience. The personal relationship was established in the introduction. The people knew that he was talking to them. All his introductions, explanations, arguments, appeals, and exhortations were applied to them. His very aim in preaching was the exposition of the Scriptures and the persuasion of the hearer, and this he did throughout the sermon.¹⁰⁰

The conclusions of his sermons were discussed in Chapter III.¹⁰¹ The use of application in the conclusion was a major objective. His method of concluding a sermon constituted his final application of the subject to all

99 Cf. ante, pp. 80-82.

100 Cf. ante, p. 123.

101 Cf. ante, pp. 147-153.

classes of people who were present. The conclusions of the sermons did not contain all of the application, for Fuller's method was to begin at the first and apply either directly or indirectly throughout the sermon. He made the truth personal, suggested the right and wrong actions in light of the truth, and throughout the sermon sought to persuade the hearer to believe and act.

An example of Fuller's method of application was found in "The Savior's Temptation."¹⁰² His objective in this sermon was to give an exposition of the Scriptural account of the temptations of Jesus and apply the truths found in this passage to the audience. He wanted to put them on guard as to the nature of temptations, the way to overcome them, and the reward for resisting temptations.

In the introduction he gave a brief discussion on the existence of evil spirits, their personal nature, and the fact that they seek to conquer man. The members of the audience were made conscious of their personal danger. "We are thus put on our guard."¹⁰³

The first division of the discussion dealt with a review of the incident of Jesus' temptations and set forth reasons why he was tempted. As Fuller began this first

102 Sermons, III, 196 ff.

103 Ibid., III, 197.

division, he made it known to the audience that the sermon time was theirs, "your time," this Scripture was written "for you," it is full of interest "to you," "let us review it."¹⁰⁴ Fuller was speaking but the hearer was to enter into the thoughts because they were for the hearer.

These temptations of Jesus were part of his suffering in becoming a perfect Saviour. One truth then for the hearer was that perfection was attained through trials and sufferings. The soul must be educated and exercised by trials.¹⁰⁵ Another truth that the audience needed to comprehend was that there may be violent temptations without sin.¹⁰⁶ "Without our consent he is harmless, and this consent is in our own will; it is voluntary compliance of the whole inner man."¹⁰⁷ Therefore, the warning for them was evident. The members of the audience were put on guard in the introduction; and in the first division they were instructed as to the value of temptations and were led to realize their individual responsibility in overcoming the Tempter.

The second division of the discussion was an analysis

104 Loc. cit.

105 Ibid., III, 198-199.

106 Ibid., III, 199.

107 Ibid., III, 200.

of the three temptations of Jesus. Fuller stated that the temptations of the Saviour were "an epitome of all temptations" and were "types of our own."¹⁰⁸ It was "of eternal moment that we examine them in their order."¹⁰⁹ The first temptation was to the senses, to the animal nature, but man was not only a body, man was a living soul.¹¹⁰ With this basic truth explained, he then applied it directly and personally. "We are exposed,"¹¹¹ "my friend;"¹¹² "look around you;"¹¹³ "would you know;"¹¹⁴ "Ah, my brethren, my brethren;"¹¹⁵ "Do you imitate the Saviour and repel the Tempter with the Scriptures? Alas, as to some of you, I fear it is the Tempter who scoffingly and exultingly recites these passages."¹¹⁶ These personal pronouns and names were used to apply this truth to the hearers.

The second temptation was addressed to the mind¹¹⁷

108 Ibid., III, 201.

109 Loc. cit.

110 Ibid., III, 201-203.

111 Ibid., III, 204.

112 Loc. cit.

113 Ibid., III, 205.

114 Loc. cit.

115 Ibid., III, 206.

116 Loc. cit.

117 Ibid., III, 206 ff.

and the third temptation to the imagination.¹¹⁸ These were explained and applied in the same direct and personal manner as the first one. The personal pronouns "us," "our," and "you," along with "my friends" and "brethern," and the phrases "remember this," and the like, were used in this part of the discussion in making the application.

The third division of the discussion dealt with the lessons taught by this passage of Scripture. "The conflict ended, Conqueror and conquered leave the field. Let us, however, not leave this field, let us linger here for a moment, and hear the admonitions of this place."¹¹⁹ There were five ideas in this section. The first one was that the same Tempter who tried the Redeemer was seeking to ensnare everyone. He applied this truth with a question, "Brethern, what is to become of us without vigilance and prayer?"¹²⁰ The second idea was that this Scriptural narrative taught that the enemy can be expected in time of want but especially "does it warn us to be on our guard when up on the pinnacles and high mountains."¹²¹ The

118 Ibid., III, 211 ff.

119 Ibid., III, 215.

120 Ibid., III, 216.

121 Ibid., III, 217.

third lesson was that the faithful Christian was a true hero, he was a conqueror.¹²² The fourth idea was that the Christian could depend on Jesus for sympathy and succor in times of temptations.¹²³ The last lesson to be taught here was that Jesus was a helper, the giver of victory over temptation.¹²⁴ All these ideas were made personal and due application was made of each one as he examined them.

The conclusion to this sermon was short. He used it as a peroration, summing up the ideas of the sermon and with earnest exhortations applying them. His plea was that his hearers should never speak to Satan with worldly wisdom. He urged them to bring every temptation to the word of God, to worship God alone, and then they would be able to withstand all the temptations of the devil.¹²⁵

There was a thread of application running through the sermon. He focused the truth on the hearts of the hearers. They would be tempted, therefore they should be on guard. He suggested the ways and means of being on guard as vigilance, prayer, resorting to the word of

122 Ibid., III, 218.

123 Ibid., III, 219.

124 Loc. cit.

125 Ibid., III, 220.

God, and enthroning God in the heart. His line of argument for persuasion was: You will be tempted; you do not need to yield to temptation; God's grace is sufficient for you; you can be victorious; you should be victorious. The I-you relationship was used to the maximum. The personal application began in the introduction, increased in the discussion, and climaxed in the conclusion.

These principles of application were dominant in Fuller's method of preaching. The rhetorical element of application was most effectively exploited by him in all his preaching. It was readily felt that he was applying the entire message to the congregation.

CHARACTERISTICS OF HIS STYLE

Richard Fuller believed that a man's style was uniquely the man. His advice to preachers concerning style was to develop their own taste, abilities, and natural inclinations. The preacher was to be just what God had made him, not the product of some artificial training or ideas.¹²⁶ Fuller's individual style was the fruition of this conception. As his style was studied, four marked characteristics were discovered: Classical, extemporaneous,

¹²⁶ Cf. ante, pp. 82-84.

imaginative, and persuasive. In this section these four divisions were discussed as they best portrayed the style of Fuller.

Classical element. The style of Fuller's preaching was marked by a definite classical characteristic. He used Latin quotations and Latinized words in his preaching.¹²⁷ This was natural for him due to his training in the classical schools and his own natural inclination.¹²⁸ His sentences were well balanced and constructed according to the best rules of grammar, and there was accuracy of diction and perspicuousness in phraseology.¹²⁹ He was influenced by the past rather than by contemporaries. His contemporaries were scientific in form with an Americanized Anglo-Saxon vocabulary. Fuller's vocabulary was marked by the Latin and Greek influence. This classical influence was noticeable in his extra-Biblical material. The Greek and Roman poets, historians, and orators pulsed through all his sentences.¹³⁰ This classical

127 True Union, August 5, 1852.

128 Cf. ante, pp. 8-11.

129 Lewis O. Brastow, The Modern Pulpit (New York: Hodder and Stroughton, 1906), p. 375.

130 William Cathcart, "Richard Fuller" The Baptist Encyclopedia (Philadelphia: Lewis H. Everts, 1883), p. 424.

element, especially his use of poetry and literature, gave to his style some marks of elegance. His style, polished with an element of classical history, language, poetry and literature, had a scholarly note stamped upon it.

Extemporaneous element. Another mark of Fuller's style was the extemporaneous spirit. He was a firm advocate of free delivery in preaching after careful preparation of the sermon and of the preacher.¹³¹ After this preparation the influence of the place, time, audience, and spiritual inspiration was recognizable in his style. The arrangement, the content, and the rhetorical elements all showed evidence of extemporaneous influence. This extemporaneous element contributed at times to perspicuity, at other times to a touch of elegance, but mostly it gave power to his thoughts and applications. Allowing the extemporaneous spirit to shape his style, he was carried away at times into feelings and thoughts that were at once dramatic and energetic. A vivid example of his extemporaneous style was found in the sermon preached at the meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in Raleigh, North Carolina, in 1872. The title of this sermon was "The

¹³¹ Cf. ante, pp. 84-89.

Everlasting Kingdom."¹³² Just before Fuller preached, news was received of the death of A. M. Poindexter of Virginia, a member of the Foreign Mission Board, who was known throughout the Convention for his missionary zeal. This news effected the Convention profoundly. In his sermon Fuller drew a picture of the angel flying in the midst of heaven with the everlasting Gospel. He began to urge the angel to fly faster, "Fly faster, fly faster, Oh angel, fly faster."¹³³ After seeking to cheer the angel to fly faster with all the instinct of his soul and eloquence of his speech, he stopped for a second as if disappointed, then he said, "But oh, angel if you cannot fly faster, call Poindexter, newly arrived in the realms of glory, give him the message and let him take it around the world."¹³⁴ This extemporaneous eloquence electrified the Convention and the churches through the South. The spirit of extemporaneousness was a major trait in Fuller's style of preaching.

Imaginative element. Richard Fuller's style was

¹³² William E. Hatcher, Along the Trail of Friendly Years (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1910), p. 125.

¹³³ Loc. cit.

¹³⁴ Loc. cit.

also marked by a vivid imagination. One contemporary of Fuller believed that this ability was the source of his great strength.¹³⁵ Fuller was able to present in living and concrete forms the personages, places, and deeds of far-off lands and times.¹³⁶ He clothed his thoughts and ideas with picture words and descriptive phrases.¹³⁷ This power of imagination left its imprint on Fuller's style in every sermon. His ideas could be seen, felt, and appreciated through his imaginative ability. He believed that imagination when disciplined was one of the noblest endowments.¹³⁸ In the employment of his imagination, he was dramatic and powerful in application and argument.

In Fuller's first sermon on "Bible Testimony the Best Testimony"¹³⁹ he gave an imaginary picture of Lazarus returning to the brothers of the rich man and their response:

Affecting to be a philosopher, the first brother would say, How can it be proved that a man died and rose from the dead? This would be a miracle, but a miracle contradicts nature and therefore no evidence can establish it. . . . This apparition at the time seemed real enough,

¹³⁵ Brantly, Christian Index, Vol. LV, No. 42, November 2, 1876, p. 2.

¹³⁶ Cathcart, op. cit., p. 424.

T. Harwood Pattison, The History of Christian Preaching (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1916), p. 379.

¹³⁷ Cf. ante, pp. 163-168.

¹³⁸ Religious Herald, April 10, 1873.

¹³⁹ Sermons, I, 55 ff.

the second brother, a pretender to science, would say: but it was easily explained on physiological principles. It was simply one of those very strange optical delusions--the effect of a disturbed nervous system--of which we read such singular accounts. The third brother, a practical man, piqueing himself on this knowledge of human nature--would treat the appearance with ridicule, and, with his gay companions would pronounce it only another of these tricks of jugglery by which artful rogues impose upon the credulity of women and children. The fourth brother, feigning great humility, would ask, whether anybody could believe that God would thus trouble himself about things so insignificant and unworthy? While the fifth, unable to overcome some superstitious misgivings, would ascribe the phenomenon to demoniacal agency.¹⁴⁰

In the second sermon on the same subject, he brought the rich man back from Hell and had him take the pulpit and preach to the people:

Lo, he is here. I step aside, I vacate the pulpit. Behold one from the dead, one from Hell has been commissioned to come to you, and now stands in my place and preaches to you. Terrible preacher; hear him. A preacher robed in flames and emerging from the caverns of despair. A preacher who, for an exordium, throws his baleful eyes around, and clasps his burning hands upon his head; who, for an argument points to the billows of fire which rage and toss in the bottomless pit, and to the smoke of their torment ascending forever and ever; who for a peroration, wails out, above the clamor and thunder of the roaring surges, O go not, go not to that place of torment.

Hear, ah hear him. My sermons are weak and vain I bring to you this night another preacher,

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., I, 59-60.

whose sermon is not weak; let it not be in vain. Hear him, apply to yourselves his warnings, exhortations, entreaties. And apply them now. Delay not. Tomorrow it may be too late.¹⁴¹

His imagination fortified his style with vividness and overwhelming energy. He could see with his mind and paint pictures with his words.

Persuasive element. Fuller's style was persuasive. His great aim to set forth Bible truths and to persuade the hearer immediately was a definite mark of his style. The legal influence was evident-- he was presenting a case, pleading with the jury, and everything was bent on a favorable verdict.¹⁴² He had practiced law for a number of years, and this fixed his style in a legal pattern which he exploited in preaching.¹⁴³ Along with this legal influence was his desire for a dazzling climax; an effort for which he was criticized by some.¹⁴⁴ In his preaching style the effort for the climax was most pronounced.

141 Ibid., I, 74-75.

142 Cf. ante, p. 10.

143 Brastow, op. cit., p. 375.
Sermons, I, 23, 137; II, 15, 143.

144 S. H. Ford, "Richard Fuller," Ford's Christian Repository (Louisville: Bradley and Gilbert, Vol. XXI, No. 6, December 1876), p. 468.

Fuller used various figures of speech for persuasion, an element which was characteristic of his style. He did not believe that satire or irony should be used in the pulpit.¹⁴⁵ He made wide use, however, of the apostrophe and personification. He would address angels, the heavenly host, Bible characters, nature, and events such as the Judgment or the Consummation.¹⁴⁶ Fuller was very gifted in the use of the interrogative and the exclamation. In all his preaching, in every sermon, the use of questions and exclamations was evident. The impassioned preacher resorted to these two in all parts of the sermon but especially in the climax and conclusion.

Other marks of his persuasive style were the use of alliterations,¹⁴⁷ word pictures,¹⁴⁸ the repetition of words,¹⁴⁹ and a play on words.¹⁵⁰ With these persuasive characteristics, there was an abundance of pathos and passion. It was more than logic on fire--the feelings and desires of the preacher, saturated with spiritual

145 Sermons, III, 221.

146 Ibid., III, 107, 250, 281; I, 105, 110.

147 Ibid., III, 117.

148 Cf. ante, p. 163.

149 Sermons, I, 31, 346.

150 Ibid., II, 26.

unction, were captivating and controlling the situation. The persuasive style of Fuller was that of a preacher seeking a startling climax and a favorable verdict, advocating, prosecuting, exclaiming, interrogating, using figures of speech that were descriptive and arresting, painting word pictures of his powerful ideas, all submerged in fiery passion and spiritual power, triumphing over the hearts of the people and moving victoriously to the finish.

These distinctive characteristics in Fuller's style-- classical, extemporaneous, imaginative, and persuasive-- when brought together gave a composite picture of a style that was clear, elegant, and powerful.

PULPIT APPEARANCE

The appreciation of the orator was enhanced by a description of his pulpit appearance. His looks, his actions, and his effect on the audience revealed the power of the speaker. Some eyewitness descriptions of Fuller's appearance in the pulpit have been preserved.

It was Fuller's habit upon entering the pulpit to bow for prayer. This practice was severely criticized by some of the Baptists,¹⁵¹ but Fuller, with his Episcopal

¹⁵¹ R. B. C. Howell, et. al., Both Sides (Nashville: Graves, Marks and Company, 1859), p. 152.

background was formal in his pulpit approach. When he arose to speak, he would generally survey the audience leisurely, then draw a deep breath before he began to preach.¹⁵² Fuller was tall and manly in appearance. His head was large, with a high forehead; his hair was brown, tousled, long and curly. His eyes were flashing, brilliant, and piercing.¹⁵³ It was necessary for him to cultivate and care for his voice, which he did with great earnestness.¹⁵⁴ His illness in college and over-work in the early part of his ministry impaired his voice for some months.¹⁵⁵ He soon learned to care for his voice and developed one with compass and power suitable for every expression.

He feared God enough to cultivate his voice and manner, forming their management on the best rules and using them with consummate skill. Having a message from the Man of Calvary, he wished to deliver it as an accomplished pleader with men, for Jesus' sake.¹⁵⁶

His voice was at times musical and melodious, gentle and

¹⁵² Henry C. Fish, Pulpit Eloquence of the Nineteenth Century (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1871), p. 347.

¹⁵³ Cf. ante, pp. 16-18.

¹⁵⁴ Brantly, Christian Index, Vol. LV, No. 41, October 26, 1876, p. 2.

¹⁵⁵ Cf. ante, pp. 11-12.

¹⁵⁶ Thomas Armitage, A History of the Baptists (New York: Bryon, Taylor and Company, 1887), p. 761.

tremulous, powerful and explosive, and was capable of expressing the warmth, pathos, and earnestness of his soul.¹⁵⁷ He read the hymns and prayed in a subdued voice but with great earnestness. When he started preaching he spoke in a calm, low voice, at times difficult to hear,¹⁵⁸ but as he moved into the sermon he warmed with the subject, increased in earnestness, and carried the audience along the way to the climax and conclusion.

Fuller did not take his notes into the pulpit with him. He was free to look the audience in the face as he spoke. At times he would have the pulpit desk removed also, so he could stand out before the people and have a better approach to their hearts.¹⁵⁹ He then preached as a man who had received from God an imperial message to proclaim.¹⁶⁰ Fuller's gestures were not numerous, they were natural and graceful but at times very animated, almost violent.¹⁶¹

These accounts describe Richard Fuller's preaching:

Gifted with a rare, manly, and commanding presence; free in every movement from those restraints fatal to the orator, which

157 Fish, op. cit., p. 347.

158 Loc. cit.

159 Loc. cit.

160 Armitage, op. cit., p. 761.

161 Fish, op. cit., p. 347.

necessarily arise from the use of manuscripts; with a legal acumen that discriminated between the delicate shades of correlated yet of pregnant truths; with an imagination that embodied in forms of living beauty the person, ages, and place, and deeds of far-off times and lands of the Savior's earthly labors; and a voice whose tones could thrill the soul with heroic resolutions or melt it into tender pity,--he had taken his place among the few great pulpit orators whose names are embalmed in the memories of men.¹⁶²

This description was given of the effects of his sermon "The Cross" at the Triennial Baptist Convention in 1841:

I see the preacher in his most impassioned mood, the tears running down upon his Bible, his voice subdued, sometimes interrupted, by his feelings--and his eyes sparkling, even through his tears; whilst my revered master, Professor Ripley, "albeit unused to melting mood" is looking up from beneath into the face of the preacher, streams coursing down his cheeks--the immense multitude before him swayed as by the wand of a mighty magician.¹⁶³

Another writer gave this account of his preaching:

It was, however, in his power of imagination and pathos that his great strength lay. Many who have heard him, can remember how he has held immense audiences entranced, unconscious, of time and place, trembling or weeping at the will of the enchanter.¹⁶⁴

162 Cathcart, op. cit., p. 424.

163 J. L. Reynolds, "The Bar and the Pulpit," Ford's Christian Repository (Louisville: Bradley and Gilbert, Vol. XII, No. 8, August 1872), p. 113.

164 Brantly, Christian Index, Vol. LV, No. 42, November 2, 1876, p. 2.

Richard Fuller made a striking appearance in the pulpit, tall and manly in appearance, his physical features and dress commanded attention. His well trained voice filled with power and pathos, his eyes sparkling and piercing, his gestures natural and animated, his actions dramatic and his soul on fire with spiritual fervor, all contributed to the persuasive power of his preaching. The man in the pulpit was ablaze with heavenly fire, yet came to address personally each heart in the congregation, to persuade that heart to receive God's word and to crown Christ supreme in soul and life.

CENTRAL PREACHING IDEA

Fuller's aims and objectives in preaching were discussed in Chapter III.¹⁶⁵ In this section there was discussed the one central idea in the preaching of Richard Fuller. He had only one center in his message and that was "Christ and Him Crucified." This was his belief, that at all times Jesus Christ was the one absorbing subject.¹⁶⁶ In his sermon "The Lamb of God,"¹⁶⁷ Fuller gave his idea as to what constituted successful preaching. "Behold the

165 Cf. ante, pp. 123-132.

166 Religious Herald, November 10, 1870.

167 Sermons, I, 127-150.

Lamb of God" was his text. This paragraph illustrated his conception of Christian preaching and the one central subject for the preacher:

For my own part, if I could, without insufferable presumption, write a treatise on the secret of successful preaching, every chapter, every page, every sentence should but repeat and paraphrase the language of our text. Herald of salvation, would you be earnest? behold the Lamb of God. Would you be impressive? behold the Lamb of God. Would you glow with irrepressible ardor for souls? behold the Lamb of God? Would you be direct and pointed in your appeal? behold the Lamb of God. Would you have your heart melt in tenderness? behold the Lamb of God. Would you have the solemnities of eternity, the judgment, heaven, hell, always pressing upon you--firing your zeal, glowing in your breast, throbbing in your pulses, burning upon your lips, beaming in your eye, informing, inspiring all your being and all your thoughts and words with native, spontaneous, restless power? behold the Lamb of God. The cruel, barbarous heartlessness, the childish rhetorical embellishments, the disgusting theatrical tricks and starts and struts and attitudes, the cold correct dullness, the still colder and more freezing bombast and declamation,--if a minister would avoid these vices which too often dishonor the pulpit;--if he would be simple, easy, natural; if he would preach not before but to his audience, rousing the consciences of sinners, and elevating the characters of Christians; if he would pray, and study, and labor so as to be a workman that needeth not to be ashamed; let him behold the Lamb of God. In a word, the entire art of preaching; the whole system of homiletics; whatever can equip and adorn the sacred orator; whatsoever things are original, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are true, if there be any virtue, if any grace, if any dignity, if any eloquence, if any glory;--all, all are condensed in this single, comprehensive, sublime counsel,

"Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."¹⁶⁸

This was Fuller's conception, his own conviction as to the one central subject for preaching. His contemporaries bore testimony that this was not only his belief but also his practice. His biographer gave this as the secret of his preaching power:

This was the view and love of his Savior, which, filling his heart and mind more and more as he went on with his life work, formed the subject-matter of every sermon, the inspiration of every effort, and the open secret of his success in winning souls to Christ.¹⁶⁹

The editor of the True Union, John Berg, visited Fuller's church many times for the purpose of analyzing his preaching. He reached this conclusion:

But the great charm of his preaching is "Jesus Christ and him crucified." He always keeps near the Cross. The tone, gesture, language, and feelings of the preacher, are all in harmony with his magnificent theme.¹⁷⁰

Henry C. Fish had this to say of Fuller:

He aims incessantly at the exaltation of Christ and the immediate conversion of men. On no theme does he so warm and glow as on

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., I, 144-145.

¹⁶⁹ J. H. Cuthbert, Life of Richard Fuller (New York: Sheldon and Company, 1879), p. 318.

¹⁷⁰ John Berg, "Richard Fuller," True Union, Vol. X, No. 8, February 24, 1859, p. 2.

that of Christ and him crucified.¹⁷¹

W. T. Brantly, Jr., a very close friend of Fuller, gave this evaluation:

He seemed to live in the presence of Jesus . . . none but Jesus was the motto and guiding principle of his life; none but Jesus was the theme of his ministry; none but Jesus were the words engraved in letters of love upon his great heart.¹⁷²

Fuller adhered so closely to this one central idea that John A. Broadus thought that he probably erred in giving his call to preach too narrow an interpretation. He did not think that Fuller gave himself a sufficient variety of topics.¹⁷³

Fuller determined in the beginning of his ministry to know only Christ and Him crucified, and he nobly adhered to his determination. Whether he selected the text in the histories or prophecies, the Proverbs or the Epistles, the Psalms or the Gospels, the sermon always came to Christ.¹⁷⁴ Christ was the alpha and omega, the center and circumference of Fuller's preaching. He

¹⁷¹ Fish, op. cit., p. 347.

¹⁷² Brantly, Christian Index, LV, 42, November 2, 1876, p. 2.

¹⁷³ W. R. L. Smith, The Great Trio (Louisville: University Press, 1896), pp. 39-40.

¹⁷⁴ W. T. Brantly, Jr., "Richard Fuller," Recollections of His Life and Character (Baltimore: J. F. Weishampel, Jr., 1876), pp. 5, 6.

would deal adequately with the subject of the sermon, but basically the sermon had meaning only in its relation to Christ and His crucifixion. He always brought the auditor face to face with Christ in his preaching. In the sermon "Elijah's Faith and Defect,"¹⁷⁵ he dealt with Elijah's faith and failure through the sermon, then in the conclusion he turned in this manner: "Let us cease from man, whose breath is in his nostrils, for wherein is he to be accounted of? Let us turn to Him who alone is worthy to be our example."¹⁷⁶

Christ and Him crucified was Fuller's theme, his one central idea. This one idea dominated Fuller's thinking, preaching, and living. For forty-four years this herald of the Cross preached Christ crucified as the only Gospel and the only hope. This subject possessed him, and he had few equals in the proclamation of this one central theme.

Fuller's death was caused by cancer. He lingered for a few weeks near the door before he passed through. On his death bed he exalted Christ the crucified as he

¹⁷⁵ Sermons, II, 290 ff.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., II, 308. Cf. also, "The Insane Rich Man," II, 174-175; "Predestination," II, 30; "Sinful Pleasures," III, 137-138; and "Jacob's Ladder," III, 236 ff.

Richard Fuller, A Solemn Question (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, n. d.), No. 176, p. 1 ff.

had for so many years. The ruling passion of Richard Fuller's soul was to preach Christ, and as death drew on he spoke often of Christ. He sent messages to his church and to his brothers in the ministry, exalting Christ. The last hours of his earthly life were spent in singing with his weakened voice "Jesus Savior Pilot Me;" and then at the end his last words were, "Who'll preach Jesus?"¹⁷⁷

CONCLUSION

The persuasive characteristics of Fuller's preaching were: His use of the rhetorical elements of explanation, argument, illustration, and application; a style marked by classical, extemporaneous, imaginative, and persuasive characteristics; his dramatic pulpit appearance; and the one central theme in all his sermons, of Christ crucified. These factors in Fuller's preaching were developed according to his own personality and ability, but in general, they are the qualities of effective preaching in any age. Fuller's use of them made him one of the most persuasive preachers of the nineteenth century.

In an analysis of his preaching it was found that

177 Cuthbert, op. cit., pp. 308-309.
Ford, op. cit., p. 468.

he used the rhetorical elements excessively at times, and in some instances his style was archaic rather than timely. His pulpit actions were too elaborate on many occasions and his strict adherence to the one theme of Christ crucified caused him to neglect other related and essential topics in his preaching. His art of preaching was instructive, but could not be followed minutely as an example.

This chapter concluded the study of Richard Fuller and His Preaching. The man, his beliefs, his sermons, and his preaching were the major divisions made in this thesis.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This thesis was written on the subject Richard Fuller and His Preaching. The first part of this study was made of the man and his beliefs. The second part was an analysis of his sermons and the characteristics of his preaching. Some conclusions and evaluations were made in the body of the thesis. It only remains to give a summary of the importance of Richard Fuller historically and the principles found in his preaching that are timeless in their value for christian preaching.

In any study of the history of Baptists in America it would be necessary to study Richard Fuller for his connection with and contribution to the following events.

- (1) Fuller was one of the Southern leaders in the Baptist Triennial Convention of America during the crucial years of 1835-1845. He helped shape the movements and events that culminated in the withdrawal of the southern Baptists.
- (2) He was the champion of the christian slaveholders and their foremost spokesman in the great slavery debate within the Baptist denomination as well as nationally.
- (3) Richard Fuller made the motion in Augusta, Georgia in 1845 that the Baptists in the South draw up a preamble for organizing a new convention separate from the Triennial Convention. He was also chairman of the committee

that wrote the constitution for the Southern Baptist Convention. (4) Fuller served as the third president of the Southern Baptist Convention and was a leader in the formation of policies, plans, and theology for the first thirty years of the Convention's history. He actively supported the missionary, benevolent, and educational institutions of the Convention. (5) He was a builder of churches in South Carolina and Maryland with a vision of modern missions, Sunday Schools, and benevolences far in advance of the majority of his contemporaries.

This study of Fuller's preaching revealed certain practices and principles in his preaching that are valuable for preaching in any age. (1) Fuller believed that the christian preacher was divinely called for the task and should devote all his energies to his calling. This he did from the time he entered the ministry to the last days of his life. (2) He was a diligent student all his active life; reserving a definite period of time for study in each week day. Every sermon was carefully prepared before he preached. (3) Fuller had a definite aim in preaching. This aim was twofold: He sought to elucidate the scriptures and preached for the immediate persuasion of the hearer. (4) His sermons were built upon Biblical truths, were clearly arranged, and sought

as their objectives to meet the needs of the people.

(5) He was an advocate of extemporaneous preaching--free delivery after careful preparation. He believed that the personal relationship of preaching was best exploited in this manner of delivery. (6) Fuller believed that the whole man should be prepared for preaching so he assiduously prepared himself physically and spiritually, as well as mentally. (7) He studied rhetoric and when appropriate used the principles of rhetoric in his sacred mission. (8) The Bible was the source book for his preaching and for his living, giving authority to his message and strength to his character. (9) The message of the atonement, Christ crucified, was the one central theme in all the preaching of Richard Fuller.

The general conclusion of this study is that Richard Fuller as a man and as a preacher should be listed with the foremost preachers of America in the nineteenth century and that he was one of the most outstanding pastor-preachers of the Southern Baptist Convention during the nineteenth century.

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