A KEEN EDGE: UNDERSTANDING AND APPLYING JOHN A. BROADUS'S VIEW OF COMMUNICATION STYLE TO CONTEMPORARY PREACHING

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A KEEN EDGE: UNDERSTANDING AND APPLYING
JOHN A. BROADUS'S VIEW OF COMMUNICATION
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To my wife, Hannah,

and to our two children, Henry and Elizabeth.

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PREFACE

This thesis is the result of years of thinking, writing, and learning about preaching. At the encouragement of my pastor, I preached my first sermon as a seventh-grade student. From that moment, God has placed a burning in my bones for preaching that will not be easily extinguished. I am so thankful for men like Dr. Hershael York, who over the years have poured into my life and ministry for the sake of the kingdom. More than anything, I desire to be faithful to the Lord Jesus Christ. Dr. York has modeled that faithfulness for me in every way.

I would have never completed the work necessary for this thesis had it not been for my wife, Hannah. She is the greatest earthly gift the Lord has given to me. Hannah, along with our children, Henry and Elizabeth, sacrificed as much, if not more than me, in the pursuit of this endeavor. I am a better disciple and preacher because of their presence in my life.

I am thankful for my church, Buck Run Baptist Church. There is, quite literally, no other body of believers on the planet I would rather serve. They are a daily fragrance of the grace of Christ in my life. I pray that my efforts would only help me serve them more faithfully.

I owe much to Dr. R. Albert Mohler Jr., and the faculty of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. This seminary community has been a part of my life in some capacity since 2010. When I think back to my first MDiv classes, it is hard to overestimate how much this institution has shaped me. I am especially thankful to Dr. York. He has been my professor, pastor, co-worker, and friend. His investment in my education and ministry is a gift. I owe so much of who I am to this place.

Lastly, I am thankful for my brothers who have walked this DMin path along with me. Their friendship and guidance proved invaluable. I am certain the Lord will continue to use these choice servants in mighty ways in the kingdom.

Chris Parrish

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The call to preach is the greatest call a man can hear. Every week, faithful men ascend to their place behind the pulpit in churches all over the world, having the audacity to stand before the gathered congregation and speak for God. Why would any sane man take that burden upon himself? Many of these men are not driven by ego or a craving for power but by a foundational belief that God has spoken. He has not left men to grope in the darkness but has revealed himself in His Word. Therefore, because *He* has spoken, *they* must speak.[1] The task of the preacher is not to creatively invent new doctrine but to think God's thoughts after him.[2] Not only is he driven by the belief that God has spoken, but he is burdened to declare to the people, "Thus says the Lord." Bold proclamation requires nothing less than a full commitment to the truthfulness of the Word. But is that all that is required? Does faithful preaching require more than mere doctrinal fidelity? Is scriptural accuracy enough to produce powerful preaching?

John A. Broadus, arguably one of the most important preachers in the nineteenth century, sought to answer these questions.[3] Broadus was born to a modest but hard-working, farming family on January 24, 1827, in Culpepper County, Virginia. His parents were devout and had a tremendous impact on his life, particularly his father, Major

[1] R. Albert Mohler Jr., writes, "True preaching begins with this confession: We preach because God has spoken. That fundamental conviction is the fulcrum of the Christian faith and of Christian preaching." R. Albert Mohler Jr., *He Is Not Silent: Preaching in a Postmodern World* (Chicago: Moody, 2008), 40.

[2] D. A. Carson, *Exegetical Fallacies*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996), 15.

[3] Broadus's life is not void of significant error or problematic beliefs. See appendix 1 for a discussion of his support of antebellum slavery.

Edmund Broadus, a man of great character and activity who provided John with deep spiritual roots.[4] He was a farmer, a major in the Virginia militia, and a miller, the leader of the Whig party in the state, and he worked personally with Thomas Jefferson. He raised his son in the Baptist church of Virginia and educated him in a subscription school, Black Hill Boarding School.[5] During the last year of his schooling, John Broadus attended a prolonged meeting at Mt. Poney Baptist Church where he heard the preaching of Reverend Charles Lewis and Reverend Barnett Grimsley.[6] The Lord used the earlier salvation and baptism of his sister to open Broadus's eyes to his need of salvation and John trusted the Lord, saying, "I came to cherish a belief, an humble hope in Christ."[7] The stage was set for Broadus to make an inestimable impact on the world.

In 1846, John Broadus matriculated at the prestigious University of Virginia, where by all accounts he was an "eager and dedicated student."[8] Even as a young man, God began to work through him to reach other students. He was diligent to serve others, attended church services, and was particularly evangelistic. In 1846, he surrendered to vocational ministry, a call he never doubted thereafter.[9] While at UVA, Broadus so distinguished himself as a student and scholar that he was chosen to deliver the graduation speech.[10] After graduation, he tutored in Fluvanna County for a year before accepting a call

[4] David S. Dockery, "Mighty in the Scriptures: John A. Broadus and His Influence on A. T. Robertson and Southern Baptist Life," in *John A. Broadus: A Living Legacy*, ed. David S. Dockery, Roger D. Duke, and Michael A. G. Haykin, Studies in Baptist Life and Thought (Nashville: B & H, 2008), 13.

[5] Dockery, "Mighty in the Scriptures," 13.

[6] Tom J. Nettles, *The Baptists: Key People in Forming a Baptist Identity* (Fearn, Scotland: Mentor, 2005), 294.

[7] John Albert Broadus, *Immersion Essential to Christian Baptism* (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1892), 36.

[8] Dockery, "Mighty in the Scriptures," 15.

[9] Dockery, "Mighty in the Scriptures," 17.

[10] Nettles, *The Baptists*, 2:245.

to pastor in Charlottesville in September of 1851. Simultaneously, he began an associate professorship at UVA teaching Latin and Greek and soon became the campus chaplain.

Over the next few years, the idea of founding a Southern Baptist seminary gained traction as James Petigru Boyce worked to establish the school. After serving on a feasibility study committee, Broadus, along with Basil Manly Jr., and William Williams, agreed to leave his beloved home in Charlottesville and join the faculty at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, which opened in 1859 in Greenville, South Carolina.[11] Reportedly, Broadus and Manly both said to each other, "I'll go if you will go."[12] This new endeavor enveloped the rest of Broadus's life and work. He poured all that he was into the work there, even turning down countless opportunities to go elsewhere. He was offered the presidency of both Brown University and Crozer Theological Seminary, each bringing with it a significant increase in pay.[13] Several prominent churches also invited Broadus to serve as their pastor. Broadus refused each invitation to leave Southern Seminary. After the war, when the seminary moved to Louisville, Broadus moved as well and continued to teach. His first preaching class after the war contained only one blind student, and yet he still taught. In 1889, he became the president of the seminary following the death of Boyce. In that year he also delivered the Lyman Beecher lectures at Yale. Already in bad health when assuming the presidency, Broadus never regained his full strength and eventually passed away on March 16, 1895. Louisville's *Courier-Journal* reported, "There is no man in the United States whose passing would cause more widespread sorrow than that of Doctor Broadus."[14] Broadus's had substantial impact not only in his own age, but he continued to influence preachers and preaching in the decades that followed his death.

[11] Dockery, "Mighty in the Scriptures," 19.

[12] Dockery, "Mighty in the Scriptures," 18.

[13] Dockery, "Mighty in the Scriptures," 21.

[14] *Courier-Journal*, quoted in Dockery, "Mighty in the Scriptures," 21.

He was not only an expert practitioner but a learned scholar whose preaching and teaching long outlived him.

Broadus committed much of his life's work to preaching. In his seminal work *Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*, Broadus argues that preachers must be concerned with both *what* is said and *how* it is said. Preaching is an art, and art requires style. Broadus describes style as the "keen edge" of a sword, making power "more powerful still."[15] Style is the method and manner of expressing thoughts, which Broadus calls the "incarnation of thought."[16] Yet, homiletical studies have widely neglected matters of style that Broadus articulates. Textual accuracy and homiletical precision are both vital, but the two disciplines are not synonymous. Therefore, in sermon preparation one must labor over the *text* and spend time laboring over the *sermon*. Preachers who understand the text well but cannot or will not do the hard work of effectively communicating the truth of that text to the people have fallen short. Clear, passionate, and beautiful preaching demands careful attention to style. Broadus argues that every preacher "should pay great attention to the improvement of his style . . . [for] any man who will try, long enough and hard enough, can learn to say what he means, to say forcibly what he deeply feels, and to clothe his thoughts in a garb at least of homely neatness."[17] How does communication style operate in relationship to homiletics? What is a biblically appropriate view of style in preaching? This thesis answers these questions as it seeks to fill a gap in the literature by examining and applying Broadus's view of style to contemporary preaching, with an eye toward usefulness in the local church.

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[15] John Albert Broadus, *A Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons* (Louisville: The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2012), 285.

[16] Broadus, *Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*, 283.

[17] Broadus, *Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*, 287.

Familiarity with the Literature

Many preaching books have sought to *describe* both faithful preaching and *prescribe* specific means and methods to produce it. They are outnumbered, though, by works that help preachers understand the text. Hermeneutics has trumped homiletics, thus many works are designed to help preachers "get the text right," but few speak to how to preach the text. Fewer still are works that give much attention to style in preaching. What follows are works that at least attempt to speak to style in preaching.

Broadus, in his magnum opus *A Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery Sermons*, devotes nearly one hundred pages to a topic that many preaching books generally neglect. His *Treatise* is a tour de force of the appropriate and fitting use of rhetorical principles in preaching. He demonstrates that he has not only learned from classical rhetoricians like Aristotle and Cicero, but has benefited from those like Augustine who have "adapted rhetoric for preaching."[18] He even organized his work around Aristotle's *Canons of Rhetoric.* In the introduction, he defines eloquence as "speaking as merely not to convince the judgment, kindle the imagination, and move the feelings, but to give a powerful impulse to the will."[19] Broadus saw that the aim of preaching was to move one toward a decision for Christ; therefore, he believed eloquence (style) could serve the preacher and the sermon. Eloquence is thus a "practical . . . [and] serious" tool in the preacher's hand. He labors to make this known and to demonstrate how preachers may grow in this discipline. One would be hard pressed to find a better discussion or example of the proper use of rhetoric and eloquence in preaching than John Broadus and his *Treatise.*

R. L. Dabney, a contemporary of Broadus and fellow seminary professor, delivered and then later published a course of lectures on preaching entitled *Sacred*

[18] Roger D. Duke, "John A. Broadus, Rhetoric, and A Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons," in Dockery, Duke, and Haykin, *John A. Broadus*, 73.

[19] Broadus, Preparation and Delivery of Sermons, 3.

Rhetoric at nearly the same time that Broadus was producing his *Treatise.*[20] Dabney shares Broadus's view of rhetoric and eloquence, though curiously seems to be cited much more by contemporary authors. He defines eloquence as "the emission of the soul's energy through speech . . . [for] the purpose of propagating in the soul a volition morally excellent."[21] He wisely dismisses rhetorical flair for the sake of pleasing one's senses but sees eloquence as a powerful and useful communication tool in presenting the Word and calling for response. Like Broadus, Dabney's work is largely ignored by contemporary homiletic students, robbing them of significant stylistic insight.

Many works on preaching display convictions on homiletics and rhetoric similar to those of Broadus, even when they scarcely interact with his *Treatise* directly. John Stott's seminal preaching manual *Between Two Worlds* is one such work.[22] Stott encourages preachers to labor hard to preach well and to approach the task of preaching with the utmost seriousness. He expresses the need for careful consideration and crafting of the sermon, interacting with many of Broadus's ideas in his section on "Preparing Sermons," and specifically the sub-sections on arrangement, introductions, and conclusions.[23] He even explicitly cites Broadus when discussing the usefulness of sermon introductions.[24] Stott's work agrees with the rhetorical principles laid out by Broadus but not explicitly exposed in *Between Two Worlds.*

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[20] Now published under the title *Evangelical Eloquence: A Course of Lectures on Preaching.*

[21] Robert Lewis Dabney, *Evangelical Eloquence: A Course of Lectures on Preaching* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1999), 35.

[22] John R. W. Stott, *Between Two Worlds: The Challenge of Preaching Today* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2017).

[23] Stott, *Between Two Worlds*, 228-61.

[24] Stott, *Between Two Worlds*, 244.

Haddon Robinson's *Biblical Preaching*, like Stott's, shares many of the same convictions and is a helpful resource for preachers.[25] In his section on style, what he calls the "dress of thought," he gives the characteristics of effective sermon style, making many of the same recommendations as Broadus.[26] He asserts that biblical preaching requires "insight, imagination, and spiritual sensitivity" and comes nearer to "erecting cathedrals than hammering together animal shelters."[27] Preaching is an art, and in art, style matters. Robinson captures that sentiment beautifully.

D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones's *Preaching and Preachers* is considered by many to be a classic in the field of homiletics.[28] Originally delivered as lectures in the spring of 1969, Lloyd-Jones's theology and practice of preaching was published just a few years later, in 1972. He references the "artistic element in a sermon," which requires considerable work on the part of the preacher as he seeks to "hammer out [the] subject manner in order to get it into the form a sermon."[29] This artistic element is not art for art's sake but rather serves the listeners so that as they listen to the sermon it is "easier for them to take it in, to remember it, to understand it, and to benefit from it."[30] Lloyd-Jones lays out the groundwork for a theory of style that matches Broadus, even calling for pastors to labor hard in the work of preparing the sermon's form.

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[25] Haddon W. Robinson, *Biblical Preaching: The Development and Delivery of Expository Messages*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2014).

[26] Robinson, *Biblical Preaching*, 135-48.

[27] Robinson, *Biblical Preaching*, 28.

[28] David Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *Preaching and Preachers*, ed. Kevin De Young (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011).

[29] Lloyd-Jones, *Preaching and Preachers*, 89.

[30] Lloyd-Jones, *Preaching and Preachers*, 89.

In their work, *Power in the Pulpit,* Jerry Vines and Jim Shaddix offer a helpful guide for preaching powerful sermons.[31] The preacher's task begins with exposition and ends with the crafting and delivering of sermons. A large portion of the work is devoted to the actual formation of the sermon. They lay out specific recommendations related to preaching style, quoting Broadus's definition of style directly.[32] Their treatment of style is brief and often surface level but directly draws from the well of Broadus even if only for a few pages.

Hershael W. York and Bert Decker offer a refreshingly practical guide for preaching in their work *Preaching with Bold Assurance.* Approaching preaching through the lenses of text, sermon, and delivery, they argue that powerful preaching requires careful and laborious work in *all three* areas. Simply explaining the text is insufficient, for the preacher must also "engage and grip his audience by the power of his conviction, passion, and warmth" in delivery.[33] The goal of preaching is "engaging exposition."[34] Throughout the work, York and Decker operate in implicit agreement with the stylistic principles laid out by Broadus even when they do not explicitly state or interact with them. Their section on illustrating, introducing, and concluding sermons leans on the basic elements of rhetoric and eloquence.

Another helpful resource for preachers is John Piper's *Expository Exultation.*[35] Piper seeks to answer the question, "What does it mean to preach [the] word, and how

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[31] Jerry Vines and James L. Shaddix, *Power in the Pulpit: How to Prepare and Deliver Expository Sermons*, rev. ed. (Chicago: Moody, 2017).

[32] Vines and Shaddix, *Power in the Pulpit*, 253.

[33] Hershael W. York and Bert Decker, *Preaching with Bold Assurance: A Solid and Enduring Approach to Engaging Exposition* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2003), 10.

[34] York and Decker, *Preaching with Bold Assurance*, 15.

[35] John Piper, *Expository Exultation: Christian Preaching as Worship* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2018).

should we do it?"[36] Through seven distinct sections, Piper lays out both a theology for preaching and the practical outworking of that theology in the practice of preaching. He sees preaching as primarily *expository exultation*, meaning that preaching not only "assists worship, but also is worship."[37] Preaching is a unique communication that is committed to both declaring the glory of Christ in the Scripture, but also exulting in that glory. Rhetoric and eloquence are far from being enemies of this goal, but if used properly, will serve it.

Void in the Literature

Despite an abundance of classic and contemporary works on preaching, many preachers are still unable to find much help in the way of style**.** Some works on preaching rarely mention style explicitly but rather offer advice on sermon structure, illustrations, application, and delivery. Often that advice clearly flows out of an underlying, but unexpressed, theory of style.[38] Others, such as Vines and Piper, explicitly agree that style is an important aspect of preaching and seek to offer some instruction on improving style.[39] Rarer still are those works, like Dabney, which not only discuss style in preaching but seek to describe both the theory and mechanics of style. Any preacher determined to improve his style in preaching will be hard pressed to find works that offer robust help.

John Broadus, in his *Treatise*, has much to offer, but little of Broadus's work on style has been utilized in the field of homiletics despite its timeless wisdom and expertise. For much of the twentieth century, Broadus's work was one of the most used textbooks in

[36] Piper, *Expository Exultation*, 15.

[37] Piper, *Expository Exultation*, 16.

[38] The works by Stott and Lloyd-Jones are an excellent example of this type of work. They operate with an underlying but unexpressed view of rhetorical style. Nowhere in their works do they offer any robust explanation of rhetoric and eloquence.

[39] Both Vines and Piper offer whole chapters dealing with stylistic choices, but neither fully explore the theory behind those choices. Piper comes close in his chapter discussing Christian rhetoric.

American preaching courses. His *Treatise* is one of the most influential works on preaching in the last 150 years.[40] Unfortunately, in the last forty-five years, Broadus's work has experienced diminished influence. In a 1972 research study conducted by Donald Chatfield, the *Treatise*[41] was still the second most used homiletics textbook for seminaries and Bible colleges associated with the Academy of Homiletics.[42] Kent Hughes, in 1983, conducted a similar study and again found that Broadus's work was among the most used.[43] This influence, though, would soon dissipate. In 1983, Chatfield again conducted a similar study among 131 school associated with the Academy of Homiletics. Not only was Broadus's *Treatise* not in the top two, his work did not even make the list.[44] The *Treatise* was also conspicuously absent from top resource lists generated from similar studies conducted in 2010, 2015, and 2017.[45] It is clear that Broadus's work has fallen out of regular use within the homiletic community. His views and ideas, though, deserve a

[40] Chris Rappazini, "What Has Been Written: Quantitative Studies on Homiletical Textbooks Used in Seminary Classrooms," *Journal of the Evangelical Homiletics Society* 19, no. 2 (2019): 31.

[41] This reference refers to the 4th ed. of the *Treatise.* More work needs to be done regarding the significant changes taken place across the many editions. Those changes may be at least partially to blame for its diminished influence. In 2012, Southern Seminary reprinted the first edition, returning to Broadus's original work and audience, which is, by far, the preferable edition. See appendix 2 for more information.

[42] Donald F. Chatfield, "Textbooks Used by Teachers of Preaching," *Homiletic* 9, no. 2 (1984): 2, cited in Rappazini, "What Has Been Written," 31.

[43] Kent Hughes, "A Quantitative Analysis of Selected General Homiletical Trade and Textbooks" (DMin thesis, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, 1983), cited in Rappazini, "What Has Been Written," 31.

[44] Hughes, "A Quantitative Analysis," 1, cited in Rappazzini, "What Has Been Written," 31.

[45] Michael Duduit, "The 25 Most Influential Preaching Books of the Past 25 Years," Preaching, 2010, https://wwww.preaching.com/articles/the-25-most-influential-preaching-books-of-the-past-25-years/; Troy Borst, "What Are Seminaries across Traditions Using to Teach the Next Generation of Preachers?" *Evangelical Homiletics Society* 15, no. 2 (September 2015): 38-48; Alex Kato, "The Theology behind the Books We Choose" (paper presented at the Evangelical Homiletics Society Annual Conference, South Hamilton, MA, October 2017), cited in Rappazini, "What Has Been Written," 31-39.

resurgence of influence. His view of rhetoric and eloquence is largely absent from present works, though many are dependent on his theories.[46]

Where others work within a thin framework of stylistic theory, Broadus lays out a robust case for style, both its theory and application. He notes that style is not "mere ornament" or simply the "glitter and polish of the warrior's sword, but also its keen edge."[47] Eloquent style focuses attention to the matter at hand, the very ideas being communicated, attracting "least attention to itself."[48] Style matters in preaching because it allows the truth of Scripture to be more clearly and powerfully communicated.

In defending his use of eloquence and rhetoric, Broadus asserts, "A just rhetoric . . . would require that a preacher shall preach the gospel—shall hold on to the told truths, and labor to clothe them with new interest and power."[49] Therefore, every preacher should labor to improve his style. Broadus, in dissecting the aspects of style and exploring means of improvement, extends the discussion of rhetorical style to an arena where few preaching books have tread. Most works offer what amounts to rhetorical "tips" that preachers may employ, but Broadus's work is interested in helping men become the *kind of preacher* that properly wields his words in service to the Word. Not enough has been written exploring Broadus's contribution to rhetorical style in preaching; therefore, a considerable void in the literature must be filled. This thesis fills a small portion of that significant gap

[46] Nettles notes that many homiletical books and theories are derived from Broadus's work (for example, James F. Stitzinger, Irvin A. Busenitz, John MacArthur, John Carrick, Bryan Chapell, David Larsen, and Joseph Webb), whether Broadus is explicitly cited or not. Tom J. Nettles, "The Enduring Impact of Relevance of a Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery Sermons," in Dockery, Duke, and Haykin, *John A. Broadus*, 176-211. See also Hershael W. York, "Carefully Expositing the Authoritative Scriptures," in *A Legacy of Preaching: The Life, Theology, and Method of History's Great Preachers*, ed. Benjamin K. Forrest et al. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2018), 2:224-25.

[47] Broadus, *Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*, 285.

[48] Broadus, *Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*, 287.

[49] Broadus, *Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*, 5.

in the literature by examining, defining, and applying Broadus's view of style to contemporary preaching with an eye toward usefulness in the local church.

Thesis

Stylistic choices aid clarity, energy, and beauty in preaching. The question is: how should a preacher improve his style? Simple tips or the mere application of stylistic theory is not enough. Preachers must both understand *and* apply a theory of style. Where many are silent, John A. Broadus speaks, offering a robust theory of style and its mechanics. In this thesis, I argue that Broadus's principles and properties of style should be understood and implemented by contemporary preachers so that their preaching will be marked by clarity, passion, and beauty. His *Treatise* has much to offer pastors in contemporary contexts.

This position is defended in the following ways. First, Broadus's theory of style is defined as laid out in his *Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons.* Second, Broadus's view of style is defended and demonstrated to be useful. The main question that must be answered is: is his theory of style compatible with what the Bible says about preaching? Does Paul forbid this sort of rhetoric in 1 Corinthians 1 when he denounces "words of eloquent wisdom?" This chapter also argues Broadus's view of style is both homiletically fitting and rhetorically effective. Third, a selection of sermons by Broadus are analyzed and evaluated on the basis of what he outlines in his *Treatise* and the effect of his stylistic decisions is discussed. Fourth, Broadus's recommendations for means of improvement are explored. Broader implications for the church are also outlined. If Broadus's view of style were to be adopted and applied, what effect would that have on preachers and their preaching? What effect would it have on preachers' schedules, studies, and focus? This section seeks to demonstrate how the means of improvement can be implemented in the life of the pastor.

CHAPTER 2

A SUMMARY OF BROADUS'S VIEW OF STYLE

Introduction

Mark Twain once remarked, "The difference between the almost right word and the right word is really a large matter—'tis the difference between the lightening bug and the lightning."[1] Seldom has a point been so succinctly demonstrated. The mercurial Twain understood what many contemporary preachers ignore: it matters not just *what* you say, but *how* you say it. John A. Broadus understood this truth and thus sought to instill in his preaching students a relentless pursuit of effective communication in the pulpit. He quotes Augustine: "*Veritas pateat*, *veritas placeact*, *veritas moveat* (make the truth plain, make it pleasing, make it moving)."[2] This pursuit is what led Broadus to devote so much of his magnum opus to style. What follows in this chapter is a brief overview of Broadus's theological convictions related to homiletics and a thorough examination of his view of style in preaching. A close look at his views will demonstrate that he not only lands squarely within orthodoxy but has much help to offer contemporary preachers.

Theological Convictions

To best understand Broadus's view of style in preaching, one must understand his underlying convictions. Without this understanding Broadus's arguments on style are

[1] George Bainton, ed., *The Art of Authorship: Literary Reminiscences, Methods of Work, and Advice to Young Beginners, Personally Contributed by Leading Authors of the Day* (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1890), 87.

[2] John Albert Broadus, *A Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons* (Louisville: The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2012), 4. From here forward referred to as *Treatise* within the text. Originally published in 1870, this is the only reprint of the first edition. There are over 50 in total, but all references in this work refer to the reprint of the first edition. In addition, references to this work from this point forward will be indicated with parenthetical page numbering.

easily twisted into something they are not. It will be helpful, at this point, to briefly examine Broadus's theological convictions in general as well as his particular convictions regarding the relationship of rhetoric to homiletics.

The discussion of Broadus's view of style must begin by acknowledging that nowhere does Broadus pit style against substance. His theory and practice of preaching is thoroughly evangelical and orthodox.[3] Hershael York notes that the study of Broadus's theology differs from many other historical preachers. Often, researchers must start with sermons and statements then "work backwards . . . inferring the underlying doctrinal positions."[4] That is certainly not the case here. The confessional statement of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, the Abstract of Principles,[5] provides a clear and robust explanation of the founder's doctrinal positions and thus speaks volumes on the theological convictions undergirding Broadus's preaching.[6] The *Abstract*, which Broadus himself played a part in crafting, grew out of confessional statements used by Baptist associations in Philadelphia and Charleston, and the earlier Second London Confession.[7] Leaving no room for theological maneuvering, the confession ensures that every professor at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary is thoroughly orthodox by historic Baptist standards. The confessional document has been appropriately described as "in line with historic orthodoxy at every point."[8] Broadus's signing of the document demonstrates his

[3] For more on the theology of Broadus, see Roger D. Duke, "John A. Broadus, Rhetoric, and a Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons," in *John A. Broadus: A Living Legacy*, ed. David S. Dockery, Roger D. Duke, and Michael A. G. Haykin, Studies in Baptist Life and Thought (Nashville: B & H, 2008), 81; Jared Howard Bumpers, "A Man 'Mighty in the Scriptures': The Hermeneutic of John A. Broadus and Its Impact on His Preaching" (PhD diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2018).

[4] Hershael W. York, "Carefully Expositing the Authoritative Scriptures," in *A Legacy of Preaching: The Life, Theology, and Method of History's Great Preachers*, ed. Benjamin K. Forrest et al. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2018), 2:216.

[5] From here forward referred to as *Abstract.*

[6] York, "Carefully Expositing the Authoritative Scriptures," 216.

[7] York, "Carefully Expositing the Authoritative Scriptures," 216.

[8] York, "Carefully Expositing the Authoritative Scriptures," 217.

unwavering theological commitment to orthodox views of the Scriptures, the Trinity, the providence of God, election, regeneration, justification, sanctification, the ordinances, and much more.[9] His preaching reflected these deep theological commitments. Throughout the history of church, preaching has often been detached from orthodoxy.[10] For Broadus, such preaching would have been not only unthinkable but would cease to be "preaching" in any real sense. These very convictions drove him to preach, teach, and write extensively. Good preaching can help defend the church against the "subtle infidelity" of heterodox beliefs by educating the laity in Christian doctrine.[11]

Far from shying away from doctrinal points, Broadus often dedicated whole sermons to doctrinal positions.[12] His theological commitments were also evident during his time at Southern Seminary. When C. H. Toy, a professor at the seminary who eventually resigned, began to believe and teach a heterodox view of the Scriptures and evolution, Broadus rightly recognized the dangers of such theology, even while many other Baptists felt the departure to be a small thing.[13] He continued to show affection and concern for Toy after he left the seminary but found that many had "little discernment" in their evaluation of the theological issues at stake.[14] His preaching was powerful and effective precisely because of his commitment to the truth of the Bible. Preaching devoid of rich doctrinal truth will always be devoid of real spiritual power.

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[9] York, "Carefully Expositing the Authoritative Scriptures," 217.

[10] For a comprehensive overview of preaching, see David L. Larsen, *The Company of the Preachers: A History of Biblical Preaching from the Old Testament to the Modern Era* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1998).

[11] Tom J. Nettles, *The Baptists*, vol. 2, *Key People in Forming a Baptist Identity* (Fearn, Scotland: Mentor, 2005), 306.

[12] John Albert Broadus, *Favorite Sermons of John A. Broadus*, ed. Vernon L. Stanfield (New York: Harper, 1959), 91-97. See his sermon titled "The Necessity of Atonement."

[13] For a full recounting see Gregory A. Wills, *Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1859-2009* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 181-90.

[14] Nettles, *The Baptists*, 2:308.

Broadus also firmly believed and taught that true preaching was totally reliant on the authority of God's Word. True preaching lays bare the text of Scripture. Broadus believed that the Bible did not merely "contain but *is* the Word of God."[15] His commitment to the absolute truthfulness and divine authority of the Word of God can be seen in his response to the Toy controversy. Broadus stopped short of affirming verbal plenary inspiration, as Basil Manly Jr. did, simply because he was cautious in "theorizing" the mechanisms of inspiration.[16] To hand down this confidence in the Bible he included a section on the Scriptures in his catechism for children, writing, "'Has it been proven that the inspired writers stated anything as true that was not true?' He answers, 'No; there is no proof that inspired writers made any mistakes of any kind.'"[17] In the Word of God, Broadus found the basis and content for his sermons. In chapter 1 of the *Treatise,* he states,

> It is manifest that to take a text gives a certain air of sacredness to the discourse. But more than this is true. The primary idea is that the discourse is a development of the text, and explanation, illustration, application of its teaching. Our business is to teach God's Word . . . our undertaking is not to guide the people by our own wisdom, but to impart to them the teachings of God in his Word. (22)

For Broadus, preaching was important because the preacher, in expounding the Scriptures, speaks for God. Preaching is authoritative and powerful because the Word of God is authoritative and powerful. Even Broadus's well-known use of rhetorical principles did not overshadow his desire to make the meaning of the Word plain. In fact, Roger Duke notes, "Nothing was more important than bringing clarity and plainness to the pulpit."[18] His commitment to clarity and plainness flows directly from his commitment to the truthfulness and authority of the Word of God. This commitment followed him through

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[15] William A. Mueller, *A History of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary* (Nashville: Broadman, 1959), 80.

[16] David S. Dockery, "Mighty in the Scriptures: John A. Broadus and His Influence on A. T. Robertson and Southern Baptist Life," in Dockery, Duke, and Haykin, *John A. Broadus*, 33.

[17] Nettles, *The Baptists*, 2:310.

[18] Duke, "John A. Broadus, Rhetoric, and a Treatise," 81.

the entirety of his life and ministry. The last words he spoke in a formal teaching setting so beautifully captured the essence of his ministry. At the conclusion of his last lecture in English New Testament, student C. L. Corbitt recounts that he urged his students to be men "mighty in the Scriptures."[19]

Broadus was also evangelistic in his preaching, calling men to faith because he believed preaching was the primary means the Holy Spirit used to regenerate men.[20] While he considered many other aspects of pastoral ministry important, nothing could surpass preaching. Preaching is unique to Christianity and sets it apart from the world's other religions, even Judaism. Early in his treatise he asserts, "The great appointed means of spreading the good tiding of salvation through Christ is preaching—words spoken, whether to the individual, or to the assembly. And this, nothing can supersede" (1). Printing can be a great tool for the minister, and pastoral work is crucial, but both fall behind preaching in importance (1). Throughout the history of the church, faithful preaching has often accompanied great works of the spirit and tremendous revival. Broadus believed this and therefore gave his life to train preachers to be faithful stewards of the pulpit. When the pulpit is weak and anemic, the church will be weak and anemic. In his introduction to his volume *Favorite Sermons of John A. Broadus*, Vernon Stanfield attributes the power of his preaching to his "conscious purpose to lead his hearers to some spiritual decision."[21] Broadus, one of sharpest and most academically accomplished preachers of the nineteenth century, was used by God because he focused on bringing people to a response; namely, trust in Christ.

Broadus's commitment to the full authority and truthfulness of the Word led him to allow the text itself to drive his sermons, making him a model for preachers in every age. Richard Melick, in measuring the preaching of Broadus against modern

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[19] Nettles, *The Baptists*, 2:313.

[20] York, "Carefully Expositing the Authoritative Scriptures," 219.

[21] Vernon Stanfield, introduction to Broadus, *Favorite Sermons*, 9.

preaching theory, notes that he resisted "spiritualization and misrepresentation" with a strong "emphasis . . . on letting the text determine meaning."[22] In an age where many preachers were happy to give merely a cursory nod to the text, Broadus believed that faithfulness required tethering oneself to the passage. Chapter 2 of *Treatise* lays out both the importance and the obligation a preacher has to understand the text. He goes so far as to provide examples of common misinterpretations while laying out the responsibility of the preacher. His duty is to "interpret and apply his text in accordance with its real meaning," and is thus "bound to represent the text as meaning precisely what it does mean" (1). The actual words of the text should be studied carefully and in context in order that the preacher may not abuse the Scriptures; twisting the words or merely making them a "motto." Modern preachers would do well to heed such wise advice, sticking close to the Scripture when they dare speak for God.

One can only understand Broadus's preaching by grasping the foundational convictions that guided him. It would be unfair to examine his view of style divorced from his greater theological commitments. By knowing these broader commitments one can understand his views on style with greater charity and clarity.

The Relationship of Rhetoric and Homiletics

Broadus begins the *Treatise* by discussing the nature of preaching, especially as it relates to eloquence.[23] He starts by defining eloquence because he classifies homiletics as a branch of rhetoric, what he calls a "kindred art" (12). Despite contemporary usage of the word *eloquence*, in the context of Broadus's writings, it is not primarily stirring up the emotions of the hearers simply for the sake of pleasure, but rather seeking to move the will. He defines *eloquence* as "so speaking as not merely to convince the judgment, kindle the imagination, and move the feelings, but to give a powerful impulse to the will" (3).

[22] Richard Melick, "New Wine in Broadus Wineskins?," in Dockery, Duke, and Haykin, *John A. Broadus*, 120.

[23] Broadus uses "eloquence" and "rhetoric" as nearly synonymous.

Preachers who merely kindle the imagination or move the emotions of their hearers for their own delight are but "vain pretenders"—they are neither truly eloquent nor a Christian preacher (4). Getting one's hearers to *feel* a certain way, or even to understand a certain theological truth is not the final goal of the eloquent preacher. Instead, the goal is to move the impulse of the will of the hearer toward the will of the Lord. In this way, Broadus see *eloquence* as a "serious thing," not to be mistaken for mere amusement (4). *Eloquence* and *amusement* are mutually exclusive; a sermon cannot be both eloquent and amusing. The preacher's job is not to amuse his hearers with new and inventive material but to "hold on to the old truths, and labor to clothe them with new interest and power" (5). He is not arguing that preachers should neglect the Bible and beclown themselves in front of their people to entertain. For Broadus, true eloquence requires fidelity to the old gospel truths and an earnest desire to move the will.

Requirements for Effective Preaching

Broadus outlines four requisites for effective preaching: piety, natural gifts, knowledge, and skill. Notice, that he lists piety first. Though God has, at times, worked through men who lacked true piety, "such cases are exceptional, and as a rule, the prime requisite to efficiency in preaching is earnest piety" (5). Preachers, above all, should strive for personal holiness in preparing to speak to God's people. A lack of personal piety is a rhetorical failure. Second, Broadus argues that the preacher must possess certain natural gifts; namely, mental acuity with passion and a "vigorous imagination," coupled with the ability to clearly and powerfully express one's thoughts. All of these gifts can be improved and developed[24] but must first be found in the preacher naturally (6). Third, the preacher must cultivate knowledge, particularly knowledge of the Scriptures and of human nature. Effective communication is of no use if no knowledge or content exists to be communicated. Fourth, Broadus argues that preachers—as well as every public speaker—

[24] See chap. 5 of this thesis for more on Broadus's prescribed means of improvement.

should work to acquire skill. The goal of rhetorical studies is to gain skill in "the construction and in the delivery of discourse" (7). Broadus taught preaching and wrote his treatise to help preachers develop skill in preaching. He used rhetorical studies to that end.

The Origin of the Rules of Rhetoric

Broadus asserts that the rules of rhetoric were not drawn up or invented by men but are instead the "result of induction" (8). These rules are merely observations about the way in which men speak and communicate. When speakers violate these rules, they do not spurn "artificial fetters and barriers" but instead they turn aside from the "path in which it is usually found best to walk" (8). Thus, the rules of rhetoric are simply condensed expressions of communication principles. These principles provide a flexible guide for communication that speakers would be wise to follow. Broadus does not argue for rigid stylistic rules that must be imposed upon the preacher and the sermon. Instead, in his study of rhetoric, Broadus is simply arguing for effective communication in preaching. The rules of rhetoric serve the preacher in the pursuit of this end.

Dangers of Rhetorical Studies

Broadus does not plunge forward in rhetorical studies without an eye toward the potential dangers. He advocates the utilization of rhetoric with caution because there are several dangers inherent in rhetoric. First, rhetorical skill could lead one to prefer form over matter. Though arrangement, adaptation of material, expression, word choice, and other rhetorical choices are important, they never eclipse the matter at hand. Broadus reminds his student that, especially for preachers, the "things which ought most to be thought of by the preacher, are piety and knowledge, and the blessing of God" (9). Second, some preachers will be tempted to imitate others, either consciously or unconsciously. He notes that even Spurgeon's students are "constantly accused of imitating him" (10). The study of rhetoric may cause preachers to become consciously aware of the speaking styles

of others and tempt them to imitate their strengths (and at times even inadvertently their faults). True rhetoric is not intended to reproduce a particular speaker or to cause a preacher to be conformed to the style of another. The third, and possibly the most dangerous error associated with rhetoric, is artificiality. Rhetoric does not require that a man be artificial or inauthentic, for in artificiality is grave danger. Broadus argues, "In all speaking, especially in preaching, naturalness, genuineness, even though awkward, is really more effective for all the highest ends, than the most elegant artificiality" (10). Effective and meaningful preaching requires that the preacher develop a *natural demeanor*, which requires time and experience. The more a preacher actually preaches, the more comfortable and *natural* his demeanor will be (11).[25] Broadus's encouragement to utilize the art of rhetoric should never be construed as a permission to engage in artificiality or performance.

The Nature and Importance of Style

In the introduction to the section on style in preaching, Broadus discusses the nature and importance of style. Simply put, style is the "characteristic manner of expressing . . . thoughts, whether in writing or in speech" (238). Style is the *dress* of thought, but Broadus argues that style is not merely the dress of thought but the incarnation of thought (284). One only knows a man's thoughts if they are revealed, thus communication, of any type, *requires* style. Style includes "one's vocabulary, the character of the words and particular phrases which he employs . . . [and] everything else belonging to his mode or expressing thought" (284). Influential writers and speakers give great attention both to *what* they say, and *how* they say it. Broadus argues that such influence is achieved by "good thoughts, well expressed" (285). Despite the common understanding of the term *style*, Broadus is not encouraging preachers to give themselves over to rhetorical fluff but rather to spend time and effort seeking to communicate (incarnate their thoughts) as effectively

[25] Interestingly enough, here Broadus cautions against preaching for "practice," and any sermons delivered in the classroom should have the professor and students as the audience. He considers any such "practicing" to be artificial and unworthy of the preacher.

as possible. Style is not just the "glitter of the warrior's sword, but also its keen edge" (285). Preachers should not neglect this powerful means of usefulness for style. Carefully clothing one's thoughts helps the preacher to be clear, compelling, and powerful in his preaching.

In Broadus day, as today,[26] many sermons suffer from "extreme negligence," "looseness of style," and "excessive vehemence" in an attempt to be striking (286). Style in preaching often lacks what Broadus called "the calmness of conscious strength, the repose of sincerity, the quiet earnestness which only now and then becomes impassioned" (287). Preachers rightly spend a significant amount of their preparation time in exegesis and theology. Unfortunately, many neglect to spend much time crafting the *sermon*. The focus is on *what* is to be said and the content to be communicated, not *how* it is to be communicated. One reason some neglect this attention to style is the belief that to give any attention to *manner* somehow diminishes the focus on the matter at hand and lends itself to inauthentic performance and abandoning truth. Broadus wholeheartedly rejects this, saying, "The best style attracts least attention to itself, and none but the critical observer is apt to appreciate its excellence, most men give credit solely to the matter, and having no idea how much the manner has contributed to attract and impress them. The thought is certainly the main thing; but the style also is important" (287).

Thoughts must be communicated to be understood; they must take on the dress of words and phrases. The preacher who is committed to communicating the all-important truths of the Scriptures must give some thought to how to communicate that truth. This attention given to style does not take away from the truths being communicated, but instead draws *more* attention to them. Broadus's view of style is not a distraction from the Word but rather a window to it. His aim is not to produce performers who can impress the crowds with "sensational and meretricious rhetoric," but instead faithful and effective

[26] For an in depth explanation of shortcomings in modern preachers see T. David Gordon, *Why Johnny Can't Preach: The Media Have Shaped the Messengers* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R, 2009).

communicators of the most important truths in the universe. Given this understanding of the basics of style, Broadus argues that every preacher should labor to improve to "learn to say what he means, to say forcibly what he deeply feels, and to clothe his thoughts in the garb of at least homely neatness" (287).

The Properties of Style

To clearly communicate the nature of style, Broadus explores the three properties of style; namely, perspicuity, energy, and elegance. His classification of style follows the method of other rhetoricians such as Campbell and Whately.[27]

Perspicuity. Broadus considered perspicuity, or clarity in speech, to be the most important element of style. Clear and effective style draws attention to the thought at hand, not to the style itself. Some have mistakenly been drawn to obscurity in speech, hoping that such language will portray a sense of "vast learning, or great originality, or immense profundity" (301). Some rhetoricians have even *encouraged* their students toward such obscurity. Quintilian, on whom Broadus relies heavily, cites a teacher who directed his pupils to "darken the idea."[28] Preachers are not immune to this temptation but must strive for clarity in communication. If perspicuity is important in the wording of contracts, prescriptions, and laws, then how much more important is clarity in communicating the Word of God? Broadus asserts that the "preacher is more solemnly bound than any other person, to make his language perspicuous" (302), what Shedd calls, "prodigious power" in this sort of clarity.[29] Clear and plain speech allows the mind of the hearer to understand and interact with the truth being presented. Broadus believed that it

[27] Broadus relies heavily on the works of George Campbell, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* (New York: Harper, 1868), and Richard Whately, *Elements of Rhetoric* (Nashville: Southern Methodist Publishing House, 1861), quoted in Broadus, *Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*, 301.

[28] Quintilian, *The Institutes of Oratory* (Boston: Harvard University Press, 1920), book VIII, chap. 2, sec. 18, quoted in Broadus, *Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*, 301.

[29] William G. T. Shedd, *Homiletics and Pastoral Theology* (New York: C. Scribner, 1867), 72, quoted in Broadus, *Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*, 302.

was the truth of God's Word that brought "real benefit" to the hearer, thus as he sought the good of his hearers, he always strived for a clear presentation of the truth (303).

Perspicuity in preaching is not achieved without great difficulty and labor. Preachers, unlike many other public communicators, are faced with an incredibly diverse and heterogeneous audience with varied levels of understanding and ability. Broadus acknowledges this trouble but argues that when one truly feels this difficulty it should drive him to "diligent and pain-taking effort" in communication (303). Clarity will *require* great labor. A lack of clarity can not only prevent a sermon from benefiting its hearers, but it may also cause harm. Some may be repelled by obscure language while other misled; thus, without perspicuity, what was "meant for medicine" becomes "poison" (303). Broadus favorably quotes Quintilian, saying, "We must take care, not that it shall be possible for [the hearer] to understand, but that it shall be utterly impossible for him not to understand."[30] This sort of clarity in speech is closely linked to clarity of thought; therefore, perspicuity in language is often a by-product of clear and careful thinking. Broadus argues that perspicuity of style is largely dependent on three aspects: (1) the choice of terms, (2) the construction of sentences and paragraphs, and (3) the proper management of brevity and diffuseness.

First, perspicuity of style relies on the choice of terms employed. Clear wording requires two elements: intelligible words and phrases, and words and phrases that exactly express the thought. Speakers, especially preaches, must constantly seek to choose words and terminology that are intelligible to their hearers. This requires that they be attuned to the specific ability and intellect of those to whom they preach. Preachers can be tempted to uses words or phrases that are far above the discernment of the audience in order to impress or give the appearance of intelligence. Such displays, though sometimes impressive, communicate little or nothing to the hearer. Such sermons, Broadus argues,

[30] Quintilian, *The Institutes of Oratory*, 7.2.23, quoted in Broadus, *Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*, 303.

may as well be in another language entirely (305). Preachers must know the language of books *and* the language of common life, taking great pains to master the everyday language of those around them. This knowledge will allow the preacher to "translate into popular language" difficult theological ideas and concepts. Broadus is not encouraging the preacher to abandon all technical or theological terms, but merely asserting that clarity and understanding are paramount in preaching. Using a technical theological term is of little use if those who hear it do not understand it. Often, even when using common theological terms (repentance, regeneration, depravity, etc.), the preacher will serve his listeners well by adding "some words of a popular character," in order to "throw light on them" (306). Preachers must not be content to merely use theological terminology but seek to communicate theological truth. Perspicuity of style demands that preachers seek to be understood clearly in *all* things. Any and all necessary steps must be taken to achieve this plainness of speech.

Perspicuity of style also relies on the preacher choosing words and phrases that exactly express his thoughts. Choosing words that are intelligible is not sufficient for clear communication. Some words, which the hearers understand, may "not yet certainly represent to them our meaning" (307). Communicators must not only use intelligible words but must seek the *right* intelligible words for the given purpose. As much as is possible, given the limits of language, preachers should choose expressions that exactly correspond with the idea being expressed. Though difficult, the right word to express one's thoughts is nearly always possible to find. Without such care in word choice, preachers may find that their words and phrases could be understood in several different senses. Though their hearers may *understand* all of these senses, they will be left to guess *which particular* sense the preacher intends (307). Some terms may be too ambiguous or general, leaving hearers confused, while more specific or definite words bring greater clarity. The process of searching out the exact word or phrase also aides the preacher in forming and developing his own thoughts. Again, Broadus points out the connection

between perspicuity in speech and perspicuity in thought (308). As with every element of style in preaching, this too requires a great deal of work and practice. Broadus asserts, "All who succeed in this respect, however gifted or however unlettered, have attained it by observation, reflection, [and] practice" (308). Those who regard word choice as unimportant do so at their own expense and will seldom achieve perspicuity.

Second, perspicuity of style depends on the construction of sentences and paragraphs (309). While short sentences generally are easier to understand, communicators should seek variety regarding sentence length, combining short and long sentences. In longer constructions, the qualifying clauses should precede the qualified clauses "in order that when we do reach a concrete conception, it may be the complete conception proposed, needing no subsequent addition or correction" (309). Preachers should limit the number of qualifying clauses they stack together, for listeners will struggle to discern the flow of the sentence. Above all, clarity and precision are the goal. Quoting George Campbell, Broadus argues that preachers should "aim at a certain simplicity in the structure of [their] sentences, avoiding long, intricate and complex periods."[31] Again, clear communication is key.

As important as sentence structure is, the structure of paragraphs is equally, if not more, important. Much of what Broadus teaches regarding paragraphs is best applied to writing. For preachers, it is more appropriate and practical to speak of "points" instead of paragraphs (312). The prime requisite for perspicuity in preaching points is unity. The preacher should seek to introduce and develop a single idea in each point. One of the most important tools at the speaker's disposal are connectives, what grammarians call particles (311). Broadus instructs his students: "The felicitous choice of a preposition or conjunction, or the proper handling of a relative pronoun will often contribute immensely to the perspicuity of a sentence or a paragraph" (311). The preacher is seeking to build a coherent

[31] George Campbell, *Lecture on Pulpit Eloquence* (London: John Bumpus, 1824), lecture III, quoted in Broadus, *Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*, 310.

and structured argument that his hearers can follow. This can prove to be particularly difficult for the speaker because he lacks the tangible advantage of the writer; namely, that readers may read at their own pace and even review preview paragraphs to make connections. The preacher must labor to string sentences together in points and points together into an understandable whole. Discernable unity, structure, and flow in a sermon help to create clarity.

Third, perspicuity depends on the proper management of brevity and diffuseness. Broadus charts a path between the danger of prolixity on side and brevity on the other. Brevity, despite its usefulness in writing, does not always produce clarity in speaking. Preachers labor to ensure that the matter at hand is comprehended by their hearers. At times, this will require the preacher to "sacrifice conciseness to clearness" (317). Brevity is not in and of itself the goal. On the other hand, prolixity is "worse than extreme conciseness" (314). A sermon that is too brief may still inspire reflection in its hearers, while verbose and tedious sermons produce weariness and disgust their hearers. Even in Broadus's day preachers were tempted to indulge in wordiness to fill the time and say *something.* The pressure to fill a certain time slot given for the sermon clouds the preacher's ideas and "in the feeble struggle to express them, he inevitably becomes prolix" (314).

Broadus suggests three ways in which preachers can achieve clarity and avoid the ditches of profuseness and extreme brevity. First, preachers must rely on repetition; another way in which speaking is different that writing. What may be redundant and ineffective in writing might be wholly appropriate in speech. A reader may, at any point, pause to revisit a writer's arguments, even reading them many times. The hearer, though, has no such benefit and must follow the argument as it happens. Understanding the nature of speech as opposed to the written word will drive the preacher to repetition. Repeating ideas, especially with different words and expressions, can provide greater clarity (315). The second means of achieving the right balance of brevity and diffuseness is the proper

use of illustrations (315). Broadus instructs that, after presenting an idea as plainly as possible, one may present "various illustrations of it, or of its different aspects" (315). Illustrations help hearers avoid confusion by, among other benefits, providing a multi-faceted view of the idea at hand. Third, preachers can bring clarity and avoid prolixity by utilizing divisions. When a single, larger idea is divided into several, smaller points, stated successively, "the whole is seen clearly" (315). These sorts of divisions keep the preacher from merely filling time, but instead encourage appropriate elaboration that gives birth to clarity.

Broadus concludes his section on perspicuity by reminding his students that "efforts to be perspicuous may be carried too far" if they go to great pains to explain what is already clear to the audience or illustrate that which is already understood (318). Broadus's desire for his students to pursue perspicuity does not arise primarily from a desire to see his students follow certain rhetorical rules or to produce rhetorical masterpieces. Instead, Broadus cared about the matter at hand: the Word of God. A perspicuous sermon exposes hearers to the Word of God; thus, preachers should labor for clarity.

Energy of style. The second property of style that Broadus enumerates is energy, also referred to as animation, force or passion. Arguing for its importance, Broadus reminds his students that "it is not enough for a speaker to say what the hearer may understand if he attends; the point is to arouse him, to put life into him, to make attention easy and pleasant, and inattention difficult" (319). Eloquent preaching is not simply conveying information but is seeking to move the will. Passion aids the effectiveness of communication by effecting on the feeling, stimulating the imagination, and influencing the will (319). The principal requisite for energy is an energetic nature which will never be accomplished without intentional thinking, genuine feeling, and a "determined purpose to accomplish some object" (319). For the preacher, that object is to faithfully communicate the Word of God so that people may hear and respond. True eloquence, as

Broadus has defined it, will not be accomplished without energy. Though some men possess a more naturally energetic style, even those without such natural gifts can grow their mastery of this rhetorical skill through much labor and practice. The second requisite for energy is having something say, specifically something that is important. When the matter itself is significant and weighty, energy will more naturally come to the speaker. Broadus admits that in this area preachers enjoy a "peculiar advantage" if they have a "familiar, profound, and ever-freshened acquaintance with the Bible" (320). The Word of God is the most significant matter that could be spoken of. Broadus says, "No temporal interests are so momentous as those of eternity . . . no other topics can impart to the mind such vigor and authority as the truths which we personally know to be taught in God's Word" (320).

Broadus categorizes energy under four main heads: (1) the choice of terms, (2) the construction of sentences, (3) conciseness, and (4) figures of speech. Again, Broadus reminds his students that the choice of terms matters a great deal, especially in relationship to energy. He recommends that, when possible, preachers choose more concrete terms instead of abstracts ones. Specific terms create more vivid and effective imagery, while more general terms leave a less distinct impression. The same *content*, or basic meaning, may be clearly communicated using either general or specific language, but general terms will rarely "fix the attention or impress the memory" of the hearer (321). Broadus cites the Song of Moses as a biblical example of this communication principle. Speaking of the Egyptians, Moses writes, "They sank as lead in the mighty waters" (Exod 15:10b AV). He could have spoken in more general terms, saying, "They *fell* as *metal* in the mighty waters," but that wording lacks the energy of the first, despite the fact that each clearly communicates the fate of the Egyptians in the Red Sea (321). The difference is between specific and general terms. Again, Broadus goes to the Bible to prove his point, citing Jesus words in Matthew's Gospel: "Consider the lilies how they grow; they toil not, they spin not" (Matt 6:28b-30a AV). Reimagining Jesus' imagery

with more general terms inserted, Broadus writes, “Consider the flowers how they gradually increase in their size, they do no manner of work” (321). Broadus concludes that this more general version is “spiritless,” despite communicating the same truth and possessing such small changes from the original (321). More specific language appeals to the imagination of the hearers in a way that general terms do not. Broadus notes that many preachers err in appealing to overly general terms (i.e., “virtue and vice; piety and irreligion”) without seeking, specifying, “Forgetting that while they include much, they impress little or nothing” (322).

Next, Broadus cautions against the excessive use of what he calls *epithets* (322), adjectives added to a noun or adverbs added to a verb, rarely add force to expressions. Using his trademark colloquial style, Broadus explains, “If you cut a bough from an apple-tree in spring to please your friends with its beauty, you would retain the twigs and leaves and blossoms; but if you wish to knock down a man with it, all these must be trimmed away” (323).

While often beautiful and ornate, epithets seldom enhance the energy and efficiency of communication. Instead of epithets, preachers can employ unusual words and phrases to improve energy. Such words and phrases, if used correctly, serve to draw the attention and awaken the interest of the hearer (323).

Energy is affected not only by the choice of terms but by the construction of sentences. First, Broadus warns against the use of periodic sentences in speaking, which he defines as any sentence in which the “sense is so suspended as to be nowhere complete till we reach the last clause” (324). While extremely effective in writing, periodic sentences require too much of the hearer for they must remember and follow each clause, holding them in their mind while they wait for the final clause. Whatever gains are achieved by concentrating the “whole force into one blow” are not worth the cost of the loss of perspicuity and the ease listening (326). Instead, preachers should opt for “loose arrangement,” which places the emphasis on the beginning of the sentence (324). This

construction, while still employing multiple clauses, could conceivably end after the first or second clause and still constitute a complete thought. This sentence structure is much easier to follow. Though loose sentences lack the suspense naturally present in periodic sentences, preacher can, "by the skillful suspension of his voice, give to a loose sentence the effect of a Period" (325). In this way, the voice can accomplish what the structure does not.

Broadus also recommends constructing sentences for emphasis. In English, word order has considerably less flexibility than in other languages. Despite this fact, word order can still play an important role in creating emphasis. Broadus points out that the "most prominent position in a sentence is the beginning, and next to this, the end" (326). When a word which would normally be found elsewhere in the sentence is moved to the beginning, it is naturally given prominence and attention. Not every English idiom allows this sort of inversion, but it should be used, when available, to indicate importance. He cites Peter's words, "Silver and gold have I none" (Acts 2:6 AV) as a perfect example of this principle. If the phrase were reordered as such, "I have no gold and silver," then the expression loses much of its force. Separating the adjective "none" from the substantive, "silver and gold," and placing it at the end of clause, the second most emphatic position, adds considerable energy (327). Effective speakers will pay close attention to sentence construction and use it to their advantage when seeking to show importance or prominence.

Third, for proper energy of style, Broadus recommends utilizing *antithetical* statements. He cites the phrase, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath," as a clear example of this principle. Antithesis, often found in the Proverbs, is characterized by its terseness and force of expression (328). This style of phrasing is particularly effective because "each of the two contrasting clauses throws light upon the other, so that without losing perspicuity the expressions may be made very brief, and thus more pointed and forcible, while at the same time the contrast makes the whole statement more striking" (328).

The effect of antithetical phrasing can be so striking that some writers and speakers have relied upon it too heavily, at times even stretching the truth to achieve this effect. Broadus warns against such excess, reminding his students that a bare desire to be "striking" in unbecoming of the preacher (328). Force should not be gained at the expense of truth; thus, preachers should never exaggerate in an attempt to be striking (329). Energy alone is not the final goal of the sermon. For Broadus, style in preaching is always a servant of the truth.

Fourth, Broadus mentions two related elements of communication that increase energy: *broken constructions* and *aposiopesis* (329). When one is under the influence of strong emotion while speaking, he will at times use broken constructions. This may be beginning a sentence one way then breaking off and finishing it another way. Or, beginning one thought, stopping, and moving instead to a different, though related, thought. Broadus insists that such constructions must always arise out of genuine feeling and emotion, never a calculated decision. When the broken construction is genuine it greatly increases energy. Similar to broken constructions is aposiopesis, where "part of a sentence is suppressed through emotion" (329). Again, as with broken constructions, Broadus insists that such maneuvers arise naturally and not be planned. The key here is that genuine emotion moves the preacher to either suppress part of his thought or to break from his construction all together. In these ways, Broadus encourages his students to build energy through the intentional construction of sentences.

To improve the energy of a sermon, Broadus also recommends striving for conciseness. While clarity should never be sacrificed for the sake of being brevity, it is hard to overstate the energy that conciseness adds to an expression. Broadus favorably quotes Campbell on the subject, saying, "The very same sentiment, expressed diffusely, will be admitted barely to be just; expressed concisely, it will be admired as spirited."[32]

[32] Campbell, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*, 353, quoted in Broadus, *Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*, 330.

Generally, the more concise a statement is, the more passion and energy it conveys. Nearly everyone, regardless of education or experience, appreciates brevity (330). Broadus contends that one must resist pleonasm and verbosity in order to achieve conciseness. Pleonasm, the addition of words or phrases that add nothing to the expression, is corrected simply by striking out "superfluous words" (331).

Verbosity, the addition of words and phrases that add little to the expression, often requires a complete recasting of the sentence (331). Broadus cites Whately's recommendation that preachers combine a short, concise statement with a longer, clearer one. This technique serves both conciseness and perspicuity as hearers will "understand the longer expression, and remember the shorter."[33] For most young preachers, conciseness is a skill that must be carefully cultivated, especially for those who are naturally gifted in speaking. For those who are naturally fluent, verbosity is often easy to fall into and must be intentionally shunned. Conciseness is rarely achieved by chance.

The fourth, and arguably the chief, aspect of the energy of style that Broadus outlines is the use of figures of speech. Broadus argues that "passionate feeling, whether anger, fear, love, or the emotion of the sublime, naturally expresses itself by means of bold imagery" (333). Figures of speech provide the necessary imagery to help give life and energy to passionate discourse. Broadus names eight specific figures of speech that enhance energy. First, he recommends preachers utilize *metaphors*. A *metaphor*, which assumes or implies a "resemblance or analogy" between two items, provides a vivid image in a "terse and condensed" package (334). While some are over used, Broadus finds in metaphors an "inexhaustible source of energetic expression" (334). When used properly, metaphors should stimulate the imagination of the hearer and always accord with good taste. Another figure of speech that improves energy is the *synecdoche*. This figure of speech, in which a part is made to represent the whole, brings energy and

[33] Whately, *Elements of Rhetoric*, 351, quoted in Broadus, *Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*, 332.

clothes thoughts in vivid imagery in a way that is nearly impossible for more general terms. Broadus cites Isaiah 2:4 as an example of this principle: “They shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruninghooks” (AV). This phrasing is certainly preferable to a more general statement that “they will convert their weapons of war into implements of agriculture” (334). Synecdoches supply important and clarifying imagery. Broadus also recommends the careful use of *hyperbole.* It is important that preachers only use hyperbole—”saying more than is meant”—when it is clear that they will not be misunderstood and in order to “make a deep impression as to an important fact” (334). Hyperbole is used often in the Scriptures, even by Christ, to create a striking and memorable image. Preachers, therefore, should utilize this figure of speech to the same end. Next, Broadus recommends two related figures of speech: *personification* and *apostrophes. Personification*, where the speaker addresses an inanimate object as if it were a person, has the potential to add “great animation and beauty and even passionate energy” to an expression (336). This effect can be achieved by simply referring to an inanimate object as “he” or “she,” though such personification should not be over used (336). Related to personification is the *apostrophe*. This effect calls for the speaker to turn away from the audience and address some other person or thing. If the preacher addresses a thing, as opposed to a person, then the apostrophe also serves as personification. Broadus cites Luke 13:33 as an example of the apostrophe: “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets” (AV). When addressing a person or object other than the present audience, speakers should be careful to keep the address short and infrequent (336). Somewhat related to the apostrophe is the *exclamation.* Here the preacher breaks from his regular communication and makes an exclamation such “oh,” “alas,” or “ah” (336). Preachers should not be afraid to utilize such utterances though some speakers do this so often that it loses all effect (336). Broadus also suggests that his students take advantage of the opportunity to use questions in making their case, what he calls, *interrogation* (336). Questions may be asked of a real or imagined foe, or even of

the audience themselves. These questions help to stimulate the audience's interest and awakens their minds as they search for the answer. Similar to the figures of speech already mentioned, preachers should use this element in moderation lest they develop an "interrogative mood" and appear to be adversarial to the listener (336). Lastly, Broadus recommends *dramatism* to give a sermon "life and vigor and charm that can in scarcely any other way be equaled" (337). *Dramatism* calls for the speaker to impersonate another person, often an objector, and to answer their echoed objections point by point. This technique was employed often by prolific speakers like as Demosthenes, Chrysostom, and Spurgeon (337). Such dramatism should be limited and regulated by "good taste and sobriety of feeling" (337).

Through the utilization of these four categories, Broadus encouraged his students to pursue a passionate and varied energy in their preaching. The preacher, by these methods, seeks to present the biblical material as faithfully and passionately as possible. Energy, though an incredibly important aspect of style, does not stand in opposition to perspicuity or faithfulness. Instead, the energy of style lends weight and vigor to the clear expressions of the preacher.

Elegance of style. The third and final property of style that Broadus enumerates is *elegance*. In Broadus's thinking, *elegance* is the "product of imagination, alone or in combination with passion, operating under the control of good taste" (341). What constitutes good taste is a combination of both emotion and judgment, the former intuitive, while the latter controlled. The preacher who seeks elegance must "cultivate imagination and sensibility" and "seek, by thoughtful contemplation of the truly beautiful, to improve his taste" (341). Elegance is a type of beauty, both intuitively recognized and objectively measurable.

Broadus separates the sort of elegance he advocates for preaching from elegance in other forms of communication. Poetry, for example, is often if not always beautiful and elegant. Though, the poet's purpose is markedly different than that of the preacher,

for the poet's chief aim is to please his readers. The preacher, on the other hand, seeks to "convince, impress, [and] persuade" (341). For this reason, beauty, while useful, is the least important property of style for the preacher. Perspicuity and energy both occupy a more significant role in the sermon than elegance. For poetry, and other light literature, beauty is primary while instruction or persuasion is, if present at all, incidental. Broadus argues that the purpose of the orator is fundamentally "very different, and entertainment, the gratification of taste, has place only as a subsidiary to conviction and persuasion" (343). All orators, but especially preachers, as Broadus asserts, have a solemn and serious task. He approvingly cites Henry Rogers, saying that even in the use of illustrations, preachers ought never choose an illustration merely because it may delight his hearers. Illustrations should be chosen primarily for how they impact perspicuity and energy, not beauty, for the preacher's goal is to "convey his meaning with as much precision and energy as possible to the minds of his auditors."[34]

Some preachers, Broadus notes, fail to appreciate the gravity of the preaching event and therefore give themselves over to entertainment. Many who come to hear the sermon are eager to be entertained, and this desire can cause the preacher to "yield to this apparent demand, and set it before [his] mind as a distinct, if not principal object to please" (345). Broadus reminds his students, who may be tempted to such frivolous preaching, that the effort to entertain is nearly always wasted and self-defeating. He explains that such efforts will "not only grieve the devout and disgust the really intelligent, but will soon pall upon the taste of those he sought to win, who will have all the while in their hearts a vague feeling that this sort of thing is unworthy of him, and will presently begin to find it rather tiresome to themselves" (344). Broadus is not encouraging preachers to sacrifice faithfulness to the Word for the sake of beauty.

[34] Henry Rogers, *Reason and Faith: With Other Essays* (London: Longman's, Green, and Co., 1866), 213, quoted in Broadus, *Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*, 344.

On the other hand, Broadus also argues that to "take pains to avoid the beautiful" is unwise (346). Some thoughts, especially from the Word of God, are naturally beautiful and the preacher should not take steps to veil that beauty. The Bible itself is beautiful, thus those who faithfully preach it are bound to find beauty present in their presentation of it. The concepts and truths of the Bible "cloth themselves in robes of majesty, and march forth in a stately but native dignity" (346). In this way, beauty can serve the cause of truth. Familiar biblical truths, when beautifully presented, often find a greater hearing, even among the faithful. This elegance in presentation must always ultimately point to the matter at hand: the Word of God. Broadus cautions his students against excess that may cause the "attention of the speaker, and so that of the hearers, [to be] drawn to the beauteous garb rather than to the truth itself" (346). Elegance, when properly employed, is not at all at odds with perspicuity or energy, but often naturally arises out of them.

Broadus categorizes the elegance of style under four main heads: (1) the choice of terms, (2) arrangement, (3) imagery, and (4) simplicity. First, Broadus advocates for a careful selection of terms. Here he refers his students back to the section on energetic terms because often the most energetic terms are also the most elegant. Much of what he states regarding energetic choice of terms also applies to elegant choice of terms. He does note, however, that the most energetic expression is not always the most elegant. Some forceful expressions should be avoided because they are "indecent or vulgar" (347). In the same vein, "slang" expressions should generally be sparingly used, as they rarely are appropriate for such a serious occasion. Broadus admits it is difficult to state a hard and fast rule about which energetic terms should be avoided because they violate good taste. Expressions must be evaluated on an individual basis in light of the speaker's culture and context.

Second, elegance of style depends on the arrangement of words within the discourse. Speakers should avoid what Broadus calls "harsh or disagreeable combinations" (348). For example, he suggests that English speakers avoid expressions that employ repeated hissing sound (*s, z, sh, ch*, etc.), such as the phrase, "in Jesus's name" (348). The

repeated hissing sound can be unpleasant. Broadus also recommends that preachers refrain from excessively repeating a word or phrase within a sentence or paragraph. There will be times, though, that perspicuity *requires* the repetition of a word or phrase in order to effectively communicate the idea. Where repetition is required, the preacher should never sacrifice clarity to achieve variety. On the other hand, when the discourse does not require repetition, variety of phrasing can increase elegance (349). Antithesis, already recommended to increase energy, can also serve the cause of elegance. Broadus does suggest that it be employed sparingly, as overuse produces stiffness and monotony (349). The arrangement of words also affects the rhythm or cadence of speech. Speakers should refrain from an overly rhythmic meter, like is found in poetry. Instead, preachers should allow the phrases and expressions to have a natural rhythm and flow. While Broadus offers a few suggestions on how to achieve this, he admits that "rhythm in prose scarcely requires particular rules, being sufficiently regulated by the ear, if once a man has learned to give it some attention, in his own speaking and writing, and in the books he most carefully reads" (350).

Third, Broadus asserts that figures, or imagery, also increase elegance. He specifically suggests the use of similes, metaphors, and personification (351). Such tools have considerable value in communicating ideas and will enjoy an even greater hearing if they are both perspicuous *and* beautiful (351). Again, Broadus is not advocating for beauty merely for sake of entertainment, but rather utilizing beauty to draw attention to truth.

Fourth, elegance relies on simplicity. Simplicity in speaking means that ideas are presented in a clear manner that is not "excessively labored, or in any respect artificial, that does not appear to be produced with great effort" (351). The simple preacher works to craft his words so that his hearers may truly understand what is being communicated. Simplicity does not necessarily entail the complete abandonment of all ornament, but rather the selective and intentional use of such language (353). To achieve true simplicity of

style, which is both intelligible and naturally beautiful, preachers must rely on "patient thought, disciplined imagination, and thorough mastery of language" (354).

Utilizing these three properties of style, Broadus teaches his students how to properly communicate in preaching. Effective preaching is perspicuous, energetic, and elegant.

Conclusion

John Broadus understood the importance of *how* one communicates. His theological convictions regarding the importance and responsibility of preaching drove him to learn, develop, and utilize effective rhetorical style in preaching. His goal was to instruct preachers in forming clear, powerful, and moving sermons. Far from tickling ears or pleasing the senses, Broadus strove to lay bare the Word of God, that the truth of God would be brought to bear on those who hear the sermon. In this way, Broadus's view of style is always in service to the Word.

CHAPTER 3

A DEFENSE OF BROADUS'S VIEW OF STYLE

While chapter 2 offered an overview and explanation of Broadus's theory of style in preaching, this chapter will seek to defend the usefulness of that style in faithful preaching. Why should contemporary preachers understand and utilize Broadus's theory of style? It will be demonstrated that Broadus's view is biblically permitted, homiletically fitting, rhetorically effective, and therefore wholly appropriate and beneficial for contemporary preachers to adopt.

Biblically Permitted Style

For faithful preachers, one primary question must be asked and answered of any potential homiletical tool: is it biblically permissible? Does the Bible *allo*w or even *encourage* this practice, especially in light of Paul's seeming denunciation of eloquence in 1 Corinthians 1-2?[1] If Broadus's view can be shown to be out of step with the witness of the Scriptures, specifically Paul's argument, then it should be rejected, regardless of any potential rhetorical effectiveness. However, if Broadus's view fits firmly within the biblical parameters, then the homiletical appropriateness and rhetorical effectiveness of that style is worth examining. This section argues that Broadus's view does fit squarely within the biblically allowed limits for preaching.

[1] "This passage is often interpreted to be a condemnation of any conscious use of stylistic techniques." William H. Kooienga, *Elements of Style for Preaching*, The Craft of Preaching Series (Grand Rapids: Ministry Resources Library, 1989), 20.

Rhetoric in 1 Corinthians 1-2

Though the Bible does not offer a comprehensive analysis of rhetorical or stylistic devices that could be used in preaching, it is possible to determine whether a particular theory of eloquence or style is permissible. When seeking such a determination, one must wrestle with what is, arguably, the most explicit and relevant passage related to eloquence in preaching: 1 Corinthians 1–2. Paul clarifies his calling by saying, "For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, and not with words of eloquent wisdom,[2] lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power. . . . When I came to you, brothers, did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God with lofty speech or wisdom"[3] (1 Cor 1:17; 2:1). What sort of eloquence and wisdom is Paul forbidding? Clearly, a type of eloquence or style exists that is off limits to the faithful preacher because it empties the cross of its power. Does Broadus's view and theory of style violate the principles espoused by Paul in 1 Corinthians? To determine if Broadus's view of style is prohibited by Paul denunciation in 1 Corinthians one must determine exactly what *type* or *style* of eloquence and rhetoric he is denouncing.

Scholars are in near universal agreement that Paul is confronting Greek rhetoric.[4] In the context of the Greco-Roman world, speakers were largely judged by their rhetorical brilliance. Schreiner explains that because "the Corinthians were assessing Paul and Apollos based on their rhetorical effectiveness and brilliance. . . . What Paul criticizes

[2] Other translations of 1:17 convey a similar idea: "Not with wisdom and eloquence" (NIV), "Not in cleverness of speech" (NASB), "Not with words of wisdom" (AV), "Not with eloquent wisdom" (CSB).

[3] Other translations of 2:1 convey a similar idea: "With eloquence or human wisdom" (NIV), "With superiority of speech and wisdom" (NASB), "Not with excellency of speech or wisdom" (AV), "I did not come with brilliance of speech or wisdom" (CSB).

[4] Thomas R. Schreiner, *1 Corinthians*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries, vol. 7 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2018), 65. See also A. Duane Litfin, *St. Paul's Theology of Proclamation: 1 Corinthians 1–4 and Greco-Roman Rhetoric*, Society for New Testament Studies 79 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); A. Duane Litfin, *Paul's Theology of Preaching: The Apostle's Challenge to the Art of Persuasion in Ancient Corinth*, rev. and expanded ed. (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2015); Bruce W. Winter, *Philo and Paul among the Sophists: Alexandrian and Corinthian Responses to a Julio-Claudian Movement*, 2nd ed (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002); Stephen M. Pogoloff, *Logos and Sophia: The Rhetorical Situation of 1 Corinthians*, Society of Biblical Literature 134 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992).

here is a focus on style instead of substance such that hearers are swayed by the artistry of the speaker rather than by the message of the cross."[5] Pogoloff says of the term σοφίᾳ λόγου in 1 Corinthians 1:17, "When σοφία and λόγου are combined in ancient usage, they frequently imply far more than just technical skill at language. Rather, they imply a whole world of social status related to speech."[6] Paul denounces preaching that primarily relies on rhetorical flourish and maneuvering rather than the substance of the gospel. In the ancient world of rhetoric, style was often elevated to the level of substance, at times even elevated above it.

Some scholars, such as Bruce Winters, argue that Paul addresses not just Greco-Roman rhetoric in general but specifically the Second Sophistic movement in which "competitive oratory and showmanship became the focus in speaking."[7] Sophists were those rhetoricians in the first century AD "whose ability in oratory was such that they could both secure a public following and attract students to their schools."[8] They were, in a sense, celebrities in their own right, gaining a following *purely* on their rhetorical abilities. The church at Corinth had probably been unduly influenced by this emphasis on the necessity and value of rhetoric. It seems that even their division over teachers may be blamed, in part, on their preference for eloquent teachers. Piper points out, "Apollos

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[5] Schreiner, *1 Corinthians*, 65.

[6] Pogoloff, *Logos and Sophia*, 113, 114-19.

[7] Schreiner, *1 Corinthians*, 65.

[8] Winter, *Philo and Paul among the Sophists*, 4. Winter also states,

> The wise, well born and the powerful epitomized the class from which the sophists came and which the latter helped perpetuate through an elitist educational system which emphasized the art of rhetoric. Given that the great sin of the sophistic movement was its boasting—a weakness manifest in the record of the Alexandria sophists in Philo's *Det.* 32-34 and reflected in the status terminology used in 1 Corinthians 1.26-28 and 4.8,10-13—Paul made the Jeremiah prohibition against boasting about wisdom, status and achievement a primary text in his critique against the Corinthian sophistic movement. (Winter, *Philo and Paul among the Sophists*, 254)

probably became their celebrity because he was so good with words."[9] In this vein, Paul was a disappointment to the Corinthians, lacking much of the rhetorical skill they had come to admire. In chapters 1-4 he seeks to explain why he does not rely on eloquence like the Sophists do. Thus, in pushing back against the Sophists, Paul is denouncing a certain type of "very specific and well-known" rhetoric, not rhetoric in general.[10] Broadus himself argued that Paul was reacting against the rhetorical context of Corinth, modeling his style of communication which is a "model of passionate energy, and rises, upon occasion, into inartificial and exquisite beauty" (286). Paul desired to preach in such a way that faith would not "rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God" (1 Cor 2:5b). Therefore, rhetoric that either exalts the speaker or seeks to manipulate the hearer is impermissible for the Christian preacher. In this way, Paul lays out boundary markers for the use of rhetoric in preaching.

Duane Litfin, on the other hand, understands Paul's denunciation to be a bit broader, and is unwilling to narrow his focus to the Second Sophist movement. Believing that Paul is rebuking Greco-Roman rhetoric in general, Liftin comprehensively rejects rhetoric and eloquence. He argues that to reduce Paul's argument to refutation of the Second Sophist movement is "a classic instance of blunting the Apostle's argument by setting up [a] sort of straw man."[11] In Litfin's view, Paul does not hold a distinction between "good" and "bad" rhetoric. As if "bad" rhetoric, eloquence that exalts the speaker and manipulates the hearer, is unacceptable and "good" rhetoric, the intentional deployment of communication techniques, is acceptable. Any such division of rhetoric

[9] John Piper, *Expository Exultation: Christian Preaching as Worship* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2018), 146.

[10] Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, rev. ed., The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014), 94.

[11] Litfin, *Paul's Theology of Preaching*, 260.

between good and bad is superficial, at best, for first-century rhetorical practices cannot be divided into "easy moral categories."[12] Litfin explains,

> [The] troublesome issues (to Paul) are not the ones Thiselton ascribes to "bad" rhetoric. Paul does not disclaim the vaunted σοφίᾳ λόγου of the Corinthians because it was manipulative and self-aggrandizing. He repudiates it for the purposes of preaching the gospel for a much more substantial reason: its potential for producing false results, generating πίστις that is based on the wisdom of human beings rather than the power of God (1 Cor. 2:5). . . . The use of human persuasive strategies to generate such 'assent' was precisely what the best rhetorical tradition was about.[13]

For Litfin, then, Paul's denunciation is about much *more* than prideful self-exaltation and manipulation, it is a repudiation of rhetorical practices that would seek to persuade listeners. Paul certainly desired his hearers to believe the gospel and thus obtain πίστις, but he refused to employ persuasive rhetorical techniques to move one toward that πίστις. What troubles Paul is not mere eloquence but the "human art of persuasion in general."[14]

Despite great insight into some first-century rhetorical practices and their heritage, Litfin's arguments are ultimately unconvincing for several reasons. First, Winter points out that Litfin does not "make use of all of the evidence on Corinth" thus his conclusions are incomplete.[15] A full appraisal of the relevant and available evidence shows that the context to which Paul writes in Corinth was not only heavily influenced by Greco-Roman rhetoric in general, but the Second Sophist movement specifically.[16]

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[12] Litfin, *Paul's Theology of Preaching*, 261.

[13] Litfin, *Paul's Theology of Preaching*, 261.

[14] Litfin, *Paul's Theology of Preaching*, 296.

[15] Winter, *Philo and Paul among the Sophists*, 8. He states, "The 'Diogenes speeches' of Dio are thought by Litfin to refer to fourth-century-B.C. Corinth, and he therefore does not use this evidence. However, Dio uses Diogenes as a mouthpiece for critical comment on first-century-A.D. Roman Corinth. . . . The evidence of Epictetus was not incorporated in the study." Winter, *Philo and Paul among the Sophists*, 146.

[16] R. Larry Overstreet, *Persuasive Preaching: A Biblical and Practical Guide to the Effective Use of Persuasion* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2018), 72.

Second, as Schreiner notes, to assert that Paul did not intend or attempt to persuades his hearer is "not quite right" for what he rejected was "trying to persuade people in the wrong way."[17] Paul was careful to make sure that anyone who heard him preach and believed the gospel did so for substantive reasons rather than stylistic ones. Litfin asserts, "The preacher is not called upon to persuade the hearers to respond," but instead, as a herald, is aiming merely for comprehension, leaving everything else to the Holy Spirit.[18] At the same time, though, he maintains that the preacher should not refrain from

> urging, entreating, exhorting, or beseeching his listeners to follow Christ. . . . Nothing I've said is meant to deny to validity of straightforward encouragement or exhortation to receive the Gospel, and of an opportunity to respond during the service. After all, invitation itself can hardly be viewed as a persuasive technique designed to induce (i.e. to cause rather than simply be the agent of yielding).[19]

Larry Overstreet, along with other scholars, points out that this distinction between "persuasion" and "straightforward encouragement or exhortation" or "urging, entreating, exhorting, or beseeching" is both unnecessary and never fully explained by Litfin.[20] What he argues against should properly be labeled as the abuse of rhetoric not rhetoric in total. While Litfin is not alone in his concern over the abuse of rhetoric in the pulpit, those abuses would be rejected by many, if not most pastors.[21] It would seem then that Litfin desires to have it both ways—to maintain that preachers should seek to urge or entreat their listeners to faith and obedience but somehow at the same time do so with a conscious rejection of rhetorical persuasion. This argument leaves the reader confused and the preacher struggling to discern which words or techniques he is permitted to implement.

The third shortcoming of Litfin's argument that Paul intends to denounce

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[17] Schreiner, *1 Corinthians*, 78.

[18] Litfin, *St. Paul's Theology of Proclamation*, 261.

[19] Litfin, *St. Paul's Theology of Proclamation*, 261.

[20] Overstreet, *Persuasive Preaching*, 44.

[21] Jerry Vines and Adam Dooley, *Passion in the Pulpit: How to Exegete the Emotion of Scripture* (Chicago: Moody, 2018), 29.

rhetoric in general is the lack a convincing explanation of why Paul still uses certain rhetorical communication features.[22] He acknowledges that despite his broad denunciation of rhetoric, Paul demonstrates remarkable rhetorical skill, even in 1 Corinthians 1–2. As defined is in this broad sense, *rhetoric* is writing or speaking with purpose. Litfin quotes George Kennedy saying, "Purposeful words are rhetorical, for rhetoric is 'that quality in discourse by which a speaker or writer seeks to accomplish his purposes'" thus "in the broadest sense, virtually all human communication is 'rhetorical,' including Paul's."[23] Rhetorical study is primarily descriptive, observing and cataloging clear and effective communication rather than prescriptive, assigning value and effectiveness to communication. Citing classicist C. J. Classen, he argues that the presence of "certain linguistic features" in Paul's writing is not evidence that Paul was consciously adopting Greco-Roman persuasive strategies for it is possible that Paul was "unconsciously borrowing from the practices of others" or working from considerable natural gifting.[24]

This explanation may very well be true, but it brings up another question: if certain linguistic features and communication techniques are permitted, given that they arise from natural gifting or unconscious imitation, why are the forbidden if they arise from conscious, intentional choices? Does Litfin really intend to communicate that preachers may avail themselves of effective communication technique but only if they arrive at such techniques naturally? Is there no room for intentional improvement? Given that Litfin not only acknowledges Paul's use of common rhetorical communication features (for example, metaphor, rhetorical questions, analogies, contrasts, etc.) but that clear communication is nearly impossible without such communication techniques, it is

[22] Kooienga writes, "Paul himself mentions that he uses a principle of rhetoric. He actually describes his own preaching as "persuasion" (2 Cor. 5:11). The evidence gains weight, moreover, when the literary structures and styles of the New Testament are examined." Kooienga, *Elements of Style for Preaching*, 21.

[23] Litfin, *Paul's Theology of Preaching*, 293.

[24] Litfin, *Paul's Theology of Preaching*, 287.

curious that the rest of his work seems so opposed to preachers growing in the area of clear communication.[25] His rejection of rhetoric in total is both short-sighted and inconsistent. He even admits, in an appendix, that since the work of rhetoricians and persuasion theorists "abounds with wonderfully valuable insights into human communication . . . we can use their work make our proclamations more effective, we not only should but must do so."[26] How is it that Litfin holds this position? Raymond Bailey cautions, "Those who abandon rhetoric to the modern medicine men surrender to the advertisers, politicians, and religious demagogues the cumulative knowledge of the centuries regarding what motivates and attracts people. Rhetoric is inherently an indifferent instrument which may be employed for justice or injustice, for good or evil."[27]

Fourth, in some sense, Litfin goes further in explaining Paul's argument than the text requires, assuming a necessary conflict between rhetoric and a reliance on the Spirit. No necessary conflict exists between a preacher's desire to persuade his hearers and his trust and reliance on the enlivening work of the Holy Spirit. Faithful preaching seeks to persuade by effectively communicating, while at the same time trusting the power of God. Kooienga argues that the goal of persuasion "in no way competes with the persuasive activity of the Holy Spirit . . . without the Spirit's power, the preaching of God's Word leaves the listener indifferent, at best."[28] Hershael York goes even further, asserting that the effort of the preacher to communicate well does not "discount the power of the Spirit, but instead *expects* it."[29] Ultimately then, Litfin's inconsistent rejection of rhetoric based on Paul's argument in 1 Corinthians 1–2 is unconvincing. Even though

[25] Litfin, *Paul's Theology of Preaching*, 293.

[26] Litfin, *Paul's Theology of Preaching*, 343.

[27] Raymond Bailey, "The Art of Effective Preaching," *Preaching* 4 (July-August 1988): 11.

[28] Kooienga, *Elements of Style for Preaching*, 56.

[29] Hershael W. York and Bert Decker, *Preaching with Bold Assurance: A Solid and Enduring Approach to Engaging Exposition* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2003), 9, emphasis original.

rhetoric can and has been used misused, including by the Second Sophist movement, Paul did not intend to jettison its use altogether.

At the same, the practical outworking of both majority views concerning Paul's argument in 1 Corinthians 1-2 is not so dissimilar. Though one may resist rejecting rhetoric to the degree that Litfin argues, some of what Litfin rejects is warranted by Paul's argument. Despite the fact that Winters centers Paul's argument more on the cultural and historical context of the Corinthians and Litfin focuses more on Paul's theological grounds for opposing Greco-Roman rhetoric, both would forbid any use of rhetoric that exalts the speaker and manipulates the hearer so that one may be moved by eloquence and rhetorical flourish rather than the truth of the gospel. In summary, despite Litfin's protest, no biblical grounding exists to abandon rhetoric in general, given that one remains within the guardrails laid out; namely, self-exaltation and manipulation. Any rhetoric that would hope to fit within biblical parameters must follow these two guidelines.[30]

Broadus within the Biblical Parameters

Given this understanding of the biblical parameters for rhetoric, the question remains: does Broadus's theory of style and eloquence fit within the biblical guidelines? When examining Broadus's method for adapting rhetorical techniques for use in the pulpit in light of the biblical parameters for rhetoric, it is not difficult to see that his view of style indeed accords with the biblical parameters for rhetoric. Broadus was careful and intentional to never place style over substance, and he emphasized trust and reliance on the Holy Spirit.

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[30] Piper offers his own similar "two-pronged criterion" for judging eloquence: self-humiliation and Christ exaltation:

> Here is my understanding of Paul's two denunciations of eloquence . . . the point both is this: pride-sustaining, self-exalting use of words for a show of human wisdom is incompatible with finding your life and your glory in the cross of Christ. . . . If we put these two criteria in front of all of our efforts to make an impact through word selection and word arrangement and word delivery—that is, if we put in front of our attempts at eloquence—we will be guarded from the misuse of eloquence that Paul rejected. (Piper, *Expository Exultation*, 147-48)

First, as has been noted, Broadus believed that style in preaching should have as its highest aim to direct the hearer to the matter at hand. He writes, "Style is excellent when, like the atmosphere, it shows the thought, but itself is not seen" (301). Styles, or the intentional and effective use of language, is meant to illuminate the content of the subject matter and thus, while manner is important, it is always less important than the matter; that is, the Scriptures (9). Style has clarity as its greatest goal. Broadus explicitly warns his students of the dangerous temptation to elevate style over substance. He would never seek to "empty the cross of its power" by impressing men with rhetorical flourish. Style, appropriately used, *always* serves to bring clarity, energy, and eloquence to biblical revelation. Any stylistic choices intended merely to impress the hearer or exalt the speaker would be considered out of bounds. Broadus writes of eloquence:

> Eloquence, then, is a practical thing. Unless it aims at real and practical results, it is spurious. Mere holiday eloquence does not deserve the name. And the preacher who kindles the fancy of his hearers merely for their delectation, who stirs their passions merely to give them the luxury of emotion, is not eloquent. There is too much preaching of just this sort. Besides vain pretenders who care only to please, there are good men, who, if they can say very handsome things, and can make the people *feel*, imagine that they are preaching well, without inquiring *why* the people feel, and to what truly religious ends the feeling is directed. It is a shame to see what vapid and worthless stuff is often called rhetoric. (4)

Clearly, Broadus cannot be credibly charged with the same error as the Sophists in Corinth. Instead, Broadus seeks to use language in service of the gospel, as did Paul and the other biblical writers.

Second, Broadus clearly relies on the power of the Holy Spirit to awaken faith and reject any attempt to manipulate hearers into false conversions. This should come as no surprise given what has already been stated regarding his theological convictions and view of style. Since Broadus was instrumental in its crafting, the "Abstract of Principles" serves as a testimony to what Broadus believed concerning the work of the Holy Spirit in regeneration. It defines *regeneration* as a "change of heart, wrought by the Holy Spirit, who quickeneth the dead in trespasses and sins enlightening their minds spiritually and savingly to understand the Word of God, and renewing their whole nature, so that they

love and practice holiness. It is a work of God's free and special grace alone."[31] *Repentance* is called an "evangelical grace" brought by the "Holy Spirit."[32] *Saving* is "wrought in the heart by the Holy Spirit." Such theological conviction, clearly believed and articulated by Broadus, would preclude any manipulation in preaching. Though Broadus believed preaching should seek to persuade or move the will, he never sought to do so apart from the work of the Holy Spirit. At different times in his life and ministry he came into contact with manipulative forms of preaching, and he wished to distinguish his preaching and ministry from such efforts.[33] The sort of manipulative abuses of rhetoric that Litfin fears are the same dangers Broadus warned against and wanted to avoid.

He does not set some idea of perfect rhetoric before his students, inviting them to become theatrical performers moving an audience through their manufactured tears and passion. Instead, he maintains that nearly all efforts "at rhetorical improvement must be mainly negative" (11). The goal for the preacher is to develop into the absolute best communicator he can be, given how God has made him. Growth in rhetorical style will not cause more artificiality in the preacher but less (11).[34] Style is primarily concerned

[31] The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, "Abstract of Principles," accessed May 6, 2021, https://www.sbts.edu/about/abstract/, VIII. Regeneration.

[32] The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, "Abstract of Principles," IX. Repentance.

[33] Duke recounts Broadus's reaction to the "protracted meetings" of the Charles Finney type. These meeting were held by any churches and often lasted several days. During the course of the revival services, Duke notes that many "powerful psychological and guilt techniques were employed to press people in the 'anxious seats' to confess Christ. Many 'conversions' were recorded but not many changed lives were noted long-term after the fact. Broadus 'carefully delineated between those revivals that were worked up by the use of the so-called 'new measures [of Finney]' and those he considered to be the work of God." Roger D. Duke, *John Albert Broadus: Prince of the Pulpit* (Mountain Home, AR: BorderStone Press, 2014), 22–23.

[34] Broadus notes,

> If one should take a fancy that cedar trees are more beautiful than oaks, and attempt to trim his oaks into the shape, and color them into the hue, of cedars, the result could only be ridiculous. Let the young cedar grow as a cedar, and the young oak as an oak, but straighten, prune, improve each of them into the best possible tree of its kind. And so as to speaking, be always yourself, your actual, natural self, but yourself developed, corrected, improved into the very best you are by nature capable of becoming. (11)

with how one expresses ideas—how one communicates—to bring clarity to the idea, energy to the discourse, and expose the beauty of the subject. Therefore, all rhetorical linguistic tools serve that end: clarity, energy, and elegance. Broadus states, "There must be a *powerful impulse* upon the will; the hearers must feel smitten, stirred, moved to, or at least moved toward, some action or determination to act. Words that . . . produce such an effect as this upon the will, are rightly called eloquent words" (4).

Clearly, Broadus is not opposed to persuasion, simply the abuse of persuasion. He re-centers his students to the importance and necessity of gospel truths again and again. He argues, "The *preacher* can be really eloquent only when he speaks of those vital gospel truths which have necessarily become familiar. A just rhetoric . . . would require that a preacher shall preach the gospel—shall hold on to the old truths, and labor to clothe them with new interest and power" (5, emphasis original).

In summary, Broadus's view of style, as a part of his broader views on rhetoric, is biblically permitted. Paul, in 1 Corinthians 1-2, denounces any communication in preaching that would empty the cross of its power by seeking to exalt the speaker or manipulate the hearer. Any honest appraisal of Broadus's work would conclude that he neither seeks to exalt the preacher or manipulate the hearer. His goal, in the use of rhetoric and specifically style, is clear, effective, and engaging communication of the truth of the Scriptures. Paul would not only approve of that goal, he would endorse it.

Homiletically Fitting

Not only is Broadus's view biblically permitted, it is also homiletically fitting, that is, appropriate to adopt in homiletical practice.[35] This section will highlight three

[35] Some might argue that because style in preaching is not the "most important" aspect it is therefore deserving of little attention. However, simply because an aspect of preaching is not the most important does not mean it is *unimportant.* For example, the aspect of appropriate dress in the pulpit—dress is by no means the most important aspect of preaching, but it certainly is worth discussing, and many homiletic texts do offer suggestions. This thesis uses the phrase "homiletically-fitting" as opposed to "homiletically-necessary" simply because an aspect of preaching need not be necessary to be important. For an example of appropriate dress in the pulpit, see Hershael W. York, "Carefully Expositing the

particular reasons intentional attention to style is appropriate in preaching. First, the task of preaching demands stylistic choices. Second, the beauty of the Bible invites intentionally beautiful style. Third, Broadus is in a long line of faithful preachers who have faithfully adapted rhetoric have modelled effective style.

Preaching Demands Stylistic Choices

Any preacher who endeavors to stand before a congregation and faithfully preach a text of scripture must make stylistic choices. No one, regardless of their views on style, is exempt from this requirement.[36] Broadus states, a man's style is simply the "characteristic manner of expressing his thoughts, whether in writing or in speech" (283). He favorably quotes Comte de Buffon saying, "The style is the man" (283). Style is not only the dress of thought, but its incarnation (22). One only knows a man's thoughts if they are revealed by clear and effective communication. Communication, especially in the pulpit, requires language. Much of Broadus's instruction in preaching style can be subsumed under the category of choosing and employing effective language. Any preacher who wishes to communicate the truth of the text of scripture must use words. Haddon Robinson argues, "Of all people an expository preacher professing a high view of inspiration should respect language. To affirm that the individual words of scripture must be God-breathed and then to ignore his own choice of language smacks of gross inconsistency."[37] Therefore, every preacher will make choices concerning which words to use to communicate that message.[38] Those who would say they give no thought to style in

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Authoritative Scriptures," in *A Legacy of Preaching: The Life, Theology, and Method of History's Great Preachers,* ed. Benjamin K. Forrest et al. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2018), 2:239.

[36] Jerry Vines and James L. Shaddix, *Power in the Pulpit: How to Prepare and Deliver Expository Sermons*, rev. ed. (Chicago: Moody, 2017), 252.

[37] Haddon W. Robinson, *Biblical Preaching: The Development and Delivery of Expository Messages*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2014), 184.

[38] It is unclear to what degree Paul consciously studied classic rhetoric. Kooienga notes, "Did Paul study rhetoric? Does he consciously follow the classic forms of this chapter? Although that question cannot be answered definitely, it's plain that Paul did not disdain recognizably good forms of speech.

preaching may very well be speaking truthfully. They may in actuality give no conscious thought to the stylistic choices they make, but that does not, however, absolve them from making such choices. They simply make them without thought. If they use words to communicate their ideas, then they have chosen, consciously or unconsciously, which words to use. Broadus argues that this lack of intentional stylistic choices leads speakers to a "looseness of style" and an "excessive vehemence" in an effort to be striking (287). Their delivery "too often lacks the calmness of conscious strength, the repose of simple sincerity, the quiet earnestness which only now and then becomes impassioned" (287).

Since no preacher is exempt from making stylistic choices, why not make "conscious, intelligent, and helpful choices?"[39] This is the sort of style Broadus advocates for: intentional, intelligent, and helpful. Just as preachers expend great effort to study and understand the Word, they should likewise work to improve style so that they might maximize their ability to communicate the Word.[40] In Broadus's view, style is not the proverbial icing on the cake that make the message more palatable, but is the very means by which the message is faithfully conveyed.[41]

Biblical Beauty Invites Beautiful Style

When considering the appropriateness of intentional style in preaching, one must note that nearly all Bible scholars agree that the Bible itself is full of eloquence. The biblical text is, in and of itself, beautiful. Poet John Donne notes, "The Holy Ghost in penning the scriptures delights himself, not only with a propriety, but with a delicacy, and

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Whether he derived them for his culture, as is probable, or whether he arrived at them intuitively and independently matters little to the argument proposed." Kooienga, *Elements of Style for Preaching*, 22.

[39] Kooienga, *Elements of Style for Preaching*, 52.

[40] York and Decker, *Preaching with Bold Assurance*, 223.

[41] See Kooienga for an in-depth discussion of the French logician Ramus and his influence on American preaching. It was his influence that "put distance between what is said—the content—and how it is said—the style." Kooienga, *Elements of Style for Preaching*, 38. A deeper look at the Ramian method of classification is beyond the scope of this thesis.

harmony, and melody of language; with height of Metaphors, and other figures, which may work greater impressions upon the readers."[42] Beauty is appropriate, if not inevitable, that the words, arrangement, and energy exhibited by the faithful preacher should at times reflect the beauty of Scripture. Beauty begets beauty. One sees this truth to be evident in other areas of communication. Consider, for example, an anniversary card a man might write for his wife. Any husband who loves his wife and finds her beautiful will naturally be drawn to beautiful language to describe her and his love for her. No wise husband would seek to consciously avoid such language, as if pure utilitarian words would somehow be sufficient to express what he feels. When one truly sees the glory of God and the beauty of His Word, he will be moved, naturally within his gifting, to reflect that beauty in his communication of the truth. R. L. Dabney said, "It is a noble thing to make the truth beautiful."[43] James Shaddix describes the effect this way: "When God is seen as a God of incomparable glory and majesty, language conductive to worship will be used to describe Him...you love for Jesus Christ will enable words to flow in some semblance of eloquence and harmony. Your language will mirror the engagement of you heart."[44]

Broadus argues, "True energy of style is often at the same time elegant" (347). Calvin, speaking of Isaiah, points out this very fact: "Let us pay attention to the style of Isaiah which is not only pure and elegant, but is also ornamented with high art—from which we may learn that eloquence may be of great service to faith."[45] The Scriptures have a native beauty that naturally lends itself to beauty and elegance in preaching. This beauty is not accomplished necessarily by intentionally seeking out beauty, but rather

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[42] John Donne, quoted in Piper, *Expository Exultation*, 140.

[43] R. L. Dabney, quoted in David L. Larsen, *The Company of the Preachers: A History of Biblical Preaching from the Old Testament to the Modern Era* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1998), 554.

[44] Vines and Shaddix, *Power in the Pulpit*, 274.

[45] Piper, *Expository Exultation*, 140.

from "an effective use of the other elements of style."[46] When preachers demonstrate great care in seeking to effectively communicate Scripture in all of its truth and beauty, some degree of beauty within the sermon is inevitable. Beauty and elegance are the natural outflow of good style.[47] The beauty of the Bible invites and welcomes beautiful style in preaching. Therefore, Broadus's view of preaching is homiletically appropriate as it lends itself to reflecting the beauty of the Scriptures.

Historical Precedent in in Preaching

Broadus's view of style is homiletically fitting because faithful preaching demands it, the beauty of the Bible invites it, and it is not without significant historical precedent in church history. As has already been noted, the Scriptures themselves employ rhetorical techniques. After the closing of the biblical canon, one continues to see church leaders adapt rhetoric for preaching. For example, the sermons of John Chrysostom, bishop of Constantinople beginning in AD 398, "abound with rhetorical devices," though he left no systematic guide concerning the use of rhetoric in preaching.[48] For such a guide one must look to Augustine, the most important church father in this regard. Augustine initially rejected rhetoric after his conversion but eventually reversed course and adapted rhetoric for use in preaching.[49]In his seminal work *On Christian Doctrine*, Augustine provides the "first good discussion of preaching and the best one seen for several centuries."[50] In book 4 of *On Doctrine*, Augustine articulates a distinctly Christian adaption

[46] Vines and Shaddix, *Power in the Pulpit*, 74.

[47] Vines and Shaddix, *Power in the Pulpit*, 274. See also Piper, who writes, "We are permitted to pursue eloquence (powerful verbal impact)—indeed if we are invited to." Piper, *Expository Exultation*, 149.

[48] Kooienga, *Elements of Style for Preaching*, 25-26.

[49] In favor of rhetoric, Augustine says, "Now the art of rhetoric being available for the enforcing either of truth or falsehood, who will dare to say that truth in the person of its defenders is to take its stand unarmed against falsehood?" Kooienga, *Elements of Style for Preaching*, 26.

[50] Kooienga, *Elements of Style for Preaching*, 26.

of rhetoric. In his view, the goal of preaching is to teach, delight, and move the audience.[51] If used properly, rhetoric could serve as a useful communication tool toward this end. He maintained that the subject matter, namely the truth of the Scriptures, must remain the primary concern. Rhetoric, as useful as it could be, would always be best utilized in service to the Word. True preaching has not really taken place, in Augustine's mind, unless the audience has heard the truth and understood it. Thus, Sypert explains, "rhetoric should be redeemed in order that the truth of God's word can be understood and cherished by those who hear."[52] Despite the potential for abuse, Augustine believed that preachers should be trained in the use of rhetoric.

In his extensive discussion regarding rhetoric in preaching, Augustine articulates a theory of style that is similar to Broadus: intentional use of language to produce clear, energetic, and eloquent communication that lifts up and exposes the truth of the Scripture. Augustine is governed by a desire to avoid any rhetoric that would become, as Harrison states, a "technical display of virtuosity performed to please, and thus, to sway its hearers, whatever its relation to truth or the good."[53] Broadus was consciously influenced by both Augustine and Chrysostom and considered himself to be line with their thinking. In the *Treatise,* when suggesting works that are "most worthy of the student's attention," Broadus only explicitly recommends Church Fathers, citing their respective works as a source of "excellent remarks on preaching" and "many interesting and useful thought" (14). In expressing his view of style, Broadus is not treading on virgin soil, instead he is walking the same path that some of the churches greatest and most influential preacher

[51] John A. Sypert, "Redeeming Rhetoric: Augustine's Use of Rhetoric in His Preaching Ministry," *Eleutheria* 4, no. 1 (May 2015): 26.

[52] Sypert, "Redeeming Rhetoric," 26.

[53] Carol Harrison, "The Rhetoric of Scriptures and Preaching: Classical Decadence or Christian Aesthetic?," in *Augustine and His Critics: Essays in Honour of Gerald Bonner*, ed. Robert Dodaro and George Lawless (London: Routledge, 2000), 217, quoted in Sypert, "Redeeming Rhetoric," 27.

have walked. In this sense, Broadus's view of style is homiletically appropriate, for it fits within a legitimate and accepted historical context.

Rhetorically Effective

As has been shown, Broadus's view of style is both biblically-permitted and homiletically fitting and thus should be adopted by contemporary preachers. In addition, Broadus's style is rhetorically effective. His particular and specific views regarding the intentional use of language are thoroughly effective in communication. Understanding and implementing his instructions regarding style will produce, in the preacher and the sermon, clarity, passion, and beauty.[54] Adam Dooley argues for the urgency of this matter: "What we say is much more important than how we say it, but how we say things has never been more important."[55] Chapter 2 summarized the methods and efforts preachers ought to commit to in order to see their preaching marked by such clarity, passion, and beauty.[56] In judging the merits of adopting Broadus's view, one must determine the rhetorical benefits. If Broadus's theory of style is followed, what will be resulting effect? In this section, five specific rhetorical benefits of clear, passionate, and beautiful style will be explored.[57]

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[54] As has been noted, Broadus's terms for these categories are perspicuity, energy, and elegance.

[55] Vines and Dooley, *Passion in the Pulpit*, 151.

[56] Space in this thesis limits a thorough discussion of the merits of every stylistic suggestion offered by Broadus regarding clarity, passion, and beauty in preaching, though some were discussed in chap. 2. The purpose of this section is to demonstrate that such clarity, passion, and beauty will have significant rhetorical effect in the sermon and the preacher. The five benefits listed here largely apply to all three aspects of style. For a more in-depth study of the effectiveness of individual rhetorical techniques, see Mark Forsyth, *The Elements of Eloquence: Secrets of the Perfect Turn of Phrase* (New York: Berkley Books, 2014); Edward P. J. Corbett and Robert J. Connors, *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student*, 4th ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999). For instruction directly related to preaching, see York and Decker, *Preaching with Bold Assurance*; Vines and Dooley, *Passion in the Pulpit*; Vines and Shaddix, *Power in the Pulpit*; Abraham Kuruvilla, *A Manual for Preaching: The Journey from Text to Sermon* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2019).

[57] These five benefits are adopted from Piper's work *Expository Exultation*. Piper argues for the use of rhetoric in Christian preach, saying preachers should "pursue the same supernatural goal of worship by using [their] natural powers of thinking and speaking—always in reliance on the Holy Spirit." Piper, *Expository Exultation*, 155. His definition of eloquence ("artistic, surprising, provocative, or aesthetically

Attract and Keep Interest

First, Broadus's view of style serves to attract and keep the interest of the hearer. Style helps listeners stay awake and alert in order to hear and understand the truths. Piper notes that "artistic, surprising, provocative, or aesthetically pleasing language[58] may keep people awake and focused because they find it interesting or unusual or pleasing for reasons they cannot articulate."[59] Though attracting and keeping one's attention does not guarantee conversion or even conviction for that matter, it is a "serious means to that end."[60] When preachers spend the time and effort to intentionally choose language, arrange material, and utilize imagery, they will find they naturally hold their listener's attention longer. One example is illustrations, which Broadus recommends utilizing to bring clarity and energy. Abraham Kuruvilla cites contemporary research that confirms what preachers have known for centuries: illustrations captivate the listener. Listeners comprehend speech about three times faster than the rate of speaking and studies show that heart rates drop continually throughout a lecture or speech, thus a wandering mind is a constant danger.[61] Illustrations and other forms of intentionally engaging communication can "help restore some of the naturally sagging attention levels and flagging heart rates."[62] Preachers must

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pleasing language choices" (150) is similar to Broadus's. Since there is so much overlap between Piper's view and Broadus's view, it is entirely appropriate his five benefits be applied to Broadus, though Piper does not cite him directly(150-55).

[58] This is exactly the sort of language that Broadus suggests.

[59] Piper, *Expository Exultation*, 150.

[60] Piper, *Expository Exultation*, 150.

[61] Kuruvilla, *A Manual for Preaching*, 149.

[62] Kuruvilla, *A Manual for Preaching*, 149. Kuruvilla also notes modern neurological research confirming the usefulness of illustrations and images.

> While the research is still in the nascent state, the existence of mirror neurons in primates has excited a great deal of attention. Motor neurons discharge when a person performs an action, but apparently a subset of these neurons also discharge when the person views *someone else* performing a similar action (mirror motor neurons). And it seems there are mirror neuron subsets of sensory nerves as well: they fire, for instance, when a person is touched and *also* when that person see *someone else* being touched. The ramifications for imitation (by mirror motor neurons) and empathy (by mirror sensory neurons)

work to use their words to capture and hold the attention of their listeners. The longer one holds the attention of the listener, the greater the opportunity to effectively communicate truth.

Gain Sympathy

Second, Broadus's view of style serves to gain the sympathy of listeners. Good style can create a sense of connection between the speaker and the listener. Piper explains that eloquent language "may bring an adversarial mind into greater sympathy with the speaker. If the language is interesting and fresh enough, obstacles may be overcome—boredom, anger, resentment, suspicion—and replaced with respect and attraction and interest and concentration."[63] An example of this is the relationship between the great preacher George Whitefield and Benjamin Franklin. In the spring of 1740, when Whitefield was preaching in Philadelphia, Franklin attended nearly every sermon, though he was not a Christian and not innate in the gospel.[64] Why would Franklin continue to attend sermons to which he had no natural inclination to hear? He was captivated by Whitefield's eloquence and thus felt compelled to return again and again. He was so convinced of Whitefield's genuine belief that the two became close friends. Harry Stout, Whitefield's biographer, writes, "Franklin allowed himself to be drawn out on the subject of personal religiosity with Whitefield as with no one else, finding in Whitefield a listener he could trust—if not agree with."[65] Whitefield's prolific eloquence opened an avenue of communication to Franklin that may not have been available otherwise. Whitefield did not depend on this eloquence to somehow save Franklin, but merely create a genuine

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are considerable. Mirror sensory neurons may explain much of listeners' emotional response to speakers, particularly to the illustrations (151).

[63] Piper, *Expository Exultation*, 150.

[64] Piper, *Expository Exultation*, 141.

[65] Harry S. Stout, *The Divine Dramatist: George Whitefield and the Rise of Modern Evangelicalism*, Library of Religious Biography (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 228.

opportunity for evangelism.[66] Good style gains the sympathy of the listener and affords greater opportunity to communicate truth.

Awaken Sensitivities

Third, proper style, as Broadus defines it, awakens the sensitivities of the listener. Poetic phrases or specific images drawn with words can serve to awaken the listener to the beauty and grandeur of the truths being explained. This is why songs and poetry move people and awaken their senses in a way that bland communication rarely does.[67] Piper argues that communicators employ style in preaching so that the effect on the listener might be an "awakening of emotional and intellectual sensitivity for more serious and beautiful things . . . to help the dull mind awaken . . . in the hopes that this natural kind of awakening might lead to the spiritual sight that nature is all about the glory of God."[68] This sort of effect makes the intentional effort given to style well worth it.

Improve Memorability

Fourth, style helps preaching to be memorable. Specific and intentional language is much more likely to create a lasting, memorable impression on the mind of the hearer. Some illustrations or word pictures create such a memorable image that they serve as lasting "hooks" on which the preacher can "hang" important truths. The memorability of a sermon is, admittedly, not the primary indicator of its effectiveness, but it is nonetheless

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[66] Stout, *The Divine Dramatist*, 228.

[67] Malcolm Gladwell has a fascinating podcast episode on this aspect of communication as seen in music. In it, he makes the argument that country music has such an emotional effect on its hearers (i.e., it awakens their senses) because of the way it employs such specific and detailed language: "Country music makes people cry because it's not afraid to be specific. . . . Beauty and authenticity can create a mood, they set the stage, but I think the thing that pushes us over the top into tears is details. We cry when melancholy collides with specificity." Malcolm Gladwell, "The King of Tears with Malcolm Gladwell," Revisionist History, July 19, 2017, https://www.simonsays.ai/blog/the-king-of-tears-with-malcolm-gladwell-e6-s2-revisionist-history-podcast-transcript-398a913f0015.

[68] Piper, *Expository Exultation*, 152.

important.[69] Speech that is aesthetically satisfying is easier to remember and makes a more lasting impact. In this vein, Piper argues, "Certain kinds of eloquence . . . increase [the] impact by making what is said more memorable, that is, easier to remember or memorize."[70]

Increase Power

Fifth, style serves to increase power in speech. Piper notes,

> The attempt to craft striking and beautiful language makes it possible that the beauty of eloquence can join with the beauty of truth and increase the power of your words. When we take care to create a beautiful way of speaking or writing about something beautiful, the eloquence—the beauty of the form—reflects and honors the beauty of the subject, and so honors the truth.[71]

In this way, the beauty and eloquence of speech serve as both a testimony of and invitation to the glory and beauty of Christ.[72] When heart, demeanor, and language are in line and in service to the text, the power of the sermon is increased.[73] The specific language convention and rhetorical techniques are always dependent on the power that comes from the Holy Spirt, which has already been discussed. However, at the same time, preachers must utilize whatever means necessary to present themselves as willing and able tools before the Lord. York speaks to this dependence saying,

> History bears witness to God's use of those who are willing to surrender all of their time and energy to his cause. God did not use Chrysostom, Augustine, Luther, Calvin, Whitefield, Wesley, Spurgeon, Moody or Graham *because of* their eloquence or

[69] Shaddix makes this point, saying, "While people's memory of our sermons is not the ultimate determinate of their effectiveness, it does serve to attach certain truths to their consciousness and provide a seedbed for life change. So it's important to think about how we can go about saying things in ways that have the best chance of finding a lasting resting place in people's minds." Vines and Shaddix, *Power in the Pulpit*, 269.

[70] Piper, *Expository Exultation*, 152.

[71] Piper, *Expository Exultation*, 153.

[72] Piper, *Expository Exultation*, 154.

[73] Vines and Shaddix, *Power in the Pulpit*, 266.

> passion, but they *used* whatever passion and eloquence they had about their convictions and their message—and God blessed them.[74]

Broadus's view of style holds great rhetorical value and increases effective communication in preaching. In the introduction of his *Treatise*, Broadus makes clear that this is the sort of preaching he aims toward:

> When a man who is apt in teaching, whose soul is on fire with the truth which he trusts has saved him and hopes will save others, speaks to his fellow-men, face to face, eye to eye, and electric sympathies flash to and fro between him and his hearers, till they lift each other up, higher and higher, into the intensest thought, and the most impassioned emotion—higher and yet higher, till they are borne as on chariots of fire about the world—there is a power to move men, to influence character, life, destiny, such as no printed page can ever possess. (1)

Conclusion

This chapter demonstrated that Broadus's view of style in preaching should be adopted by preachers because it is biblically-permitted, homiletically-fitting, and rhetorically effective. Therefore, preachers would be wise to study and implement the communication strategies and techniques offered by Broadus. More than that, preachers must seek to *become* clear and effective communicators in the pulpit. What Broadus offers is more than a few mere "tips and tricks" for the sermon. Instead, he offers a thorough look into what constitutes proper communication and how preachers can utilize such knowledge. Though not entirely original, Broadus's view of style is well worth emulating.

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[74] York and Decker, *Preaching with Bold Assurance*, 153.

CHAPTER 4

EXAMPLES OF STYLE IN THE PREACHING OF BROADUS

While chapters 2 and 3 sought to define and defend Broadus's theory of style, this chapter will seek to demonstrate that style in the actual preaching of Broadus by examining a selection of sermons and excerpts from Broadus.[1] The excerpts and examples that follow are demonstrations of Broadus's stylistic choices organized according to his three properties of style: perspicuity, energy, and elegance.[2]

Perspicuity

For Broadus, perspicuity, or clarity in speech, was the most important element of style. He taught his students to "sacrifice elegance to force [energy] and both to clearness [perspicuity]."[3] Broadus labored to clearly present the truth of Scripture because he believed it was the truth of God's Word that brought "real benefit" to the hearer (303). Jerry Ashby notes that Broadus often achieved clarity through the simplicity of his sermon outlines. For example, his sermon on John 4:24, entitled "Worship," consisted of two simple divisions: (1) why should we worship God?; and (2) how should we worship God?[4] His sermon "Moses Learned" also utilized clear and uncomplicated

[1] See appendix 2 and 3 for full sermon examples.

[2] For an in-depth analysis of the intersection of Broadus's theory of preaching and his actual sermons, see Jerry Paxton Ashby, "John Albert Broadus: The Theory and the Practice of His Preaching" (PhD diss., New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, 1956).

[3] John Broadus as recorded in William Owen Carver, "Homiletics Notes," as cited in Ashby, "John Albert Broadus," 110.

[4] John A. Broadus, "Worship," in *Selected Works of John A. Broadus*, ed. A. T. Robertson (Cape Coral, FL: Founders Press, 2001), 1-25.

divisions: (1) a learned man who was wise; (2) a learned man who was a great practical force; and (3) a learned man who welcomed revelation.[5] Despite the simplicity, Broadus was not shy to preach that sermon in front of more "intellectual bodies," evidenced by the fact that he preached it at multiple college and university commencements.[6] Vernon Stanfield notes that Broadus once preached the same sermon to a small rural church in South Carolina and before the Southern Baptist Convention in the span of a week.[7] Broadus was not at all embarrassed of his simple sermon outlines but rather saw them as an essential aide to clarity and understanding. His commitment to simplicity drew many to hear him, even children. Edwin Dargan recounts what occurred when John H. Leathers brought his ten-year-old son to hear Broadus preach. Hearing the sermon, Leather's young son was left quite stunned. Leathers described Broadus to his son as a "great preacher," and the boy exclaimed: "Why, I could understand everything he [Broadus] said."[8] Simplicity in preaching was of utmost importance to Broadus.

Choice of Terms

Another way Broadus achieved perspicuity in preaching was through his choice of terms. Clear wording requires two elements: intelligible words and phrases, and phrases that exactly express the thought. The surviving sermons of Broadus demonstrate that he carefully chose words and phrases that would be easily understood by his hearers. Ashby explains,

> A casual reading of most of his printed sermons shows the preponderance of his dependence upon expressions of normal conversation. Generally, Broadus employed more monosyllabic than polysyllabic words. Contractions and interjections occur frequently. Personal pronouns, as in regular conversation, are common. The preacher

[5] Ashby, "John Albert Broadus," 111.

[6] Asbhy, "John Albert Broadus," 111.

[7] Vernon Stanfield, introduction to John Albert Broadus, *Favorite Sermons of John A. Broadus*, ed. Vernon L. Stanfield (New York: Harper, 1959), 8-9.

[8] Ashby, "John Albert Broadus," 112.

> also made rich use of connotative words, which are more common in conversation than denotative words.[9]

Broadus did not employ vague language when he chose plain vocabulary. Clear word choice was to be precise. Broadus reminds his students that some words that hearers understand may "not yet certainly represent to them our meaning" (307). Consider the following selection from the conclusion of his sermon on Matthew 11:28-30, "Come Unto Me." In inviting his hearers toward repentance and faith his language was simple, clear, and precise. He invited,

> Again, and this is the last thing I shall say now, come to Jesus just as you are. Wait not to be ready—think not of being prepared—dream not of being fit, to come. The readiness, the preparation, the fitness, all must be his gift. How wrong to putt off your coming to him till you have that which he alone can give. You are a burdened sinner—is it not so? Do you not feel the truth, here on my heart the burden lies, past offenses pain mine eyes—you are heavy laden with sin—then Jesus here invites you to come unto him.[10]

His hearers may have rejected such a gracious call to repentance, but they undoubtedly understood him. His words and his call were so plain yet so specific that everyone could understand what he was saying.[11]

Clarity of language also includes using "some words of a popular character" in order to "throw light" on important theological terms (308). Broadus taught that preachers must not be content to merely use theological terminology but seek to communicate truth. Broadus was often careful to explain, in plain language, important theological terms and concepts. In his sermon "Necessity of the Atonement," on 1 John 1:7, Broadus went to great lengths to explain the "necessity of an atonement by the propitiatory death of Jesus

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[9] Ashby, "John Albert Broadus," 112-13.

[10] Broadus, *Favorite Sermons of John A. Broadus*, 64.

[11] Ashby notes another helpful example of his clear and simple language from a sermon entitled "The Saviour Praying for Us" out of John 17:9. Broadus states,

> I read that Elijah lay under a juniper tree in the desert and requested for himself that he might die; yet really I suppose there had been no time for many years when he was not better fit to die than at that moment. In answer to his prayer, an angel came with food that he might eat and lie down and sleep again and getting up might go work in God's service. Often when people are whining that they do not want to live, what they really need is food and sleep and exercise that they may be ready to serve God. (Broadus, *Favorite Sermons of John A. Broadus*, 99, quoted in Ashby, "John Albert Broadus," 113)

Christ."[12] Throughout the sermon he again and again stated a theological term or concept and immediately followed up with a brief explanation. For example, when speaking of the sacrifice of Christ, Broadus explained,

> The sacrificial death of the redeemer is in one sense a ransom for sinful man, a redemption, a purchase of his salvation. It is the idea of buying and selling, but especially the idea of ransoming from captivity…This is a very familiar thought to human experience, and it often comes home to us in simple forms. I am in debt, and all the debt I owe, Jesus paid it. I am a captive, I am a bondman, Jesus died to ransom me. . . . We are bound captives, and Jesus is our ransom. He purchased our salvation.[13]

Broadus used simple language to make it impossible for one to misunderstand rather than relying on confusing theological jargon.

Construction of Sentences and Paragraphs

In addition to proper word choice, Broadus carefully structured individual sentences as well as whole paragraphs or sections of a sermon. He sought to vary sentence length, combining short and long sentences as well as limiting the number of qualifying clauses stacked together in a single sentence. Ashby offers an analysis of a sermon entitled "Ask and it Shall Be Given You," highlighting some specific characteristics regarding sentence structure. He notes that of the 157 sentences that make up the sermon, 112 are declarative, 30 are interrogative, 9 are exclamatory, and only 6 are imperative.[14] Regarding sentence structure, over 75 percent are complex or compound complex. Nearly 60 percent of his sentences fall between 10 and 30 words, with only 4 sentences of 100 words or more. Of the longer sentences (those with fifty or more words), most "are separate clauses punctuated with semicolons, and thus in delivery these statements could be heard as shorter sentences."[15] The longest sentence in the sermon is 111 words but is immediately

[12] Broadus, *Favorite Sermons of John A. Broadus*, 91.

[13] Broadus, *Favorite Sermons of John A. Broadus*, 94.

[14] Ashby, "John Albert Broadus," 114.

[15] Ashby, "John Albert Broadus," 115.

followed by sentences of 4 words and 29 words. Ashby also notes, "In instances where application is made, his sentences are always more varied in kind, simpler in manner of construction, and shorter in length."[16] Flowing between short and long sentences gives the sermon a conversational feel and helps to keep the attention of the hearer.

The following paragraph from Broadus's sermon on John 4:32-38 is a perfect example of this conversational pattern of speech:

> It is true in practical inventions. We pride ourselves on the fact that ours is an age of such wonderful practical inventions; we some-times persuade ourselves that we must be the most intelligent generation of mankind that ever lived, past all comparison; that no other race, no other century, has such wonderful things to boast of. How much of it do we owe to the men of the past! Every practical invention of today has been rendered possible by what seemed to us the feeble attainments of other centuries, by the patient investigation of the men who, in many cases, have passed away and been forgotten. We stand upon the shoulders of the past, and rejoice in our possessions, and boast; and when we grow conceited and proud of it, we are like a little boy lifted by his father's supporting arms, and standing on his father's shoulders, and clapping his hands above his father's head, and saying, in childish glee, "I am taller Than papa" A childish conclusion, to be sure.

In this short passage Broadus used simple, compound, complex, and complex-compound sentences, all varied in length. He begins the sections with a short 6-word sentence followed by a compound sentence of 35 words broken into two clauses (16 words and 19 words respectively) joined by a semicolon. The next sentence is even longer at 37 words. The peak of the paragraph comes in the penultimate sentence which is made up of 67 words. Broadus clearly ramped up the sentence length as he moves through the section but finishes the section the way he began, with a 6-word sentence. When examined this way, readers will notice a certain beauty and symmetry to his prose.

Brevity and Diffuseness

Perspicuity also depends on the proper management of brevity and diffuseness, and Broadus charted a path between the danger of prolixity on one side and brevity on the other. The use of repetition is one important means of managing brevity for the sake of

[16] Ashby, "John Albert Broadus," 115.

clarity. In his sermons, Broadus often repeated key words or ideas to help his hearers grasp the concepts on passage. In a sermon entitled "And Enoch Walked with God" he repeated the main idea, *walking with God*, over 10 times.[17] In his sermon on Philippians 4:4, "Christian Joy," the theme of *joy* is repeated nearly 60 times.[18] Another example of the proper use of repetition is found in Broadus's sermon "Come Unto Me" on Matthew 11:28-30. The sermon has a simple outline: (1) who is invited to come to Jesus and (2) what is meant by coming to Jesus.[19] This simple outline allowed Broadus to return again and again to the same theme: inviting his hearers to come to Christ in repentance and faith. The final section of the sermons begins with Broadus extending the invitation: "Again, and this is the last thing I shall say now, come to Jesus just as you are."[20] That invitation is repeated 9 times in the final paragraph of the sermon. Broadus used repetition to hammer home his point.

Brevity is also managed by the intentional and strategic use of illustrations. Illustrations help hearers avoid confusion by, among other benefits, providing a multi-faceted view of the idea at hand. To demonstrate this benefit, Ashby calls attention to Broadus's sermon "And Enoch Walked with God," where Broadus "discussed the fallacy of refusing to believe matters simply because they cannot be explained" by using three separate illustrations which "showed matters that are believed though they are not usually explained."[21] These illustrations shed light on Broadus's original point. In another sermon, "Some Laws of Spiritual Work," on John 4:32-38, he employed a series of three

[17] Ashby, "John Albert Broadus," 117.

[18] Ashby, "John Albert Broadus," 118.

[19] Broadus, *Favorite Sermons of John A. Broadus*, 60.

[20] Broadus, *Favorite Sermons of John A. Broadus*, 65.

[21] Ashby, "John Albert Broadus," 118.

illustrations to help show that "it is not in vain to try to do good to the souls of men through the truth of God and seeking his grace."[22] Broadus illustrates the idea this way:

> Comfort your hearts with these words: It is not in vain to try to do good. You may say, "I have not the lips of the eloquent, the tongue of the learned, how can I talk?" There is many a minister who is eloquent and has preached to gathered congregations, who could tell you that he knows of many more instances in which his private words have been blest to individuals than he knows of such instances in public. I knew of a girl who had been so afflicted that she could not leave her couch for years, who had to be lifted constantly-poor, helpless creature!-but who would talk to those who came into her room about her joy in God, and would persuade them to seek the consolations of the Gospel, and many were benefited and would bring their friends to her, till after a while they brought them from adjoining counties, that she, the poor, helpless girl, night influence them; at length she even began to write letters to people far away, and that girl's sickbed became a center of blessing to people throughout a whole region. We talk about doing nothing in the world. Ah, if our hearts were in it! we do not know what we can do. That tiger in the cage has been there since he was a baby tiger, and does not know that he could burst those bars if he were but to exert his strength. Oh, the untried strength in all our churches, and the good that the people could do if we would only try, and keep trying, and pray for God's blessing.[23]

In using these three illustrations so close together, Broadus provided three different pictures of the efforts of the people of God and the rewards that await them. These sorts of illustrations can be found throughout Broadus's sermons.

Broadus also called on preachers to utilize proper divisions to bring clarity to the sermon and avoid prolixity. Dividing a single larger idea into several smaller points stated successively assures "the whole is seen clearly" (315). An example of this principle in practice appears in Broadus's sermon "The Habit of Thankfulness" from 1 Thessalonians 5:18. The first major division of the sermon, the value of the habit of thankfulness, is sub-divided into 7 smaller segments in which Broadus enumerated the benefits of thankfulness.[24] This sub-division gives the section a clear structure and rhythm, making it easier for hearers to follow the argumentation.

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[22] Ashby, "John Albert Broadus," 19.

[23] Broadus, *Favorite Sermons of John A. Broadus*, 19-20.

[24] Broadus says, "Consider the value of the habit of thankfulness. (1) It tends to quell repining (2) It tends to enhance enjoyment (3) It serves to sooth distress (4) It helps to allay anxiety (5) It cannot fail to deepen penitence (7) It has one necessary effect to brighten hope (8) It serves to strengthen for endurance

Energy

The second property of style that Broadus enumerated is energy, also referred to as animation, force, or passion. Passion aids the effectiveness of communication by effecting the feeling, stimulating the imagination, and influencing the will (319). Broadus sought to achieve a certain level of energy and passion in a variety of interesting ways that can be easily spotted in many of his sermon manuscripts. Broadus categorizes energy under four main heads: (1) the choice of term, (2) the construction of sentences, (3) conciseness, and (4) figures of speech.

Choice of Terms

Broadus recommended that, when possible, preachers should choose more concrete terms instead of abstract ones as specific terms create more vivid and effective imagery. When examining his sermons, one finds no shortage of striking words and images. Ashby highlights one example of a "vivid description" that "stirs the imagination."[25] In "He Ever Liveth to Intercede" on Hebrews 7:25, Broadus closed the sermon with a final section:

> *And* he *who saved them will be ever living to kee*p them safe, unto all eternity. My friends, how shall we think of Jesus? What conception shall we cherish of him whom "having not seen, we love," who ever liveth to intercede for us? Many centuries ago, on the eastern slope of Mount Olivet, toward Bethany, twelve men stood together, one talking to the others. Presently he lifted up his hands and blessed them; and with hands still uplifted, and words of blessing still lingering on his lips, he was parted from them and rose toward heaven, till a cloud received him out of sight. Years passed, and one of the eleven was an exile on a lonely island. It was the Lord's day, and he was in the Spirit. Hearing behind him a mighty voice that seemed to call him, he turned, and lo! one like unto the Son of Man, it was the Saviour who had parted from him long years before. He was arrayed in robes of majesty, and girt about with a golden girdle; his whole head shone white as snow with celestial glory; his eyes were as a flame of fire; and his feet like unto burnished brass, as if it had been refined in a furnace; and his voice as the voice of many waters; and his countenance as the sun shineth in his strength. Yes, the feet that once wearily trod the dusty roads of Judea now shone like molten brass. The eyes that were full of tears as he gazed upon doomed Jerusalem now gleamed as a flame of fire. The countenance that writhed in

and exertion." John A. Broadus, "The Habit of Thankfulness," in Robertson, *Selected Works of John A. Broadus*, 46-47.

[25] Ashby, "John Albert Broadus," 119.

> agony as he lay prostrate on his face in the garden, that was streaked with the blood that fell from his thorn-pierced brow, was now as the sun shineth in his strength. And the voice as the voice of many waters-it was the same voice that in gentleness and love had so often encouraged the sinful and sorrowing to draw near-it is the same voice that now calls us to come unto God through him, and declares that he is able to save us completely, since he ever lives to intercede for us. O my hearer, slight all the sounds of earth, all the voices of the universe; be deaf to the thunder's mighty tones, and stand careless amid "the wreck of matter and the crush of worlds"—but oh, slight not the loving voice of Jesus.[26]

This excerpt demonstrates Broadus's ability to interject energy and passion into the sermon with specific and concrete word choice. In another sermon, "Worship," on John 4:24, he used vivid imagery to describe the look and demeanor of Jesus that the disciples may have seen. He describes Jesus as "rested, leaning with limbs relaxed, with face weary, yet gentle; and the other of Jesus as [the disciples] found him when they came back, sitting up now with an animated look on his face, busily, eagerly talking."[27] By painting a picture with his words, Broadus drew his hearers into the scene, helping them to imagine in their mind's eyes what the scriptures describe. Just as he taught his students, Broadus "refrained almost completely from employing epithets, common cliches, and apologetic expressions."[28] Every word matters, and Broadus did his best not to waste words.

Construction of Sentences

Energy is not only affected by the choice of terms, but by the construction of sentences and paragraphs. Broadus understood the significant difference between written and oral communication. His sermons, even in written form, nearly always "employ the manner of sentence construction that is common to extemporaneous speech."[29] Sentence structures, like periodic sentences that are useful in written communication, often lose

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[26] John A. Broadus, "He Ever Liveth to Intercede," in Robertson, *Selected Works of John A. Broadus,* 83-84.

[27] Broadus, *Favorite Sermons of John A. Broadus*, 38.

[28] Ashby, "John Albert Broadus," 120.

[29] Ashby, "John Albert Broadus," 120.

much, if not all, of their effectiveness when employed verbally. For instance, the "sense" of periodic sentences is "so suspended as to be nowhere complete till we reach the last clause" and thus requires hearers to remember too many clauses, holding them in their mind while they wait for the final clause (324). The "loose arrangement" that Broadus preferred places the emphasis on the beginning of sentences. At times, however, Broadus stacked clauses to build suspense and tension. These sentences usually occur near the end of his sermons. One example is found at the end of his sermon "Worship."[30] As he closed the sermon he pressed in upon his hearers to consider the end of their lives:

> And O mortal men and women, who have united to build high and glorious piles that will stand when you are gone, when in the hour of your departure from the works of your hands, and from the worship that you loved on earth, and slow and solemn up the aisle they bear the casket that holds all that is left to earth of you, and behind come sad-faced men and sobbing women, and while the solemn music sounds through all these vaults and your pastor rises, struggling to control his own sorrow for the death of one he loved so well-oh, may it be true, in that hour which is coming-may you begin from this night so to live that it shall then be true, that the mourners of that hour may sorrow here, not as those who have no hope, and that the men and women who honor you, and have gathered to pay honor to your memory, may feel like saying in simple sincerity as they look upon your coffin, "The memory of the just is blessed; let me die the death of the righteous and let my last end be like his." Oh, begin today, God help you to begin from this hour of entrance into your new place of worship so to live that all this may be true when you pass away.[31]

The main clause does not appear until nearly two-thirds of the way into the sentence. In this way he built tension and suspense by stacking dependent clauses before arriving at the independent clause.

This structure can be effective with shorter sentences also. For example, Broadus began his sermon on Ephesians 3:8, "Numerous as were the functions of the Apostle Paul, he was, most of all things, a preacher."[32] By placing the phrase "he was, most of all, a preacher" at the end of the sentence, Broadus highlighted the phrase, by giving it the second most emphatic position in the sentence. This effect, when scarcely

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[30] See appendix 2.

[31] Broadus, *Favorite Sermons of John A. Broadus*, 50.

[32] Broadus, "The Habit of Thankfulness," 139.

and carefully used, can add considerable energy to a sermon. Antithetical sentence structure similarly lends similar energy to a proposition. Consider the following line from Broadus's sermon "Loving Jesus Christ" in which he used an antithetical construction to clarify that "Jesus Christ is not simply the world's great teacher and the world's noblest example of purity and goodness, but far above this, Jesus Christ is a Saviour."[33] The two statements, joined together by the conjunction "but," work together to clarify his point about the nature of Jesus' life and work. Such constructions should be used sparingly, Broadus only rarely relied on "any unusual placing of the subject or the verb for effectiveness; he relied mainly upon dependent clauses at the beginning of sentences for energy."[34] Broadus's sermons were energetic because listeners could easily understand, and follow along.[35]

Figures of Speech

According to Broadus, the chief aspect of the energy of style is the use of figures of speech. He argued that "passionate feeling, whether anger, fear, love, or the emotion of the sublime, naturally expresses itself by means of bold imagery" (333). Broadus specifically named and employed eight different figures of speech: metaphor, synecdoche, hyperbole, personification, apostrophe, exclamation, interrogation, and dramatism.

He argued that metaphors, which assume or imply a "resemblance or analogy" between two items, provide a vivid image in a "terse and condensed" package (334). One metaphor occurred in many of the sermons and writings of Broadus: "Truth is the

[33] Broadus, *Favorite Sermons of John A. Broadus*, 107.

[34] Ashby, "John Albert Broadus," 121

[35] Broadus also used periodic and sentences and aposiopesis, but they are rarely found in his sermon manuscript. This is because when they occurred, they nearly always occurred naturally in the moment. Broadus insisted that such constructions must always arise out of genuine feeling and emotion, never a calculated decision (329).

lifeblood of piety."[36] In his sermon "The Saviour Praying for Us," on John 17:9, he adds another metaphor, saying, "Truth is the lifeblood of piety. Truth is the medicine for the soul's disease."[37] Metaphors create an image in the mind of the hearer and bring clarity to the thought. In his sermon "Come Unto Me," Broadus described the death that iniquity brings by comparing it to a garment, saying, "No poisoned garment of ancient fable ever adhered so closely to him that wore it, sending death through all his frame, as does the garment of iniquity."[38] Broadus's sermons, despite his homiletical theory, lack extensive use of metaphors and "as a result his sermons are deficient at this point."[39] He would have benefited from using metaphors in his sermons according to the theory he taught his students.

Despite teaching his students that synecdoche can supply important and clarifying imagery, Broadus seldom employed the technique. One way he used this figure of speech was to use the term "soul" to refer to the entirety of man. In his sermon "One Jesus" Broadus says, "My friends, these souls of our crave a perfect example."[40] Of course Broadus is not merely treating the human soul as some subset or division or man. He uses this phrasing to speak, in general terms, about what men desire. Another example is found in his sermon "Come Unto Me," when he described slavery to sin: "You have bowed your neck to the yoke, and now you cannot free yourself from it."[41] This image communicates *total* slavery to sin. He was not saying that men have merely bowed their physical necks to the yoke of sin, but that the yoke of sin has enslaved them entirely.

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[36] Ashby, "John Albert Broadus," 122.

[37] Broadus, *Favorite Sermons of John A. Broadus*, 100.

[38] Broadus, *Favorite Sermons of John A. Broadus*, 62.

[39] Ashby, "John Albert Broadus," 122.

[40] Broadus, *Favorite Sermons of John A. Broadus*, 56.

[41] Broadus, *Favorite Sermons of John A. Broadus*, 61.

Broadus also used hyperbole sparingly in his sermons and thus an example is hard to come by. One instance of hyperbole occurs in his sermon "Worship." In describing why pictures and statues do no serve true worship, Broadus stated, "Aye, the world has tried that experiment *widely and, in every way,* and it is found that though you might think that pictures and statuary would be helps to devotion, they turn out to be hurtful."[42] Clearly, Broadus does not mean that the world has *literally* tried *every* type of statue and/or image to aid worship. His point is that despite the great number of attempts throughout the history of man, none have proven helpful. Hyperbole here adds energy and emphasis to his point.

In addition to hyperbole, Broadus made use of two related figures of speech, personification and apostrophe, often using them together. One example comes from the conclusion of a funeral sermon. Broadus exclaimed,

> O pitying heavens, drop down the dews of your consolation. O pitying angels, doubtless ye care, but ye know not, O angels, the sweet, sweet human love, the bitter, bitter human sorrow. O sympathizing Saviour, thou didst weep with sisters beside a brother's grave, and thou knowest, thou knowest, O Saviour, that here is a grief still harder to bear. O Holy Ghost the Comforter, come now and comfort. O God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, the father of the fatherless and the widow's God, come guide and uphold one who strives to be brace and calm as she leads forth into life the tottering steps of her fatherless little boy.[43]

This conclusion is both emotional and powerful. Making use of both apostrophe and personification, he added considerable energy to the ending of the sermon. He cried out to the heavens, to angels, to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit on behalf of the bereaved. One only wonders what it may have been like to hear this sermon in person. Broadus at times used this specific technique in heavier moments of the sermon. In his sermon "He Ever Liveth to Intercede," Broadus addressed the soul of man, saying, "O burdened spirit, crying, 'Wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of

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[42] Broadus, *Favorite Sermons of John A. Broadus*, 46.

[43] John A. Broadus, "Funeral Sermon for G. W. Riggan," in Robertson, *Selected Works of John A. Broadus,* 388.

this death?' be sure to add, 'I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.'"[44] In directly addressing the spirit of man Broadus heightened the seriousness of the moment and drew his hearers in. Broadus's use of figure of speech gives "witness to the beauty and pathos that Dr. Broadus could feel and express in the pulpit."[45]

Broadus often employed exclamation to add energy to his sermons. Many of his existing sermon manuscripts contain at least one occasion of exclamation.[46] This figure of speech appears to have been one of his favorites to use and thus example abound. In his sermon "Some Spiritual Laws," he used the figure of speech several times: "Oh! Do you want to see a great season of harvest among your own congregation. . . . Ah, if our hearts were in it! We know not know what we can do. . . . Oh, the untried strength in all our churches, and the good that the people could do if we would only try."[47] One particular sermon, "The Holy Scriptures," on 2 Timothy 3:15, "abounds in exclamations, containing approximately thirty."[48] One section illustrates this beautifully:

> *Alas* for a man who from a child has known the Holy Scriptures, and now is growing old, and has not become wise unto salvation! *Alas* for a man who can bear, like Atlas, the burdens of the world's affairs in the maturity of his strength and wisdom, and who is neglecting to be wise unto salvation! *Ah*! If I speak to any one such person in middle life, or growing old, might I persuade him to say this day, out of an honest and humble heart, "*O* Jesus, of whom my mother taught me in my childhood, take me now to be Thine!"[49]

This section, emphasizes application.[50] The break from regular communication combined with the energy of the exclamation itself draw the hearer's attention back to preacher.

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[44] Broadus, *Favorite Sermons of John A. Broadus*, 35.

[45] Ashby, "John Albert Broadus," 126.

[46] Every sermon included in Stanfield's volume has at least one example of an exclamation.

[47] Broadus, *Favorite Sermons of John A. Broadus*, 16, 20.

[48] Ashby, "John Albert Broadus," 123.

[49] John A. Broadus, "Holy Scriptures," in Robertson, *Selected Works of John A. Broadus,* 164-65, emphasis added.

[50] Ashby, "John Albert Broadus," 123.

Broadus also relied on interrogation or rhetorical questions to stimulate the audience's interest and awaken their minds. Such questions addressed to various recipients can be found throughout his sermons and supply a good deal of energy. His sermon "Come Unto Me," utilized this figure of speech to great effect. One section uses questions particularly powerfully:

> Are men enemies to God?-they are invited to be reconciled. Have they hearts harder than the nether millstone?—he offers to take away the stone, and give a heart of flesh. Are they dancing gaily, or rushing madly, along the way that leads to death?—he calls upon them to turn, "Turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die?" Are they sleeping the heavy sleep of sin?—"Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead." Are men hungering with a craving hunger?—he tells them of the bread that came down from heaven. Are they thirsty?—he calls them to the water of life. And are they burdened with sin and sinfulness?—he invites them to come to Jesus for rest. It is those who are "bowed down beneath a load of sin," that are here especially invited to come to Jesus.[51]

These questions draw the hearer back in and force him/her to consider the idea being presented. In that same sermon, Broadus twice used the same question to press upon his hearers the futility of their sin. He asks, "What has your sin done for the world and for you that you should desire it. . . . Sum it up again—what has sin done for you?"[52] By asking this same question at different points in the sermon, Broadus again and again invited his hearers to consider the foolishness of a life given to sin. Simply stating the truth in propositional form ("Your sin has gained you nothing but judgement") does not bring the same energy to the sermon as a strategically placed question ("What has your sin gained you?").[53] Lastly, Broadus recommended dramatism to give a sermon "life and vigor and charm that can in scarcely any other way be equaled" (337).

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[51] Broadus, *Favorite Sermons of John A. Broadus*, 60-61.

[52] Broadus, *Favorite Sermons of John A. Broadus*, 61-62.

[53] Another example of strategically placed questions comes in Broadus's sermon "Ask and It Shall Be Given You." Broadus asks three questions: "Have you not often asked God for something which you have lived to find out would have been a curse to you? Have you not entreated God to spare you something which it turned out to be a blessing to you that he did not spare? Have you not learned more and more how little you could rely on your judgment as to what was really best?" John A. Broadus, "Ask and It Shall Be Given You," in Robertson, *Selected Works of John A. Broadus,* 63.

Elegance

Elegance is the third and least important aspect of style that Broadus proposed. Elegance is the product of "imagination, alone or in combination with passion, operating under the control of good taste," by which the preacher seeks to "convince, impress, [and] persuade" (341). When familiar biblical truths are beautifully presented, they often find a greater hearing. Therefore elegance, when properly employed, is not at all at odds with perspicuity or energy, but often naturally arises out of them. Broadus's elegance can best be seen in his sermons by examining his choice of terms, arrangement of words, use of imagery, and simplicity of preaching.

Choice of Terms

Broadus believed that much of what constitutes an energetic choice of terms also applies to an elegant choice of words. Many of the examples already given to demonstrate the energy of Broadus's preaching would also serve as examples of the beauty and elegance of his preaching. For instance, in choosing specific concrete words over abstract words, Broadus not only brings clarity and energy to the sermon, but often beauty as well. Consider the opening paragraph of his sermon "Come Unto Me":

> This familiar passage of Scripture [Matthew 11:28-30] contains one of the most precious among the many precious invitations of our compassionate Redeemer. Many a feeble and fainting believer has been led by it to take fresh courage and "press toward the mark," many a burdened sinner has found in it that the gospel of Jesus is indeed "good news," "a word in season to him that is weary." And since the passage is so important and so precious, we may find our profit in attending a little to its phraseology, in endeavoring to make ourselves acquainted with its precise terms.[54]

One should notice the beauty of the way Broadus set up the passage. He described the passages as "precious" and consisting of a "precious invitation of our compassionate Redeemer." These descriptions, while being both clear and energetic, point his hearers to the beauty of the passage and the truth it teaches. In describing who this passage is for, he used the phrases "feeble and fainting believer," and "burdened sinners." These designations paint a vivid and beautiful picture, inviting the hearer to find himself/herself in either of

[54] Broadus, *Favorite Sermons of John A. Broadus*, 58.

the images. It would be just as accurate to say that the text has been of benefit for many "struggling believers," but by choosing the terms "feeble and fainting" (especially with the slight alliteration they create with the word "fresh"), Broadus painted a clearer and more beautiful picture of who this text calls.

Slang and/or indecent language is absent in Broadus's sermons. He strove to use common language but believed that slang terms were not appropriate for such a serious occasion, aiming instead to "maintain a pure and chaste style."[55] Though informal and vulgar language *can*, at times, bring considerable energy, Broadus taught that such language should be avoided. In reading manuscripts of Broadus's sermons, a reader would be hard pressed to find *any* terms that even begin to approach vulgarity.

Arrangement of Words

Broadus's elegance can be seen by reviewing his arrangement of words within the sermon. Again, as with the choice of terms, sentence structure that lends itself to clarity and energy often brings with it elegance. As has already been noted, Broadus taught that elegance in speaking comes from allowing phrases and expressions to have a natural rhythm and flow (350). Consider the rhythm and flow of the following section from Broadus's sermon "Some Laws of Spiritual Work":

> This principle is true in individual churches, that there are seasons of sowing and reaping. It has to be so. We sometimes say we do not believe in the revival idea; we think there ought to be revival in the church all the time. If you mean that we ought always to be seeking for spiritual fruits, always aiming at spiritual advancement, it is true. But if you mean that you expect that piety will go on with even current in the church, that there will be just as much sowing and reaping at any one time as at any other, then you will certainly be disappointed. That is not the law of human nature. That is not possible in the world. Periodicity pervades the universe. Periodicity controls the life of all individuals, shows itself in the operations of our minds. Periodicity necessarily appears in the spiritual sphere also. People have Their ups and downs. They ought to strive against falling low. They ought not to be content with growing cold. They ought to seek to maintain good health of body all the while, but it will not be always equally good; and good health of mind and soul all the time, but it 'will not be always equally good. They ought to be seeking to reap a harvest

[55] Ashby, "John Albert Broadus," 125.

> of spiritual good among those around them all the while; but they will have seasons which are rather of sowing, and other seasons which will be rather of reaping.[56]

Readers will notice that the entire passage flows easily. Each sentence leans into the next, creating an easy listening experience. Broadus used the repetition of words ("periodicity") not in excess but to create a discernable rhythm and to bring emphasis to the idea. Elegant sentence and paragraph structure is hard to prescribe but easy to recognize. When one reads Broadus's sermons he is not left to trudge through stale exposition, but rather beautiful and elegant (if not simple) arrangement.

Imagery

Broadus asserted that imagery, or figures, also increases elegance. He specifically suggested the use of similes, metaphors, and personification because these tools have considerable value in clearly communicating ideas *and* increasing beauty. Broadus was particularly skilled in how he could verbally paint a picture. His words and descriptions bring the text alive for his hearers and enliven their senses. Consider how Broadus set the scene in the opening paragraph of his sermon "Worship." He avoided stale descriptions and instead vividly described the scene, saying,

> Jesus was tired. The little that we know of the history just before yet enables us to see cause why he should have been tired. He had been, for long months, engaged in active efforts to save men's souls-to lift men out of their sluggishness and worldliness toward God. That is hard work for mind and heart. And he had been at work among many who were jealous. The disciples of John were some of them envious that their master was decreasing, and another was increasing, though John said it was right and good; and when the Pharisees heard that Jesus was now making and baptizing more disciples than John, they were jealous. They made it needful that he should withdraw from Judea, as so often during his brief ministry he had to withdraw from the jealousy of his enemies or the fanaticism of his friends and seek a new field. Worn out and perhaps sad at heart, the Redeemer sat alone by Jacob's well.[57]

Broadus beautifully set the scene of John 4. Broadus used words and imagery that would animate the imagination of his listeners, enabling them to see the events of John 4 not merely as words on a page but as a real event with real people in a real place.

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[56] Broadus, *Favorite Sermons of John A. Broadus*, 16.

[57] Broadus, *Favorite Sermons of John A. Broadus*, 38.

He begins with the simple phrase "Jesus was tired." In a sense, this is a surprising way to begin the text. Many hearers would not readily think much about the physical characteristics of Jesus. Broadus, with his first words, pressed the images of a physically fatigued Christ into the minds of the listeners. Jesus was not merely "waiting by the well," but he is "worn out and perhaps sad at heart."[58] In another sermon, Broadus described the scene the disciples found when they returned to the well with lunch:

> The disciples must have been very much astonished at the change which they observed in the Master's appearance. They left him, when they went away to a neighboring city to buy food, reclining beside Jacob's well, quite worn out with the fatigue of their journey, following upon the fatigues of long spiritual labors. And here now he is sitting up, his face animated. his eyes kindled. He has been at work again.[59]

Again, this passage is beautifully simple. The disciples have returned with food, expecting to find Jesus as they left him, resting beside the well. However, as Broadus so elegantly stated, they find Jesus "sitting up, his face animated, his eyes kindled." These words paint a picture that is easy to see in the mind's eye. Broadus used images expertly to kindle the imagination. Ashby highlights another example of Broadus's ability to transform a "mass of thought into animated idea" from his sermon "Glad Giving."[60] In retelling the story of the widow's mite from Mark 12:41-44, Broadus led the listener to imagine the scene from her perspective:

> Look at her as she draws near to the contribution box! See the glow on her face, of devout zeal. She is very poor, she can't do much, but she wants to do all she can. Dear old woman! she doesn't know who is looking at her. Ah! how little she imagines that one is looking on who knows the depths of her heart and the whole story of her life, and appreciates her love and enthusiasm! She does not know *who* is looking at her—one more than mortal, more than man, more than the high angels. I wonder if he does not look now at people who make contributions.[61]

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[58] This phrase also serves as an example of embellishment.

[59] Broadus, *Favorite Sermons of John A. Broadus*, 14.

[60] Ashby, "John Albert Broadus," 129.

[61] John A. Broadus, "Glad Giving" (1894), 18-19, as cited in Ashby, "John Albert Broadus," 129-30.

Using simply his words, Broadus "supplemented the story to excite the imagination of his hearers, and thus he motivated their feelings."[62] Imagery is a powerful tool in the hands of a skilled speaker and greatly increases elegance.

Simplicity

Lastly, Broadus relied on simplicity to aide elegance. His presentation of ideas was not "excessively labored, or in any respect artificial, that does not appear to be produced with great effort" (351). Broadus taught that to achieve true simplicity of style, which is both intelligible and naturally beautifully, preachers must rely on "patient thought, disciplined imagination, and thorough mastery of language" (354). Broadus refused to fill his sermons with rhetorical flair and ornate wording simply as a means of impressing his hearers. He achieved elegance in his sermons largely by relying on simplicity of thought and expression. For Broadus, elegance was the least important of the three properties of style. Ashby sums up his approach this way: "Broadus attempted to formulate his sermons so that inherent simplicity would at once make his thought plain. . . . His practice, which often may have been to employ the most convenient wording, was to strive for clarity and energy through simplicity and to depend largely upon the same simplicity for elegance."[63]

Broadus's sermons overflow with simple, clear statements. This simplicity does not prevent elegance, but rather enhances the beauty of his prose. In his introduction the "Favorite Sermons of John A. Broadus," Stanfield lauded the beauty and effectiveness of Broadus's preaching.[64] He suggests that Broadus's explanation of justification is a representative example of his simplicity:

> What does Paul mean, when he talks about being justified? There has been a great deal of misapprehension as to his meaning. Martin Luther was all wrong in his early

[62] Ashby, "John Albert Broadus," 130.

[63] Ashby, "John Albert Broadus," 127.

[64] Stanfield, introduction to Broadus, *Favorite Sermons of John A. Broadus*, 8.

> life because he had been reared upon the idea that a justified man means simply just a man, a good man, and that he could not account himself justified or hope for salvation until he was a thorough good man. . . . How would God treat you, if you were a righteous man; if you had, through all your life, faithfully performed all your duties, conforming to all your relations to fellow-beings,—how would he regard you and treat you? He would look upon with complacency. He would smile on you as one that was in his sight pleasing. He would bless you as long as you lived in this world, and, when you were done with this world, he would delight to take you home to his bosom, in another world, because you would deserve it. And now as God would treat a man who was just because he deserved it, so the Gospel proposes to treat men who are not just and who do not deserve it, if they believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. He will treat them as just, though they are not just, if they believe in Christ; that is to say, he will look upon them with his favor; he will smile upon them in his love; he will bless them with every good as long as they live, and when they die, he will delight to take them home to his own bosom, though they never deserved it, through his Son, Jesus Christ. This is what Paul means by justification.[65]

Broadus took an important theological truth and in the matter of a few sentences explained it in a way that even a child could understand. He did not take ideas and dress them up in ornate language to make them *appear* to be glorious. His whole style is predicated on the truth that the Bible is, in and of itself, glorious. Therefore, the preacher's task is to use his words to *show* and *illuminate* the beauty of the text. For that reason, simplicity nearly always serves elegance.

Conclusion

Broadus was not only a professor of preaching, but he was, above all else, a preacher. Like every preacher, he did not follow his own theory preaching in *every* instance. Nevertheless, his sermon manuscripts and outlines serve as rich and diverse evidence to his brilliance as a preacher. Not only that, his sermons and the testimonies of those who heard him preach demonstrate that his theory of style in preaching truly is effective. Following this style is, at least in part, what made Broadus's sermons so clear, powerful, and beautiful. Though much more analysis of his sermons could be done, this chapter has demonstrated Broadus style in action.

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[65] John A. Broadus, "Let Us Have Peace with God," in Robertson, *Selected Works of John A. Broadus,* 87-88.

CHAPTER 5

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE CHURCH

This thesis began by asking the questions: does faithful preaching require more than mere doctrinal fidelity? Is scriptural accuracy enough to produce powerful preaching? Few would deny that a proper hermeneutic and orthodox theology are necessary for the faithful preacher. Preachers, if they dare to speak for God, *must* get the text right. Faithful preaching is never less than faithful exposition of the text at hand, though it often includes much more. Sermon preparation involves laboring over *both* the text and the sermon. Preachers who understand the text well but cannot or will not do the hard work of effectively communicating the truth of that text to the people have fallen short. Clear, passionate, and beautiful preaching demands careful attention to style. At this intersection of text and sermon, Broadus's *Treatise* proves particularly helpful. Broadus spends nearly 100 pages teaching preachers how to grow in their preaching style. The goal of preaching is not to merely to convey information but to move one toward a decision for Christ; therefore, he believed style could serve the preacher and the sermon.[1] Stylistic choices aide clarity, energy, and beauty in preaching. This thesis argued that Broadus's principles and properties of style should be understood and implemented by contemporary preachers so that their preaching will be marked by clarity, passion, and beauty.

Chapter 2 provided a definition of Broadus's view of style, exploring the three main elements: perspicuity, energy, and elegance. Both the importance and the mechanics of these elements were explicated. Broadus provides, in detail, instruction for the necessary aspects of style. He argues that every preacher "should pay great attention to the

[1] This decision for Christ does not necessarily entail conversion. The "decision" one makes may be categorized as sanctification.

improvement of his style . . . [for] any man who will try, long enough and hard enough, can learn to say what he means, to say forcibly what he deeply feels, and to clothe his thoughts in a garb at least of homely neatness" (287).

Chapter 3 sought to defend the usefulness of Broadus's theory of style. Why should contemporary preachers understand and utilize his theory? Broadus's view was shown to be biblically permissible, homiletically fitting, and rhetorically effective, and therefore wholly appropriate and beneficial for contemporary preachers to adopt. Preachers would be wise to study and implement the communication strategies and techniques offered by Broadus.

Chapter 4 demonstrated Broadus's style as seen in his actual preaching. Though no audio recordings exist, much can be learned from his notes and reproduced manuscripts. Broadus not only taught preaching, but he was a preacher himself—one who sought to implement his homiletical theory in the pulpit. Though imperfect, these sermons demonstrate the effectiveness of his preaching style and provide examples for contemporary preachers to follow.

Chapters 1–4 defined Broadus's view of style, defended its appropriateness, and demonstrated its usefulness in preaching. Contemporary preachers must seek to become clear and effective communicators in the pulpit and Broadus's *Treatise* offers a path of improvement. More than mere "tips and tricks" to improve communication, Broadus offers a roadmap to *becoming* a better communicator. His theory of style aims to change the man, the preacher himself, in order to change his words. The question must now be asked: what implications would adoption of Broadus's theory have for the life of the church? That answer lies primarily in the influence Broadus's teaching would have on preachers. The implications for the local church are at the pastoral, preaching level. What practical changes must be made in the life and study of the preacher if he were to study and implement Broadus's style?

This chapter, at its core, follows the three means of improvement laid out by Broadus in his *Treatise*, while making appropriate extrapolations in line with those listed means. Every suggested means of improvement listed below either comes directly from Broadus or are additions that serve to advance his stated means of improvement while keeping within his theory of style. This thesis largely serves as a clarion call for preachers to work hard to grow in their preaching. Faithful and effective preaching is not for the lazy; it requires hard work. Hershael York declares, "If we are to be effective and not just busy, then we must settle once and for all that we are willing to do some clear, hard thinking about our preaching."[2] Growing as a communicator and developing a clear, energetic, and elegant style *requires* clear, hard thinking. That sort of growth and improvement requires hard work. Early in his *Treatise*, Broadus lays out the effort required of those who preach, saying,

> And yet in this work of ours, so awful and so attractive, so difficult and solemnly responsible and yet so blessed, we ought to aspire after the highest excellence. If in other varieties of public speaking, then most of all in this, may we adopt Cicero's words with reference to the young orator, "I will not only exhort, but will even beseech him, to labor." (3)

Preaching is an art and preachers should labor to improve their skill.[3] Considering Broadus's teaching, in what areas is the preacher to labor? How is he to grow as a preacher with clear, passionate, and powerful style? This chapter will explain the three specific means of improvement Broadus proposed in his *Treatise* (288-300). First, preachers must study language, particularly their own, to master their medium (288-292). Second, preachers must study literature to grow their communication instincts (292-296). Third, preachers must carefully practice their craft, in writing and in speaking (296-300).

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[2] Hershael W. York and Bert Decker, *Preaching with Bold Assurance: A Solid and Enduring Approach to Engaging Exposition* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2003), 24.

[3] Shaddix notes, "Your sermon style should have some degree of beauty or elegance. In many ways a sermon properly composed is a work of art. Beauty in preaching isn't a quality that you can create, but one that simply results from an effective use of the other elements of style." Jerry Vines and James L. Shaddix, *Power in the Pulpit: How to Prepare and Deliver Expository Sermons*, rev. ed. (Chicago: Moody, 2017), 274.

The Study of Language

Preaching requires more than mere words, but never less. Preachers will not faithfully preach the text with clarity, passion, and power without speaking. Just as paint is the medium of painters, so words are the medium of preachers. Sermons are made up of words.[4] Broadus encouraged the study of language to master the medium and improve style in preaching. He taught his students that "the study of language, particularly of our own language, is exceedingly profitable" (288). As those who help to translate the ideas of the Scriptures into the minds of their hearers, preachers should be masters of their own language. There are a few specific ways preachers may accomplish this end.

Study Grammar

First, Broadus taught his students to read and study English grammar.[5] This study will aid the speaker in paying close attention to "the nature of language in general, to the history, changes and capacities of words, and the relation of syntactical constructions to the different forms and processes of thought" (288). So much of Broadus's theory of style relies on the careful choice of words and the structure of sentences and paragraphs. To choose the right words for the right purposes, one must *know the right words*. Preachers cannot opt for a flowing and conversational sentence and paragraph structure if they lack basic knowledge of syntactical relationships between propositions. Broadus argued that preachers "have to learn the usage of the language, and grammars undertake to present this usage in a systematic and convenient form" (291). Understanding more about how his own language functions will give the preacher a greater command of that language in the pulpit. Given all contemporary resources, finding and benefiting

[4] Haddon Robinson writes, "Ministers are the only professionals who have people come to hear them on a regular basis. . . . We preachers use words as tools, and we ought to use them with both thought and skill. We owe that to the men and women who come Sunday and Sunday to hear us." Haddon W. Robinson, *Biblical Preaching: The Development and Delivery of Expository Messages*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2014), 147.

[5] This chapter focuses on the mastery of the English language, as the primary audience for this thesis is English speakers. Of course, the same principle would apply for those who preach in other languages. Preachers should strive to master *whichever* language or languages in which they preach.

from English grammar is not difficult, even though it may be a rare practice. Broadus notes,

> The rules of grammar have most effectually done their work when conformity to them has become habitual, and we need the rule no longer—yea, when we have so fully entered into the principles involved, that upon occasion we may even violate a rule. Correct habits may be formed, and right principles comprehended, without books of grammar, but more rapidly and surely with them, provided we use them only as helps, and aim to go deeper than they can carry us. (291)

As preachers study language, they will grow more comfortable using language without having to consciously remember the rules of grammar. A beginning painter may read many works on mixing colors, but after decades of painting will know the proper combination instinctively. This is goal of the preacher: to be so comfortable and familiar with the English language that he may properly wield it any way he wants in service to the text.

Read Carefully

Broadus taught that preachers should not only study grammar, but should also read carefully, noting that many have achieved beauty and force with words despite little to no formal training or education (291). Men may learn much about grammar and syntax merely from encountering it in the written text. Again, just as an apprentice painter learns by working with a master painter, so do apprentice wordsmiths learn much from reading the works of master wordsmiths. Broadus claimed that in "reading we gain much in the knowledge of language, especially as to richness of vocabulary, fullness of expression" (292). In other words, an understanding of English grammar is both *taught* and *caught.* Similarly, Robinson instructs students of preaching to study how others use language and "when writers or speakers shake you awake, examine how they did it."[6] Preachers should read with an eye and an ear toward grammar.

[6] Robinson, *Biblical Preaching*, 147.

Seek Feedback

Third, preachers should seek help and feedback from others as they grow in their knowledge of language. Knowledge acquired alone is not worth more than knowledge acquired with the help of others. Broadus does not explicitly recommend this means of improving styles but seeking feedback fits naturally within his call to improve one's facility of language. He explicitly recommends that preachers benefit from a variety of written sources concerning the use of language. Preachers would be wise to consult other sources of correction concerning their use of language, rather written or personal. Any preacher would greatly benefit from honest, charitable critique from others.[7] One may seek out a member of the congregation who is knowledgeable about grammar and language use to provide feedback on the sermon. Preachers may also be able find this help from former professors or fellow preachers. T. David Gordon argues, "The feedback of another set of eyes can be very helpful, and this process is a great aid in developing sensibility of thoughtful composition."[8] Either way, seeking the help and counsel of others who may be able to provide helpful feedback concerning English grammar is exceedingly wise and will increase one's ability to wield language to accomplish his ends.

The Study of Literature

While the study of language is important, Broadus argues that the study of literature "contributes still more to the improvement of style, than the direct study of language" (292). By studying literature, preachers form their "literary taste" and develop their communication instincts (292). In this sense, beauty begets beauty. Broadus suggested preachers may study literature in at least a few ways.

[7] At times, preachers may discover that these "critiques" find their way to them. This sort of feedback is always better to seek out rather than waiting for it to come to the preacher.

[8] T. David Gordon, *Why Johnny Can't Preach: The Media Have Shaped the Messengers* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R, 2009), 105.

Read Widely

First, preachers ought to read widely. Broadus called on them to "bathe [their] minds in choice literature till they become imbued with correct principles of style, to nourish them with good learning till our taste grows healthy, so as to discern quickly and surely between good and bad" (293). Reading good literature grows one's ability to *produce* clear and powerful sermons. R. Albert Mohler has argued that "when you find a leader, you have found a reader."[9] The same principle should apply to preachers. Where you find a preacher, you find a reader. A man's preaching style will inevitably be impacted, for good or evil, by what he intakes. He must read often and with great variety. Broadus reminded his students "how many good authors there are, in English and in other languages . . . [which are] noble specimens of style, in which one may at the same time nourish the intellect, warm the heart, and refine the taste, and among which he may select such as will exert the kind of influence he particularly needs" (293).

Most preachers already read commentaries and works on theology. Their shelf should be expanded to include other genres like poetry, fiction, history, and the classics. Jerry Vines and Jim Shaddix instruct preachers to "Read widely, and study in as many areas as possible. . . . Read biographies and good novels. Read fiction and nonfiction. Stretch your mental capacities. You'll be amazed at how this will help you in your sermon preparation and delivery."[10] Works need not be specifically Christian for preachers to benefit from them. Broadus argues, "Preachers may learn much from the great secular orators, even as lawyers and statesmen often diligently study the great preacher" (294). The reading list of preachers should be both long and intentional. Broadus suggests that a preacher "should not read hap-hazard; that taking account of his mental constitution, his previous training and present stage of development, the particular tendencies as to

[9] R. Albert Mohler Jr., *The Conviction to Lead: 25 Principles for Leadership that Matters* (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2012), 99.

[10] Vines and Shaddix, *Power in the Pulpit*, 115.

thinking and style of which he is now conscious, he should select, according to the best accessible information, such works as will best meet his actual needs" (294).

In the same way that reading can grow one's understanding of grammar and syntax, reading can increase one's ability to utilize words for the sake of clarity and elegance. Reading is an invaluable resource for the preacher. This skill is an increasingly rare one in modern society. Gordon states, "The average American adult reads fewer than nine books annually and spends seventeen times as much time watching television as reading."[11] This must not be true in the life of the preacher who desires to improve his style.

Listen to Great Preachers

Second, Broadus encouraged his students to read, listen to, and watch the sermons of great preachers. Broadus's students, of course, lacked the sort of audio and video resources that make this practice so simple in today's era. Nevertheless, Broadus still suggested that his students read sermons from great preachers like Baxter, Bunyan, and Spurgeon (294). He directed his students to the writings and sermons of Robert Hall "for a grand model of style, which, like some young Grecian athlete, stands glorious in disciplined strength and manly beauty" (294). Preaching, as an art form, is both taught and caught therefore, preachers will benefit immensely from hearing other faithful and gifted preachers. Contemporary preachers have access to a nearly unlimited number of preachers and sermons. Current technological advances, like the internet and the smartphone, give preaching students constant access to a wealth of clear, passionate, and beautiful preaching and they ought to take full advantage. Broadus quotes Augustine's advice to his students:

[11] Gordon, *Why Johnny Can't Preach*, 35. He goes on to note,

> As a consequence of this cultural shift, those human sensibilities (one's capacities to know, understand, experience, or appreciate certain realities) essential to expository preaching have largely disappeared, so that a theological seminary attempting to teach a person who is not comfortable with texts or with writing organized prose is analogous to a theological seminary attempting to teach a dachshund to speak French." (Gordon, *Why Johnny Can't Preach*, 36)

> Moreover, I enjoin it upon him who would combine eloquence with wisdom, by which he will certainly become more effective, to read and listen to the eloquent, and imitate them in exercises, rather than apply to the teachers of rhetorical are; provided those whom he hears and reads were, or are now, justly celebrated, not merely for their eloquence, but also for their wisdom. (295)

Broadus understood that students need more than mere instruction, they need a model (295). Preaching is an oral exercise; therefore, preachers must train their ears to recognize effective speech. Listening to faithful and beautiful preaching helps to train the sensibilities and the taste of the preacher. Over time, preachers will develop new communication instincts and reflexes. For this reason, preachers should vary the type and style of preaching they study. This diverse palate will produce diverse sensibilities in the preachers.

Listen Intentionally

Third, preachers ought to listen to any medium that makes a careful use of language for the sake of beauty and effectiveness. Broadus argued that listening intentionally to other mediums allows the preacher to "see the same principles carried out in material and for purposes quite different from his own, [and] will illustrate those principles afresh, and will prevent his becoming formal in arrangement and monotonous in style" (294). Listening to beautiful music or important speeches, like the other methods already mentioned, helps to develop the taste of the listener. Preachers are called to wield language (words, phrases, paragraphs) to effectively communicate the truth of the Scripture their preaching. Broadus taught that hearing others effectively and skillfully wield language on a regular basis is of immense benefit, even outside of sermons. Therefore, preachers should always be ready to learn from any type of communication they encounter. How one understands the beauty and force of language is shaped by how he/she hears language used.[12] Preachers are much more than wordsmiths, but they are

[12] Malcolm Gladwell's podcast, "The King of Tears," is instructive here. Writers and artists like Bobby Braddock understand the power and beauty of specific, image-inducing language and its effect on the hearer. Preachers who listen to powerful and beautiful music will intuitively learn something about the effective use of language. See Malcolm Gladwell, "The King of Tears with Malcolm Gladwell,"

never less. Broadus insisted that one must never waste an opportunity to learn from other wordsmiths, regardless of their medium.[13]

Practice

While the study of language and literature are no doubt important, Broadus maintained that the "chief means of improvement in style is careful practice, in writing and speaking" (296). Nothing will grow a preacher like preaching. The exercise of interpreting the text, building the sermon, and delivering the message will pay great dividends in the formation and growth of the preacher. No method of improvement will ever supplant the actual act of preaching as the primary means by which one may improve his sermons. The following habits, though not all explicitly recommended by Broadus, are in keeping with his enumerated means of improvement and will assist the preacher in getting the most growth out of his preaching opportunities.

Practice Writing

First, Broadus extols the benefits of careful writing. Preachers should practice *writing* their sermons. Especially as preachers are developing their style and skill in speaking, writing out a sermon manuscript is a helpful exercise. Broadus notes that written composition gives the preacher an opportunity to focus on the "details" of his sermon, like spelling and grammar (296). Taking the time to write out and edit sermon manuscripts forces the preacher to grow in use of language. Though some preachers take little joy in perfecting the minute grammatical details of their sermons, Broadus argues that "to take some pains in this direction is worthwhile, not only for the sake of removing a literary

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Revisionist History, July 19, 2017, https://www.simonsays.ai/blog/the-king-of-tears-with-malcolm-gladwell-e6-s2-revisionist-history-podcast-transcript-398a913f0015.

[13] Though not specifically mentioned by Broadus, even less serious forms of communication, like stand-up comedy, have something to offer the preacher. Comedians, especially those who rely on a narrative form of comedy, are masters of timing and setup. With an economy of words they get exactly where they want to go often while appearing to be casual and "off the cuff." Preachers can learn from their ability to wield language in service of their purpose.

blemish, but because accuracy in detail is apt to react profitably upon our mental habit, and also to increase our love for the work of composition" (296).[14] Having a full manuscript makes it easier for preachers to get editing help from others who may have more grammar expertise. Writing is an important tool for the preacher for "writing is thinking" and the "primary means by which our thinking is clarified and deepened."[15] Writing sermon manuscripts is a useful tool even though experienced preachers may no longer benefit from it as drastically as they did when they were just learning to preach.

Develop Sermon Outlines for Oral Delivery

Second, as preachers develop their writing ability, they must develop sermons with delivery in mind. In his section on delivery, Broadus suggests the use of a specific type of extemporaneous preaching in which one speaks freely from written preparation (383). The preacher prepares the sermon in full, focusing primarily on the major ideas and divisions of the sermon, but preaches "without any effort to repeat the language of the manuscript" (384). The preacher learns to rely not only on his written preparation, but on his ability to use and command language in the moment. This does not mean, though, that the preacher simply rambles or speaks whatever may come into his mind. Broadus noted, "Command of language does not consist in what Huet disrespectfully called *une fluxe de bouche*, in a mere gush of words, but in the ability to bring forward precisely the right word at the moment it is wanted" (398). Having already prepared the major sections and divisions of the sermon, the preacher has not only the freedom, but the responsibility to find the specific word to express his ideas in the moment of delivery. This practice fits perfectly with Broadus's goal as a teacher, as he sought to teach his students not merely to be better writers but to be better preachers. Effective preachers enjoy free and effective

[14] Broadus adds, "Someone has said that there never was a great sculptor who did not love to chip the marble" (296).

[15] Jonathan T. Pennington, *Small Preaching: 25 Little Things You Can Do Now to Become a Better Preacher* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2021), 40.

command of language. They can find the right word in the right moment. To this end, Broadus insists that preachers should "cultivate accuracy and rapidity of thinking, and should discipline [themselves] to pursue trains of thought without interruption, and as far as possible without dependence on outside helps. He must get his knowledge of scripture, and his knowledge (as far as may be) at his tongue's end" (396). Broadus wanted to take his students beyond reliance on carefully crafted notes and move them toward a true freedom in communication. Developing sermon outlines with delivery in mind would do just that.

In this vein, preachers would benefit from writing what Clyde E. Fant calls "Oral Manuscripts."[16] These manuscripts are essentially detailed outlines produced with the final, oral nature of the sermon in mind. Though not explicitly addressed by Broadus, this method of sermon preparation taught by Fant fits squarely within Broadus's theory and goal of improving style. Broadus has encouraged free speaking from preparation and Fant provides a helpful model for preachers to follow. He encourages preachers to do all the same initial study of the text then write an oral rough draft. He instructs the preacher,

> Put each division of the theme on a separate sheet of paper. Then preach aloud each of them as long as ideas suggest themselves, using free association. . . . Keep a pen in hand and pause in speaking only long enough to note briefly the key directional phrases or sentences that emerge. . . . This stage corresponds exactly with the writing of the rough draft of the manuscript—*except that it is being done in the medium which will eventually be used.*[17]

This process is not only much more efficient than writing a full manuscript, but also results in an outline much more suited for oral delivery. This process of orally writing the sermon gives the preacher valuable time to test words and phrases that he might use. The process of verbally speaking the sermon multiple times before final delivery can create helpful ruts in the mind of the preacher and aide in a smoother delivery.

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[16] Clyde E. Fant, *Preaching for Today* (New York: Harper & Row, 1975), 118-26.

[17] Fant, *Preaching for Today,* 119-20, emphasis original.

Fant identifies five main advantages that an orally prepared outline offers to the preacher, as opposed to a full sermon manuscript. First, "the sermon has produced the instrument rather than the instrument producing the sermon."[18] Oral preparation helps the preacher use his sermon outline as a tool for preaching instead of using the sermon as the means of delivering an outline. This keeps the focus on the preaching event and grows the preacher's ability to speak.

Second, an orally prepared outline is "truer to the nature of conversation because it is less rigid, less fixed, more fluid and therefore more adaptable to the living encounter of the sermon event."[19] In other words, the sermon is clear and naturally easy to understand. Broadus was deeply concerned with the clarity and accessibility of sermons. He desired that a preacher would preach in such a way that all would be able to hear and understand. Orally prepared outlines lend themselves to this sort of clarity and simplicity.

Third, orally prepared outlines do not tie the preacher to specific words in the manuscript but instead "allows that freedom of creation and spontaneity of response which is essential if preaching is to be an event in the worship service."[20] Preaching is an event, not something that can be fully captured on a page. Broadus's theory of style seeks to make men better communicators, not simply teach them literary techniques. An orally prepared outline gives the preacher room to develop and depend on his improving communication instincts. The goal in seeking to learn from Broadus's theory of style is not to be become a better *writer*, but a better *preacher*. Growth in writing may lead to growth in preaching but not necessarily. Preachers must focus their preparation on delivering the sermon, not merely perfecting a manuscript.

Fourth, orally prepared outlines, while allowing for freedom, still provide "specific direction" and do not give the "impression of unpreparedness" as the purely

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[18] Fant, *Preaching for Today,* 124.

[19] Fant, *Preaching for Today,* 124.

[20] Fant, *Preaching for Today,* 124.

extemporaneous method may.[21] Appropriate preparation neither ties a preacher to a manuscript nor leaves him unprepared. Instead, the preacher comes into the pulpit having already planned and attempted a verbal delivery of the sermon therefore allowing him freedom of expression. He has prepared and considered his specific wording, but he retains maximum flexibility to adjust the content in the moment of delivery. Again, this method lends itself to the sort of style growth that Broadus encouraged in his students. He states, "Let one speak much that has been carefully prepared, though not written; and speak sometimes, as in social meetings, upon the strong impulse of the moment" (299).

Fifth, and most important, "the oral process of preparation results in an oral product for the oral medium of preaching."[22] Preaching is an oral event. If it were not so, then the preacher could simply print out his manuscript each week and publish it for the congregation. But reading the sermon is not the same as hearing it. Improvement in style will not come without improvement in verbal delivery. In this way, an orally prepared outline helps the preacher prepare and practice the verbal communication skills needed for effective preaching. For this reason, Broadus recommended occasionally speaking extemporaneously with little to no notes. These occasions, he explains, would help a preacher learn to

> closely observe his hearers and learn to perceive when they understand and are impressed. He will thus become able to judge when to be diffuse, and when rapid, and will acquire the directness of address, the power of constant movement toward a fixed point, the passionate energy and unstudied grace, the flexibility and variety which characterize the speaking style. (299)

Broadus was committed to seeing his students grow in style and orally prepared outlines are an excellent source of stylistic practice for the student of preaching. One who wishes to improve style must prepare and practice the craft of preaching with much care.

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[21] Fant, *Preaching for Today,* 124.

[22] Fant, *Preaching for Today,* 124.

Prepare in Community

Another practical way preachers may experience growth in style is by preparing sermons in community. This is a faithful extrapolation from the explicit means that Broadus outlined in his *Treatise*. Though he never directly encourages working with others in the sermon writing process, what follows is a useful tool that will help preachers improve their style.[23] Every means of improvement Broadus mentioned is enhanced and more effective when practiced in community. Young preachers have much to gain in wrestling through a text together with other preachers. Preparing in community is particularly helpful when the preacher has spent considerable time in the text and already has a rough outline. Having done much of the heavy lifting, the preacher may then choose to present what he has to a select group. The process of having to explain the text and walk through an initial sermon outline with others will force the preacher to clarify his thoughts and be specific in his language. Allowing others to hear the main contours of the sermon in the writing process provides the preacher with early feedback and advice. For example, if a preacher is trying to decide which is clearest between two statements, this group could provide helpful feedback. For young preachers, this feedback provides an excellent way to learn from the wisdom and giftings of others. For older preachers, this exercise is an opportunity to model sermon preparation for younger ministers. Jonathan Pennington notes that such preparation "is a great source of encouragement, stimulation, accountability, and growth."[24] Many pastors would be more than happy to join the sermon preparation process of a preacher they have great respect and admiration for. Growth in style is expedited when one relies not only on his own instincts and tastes but benefits from those around him.

[23] Broadus does, though, suggest having others check sermon manuscripts for correct spelling: "Let him have whatever he writes examined by some accurate speller" (296).

[24] Pennington, *Small Preaching,* 18.

Review Sermons

Fourth, preachers should periodically review their sermons. This practice is in step with Broadus's chief means of improvement: careful practice. He commends "not mere practice without care, for this will develop and confirm what is faulty as well as what is good," but careful attention to improvement in style (296). The practice of regularly reviewing sermons, either individually or in a group, serves to advance the purpose behind Broadus's chief means of improvement and is an appropriate extrapolation from his explicitly listed means.

The regular rhythm of 2-3 sermons a week that many pastors preach does not allow for an ample amount of reflection. Still, preachers should seek to review and critique their sermons as often as their schedule allows. The practice of intentionally re-watching a sermon and reviewing the content and form of the sermon can yield significant fruit. For example, when reviewing his sermon, the preacher may become aware of certain errors in his language that went unnoticed during the sermon. He may use far more informal language than he previously knew. This review can also help him identify areas in the sermon where more specific language could have been employed. Improvement is difficult if one is largely unaware of areas of preaching that need significant improvement. Identifying these areas in any meaningful way *during* the sermon is nearly impossible. Preachers must take the time to review their sermons and intentionally seek to improve their style.[25]

Pennington offers four helpful suggestions for how preachers may improve their style, as Broadus suggests, by implementing more sermon review into their schedule. First, use a standard form or sermon questionnaire to help evaluate sermons, running each sermon through the same grid guides evaluation.[26] Second, develop of a regular habit of

[25] Sermon review is another area in which preachers can greatly benefit from those around them. Just as they should write in community, reviewing in community can bring similar benefits. Others may notice areas of improvement that the preacher himself is unaware. Others may even be able to offer specific means of improvement that the preacher would not have arrived at alone.

[26] Pennington, *Small Preaching*, 102.

seeking feedback from other pastoral staff: "The key is for the preacher to not be defensive but instead to create a safe environment behind closed doors where staff can be honest."[27] Third, seek feedback from other "preaching friends at other churches."[28] Fourth, "form a small group of representative people in your church to meet for a specific time to do sermon evaluation."[29] Lay people will provide helpful feedback for the preacher seeking to evaluate the clarity and effect of his preaching. Preachers would be wise to take intentional steps to learn from those around them.

Preach

Above all, the best means of improving preaching style is preaching. Broadus taught that one "must studiously practice *speaking,* in order to form his speaking style . . . let him always have a practical purpose, and throw himself into an effort, not to make a discourse, but to accomplish his object" (299). To grow and improve in style as Broadus suggests, one must preach. There is no substitute for time in the pulpit. Students may read and learn and plan, but in the end they much preach. Knowing a great deal *about* preaching is not the same as preaching. No amount of study can fully replace the experience gained from preaching. Broadus wanted his students to grow as preachers, nor merely to learn more information about preaching. For this reason, those who wish to grow in preaching style should preach as often as possible.

Preaching has great value for improvement regardless of the venue. Students of preaching will find that preaching opportunities are not difficult to come by if one is unconcerned about the size of the audience. Nearly every nursing home would be thrilled to have a young preacher regularly preach for the residents. Prison ministries across the country need men willing to preach the Scriptures. These preaching opportunities offer

[27] Pennington, *Small Preaching*, 102.

[28] Pennington, *Small Preaching*, 102.

[29] Pennington, *Small Preaching*, 103.

little in terms and applause and prestige, yet the faithful preacher is not concerned with either. The exercise of preparing a sermon then standing in the pulpit and delivering will reap significant benefits in the life of the preacher. If one wishes to grow his preaching style, then he should see to it that he preaches regularly.

Conclusion

Preaching is too important of a discipline to be taken lightly. Any preacher who has the audacity to stand in the pulpit and proclaim the Word of God must be committed to becoming the best vessel of the Lord he can be. Given his skills, gifting, education, and calling, the preacher must be disciplined and diligent to make the most of what the Lord has given him. John A. Broadus devoted much of his life to helping preachers grow in effectiveness and faithfulness. This thesis argued that Broadus's principles and properties of style should be understood and implemented by contemporary preachers so that their preaching would be marked by clarity, passion, and beauty. His view of style has been shown to be biblically permissible and uniquely effective. Preachers would do well to learn from the aged wisdom of Broadus. Style is not merely ornamental but is "the glitter and polish of the warrior's sword, and also its keen edge. Broadus's teaching on style will sharpen the sword off all who will listen.

APPENDIX 1

JOHN BROADUS AND RACE

Disturbing Blind Spot

Despite his robust theology and his passionate preaching there was still at least one area of Broadus's life that was not compatible with the gospel of Jesus Christ: his support of antebellum slavery. In a landmark report, the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary exposed its ugly history with racism and slavery. Unfortunately, none of the founders escape unscathed, including Broadus. What follows are just a few bare facts concerning Broadus's relationship with slavery. Broadus owned two slaves himself, and the entire founding faculty owned 55 between themselves.[1] He defended the moral righteousness of slaveholding. In 1863, he wrote and presented resolutions to the SBC to support the cause of the Confederacy. He served as a chaplain in the confederate army.[2] He not only believed but propagated the myth of black inferiority, even suggesting that the Seminary be moved to Lynchburg, VA because it was "in a white man's country."[3] In his *Treatise,* Broadus makes no attempt to hide his prejudice toward others. When discussing means of improving the use of language, Broadus recommends reading good literature to counteract "certain evil influences."[4] He states, "Few among us have learned from childhood to speak graceful and forcible English, few indeed to speak it with bare

[1] Gregory A. Wills et al., *Report on Slavery and Racism in the History of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary* (Louisville: Southern Seminary, 2019), 5.

[2] Wills et al., *Report on Slavery and Racism*, 6.

[3] Wills et al., *Report on Slavery and Racism*, 26.

[4] John Albert Broadus, *A Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons* (Louisville: The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2012), 293.

correctness. Mother-tongue is often to a great extent nurse's tongue; and in this country that usually means the broken and rude English of the negroes, or the brogue of the most ignorant Irish."[5] Dr. Albert Mohler Jr., current president of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, asks "How could our founders, James P. Boyce, John Broadus, Basil Manly Jr., and William Williams, serve as such defenders of biblical truth, the gospel of Jesus Christ, and the confessional convictions of this Seminary, and at the same time own human beings as slaves— based on an ideology of race—and defend American slavery as an institution?"[6]

After reading Broadus it is hard to imagine how one who so eloquently preached the gospel of the Lord Jesus could justify owning another person. Despite this significant area of sin in Broadus's life, his works remain useful. Readers must resist the urge to fully reject Broadus's work or the receive it uncritically. One must place Broadus in his context and understand all his works in light of his life and ministry. His writings, specifically those regarding style, can still prove useful to contemporary preachers despite the deep flaws of their author. Ultimately, Broadus grounds his view of style in communication theory that long predates him. In recommending study and adaptation of Broadus's writings on style, this thesis, in no way, seeks to endorse any and every view espoused by him.

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[5] Broadus, *Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*, 293.

[6] Wills et al., *Report on Slavery and Racism*, 3.

APPENDIX 2

SERMON OF JOHN BROADUS 1

What follows is a full manuscript Broadus's sermon on John 4:24 entitled "Worship" which is representative of his preaching style.[1]

Worship

"God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship
him in spirit and truth" (John 4:24)

Jesus was tired. The little that we know of the history just before yet enables us to see cause why he should have been tired.

He had been, for long months, engaged in active efforts to save men's souls-to lift men out of their sluggishness and worldliness toward God. That is hard work for mind and heart. And he had been at work among many who were jealous. The disciples of John were some of them envious that their master was decreasing and another was increasing, though John said it was right and good; and when the Pharisees heard that Jesus was now making and baptizing more disciples than John, they were jealous. They made it needful that he should withdraw from Judea, as so often during his brief ministry he had to withdraw from the jealousy of his enemies or the fanaticism of his friends, and seek a new field. Worn out and perhaps sad at heart, the Redeemer sat alone by Jacob's well.

[1] John Albert Broadus, *Favorite Sermons of John A. Broadus*, ed. Vernon Stanfield (New York: Harper, 1959), 38-50.

Our artists owe us yet two companion pictures-the one of Jesus, as the disciples saw him when they turned back to look, on their way to buy food, as he sat and rested, leaning with limbs relaxed, with face weary, yet gentle; and the other of Jesus as they found him when they came back, sitting up now with an animated look on his face, busily, eagerly talking.

Ah! there was an opening to do good, and he who "went about doing good" would give up even his needed rest, and often did, to do good to the least and the lowest. The disciples wondered not that he was ready to do good; they had seen that often already. They wondered that he was talking with a woman, for that was contrary to the dignity of a man according to the ideas of that time and country, to be seen talking with a woman in public. They wondered; they knew not yet what manner of spirit they were of-that they had to deal with high-saving truths that break through all weak conventionalities.

They would have wondered more if they had known what he knew full well-that it was a woman of bad character; and yet he saw in her potencies for good, and he did win her that day to faith in the Messiah who had come, and sent her forth to tell others to come and see "a man who had told her all things whatsoever she did."

But she shrank in the process. Beautiful and wonderful it is to see how admirably our Lord led the casual conversation with a stranger so as to introduce the profoundest spiritual truths.

My Christian friends, let me not fail to point your attention to this. I know no art of social life more needful to be cultivated in our time and country than the art of skillfully introducing religion into general conversation. It is a difficult task. It requires tact and skill to do this in such a way as to accomplish much good and no harm; but it is worth all

your efforts. Old and young, men and women, yea-shall I say it?-specially young ladies, who are Christians, with that control which young ladies have in our American society, need to cultivate few things so much as just that power which the Redeemer possessed. Oh! beautiful, blessed example of Jesus! How it shines more and more as we study and strive to imitate it! And not only did he lead on toward religious truth, but he knew how, in a quiet, skillful way, to awaken her consciousness to a realization of her sinfulness, so that she might come near to spiritual truth. She shrank from it, I said, as people will often shrink from us when we try to bring truth home to their souls. She shrank, and while not wishing to turn the conversation entirely away from religious things, she would turn it away to something not so uncomfortably close, and so she asked him about a great question much discussed.

"Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet. Our fathers did worship in this mountain," and right up the steep slopes of Mount Gerizim she would point to the mount high above them, where were the ruins of the old temple of the Samaritans, destroyed a century and a half before. "Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. O prophet, which is it?" Again the Redeemer, while he answers her question, will turn it away from all matters of form and outward service, and strike deep by a blow into the spiritual heart of things. "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming, when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem shall ye worship the Father." He will not fail to imply in passing that Jerusalem had been the right place. "Ye worship that which ye know not. We worship that which we know, for salvation is from the Jews"-he only mentions that in passing- "but the hour cometh and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth, for such doth the Father seek to be his worshippers."

Only spiritual worship will be acceptable to God; this is what he seeks, and, more than that, this is what the very nature of the case requires. “God is a spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and truth.”

I wish to speak of the worship of God, and I shall ask two very simple questions about it, and try to some extent to answer each of them.

Why should we worship God?

How should we worship God?

I. A man might well draw back and fear to say one word as to reasons why we should worship God. Oh! how high, and wide, and deep, that theme! Yet it may be useful just to remind you of some things included in these expressions. Why should we worship God? Because it is due to him; and because it is good for us.

1. That we should render to God worship is due to him. My dear friends, if we were but unconcerned spectators of the glorious God and his wonderful works, it should draw from our hearts admiration, adoration, and loving worship. The German philosopher, Kant, probably the greatest philosopher of modern times, said: “There are two things that always awaken in me, when I contemplate them, the sentiment of the sublime. They are the starry heavens and the moral nature of man.” Oh! God made them both, and all there is of the sublime in either or in both is but a dim, poor reflection of the glory of him who made them. Whatever there is in this world that is suited to lift up men's souls at all ought to lift them toward God.

Robert Hall said that the idea of God subordinates to itself all that is great, borrows splendor from all that is fair, and sits enthroned on the riches of the universe. More than

that is true. I repeat, all that exalts our souls ought to lift them up toward God. Especially ought we to adore the holiness of God.

O sinful human beings, still you know that holiness is the crown of existence. There is not a human heart that does not somehow, sometimes love goodness. Find me the most wicked man in all your great city, and there are times when that man admires goodness. Yea, I fancy that there are times when he hopes that somehow or other he may yet be good himself. When a man we love has died, we are prone to exaggerate in our funeral discourse, in our inscriptions on tombstones and the like-to exaggerate what? We seldom exaggerate much in speaking of a man's talents, or learning, or possessions, or influence, but we are always ready to exaggerate his goodness. We want to make the best of the man in that solemn hour. We feel that goodness is the great thing for a human being when he has gone out of our view into the world unseen. What is it that the Scriptures teach us in one of the great themes of the high worship of God, where worship is perfect? Long ago a prophet saw the Lord seated high on a throne in the temple, with flowing robes of majesty, and on either side adoring seraphs did bend and worship, and oh! what was it that was the theme of their worship? Was it God's power? Was it God's wisdom? You know what they said-"Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts. The whole earth is full of his glory." And there do come times, O my friends, to you and me, though we lift not holy hands, when we want to adore the holiness of God.

Then think of his love and mercy! If you were only unconcerned spectators I said-think of his love and mercy! He hates sin. We know how to hate sin as the holy God must hate it. And yet he loves the sinner! How he yearns over the sinful! How he longs to save him! Oh, heaven and earth, God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever will have it so, might through him be saved.

I know where that great provision, that mighty mercy, is adored. I know from God's Word that those high and glorious ones, who know far more than we do of the glorious attributes of the Creator and the wide wonders of his works, when they have sung their highest song of praise for God's character and for creation, will then strike a higher note as they sing the praises of redemption, for holiness and redemption are the great themes which the Scriptures make known to us of the worship in heaven. John saw in his vision how the four living creatures, representing the powers of nature, and the four and twenty elders, representing the saved of God, bowed in worship, and how a wide and encircling host of angels caught the sound, and how it spread wider still, till in all the universe it rolls, "Salvation and honor and glory and power be unto him that sitteth on the throne and unto the Lamb forever and ever."

Holiness and redemption! We ought to adore if we had nothing to do with it, for we have a moral nature to appreciate it. And oh! are we unconcerned spectators? That most wonderful manifestation of God's mercy and love has been made toward us. And, if the angels find their highest theme of praise in what the gracious God has done for us, how should we feel about it? Yea, there is a sense in which, amid the infirmities of earth, we can pay God a worship that the angels cannot themselves offer.

Earth has a joy unknown in heaven;
The new-born bliss of sins forgiven.

And sinful beings out of grateful hearts for sins forgiven may strike a note of praise to God that shall pierce through all the high anthems of the skies and enter into the ear of the Lord God of Hosts.

2. Moreover, we should worship God, not only because it is due to him, but because it is good for us. Only the worship of God can satisfy, O my friends, the highest and noblest aspirations of our natures.

When anything lifts us up, then we want God as the climax of our exalted thought, and our thought itself is imperfect without it. If you will look, as I looked this morning, in the early light, upon the glory of the autumn woods, faded now, yet still bright and beautiful; if you gaze upon the splendor of the nightly skies; if you stand in awe before the great mountains, snow-clad and towering; if you go and gaze in the silence of night upon the rush of your own imperial river, or stand by the seashore, and hear the mighty waters rolling evermore, there swells in the breast something that wants God for its crown and for its completeness. There are aspirations in these strange natures of ours that only God can satisfy. Our thinking is a mutilated fragment without God, and our hearts can never rest unless they rest in God.

And worship, oh, how it can soothe! Yea, sometimes worship alone can soothe our sorrows and our anxieties. There come times with all of us when everything else does fail us; there come times when we go to speak with sorrowing friends and feel that all our themes are weak and vain. You, wicked man yonder-you have gone sometimes to visit a friend that was in great distress, who had lost a dear child or husband, or wife; and as you have sat down by your friend and wanted to say something comforting, you have felt that everything else was vain but to point the poor sorrowing heart to God; and you felt ashamed of yourself that you did not dare to do that. How often have devout hearts found comfort in sorrow, found sup-port in anxiety, by the worship of God; by the thought of submission to God and trust in God; a belief that God knows what he is doing; that God sees the end from the beginning; that God makes “all things work together for good to those that love him!”

Furthermore, the worship of God nourishes the deepest root of morality-individual and social. Morality cannot live upon mere ideas of expediency and utility. The root of morality is the sentiment of moral obligation. What does it mean when your little child first begins to say "I ought to do this" and "I ought not to do that"? What does it mean? "I ought." The beasts around us are some of them very intelligent. They seem to think in a crude fashion. They seem to reason in a rudimentary way. Our intellect is not peculiar to us. They have something of it, but they show no sign of having the rudiments of the notion that "I ought" and "I ought not." It is the glory of man. It makes him in the image of the spiritual one that made him. And what is to nourish and keep alive and make strong that sentiment of moral obligation in our souls? It is the recognition of the fact that there is a God who gave us this high, moral, spiritual being; who made us for himself; to whom we belong. It is our worship of him which nourishes in us the highest and best. How can a man tell the reasons why we should worship God? They are as high as heaven, as wide as the world, as vast as the universe; all existence and all conception-everything is a reason why we should worship God.

II. How much should we worship God? I wish here to speak only of that line of thought which the text presents, How shall we worship God with spiritual worship?

The spiritual worship the text points out to us is essentially independent of localities. Time was when it was not so: when the best worship that was to be expected in the world depended upon holy places and impressive rites. In the childhood of the race these ideas were necessary, but Christianity came as the maturity of revealed religion, and declared that those ideas should prevail no longer; that true Christian spiritual worship is essentially independent of localities.

My friends, under the Christian system you cannot make holy places; you cannot make a holy house. We speak very naturally and properly enough, if with due limitation, in the language of the Old Testament, about our places of worship, but we ought to remember constantly the limitations. You cannot consecrate a building in the light of Christianity. You can dedicate the building, you can set it apart to be used only for the worship of God; but you cannot make the house a holy house; it is an idea foreign to the intense spirituality which Jesus has taught us belongs to the Christian idea of worship.

`Why, then, one might say, why should we have houses of worship? Not merely because if there is to be the worship of assemblies at all, with all the strange power that sympathy gives to aggregated worship, then there must be places of assembly; but because these soon become associated with the solemn worship we hold in them and sacred by their associations, and if we do not disturb those associations, if from the places where we are wont to hold solemn worship, we keep carefully away all that tends to violate those associations, they grow in power upon us; they do not make the place holy, but they make it easier by force of association and of beneficent habit for us to have holy thoughts and to pay holy worship in the place where we have often paid it before. So we can see why it is fit to set apart places of worship, houses of worship for God, though they be not in themselves holy, though spiritual worship is independent of locality.

Let us rise to a broader view of the matter. Spiritual worship must subordinate all these externals.

Can you listen a few minutes while I offer a plain, unadorned, unimpassioned statement about this really practical matter, surely suitable to our circumstances, worthy to be discussed; for there are many extremes about it among men, and though you may not go

with my thought, it may help you to think the matter through for yourself. I say, then, on the one hand, spiritual worship must have its externals. For while we are spiritual, like God, we are something else also. We have a material nature, and we are all closely linked and interdependent and acting upon each other continually. It is idle, then, to think that our worship will be all that it is capable of becoming if we try to keep it exclusively spiritual and give it no outward expression at all. When you try to pray in private by your own bedside, alone with your beating heart and your God, you mistake if you try to pray without couching your thought and feeling in words. We need the force of expression, though we utter not the words. We need to have the words in order to give clearness and form to our thought and our sentiment; and it is good, even when alone, in low, solemn tones to speak aloud one's private prayer, for that seems somehow, by a law of our nature, to make deeper the feeling which we thus outwardly express; and if we do so even in private prayer, how much more is it necessarily true in public worship!

We must have expression then for our worship, that there may be sympathy-expression that shall awaken and command sympathy. We must use the language of imagination and passion as in the Scriptures. The Scriptures are full of the language of imagination and passion-language that is meant to stir the souls of men. And when we sing, sing in the simplest and plainest way, if you please-we are yet striving to use that as one of the externals of spiritual worship. We need it. We must have externals. Why, then, a man might ask, and men often have asked, why not have anything and everything that will contribute at all to help the expression and cherish the devout feeling? Why not have everything in architecture, everything in painting and statuary, everything in special garments, in solemn processions, in significant posture? Why not anything and everything that may at all help as an external expression of devout feeling?

Let us consider this, I pray you. I said spiritual worship must have its externals, and now I repeat that it must subordinate those externals; whatever externals it cannot subordinate it must discard, and the externals it does employ it must employ heedfully. There are some things that awaken in some men a sort of fictitious, quasi-devout feeling, which you never would think of recommending as aids to devotion. Some persons when they use opium have a dreamy sort of devoutness, and some persons, even when they become drunk, show a morbid sort of religion. Yet who would think of saying that these are acts that help to devotion?

But there are feelings that are right in themselves and noble in their place that do in some cases help to promote devotional feeling. The husband and wife, when they bow down with their children by their sides to pray together, and then, rising up, look lovingly into each other's eyes, find their devout feeling toward God heightened by their love for each other and their children. I can fancy that the young man and maiden who both fear God and have learned to love each other may sometimes feel their devout sentiments truly heightened by this new, strange and beautiful affection which they have learned to feel for each other. That is so sometimes, and yet everybody sees that to recommend that as an avowed and systematic thing to be used as a help to devotion would be out of the question. Not everything, then, that may promote devotion is to be regularly used for this purpose.

There are some things that look as if they were necessary, are very often recommended as helpful, and often employed as helps, that turn out to be dangerous and erroneous. Why can't we use pictures and statuary as helps to devotion? Why can't we employ them as proper means of making the thought of our Saviour near and dear to us? Well, in all the ages of the world, the heathen have tried this. An educated young Hindu, some years ago, educated in England, wrote an essay in which he complained bitterly that the Hindus

were accused of worshiping images, and quoted Cowper's beautiful poem entitled, “My Mother's Picture”:

O, that those lips and language!

Years have passed since thee I saw.

And he says, the picture of the poet's mother brought close and made real the thought of one long dead. That is the way, he said, that we use images. But that is not the way that the great mass of men use images in worship. They have often meant that at the outset; but how soon it degenerated and was degraded, and these things that were meant as helps to worship dragged down the aspirations of human hearts, instead of lifting them up! But, it seems to me, if I were to employ such helps in our time, persuading myself that they would be good, that I should feel it was wise to go back to the old ten commandments that we teach our children to repeat, and cut out the second commandment, that expressly forbids the use of graven images, because it necessarily leads to idolatry. I should cut that out. You can inquire, if you are curious to do so-and I say it in no unkindness-you can inquire whether those Christians in our own time and country who employ pictures and statuary today as helps to devotion have mutilated the ten commandments. They were obliged to leave out that which their little children would say was forbidding what they do.

Aye, the world has tried that experiment widely and in every way, and it is found that though you might think that pictures and statuary would be helps to devotion, they turn out to be hurtful. They may help a few; they harm many. They may do a little good; they do much evil.

But there are some of these things which we must have to some extent church buildings, architecture, music, cultivated eloquence. How about these? We are obliged to have these. We must have the rude and coarse, if we have not the refined and elegant; and just what we may have in this respect, why, it depends, of course, upon what we have been accustomed to in our homes, our places of public assembly, our halls of justice. That which is natural, needful and good for some would utterly distract the attention of others. Take a man from the most ignorant rural region, utterly unused to such things, and place him in this house next Sunday morning, and his attention would be utterly distracted by the architectural beauties of the place and the strange power of the music, and he would be scarcely able to have any other thought. These things would be hurtful to him; but to those who have been used to them and who, in their own houses, have been accustomed to elegance and beauty, or in the homes of others they sometimes enter, or in the great places of public assembly in the cities where they live, these things need not be hurtful to them. They may be helpful to them. Ah, my friends, they need to be used by us all with caution and with earnest efforts to make them helpful to devotion, or they will drag down our attention to themselves. Often it is so. You go home with your children, talking only about the beauty of your house of worship or the beauty of the music, and how soon your children will come to think and feel that that is all there is to come to church for, and how many there are who do thus think and feel.

It is easy to talk nonsense on the subject of church music. It is very difficult to talk wisely. But I think we sometimes forget in our time that there is a distinction between secular and sacred music. I have seen places where they did not seem to know there was such a distinction. They seem to have obliterated it by using so much purely secular

music in sacred worship. It is a distinction not easy to define, I know, but easy enough to comprehend on the part of one who is cultivated and has an ear for music and a heart for devotion. It is a distinction that ought always to be heedfully regarded. Beautiful church music, I delight in; but we must learn to use it as a help to devotion, or else we are using it wrong, and it will do us harm. We must not only cultivate the use and enjoyment of artistic music for the sake of enjoyment, but what is far more than enjoyment, we must cultivate the power of making it a help to religious worship. We must learn to do that, or we must refuse to have it.

My friends, you should rejoice in the high privileges of cultivated society and refined homes, beautiful places of worship, glorious sounds of music and a lofty style of eloquence; but there is danger for you. I have heard people say, “I don't believe in the religion of those who work themselves into a mere animal excitement. They sway their bodies, and parade around the room, and shake hands, and shout, and embrace each other, and work up mere animal excitement; but there is no religion in that.” Oh, you child of culture! Go to your beautiful place of worship, with its dim religious light, its pealing organ, its highly cultivated gentleman, trained in elegant literature to speak in a beautiful style, as he ought to do, and you may have excited in you a mere aesthetic sentiment which may have no more real worship in it than “animal excitement.” But, thank God! there may be genuine religion in both.

There is danger there, but my friends there is always danger and we must learn to discard that which we cannot subordinate to spiritual worship. I pray you, then, do not go to asking people to come just to see your beautiful house of worship or to listen to your

noble music. Some will come for that reason alone, and you cannot help it. But do not encourage such a thought. Talk about worship. Talk about these externals as helps to the solemn worship of God. Try to take that view of it. Try to make other people take that view of it. Try to speak of worship for its own sake and not for the sake of the aesthetic gratification it may give.

Still another thought on spiritual worship. I think that in most of our churches-our churches that have no set ritual, no fixed form of worship-there is a disposition to underrate the importance of public worship; to think only of the preaching. I notice that in those churches, not only our own, but those like it that have no special form of worship, they always give notice for preaching and not for worship, they only talk about the preacher and not the worship. They seem to think it makes little difference if they are too late for worship, provided they are there in time for the sermon. I notice that many preachers seem to give their whole thought to their sermon, and think nothing of preparing themselves for that high task, that solemn, responsible undertaking, to try to lift up the hearts of a great assembly in prayer to God.

What I wish to say is, wherever that may be true, let us consider whether we ought not to take more interest in our worship, in the reading of God's word for devotional impression, in solemn, sacred song and in humble prayer to God, in which we wish the hearts of the whole assembly to rise and melt together. It is true that we must have a care how we cultivate variety here, for the hearts of men seem to take delight in something of routine in their worship; they are rested if they know what comes next; they are harassed often if

they are frequently disappointed and something quite unexpected comes in. We must keep our variety within limits, but within limits we must cultivate variety.

I believe there should be more attention paid to making our worship varied in its interest than is usually the case; and then, O my brethren, something far more important for the preacher and people is this-we must put heart into our worship. We must not care merely to hear a man preach. I do not wish you to think less of preaching, but more of the other. We must put heart into our worship. Even the sermon is a two-sided thing--one side of it is part of our worship so far as it causes devotional feeling and lifts up the heart toward God, though on its other side of instruction and exhortation it is distinct from worship.

Now, I say we must put heart in our worship. Do not venture to come to this beautiful place of worship, or whatever place of worship you attend, and just sit languidly down to see if the choir can stir you or to see if the preacher can stir you. Oh! stir up your own souls. It is your solemn duty when you go to engage with others in the worship of God-it is your duty to yourself, it is your duty to others, it is your duty to the pastor who wishes to lead your worship, it is your duty to God, who wants the hearts of men, and who will have nothing but their hearts. I know how we feel. Worn by a week's toil, languid on the Lord's day through lack of our customary excitement, we go to take our places, jaded and dull, and we are tempted to think, “Now I will see whether the services can make any impression on me; whether the preacher can get hold of me-I hope they may,” and we sit passive to wait and see. Oh, let us not dare thus to deal with the solemnity of the worship of God.

My brethren, if we learn to worship aright, there will be beautiful and blessed consequences. It will bring far more of good to our own souls. It will make worship far more impressive to our children. have you not observed that it is getting to be one of the questions of our day how the Sunday school children are to be drawn to our public worship. We are often told that the preacher must try to make his sermon more attractive to children, and so he must. But let us also make our worship more impressive, and make our children feel that it is their duty to worship God, and try to bring hem under the influence of this worship I heard in Washington one of the foremost Sunday school laborers of this country, a Methodist minister, make this statement in private: He said: "Of late I have been telling the people everywhere, if your children cannot do both, cannot go to Sunday school and go to the public worship also, keep them away from the Sunday school, for they must go to the public worship." You may call that an extravagant statement. I am not sure that it is extravagant, but I am sure of this, that we need not merely to try to make our preaching attract children, but to try to make the worship so solemn, so real, so genuine, so earnest, that those strange little earnest hearts of our children will feel that there is something there that strikes to their souls.

And if you have true, fervent worship of God, the stranger that comes into your place of worship will feel it too. Have you not noticed when you go into some houses how quickly you perceive that you are in an atmosphere of hospitality and kindness? There may be no parade, no speech-making. Yet in some places you may feel it, you feel it in the atmosphere, you feel it at once in your soul; you see a place where they are kindly and loving. So it ought to be, that when a man comes into your place of worship he shall very soon feel a something that pervades the atmosphere he breathes, from the look of the

people, from the solemn stillness, from the unaffected earnestness he shall feel that these people are genuine, solemn worshipers of God. When he feels that, he will conclude that God is with you of a truth and there will be power to move his soul in your solemn worship.

Now, my brethren, in this beautiful house which you have built for the worship of God, and are now dedicating to his worship, oh, may there be much real spiritual worship. When your hearts are full sometimes and you come and try to throw your souls into God's worship, may you be moved and melted; when you are sorely tempted sometimes and coming to the house of God, try to lift your heart to him in prayer, may you get good from the wise and loving words of the man you love to see stand before you as your pastor. As your children grow up by your side and learn to delight with you in coming to the house of God in company, oh, may you be permitted to see more and more of them gladly coming to tell what great things God has done for their souls, and gladly coming to put on Christ by baptism. And not only the children of your households, but strangers within your gates.

Yes, and when the young of your households begin to link those households more closely than ever together, and on the bright bridal day the brilliant procession comes sweeping up the aisle and all men's hearts are glad; may they always come reverently in the fear of the God they have here learned to worship. And O mortal men and women, who have united to build high and glorious piles that will stand when you are gone, when in the hour of your departure from the works of your hands, and from the worship that you loved on earth, and slow and solemn up the aisle they bear the casket that holds all that is

left to earth of you, and behind come sad-faced men and sobbing women, and while the solemn music sounds through all these vaults and your pastor rises, struggling to control his own sorrow for the death of one he loved so well-oh, may it be true, in that hour which is coming-may you begin from this night so to live that it shall then be true, that the mourners of that hour may sorrow here, not as those who have no hope, and that the men and women who honor you, and have gathered to pay honor to your memory, may feel like saying in simple sincerity as they look upon your coffin, “The memory of the just is blessed; let me die the death of the righteous and let my last end be like his.” Oh, begin today, God help you to begin from this hour of entrance into your new place of worship so to live that all this may be true when you pass away.”

APPENDIX 3

SERMON OF JOHN BROADUS 2

What follows is a full manuscript of Broadus's sermon on Hebrews 7:25 entitled "He Ever Liveth to Intercede" which is representative of his preaching style.[1]

He Ever Liveth to Intercede

"Years ago, in the city of Philadelphia, I went to hear an eminent musician. He played with genius and skill some magnificent music, but the pieces were nearly all new to me, and, as often happens in such cases, it required so much effort to comprehend the idea of the piece, that I could but partially enjoy its beauty. At length, upon being loudly applauded, the musician returned, and seating himself at the instrument, struck out in full tones the opening notes of "Home, Sweet Home." I shall never forget while I live the thrill that passed through the audience. I seemed to feel that it was approaching me, seemed to feel when it reached and embraced me. That was a theme all could comprehend, and rich for us all in a thousand delightful suggestions and associations; and, strangers as we were, the hearts of the vast assembly seemed melted into one as we listened to those swelling tones.

My brethren, I wish it might always be so with us when one begins to speak to us of Jesus. There is many a subject of public discourse that well deserves our attention. Especially the topics drawn from the Bible and usually presented from the pulpit are all important and should all be interesting. Whatever pertains to God and his province, to his

[1] John A. Broadus, "He Ever Liveth to Intercede," in *Selected Works of John A. Broadus,* ed. John A. Broadus and A. T. Robertson (Cape Coral, FL: Founders Press, 2001) 70-84.

gracious dealings with man in the past, and his purposes of mercy for the future, whatever to the condition and wants of our race as sinful and immortal, should awaken our minds and impress our hearts. Difficult and mysterious as some of these topics are, they are useful; and if we resist the temptation to wander into speculation or descend into secularity, they will give us pleasure and do us good. But Jesus-it is a theme which all alike can understand, in which all alike are profoundly concerned, a theme associated with all the sweetest recollections of our spiritual life, with all the brightest hopes of our immortal future. Ah! we are perishing and helpless sinners, and it ought to thrill through our very hearts, to link us in living sympathy, and kindle our souls into a glow of love and joy to hear of Jesus, our divine, our loving, our precious Saviour. It ought to be not mere poetry, but the true expression of genuine feeling, when we sing,

Jesus, I love thy charming name;
'Tis music to mine ear;
Fain would I sound it out so loud
That earth and heaven might hear.

And my text today treats of Jesus.

The Jewish Christians to whom this Epistle was addressed were strongly urged, both in the way of persecution and persuasion, to apostatize from Christianity, and return to Judaism. Among the arguments employed for this purpose, it was urged that Christianity had no priesthood, no sacrifice or temple, and so was really no religion at all. The inspired writer of this Epistle meets these arguments, and, in fact, turns them into proofs of the superiority of Christianity. Thus, in regard to the priesthood, he shows that Christianity has a priest, a great High Priest, immensely superior to the Levitical priesthood. His office is held forever. He has offered, once for all, the wonderful sacrifice of himself, which is forever sufficient. He has passed through the heavens into the true sanctuary, bearing his own precious, atoning blood. Then Christianity is superior in this,

as in other respects, to Judaism, that is, to the Mosaic dispensation if regarded as complete in itself, and designed to be permanent; and so the sacred writer urges his brethren not to apostatize, interspersing everywhere throughout his arguments the most earnest exhortations to hold fast their profession, the most solemn warnings of the guilt and ruin of apostasy. For us as well as for them, grievous is the guilt and hopeless the ruin of abandoning the gospel of Christ, our sole hope of salvation.

One of the points he makes to prove this superiority of Christ and Christianity, is that from which the text is an inference. The Levitical priesthood was held by many persons in succession, “because that by death they were hindered from continuing”; but Jesus, “because he abideth forever, hath his priesthood unchangeable. Wherefore he is able to save to the uttermost them that draw near unto God through him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.” The phrase translated “to the uttermost” signifies “perfectly,” “completely”; he can save completely, can complete the salvation of them that come unto God through him. And the thought of the text is that he is able to complete their salvation, because he ever lives to intercede for them.

Perhaps we are accustomed to look too exclusively to the Saviour's atoning death, not dwelling as we should upon the idea of his interceding life. See how the apostle speaks in Romans: “For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.” And again: “Christ Jesus that died, yea rather that was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.” He who loved us and gave himself for us ever liveth to accomplish the objects for which he died; as the mediatorial priest, he is ever interceding for the salvation of them that come unto God through him; as the mediatorial king, having all authority given unto him in heaven and earth, he controls all things so as to carry forward to completion the work of their salvation.

My brethren, it is just such a Saviour that we need. From the first moment when we approach God through him, onward through life, and in a certain just sense onward without end, we continually need God's mercy and grace for the Saviour's sake. If we dwell on this, we shall be better prepared to rejoice that our great High Priest ever lives to intercede for us, and thus can complete our salvation.

1. *We are tempted*. And what hope have we of conquering temptation, save "through him that loved us"? Remember what our Lord said to his disciples, with regard to the sore temptations that would soon befall them: "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan asked to have you, that he might sift you as wheat; but I made supplication for thee, that thy faith fail not." As Satan is described as seeking permission from that Sovereign Ruler, without whose permission all his might and his malice are powerless, to tempt Job with peculiar trials, in the hope that he could bring him to renounce the Lord, so here as to the disciples: "Satan asked to have you"-and the term, as well as the connection, shows that he was permitted to have them, "that he might sift you as wheat."

Jesus himself is represented by John the Baptist as engaged in a similar process: "Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly cleanse his threshing-floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." But how different is the object in the two cases! Satan sifts with the hope of showing that all is really worthless, fit only for destruction. Jesus sifts in order to separate the precious from the vile, and preserve the pure wheat for the garner of heaven. And often what Satan meant as a sifting for evil is overruled by the stronger power so as to be for good.

How was it with Peter? The Saviour said: "But I made supplication for thee, that thy faith fail not"; and though his faith mournfully gave way, it did not utterly give out. I am not

excusing Peter at all. We may be sure he never forgave himself. It was a sad and shameful fall; but Jesus had made supplication for him; and how different the result in his case from that of Judas. He, too, was one of those whom Satan obtained to sift them, and the result proved him to be all that Satan could wish. When he saw the consequences of his horrid crime, and had time to reflect upon it, he was sorry; but it was not the tender grief of a truly penitent heart which would have brought him back with humble submission-it was the sorrow of the world that worketh death-it was remorse that drove him headlong into self-destruction. But Peter, when the cock crowed after his third denial of his Lord and that injured one turned and looked upon him, Peter went out and wept bitterly, with the sorrow "that worketh repentance unto salvation," the sorrow of a deeply humble and really loving heart. There was a great change from that time in Peter, for the Lord had prayed for him, and divine grace not only preserved him from utter spiritual ruin, but overruled his own dreadful wickedness to his spiritual good.

Observe with what special emphasis the Saviour's intercession for the tempted is spoken of in this Epistle. The persons therein addressed were, as we have seen, peculiarly and sorely tempted-tempted even to forsake Christianity, through which alone they could find salvation; apart from which "there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment and a fierceness of fire which shall devour the adversary." The Jewish high priest, being taken from among men, "could bear gently with the ignorant and erring, for that he himself also was compassed with infirmity." So our great High Priest took upon him human nature partly for this very reason, that he might sympathize with the tempted, and that we might feel sure he does sympathize. "Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, as he is able to succor them that are tempted."

It is because of his atoning sacrifice and sympathizing intercession that we are urged to hold fast our profession as Christians, and encouraged to come to God with entire confidence. This is done in words that have been very dear to tempted hearts in every age since the holy man of God spake them as he was moved by the Holy Ghost. “Having, then, a great High Priest who hath passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we have not a high priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but one that hath been in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore draw near with boldness unto the throne of grace that we may receive mercy, and may find grace to help us in time of need.”

Ah! mighty, to the most favored, are the temptations of life. Many belong to all periods; others mark some special season. Many are “common to man”; others belong to some particular condition or calling. “The heart knoweth its own bitterness”; yea, and its own trials, and its own weakness. Be this our support-our Saviour lives, he sympathizes with us, he intercedes for us; let us draw near unto God through him, unto God who has said, “As thy days, so shall thy strength be.”

The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose,
I will not, I will not desert to its foes;
That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake,
I'll never, no never, no never forsake.

2. *But many times, sad as is the confession, we yield to temptation, we sin; and “the soul that sinneth, it shall die.” Must we then despair?* Must the hopes we had cherished be abandoned, and this new sin be the terror of our souls? Listen! The apostle John wrote an Epistle for the express purpose of restraining his brethren from sin; yet he does not cut off those who are conscious they have sinned from the hope of forgiveness and salvation. He says: “My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye may not

sin. And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the whole world."

Now we know what an advocate was, according to the usages of the Roman law, and is among ourselves, viz.: one who undertakes the management of another's case in court, and pleads his cause. So Jesus is our advocate with the Father. But, as in other cases where spiritual things are illustrated by temporal, the analogy is not perfect; there are differences. Our advocate does not argue that we are innocent, but confessing our guilt, pleads for mercy to us; and he does not present *our* merits as a reason why mercy should be shown us, but *his* merits. "He is the propitiation for our sins." His atoning death does, as it were, render God propitious, or favorable to sinners. Not that God is unwilling to show favor to poor sinners, and only prevailed on to do so by the death and intercession of his Son. Oh no! far from it. "Herein is love," says John in the same Epistle, "not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." It was because God loved us, and wanted us to be saved, that he devised this way of saving us. And God is made propitious, favorable to us, not when he is made willing to save, but when it is made right that he should save us, and therefore we need not die, but may have everlasting life.

When a sinner is pardoned, simply for the sake of the atoning and interceding Saviour, there is in that no encouragement to God's creatures to sin, as if it were a little thing and could be readily passed over, but a most solemn and impressive exhibition of the dreadful evil of sin, since it was only through the atonement and intercession of the only-begotten Son of God that any sinner could be forgiven, an exhibition at once of God's love to the perishing, and of his justice, that "will by no means clear the guilty."

Bearing in mind the difference between the pleading of our great advocate and any parallel which human affairs presents, we may look at a story of Grecian history, which has been often used to illustrate the Saviour's intercession. The poet Aeschylus had incurred the displeasure of the Athenians. He was on trial before the great popular tribunal, consisting of many hundreds of citizens, and was about to be condemned. But Aeschylus had a brother, who had lost an arm in battle-in the great battle of Salamis, where the Greeks fought for their existence against the Persian aggressors. This brother came into the court, and did not speak words of entreaty, but letting fall his mantle, he showed the stump of his arm, lost in his country's defense, and there stood until the Athenians relented, and Aeschylus was suffered to go free. So, my brethren, imperfect and unworthy as is the illustration, so we may conceive that when we are about to be condemned, and justly condemned for our sins, our glorious Brother stands up in our behalf, and does not need to speak a word, but only to show where he was wounded on the cross,

Five bleeding wounds he bears,
Received on Calvary;
They pour effectual prayers,
They strongly speak for me;
"Forgive him, 0 forgive," they cry,
"Nor let that ransomed sinner die!"

Here, then, is hope for us. "If any man sin," much as he ought to deplore it, he need not despair. Our advocate with the Father ever liveth to make intercession for them that come unto God through him, and through him we may find mercy. And here is no encouragement to sin, but the very contrary. If we truly trust in, truly love our interceding Lord, we shall be supremely anxious for his dear sake to turn from sin, to live for him who died for us; yea, who ever lives as our Saviour.

3. *This suggests another respect in which is seen our need of our Lord's perpetual*

intercession. We make such slow progress in attaining holiness-holiness, which is the noblest thing men can aspire to-holiness, “without which no man shall see the Lord.” Many a Christian, as he sorrowfully sees how often he yields to temptation, how his character breaks down afresh where he thought it had grown most firm, is at times inclined to think it impossible that he should ever become really holy.

But remember how Jesus prayed the night before his atoning death, “Sanctify them in the truth; thy word is truth.” “I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.” Think you that he, who ever lives to intercede for his people, does not still pray this prayer, that they may be sanctified and kept from the evil? Do you doubt that he prays for them still, as he did when on earth? His people's wants have not changed, and as for him, he is “the same yesterday and today and forever.” Find me a young man far from his home whose mother used to pray for him when they were together, and try to make him believe that she does not pray for him still. “No, no,” he would say, “if she is living, she prays for me.”

Brethren, he who prays for us “ever lives.” When the Jews gathered at the temple on the great day of atonement, and the high priest went into the holy of holies to pray for the people and himself, did the people doubt whether he was praying? Why, for that very purpose he had withdrawn from their view. So for that very purpose our High Priest has entered “not into a holy place made with hands, like in pattern to the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear before the face of God for us.” And do not say that the Jewish high priest was absent but a few minutes, while it is long since Jesus went away. On the scale of the ages it is but a little while since he entered the heavenly sanctuary, having “been once offered to bear the sins of many,” and any moment he may “appear a second time apart from sin unto salvation.” Let us be sure that while absent he perpetually carries on his work of intercession.

Think of him, then, as still praying, “Sanctify them in the truth. Keep them from the evil.” In all our disheartening failures to keep good resolutions, even when we may be tempted to think it scarce worth while for us to try to be holy, let us remember that Jesus prays for us, and, “forgetting the things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, let us press toward the mark.” Ah! brethren, though it might often seem to us the bitterest irony now for a man to call you and me the saints of the Lord, yet, if indeed we are in Christ, and thus are new creatures, we have but to trust in his intercession for the sanctifying Spirit, and earnestly strive to “grow in grace,” and we shall make progress; yea, sadly imperfect as is now our conformity to the Saviour's beautiful image, “we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.” O burdened spirit, crying, “Wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” be sure to add, “I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.” The Saviour will continue to intercede, the Spirit will help your infirmities, and you shall at last be pure from sin, and safe from temptation to sin, a saint of the Lord forever.

4. *When we are in sorrow it is a blessed thing that Jesus ever lives to pray for us*. He was himself while on earth, “a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.” And he showed the truest, tenderest sympathy with the sorrows of others. Who does not think at once of that touching scene at Bethany? “Jesus wept,” in affection for the departed, in sympathy with the bereaved. And presently, standing by the tomb, he said, “Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me.” Then he had been praying, asking that he might be able to raise Lazarus from the dead. We do not expect him now to pray that miracles may be wrought in behalf of the bereaved. We do not expect him now to give back the buried brother to his sisters, or to the widowed mother her only son. But shall it not be a consolation to us all in our afflictions, to feel assured that he now intercedes for us; that now, too, the

Father hears him, and that by the gracious influences of the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, this affliction shall work for us glory? And though we cannot now see his tears, nor hear his loving voice, as did the mourners at Bethany, neither do we need to send a messenger many miles, and wait, day after day, and go forth into the suburbs to meet him; he is everywhere alike near, and ever ready to pray for us to his Father and our Father, to his God and our God.

5. *When we come to die, he is "alive forevermore."* One of his servants, when near to death, saw "heaven opened, and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God," where he represents and intercedes for his people. And so in departing he committed his spirit to him, as now exalted and glorious and ready to receive it. And so, amid all the cruel injustice and suffering, he was calm and forgiving. And so, though they were stoning him to death, "he fell asleep." Oh, whenever you are called to die, brother, and however, whether among loving friends in your pleasant home, or far away in loneliness and want, whether with ample forewarning or in the suddenness of a moment, think of your interceding Saviour standing on the right hand of God, and say, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit," and you too shall fall asleep.

6. *Even this is not the end of his work for his people*. There shall be a "redemption of the body." Many have been sad during the time of war, because the bodies of their loved ones lie so far away, lie perhaps undistinguished among the huge masses of the unnamed dead. But he who receives the departing spirit to himself will also care for the mouldering body. His resurrection is a pledge of the glorious resurrection of his people. "If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also who through Jesus have fallen asleep, will God bring with him." "Who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation,

that it may be conformed to the body of his glory." Then, the spirit reunited with the risen and glorified body, "so shall we ever be with the Lord."

And he *who saved them will be ever living to kee*p them safe, unto all eternity. My friends, how shall we think of Jesus? What conception shall we cherish of him whom "having not seen, we love," who ever liveth to intercede for us? Many centuries ago, on the eastern slope of Mount Olivet, toward Bethany, twelve men stood together, one talking to the others. Presently he lifted up his hands and blessed them; and with hands still uplifted, and words of blessing still lingering on his lips, he was parted from them and rose toward heaven, till a cloud received him out of sight. Years passed, and one of the eleven was an exile on a lonely island. It was the Lord's day, and he was in the Spirit. Hearing behind him a mighty voice that seemed to call him, he turned, and lo! one like unto the Son of Man, it was the Saviour who had parted from him long years before. He was arrayed in robes of majesty, and girt about with a golden girdle; his whole head shone white as snow with celestial glory; his eyes were as a flame of fire; and his feet like unto burnished brass, as if it had been refined in a furnace; and his voice as the voice of many waters; and his countenance as the sun shineth in his strength. Yes, the feet that once wearily trod the dusty roads of Judea now shone like molten brass. The eyes that were full of tears as he gazed upon doomed Jerusalem now gleamed as a flame of fire. The countenance that writhed in agony as he lay prostrate on his face in the garden, that was streaked with the blood that fell from his thorn-pierced brow, was now as the sun shineth in his strength. And the voice as the voice of many waters-it was the same voice that in gentleness and love had so often encouraged the sinful and sorrowing to draw near-it is the same voice that now calls us to come unto God through him, and declares that he is able to save us completely, since he ever lives to intercede for us.

O my hearer, slight all the sounds of earth, all the voices of the universe; be deaf to the thunder's mighty tones, and stand careless amid “the wreck of matter and the crush of worlds”-but oh, slight not the loving voice of Jesus.”

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ABSTRACT

A KEEN EDGE: UNDERSTANDING AND APPLYING
JOHN A. BROADUS'S VIEW OF COMMUNICATION
STYLE TO CONTEMPORARY PREACHING

Christopher Scott Parrish, DMin
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2022
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This DMin thesis argues that Broadus's principles of style should be understood and implemented by contemporary preachers so that their preaching will be marked by clarity, precision, and power. The first chapter surveys the relevant literature in homiletics and demonstrates the current void in the field of study. The second chapter defines Broadus's view of rhetoric and its relationship to homiletics. The third chapter defends Broadus's view of style in preaching. The fourth chapter analyzes a selection of Broadus's sermon manuscripts with an eye toward his use of style. The fifth chapter explores the means of improvement Broadus offers, as well as offers some modern means extrapolated from his principles.

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