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THE BIOGRAPHICAL METHOD IN THE PREACHING OF ALEXANDER WHYTE AND
CLARENCE E. MACARTNEY

By

ARNOLD L. NELSON

A. B., University of Wisconsin

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INTRODUCTION

THE BIOGRAPHICAL METHOD IN THE PREACHING OF ALEXANDER WHYTE AND
CLARENCE E. MACARTNEY

INTRODUCTION

A. The Problem Stated and the Present Study Justified

John A. Broadus gives his description of preaching when he
says:

The great appointed means of spreading the good tidings of salvation through Christ is preaching—words spoken whether to the individual or to the assembly.¹

Various approaches have been used in an attempt to bring salvation to men. One method which has been very effective in the ministry of two prominent Calvinist ministers, Alexander Whyte and Clarence E. Macartney, is the presentation of Biblical truths through the spiritual experiences of Biblical characters. Alexander Whyte graduated from his theological training at Edinburgh in 1866 and began his ministry at Free St. George's. He became the minister of this church upon the death of Dr. Candlish two years later. It was at this church that Dr. Whyte spent almost his entire preaching career, resigning from this pastorate in 1916. He gained great prominence among his fellow churchmen, and was given the honor of being the Moderator of the Presbyterian Churches of Scotland in 1898. In the field of education he also gained great heights, being elected principal of New College in Edinburgh in 1909 and holding this position until 1916.

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1. John A. Broadus: Preparation and Delivery of Sermons, p. 12

Clarence Edward Macartney was ordained to the ministry in the year 1905 and was installed as minister of the First Presbyterian Church of Paterson, New Jersey. After a successful pastorate of eight years he became the pastor of the Arch Street Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia. Dr. Macartney, like Dr. Whyte, achieved the highest office within the Presbyterian Church when he was elected Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. in the year 1924. In the year 1927 Dr. Macartney succeeded Dr. Maitland Alexander as minister of the famous First Presbyterian Church of Pittsburgh, where he remained as pastor until 1953 when he resigned from the active pastorate.

The chief concern in the preaching of both of these men was not primarily with the proclamation of certain doctrines or the explanation of difficult passages of Scripture. It was rather to clothe those doctrines in flesh and blood and to present the psychology of faith and morals. Both men believed biography to be one of the best methods of achieving this result. This is practical experiential rather than doctrinal preaching.

With reference to the value of Bible biography as a teaching medium Dr. Macartney writes:

Life is the great teacher. That is why biography is the greatest literature. The Bible is the greatest biographer and therefore, the greatest teacher. What is recorded there of the lives of men is written for our admonition, 'upon whom the ends of the ages are come'.¹

The purpose of this thesis is to discover those factors in the biographical sermons of Macartney and Whyte which make them interesting and effective vehicles for presenting Scriptural truths.

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1. Clarence E. Macartney: Bible Epitaphs, p. 9

A comparison will be made to ascertain the likenesses and differences in their methods and in their applications of the characters of the Bible.

The contributions which these two men have made to the presentation of Scriptural truths by means of biographical preaching are well recognized. Although Dr. Alexander Whyte died thirty years ago, his influence is still felt today. Dr. Samuel Shoemaker, formerly of Calvary Episcopal Church in New York City, considers the biographical works of Dr. Whyte among the best books in his library.¹ Dr. Macartney, on the other hand, although now retired from the active ministry, is still very prominent in the Presbyterian circles of this country and has achieved wide recognition as a conservative Biblical preacher. Much of this fame has come to him because of his biographical sermons.

B. Subject Delimited

Both of these men have written numerous books outside the field of Bible biography. Since the main contribution of each of these ministers has been in the field of biographical preaching, only those sermons dealing with the characters of the Bible will be studied. These will be investigated with the aim of determining those factors in the sermons which have aided in making them effective in presenting the truths of the Gospel.

D. Procedure and Sources

In order to achieve some knowledge of the backgrounds of each

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1. "My Ten Best Books," Religion in Life, XIX, (Autumn Number 1950) p. 506

of these biographical preachers a summary of their lives will be given. Two main sources on the life of Alexander Whyte will be used. These are as follows:

1. The Life of Alexander Whyte, D.D., By G. F. Barbour
2. The Religious Development of Alexander Whyte, a M.R.E. degree thesis prepared by Helen L. Evans at the Biblical Seminary in New York, 1951.

Published information regarding the life of Clarence E. Macartney is very limited. No one has written his biography as yet. Information regarding his life has come from pamphlets published by his church in Pittsburgh as well as from personal correspondence which the writer has had with those who have known him and worked with him.

Following the survey of the lives of these men, representative biographical sermons will be analyzed to ascertain those elements which have made this type of preaching effective. The final chapter will show the comparisons and contrasts in the methods used by Whyte and Macartney in biographical preaching. In order to make the comparison more vivid, sermons which deal with the same theme as well as the same character have been chosen as far as possible.

Some of the main sources which will be used for material on the preaching of Dr. Whyte are as follows:

1. Bible Characters, Vol. I-VI, Third Edition, by Alexander Whyte
2. Lord, Teach Us to Pray, by Alexander Whyte

Material regarding the preaching of Dr. Macartney will be taken from his numerous books of sermons on Biblical Characters. The sermons analyzed are taken from the following three books of sermons:

1. The Wisest Fool and Other Men of the Bible, by Clarence Macartney
2. Great Interviews of Jesus, by Clarence Macartney
3. Trials of Great Men of the Bible, by Clarence Macartney

CHAPTER I

THE BIOGRAPHICAL METHOD IN THE PREACHING OF ALEXANDER WHITE

CHAPTER I

THE BIOGRAPHICAL METHOD IN THE PREACHING OF ALEXANDER WHYTE

A. Introduction

Few men have started from such a humble beginning and risen to such heights in the Christian ministry as Alexander Whyte. Although he was an illegitimate child and came from a poverty stricken family, yet through hard work of both mother and son he was able to complete the work for both his college and seminary degrees.

It would be impossible to fully estimate the influence which this man of God has had. One of the great memorials he has left is his work on Bible characters. His insight into the lives of these men and women has been a source of help to many ministers following in his steps. Through a psychological approach to the lives of Bible characters he was able to put great stress upon ethical preaching. He states the method and aim of this type of preaching in a sermon on Moses:

Were I to let myself once expatiate on the whole of Moses's life I would not know where to begin or where to end. But my method and my endeavor in these expositions is the study of those Bible men and women in their moral character alone. My intention and my aim is to try to find out how the foundations of their moral character were laid in those Bible men and women; how their respective lives and characters were built up, what their instruments were, and what the occasions and opportunities by means of which those men and women made themselves what they were and are.¹

It was during the later years of his ministry that his great emphasis upon biographical preaching became prominent. He felt that biography was a vivid way of accomplishing the purpose of Gospel

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1. Alexander Whyte: Bible Characters, Adam to Achan, p. 228

preaching, that is, of bringing men face to face with Christ. The biographer of Dr. Whyte, G. F. Barbour, states regarding his emphasis upon the men and women of the Bible:

...it is true that he made less direct use of the results of modern scholarship in his later preaching...his preaching concentrated more and more on the study of characters, and his interpretation increasingly became intuitive and psychological rather than historical. His main interest was in the Revelation of God as shown in His dealings with the souls of individual men, rather than in His education of the chosen people as a whole.¹

The first part of this chapter will be devoted to the life and training of Dr. Whyte in order to gain better understanding of the problems he faced. The latter part of the chapter will be an analysis and study of three sermons which are typical of his biographical preaching.

B. Alexander Whyte as a Preacher

1. Influences upon the future preacher

Alexander Whyte was born to unwed parents in the little Scottish town of Kirriemuir on January 13, 1836. His father left the town of Kirriemuir shortly after the birth of Alexander, leaving him in the care of his mother, Janet Thompson. It was a difficult task for Janet Thompson to gain support for herself and her child. Yet she firmly refused to accept the offer of marriage from Alexander's father, feeling that she would merely be involving herself in another error by so doing.² Consequently she earned a meager living by working in the fields and at the loom.

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1. Ibid. pp. 223, 224

2. Ibid. p. 16

Because of the financial difficulties of his mother throughout his early years, young Alexander did not receive a sustained schooling. He himself stated that "I did not get much education--any more than John Bunyan did--in my young days."¹ Undoubtedly his intense desire for reading as a child had much influence upon his later life.

Barbour in his biography of Dr. Whyte states:

...by far the most vital influence in Whyte's boyhood was the religious training which he received from his mother, from his Sabbath-School teacher, James Kennedy, and from his first minister, Daniel Cormick.²

In his later years D. Whyte pays high tribute to his Sabbath-School teacher, James Kennedy, for the profound influence the life of this man had upon him.

The home of Janet Thompson became the school room for Alexander for his training in the things of God. It was customary for his mother to sit down with him on a Sunday evening and talk over the sermon of the day.

Dr. Whyte speaking glowingly of Daniel Cormick, under whose ministry he sat until the age of 12, still recalled that "no minister all round about had less strength of some kinds than Daniel Cormick; but...he was by far the holiest man of them all, and by far the most successful minister of them all."³

At the age of 12 Alexander Whyte began to serve as an apprentice to a shoemaker. However, from the many incidents which are recalled from this period of his life, his love of books made him a poor ap-

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1. Ibid. p. 20
2. Ibid. p. 21
3. Ibid. p. 25

prentice. Often he would spend a portion of the small income which he received to pay some young man to read to him from Paradise Lost while he tried to work at his trade.¹ Although he was serving time as an apprentice his eye was on the goal of becoming a minister. This call of God was constantly pushing him on toward the attainment of that goal.

Upon the completion of six years' apprenticeship as a shoemaker, Alexander Whyte was able to get a position as a teacher. Teaching was the first step toward a university education for those without the necessary means. It was while Alexander was teaching at a Free Church School in Airlie that he came under the influence of the Rev. David White, a man who played a part in stimulating and guiding his intellectual development as essential as that part played by his mother, the Reverend Cormick and Mr. Kennedy in awakening his religious impulses. David White who had gained distinction in classics and philosophy at Edinburgh University offered to tutor young Alexander, who at this time was about 18 years of age. Barbour writes:

The service which David White rendered to the younger man was fourfold. He showed how a true and wide scholarship might be made the basis of a fervent ministry and a faithful pastorate; he pointed out the elements which go to form a good English style; he gave the teaching in Latin and Greek without which a university course was then impossible; and (perhaps the greatest service of all) he encouraged Whyte's own desire to enter the ministry by the warmth with which he spoke of his intellectual and spiritual power.²

These early influences of his mother, his Sabbath-School teacher, his minister and Dr. White were means of molding the future of Alexander Whyte. The seeds which were planted into the good soil

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1. Ibid. p. 31
2. Ibid. p. 42

of Alexander's early life bore much fruit.

2. University and Seminary Training of Alexander Whyte

a. University Training of Alexander Whyte

The university education of Alexander Whyte was begun in the summer of 1858 when he left his teaching job in Kirriemuir and arrived at Kings College, Aberdeen, with scarcely enough money to last but a short while even under frugal conditions. He was fortunate in that he became acquainted with David Stewart whose father was head of a comb industry. Alexander was asked to conduct evening classes among the younger workers in the factory for which service he was paid 25 pounds for the winter session.¹

While at Kings College Alexander was very active in the debating society. This club became a very important training ground for Whyte. Barbour observes that the first success which he had in the field of debating "was won by the exposition and defense of a character, and that the character of the great Puritan statesman of England."² Even at this early age, the interests of Whyte already were rooted in the study of the individual.

The studies which gave Whyte his greatest difficulties were the sciences. Mathematics, physics and chemistry came hard for him. He attributed this fact to his defective memory. In a letter to his John Dickson in April of 1860 he wrote:

You'll have heard of the mishap that has befallen me in my examination, my not having passed my examination in chemistry. It no doubt looks a serious matter from the Kirry point of view. To me I assure you, it has no such aspect...trouble not yourself, for it troubles not me.³

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1. Ibid. p. 62
2. Ibid. p. 64
3. Ibid. p. 75

During his years at Aberdeen, he took an active part in many of the discussions and debates which centered around the theological questions of his time. His interest was wide but he was particularly fond of the philosophical debates and discussions.

One of the professors at Kings College who left a strong and lasting influence upon Whyte's mind was Alexander Bain. Bain was appointed to the chair of Logic and Psychology in the face of vigorous protests from many who felt that his views were unorthodox. Whyte had great admiration for this philosopher and did not let the fact that he was a skeptic prejudice him against Bain. The point where this great scholar left his mark most indelibly upon Alexander Whyte was his studies in psychology. Speaking of the influence this philosopher-psychologist had upon Whyte, Barbour writes:

...the cardinal point in his influence was that it did much to turn Whyte's thinking into psychological channels; or perhaps it should rather be said that Bain strengthened that inborn interest in the examination of motives and the study of character which in later years so largely shaped his preaching.¹

One of the other professors whose influence was greatly felt in the life of Alexander Whyte and his subsequent interest in biographical preaching was Professor William Martin. Professor Martin, a former minister of the Church of Scotland, gave Dr. Whyte a love and devotion for the writings of Bishop Butler. Whereas Professor Bain turned Whyte's thoughts toward a purely speculative approach to the problems of the moral and spiritual life, the love for Butler, a great student of the human motive, which was engendered by Martin pointed Whyte toward an

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1. Ibid. p. 82

introspective approach to the problems of moral life.¹

The university education of Whyte came to a close on April 5, 1862 when he graduated with a Master of Arts degree. His college years were hard for him and often times he despaired of it all because of the constant battle he fought to keep alive his body while gaining food for the soul.

b. Seminary Training of Alexander Whyte

Alexander Whyte entered New College, Edinburgh, to start the four years of his theological education in 1862. From the very entrance into Edinburgh he became the assistant or missionary to Free St. Luke's Church which was an outlying church founded by St. George's. Whyte was the assistant to Dr. Moody Stuart, helping him with much of the visiting as well as with the week night meetings. Most of the information recorded deals not so much with his subjects and activities while in New College but rather with the friends and professors there who had an influence upon his life.

The principal of New College, Dr. Robert Candlish, became one of Whyte's favorite preachers. Often Whyte was to be found not only listening to him in the class room but also eager at every opportunity to hear him preach.

When Dr. Whyte was inaugurated as Principal of New College he acknowledged his debt to Dr. Rainy, one of his professors, with these words:

Dr. Rainy's depth, his insight, his power of realization, his philosophical grasp, and his theological judgment all combined to give

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1. Ibid. p. 82

me a view of the sub-Apostolic Fathers that I had not hitherto met with, and I do not know where there is anything at all like it.¹

Another individual from whom Whyte gained much during his time at New College was Dr. Marcus Dods. Dr. Dods was an assistant minister and preached in various Edinburgh churches as he had opportunity. Through the close friendship which developed between these two men, Whyte seems to have gained much from Dods he could not get in the class room.

Whyte was thirty years old when in 1866 he finished his schooling for the ministry and became colleague to Dr. John Roxburgh in Free St. John's in Glasgow. Twelve years had passed since Whyte laid down his cobbler's awl to take up the work as joint pastor of a church in the heart of Scotland's largest and most active communities.

3. The Development of Special Interest in Preaching

The life of Dr. Whyte took a very definite turn in a new direction in the year 1892--a turn which seemed to point him toward his intense study into the psychological nature of the human personality. It was at this time that he began a very serious investigation of the mystics. His chief reading during this period was William Law and Lord Macaulay. Dr. Whyte relates the influence which Law had upon his life when he says:

The study of this quite incomparable writer has been nothing less than an epoch in my life...It was a red-letter day in my life when I first opened William Law, and I feel his hand on my heart and on my mind and on my conscience and on my whole inner man literally every day I live.²

For the next five years from 1892 to 1897, he delved very deeply into the study of the mystics. From the study of William Law, he went to Behmen, to St. Teresa, Brother Lawrence and many more. Al-

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1. Ibid. p. 108

2. Ibid. p. 378

though Whyte could never be classed as a mystic in the true sense of the word, yet the teachings of these men did have great influence upon his spiritual life.

From the standpoint of this study, Whyte's investigation of the mystics and his intense interest in them is more important because of the direction in which they turned his interests rather than because of the influence they might have had upon his own spiritual life. For it was with the mystics that he began his psychological study of the human personality. Consequently the mystics were the stepping stones from which he began his character studies which eventually developed into his emphasis upon biographical preaching. During the ten years from 1892 to 1901, Dr. Whyte published books dealing with seven authors. These were books on St. Teresa, Behmen, Sir Thomas Brown, Rutherford, Law, Newman and Father John of Cronstadt. In these writings he was interested primarily in their religious experience. Hector Macpherson in a review of these works stated:

...like William James, he dealt with the Varieties of Religious Experience; but that, while the great psychologist had left them as confused as they were varied, Dr. Whyte's deep and broad spiritual experience enabled him to weld them into a unity.¹

As has been seen in this section, the study of the mystics turned the interests of Dr. Whyte to the study of human personality, from which developed his sermons on the characters of the Bible. This study of the mystics did not begin until Whyte had been in the ministry for 26 years. Yet these ten years from 1892 to 1903 were some of his

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1. Ibid. p. 391

most fruitful years. This is especially true with regard to his published works which fall almost completely within this decade.

C. Analysis of Typical Biographical Sermons

In selecting sermons for study, the writer has been motivated by two goals. First the subject matter has been selected to follow the course of a normal Christian life. The first sermon analyzed in the case of both Whyte and Macartney is a sermon on the sinful condition of man. The final sermon for analysis will be on the Christian life of prayer.

The second factor which has been considered in the selecting of typical sermons for both Dr. Whyte and Dr. Macartney is their choice of the same Bible characters to illustrate each sermon. Therefore, a biographical sermon on Achan by Dr. Whyte and Dr. Macartney is used as an example of a typical sermon on the sinful condition of man. The same procedure of using the identical Bible characters for the same subject matter will be followed in connection with other topics.

1. A Typical Sermon on the Condition of Man

One of the elements which contributes greatly to the effective preaching of Dr. Whyte is his keen analysis of sin. He saw it in all its hideousness and with his great ability as a preacher sought to warn his people regarding it. At the time of the ministry of Dr. Whyte the emphasis upon sin was not strongly carried out. Rather it was a subject which received very little attention from most ministers of that day.

George Adam Smith, speaking from Dr. Whyte's own pulpit three days after he passed away, said:

In the Scottish preaching of the seventies sin had either, with the more evangelical preachers, tended to become something abstract and formal, or with others was elegantly left alone. But Dr. Whyte faced it, and made us face it, as fact, ugly fatal fact--made us feel its reality and hideousness, and follow its course to its wages in death.¹

In preaching upon sin, Dr. Whyte was not negative. Rather, he was trying to expose sin in order that the righteousness of God could become operative. Miss Evans in her thesis felt that the close association of Dr. Whyte with the mystics increased his determination to bring in sharp focus the horrors of sin to his congregation.²

The stress which Dr. Whyte put upon sin in the light of his preaching upon righteousness is spoken of by Mr. Barbour:

It was Dr. Whyte's lifelong aim to be a preacher of righteousness, and, since he would not heal the wound of his people slightly, a preacher, first, of sin. The school of religious thought in which he was brought up, with its emphasis on a strict self-examination, and perhaps also the entail of suffering in his early home, had given a sharper edge to a naturally sensitive conscience.³

Dr. Whyte, in a letter to Rev. E. Jenkins who had written to ask his counsel, gives his idea of successful preaching which is an emphasis upon sin:

Never think of giving up preaching! The angels around the throne envy you and your great work. You "scarcely know how or what to preach!" Look into your own sinful heart, and back into your sinful life, and around on the world full of sin and misery, and open your New Testament, and make application of Christ to yourself and your people; and, like Goodwin, you will preach more freshly and more powerfully every day till you are eighty.⁴

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1. Ibid. p. 300

2. Helen Evans: The Religious Development of Alexander Whyte, p. 36

3. Barbour, op. cit. p. 305

4. Ibid. p. 307

That statement sums up the main emphasis of Dr. Whyte's preaching. It was an exposing of sin and then the application of the grace of God. Recognizing sin, treating it as such, exposing its insidious ways, and showing the concrete reality of it, made the sermons of Dr. Whyte very vital to the listeners.

a. The Outline of a Sermon Entitled "Achan"¹

- (1) Introduction
 - (a) Description of Jericho and its greatness.
 - i. A well situated and strongly fortified city.
 - ii. It had great foundries of brass and iron with workshops for silver and gold.
 - iii. The work of its looms was famous throughout the eastern world.
 - (b) Description of the army of Israel crossing the Jordan and entering into the land.
 - i. Each of twelve tribes of Israel had its own regiment and entered battle under its own ensign.
 - ii. Judah was leading regiment.
 - (c) Description of Achan stealing into the city for booty.
 - (d) Description of Joshua's method of detection of crime.
 - (e) The confession of Achan.
 - (f) The punishment of Achan.
- (2) Body of Sermon
 - (a) The eyes were the source of Achan's fatal snare.
 - i. Thomas a' Kempis' description of the successive steps of a successful temptation.
 - ii. The eyes were the instrument which led to the sin of Adam and Eve.
 - iii. The Saviour, realizing the instrument to sin the eyes could be, stated that if the eyes of His disciples offended them they should pluck them out.
 - iv. Application: "...the mortified man who goes about with his eyes out; the man who steals along the street seeing neither smile nor frown; he who keeps his eyes down wherever men and women congregate,--in the church, in the market-place, at a railway station, on a ship's deck, at an inn table,--where you will; that man escapes multitudes of temptations that more open and more full eyed men and women continually fall before."²

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1. Alexander Whyte: Bible Characters, Adam to Achan, p. 290-301
2. Ibid. p. 296

- (b) Sin will find the sinner out.
 - i. The sin of Achan was discovered by casting lots.
 - ii. The manner in which sin has a way of finding a sinner out and punishing the innocent with the guilty is illustrated by a story of an eagle that stole a piece of sacred flesh from the altar, brought home a smouldering coal with it that kindled up afterwards and burned up both her whole nest and all of her young.
- (c) Confession is necessary in the overcoming of sin.
 - i. Achan confessed and gave himself up to Joshua before all Israel.
 - ii. Application: "Go home to your tent tonight, take up the accursed thing out of its hiding place, and lay it before Joshua, if not before all Israel, and thus and thus have I done."¹
- (3) Conclusion
 - (a) The Lord troubled Achan in judgment that day, but He is troubling you in mercy.
 - (b) That trouble can be changed to joy if you will let the Lord save you.

b. Analysis of Effective Elements of the Sermon

(1) A Live Recreation of Historical Setting

One of the qualities in which Dr. Whyte excels is his ability to recreate in vivid word pictures the scenes which he is portraying. The effective use of his imagination was one of the abilities he cultivated for use in his preaching. Much of Dr. Whyte's charm as a preacher came from his powers of imagination. He was concerned in the fields of the imaginative and mystical much more than the historical structure of a subject.

G. F. Barbour, speaking of the imaginative character of the preaching of Dr. Whyte, said:

Nothing was more characteristic in Dr. Whyte's preaching than his emphasis on the right exercise of the imagination...During the long, solitary walks of his holiday seasons, not less than in the silence of his study, Dr. Whyte of set purpose let his imagination

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1. Ibid. p. 299

pierce through and through the subjects or the characters regarding which he had in mind to preach. This deliberate and conscious exercise of that which he regarded as "nothing less than the noblest intellectual attribute of the human mind" brought the abundant reward.¹

The recreative ability of Dr. Whyte is graphically brought out in this sermon under analysis as he paints a word picture into which he sets the incidents surrounding the sin of Achan. History, geography, and archaeology, all have been used by Dr. Whyte to accomplish this setting. The historical importance of Jericho is mentioned. The strategic geographical location of the city with its "broad and lofty wall which ran all around the city"² further helps to gather the complete picture of Jericho. Archaeological evidence has been drawn upon to show the commercial importance: "There were great foundries of brass and iron in Jericho, with workshops also in silver and in gold."³

The dramatic element is coupled with the imaginative as Dr. Whyte describes the entry of the armies of Israel into the outskirts of Jericho. He pictures the armies of Israel each "marching and camping and entering battle under its own ensign."⁴

(2) Psychological Analysis of Biblical Character Involved

Mr. Barbour speaking of the preaching of Dr. Whyte said:

If theology is something separable from life, then he was no theologian. His strength lay in his union of a lofty spiritual imagination with a deep and searching knowledge of human character.⁵

The psychological reasons for the sin of Achan are begun in a general way as a description is given of the normal reaction of soldiers

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1. Barbour, op. cit. p. 298-299
2. Whyte, Adam to Achan, p. 290
3. Ibid. p. 290
4. Ibid. p. 290
5. Ibid. p. 291

to a defeated city. It would be natural for a soldier to want to plunder a city after it had been captured. Yet as Dr. Whyte points out,

Nothing demoralises an army like sacking a fallen city. To spring like a tiger at a wall that reaches up to heaven, and then to extinguish all a tiger's thirst for blood and plunder, that is the high ideal of a true soldier's duty.¹

Dr. Whyte deals in a very detailed way with reference to the steps which caused Achan to sin. The line over which Achan stepped as he fell into his sin was to Alexander Whyte a very thin line. Dr. Whyte almost comes to the point of taking away part of the blame for Achan's sin because of the circumstances in which Achan found himself,

Had Joshua happened to post the ensign of Judah opposite the poor men's part of the city, this sad story would never have been told. But even as it was, had Achan only happened to stand a little to one side, or a little to the other side of where he did stand, in that case he would not have seen that beautiful piece, and not seeing it would not have coveted it, and would have gone home to his tent that night a good soldier and an honest man.²

It is not that he is minimizing the fact and the responsibility of sin but rather he is attempting to picture how large a factor circumstances become in temptation.

Vividly and dramatically the struggle which goes on in the heart of Achan is described as this soldier of Joshua wrestles with the problem of how he will be able to get without detection the spoils upon which his eyes have fallen. After Achan had succumbed to the temptation which lay before him, Dr. Whyte brings out the reason for the downfall in the character of this man. Speaking of this downfall, he says:

His eyes were Achan's fatal snare. It was his eyes that stoned Achan and burned him and his household to dust and ashes in the Valley of Achor.³

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1. Ibid. p. 291
2. Ibid. p. 294
3. Ibid. p. 295

In order to back up the contention that the eyes are the fatal snare which leads men into sin, Dr. Whyte gives numerous incidents in which the eyes were the initial factor of a fall into sin. Adam and Eve found that their eyes were the vehicle through which Satan entered them. The fact that Christ demanded of His disciples to pluck out their eyes rather than allow them to be instruments of sin is used to substantiate his argument.

The entire action of Achan is seen to hinge upon his first glance upon the spoils. This is where the sin started, the final result of this sin being death.

In the psychological analysis which is made of the character of Achan in this sermon, a number of points were quite prominent. In the first place great stress was placed upon the factor which circumstances played in leading Achan to this sin. It was noted that if the circumstances were eliminated, there would have been no sin. However, since Achan did sin, Dr. Whyte seeks the answer to the question of what led to that sin. Very strongly he comes forth with the conclusion that the eyes were the instrument through which Achan was led from temptation into sin.

(3) Evaluation of Revelatory Truth

From the narrative of the story of Achan, three features were chosen to reveal truths contained in the passage. The first truth which was discussed in the preceding section points out that the eyes are the initial organ for temptation. Dr. Whyte uses the confession of Achan to show this truth. Referring to Thomas a' Kempis' successive steps of temptation which portrays sin as a picture on the screen of the imagination eventually finding its way to the heart, Dr. Whyte contrasts this

with Achan's confession.

But Achan's confession to Joshua is much simpler, and much closer to the truth. 'I saw the goodly Babylonish garment, I coveted it, I took it, and I hid it in my tent.'¹

Numerous illustrations are given to substantiate this truth. Adam and Eve were deceived first through their eyes. "Job in despair to get the devil out of his heart...swore a solemn oath and made a covenant with his eyes."² A quotation from Miss Rossetti, whom he does not identify, is used to further emphasize the necessity of screening what the eyes see so that the temptation to sin may be eliminated.

The second feature used to reveal a Scriptural truth was the effect which Achan's sin had upon others. The sons of Achan, his daughters, his oxen, his asses, his sheep all felt the impact of his sin. Achan was not the only one upon whom the punishment for sin fell. The innocent were punished with the guilty. This truth is illustrated by the story of an eagle that burned up her nest and all her young when she brought home a smoldering coal with a stolen piece of sacred flesh from the altar.

The final truth that is revealed through the actions of Achan is that confession is necessary to gain forgiveness for sin. Even though the consequences of his sin remained and resulted in the death of Achan, still he made a confession of that sin,

Achan made a clean breast of it, and gave himself up to Joshua before all Israel and walked out to the Valley of Achor without a murmur...and Achan had to die.³

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1. Ibid. p. 295
2. Ibid. p. 295
3. Ibid. p. 298

(4) Use of Illustrations

The illustrative material for the sermons of Dr. Whyte comes from a great variety of sources. He was very widely read, and this reading is reflected in many of his illustrations. He was especially fond of quoting from Biblical commentators. Among his favorites were Newman, Thomas Goodwin, Matthew Henry, John Howe, and Dr. Pusey.

In the sermon under discussion, four illustrations are used. Each one is from a source other than the Bible. To show the steps in the inception of sin in Achan's life, "Thomas a' Kempis' famous description of the successive steps of a successful temptation"¹ is used. This rather lengthy illustration showing how the thought of a deed is translated into action is again used in a sermon on the prodigal son.²

To stress that one should avoid sinful pleasures, a quotation from Miss Rossetti, whom he does not identify, is given to show that in the avoidance of sinful desires there is a spiritual reward. To show the results of sin, a story of an eagle which stole a piece of flesh from an altar is told. While picking up the flesh, a smoldering coal clung to the meat. When the food was deposited in the nest, the coal kindled up and burned the whole nest and the young birds. This is used to show that the results of Achan's sin was felt in the lives of his family.

The final illustration has to do with the spiritual struggle within Achan's life on the fateful morning when Joshua was attempting to

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1. Alexander Whyte: Bible Characters, Joseph & Mary to James, p. 97
2. Whyte, Adam to Achan, p. 294

find the man who was responsible for the defeat of the army of Israel. Here again the story is taken from a source outside the Bible. It deals with an acquaintance of Dr. Whyte who spent a night in a hotel room next to a criminal and it is a description of the unrest and struggle going on within the life of the man.

As is noted above, all of these illustrations come from extra-Biblical sources. The sources for two of the illustrations are given whereas the origin of the other two is not given.

(5) Application of Sermon Points

Throughout the sermon applications are made as incidents in the narrative provide an opportunity for practical application. Dr. Whyte in seeking to apply the lesson which he so strongly stresses of the eyes being the vehicle of temptation attempts to encourage his listeners to refrain from books which would be detrimental to their spiritual good; from all pictures which tear down their moral fibre; from all companions who would be a hindrance to their spiritual growth. He even goes so far as to suggest the practice of refraining from looking at congregating places in order to avoid temptation.

Yes, it is as certain as God's truth and righteousness are certain, that the mortified man who goes about with his eyes out; the man who steals along the street seeing neither smile nor frown; he who keeps his eyes down wherever men and women congregate,-- in the church, in the market place, at the railway station, on a ship's deck, at an inn table,--where you will; that man escapes multitudes of temptations that more open and more full-eyed men and women continually fall before.¹

2. A Typical Sermon on Redemption

It was Dr. Whyte's own wish that he should be known as a

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1. Ibid. p. 294

specialist in the study of sin. However, his preaching was not depressing but rather it was full of encouragement because the vision of grace was constantly before him. One of his elders wrote regarding this aspect of Dr. Whyte's preaching:

No preacher has so often or so completely dashed me to the ground as has Dr. Whyte; but no man has more immediately or more tenderly picked me up and set me on my feet again.¹

The sermon which has been chosen as representative of a sermon on redemption clearly bears out the above quotation.

a. The Outline of a Sermon Entitled "The Penitent Thief."²

(1) Introduction

(a) The background of the penitent thief.

- i. The two malefactors were ringleaders in Barabbas' robber band.
- ii. This band could have been at the beginning a group of rebels against the political organization at Rome as all Jews were at heart.
- iii. Because of being hunted constantly they became by degrees thieves and robbers.

(b) Parallel with David's early life.

- i. David in the cave of Adullam is something of a parallel of Barabbas at the beginning of his life. Just as many discontented people came to David and from these he formed an army, so the band of Barabbas was gathered together in like circumstances.
- ii. Luke undoubtedly inquired into the early life of the penitent thief but it would have been out of place to parade the man's past when all eyes are fixed on the crucifixion of Jesus.

(2) Body of Sermon

(a) The thief's contact with Jesus before the Cross.

- i. He had cast behind him the life, teaching and character of Jesus whom he knew well.
- ii. There was no place in all Israel where the name, and the teaching and the mighty works of Jesus were not constantly discussed and debated.
- iii. Barabbas and his band hundreds of times disguised themselves as fishermen and shepherds to hear the Lord preach and to see his miracles performed.
- iv. It is even possible that the penitent thief was at one time a follower of Jesus.

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1. Alexander Whyte: Lord, Teach us to Pray, p. XIII

2. Alexander Whyte: Bible Characters, Joseph & Mary to James, p. 151-158

- a. He may even have seen Jesus baptized.
 - b. He may have been among the multitudes who listened to the Sermon on the Mount.
 - c. He could have gone back to Barabbas's band when Jesus would not permit his followers to make him king.
 - d. Even though he went back to the group of robbers, "I defy him ever to forget what he had seen and heard down among the cities, and the villages, and the mountain sides, and the supper tables of Galilee and Jewry."¹
- (b) The effect of association with Jesus upon the penitent thief.
- i. The psalms and hymns of his boyhood came back to his mind.
 - ii. This thief along with the other cursed and blasphemed.
 - iii. The thing that caused the penitent thief to come to himself was that the Lord did not complain at the suffering he was enduring.
 - iv. When the Lord did speak the words "Father forgive them" the thief's hard heart was broken.
 - v. "The swiftness of the thief's repentance, and faith, and confession, and pardon, and sanctification and glorification, is something very blessed for us all to think about, and never to forget."²
- (3) Conclusion: The result which accrued from the acceptance of Christ by the thief was that the Lord had great joy in his heart.

b. The Analysis of Effective Elements of the Sermon

(1) A Live Recreation of Historical Setting

Dr. Whyte makes this story live by assuming the penitent thief to have known Jesus and his work previous to their meeting upon crosses on Calvary. Regarding this he says:

...it is as clear as daylight to me that this is not the first time that this crucified thief has seen our Lord. He knew both our Lord's life and teaching and character quite well, though he had cast it all behind his back all his days up till now.³

The thief is pictured as a member of Barabbas's robber band who came week after week to hear the Lord preach and watch as miracles were performed. To stress this previous association which brings such a dramatic element into this story the imagination of Dr. Whyte roams

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- 1. Ibid. p. 154
- 2. Ibid. p. 156
- 3. Ibid. p. 152

into the variety of situations in which Jesus and this thief could have come in contact. Dwelling upon these situations, vividness and action come into play. Definite instances where it would have been possible for Jesus and the thief to have looked upon one another are recounted. It is possible that he was a disciple of Jesus, or had seen Jesus baptized, or had sat and heard the Sermon on the Mount. By such a cataloguing of instances, the life of the thief is placed within the orbit of Jesus' activity.

Another very important element in recreating the historical setting is the manner whereby Dr. Whyte portrays the type of men with whom the thief was associating. He pictures him as a member of a robber band led by Barabbas. The existence of such a band gives insight into the political situation. Speaking of this Dr. Whyte says:

Now all the chances are that Barabbas and his band had begun simply by being rebels against Rome, as, indeed, all the Jews were everywhere in their hearts. Though no doubt their repudiated, outlawed, exasperated, and hunted-down lives had by degrees made Barabbas and his band desperate and reckless, till they had become in many instances pure thieves and robbers.¹

As has been seen, the recreation of the historical setting is accomplished by portraying the thief in two associations; in association with Jesus and in his simultaneous association with the band of robbers, a group which probably first started as a rebel band opposed to Roman domination.

(2) Psychological Analysis of Biblical Characters Involved

This sermon could almost be classified as a psychological study of the reasons why this penitent thief became the type of man he was and what motivated him to change.

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1. Ibid. p. 152

As is customary in his preaching, Dr. Whyte in his imagination pieces together what he thinks to be the life story of the thief. He very strongly feels that the thief knew Jesus quite well and was thoroughly acquainted with his teaching, his life and his character. The reason Dr. Whyte feels he can make such an assumption is that everyone knew of the works and teaching of Jesus. Speaking of the fame and general knowledge of Jesus, he says:

There was not a Sabbath synagogue, nor a passover journey, nor a carpenter's shop, nor a tax-gatherer's booth, nor a robber's cave in all Israel where the name, and the teaching, and the mighty works of Jesus of Nazareth were not constantly discussed, and debated, and divided on.¹

Consequently Dr. Whyte assumes that the penitent thief must have discussed often with others of his band the person and work of Jesus.

Dr. Whyte pictures the thief sick in heart as he seeks to decide whether or not Jesus actually was the longed-for Messiah. In this constant quest, he is pictured as disguising himself as a fisherman or a shepherd in order to be undetected among the crowds who heard Jesus preach. To further heighten the thief's desire to follow Christ and to put within him that longing for the Master, Dr. Whyte surmises that he could even have been a follower of the Lord.

...for anything we know, this man may at one time have been one of our Lord's disciples, quite as well as Simon Zelotes and Judas Iscariot. In his early, and enthusiastic, and patriotic days he may have been one of John's disciples. He may have seen Jesus of Nazareth baptized that day. He may have been baptized himself that day. He may have heard the Baptist say: "Behold the Lamb of God!" He may have been among the multitude who sat and heard the Sermon

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1. Ibid. p. 153

on the Mount. He may have actually have closely companied with our Lord for a season.¹

With such an explanation, Dr. Whyte attempts to show the factors and fears which were motivating this man and which were revolving within his mind as he hung on a cross alongside the Master. The preacher plays on the emotions of the thief as he seeks to show the factors working within his life. On the morning of the execution the thoughts which ran through his mind were childhood thoughts--"The psalms and hymns of his boyhood came back into his mind."²

Not only was the former association which this man had with Jesus responsible for his receiving the Saviour, but Jesus' quiet acceptance of His own suffering made a marked impression upon him. Dr. Whyte feels the silence of Jesus in the face of His suffering was the deciding factor on the part of the thief to "come to himself."³ Furthermore, the effect of Jesus' prayer of forgiveness, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do," broke the heart of the thief. Speaking of this prayer, Dr. Whyte states:

That benediction of our blessed Lord did more to benumb the agony of body and mind in this thief than all the wine mingled with myrrh the women of Jerusalem had made for him and for his fellows to drink that morning.⁴

In summary, three factors profoundly influenced this man, causing him to put his faith and trust in Jesus as the Son of God. First, his previous knowledge and possible association with Jesus prepared the

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1. Ibid. p. 154
2. Ibid. p. 154
3. Ibid. p. 155
4. Ibid. p. 156

way for his reception of Christ. Second, with death but a few hours away, his thoughts went back to these associations. Third, Jesus' reaction to His own suffering, in that he asked forgiveness for those who were crucifying Him, produced in the thief faith in Him as the Messiah.

(3) Evaluation of Revelatory Truth

Two key truths stand out vividly against the background of this story. The first is the lingering presence and effect of the Person of Jesus Christ. The second, the simplicity of the Gospel which Dr. Whyte summarizes in a motto which was written on the wall above the bed of Augustine--"There is life in a look at the crucified One."¹ The sermon is a development of these two truths.

In the previous two points of this outline, the possible former associations of the thief with Jesus were discussed. It was the lasting influence of these encounters which was responsible in a great measure for the thief's accepting Jesus as the Christ. This association is pictured as influencing the thief in two ways. First, after seeing the works of Jesus as well as hearing his words, the thief began to reason that possibly this was the Christ. Consequently this picture of the Person of Jesus was ever before him.

In the second place, because of his former association with Jesus he began to see his own sinfulness and became convicted of this sin. Dr. Whyte shows him as saying to himself as he hung on the cross:

This is Jesus of Nazareth. This is the carpenter-prophet. I used to steal into His presence to hear Him preach. I once thought to be one of His men myself to deliver Israel...Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions.²

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1. Ibid. p. 157
2. Ibid. p. 155

These two factors, repentance and the knowledge of Christ, which are present in every genuine conversion are given prominent place in the story of the thief. Both the repentance and the knowledge of Jesus came to light because of the former association of the thief with Jesus.

The simplicity of the Gospel which was suddenly accepted by the thief forms the second main truth which this sermon reveals. Speaking of the suddenness of this repentance, Dr. Whyte states:

He took heaven, so to speak, at a leap that day. The swiftness of the thief's repentance, and faith, and confession, and pardon, and sanctification, and glorification, is something very blessed for us all to think about and never to forget; and especially, those of us who must make haste and lose no time if we are to be forever with him and his Lord in Paradise.¹

Even though the Gospel is received in this simple acceptance of Jesus, yet Dr. Whyte gives great praise to the thief because of his leap of faith. He is considered a "greater believer than Abraham, the father of believers,"² because of his acceptance of Jesus at the time when the King of kings was hanging on the cross. In contrasting the faith of the thief in the simplicity of the Gospel with that of other great believers, Dr. Whyte says:

All faith and all hope on Christ were as dead as a stone in Peter's heart and in John's heart. Mary Magdalene herself, with all her love, had given Him up as forever dead. But not the thief. It was at the very darkest hour this world has ever seen or ever will see, that this thief's splendid faith flashed up brighter than the mid-day sun that day.³

The simplicity of the Gospel, the association with Jesus convicting him of sin and causing him to realize that Jesus is the Christ all meet together in this one scene on the cross giving a story of the

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1. Ibid. p. 157

2. Ibid. p. 157

3. Ibid. p. 158

sin of man and the grace of God.

(4) Use of Illustrations

The illustrations which Dr. Whyte uses are normally brief and most often presume that the listener has some acquaintance with the subject of the illustration. This is especially true if the subject of the illustration is a personage in the Bible. In this sermon, when the great faith of the thief on the cross is to be displayed, a number of persons in the Bible whose faith is a known factor, are mentioned by name to contrast with the thief. Speaking of the faith of the thief on the cross, Dr. Whyte says:

He was a greater believer than Abraham, the father of believers. Greater than David. Greater than Isaiah. While Peter, and James, and John, with all their privileges and opportunities, are not worthy to be named in the same day with this thief.¹

Unless a person were familiar with the above named men, the meaning of such an illustration would be lost. No explanation is given to show how or why these listed individuals had faith but it is assumed that these men are well enough known for the average churchgoer to fill in the needed information and complete the illustration intended.

Two of the illustrations used in this sermon are what could be called parallel subject matter. One is taken from a civil practice, the second is drawn from the Bible. In attempting to delve into the reason behind the thief's nefarious work, Dr. Whyte seems to feel that this robber band began as a rebel group against the Roman rule. Consequently originally they probably had committed a crime against the government. To show the distinction between these two types of crimes, re-

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1. Ibid. p. 157

bellion against government and a wrong against an individual, Dr. Whyte says:

But when Barabbas and his band are called thieves and robbers it is due to them to give them the benefit of the doubt. In our noble British law and administration there is a deep and a fundamental distinction taken between ordinary criminals against all civilized society, and political criminals against this or that foreign government for the time. We give up swindlers and murderers when they flee to out shores, but we provide a safe and an honourable asylum for political refugees and state criminals, as we call them.¹

The second use of this type of illustration is employed as David is pictured as a leader somewhat after the fashion of Barabbas at the beginning of his life of outlawry. Everyone in distress or in debt attached themselves to the bands of David and Barabbas. The parallel of David and Barabbas holds true up to a certain point and at this place a distinction is made with the following comment:

David was a far better captain than Barabbas ever was. David, no doubt, kept his men in far better hand, till he turned them out such fine specimens of soldiers and mighty men of war, and the best law abiding citizens in all Israel.²

Two very short, one-sentence quotations are used as final aids to illuminate the sermon. One is a quotation from a sermon preached by John Donne which speaks of "the dispatch of the grace of God in the case of the penitent thief."³ The second is the motto which Augustine had hung over his bed, "There is life in a look at the crucified One."⁴

Numerous methods of illustration are constantly used by Dr. Whyte in his sermons. In this one, parallel illustrations, contrasting illustrations, as well as quotations have been used effectively.

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1. Ibid. p. 151
2. Ibid. p. 152
3. Ibid. p. 156
4. Ibid. p. 157

(5) Application of Sermon Points

Only one place in the entire sermon is a specific point of the sermon taken and directly applied to the listener. The story of the thief is simply and clearly presented, so that an application to the life of the listener could be easily made without calling attention to the specific manner of applying the truth to life. This type of self-application of sermon points in the preaching of Dr. Whyte is very common. It is seldom that he will give a specific injunction for the listener to apply the point in question.

In only one place does Dr. Whyte specifically draw the listener into the sermon by mentioning him; that is after speaking about the immediate response of the Lord to the sudden repentance of the thief. He mentions the necessity of those who are old, to know that there is salvation "in a look at the crucified One."

Through the clarity and simplicity of this sermon, even though direct applications are not made, still many lessons strike home to the heart.

3. A Typical Sermon on the Christian Life of Prayer

In the winter of 1895-96, Dr. Whyte began a series of sermons using the text "Lord, teach us to pray," in combination with some other text in order to show the life of prayer in various aspects. The sermons are studies of the prayers of men of the Bible. They are studies in characters in that they take one particular aspect of a man, his prayer life, and analyze this facet.

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Representative of this class of sermons, the life of Jacob will be studied with special emphasis upon his prayer while wrestling with God at Peniel.

a. The Outline of a Sermon Entitled "Jacob-Wrestling"¹

(1) Introduction

- (a) While in Padan-aram Jacob seemingly forgot about God. Much is told about his marriage, his prosperity, but no mention is made that he remembered or worshiped God.
- (b) Finally the Lord told Jacob to return to the land of his fathers and kindred.
- (c) As Jacob neared the land of Edom, his early days were brought back to mind and he began to fear what Esau might do to him.
 - i. He sent a present ahead to Esau.
 - ii. He then sent his women, children and cattle ahead while he stayed behind alone.
- (d) While alone, he wrestled all night with an unknown antagonist.
- (e) "We see here how the whole of Jacob's life was laid out, and overruled, and visited of God in order to teach Jacob to pray, in order to make Jacob a prince of prayer."²

(2) Body of Sermon

- (a) As long as all goes well with us, we too, are tempted to neglect God.
 - i. The mercy shown Jacob by God on numerous occasions would cause one to think Jacob could never forget God.
 - ii. No sooner had Jacob's affairs begun to prosper in Padan-aram than Jacob's consciousness of sin fell asleep.
 - a. From the day of the barter of the birthright, down to the arresting night at Jabbok, Jacob had seen himself, and his share in all that bad business, with his own partial and indulgent eyes.
 - b. God "winked" at Jacob's sin till Jacob was at the top of his prosperity, and then God opened His eyes on Jacob's sin, and He opened Jacob's eyes also.
- (b) There are seasons in our lives when true prayer demands time, place, preparation and solitude.
 - i. Jacob was determined not to return to Padan-aram but to go on to Canaan.
 - ii. When Jacob had made the decisive step of crossing the Jabbok, Jacob was left alone and he deliberately prepared himself for a whole night of prayer.
 - iii. It is necessary for the Christian to be left alone, as Jacob was in order to review his past life.

1. Alexander Whyte: Lord, Teach us to Pray, p. 41-51

2. Ibid. p. 43

- (c) Jacob spent such a long time in prayer not because God was unwilling to hear and answer his prayer but because Jacob was not ready to ask aright.
 - i. Jacob had twenty years of unbelief and self-forgiveness and forgetfulness to undo.
 - ii. The story of Jacob at Jabbok has such a large place in the Bible because he did in a few hours what it normally takes years to do—he acknowledged his sin.
- (d) Jacob at Jabbok is a reminder of our Lord in Gethsemane.
- (3) Conclusion
 - (a) Jacob was worthy to have the new name of Israel because he behaved himself like a prince of the Kingdom of Heaven that night as he prayed.
 - (b) Prayer is the most magnificent and stupendous act that any creature of God can perform on earth or in heaven.
 - i. Prayer is far too princely a life for most men.
 - ii. True prayer is colossal work.

b. Analysis of Effective Elements of Sermon

(1) A Live Recreation of Historical Setting

The historical setting into which this sermon on prayer is placed is achieved by a recollection and retelling with imagination of the Biblical narrative of Jacob wrestling with an angel. A quick survey of the events leading up to Peniel aids in placing the prayer of Jacob into its rightful sequence within his life. Jacob had achieved fortune in Padan-aram. The Lord had blessed him materially despite the fact that while in this country there is no mention of prayer or praise to God by Jacob.

Above and beyond the historical setting of the narrative there is also the psychological setting which helps to give life and vividness to the account. It is this particular psychological build-up which provides the dramatic quality to the sermon. The narrative is placed within the framework of an incident of fear, fear on the part of Jacob that the meeting with Esau would be fatal to him. Because of the guilty conscience which plagued Jacob, a conscience due to the manner by which he mistreated

his brother in taking away his birthright, Jacob wanted to be alone. Consequently he sent his material possessions along with his family across the brook Jabbok. It was while he was alone that he wrestled with his unknown antagonist.

By bringing out the historical as well as the psychological setting of this incident, Dr. Whyte has given life and a dramatic quality to this incident in the life of Jacob.

(2) Psychological Analysis of Biblical Characters Involved

Dr. Whyte has masterfully taken this incident of prayer in the life of Jacob and has brought out the factors which led up to it. The neglect of God, the fear of Esau and the yielding to the struggle, all form part of the over-all mental struggle through which Jacob was passing.

It is pointed out that Jacob was following the natural tendency of an individual to forget about the blessings he has received once he has become wealthy, and also to forget about his sins once the object of that sin is removed from the scene. Regarding this tendency of Jacob, Dr. Whyte writes:

You would have said that Jacob had had such an upbringing and had fallen into such transgressions, all followed by such mercies, and by such manifestations of God, that he could never again forget God. ...But no sooner was Jacob safely out of Esau's reach: no sooner had Jacob's affairs begun to prosper in Padan-aram than Jacob's consciousness of sin fell asleep. And Jacob's conscience would have slept on till the day of judgment had God and Esau left Jacob alone.¹

The fear which was shown by Jacob and which drove him to prayer was caused by his coming face to face with his former sin which was com-

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1. Ibid. p. 44

mitted against Esau. Up to this night at Jabbok, Jacob had not so much as considered this sin. It is shown that it is a natural tendency for men to have a short memory of what sufferings they have caused others to endure.

A very interesting explanation into the therapeutic value of the all-night wrestling of Jacob is given. God could have forgiven Jacob immediately as he prayed. Yet God did not. Rather he made Jacob spend the night wrestling. In seeking an explanation for this fact, Dr. Whyte shows there was the necessity of purging the character of Jacob. Regarding this he says:

Why did it take Jacob so long to offer his prayer? Was God unwilling to hear Jacob. No, that cannot be the true explanation. God was neither absent nor was he unwilling. God had come down to the Jabbok for this very purpose—to hear and to answer Jacob's prayer, and to preserve Jacob's life from Esau's anger. God was ready to hear and to answer; but Jacob was not yet ready to ask aright. Jacob had twenty years of unbelief and self-forgiveness, and forgetfulness of Esau's injury, and total neglect and want of practice in penitence, and humiliation and sorrow for sin. Jacob had all that, somehow or other, to undo, and to get over, before his life could be preserved: and the wonder to me is that Jacob accomplished so much in such a short time.¹

It was this prayer and it was God dealing with Jacob on this night that changed the character of Jacob from one who was scheming, plotting and high minded to a man who became absolutely surrendered at God's feet. This change was wrought because Jacob was willing to acknowledge his sin before God.

(3) Evaluation of Revelatory Truth

A number of practical and very timely truths on prayer are drawn from this experience of Jacob. Jacob had been blessed by God.

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1. Ibid. p. 48

His flocks increased. His material possessions were sufficient to the place where he felt he no longer needed to pray. From this self satisfied attitude of Jacob, Dr. Whyte draws his first lesson. That lesson is "That as long as all goes well, there is a tendency to neglect God."¹ By using the incidents in the life of Jacob this truth is vividly portrayed. As long as Jacob had his wives and cattle and no fear of his brother Esau, prayer was far removed from his thoughts. It was only as the fear of consequences of the meeting with his brother was facing him that he sought the face of God.

The second truth which is drawn from this incident is the practical lesson that "There are seasons in our lives when true prayer demands time, and place, and preparation and solitude."² Dr. Whyte takes a seemingly insignificant element in the journey of Jacob, the fact that he wanted to be alone, and uses this to point out a vital necessity in the life of a Christian, time alone for prayer.

The final truth which is stressed is the agonizing element in prayer. This third point is not drawn directly from the narrative but is derived from the praying that our Lord did in Gethsemane. A transition is made from the story of Jacob to the incident of Jesus in the Garden by saying, "But Jacob at the Jabbok always calls up our Lord in Gethsemane."³

In each of these cases, the truth is a simple one. There is no logical development of any particular phase of prayer, but thoughts on prayer are revealed by the life of Jacob.

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1. Ibid. p. 43
2. Ibid. p. 46
3. Ibid. p. 49

(4) Use of Illustrations

As is very common in the preaching of Dr. Whyte, numerous brief quotations are used to illustrate points in the sermon. In this lesson on prayer, quotations from four writers are used. When discussing the tendency of a wealthy man to neglect God, the following is quoted: "As Huysman says in En route, 'The rich, the healthy, the happy seldom pray.'¹ No explanation is given concerning either the author or the work of this quotation. The words of the quotation make a fitting illustration regardless whether or not the author is known by the listener.

The other three quotations come one right after the other as Dr. Whyte shows the agony that there is to prayer. He has brief quotations from Lancelot Andrewes, Jonathan Edwards and Coleridge.

Apart from these four quotations no other illustrative material is used. This sermon is almost purely the retelling in an interesting fashion of the Biblical narrative of Jacob wrestling with the angel, with but just the few noted quotations used as illustrative material.

(5) Application of Sermon Points

In making a personal application upon the first point of the sermon, Dr. Whyte shifts off a bit from the original thought of a neglect of God. He shows that Jacob was not only forgetful of his duties to God during the time he was in Padan-aram but also neglected the wrong he had done to his brother. Jacob's conscience would have remained asleep to his deeds against Esau had it not been for his coming meeting with his brother.

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1. Ibid. p. 44

After speaking about Jacob taking time to be alone when he was on his journey to Canaan, Dr. Whyte makes an application of this point. He feels that every Christian owes it to himself to set apart days during the year specifically for prayer. To make this point even more practical, definite suggestions are given to help implement such days. Among the suggestions are the following:

Let a long journey then--by land or sea--at one time, be set apart for prayer. A whole day sometimes, a birthday, the anniversary of our engagement to be married, or of our marriage, or again an anniversary of some such matter as Jacob's deception of Esau, or of his flight, or what not.¹

Dr. Whyte was constantly attempting to make his sermons practical. By such simple ideas on how to implement the truths he preached he made his messages applicable to his listeners.

In concluding this sermon on prayer, after speaking about the difficulties of prayer and the value of prayer, the following application is made:

True prayer is colossal work. There were giants in those days. Would you be one of this royal race? Would you stand in the lot of God's princeliest elect at the end of your days? And would you be numbered with His Son and with His choicest saints? Then pray.²

As was noted in this sermon, applications of the sermon points were made at various places within the sermon. The entire application was not reserved for the conclusion of the sermon. The applications which were made were practical and down-to-earth.

D. Summary

The profound influence which Dr. Whyte has had not only in Scot-

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1. Ibid. p. 47

2. Ibid. p. 51

land but also in the rest of the world is due largely to his great ability of presenting Biblical truths and making them applicable to the individual. Although he did not solve to the satisfaction of the young minds of his time the intellectual problems bothering them, he still had a great ministry to them in displaying the essence of Christianity, the new life in Christ. His favorite themes were temptation and sin, penitence, and the struggle after virtue, and the goodness and serenity of God.¹ These truths were largely presented through the medium of biographical preaching. In fact, two-thirds of the volumes of sermons which Dr. Whyte published contained in their titles the word "character."

This chapter has dealt with some of the elements in his preaching which made the sermons effective.

His method of treating the characters of the Bible could be classified as psychological for it is through a probing into the motives behind the actions of the Bible characters that he reveals the reasons for the outward actions.

Five effective elements in the biographical preaching of Dr. Whyte have been considered. By pointing out facts and by the use of imagination he was able to recreate the historical setting of the sermon so as to make it live. Through his keen insight into the characters of men, Dr. Whyte was able to show the motives for the deeds of personalities of the Bible. From the deeds, certain truths were chosen to bring before the hearer spiritual truths. These truths were more clearly defined and elaborated by appropriate illustrations. It was noted that most of the

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1. Barbour, op. cit. p. 224

illustrations were derived from extra-Biblical sources, the great majority coming from literature. Finally the chapter has shown how these truths were applied.

Through these five specific elements which have been discussed, the effectiveness of the biographical sermons of Dr. Whyte has been shown.

CHAPTER II

THE BIOGRAPHICAL METHOD IN THE PREACHING OF

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A. Introduction

One of the great ministers of the Presbyterian Church, USA, during the past fifty years was Dr. Clarence Edward Macartney. His influence during these years has been strongly felt within the church. This is especially true of the period of time when the Presbyterian Church went through a stormy session regarding loyalty to the Christian standards. Dr. Macartney, at that time as well as now, was very strong for the adherence to the standards set forth in the Westminster Confession.

During his fifty years of preaching, Dr. Macartney has held three outstanding pastorates—the First Presbyterian Church in Paterson, New Jersey, the Arch Street Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia and the First Presbyterian Church in Pittsburgh. At this last church he was minister for twenty-five years before retiring in 1953.

His ability as a preacher has been widely recognized. Numerous seminaries and colleges have invited him to give lectures on preaching and Biblical subjects. These have included the Stone Foundation Lectures at Princeton Theological Seminary, the Caleb Davies Lectures at Hiram College, the Ott Lectures at Davidson College, and Smythe Lectures at Columbia Theological Seminary.

The writings of Dr. Macartney have not all been confined to

Biblical subjects. He has written much about the Civil War period. Among the books of this period which he has written are Highways and Byways of the Civil War, Lincoln and His Generals, Lincoln and His Cabinet, the Life of General George B. McClellan, and Grant and His Generals.

Dr. Macartney has published many sermons which would be properly called Christian biography. Regarding this special field of preaching Dr. Macartney says:

I find that I have preached 167 sermons on the characters of the Bible. In a number of instances, however, some of the sermons have dealt with different aspects of the same men and women, or with different incidents in their lives. I discovered early in my ministry that people like biography; and nowhere is there such biography, so stirring, so moving, so uplifting, so tragic, as that to be found in the Bible.¹

As was the case in writing about Dr. Whyte, the first part of this chapter will be devoted to the ministry of Dr. Macartney. Inasmuch as there is no published work on his life, information has been derived from pamphlets, as well as letters written by friends and those who have worked with him. Included in this section will be an evaluation of preaching as revealed in Dr. Macartney's book entitled, Preaching Without Notes. The major part of the chapter will be an analysis and study of three sermons which may be judged typical of his biographical preaching.

B. Clarence Macartney as a Preacher

1. His Training and Ministry

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1. Clarence E. Macartney: The Wisest Fool, p. 5

In contrast to the life of Dr. Whyte, which was lived in the shadow of the stigma of being an illegitimate son, Clarence Macartney was the son of a manse. He was born in the small town of Northwood, Ohio, where his father was the minister of the Reformed Presbyterian Church. When Clarence was but a few years old his parents moved to Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania where his father was Professor of Science at Geneva College. There in an atmosphere of plain living and high thinking, Dr. Macartney spent most of his early youth.

His last two years of high school were finished at the Preparatory School of Pomona College at Claremont, California, his family having moved to California when Clarence was 15 years old. Upon graduation from the preparatory school, he went to the University of Denver where he spent his freshman year. The last three years of his college education were completed at the University of Wisconsin. While at the Wisconsin University his talents as a debater and orator began to appear as he achieved distinction in these fields.

The seminary training of Dr. Macartney was begun in 1902 at Princeton Theological Seminary. Upon his graduation from seminary he was ordained by the Presbytery of Jersey City and installed as minister of the First Presbyterian Church in Paterson, New Jersey. After spending eight years as minister of this historic church, he took the pastorate of the Arch Street Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia, building up this depleted church into one of the chief preaching centers of Philadelphia.

He had the distinction in 1924 of being one of the youngest men ever to be elected Moderator of the General Assembly of the

Presbyterian Church, USA.

In the year 1927 Dr. Macartney succeeded Dr. Maitland Alexander as minister of the First Presbyterian Church of Pittsburgh. He retired in 1953.

2. Preaching Without Notes

This section of the thesis will cover Dr. Macartney's evaluation of preaching as found in his book on homiletics entitled, Preaching Without Notes.

a. The Preacher and his Message

Dr. Macartney is very strong and outspoken upon what he considers to be the aim and purpose of preaching. There should be sermons for special occasions, comfort, instruction and condemnation, yet the great aim and purpose of the sermon "is to convert the sinner to the will of God in Christ."¹ In view of this aim, three conditions for successful Gospel preaching are presented which clearly bring out the aim and purpose of preaching. These conditions which Dr. Macartney gives are as follows:

- (1) A concern and a desire for the salvation of souls.
- (2) The presentation of the cardinal doctrines and truths of the Christian faith.
- (3) The necessity of backing preaching with prayer.

These three prerequisites of Gospel preaching point out the stress which is placed within the sermons of Dr. Macartney. He is

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1. Clarence Macartney: Preaching Without Notes, p. 9

strong on the presenting of the cardinal truths of the Gospel as centered in Jesus Christ. Speaking about the message of the preacher he says:

When it comes to the content of the preacher's message, we have that from our Lord himself, as related in the words that Peter spoke to the centurion Cornelius. These words tell what our Lord after his resurrection commanded the apostles to preach: "And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead. To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins."¹

Whether it be a biographical sermon, a textual sermon or an expository sermon, the theme of Jesus Christ and His power to save is always very evident in the preaching of Dr. Macartney.

b. The Preacher and his Illustrations

As will be seen in the sermons which are studied in this thesis, Dr. Macartney makes great use of illustrations. The source from which he obtains the major portion of his illustrations is the Bible. "The greatest of all illustrations," he says, "are the parables and stories of the Bible, particularly those of the Old Testament."² In keeping with his biographical preaching, the story itself becomes its best illustration if the preacher will "expand it and make it live so that it becomes a vivid reality to the congregation."³

Besides the usual sources of illustrations of biography, mythology, fiction, philosophy, poetry, and personal experiences, Dr. Macartney stresses imagination as a source of "windows" for the

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1. Ibid. p. 20
2. Ibid. p. 35
3. Ibid. p. 38

sermon. Speaking about the need for creative illustrations he says:

The average preacher does not make enough use of his imagination. He can use it either in describing a Bible scene or in a flight of pure fancy.¹

Without imagination, Dr. Macartney feels illustrations become dry and dead.

c. The Preacher and Biographical Sermons

The goal of every earnest preacher is to make the word which he proclaims become flesh, and, as it were, dwell among men. That is the great purpose of biographical preaching.²

One of the many advantages which are evident through the preaching on Bible characters is that the sermon is bound to be real and true to life. What the minister has to say about the lives of the characters of the Old Testament will apply just as well to a businessman in our society.³ Furthermore, through the use of biographical sermons, a freshness and vividness is brought to the hearers. Dr. Macartney feels that even when the story in the Bible is well known the listeners are given an additional element of interest by virtue of this fact. He likens this to listening to familiar and well-loved music.⁴

Biographical preaching affords the minister one of the best ways to preach on doctrinal subjects of the Bible. In using this means, the danger of the sermon becoming too heavy is avoided.

In summary, Dr. Macartney's methods in his preaching are all geared to the one aim of winning men and women to Jesus Christ.

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1. Ibid. p.68
2. Ibid. p.121
3. Ibid. p.128
4. Ibid. p.129

C. Analysis of Typical Biographical Sermons

The sermons of Dr. Macartney lend themselves to a very clear analysis of their contents. It is his manner of preaching not to veil the transition from one subject to another but to let his hearers know obviously when he is moving from one point to another. This manner of definite breaks between points of the sermon is due to the fact that Dr. Macartney preaches without notes and needs such an outline whereby to remember his thoughts. He says regarding the construction of his sermons:

I myself like the old plan of the simple outline with few divisions, including a statement at the beginning pointing where the preacher intends to go and how he intends to get there.¹

1. A Typical Sermon on the Condition of Man

The theme of sin is very evident in the preaching of Dr. Macartney. There is hardly a major character in the Bible whose life does not come under analysis in the light of this subject. This subject finds expression in sermons on Solomon,² Mark,³ Judas,⁴ Aaron,⁵ Saul,⁶ David,⁷ to name just a few. Dr. Macartney's great aim in preaching is to convert the hearer. He says regarding this aim:

There are, it is true, sermons for comfort and instruction, for condemnation, for special occasions. Nevertheless, the great aim and purpose of the sermon is to convert the sinner to the will of God in Christ.⁸

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1. Clarence Macartney: Preaching Without Notes, p. 154
2. Macartney, Wisest Fool, p. 9-19
3. Ibid. p. 90-98
4. Ibid. p. 180-191
5. Clarence Macartney: Mountains and Mountain Men of the Bible, p. 45-57
6. Ibid. p. 104-116
7. Clarence Macartney: Greatest Men of the Bible, p. 26-40
8. Macartney, Preaching Without Notes, p. 9

With this aim in view it is only natural that the sinful condition of man is exposed in so many of his sermons. He could by no means be called a negative preacher, for in exposing the sinful condition of man, he has an opportunity to present the sufficiency of the work of Christ.

a. The Outline of a Sermon Entitled "Achan---How Sin Lost a Battle."¹

(1) Introduction

(a) The recreating of the Biblical account of the scene centering around the sin of Achan forms the introduction of this message. In creating the setting the following events leading up to the sin are told.

- i. A description of the army of Israel encamped outside the ruined city of Jericho.
- ii. The sin of Achan as he stole into the city to take the forbidden booty.
- iii. The effect of the sin was evidenced in the defeat of the Israelite army the following day when 3,000 picked troops were defeated.
- iv. Joshua sought God for the reason of the defeat and was told that it was due to sin in the camp.
- v. When a lot was cast to find the sinner, it fell upon Achan who confessed his deed. He was punished for his sin by stoning.

(b) In concluding the introduction, the three points of the sermon are introduced with the following:

This dramatic story from the Book of Joshua tells us several timeless truths about sin. First, how sin gets its start, the progress of sin in the heart, and what it leads to, and how the end is death. Second, how sin finds the sinner out; and third, how one man's secret sin affects others and hinders the cause of God in the world.²

(2) Body of Sermon

(a) The Beginning and Progress of Sin.

- i. The beginning and progress of sin in the life of Achan is shown when "he saw, then he coveted, then he took, then he hid, then he suffered."³
- ii. Examples of this progress illustrated in the lives of the following:

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1. Clarence Macartney: Wisest Fool, p. 32-43

2. Ibid. p.37

3. Ibid. p. 37

- a. Adam and Eve when they saw that the fruit of the tree that it was pleasant to the eyes, coveted it, took it, ate it, and then sought in vain to hide themselves from God.
 - b. Ahab saw the well-kept vineyard of Naboth, coveted it, took it, and paid for this act with his life.
 - c. Samson went down to Sorek where he saw Delilah, coveted her, took her and so betrayed his strength to the Philistines.
 - d. Gehazi, the servant of Elisha, saw the glitter of gold and silver and the rich raiment that Naaman the leper had brought from Syria as a gift for the prophet when he healed him, which Elisha had refused. Gehazi saw, coveted, took, and hid in his tent, like Achan, and lied and went out from the presence of Elisha a leper as white as snow.
 - e. Judas saw the glitter of silver in the hands of the priests and Pharisees, and sold his Lord for 30 pieces of silver and then went out and hanged himself.
- The application which Dr. Macartney makes from these examples is:

The time to resist sin is when it first displays itself and flashes its false attractiveness before us. If it is not resisted then, the next step is to covet and then to take, and then to seek in vain what has been done.¹

(b) How Sin Finds the Sinner Out.

The sin of Achan had all the appearances of a perfect crime, so far as discovery was concerned. And yet his sin found him out, exposed him, judged him, punished him. Sin always finds the sinner out.

i. It finds him out in time.

- a. Moses thought he was not seen when he slew an Egyptian. Someone did see him and the crime became known.
- b. A secular illustration is given in which a nail in the skull of a corpse was used as proof of a crime.

ii. It finds him out in conscience.

- a. Judas, when he flung down the blood money before the priests said, "I have sinned."
- b. Peter, when Jesus looked upon him after he had denied him that night in the court of Caiaphas, went out and wept bitterly.

iii. It may be deferred reaction on conscience. The brethren of Joseph, long after they had sold him as slave into Egypt were stricken in conscience and said, "We are verily guilty concerning our brother."

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1. Macartney, Wisest Fool, p. 40

(c) How Sin Hurts and Hinders Others.

Sin is always individual in its origins, but always social as well as individual in its results. In the case of Achan's sin, none of all the army and camp of Israel had seen it, and yet its effect upon Israel was disastrous.

- i. Sin not only affects the lives of others but it goes on year after year doing its malignant work. That is the meaning of the Old Testament refrain "Jeroboam, the son of Nabat, who made Israel to sin." Long after Jeroboam was dead, the sin which he had committed, when he put up golden calves for idols, and so led Israel into idolatry, haunted and injured the nation.
- ii. A secular illustration is given, telling of a poisonous ring which was still lethal after hundreds of years.

(3) Conclusion

Dr. Macartney in his conclusion says:

Great as was the sin of Achan, and tragic its effect and influence upon others, and inescapable though his judgment was, Achan made a full confession of his sin. That is the only compensation that the sinner can ever render unto God. If we say that we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sin and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.¹

b. Analysis of Effective Elements of the Sermon

(1) A Live Recreation of Historical Setting

Some of the most stimulating and interesting introductions in the sermons of Dr. Macartney are those in which he allows his imagination to roam as he recreates the setting. His fondness for this type of preparatory material is evidenced by his frequent use of it.² Such scenes read like a page from an exciting novel. Although some of the Biblical details have been elaborated and pure speculation brought into this re-creation of the setting, still the mood of the Biblical

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1. Ibid. p. 43

2. Examples of this type of introduction can be found in Great Nights of the Bible, p. 38; Chariots of Fire, p. 31, p. 67; Great Interviews of Jesus, p. 98.

account has not been altered.

In the sermon under analysis, the imagination of Dr. Macartney comes into play to create a dramatic effect in setting the mood for this sermon. The description of Achan making his way through the darkness to the silver and gold forms the introduction to the sermon. Through the use of vivid imagination the picture of the setting is portrayed. The arrangement of the tents of each tribe is described in its relation to the Ark of the Covenant and the tabernacle. The story is brought alive as a vivid description of Achan moving around is given as follows:

There he crouches for a time behind the fragment of a fallen wall, as if fearful of the shadow which his body casts in the moonlight. Now he steps over a column of the temple of Baal and carefully makes his way over the heaps of debris until he reaches the street where the shops had once flourished. There he begins to search amid the ruins. In the moonlight he sees something bright and white shining before him. Reaching down, he finds that it is two hundred shekels of silver. He fills both hands with the silver, and then, opening his fingers, lets the silver flow through his hands like a stream. Once, twice, thrice, he does that, and the sound of the silver falling on silver is music to his covetous soul.¹

To further aid in recreating the scene and bringing life into it, words are put into the mouth of Achan, as he expresses delight over his new found treasures.

"Better luck than I had expected," he says to himself as he fills his soldier's haversack with the silver, the gold, and the Babylonian garment.²

All of these elements, even though not contained in the Bibli-

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1. Macartney, Wisest Fool, p. 33

2. Ibid. p. 33

cal narrative, aid in setting the mood for the story as well as giving a dramatic effect to the story. Though they may have been created by the imagination of the preacher, yet they are true to the mood of the story.

(2) Psychological Analysis of Biblical Characters Involved

As was observed above, Dr. Macartney could be classified as a psychological preacher. This term is meant to imply that his teaching on various subjects is founded upon human experience and the natural development of that subject through the experiences of Biblical, historical and living personages rather than upon deductive, theoretical affirmations. The religious experiences of the men of the Bible are used to portray the manner in which Scriptural truths are worked out in actuality. This method of presenting Biblical subjects through biographical preaching is commended by Dr. Andrew Blackwood as follows:

...one can discuss the practical meaning of sin as a fact in every man's experience and the practical meaning of forgiveness as being restored to right relations with God. Instead of preaching about sin and pardon as pale, gray abstractions, one may turn to King David as a living object lesson. His experience with Bathsheba shows that sin is a man's way of putting himself out of right relations with God, and that forgiveness is God's way of bringing a sinful human being into right relations.¹

To picture the psychology of sin, experiences of sin in the lives of individuals in the Bible are shown to display sin's progress and result. Even though the message is a biographical study of Achan, yet many other individuals are presented to serve as further examples of the theme. The similar experiences of Adam and Eve, Ahab, Samson,

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1. Blackwood, Preparation and Delivery of Sermons, p. 64

Gehazi, and Judas show the principle of sin operative in their lives. In each case, four steps in the inception and progress of sin are shown to occur. First, they looked, then they coveted, then they took, and finally they suffered. These steps could not be catalogued under a theological classification, but they are practical lessons in the psychology of sin learned from life.

A very clear presentation of what is attempted through a psychological presentation of sin is given by Dr. Macartney in the introduction to the sermon entitled, "Sin, the Saddest Word in the Bible." This sermon is based upon the text, "Sin croucheth at the door."¹ In the introduction he states his plan of procedure:

Our plan is to show the sadness of sin, not by abstract argument or reasoning, but by illustration in the lives of men, by a recital of what sin did in the lives of men whose history is related in the Bible. The Bible is the perfect and eternal mirror of the human heart, and you can count on it that what sin did in the lives of men in the Bible, it is doing in the lives of men today.²

In another sermon the same thought is brought out as Dr. Macartney gives an insight into his purpose in presenting events in the lives of Bible characters:

More than anything in the Bible, perhaps, the fall of David teaches us the awfulness of sin and the certainty of punishment, and warns us how even a good man, a man who talks of God and worships God, and serves him and praises Him and prays to Him, can fall into the pit of transgression and sin.³

The phrase "the fall of David teaches" gives the key to the

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1. Clarence Macartney : Greatest Words of the Bible, p. 13

2. Ibid. p. 13

3. Clarence Macartney: Great Men of the Bible, p. 32

purpose of the psychological method. It is an attempt to teach through the experiences of others. Through the religious experiences of individuals, truth is brought home in a practical, personal way. The personal element in the sermons of Dr. Macartney is always in the foreground. One of the factors which has been prominent in the shift from a "personal" to a "social gospel" has been the failure of ministers to apply the truths of the Bible to the individual soul. Dr. Macartney is not interested in merely presenting Christian truths. He is interested in applying that truth to the individual.

(3) Evaluation of Revelatory Truth

The actions of Achan are used as a study into the problem of sin. From this dramatic story, Dr. Macartney draws three points which reveal truths regarding sin. The confession which Achan made to Joshua is used from which to draw these truths. In this confession Achan said:

I saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver and a wedge of gold...then I coveted them, and took them; and, behold, they are hid in the earth in the midst of my tent.¹

By bringing in other individuals who went through similar experiences of sin, Dr. Macartney is able to strengthen this Biblical truth about the beginning and progress of sin. Beginning with Adam and Eve who sinned when they ate of the forbidden fruit of the garden of Eden, down to the New Testament example of Judas who was enticed into sin when he saw the silver in the hands of the Pharisees, the

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1. Macartney, Wisest Fool, p. 37

beginning and progress of sin is illustrated by numerous examples. The problem of temptation and fall into sin has not only been shown as an incident in the life of Achan but it has been vividly illustrated by the lives of five men of the Old and New Testaments who had a similar experience. To Dr. Macartney these men and these experiences speak much more forcibly than any doctrinal preaching upon the nature of sin.

The second truth which the story of Achan reveals is that sin finds the sinner out. By a skillful use of details which draw attention to the fact that the crime of Achan was very difficult to detect Dr. Macartney shows that sin eventually finds the sinner out. Again, after drawing this fact from the crime of Achan illustrations taken from the lives of Moses, Judas, Peter and the brethren of Joseph show that even though a sin may go undetected, yet it eventually catches up with the sinner.

How sin hurts and hinders others, is the final revelatory truth drawn from the story of Achan and his sin.

Here was a secret sin if ever there was one. None of all the army and camp of Israel had seen it, and yet its effect upon Israel was disastrous...that sin brought defeat to his country on the field of battle. It brought disgrace and ruin to his family.¹

The sin of Achan, although it might have appeared like only a crime which Achan committed against the unknown owner of the property he stole, yet grew to such proportions that it defeated an entire

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1. Ibid. p. 41

army.

As will be noticed in this sermon, Dr. Macartney uses a method whereby events in the life of an individual are described and from these incidents truths are drawn. These points are then further strengthened by numerous citations of similar events from the lives of other men in the Bible.

(4) Use of Illustrations

In the message under discussion, almost all of the supporting illustrative material is Biblical biography. Events in the lives of eleven different characters are used to illustrate truths in the sermon. Only two illustrations from sources other than the Bible are used.

In speaking of the beginning and progress of sin, Dr. Macartney gives incidents in the lives of Adam and Eve, Ahab, Samson, Gehazi and Judas to show that in each case the pattern of the progress of sin was the same. In each instance the individuals first saw, then coveted, then took and finally suffered for their sin.¹

Incidents in the lives of Moses, Judas, Peter and the brethren of Joseph are used to illustrate the second point of this sermon, how sin finds the sinner out. Moses after killing an Egyptian thought his crime was undetected. However, the following day "when he saw two Israelites fighting with one another, and sought to separate them one of them said to him: 'Intendest thou to kill me, as thou killedst

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1. Macartney, Wisest Fool, p. 37

the Egyptian?' And Moses feared, and said, 'Surely this thing is known.'¹

To illustrate the reaction to sin once it has been committed, incidents from the lives of three men of the Bible are used. The conscience of Judas so worked upon him that he flung down the bloody money before the priests and said, "I have sinned."² Peter looking back upon his sin in denying the Lord went out and wept bitterly. The final illustration of reaction to sin is the case of the brethren of Joseph when Joseph demanded that one of them be left as a hostage until they brought down their youngest brother. The conscience-smitten men said to one another:

We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us.³

The final point of the sermon, how sin hurts and hinders others, is illustrated by Jeroboam's life. Dr. Macartney brings out the fact that long after Jeroboam was dead, the sin which he committed haunted and injured the nation.⁴

As has been noted, great use has been made of incidents in the lives of Bible characters to clearly illustrate the points of the sermon. Of the eleven illustrations used in the above sermon, only two were from sources other than the Bible. This stress upon Biblical biography as a source of illustrations is in keeping with the purpose

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1. Ibid. p. 39
2. Ibid. p. 40
3. Ibid. p. 41
4. Ibid. p. 42

of Dr. Macartney. His purpose is to let these lives speak for him. He has stated his reason for reference to these men and the great advantage derived from it as follows:

It is not possible to preach on the great men of the Bible without speaking practical and timely truths to the people, and in a way that everyone will understand. The great advantage of such preaching is that you summon these men themselves into the pulpit and permit them to preach for you.¹

(5) Application of Sermon Points

Much of the force of Dr. Macartney's preaching comes from what could be called implied application. The simplicity and clarity with which he preaches makes his points of application very obvious. By precept and by the many examples he cites, the communication of the point to the hearer is facilitated. However, on occasion he does give one or two sentences to make even more obvious what is required of the listener. In drawing an application to the beginning and progress of sin he concludes that section of his sermon with the following statement:

The time to resist sin is when it first displays itself and flashes its false attractiveness before us. If it is not resisted then, the next step is to covet, and then to take, and then to seek in vain to hide what has been done.²

No attempt is made to point out to the listener the application from the second point of the sermon, on how sin finds the sinner out. Rather it is assumed that the point is so obviously made that application of this truth to the life of the hearer will be under-

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1. Macartney, Greatest Men of the Bible, p. 6
2. Macartney, Wisest Fool, p. 41

stood without explanation as to how it should be applied.

However, in concluding the sermon and making an appeal for a godly life to prevent a hindrance to the progress of the church and the word of God the following appeal is made:

Who can tell how much the work and battle of the church is held up and hindered because of Achans in the camp? How solemn that makes the responsibility of every soldier in the ranks of the army of the Lord, of every professed follower of Christ in the church! To whatever degree you are unworthy or un-Christlike in spirit, in word, or in deed, to that extent you hinder the work of the church and hold up the progress of the army of the Lord.¹

2. A Typical Sermon on Redemption

Dr. Macartney places great stress on the doctrine of sin in his preaching. The reason for this emphasis is that by showing sin in its awfulness he can show in contrast the need of God's grace and His redemptive love. The message of redemption is very prominent among his sermons. The sermon entitled "Interview of Jesus with a Criminal" has been chosen as representative of his treatment of a sermon on redemption.

a. The Outline of a Sermon Entitled "Interview of Jesus with a Criminal."²

(1) Introduction

(a) Description of background scene

i. The centurion is ordered to crucify Jesus along with two others.

ii. As was the custom, a placard carried by a herald was marched in front of each criminal stating their crime.

(b) Description of procession to Calvary

i. Jerusalem was filled with many strangers who had come

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1. Ibid. p. 41

2. Clarence Macartney: Great Interviews of Jesus, p. 170-180

to the city for the Passover.

- ii. Crowds of people, including priests, followed the procession to Calvary shouting cruel jests.
- iii. A few women who had known Jesus, followed weeping.
- iv. Simon of Cyrene was chosen to carry the cross of Jesus.
- (c) Description of scene at Calvary
 - i. The doomed men were stripped of clothing and nailed to the cross.
 - ii. Medicated wine taken by two thieves but not by Jesus.
 - iii. The enemies of Jesus shouted and mocked at him.
 - iv. The two thieves also mocked him.
 - v. One of the thieves had a change of heart and looking toward Jesus said, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom."
 - vi. Jesus answered, "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise."
 - vii. "This incomparable scene upon the cross...is the beautiful climax to the life and passion of Christ. Here is all the gospel of repentance and faith and salvation."¹

(2) Body of Sermon

(a) Repentance

- i. The miracle of repentance is explained and illustrated in the repentance of the dying robber.
- ii. His repentance was sincere and genuine as evidenced by the following:
 - a. He confessed he was an evildoer.
 - b. He acknowledged the righteousness and justice of the penalty he was enduring.
 - c. He gave expression to the fear of God.

(b) Faith

- i. The faith of the thief is shown when he said to Jesus, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom."
 - a. It was a faith in the person of Christ.
 - b. It was a faith not based upon the testimony of history, Bible, or the church, but purely in the person of Christ.
- ii. The prayer of faith of the thief touched the heart of Christ.

(c) Salvation

- i. The end of repentance and faith is salvation. In answer to the thief's request, "Lord, remember me" Jesus answered, "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise."

(3) Conclusion

There is only one way to heaven, and that is the way the

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1. Ibid. p. 175

penitent thief traveled. There is only one gate into heaven, and that is the gate through which the penitent thief entered, the gate of repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. That gate is open today for you and for me. "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."¹

b. Analysis of Effective Elements of the Sermon

(1) A Live Recreation of Historical Setting

The atmosphere, the excitement, and the action of the crucifixion of Jesus are brought before the congregation as Dr. Macartney in his imagination recreates the crucifixion scene. Details are presented to help transport the listeners to Calvary. With psychological insight Dr. Macartney peers into the life of Pilate, as he watches the procession of the three condemned men marching to their death. This scene is described as follows:

Standing at the window of his palace, Pilate watched Jesus being led away with the cross upon his back. He gazed for a moment and then, turning away with a troubled look in his face, said to his wife Claudia, whose dream had warned him not to do that thing which now he could not undo, "An innocent man!"²

Even though such an interpolation is fanciful, yet by its use the setting is given life and vitality. The facts of the Biblical scene are not coldly presented, but through use of imagination the scene becomes one of reality.

The same type of description is given as Dr. Macartney narrates the procession moving through the main street of Jerusalem. After indicating that Jerusalem was filled with strangers who arrived

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1. Ibid. p. 180
2. Ibid. p. 171

to celebrate the Passover, a description of this crowd is given as they took part in the procession.

As they passed along, the crowds fell in behind, eager to see the end of these dangerous men. Even the priests forgot their dignity and high office and walked along with the rabble mob, shouting their imprecations and cruel jests. The centurion marched imperiously ahead; the soldiers were on either side of the condemned men and behind them, sometimes roughly pushing the crowd aside and sometimes with their scourges and their curses urging the three men with the crosses on their backs to get along faster. In the crowd, however, there were a few of the women who had known Jesus and loved him and they followed after him, weeping and wailing, their tears and their cries a strange contrast to the curses and blows of the soldiers and the jeers of the spectators.¹

Here again the tense atmosphere which prevailed at this time in Jerusalem is recounted. Even though these scenes are not described in the Biblical account of the crucifixion, yet in actuality they might very well have taken place. This type of recreation could by no means be considered as taking liberty with the Scriptures, for the feeling and atmosphere of the scene have been correctly portrayed.

(2) Psychological Analysis of Biblical Characters Involved

Dr. Macartney follows the actions preceding the prayer of the thief in an attempt to ascertain what caused the change of heart. As Christ hung between the two criminals both men are pictured as reviling Jesus along with the crowd. In searching for the motive for such action Dr. Macartney suggest a number of possible reasons. He says:

Perhaps they had a faint hope that by thus joining in reviling Jesus they might gain at the last moment a reprieve. Or it may

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1. Ibid. p. 171

have been the natural explosion of tortured men and wicked hearts. Perhaps in the prison they had said one to another, "The time has come for us to die; but remember what we always vowed, that we will die cursing and blaspheming."¹

This constant probing for the purpose behind the actions of individuals is very common in the preaching of Dr. Macartney, as he seeks to find the hidden psychological motives of an individual which cause him to act in a particular way. With the change of heart on the part of the repentent thief this same probing into his reason for repenting and accepting Jesus as the Christ is carried out. Even though Dr. Macartney states that it is unknown to him what "agencies the Holy Spirit used to work the great change in the heart of that wicked and cruel man,"² yet he asks himself numerous questions as to the probable cause.

Was it the taunts of the mob? Was it the way Jesus had claimed to be a king and said that he was the Son of God? Was it the sometimes softening effect of pain?...Whatever it was, the man's heart was changed. He repented of his sin.³

To further show the great faith in the power of Christ which this man had, a list of the advantages which one has in this generation for faith in Christ is given. This list includes the testimony of the resurrection, the Bible, history, and the church. In contrast, Dr. Macartney says:

...the poor thief had none of these advantages. He had no prophet, no miracles, no resurrection from the dead; and yet there he was, hanging on a cross in that dark and dreadful hour, putting his trust in the power and mercy and forgiving love of

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1. Ibid. p. 174
2. Ibid. p. 175
3. Ibid. p. 176

Jesus, coming to an understanding of the meaning of his death which Jesus had so often and so vainly sought to explain to his own disciples.¹

By contrasting the advantages which we have with those of the thief, the great faith of this man is shown. Such a contrast serves to show how great this faith was.

(3) Evaluation of Revelatory Truth

The action of the thief on the cross, as he changed his attitude toward Jesus from one of scorn to one of acceptance, forms the basis for the three truths which Dr. Macartney draws from this scene. In introducing these truths, Dr. Macartney says:

This incomparable scene upon the cross--what the thief said to his fellow thief, what he said to Jesus, and what Jesus said to him--is the beautiful climax to the life and passion of Christ. Here is all the gospel of repentance and faith and salvation.²

From the confession which this criminal made of the righteousness and justice of the penalty which he was enduring Dr. Macartney draws the conclusion of true repentance. He bases this conclusion of genuine repentance upon two statements of the thief to his fellow partner in crime. First he said, "...we receive the due reward for our deeds"³ and later to show his fear of God he said to his fellow robber, "Dost not thou fear God?"⁴ From these two statements Dr. Macartney shows that they indicate a genuine and a sincere repentance on the part of the dying thief.

The step of faith which this dying man took is shown by his

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1. Ibid. p. 177
2. Ibid. p. 175
3. Ibid. p. 176
4. Ibid. p. 176

statement to Jesus, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." Dr. Macartney emphasises very strongly the tremendous faith necessary for this man, inasmuch as he lacked all the evidences regarding the Person of Christ and His life which accrue to people in this present generation. This step of faith is significant for another reason. The thief on the cross was the first to discover the heart of the Gospel.

The third theological truth which is brought out in this sermon is how salvation comes to a sinner. It is pointed out that this salvation comes to a simple plea of faith. In answer to the thief's request for remembrance when Christ came into his kingdom, Jesus answers "today shalt thou be with me in Paradise."¹

It is very enlightening to notice the manner by which a discussion of these theological truths is achieved from the reactions of this one man. In each case, the starting point is a statement or question from the thief as he hangs on the cross. From these statements the simple basic facts of repentance, faith and salvation are illustrated. The operation of each of these truths is so obvious that no attention is drawn to how these truths are to be applied. The progressive steps of salvation are very simply explained, the prerequisites being repentance and faith. Thereby the basic truths of Christianity, which are at the center of Christianity are vividly and simply illustrated by the thief on the cross in his dying moments.

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1. Ibid. p. 177

(4) Use of Illustrations

One of the elements which has been shown to be very strong in the preaching of Dr. Macartney is his ability to place himself in the action and situation of the scene which he is describing and to draw from this point of vantage elements of interest which make his sermons come alive. This technique is used to illustrate moods and points which need clarification.

To show the probable reaction of the other criminal to the confession and repentance of the penitent thief, an imaginary conversation is recreated between the two. In answer the question, "Dost not thou fear God?" the unrepentent thief says:

When did you turn preacher? You talk as if you had a better record than I have. Let me remind you of a few things. Do you remember the old merchant from Antioch whom you strangled for his gold and threw into the Orontes River? Do you remember that child that you stole from the villa at Tiberias and flung into the Jordan when we were closely pursued? Do you remember that young ruler whom you tortured and mutilated until he revealed to you the hiding place of his treasure? Do you remember that daughter of the captain of the guard whom you raped and defiled?¹

The effect of such an illustration, and it is an illustration of the atmosphere on Calvary, is to give life and vividness to the scene. Just as some types of illustrations help clarify a doctrinal issue, this type of imaginative illustration gives clarity to the mood of the scene.

Another type of illustration is used in this sermon to describe the angels in heaven as they debated as to who would be the

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1. Ibid. p. 176

first one admitted to the Kingdom of Heaven upon completion of the redemptive work of Christ. In this debate a number of saints from the Old Testament dispensation are paraded before the congregation, including Abraham, Moses, Noah, David, Isaiah, and John the Baptist, to provide a contrast to the penitent thief who first entered the Kingdom of Heaven. This is a type of illustration which is very common in the preaching of Dr. Macartney. He often goes through a series of men of the Bible briefly calling them to the attention of the hearers, in order to give stress to a particular point under discussion.

In the later preaching of Dr. Macartney, his illustrations are drawn from incidents in the Bible. He makes the Scriptures illustrate Scripture. In some of his earlier books, many of his illustrations were drawn from secular sources. This shift has been gradual but it is very marked as his earlier sermons are compared with his more recent preaching.

(5) Application of Sermon Points

This sermon under consideration is one in which Dr. Macartney has felt that the applications which should be drawn by the hearer are too obvious to be elaborated upon. Consequently the story is simply and plainly told, letting the sermon speak for itself. Nothing is said regarding how the listeners should repent, or even of the necessity of repentance. Nor is any direct application made from the other two points of the sermon. The last paragraph in the sermon is the only reference to direct application. It is the only indication of what Dr. Macartney feels should be the response of the listener. In this paragraph he says:

There is only one way to heaven, and that is the way the penitent thief traveled. There is only one gate into heaven, and that is the gate through which the penitent thief entered, the gate of repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. That gate is open today for you and for me. "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."¹

The manner in which the sermon is preached necessitated no further application. The transition from the experience of the thief to the experience of those hearing this sermon would be easy to make. It is obvious by the manner of preaching what applications are necessary.

3. A Typical Sermon on the Christian Life of Prayer

Dr. Macartney in his introduction to one of his books of sermons, Trials of Great Men, states that when a preacher deals with the lives of the great personalities of the Scripture he is always then coming close to the lives of men and women today. In a series of sermons preached on the trials of men of the Bible, a sermon on the incident of Jacob wrestling with an angel is included. It is this sermon which is used to parallel the third sermon studied in the previous chapter.

a. The Outline of a Sermon Entitled "The Trial of Jacob"²

(1) Introduction

- (a) What happened to Jacob on the night he wrestled with a mysterious antagonist is not quite clear. Yet following the struggle, life was never the same for Jacob.
- (b) This incident is typical of what happens in life--God wrestling with man trying to bring out the spiritual and heavenly and man wrestling with God resisting God and his Holy Spirit.
- (c) A recounting of the life of Jacob in which the following points are brought out.
 - i. After twenty years in Mesopotamia, Jacob was now on his way back to Canaan a prosperous man.
 - ii. He was uneasy because he remembered the crime he had committed against his brother.
 - iii. Jacob had sent messengers ahead to sound out Esau and to seek his favor.

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1. Ibid. p. 180

2. Clarence Macartney: Trials of Great Men, p. 32-42

- iv. When Jacob heard that Esau was approaching with 400 men he called upon God in prayer.
- v. He divided his people and possessions into two bands and sent them across the Jabbok while he was left alone.
- vi. While Jacob waits on the banks of the Jabbok, he encounters an unknown adversary who wrestles with him till dawn.
 - a. Jacob states he will not permit the angel to go until he blesses him.
 - b. The angel surrenders to Jacob's instant prayer and blesses him with a change of name and change of heart.

(2) Body of Sermon

- (a) Spiritual changes are wrought by trial and adversity. It was a painful desperate struggle that Jacob had with his adversary, but he discovered that the wrestler had power to bless him.
 - i. The disciples while fishing thought they were going to perish because of a storm. When Jesus appeared to them on that stormy night the disciples thought him to be a ghost. But they soon discovered that the ghost was Jesus and all their fears were gone when they heard him say, "It is I; be not afraid."
 - ii. Joseph was falsely accused of sin and put in prison. Even though at the time it looked as if this experience would work against him, in the end this incident proved to be a blessing.
 - iii. An illustration is given of how sorrow in the life of William Taylor was used as a constant inspiration in the preaching of this minister.
- (b) The change in the life of Jacob came when he made the prayer, "I will not let thee go except thou bless me."
 - i. He was prepared for this prayer by the events which led up to the wrestling.
 - ii. Even though his dealings with Esau were disreputable, yet he was eager for a spiritual blessing. This blessing came when he prayed.

(3) Conclusion

- (a) How hard do you struggle with your angel? The same angel comes to struggle with you and has the same power to bless you; but your pride, your self-sufficiency, your self-righteousness must first be overcome. Do you resist the Holy Spirit? Do you strive against the angel? Or will you strive now to hold him?¹

(1) A Live Recreation of Historical Setting

The basis for this sermon is the retelling of the Biblical narrative of the episode of Jacob wrestling with the angel. Exactly

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1. Ibid. p. 42

half of the sermon is taken up with just the recounting of this event without making any applications or stressing any particular point. It is only after the completion of the account that the points of the sermon appear.

In achieving the historical setting, the background of the story is brought into play. Beginning twenty years previous to the event of wrestling with the angel, occurrences in the life of Jacob are recounted one by one. To bring reality and life into this recreation, details of many of these events are brought out. Dr. Macartney speaks of the meeting between Jacob and Rachael; of how Jacob wrestled with Laban and won; of the crime which he committed against Esau. All this serves to put not only life into the story by citing these specific events, but it also provides the listener with the knowledge of where this event fits into the life of Jacob and why it occurred.

By attention to details as well as by his clarity in describing a scene, interest is generated and life brought into the story. An example of this skill is found in the following description of Jacob's dividing of his possession:

Frightened though he was, Jacob's native shrewdness did not forsake him in this crisis. He divided his people and his flocks and herds into two bands and sent them across the brook Jabbok ahead of him, his thought being that if Esau fell upon one of these bands, the other might possibly escape. Thus his flocks and herds and wives and children and all his possessions crossed the Jabbok and disappeared in the distance, until even the faintest tinkly of a bell on one of the goats was no longer heard... In this hour, in this night, Jacob is left alone. He is not to hear the lowing of his herds, the cries of the little children, nor the affectionate voice of the beloved Rachael.¹

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1. Ibid. p. 35

As will be noted in this description, an attempt is made by Dr. Macartney to give life to this narrative by including items which appeal to the sense of hearing. For example, he refers to "The faintest tinkle of a bell" and the absence of the "lowing of the herds, the cries of the little children, the affectionate voice of the beloved Rachael." Such references help to put reality into the story and give vitality to the sermon.

(2) Psychological Analysis of Biblical Character Involved

Behind the struggle which Jacob had with the angel, lay a basic fear. This fear was engendered by the actions of Jacob against his brother Esau. Dr. Macartney slowly works out the events in the life of Jacob which brought about this fear. To begin with, the fact of a definite change in the life of Jacob is cited. Just exactly what brought about this change is not quite clear. Speaking of the change in the life of Jacob, Dr. Macartney says:

He passed through some great change, experienced some great blessing. But just what it was we cannot know. Jacob himself was unable to tell all that had happened to him, for when he asked his mysterious antagonist, "Tell me, I pray thee, thy name," the wrestler answered, "Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name?" Yet when the struggle was over and the angel had departed, life was never again the same for Jacob. He tells us what he had passed through, what he had experienced, by the name that he gave to the place where he had wrestled with the angel. "Peniel," he called it--"I have seen God face to face."¹

Taking this wrestling in a spiritual sense and putting a psychological meaning to it, Dr. Macartney feels that this is the constant struggle between man and God. God trying to bring out the eternal that is in man, and man resisting God in this work.

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1. Ibid. p. 32

Another theme which runs through the character study of Jacob in this sermon is the effect which sin has upon an individual. As Jacob made his way back to Canaan, he is pictured as uneasy and unhappy. Even though twenty years had passed since the crime against Esau was committed, still the guilt feeling lingered on in the heart of Jacob. Time did not erase the guilty conscience which followed this sin. Dr. Macartney speaking of the lingering influence of sin states:

Sin and remorse are not subject to time. They are timeless, ageless. The sin a man commits today, when conscience and memory bring it back to him twenty years from today, yes, fifty or seventy years from today, will be as fresh as it was twenty seconds after he committed the sin. "Be sure your sin will find you out!" The likelihood is that it will find a man out in time, as Jacob feared that his sin was finding him out. It will find him out in conscience as Jacob's sin found him out as he drew near to the borders of Seir. It will find a man out, finally, inevitably, inexorably, in eternity.¹

It was this constant thought of his sin which caused Jacob to find the solitude along the Jabbok.

Not only was this sin causing him uneasiness and unhappiness but his fear of the consequences of this sin drove him to prayer. It was not a deep piety which drove Jacob to his knees but rather just plain fear. His prayer at this time very definitely bears out this contention of Dr. Macartney.

Even though it is stated in the beginning of the sermon that it is not known what change came over Jacob, yet mention is made of the fact that the change did come through adversity and trial. The result of that struggle with the angel was that Jacob received a new knowledge

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1. Ibid. p. 34

of God and found a new trust in God. All this was accomplished because Jacob prayed. Speaking of this change, Dr. Macartney says, "The change came for Jacob when, weak and halt and lame, he made that prayer: 'I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.'"¹

The life of Jacob was changed from the life of a schemer to a life of a "prince with God" through the series of incidents recounted above.

(3) Evaluation of Revelatory Truth

The first truth which is forcibly brought to the attention of the hearers is the lingering influence of Jacob's sin. Dr. Macartney brings out this truth by showing that even though twenty years had passed since the sin against Esau was committed, still the deed lingered in the conscience of Jacob. Time had not erased the scar.

The second truth which derived from this story is the truth that fear often drives a man to prayer. The grim tidings that the messengers of Jacob brought to him reporting that Esau was approaching with 400 men sent the supplanter to his knees. His reaction to this news is shown by the following statement: "When Jacob heard that, he was all the more afraid and he called upon God in prayer."²

This conclusion that fear motivated his prayer can very legitimately be drawn because in the prayer Jacob brings out his great fear when he says, "For I fear him, lest he will come and smite me and the mother with the children."³

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1. Ibid. p. 40
2. Ibid. p. 34
3. ¹ibid. p. 35

Fear undoubtedly is not the best motive for prayer, but in the case of Jacob it produced the desired results.

Dwelling upon the effect which the struggle with the angel had upon Jacob, Dr. Macartney shows that adversity and trial oftentimes produce spiritual changes in a man. Trial and adversity in the form of the all night struggle produced this result in Jacob's life. Speaking of this change, Dr. Macartney says:

That was a painful, desperate, terrifying, all-night struggle that Jacob had with his adversary, but before it was over, he discovered that the midnight wrestler had power to bless him.¹

To further amplify this truth, numerous illustrations are given to show that this truth is born out not only in the Bible but also in the lives of men outside the Bible. These illustrations will be discussed in the section below.

In summary, Jacob's struggle was used to portray three truths: How sin will cause a man to fear. How that fear will drive a man to prayer. Finally, how adversity and trial can produce spiritual change in a life.

(4) Use of Illustrations

Dr. Macartney is very fond of using Biblical material for illustrative purposes. Although he often reaches out into the secular world for an illustration, still by far the majority of his illustrations come from within the Bible. This is well shown in this sermon where three out of four illustrations used come from the Bible.

Normally the illustrations which are used by Dr. Macartney

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1. Ibid. p. 38

are quite lengthy. He goes into detail to show how they apply to the point under discussion. Occasionally he does give just a passing reference to some parallel incident. This is the case with one of the illustrations used in this sermon. When speaking of the struggle between Jacob and God, a dispute which is indicative of the constant battle between good and evil in the world, Dr. Macartney makes a one sentence reference to the struggle between Michael and the devil for the body of Moses. No amplification is made of this event. It is just mentioned as further indication of the struggle between good and evil forces.

The other three illustrations, which are fairly lengthy, amplify one subject. They are used to show that "often God's providences will appear to us something other than they are."¹ The appearance of Jesus to his disciples on a stormy night frightened them into thinking he was a ghost. Yet they soon discovered that the ghost was the Master, and He allayed their fears with the words, "Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid."²

Another illustration showing that what appears to be an experience of defeat actually is a stepping stone to an abundant life is the story of Joseph. Dr. Macartney points out that when Joseph was sold to be a slave in Potiphar's household he might well have thought all things were against him. As it turned out, this was merely God's way of making "his name blessed to Israel and to the generations to come."³

The third illustration of seeming defeat turning out to be something useful is the story of William M. Taylor, a preacher of the

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1. Ibid. p. 38

2. Ibid. p. 39

3. Ibid. p. 39

last century. The last picture he saw as he left on a trip was the sight of his little daughter waving goodbye to him from her place in the window. He never saw her alive again. Sudden death took her the following morning. Speaking of this seeming defeat in the life and joy of Taylor, Dr. Macartney says:

At first it seemed to him a blow that staggered his faith and crushed his hopes and put out the lamp of his joy. But as the years went by and the vision of that child waving him farewell came back to him, it seemed to him as if God had sent her in the window of heaven to beckon him upward to his eternal home. "I would not give that memory for all the gold on earth," he said. "I would not part with the inspiration which it stirs within me for all that the world could bestow."

Whereas all the other illustrations are Biblical in their source, this one is the only one taken from a secular source.

One thing that is common in Dr. Macartney's use of illustrations is his use of a series as he has done here. Very often he will give three or four illustrations in a string to amplify some point in the sermon.

(5) Application of Sermon Points

This is another sermon where Dr. Macartney makes very few direct personal applications. The story is so simply and lucidly told that there would be very little difficulty on the part of anyone to apply the lessons and illustrations to himself. It is only as the sermon is nearing the conclusion that the first direct personal application is made.

While speaking of the repentance, the turning about which Jacob experienced at Peniel, an application is made as follows:

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This night when he wrestled with the angel marked the turning point, a change, in the life of Jacob. There were other events, no doubt, that prepared for it, but this was the decisive night. There is such a turning point in the history of the soul. On some journey you have felt as you went along that you had turned into the wrong road. Yet you were not quite sure, and you continued driving or walking along the road. At length you came to a dead end, or some other intimation that you were certainly off the road, and you turned about and went back. That was the turning point although the incidents that had gone before had prepared you for it, there was a definite moment when you turned about. So it is with repentance, with conversion, and with the new birth.¹

The above quotation which is an application of conversion is at the same time an explanation of this act as applied to the listener.

The only other direct application in this sermon is its conclusion. Here again it is in the form of an explanation rather than a positive incentive to action. Speaking of Jacob's determination not to permit the angel to escape until he had blessed him, Dr. Macartney makes the following observation and application:

Even in his dealings with Esau, shady and disreputable though they were, he had been eager for a spiritual blessing...How hard do you struggle with your angel? The same angel comes to struggle with you and has the same power to bless you; but your pride, your self-sufficiency, your self-righteousness, must first be overcome. Do you resist the Holy Spirit? Do you strive against the angel? Or will you strive now to hold him? And will you say to God who speaks to you by his Holy Spirit in the midnight struggles, in the sorrows of life, in the midday light and happiness and joy, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me?"²

Dr. Macartney has left it to the listener to apply the truths as they appear in the sermon. Even in these two cases, it will be noted that there is not a strong appeal toward application but the need for appropriating these truths is evident.

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1. Ibid. p. 40

2. Ibid. p. 41

D. Summary

In this chapter the elements which make the sermons of Dr. Macartney effective were discussed. Three sermons were analyzed to show how he used the lives of men of the Bible to portray Scriptural truths. These sermons were analyzed from the standpoint of five effective elements in his messages. A live recreation of the historical setting was achieved through the use of vivid imagination. The reasons behind the acts and deeds of the men were brought to light through a psychological analysis of the Bible characters. Effective use was made of illustrations, both secular and Biblical. Finally, it was shown that certain truths were brought forth and how these truths were applied.

By such an analysis of the sermons of Dr. Macartney, an insight was gained as to the means whereby he made his sermons effective.

CHAPTER III

COMPARISON OF THE BIOGRAPHICAL METHODS OF
ALEXANDER WHYTE AND CLARENCE MACARTNEY

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OF ALEXANDER WHYTE AND CLARENCE MACARTNEY

A. Introduction

In the first two chapters an analysis has been made of three representative sermons preached by each of these two men. These messages have been analyzed with the purpose of finding those elements in the sermons which contribute to making the sermon effective in presenting the truths derived from the study of various Biblical characters.

In this chapter, the study will be directed to a comparison of the techniques of these two men as found in their sermons. The purpose is to point out the likenesses and differences both in subject matter and style in the presentation of the truths of the Bible through biographical preaching. Even though their goal is the same, their method of achieving it differs in some respects.

B. Comparison of Subject Matter

The obvious reason for the comparison of the preaching methods of these two ministers is their common vehicle of presenting Scriptural truth through means of the biographical sermon. This method has been designated as psychological preaching. That is, actual experiences of Bible characters are used to show the practical outworking of the truths of the Scriptures. Through the religious experience of men of the Bible, truth is brought home in a practical concrete and

personal way.

1. Choice of Subject Matter

Both Dr. Whyte and Dr. Macartney stress the fact that they have chosen biographical preaching because they feel it is the best medium of getting the truths of the Bible across to the hearer. Dr. Whyte's intention and aim was to find the foundations in the lives of men and women of the Bible for their moral conduct.

Because of this stress, the subject of sin is very prominent in his preaching. As was shown previously¹ his desire was to be known as a specialist in the study of sin. Still it could not be said that he was a negative preacher for there is the element of grace which is constantly present as evidenced in his preaching.² Speaking of this dual stress upon sin and grace, one of his elders wrote of him,

No preacher has so often or so completely dashed me to the ground as has Dr. Whyte; but no man has ever more immediately or more tenderly picked me up and set me on my feet again.³

Dr. Macartney had the same evangelical motive which was found in Dr. Whyte's preaching. His desire was to see men won to the Lord. He had a strong aversion to what he called the "social gospel." Speaking of his motive for preaching and the subject of all his preaching, he says:

The preaching of the gospel is necessary, not only because men must have it to be saved, but because it is the only gospel by which men can be saved. It is one thing to preach the gospel as a way or a very good, or even the best way, and another thing to preach it as the only way. The gospel is both universal and exclusive—universal in that it is offered to all men, exclusive

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1. Cf. ante p. 20

2. Ante p. 11

3. Whyte, Lord, Teach us to Pray, p. xiii

in that it declares that it is the only way of salvation.¹

Dr. Macartney felt that through preaching biography, the Bible character was summoned to preach the great truths of the Bible. Speaking of the value of permitting these lives to speak for him, he said:

It is not possible to preach on the great men of the Bible without speaking practical and timely truths to the people, and in a way that everyone will understand. The great advantage of such preaching is that you summon these men themselves into the pulpit and permit them to preach for you.²

Both of these men saw that in the choice of subject matter, the biographical sermon was able to present the great truths of the Bible, especially the truths of salvation and Christian living in a practical and interesting manner. They used life-situations of men and women of the Bible to teach these truths.

2. Source of Illustrations

There is a great difference in the sources from which Dr. Whyte and Dr. Macartney draw their illustrations. Dr. Whyte's love for reading led him into an acquaintance with many works which had a marked bearing upon his illustrations. Quotations from secular sources as well as Bible expositors are frequently found in his sermons. Quotations from John Donne,³ Huysman,⁴ Jonathon Edwards,⁵ Lancelot Andrewes,⁶ and Thomas a' Kempis⁷ frequently appear. Among other expositors whose

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1. Macartney, Preaching Without Notes, p. 14

2. Macartney, Greatest Men of the Bible, p. 6

3. Ante, p. 28

4. Ante, p. 35

5. Ante, p. 35

6. Ante, p. 35

7. Alexander Whyte: Bible Characters, Gideon to Absalom, p. 92

works are quoted are John Henry Newman,¹ Goodwin,² Bishop Butler,³ Matthew Henry,⁴ and John Howe.⁵ In the messages of Dr. Macartney, the names of commentators rarely appear. Rather his illustrative material comes largely from the Bible which he considers as the best source from which to draw this material. In the sermons analyzed, this is clearly brought out. In one sermon alone⁶ eleven different Bible characters are brought into the sermon for illustrative purposes. Speaking of the use of the Bible as the primary source of illustrations Dr. Macartney says:

The greatest of all illustrations are the parables and the stories of the Bible, particularly those of the Old Testament. The parables of the Old Testament, not nearly so well known as those of the New Testament, afford the preacher not only a fertile field for illustrations of truth, but also a great lesson in the use of illustrations.⁷

Another difference in the use of illustrations is brought out when the length of the majority of illustrations is considered. On the whole, the illustrations of Dr. Whyte are a great deal shorter than those of Dr. Macartney.

3. Emphasis Upon Particulars

"Generalities do not pierce deep,"⁸ is a favorite quotation of Dr. Whyte. Throughout his messages this thought is borne out. The lessons are drawn not in broad terms but rather in specific acts to be

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1. Alexander Whyte: Bible Characters, Gideon to Absalom, p. 92
2. Ibid. p. 157
3. Ibid. P. 114
4. Whyte, Gideon to Absalom, p. 96
5. Alexander Whyte, Bible Characters, Our Lord's Characters, p. 103
6. Ante. p. 54
7. Macartney, Preaching Without Notes, p. 35
8. Barbour, op. cit. p. 305

done. When, for example, he speaks of pride or lack of consideration of others, he has specific instances to show and illustrate these subjects.

Dr. Andrew Blackwood brings out the point that every one of the outstanding preachers who stresses biographical preaching relies on facts. He states that they rely on "facts from life, facts about persons, facts from biography."¹

In the preaching of Dr. Whyte this emphasis upon particulars rather than vague generalities is very strongly brought out in the sermon entitled, "The Penitent Thief." While speaking of the possibility of the thief's close association with Jesus, numerous concrete suggestions are brought out to give definiteness to the sermon.²

Dr. Macartney has the same emphasis upon particulars. He does not paint his subjects, such as sin, in gray abstractions. He uses concrete evidence to show the sinfulness of sin. Particular sins are pointed out in the lives of men of the Bible to show its operation. Speaking of his method of stressing the particular he says:

Our plan is to show the sadness of sin not by abstract argument or reasoning, but by illustration in the lives of men.³

Emphasis upon the particular both in the messages of Dr. Whyte and Dr. Macartney is one of the factors which gives vitality and interest to their sermons.

C. Comparison of Style

A generation of time separates the preaching of these two

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1. Andrew Blackwood: Biographical Preaching for Today, p. 121
2. Ante p. 23
3. Clarence Macartney: Greatest Words of the Bible, p. 13

men. Consequently there would naturally be a different stress in the style of preaching. This is quite evident in the reading of the sermons. The sermons of Dr. Whyte have a heaviness to them which is not found in those of Dr. Macartney. However, the basic factors which make sermons live are found in the sermons of both men.

1. A Lively Imagination.

Dr. Blackwood has said:

In any list of ministerial powers he (the minister) ought to put imagination first. As Sir James Barrie would say, "If a preacher has imagination, he may not need much else, and if he does not have it, nothing else can take its place."¹

Without a doubt, it is the power and use of a lively imagination which has caused these two men to be outstanding preachers. A lively imagination is the chief difference between a master preacher and a mechanical sermon maker. It is the ability to see the truths of a Bible narrative and then to share these truths with others.

The imagination of Dr. Whyte is not only operative in the description of individual acts, or scenes, but it is also used to pierce into the inward parts of man to reveal what is hidden there.

Dr. Macartney is no less a master at the use of imagination than Dr. Whyte. His ability not only to see the truths of a story but also to paint it in word pictures is the primary factor in making his sermons vivid and interesting. In the three sermons analyzed this imagination has shown through on almost every page. As indicative of the creative imagination of Dr. Macartney, the description of the

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1. Blackwood, Biographical Preaching for Today, p. 149

the conversation between the two thieves on the cross is an excellent example.¹

Without the dramatic quality given to sermons by these two men through the use of lively imagination, their sermons would be dry, uninteresting lectures.

2. Method of Application of Sermon

In biographical preaching there is not the necessity for a strong application. Normally the applications desired are so clear that it is not necessary to stress the action required. Neither Dr. Whyte nor Dr. Macartney makes strong emphasis upon application. However, their applications, when they are made, are practical. They are for the most part implied.

Dr. Macartney varies somewhat in his manner of applying Scriptural truths. At times he will make the application as he narrates the story.² Other times the application is made after he has finished the Biblical narration.³ Dr. Whyte on the other hand, uses only the former method.

The applications in the messages of Dr. Macartney are usually motivations toward principles, such as having a good conscience,⁴ whereas the applications of Dr. Whyte are toward concrete practical things to be done.⁵

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1. Ante p. 64
2. Macartney, *Trials of Great Men*, p. 55
3. Macartney, *Chariots of Fire*, p. 43
4. Macartney, *Wiseest Fool*, p. 104
5. Ante p. 19

3. Psychological Analysis of Biblical Characters

Both Dr. Whyte and Dr. Macartney have a deep insight into the psychology of men. They are able to delve into the characters of individuals and point out what motives are behind their acts.

The points previously mentioned in this chapter contribute to the psychological analysis of the Biblical characters. The use of illustrations, emphasis upon particulars, and imagination all aid in an analysis of the Bible men under discussion.

The manner of dealing with the Bible characters in attempting to find the motive for action is very much the same. In the sermon on Achan, both ministers stress the same steps in the fall of Achan,¹ which began with the sight of the object and ended with the taking of it. Both men constantly go back behind the act to the motive to find the cause for the action.² As would be expected, Dr. Whyte and Dr. Macartney make full use of imagination as they seek the background and motives which lead to acts. For example even though they arrive at different conclusions as to the motivating factors of a deed, yet their method of building a background for their case is the same. A lively imagination is used in both instances.³

Another likeness in their techniques is the manner in which they back up the pattern of action in one man by many examples. In the sermon on Achan, lives which show a parallel progression in sin similar to that of Achan are brought before the hearer.⁴

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1. Cf. Ante p. 14 and p. 50

2. Cf. Ante p. 22 and p. 60

3. Cf. Ante p. 32 and p. 69

4. Cf. Ante p. 15 and p. 50

As has been seen, basically their method of seeking the inner workings of man is the same. A difference was detected in that Dr. Whyte puts a greater stress upon the part circumstances play in a life to motivate it to action than does Dr. Macartney.

D. Summary

This chapter has considered the various likenesses and differences in the biographical methods of Dr. Whyte and Dr. Macartney.

First, a comparison was made of the subject matter with which they dealt. Although both men put their emphasis on biographical preaching, their manner of illustrating sermons was quite different. Dr. Whyte was fond of using quotations from many and varied sources. Dr. Macartney drew most of his illustrations directly from the Bible itself. The stress on particulars and facts both in the analysis of the Bible characters and in illustrations was common to both.

The last part of the chapter dealt with a comparison in style. The factor which made their sermons live was the use of a lively imagination. Through the use of imaginative insight into the motives of actions in the lives of men of the Bible, life was brought into the sermon. Neither preacher had strong applications. It was shown that in biographical preaching there usually is not the need for a strong application. Rather in this type of preaching the sermons are clear enough for the listener to imply what action should be taken.

Though there were differences in use of subject matter and style, yet the one element above all else which makes the sermons of

these two men live is their ability to use imagination.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

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A. Summary

The purpose of this thesis, as stated in the introduction, has been to make a comparative study of the biographical preaching of Dr. Alexander Whyte and Dr. Clarency Macartney. This study was undertaken in order to find those elements which made the preaching of these two ministers effective.

The first part of Chapter I gave information as to the background and training of Dr. Whyte. The second part of this chapter was given over to an analysis of three typical sermons. The second chapter told of the training and background of Dr. Macartney, together with an evaluation of preaching as evidenced in his book, Preaching Without Notes. The last part of this chapter was an analysis of three typical sermons of Dr. Macartney. The third chapter was a study in the likenesses and differences in the sermons of these two men.

It was seen in the first chapter that many influences worked upon the life of Alexander Whyte to bring him to a mature spiritual preacher. Even though he was an illegitimate child, still his mother was able to surround him with a strong religious atmosphere. His Sabbath-school teacher, James Kennedy, and his first minister, Daniel Cormick, also had much to do with the early religious training of Alexander. Following the completion of his university training,

he entered the seminary at New College at Edinburgh. Dr. Whyte was thirty years old when in 1866 he finished his schooling for the ministry and became a colleague to Dr. John Roxburgh in Free St. John's in Glasgow.

The last part of the first chapter was devoted to an analysis of three typical biographical sermons of Dr. Whyte. The sermons analyzed were chosen to follow the course of a normal Christian life. That is, the first sermon was one on the sinful condition of man; the second a sermon on redemption; the third a sermon on the Christian life of prayer. These messages were studied in relation to the five following questions:

1. How was the historical setting recreated?
2. How does the minister account for the actions of Bible characters involved?
3. What truths are revealed through the study of this character?
4. How are illustrations used?
5. What applications are made of the points of the sermon?

The answers to these questions pointed out the elements which made the sermons of Dr. Whyte effective. It was shown that in the case of each of these questions the factor above all else which made his sermons effective and which is woven into every phase of his preaching, is a lively imagination.

In the second chapter, the first section dealt with the background and training of Clarence Macartney. In contrast to the life of Dr. Whyte, Clarence Macartney had the privilege of a good family background. He was the son of a manse. Early in his university

career he showed ability at public speaking and was very active in debating at the University of Wisconsin. Following graduation from Princeton Theological Seminary in 1902 he was ordained and installed as minister of the First Presbyterian Church in Paterson, New Jersey. He was minister of the First Presbyterian Church of Pittsburgh for 25 years before retiring in 1953.

Following the section on the life of Clarence Macartney, an evaluation of preaching was given as found in his book on homiletics entitled, Preaching Without Notes. Three main points were discussed-- the preacher and his message; the preacher and his illustrations; the preacher and biographical sermons. It was shown that Dr. Macartney felt the sermon should have one primary aim in view. That aim was to "convert the sinner to the will of God." It was further learned that the Bible was the main source of illustrative material for Dr. Macartney. Finally it was shown in this section that biographical preaching was one of the best avenues to bring out the truths of the Bible.

The final portion of this chapter dealt with an analysis and discussion of three typical sermons which followed the same themes and took the same characters as the sermons of Dr. Whyte in the previous chapter. The same five questions listed above were asked when analyzing the messages of Dr. Macartney to ascertain his method of treating the Biblical characters.

The third chapter was a comparison of the likenesses and differences in the biographical sermons of Dr. Whyte and Dr. Macartney. The first part of the chapter gave a comparison of the use of subject

matter. Both men put great emphasis upon preaching an evangelical Gospel. They agreed on biographical preaching as the best means for getting the truths of the Bible across to the hearers. In discussing the source of illustrations, it was pointed out that Dr. Whyte made much use of quotations for supporting material whereas Dr. Macartney drew his illustrations largely from the Bible. One of the factors which was evident in the sermons of both men and which gave life and interest to their messages was the emphasis upon facts and particulars.

The second half of this chapter dealt with the comparison of style. It was shown that a lively imagination was the prime factor which gave life to the sermons of these men. A difference was noted in the method employed of applying points in a sermon. Although neither of them made a strong emphasis upon application, yet where applications were made those of Dr. Whyte were more practical and concrete. A deep insight into the motives behind the actions of men on the part of both Dr. Whyte and Dr. Macartney was very evident as they sought the reasons for actions.

In summary, without the creative imagination which was possessed by both of these men their sermons on Bible characters would not be the interesting, living studies that they are.

B. Conclusion

As has been noted throughout this thesis, even though there were differences in style and source material, yet basically the preaching of these two men was the same in that they took living situations and brought from these Bible truths. This is the uniqueness of

biographical preaching. It is God speaking in a living situation. The element which gives the biographical sermon its power is not that it is dogmatic, for it is not, but rather that people are given insights into the religious experiences of others. It is preached with the person in the pew directly in mind.

Through this study, the factor above all else which has been impressed upon the writer is the use of imagination. Imagination is a faculty which is vital in every type of preaching but particularly in biographical preaching. It is the element which gives life and vividness to the message.

This study has also given a new insight into the vast available source of illustrative material found in the Bible and how this material can be used effectively. It has provided a better understanding in the use of techniques for the presentation of truths of the Scriptures. Many of these techniques already have found their way into the sermons of the writer.

The life of Dr. Whyte has provided an understanding into the great importance which should be attached to early influences in life--the influence, for example, of a minister upon the life of a young man.

This thesis has aroused a curiosity to further pursue the study of biographical sermons as preached by other ministers.

Finally, the study has been an inspiration as the lives of these two men have been studied and their influence noted. Their devotion to the Lord and their untiring efforts to win men to Him has had a profound influence upon the writer.

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