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THE TEACHING OF THE SHORT TITLE  
PREACHING THE LAW AND PERSUASION  
OF PSYCHOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES

A Thesis Presented to the Faculty  
of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,  
Department of Practical Theology  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of  
Master of Sacred Theology

by  
Paul Andrew Otto  
June 1958

Approved by: Richard J. ...  
Henry W. ...

THE PREACHING OF THE LAW IN THE SERMONS OF GEISEMAN,  
FOSDICK, SPURGEON AND MACARTNEY AND THE APPLICATION  
OF PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSUASIVE PROCEDURES

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51808

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. INTRODUCTION . . . . .	1
II. STATING THE PROBLEM . . . . .	4
III. THE PREACHING OF THE LAW AND THE PERSUASIVE TECHNIQUE OF SUGGESTION . . . . .	9
Direct and Indirect Suggestion . . . . .	9
Techniques of Indirect Suggestion . . . . .	11
Conditions Favorable to Direct Suggestion . . . . .	14
Using Direct Suggestion and Self-Interest . . . . .	14
Camouflage of Direct Attack . . . . .	17
IV. THE PREACHING OF THE LAW AND THE PERSUASIVE TECHNIQUE OF COMMON GROUND . . . . .	19
Techniques of Establishing Common Ground . . . . .	21
V. O. A. GELSEMAN . . . . .	26
Personal and Impersonal References . . . . .	26
"Personal" Paragraphs Examined . . . . .	29
Paragraphs of Combined Approaches Examined . . . . .	32
"Impersonal" Paragraphs Examined . . . . .	35
VI. HARRY EMERSON FOSDICK . . . . .	38
Use of the Direct Attack . . . . .	44
Techniques of Indirect Attack . . . . .	46
The Use of Common Ground . . . . .	49
VII. CLARENCE E. MACARTNEY . . . . .	52
Use of Indirect Attack . . . . .	54
VIII. CHARLES H. SPURGEON . . . . .	57
Use of Indirect Techniques . . . . .	60
IX. CONCLUSION . . . . .	65
APPENDIX A Type of Relation of Law to Hearers in Sermons of O. A. Geiseman . . . . .	66

Chapter	Page
APPENDIX B Types of Paragraphs in Sermons of H. E. Fosdick . . . . .	67
BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	68

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

The second chapter of this thesis describes in full the problem which has stimulated this investigation. Stated briefly here, it involves man's natural rejection and refusal of the fact to confront and confess his guilt. Man most generally defends himself from the truth of God's Law in order to protect his own ego. This, of course, makes it difficult for the Gospel to have its full effect and application. This problem also emphasizes the importance of this study in that it tries to discover techniques whereby the Law may be preached so that it is not defended against by the hearers and the application of those techniques in the sermons of Geiseman, Fosdick, Macartney and Spurgeon.

The persuasive techniques that the writer has enlisted are taken almost exclusively from Robert T. Oliver's important work, The Psychology Of Persuasive Speech. Only occasionally do other authors help in amplifying his techniques. The procedures of persuasion are contained in chapters three and four. These techniques are given in as much detail as possible in these two chapters. However, it was found that each detail could not be applied to every sermon or even every preacher. Sometimes even major techniques, such as the use of Common Ground, could not be applied to a certain preacher at all, much less smaller aspects of the major techniques. Therefore,

at the end of chapter four, a condensation of the highlights of chapters three and four appears which was used as a guideline in applying the techniques to the sermons. The application of the smaller details of the techniques to the sermons had to be overlooked. For instance, the use of the camouflage of attack was a major technique that was looked for in the sermons. The writer, however, did not try to find application of all ten methods although they are listed, but merely application of the technique itself.

In addition, when examining the sermons of these men, the writer did not always attempt to use the techniques as a check list and report which techniques were in evidence and which not. The writer did not always attempt to mention the fact that a certain technique was absent in the sermons. The fact that it was not even mentioned is an indication that the technique was not evident in the sermons. Generally, those techniques that were employed to a great degree were discussed, sometimes to the exclusion of a technique that may have been evident to a very minor or lesser degree.

Six sermons were selected from the sermons of each of these men. They were considered by the writer as the most select examples of sermons with Law because of the size of the Law section and its explicit and direct Law statements. They were not chosen because they already manifested the use of the techniques. The six sermons by each man were selected from a total of 137 of Geiseman's sermons, seventy-six of

Fosdick's, ninety-two of Macartney's and sixty of Spurgeon's. Moreover, an attempt was made to collect them from their earlier as well as their later writings.

One limiting factor in this thesis is the subjective nature of the study. Many of the findings are a result of the writer's decision as to what was Law and what was not Law in any sermon, as well as, in many cases, when a technique did or did not apply. A rigid standard and set of definitions may have objectified the study more thoroughly, if they would have been available and workable. Despite these limiting factors, the general conclusions may still stand and ought not be effected in a major way by the subjectivity that entered into the study.



## CHAPTER II

### STATING THE PROBLEM

It is necessary that the Gospel be preached to people since it is God's power to create and strengthen faith and life. But as a necessary prerequisite to the Gospel, the Law must be preached in order to awaken need in a hearer for the Gospel. The Law must be preached in order to prepare the listener for the Gospel.

The Law plainly shows the sins of the listener to himself. The Law is designed to emphasize how helpless man is before God and reminds him of his nothingness. The Law always diagnoses how short of God man is and is a reminder of his deficiency of God. The Law thus prepares the hearer for the Gospel.

But this purpose and work of the Law as preparation for the Gospel is thwarted by man's own nature. When a person faces a deficiency in himself he begins to erect defenses for his protection. Some sort of discomfort is the immediate occasion for a defense mechanism.<sup>1</sup> In fact, some people finally become blind to their shortcomings and defeats because they have developed an attitude which is basically a defense

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<sup>1</sup>John J. B. Morgan, Keeping A Sound Mind (New York: Macmillan, 1937), p. 23.

against disappointments and frustrations.<sup>2</sup> So, when the Law is preached exposing one's sins and shortcomings, the automatic tendency is to structure defenses against the effects of the Law since it is too painful to one's ego and pride to admit his deficiencies.

The root of these defense actions is man's regard for his personal self. Man holds himself in high esteem. What ultimately is sacred to man is his "beloved ego." Self-aggrandizement is demanded in human nature. The root desire of man is selfish so that motives that at first were regarded as self-sacrificing are at bottom merely selfish. "Every man is inescapably a Nachtmensch; his most coveted experience is the enhancement of his self-esteem, and his most ineradicable trait is vanity."<sup>3</sup>

Allport bases his comments on studies made on the subject:

These experimental studies all seem to bear out the traditional dicta of philosophers: "The deepest principle of human nature is the desire to be appreciated"; "Self-defense is the nature's eldest law"; "By whatever name we call the ruling tyrant, Self is all in all." The centering of each life upon its own sense of integrity and self-importance is everywhere recognized. In psychology, Freud's concept of Narcissism has found a prominent place. Koffka postulates as a paramount principle of dynamic psychology "a force which propels the Ego upward." McDougall has found at the heart of every personality the central sentiment of self-regard, playing,

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<sup>2</sup>J. E. Wallace Wallin, Personality Maladjustments And Mental Hygiene (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1935), p. 254.

<sup>3</sup>Gordon W. Allport, Personality, A Psychological Interpretation (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1937), p. 169.

"the most powerful all-pervasive role in the higher life of man."<sup>4</sup>

The result of this self-regard is that tension and annoyance are created when we are accused of incompetence or dereliction. Rather than feel annoyance or tension, it is better to find an alibi so that suspicion of incompetence is lulled and tension is removed.<sup>5</sup>

When one slips constantly below a standard of conduct chosen for oneself (in morality or in the display of strength, wit, or grace) one usually finds extenuating circumstances to minimize the force of failure.<sup>6</sup>

It is the task of a defense mechanism, therefore, to protect the ego from distressing news, such as inadequacy, guilt, incompetence, failure and the like.

As the word is ordinarily employed, a defense mechanism or defense reaction is a mode of response adopted by the individual for the purpose of protecting himself from the knowledge or consequences of his own shortcomings. It is a method employed to circumvent or sidestep the feelings of chagrin or disappointment that result from conflicts or feelings of inadequacy. Essentially it is a form of deception by means of which the individual hopes to conceal the real facts from others or to deceive himself into believing that he can find security, peace, and recognition by faking or bluffing his way through difficulties. The human mind has been extraordinarily ingenious in inventing a great variety of defense mechanisms, some transparently simple and clumsy, others exceedingly adroit and cunning.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 170.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 179.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>Wallin, op. cit., p. 235.

Psychology generally employs a long list of defense mechanisms. Wallin simply describes one such mechanism as "buck passing." The ego must be defended against feelings of inferiority or guilt and must exalt and assert its own worthiness and vanity. So a person assumes an attitude of superiority and projects his blame onto others. We attempt to divert suspicion from ourselves by blaming others, "and we hasten to blame others before they have time to blame us."<sup>8</sup>

Or, people are apt to justify themselves when they encounter a failure. Almost automatically the first reaction to failure is self-justification. There are few compensatory mechanisms that are used more frequently than this device. If anything goes wrong, the person absolves himself by putting the blame on anything else imaginable.<sup>9</sup>

Even hypocrisy, Wallin says, is a species of defense. The sinner who is conscious of his wrong may try to convey the impression by his prayers and righteous behavior that he is a paragon of virtue. "Hypocrisy, undoubtedly, is often a defense against a prickly conscience."<sup>10</sup>

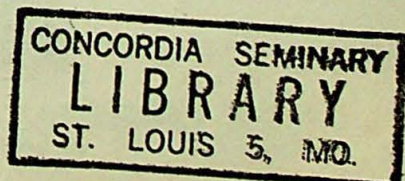
The list of defense mechanisms that people employ to protect themselves could be greatly extended. The principle is at least clear. When a hearer is presented with his shortcomings he tends to protect himself or at least minimize the

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<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 257.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 256.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 236.



truth of his deficiencies by establishing defense mechanisms. It is the function of the Law to hold up to the hearer his faults and shortcomings. The resultant problem is, what can be done in preaching the Law to prevent the hearer from establishing defense mechanisms against the truth of the Law? Or, in other words, are there methods of preaching the Law whereby the hearer will feel the full brunt of the Law without being inclined to protect himself by the use of defense mechanisms?

preaching. Robert T. Oliver, in his book, *THE PSYCHOLOGY OF PERSUASIVE SPEECH*, contrasts direct suggestion with indirect suggestion. Direct suggestion demands instant acceptance of what the speaker proposes instead of intellectual consideration of the point. Direct suggestion inhibits the thought processes of the audience. The speaker says, "Forward, march!" "Copy the questions as I read them to you!" "Pick up your toys!" Unless conditions are very favorable to this method, hearers would ordinarily resist such a direct attack of the Law.

Indirect suggestion, it is felt, is more valuable than direct since it consists in instilling an idea in the mind of the hearer without seeming to do so. The hearer thinks the idea is his own and that he has reached the conclusion by himself. This is the ideal way of instilling an idea in the mind of a hearer, since, when he thinks it is his own idea,

## CHAPTER III

### THE PREACHING OF THE LAW AND THE PERSUASIVE TECHNIQUE OF SUGGESTION

#### Direct and Indirect Suggestion

There are two types of suggestion in speech, the techniques of which this study will examine as persuasive procedures for Law preaching. Robert T. Oliver, in his book, The Psychology of Persuasive Speech, contrasts direct suggestion with indirect suggestion. Direct suggestion demands instant acceptance of what the speaker proposes instead of intellectual consideration of the point. Direct suggestion inhibits the thought processes of the audience. The speaker says, "Forward, march!" "Copy the questions as I read them to you!" "Pick up your toys!"<sup>1</sup> Unless conditions are very favorable to this method, hearers would ordinarily resist such a direct attack of the Law.

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<sup>1</sup>Robert T. Oliver, Psychology of Persuasive Speech (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1942), pp. 232-234.

he may pride himself on the discovery and may even feel superior to the speaker because he came to the conclusion while the speaker apparently was not even aware of the idea.<sup>2</sup>

Furthermore, indirect suggestion is more desirable, because the hearer, believing the action to have been originated by himself, is not likely to propose contrary ideas. He is much less critical of the idea when it is his own.<sup>3</sup>

This method is more successful than an authoritative approach, especially, of course, where there is resistance to authority.

Where groups or individuals will not accept authority, the leader or counselor use suggestion and persuasion. . . . Suggestion is a similar technique, in which resistance is overcome not by pressing the idea too directly but by giving the individual a chance to accept it as his own. The leader of this type of group discussion goes through a process by which the members seem to reach for themselves the conclusion at which he wishes them to arrive.<sup>4</sup>

Oliver lists Hollingsworth's seven laws of suggestion, one of which supports the favorableness of indirect suggestion.

With the kind of audiences speakers normally address, the strength of a suggestion is in proportion to its indirectness. The auditors will act most surely on what they take to be their own ideas.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 233.

<sup>3</sup>George W. Crane, Psychology Applied (Chicago: Northwestern University Press, 1938), pp. 168-169.

<sup>4</sup>Karl Zerfoss, editor, Readings In Counseling (New York: Association Press, 1952), p. 163.

<sup>5</sup>Oliver, op. cit., p. 243.

It seems, therefore, that if one can preach the Law by means of indirect suggestion he may become more successful in having the Law have its total effect on the hearer, than if he preached the Law completely in an authoritarian, direct manner.

#### Techniques of Indirect Suggestion

Oliver, in his chapter on "Suggestion" in The Psychology of Persuasive Speech, lists several of the techniques of suggestion. While the author does not make plain whether these are techniques of indirect or direct suggestion, nevertheless they seem to apply more adequately as methods of indirect suggestion. The use of parables, analogies, examples, illustrations, allegories and anecdotes, for instance, are plainly techniques of indirect suggestion. Their value is contained in the fact that when using them, the speakers describe how something happened in the narrative and then asks the audience "to assume with them that the same thing will occur or has occurred in regard to their proposal."<sup>6</sup>

The technique of presumption is effective in suggesting indirectly a proposal. This method has the speaker simply presume, that, of course, his audience agrees with him. One such method of presumption is for the speaker to assume that the desired belief or conduct already exists. As Alexander Pope advised: "Men must be taught as if you taught them not, And things propos'd as things forgot." A second method of presump-

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<sup>6</sup>Oliver, op. cit., p. 248.



tion is to impute to the audience the ideas of the speaker himself, "as though he is but echoing what they already believe. The salesman uses this device when he tells the prospect that 'We have created this product in response to strong public demand.'"<sup>7</sup> A third and final method of presumption operates when the speaker assumes the truth of his proposal and reasons on from there.<sup>8</sup>

A technique such as style has much persuasive power. Joseph Conrad wrote, "Give me the right word and the right accent and I will move the world."<sup>9</sup> Similarly, Andrew Fletcher said, "Give me the makings of the songs of a nation, and I care not who makes its laws."<sup>10</sup> There is a terrific power in the right word. "Apart even from the idea it contains, an effective phrase is a strong motivator of human conduct."<sup>11</sup> The idea is that while the speaker may not directly attack his audience, he will have described the problem connected with the hearers with such stylistic excellence that they are convinced of the truth of their condition. Hollingsworth's second law of suggestion may find application here: "A suggestion is more dynamic the more forcefully and vividly it is presented."<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 248.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 249.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 244.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 247.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 246.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 243.

The source of a statement has a determining effect on the power of suggestion. Prestige is of great value in persuasion. When a speaker himself has a great deal of prestige or makes a statement whose source has prestige value the statement will be accepted without proof or hesitation.

If Einstein says that there is no such thing as a straight line, so be it. . . . The source from which a statement comes is frequently the decisive factor in determining whether it will be accepted. This is one reason why politicians spend so much time in trying to destroy one another's character.<sup>13</sup>

Oliver paraphrases another of Hollingsworth's laws of suggestion which underlines this technique. "The effectiveness of suggestion varies directly in proportion to the prestige of its source."<sup>14</sup>

The use of questions also favors indirect suggestion. The speaker implies by his question that he would never have asked the question if it did not favor his cause. Something is suggested by questions that ordinarily could not be proved.<sup>15</sup> However, it is necessary that the speaker gets a favorable reaction from the hearers in response to his questions. The listener must not be permitted to say "No." The questions should be phrased in such a way that the only answer that is reasonable favors the speaker. They must be leading questions.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>13</sup>Oliver, op. cit., p. 239.

<sup>14</sup>Oliver, op. cit., p. 244.

<sup>15</sup>Oliver, op. cit., p. 249.

<sup>16</sup>Crane, op. cit., p. 268.

### Conditions Favorable To Direct Suggestion

There are times and conditions when one can preach the Law directly and still be effective. Psychologically, this may happen when the speaker is in complete control of the audience, when the audience feels itself inferior to the speaker and the speaker's prestige is high, when the audience is polarized and/or the auditors are youthful.<sup>17</sup> One would suppose that this is likely to be true of the sermons of great preachers since they were known as masters and in most cases must have held a great deal of prestige.

Or, the preaching of the Law may be very effective in certain conditions where defense mechanisms cannot be organized or structured for defense. When the hearer is completely found out, when the facts concerning his sin cannot be reasonably denied, when he is so completely caught with the problem as was David when Nathan addressed him, then it seems that the speaker can go directly into the problem.

### Using Direct Suggestion and Self-Interest

The problem of self-interest poses a problem for the preacher of the Law. The "self" must be protected. Because of that fact, there are difficulties in making the hearer aware of his deficiencies, as was pointed out in an earlier chapter. But this fact of self-interest may be an aid in ap-

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<sup>17</sup>Oliver, op. cit., pp. 234-235.

plying direct suggestion. For when the hearer's interests revolve around his sins, when he is quite conscious and concerned about his problems, then the speaker will want to appeal directly to those interests of his hearers. He will want to seize upon such an opportunity and go directly to the heart of the matter and will be able to preach the Law directly without incurring the hearer's antagonism because he is discussing interests that are very much a part of the person's self. Sins in which the hearer has a manifest interest, that plague him and are known to him, will be sins that when talked about will be an appeal to the hearer's self-interest. Caemmerer points out that the preacher will often have to begin with surface symptoms of man's need for God, such as, fear, uneasiness, disquiet, which the hearer easily recognizes and has an interest in, in order finally to point out man's total sin and deficiency of God.<sup>18</sup>

The speaker may also be able to use selfishness in an "enlightened" sense. In diplomatic circles this phrase has become popular. While a country may have to make a present sacrifice, ideally it is for her best, it is pointed out, and in the long run will work out for her advantage.<sup>19</sup> Oliver sees how this "enlightened selfishness" may become useful for

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<sup>18</sup>R. R. Caemmerer, Preaching To The Church (St. Louis: Concordia Seminary Mimeo Company, 1952), p. 9.

<sup>19</sup>Oliver, op. cit., p. 47.

the speaker.

The lesson for the persuasive speaker is clear: when selfishness blocks the acceptance of his proposal, the auditors should be "enlightened" to see that their own interests are in reality furthered by what the speaker has to propose.<sup>20</sup>

This may not only be psychologically true, but theologically necessary. The Christian minister may make it easier for his hearers to accept the Law by means of "enlightened selfishness" by showing that the actual purpose of the Law is to bring them to the Gospel. The task of getting the hearers to accept the Law would seem to be simpler if the hearers can be made to see that the Law is preached not to be harsh and condemnatory as though the speaker wants to get something "off his chest" by taking it out on his hearers. Rather "enlightened selfishness" can be employed if the speaker has consistently made it clear in sermon after sermon that he is preaching the Law for the Gospel. The hearers will come gradually to recognize that the speaker is concerned for their good even when he preaches Law, just as a patient with experience comes to realize that bitter medicine is actually for his cure. So, a vital consideration in the sermon must be what comes after the Law section of the sermon. What did the speaker do after the preaching of the Law that encouraged the hearers to accept what he was saying during the preaching of the Law?

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<sup>20</sup>Oliver, op. cit., p. 48.

The hearers cannot know from the Law of one sermon that there will be a treatment of the remedy in the same sermon unless they become accustomed, sermon after sermon, to hear a remedy to the particular problem. Consequently, a parallel consideration is: How consistently did the speakers apply a remedy to the sin depicted in the Law?

#### Camouflage of Direct Attack

Whether conditions appear favorable or not, the speaker may feel that he nevertheless must make a direct attack when preaching the Law. He knows that he is running the risk of much antagonism and defense mechanisms, but, despite it, feels that a direct attack must be made. In such cases, when a direct attack proves necessary, the speaker may want to camouflage his attack. That is, he may try to say something immediately preceding his attack that will disarm resistance. Therefore, while he comes out plainly and directly with what he wants to say, he has so camouflaged his approach that it does not appear to be an attack. The speaker thereby does not necessarily dull the seriousness of the matter he wants to discuss, but rather disarms any resentment and antagonism against what is an attack upon themselves.

Oliver suggests ten methods in camouflaging an attack:

1. Agree with him in principle. . . .
2. Make it clear that he is not to be blamed for being wrong. . . .
3. Admit that many people agree with him. . . .

4. Agree with part of his statement, or with his reason for making it. . . .
5. State your desire to agree if you could. . . .
6. Take time to examine and evaluate his idea carefully. . . .
7. Agree, then raise objections as an afterthought. . . .
8. Restate his idea in a form which is acceptable to you, assuming that this is what he meant all the time. . . .
9. Praise the individual before attacking his idea. . . .  
[53]
10. Attack your own ego before deflating his. . . .<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>21</sup>Oliver, op. cit., pp. 52-53.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE PREACHING OF THE LAW AND THE PERSUASIVE TECHNIQUE OF COMMON GROUND

When preaching the Law the speaker wants to have the hearer accept the Law for what it is without at the same time arousing in him feelings of antagonism and argument. The speaker will try to prevent whatever the hearer may attempt in the way of defending himself and shifting the blame by disagreeing with the message itself or by becoming negative toward the speaker. As was noted earlier, when the Law is preached fertile ground is plowed for just such aroused feelings in the hearer. The hearer may defend himself by answering back with argument in his own mind, with antagonism and resentment to the speaker who provides the Law, by sidetracking into irrelevant issues and magnifying them out of proportion to the major fact confronting him. The preacher of the Law never wants this to happen. He wants the hearer to accept the Law without argument in defense against it and certainly without any resentment toward the speaker himself.

The speaker who preaches the Law cannot show that there is complete agreement as far as God and the hearer's life and faith are concerned. The preaching of the Law will show that there is a conflict with the hearer's thoughts, feelings and deeds. This does not mean that there will automatically be



antagonism or argument. But the speaker can anticipate that there are likely to be defenses of argument and disagreement. The speaker may be able to prevent some of them by using the principle of common ground as he preaches the Law. In employing common ground, he will point out the areas of agreement between the hearer and the message. If the speaker can show that there are definite points of agreement with the hearer, then the speaker is likely to avoid antagonism and argument.

Furthermore, the speaker will have to show that he has much in common with the hearers as a person. He will try to defeat any antagonism that they may try to direct toward him. Certainly, he may want to use his prestige as much as possible. He will want to capitalize on the audience's feelings of inferiority to the speaker as a method of enforcing direct suggestion. But when the preaching of the Law will anticipate an argument and antagonism, he will want to avoid resentment to the speaker by showing the hearers that he has much in common with them.

Without lessening their own guilt, he will want to show that the speaker is in the same dilemma as are they. His fault is as great as their's. Thus he tries to encourage a mutual cooperative discussion of the problem as well as a cooperative solution to it.

At the outset, the speaker will have to gain the individual hearer's confidence and trust. He will want to assure him of his friendship and sympathy. He will want to se-

cure a favorable, positive attitude from him by assuring him of his interest and care for his well-being. In short, he must establish rapport. Much of this is accomplished through a preacher's pastoral ministry. But what he also says after the sermon by way of cure and solution of the Gospel will be evidence to the hearer of his concern and interest in him. Not only what he says after the Law, but also what the speaker says before the Law will be important.

#### Techniques of Establishing Common Ground

John Edward Lantz in his book, Speaking In The Church, takes up the matter of establishing rapport with the audience and tries to find the methods by which a speaker may establish an attitude of cooperation in the sermon with the congregation. Lantz made an analysis of twenty-five sermons by twenty-five outstanding preachers and several factors were noted that helped to develop a spirit of cooperation with the audience. The first person, singular and plural, was used much, but not as much as the third person. No preacher used the second person to any great extent.

It seems the use of the first person does help in making of the sermon a cooperative enterprise, whereas the third person gives it a ring of finality and--when the subject is controversial--of dogmatism.<sup>1</sup>

A discussion of some vital problem was also effective in

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<sup>1</sup>John Edward Lantz, Speaking In The Church (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1954), p. 26.

establishing rapport. It seems that the thing that guarantees a cooperative enterprise between preacher and audience is to pick a problem so vital that the people will feel a need of finding the solution to their common problem. Furthermore,

Figures of speech, rhetorical questions, and the use of varied style were all instrumental [27] in securing and maintaining the spirit and form of finding cooperatively the solutions to mutual problems.<sup>2</sup>

The use of questions in particular seems to be helpful in contributing the idea of conversation to the sermon. Sometimes it is good for the questions to be answered by the preacher as a voice of the audience and so that the speaker and audience carry on a brief dialogue. In addition, the question expresses the worth of the hearer.

It appeals to his intelligence and believes in his capacity. It expresses the desire for the response of the audience, and so they are unconsciously drawn to the preacher.<sup>3</sup>

Oliver, in his chapter on "Common Ground" suggests four types of Common Ground, three of which are included here. The persuasive speaker may find in the interests of the audience a basis of common ground. Oliver likens this type of common ground to a bridge over which the speaker's appeals may march. This bridge should be formed in the introduction for if it is not "the remainder of the speech is likely to go unheard--

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 26-27.

<sup>3</sup>Arthur S. Hoyt, The Work Of Preaching (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1921), pp. 356-357.

or at least unconsidered."<sup>4</sup>

The speeches are endless in which the speaker begins: "I want to talk to you tonight about--, a subject in which I have long been interested." Unless the audience has an unusual interest in the speaker as a person, that biographical detail will only make it moan. Much better is the speech which commences: "You people have lately been showing a great deal of interest in--. I have discovered some facts about that subject which I think you would like to hear."<sup>5</sup>

Or, the speaker is sure to find a source of common ground when referring to the audience's feelings.

People are much more similar emotionally than they are intellectually. Imbeciles and geniuses alike feel fear, hatred, love, and disgust. Both conservatives and liberals are open to an appeal to their patriotism, loyalty, and sense of duty. Most people respond readily to humor or to the thrill of exciting tales. . . . Aside from the use of humor, appeals to loyalty and fear are [269] great unifiers.<sup>6</sup>

Or, if the speaker can find agreement in beliefs, then he has a tight bond built between the audience and himself. If he can get his hearers to agree consistently to what he says at the outset, they will find it difficult to disagree with him when making an appeal to them.

Salesmen have proved the efficacy of the "yes" technique. They have discovered that if a prospect can be induced to say: "Yes," "Yes," "Yes" to a series of propositions, it is difficult for him to shift suddenly from the affirmative to the negative and say "No" to the closing appeal to buy.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Robert T. Oliver, The Psychology of Persuasive Speech (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1942), pp. 232-234.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 267

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., pp. 268-269.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 269.

Finally, Oliver lists several techniques for the use of Common Ground:

1. Always stress the obvious relations which the speaker has with his audience. . . .
2. Always stress any basic relations which the speaker may have with his audience. If the speaker has close ties of any sort with his auditors, they should always be made evident and their significance clarified. . . .
3. Always stress the agreement of the speaker and his audience upon fundamental aims and beliefs. . . . [274]
4. Strive to keep the auditor's attention directed away from the minor points of difference. . . . [275]
5. Work toward your own conclusion, but do it by means of the audience's line of reasoning. . . . [276]
6. Avoid carefully any initial appearance of dogmatism in belief, words, or manner. . . .<sup>8</sup>

The following is a condensation of the preceding two chapters and was used as a guideline in checking the sermons for their use of these techniques.

Were the following techniques of indirect suggestion (attack) evident: illustration (including parables, analogies, anecdotes, etc.), presumption, prestige value and questions? Though style was a technique listed, it is a difficult factor to measure. What exactly may be considered as style appeared to the writer as being too subjective to determine and was therefore ignored.

Were the conditions psychologically favorable for direct suggestion? This is also an elusive factor to measure, but was

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<sup>8</sup>Ibid., pp. 273-276.

occasionally discussed in connection with some of the sermons. Was self-interest and camouflage of direct attack evident in the use of direct suggestion (attack)?

How did the speaker attempt to employ common ground? Did he link himself with the hearers? Did he try to encourage a cooperative discussion of the topic?

Which indirect and to determine how the speaker applied the law to the hearers. Personal law preaching means that the speaker related sin personally with the hearers, that is, in terms of "you" and "we" and their derivatives (our, us, your). This is not identical with direct law preaching, because, while to be direct one must be personal, nevertheless, merely being personal does not guarantee a direct approach. Impersonal law preaching means that the speaker related sin to some other agent than the hearer, such as, "they," "people," "the human race." Impersonal law preaching is related to indirect law preaching. However, one could become so impersonal that he is not preaching the law indirectly at all, but rather that the law is simply not applied to the hearer.

#### Personal and Impersonal References

On examining Weisman's six sermons, it was found that the guilty agents of the sins discussed were more frequently described as people in general and not specifically in terms of the hearers. The majority of guilty agents were described impersonally, in terms mainly of "they," "he," "people."

## CHAPTER V

O. A. GEISEMAN

A study was made on the personal and the impersonal references of the Law to the guilty agents, in order to ascertain which sections of the Law were direct in approach and which indirect and to determine how the speaker applied the Law to the hearers. Personal Law preaching means that the speaker linked sin personally with the hearers, that is, in terms of "you" and "we" and their derivatives (our, us, your). This is not identical with direct Law preaching, because, while to be direct one must be personal, nevertheless, merely being personal does not guarantee a direct approach. Impersonal Law preaching means that the speaker related sin to some other agent than the hearer, such as, "they," "people," "the human race." Impersonal Law preaching is related to indirect Law preaching. However, one could become so impersonal that he is not preaching the Law indirectly at all, but rather that the Law is simply not applied to the hearer.

### Personal and Impersonal References

On examining Geiseman's six sermons, it was found that the guilty agents of the sins discussed were more frequently described as people in general and not specifically in terms of the hearers. The majority of guilty agents were described impersonally, in terms mainly of "they," "he," "people,"

"men," "the human race," "soul," "conscience," "society," or "heart," "somebody," "anybody," "everybody," and sometimes even more specifically as "Judas," "Peter," "fathers," "mothers," "miser," "drunkard," "adulterers," "robbers," and the like. Included in this class are only those guilty agents that were never prefixed with a pronoun that would include the hearers, such as "our sinful heart," or "we people," but always stood alone, without being associated with the hearers. The total number of times that sin was associated with such an impersonal agent in these six sermons was 424.

There was a majority of references to sin associated with the hearers at hand. The total number of personal connections between the sin discussed and the hearers was 222 times. This means that there was a ratio of two to one in favor of impersonal Law preaching. As far as percentages are concerned, the number of impersonal references is sixty six per cent of the total references, and the number of personal references is thirty four per cent of the total. In none of the six sermons was there a majority of personal references.<sup>1</sup>

However, the fact that the impersonal agents are on the greater side of the two to one ratio does not mean that there is only twice as much Law preached impersonally as personally. Taken alone, it merely means that there were twice as many references to an impersonal guilty party as to the present hearers. In fact, a study of the number of paragraphs that were

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<sup>1</sup>See Appendix A.



either totally personal or totally impersonal boosts the ratio even higher in favor of the impersonal. In the six sermons, there was a total of seven paragraphs that had references only to the hearers, while there was a total of thirty-one paragraphs that had no reference to the hearers at all, but only to impersonal parties, in so far as their connection with the Law is concerned. Twelve paragraphs demonstrated a combination of an impersonal and personal approach. When broken down to the actual number of words in the thirty-one paragraphs and in the seven paragraphs, the impersonal approach looms into even more prominence. There were 4858 words in the impersonal sections and 1398 in the personal sections. So, as far as sheer space and words dedicated to either approach is concerned, the ratio is better than three to one in favor of an impersonal relation of Law to hearer. The other twelve paragraphs, which represent a combination of the methods, should not favor one approach much more than the other. All in all, there is a marked direction in favor of impersonal Law preaching.

Included in the total number of personal references are references to the hearers in terms of "we," "us," "our," and not only the "you" of the second person. It would seem, however, that referring to the hearer in terms of "we," or "us," is less personal than referring to him in terms of "you." In order to measure further the impersonal character of the six sermons a study was made on the 222 personal references. It was found that there were ninety references to "you," and 132

references to "we," "us," and "our." This further indicates the attempt at an impersonal approach in linking the hearers to the Law.

#### "Personal" Paragraphs Examined

In the seven paragraphs where there were personal references to a guilty agent, there was only one paragraph that had somewhat of a direct attack on the hearers. It was the seventh and last paragraph of the section of Law in the sermon and this paragraph also contained some Gospel. Of more significance is the fact that the paragraph employed self-interest in direct Law preaching, that is, an appeal for the hearers to recognize their sin because, if they do, the final end will be profitable for them. In this case, the application to self-interest was that if they accept their sin the Resurrection will mean something to them.

I don't know all of you, and I certainly don't know what problems you have, what your heartaches may be, or of what sins you may have made yourself guilty. You know and God knows. But I know one thing--whatever your sin may be, Jesus came to pay for that sin. If you don't care anything about sin, you're not going to care anything about the Resurrection of Christ. But if you are honest with yourself and honest with God, and have courage to come face to face with the facts of your own moral and spiritual need, then there could be for you no greater news, and no more reassuring fact than the fact that He is risen; that He has paid for your transgression.<sup>2</sup>

There are five paragraphs, containing entirely personal

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<sup>2</sup>0. A. Geiseman, "Significant Event," Mimeographed Sermon, April 13, 1952.

references, which demonstrate the technique of shifting from the direct to the indirect in presenting the Law. The technique is also evident, as will be shown, in the twelve sections where the personal and the impersonal are combined. In those five sections under present consideration, the technique consists of relating the hearer to the sin at the beginning of the paragraph, often by means of a question, then describing a certain situation or condition without making any personal or impersonal relations to it, and then concluding the paragraph with a personal linkage to the hearer, often again with a question.

One such paragraph begins with a question, "Are you asleep or are you awake to the fact that you are living in one of the great critical moments in history?" Thereafter, the speaker describes the great moment. Then he applies this description to the hearer with another question, repetitious of the first, "How much does that bother you to think that you are living in one of those great crises in which the great prophecies of our Lord are finding their fulfillment?" Further description follows and the paragraph concludes with these questions, "Where do you and I stand or don't we stand at all? Are we asleep as Peter was?"<sup>3</sup>

Another paragraph is an example of this technique. In a preceding paragraph the speaker notes how Judas neglected the opportunities that Christ had offered him. He begins the fol-

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<sup>3</sup>O. A. Geiseman, "Asleep Or Awake," Mimeographed Sermon, Feb. 7, 1951.

lowing paragraph with the question, "My friends, what are we doing with our opportunities?" There follows a list of the opportunities that come our way. He ends the list of opportunities with two questions.

What use are we making of our opportunities? Are we grasping them as they are provided by the Lord or are we like Judas passing them by only to impoverish ourselves and make ourselves miserable for time and eternity?<sup>4</sup>

Another variation of this technique is to link the hearer only at the very end of the paragraph after a build up to the pointed concluding statements. In such a paragraph he has enumerated the spiritual advantages his hearers have had from the beginning of the paragraph. They have received religious instruction in classes, been instructed from their parents in Bible story and prayer, have had opportunities to view the passion of Christ, and the like. Then the last sentences are, "And yet despite it all, there is that grave possibility that we might be asleep. It could happen here. It could happen with you and me. It did happen with Simon Peter."<sup>5</sup>

As has been demonstrated, Geiseman uses the indirect method of posing questions in these Law sections. In one of the final examples of Law in these paragraphs with personal references only, half of the paragraph consists of questions. This paragraph consists of 199 words and has ninety-nine words

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<sup>4</sup>A. Geiseman, Horizons of Hope (Chicago: Kaufmann Inc., 1940), pp. 15-21.

<sup>5</sup>Geiseman, "Asleep or Awake."

in the questions. Unlike the other instances, these questions appear, not at the beginning and end, but more or less in the middle of the paragraph.<sup>6</sup>

#### Paragraphs of Combined Approaches Examined

This same technique of relating the Law to the hearer at the beginning and end of a paragraph while filling in the middle with some impersonal material was evident with variation in the other twelve paragraphs that were combinations of the personal and impersonal approaches. In this variation the speaker began and concluded with a reference to the hearer and did relate the intervening material, though it was only to an impersonal agent. The following example will show this, demonstrating again the use of the question.

Are you awake or are you asleep? Are you awake to the spiritual needs of your fellow men? So many people seem to be altogether unconcerned about all their fellow men. They are not even bothered about the people in their own household. Sometimes even fathers and mothers who had a good Christian training in their youth do very little or nothing about giving a Christian training to their own children. Do you know I run across people like that every once in a while? They seem to be utterly indifferent as to whether their children know God or don't know God, as to whether they have found Christ or haven't found Christ. Perhaps you have a wife or a husband who does not know Christ.<sup>7</sup>

Probably the best example of direct attack in all of the Law sections was found in one of these twelve paragraphs of

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

combined personal and impersonal approaches. After seventy words in which the speaker looks with the hearers at the sins of "human society in general" the paragraph concludes with:

You have sometimes heard it said, the world would be all right if it weren't for the people in it. Perhaps you yourself have said it at one time or another, "if only the people would be different!" Well, my friends, you are the people. You and I, we are the people. If human society is not good, then it is because we as individuals are not good. That is precisely how it is. You and I need have no illusions on that score.<sup>8</sup>

In making this direct attack, the speaker makes little effort to camouflage his approach. He appears firm and dogmatic, especially at the end. He quotes what he supposes the hearers have said previously, seems to accept the statement as true in itself, but then pins it down to a specific case, namely, the hearers themselves. If the hearer could recognize the quote as a genuine feeling of his own, and especially if the hearer employed that truth as somewhat of an alibi or without seeing himself in it, what the speaker subsequently says about it would prove very deflating to the hearer.

On the other hand, it will be noted how the speaker tends to soften the attack by linking himself with the hearer. He introduces one pointed statement with "my friends." He refers only once to the hearers without including himself. Twice he mentions "you and I" and twice again he refers to "we."

Presumption was another technique that was employed. This

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<sup>8</sup>O. A. Geiseman, Redeeming Love (Chicago: Kaufmann, Inc., 1945), pp. 100-107.

technique was discovered twice, both times in the section of the twelve impersonal paragraphs. It may be argued that these are more sentences of fact than they are presumptive statements. Nevertheless, it was felt that the speaker was doing some presupposing in them. The following are the two examples: "You hardly need to have a minister stand in the pulpit before you to remind you how parallel our day is to that distant yesterday. . . ."9

When you and I follow the natural impulses of our heart, we are convinced that nothing stands so squarely in the way of a happy life as the ten commandments which God has given us.<sup>10</sup>

Questions were used fairly frequently sometimes addressing the hearer directly, such as, "How concerned are you about that person's spiritual welfare?" and sometimes addressed to an agent other than the hearer, such as "What is it men are looking for?" The question is a technique of indirect suggestion in itself and its value consists in addressing the hearer. It appears as a mere question and loses its value for indirect suggestion to the hearer when it is applied impersonally to an agent altogether different from the hearer. Questions used in direct relation to the hearer and the Law occurred twenty-seven times in the six sermons, but seventeen of the twenty-seven times in one sermon. Two questions had no questions in their Law sections. One other had six questions, and the other

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<sup>9</sup>O. A. Geiseman, "The Attitude of Man Toward God," Mimeographed Sermon, August 20, 1950.

<sup>10</sup>Geiseman, "Significant Event."

two had two.

The use of parables, allegories, illustrations, etc., as well as quoting a source that had prestige value were infrequent and of no major consequence for this study.

#### "Impersonal" Paragraphs Examined

It will be remembered that it was discovered that a great majority of the Law that was preached was in paragraphs completely impersonal. Sin was discussed in thirty-one of the fifty paragraphs in relation to someone totally different from the hearer. If the Law was meant to be applied at all in these paragraphs, the hearer must have done it for himself. What may be said of this type of Law preaching? On the one hand it could be said that this is indirect Law preaching to the utmost. On the other hand, it may be questioned whether this is applying the Law at all, that the hearer would hardly be able to apply the Law to himself. Several factors must be considered in measuring the effectiveness of such law preaching. If, even while discussing the Law totally impersonally, the speaker described the people and their sins in terms that could be identified with the Christians before him, then it would be probable that the hearer could apply the Law to himself. This would be a highly desirable type of indirect Law preaching. If, however, the sins and the guilty agents were described in terms of people not readily identified with the hearers, then the application would be more difficult. Much of this cannot be measured since the character of the congre-



gation is not known and hence difficult to compare with the guilty agents described in these sections of Law. It must also be remembered that it may not have been the purpose of the speaker to awaken a sense of guilt indirectly in the hearers by a description of sin in terms of others than the hearers. Nevertheless, because of the bulk of this type of Law it must be seriously considered in the overall effectiveness of the Law preached.

It seems that at least in one sermon the speaker has made an attempt to describe the sins of impersonal agents in terms mainly of the hearer and is thus being effective in his indirectness. He describes the sins of the people in terms of lack of love, carelessness in using the name of Christ, disrespect, sins of uncleanness, vile language, perversion, dishonesty and the like. The sins in this sermon seemed to be more apropos to the hearers, although no one can say with certainty unless he were aware of the congregation itself.<sup>11</sup>

In other cases, this was not so clearly done. It seems in other sermons that the goal of the speaker was to discuss the sins of others, of the people in Micah's time, of Peter or Judas, first, and then show the parallel to people and Christians today. This was evident from certain transitional sentences that followed descriptions of sins of others and that preceded an application to the hearers, such as, "As God was awake then so is He awake now." "Even as in the days

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<sup>11</sup>Geiseman, "Asleep or Awake."

of Israel, so in the days of modern America. . . ."<sup>12</sup>

In this type of sermon he seems to go from a wider and more distant circle of application to a nearer, narrower circle of present application. His goal in these impersonal sections seems to be to give background or description. But it is doubtful whether it is always Law applied to the hearers themselves.

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<sup>12</sup>Geiseman, "The Attitude of Man Toward God."

## CHAPTER VI

### HARRY EMERSON FOSDICK

In the first place, it should be noted that Fosdick's entire sermons quite generally may be considered as Law. The sermon was a discussion of some problem which he tried to impress upon the hearers. While there are areas here and there which cannot be strictly classified as Law, nevertheless, the total sermon, representing a diagnosis and analysis of a problem, finally includes even these sections as Law. The graph in Appendix B gives an idea of the proportion of personal and impersonal paragraphs to each other and the sermon as a whole, the number of paragraphs representing the total length of the sermon and not merely the Law sections. Although the graph does not make this entirely evident, Fosdick generally involves the hearers at the very outset, unlike other sermons which begin the Law with a distant, impersonal application of the Law. In the second place, there seems to be a great concern for Fosdick to make the sermon pertinent and applicable to the hearers. He wanted to make the problem be an involvement with the hearers.

Not only is there a sizable section of the sermon that was completely and entirely personal, that is, directed only at the hearers, but there was a good section that is a combination of the personal and impersonal. This already speaks well for a personal approach in his preaching. But one further fact that

emphasises the total personal character of the sermon is that even in the sections that were entirely impersonal Fosdick often attempted to have the hearer see himself involved. One method of doing this was to describe the sins of the impersonal agents, as well as the agents themselves, in terms readily identifiable with the hearers. While this is a difficult factor to measure, since the character of the congregation he was addressing is not known, still certain examples, taken only from the three sermons which were the most impersonal, seem to demonstrate this. When Fosdick talked about dressing up Christ in creeds, about sacramental adoration, building beautiful sanctuaries, praying to him, singing to him, talking of him in theological terms, all that was an attack on the historic church. But the hearers, too, who were perhaps in that very service doing much of the same must have felt the application of that.<sup>1</sup> Again, when he spoke on the danger of going to church, Fosdick consistently described the guilty agents in terms of churchgoers. Identification with the agents described must have been somewhat recognizable, especially by their very presence in church and by what must have been continual churchgoing for many of them.<sup>2</sup> When Fosdick was making the point that those who did kill Jesus were not bad people but much like

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<sup>1</sup> Harry Emerson Fosdick, The Hope Of The World (Reprint edition, Garden City Books: Garden City, New York, 1953), pp. 96-106.

<sup>2</sup> Harry Emerson Fosdick, What Is Vital In Religion (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1955), pp. 133-142.

ourselves he attempted to describe the Pharisees, and the temple money-changers and Herod closely in terms of the hearers. He depicted the Pharisees as loyal men of religion. He described Herod as a "typical man of the world," debonair, witty, worldly-wise, and a regular good fellow, and he went on to excuse his adultery as it is in practice commonly excused today. Of the money-changers, he said,

Moreover those money-changers had families to support, and what more sacred obligation rests on anyone than to support one's family? They were not bad folk. They were among the friendliest, kindest, most courteous and urbane people in Jerusalem.<sup>3</sup>

Another way in which Fosdick made these sections personal although he did not use the personal pronouns "we," and "you," was to address the agents with "to say to anyone here. . . .", "it could happen here. . . .", "can mean to someone here. . . ."<sup>4</sup>

Another technique that Fosdick put into practice to make impersonal sections become personal in these three sermons (and mere description and illustration become Law) was to make a concluding statement to an impersonal section whereby he applied the foregoing to the hearer. In the other sermons he sometimes made, in addition, preceding statements to these sections. But from the three presently under scrutiny are several examples of concluding statements to impersonal sections

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 189-195.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., pp. 133-142.

that helped to involve the listening hearers:

"We would not crucify him, not one of us, but, alas, we worship him--we dispose of him in that way. We say, 'Lord, Lord.'" "You see what we have done with Christ--we have kept his name on the label, but we have changed the contents of the bottle." "We cannot, then, leave our text in history. It comes down the centuries, accumulating significance with every year, and walks up to our own doors and knocks." Another statement, at the end of a paragraph, describing how Buddha was abused, reads, "The Christians, however, are no better than the Buddhists in that regard. That is what we have done with Jesus."<sup>5</sup>

After describing the people in the synagogue at Nazareth, Fosdick concluded with, "They wanted their churchgoing to confirm their prejudices. Well, look at our American churches today and see how all too commonly that kind of churchgoing is being reduplicated here." Again, in another place, after a similar discussion, he said, "Well, does nothing like that happen in our American churches?"<sup>6</sup>

Concluding a description of the Pharisees, Fosdick said,

I stood on Olivet trying to be angry with the ancient Pharisees for what they had done to our Lord, but I found myself praying instead: God have mercy on our organized religion for what we today are doing to him still.

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<sup>5</sup>Fosdick, The Hope Of The World, pp. 96-106.

<sup>6</sup>Fosdick, What Is Vital In Religion, pp. 140-141.

After a description of the money-changers and a parallel example in New York, Fosdick concluded:

That is not ancient history. I have been frank about the unchristian aspect of that area of life where I habitually work--organized religion. Will you be equally frank about the unchristian aspects of that area of life where many of you work?

And again,

I sat on Olivet remembering angrily those old businessmen in Jerusalem who did our Lord to death, until I recalled that one of the most thoughtful economists of America said, "The master iniquities of our time are connected with money-making." How continuously with the same old motives we crucify Christ still.

A description of Herod ended with, "That is a familiar type. There are many Herods in New York today." And after his discussion of Judas, Fosdick said of him, "Lost faith, disillusionment, resurgent selfishness--that is Judas. Anything strange about it? 'He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone.'"<sup>7</sup>

It is true, Fosdick did preach Law at times just in terms of one person or some other impersonal agent with whom the hearer must have had difficulty relating. But when he did that, he sometimes turned on the hearers that the hearers would not use such examples as scapegoats. He did that twice in the same sermon. He had used Sir John Bowring who wrote, "In The Cross Of Christ I Glory," and who was the British Governor at Hong Kong at a time when the British Empire was forcing the opium traffic on China, as an example of worshipping Christ

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid., 187-198.

but still not following him morally. Later, however, he says of Bowring,

I am not specially blaming Sir John Bowring; we cannot do that. He was like the rest of us. He was not consciously hypocritical, but a sincere, honest, and in many ways admirable man. He simply fell victim, as many of us have fallen, to this most popular of all ways of getting rid of Christ.<sup>8</sup>

Again, he used the example of John Newton who ran a slave ship and who still wrote that he never knew sweeter hours of divine communion as when every Sunday he read the church liturgy twice with his crew. But then Fosdick finishes, "Yet how many have been and are guilty of it and how few, like John Newton, see the new light, repent of their blindness, and change, as he did, both opinion and life."<sup>9</sup>

Two factors then are evident about Fosdick's sermons. They are, in the main, Law throughout, the discussion of some vital problem. The other is that the sermons are highly personal since even the impersonal sections are related to the hearers.

How then, did Fosdick bring the problem to bear on the hearer: directly, or indirectly? It is difficult to measure exactly the proportion of one approach to the other. One thing is clear. Both approaches are employed, with probably a greater stress on the indirect than the direct approach.

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<sup>8</sup>Fosdick, The Hope Of The World, p. 100.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 102.



## Use of the Direct Attack

The direct approach is best exemplified in one sermon and a brief review shows the intensity of approach as well as how such an attack was handled. Rather than select direct attacks from all sermons, one sermon will be studied because it appears so largely and completely direct in itself. One factor that hints at a direct approach is the almost complete identification of the guilty agents with the hearers. "We," "our," and "us," were used 105 times. Terms like "people," "human beings," were employed only fifteen times. Terms such as "nobody here," "at this moment in this congregation," "every family here," help to pin point the problem with the hearers. Moreover, indirect techniques were not present in the same degree as in other sermons. Only three questions were used in connection with the Law and this is seven below the least amount that any of the other five sermons had. While there were fourteen items of illustration employed (more than in three other sermons), still they did not occupy as much space or time as the other sermons (only thirty-eight sentences, fewer than all the other sermons).<sup>10</sup>

How did he handle such a direct attack and what allowed him to do it in this sermon more than in others? For one thing, there was a constant use of common ground in that the speaker

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<sup>10</sup>Harry Emerson Fosdick, "Our Perennial Use Of Alibis," Mimeographed copy of a sermon delivered Sunday, December 31, 1939.

continually linked himself with the hearers in terms of "we," "us," etc., as is shown above, and less than a dozen times did he address the hearers with "you." Probably the determining factor which allowed Fosdick to be so direct was the type of problem that he discussed. He must have felt that this was a problem common to all hearers and when confronted with it they could not reasonably deny it. He said as much on occasion when he spoke dogmatically, in connection with the use of alibis, "I am talking about every family here." It seemed to be one of these problems that when discussed, the hearer cannot find an avenue of escape. That Fosdick supposed that the hearer would not try to escape is not the case in this sermon. At one place in this sermon he said, "Some of you at this moment are in a corner about this matter. Don't dodge. Don't say, I cannot help myself; . . ."

Speakers sometimes camouflage a direct attack. Fosdick often camouflaged an attack by first saying something complimentary and sympathetic to the hearers. Even when he did make the attack, however, it appeared more indirect than direct. The technique is a persuasive procedure for a direct attack. Fosdick appears to use it even for an indirect attack. Of the following examples, the first two were taken from sermons not primarily direct in their approach.

When we start in to glorify our ancestors. . . we make a thorough job of it and glorify all our ancestors. What a splendid outpouring of cooperative and unanimous zeal it was, we think, that all those colonists put their lives, their fortunes, their sacred honor at the disposal of the cause! That sounds splendid but there is not a word of truth in it. There were probably more Tories than

Revolutionists among the Colonists. . . .<sup>11</sup>

Often in these trying days, as your preacher, I think of you business men. . . . The more I know of you the better I appreciate the fine code of honor with which you handle your responsibilities. . . . Not for all the world would you run your business in lawless disregard of the rules. You have a careful sense of honor about observing them. But are you dedicating your brains--and the best brains are in the business world--to this third matter: Cannot the rules be improved? Cannot the whole game be made more just?<sup>12</sup>

To all this I answer, Just so! That is what makes the problem difficult. If all alibis were fakes, it would be easier. Life can be terribly unfair and social injustice ruinous. We are not forgetting that, although our emphasis is elsewhere. But friend, I think you know what we are talking about. You know the difference between the man who always has an alibi and the man. . . .<sup>13</sup>

#### Techniques of Indirect Attack

Many of the indirect techniques were employed in the sermons to bring the Law home to the hearers. The use of illustrations was amply represented in every sermon. Of the total number of 1123 sentences in the six sermons, 355 sentences consisted of illustrations with no sermon having more than sixteen illustrations and none less than ten. The illustration in length ranged as long as seventeen sentences in one sermon to many instances of short one sentence illustrations. As was pointed out earlier in the study, many of these illustrations do not look like an aid in preaching the Law when standing

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<sup>11</sup>Fosdick, The Hope Of The World, p. 3.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 9.

<sup>13</sup>Fosdick, "Our Perennial Use Of Alibis."

alone, but because of the whole nature of the sermon and because of the concluding statements which made them personal and applied, they do become Law.

Fosdick employed questions profusely. He used them sixty-four times in relating the Law to the hearer indirectly. In employing questions for this purpose one sermon had seventeen questions, one had twelve, two had eleven, one had ten, and another only three.

Sometimes he used questions in clusters for emphasis, one following the other.

Are we the germinal two per cent on which the future of mankind depends? Are we the little group of forward-looking men and women on whom, as on the first disciples of our Lord, has fallen the vision of a new world-order so that we are custodians of prophetic principles that shall remake society? Are we the [2] minority ready to sacrifice fame or famine or life itself for those ideas,<sup>14</sup> which shall some day permeate mankind with their truth?

At other times questions appeared in single sentences driving home a point. The following examples are similar to those concluding statements quoted above that were in the form of a question. "Church of Christ in America, with all your wealth and your prestige, beware! Could Paul say of you, 'Ye are a colony of heaven?'"<sup>15</sup> "Do not many Christians still suspect that he would feel grieved, hurt, rejected, and jealous if he were not thus adored?"<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>Fosdick, The Hope Of The World, p. 2.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 7.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 98.

Twice he ended a sermon with a question, once with, "Ah, Lord, What kind of a Christian am I?"<sup>17</sup>

Fosdick also used prestige value, quoting some authority or impressive personality in support of a thought. In every sermon but one was such a person quoted and they included John Adams, Anatole France, Professor Wieman of the University of Chicago, President Eliot of Harvard, James Russell Lowell, Robert Louis Stevenson, Howard Thurman, Emerson, Gandhi, someone described as "one of the most thoughtful economists of America," and, of course, Jesus Christ. In one interesting manner of quoting Christ, Fosdick strung six passages together, one after the other, totalling 167 words. One other technique was prominent in preaching the Law. It consisted of giving an answer to the hearers' objection to something Fosdick had said. He advances the hearers' objection as though he had been reading their thoughts and then proceeds to defeat the objection or show how it either agrees or adds somehow to his thought. In the following instances, Fosdick had preached some part of the Law and then anticipated the hearers' objection to it, whereby the hearers may be seeking a way of escape. Thus he reasons or argues with the hearers, closing any doors they may be tempted to use by way of excuse and escape. This technique occurred in five of the six sermons. The examples at hand demonstrate merely how he raised the anticipated ob-

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<sup>17</sup>Fosdick, What Is Vital In Religion, p. 142.

jection and began his reply.

If some one protests that the real church, then, must forever be standing for new ideas only and never for old ones, so that in consequence the real church becomes merely a radical, iconoclastic group, I am glad to answer that protest as a constructive contribution to our thought.<sup>18</sup>

One suspects a certain discouragement in some as they face this way of putting the matter, as though they would say, If we were only bad we might improve ourselves and do better, but if one is stupid what can one do about that? Such an attitude shows how neglected this theme has been. We do not need to be so stupid as we are.<sup>19</sup>

We know this contrast well because not only sportmanship but biography is full of it. You say, There are genuine excuses for failure. Yes, but when you read the great biographies, . . .<sup>20</sup>

#### The Use of Common Ground

Common Ground was a technique consistently used in Fosdick's sermons. He seldom allowed his hearers to be addressed simply as "you" but rather linked himself often with the hearers. This was shown in at least one sermon in which detailed statistics were taken, and this sermon one that was found to be quite direct. The hearers were addressed as "we," and "us," over one hundred times in this sermon, and less than a dozen times with "you." At other times there were clear cut examples when Fosdick admits his own guilt or when he makes advances to allign himself with the audience. Once he saw himself guilty along with the hearers: "Many of us will acknowledge

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<sup>18</sup>Fosdick, The Hope Of The World, p. 7.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 226.

<sup>20</sup>Fosdick, "Our Perennial Use Of Alibis."

as I must, that in countless readings of this familiar passage, that phrase, 'desiring to justify himself,' has gone half noted and soon forgotten."<sup>21</sup> In another instance he sees his sin:

This road leads straight to a man's own soul. Let a man in some hour of honest penitence face those things about which he is most ashamed, and of what does he accuse himself? Is it not of folly? I can answer for only one man. Always in retrospect the things of which I am most ashamed wring from me the cry, "O Lord, be merciful to me, a fool!"<sup>22</sup>

At another time he puts himself among the hearers and applies what he has been discussing to himself.

And do not, I beg of you, think of me as a preacher hurling accusations at you. After a minister has retired, as I have, he begins spending his Sunday mornings in the pew. He joins the ranks of the churchgoers. I am one of you. I am asking myself: What kind of a churchgoer am I.<sup>23</sup>

Another way in which Fosdick attempted to build rapport with the hearers was to have them think of the sermon as a cooperative, mutual discussion of the problem and the discovery of its solution. He sustained this by conversing with the audience, asking them questions, and sometimes proceeding by answering the question for them. This technique has already been demonstrated above as a means for stating the objection which the hearer is likely to raise and then to defeat it. The technique is exactly the same here only that in these cases

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<sup>21</sup>Ibid.

<sup>22</sup>Fosdick, The Hope Of The World, p. 224.

<sup>23</sup>Fosdick, What Is Vital In Religion, p. 135.

it is not necessarily linked to any problem or law discussion. This technique generally involves the use of questions as in the following example:

Can one doubt, then, what Jesus' attitude would be? We all sing, for example, that great hymn, . . . Who wrote that? Sir John Bowring. Who was he? He was the British Governor at Hong Kong. . . .<sup>24</sup>

An extended example of this technique shows how Fosdick reasoned with the hearers, carrying on a conversation with them over a space of 482 words.

I can imagine someone saying, But, then, do you not believe in the divinity of Jesus? To which I answer that I believe. . . . If some one says, Well, we all have some of that divine spark in us; . . . I answer, Are you afraid of that conclusion? . . . [104] Was the God that Paul and John prayed might be in them a different kind of God than was in Jesus? To be sure not. . . . If, now, some one says, Very well, but that reduces Jesus to our level, I answer, How do you make that out? I feel in relationship to Jesus. . . . If, then, we mean by Jesus' divinity the quality of his spiritual life, of course I believe in it and glory in it.<sup>25</sup>

Questions are drawn into this technique as a method for carrying on this conversational style. Earlier it was shown that questions were used sixty-four times, but, it must be remembered that they were merely in connection with bringing the Law to the hearers. All in all, counting the sixty-four questions used in that connection, the total number of questions out of a total number of 1123 sentences in the six sermons was 117. Eight was the lowest number of questions in any one sermon. No other sermon had lower than seventeen questions, and two had that few, while another had nineteen and two others had twenty-eight.

<sup>25</sup>ibid., 103-104.



## CHAPTER VII

### CLARENCE E. MACARTNEY

The most striking characteristics about the sermons of Macartney are their impersonal and indirect factors. First of all, the sermons are greatly impersonal. Ninety-two times the guilty agents were impersonally described as "man," "human heart," "they," "he," "Christian," "Israel," "someone," "evildoer," "individuals," "many," "whoever," and "soul," and the like. Seventy-three times the guilty agents were described personally in terms of "we," "us," "our," and "you." However, of the seventy-three personal references, thirty of them were concentrated in only two paragraphs totalling twenty-one sentences. Furthermore, these thirty references were the only occurrences of the personal pronoun "you" in linking the hearer to the sin discussed. All the other references were in terms of "we," "us," and "our." This all emphasizes the impersonal character of the sermons.

Of course, the question could be asked, "Could not some of those seventy-three personal references be so spaced that they appear in concluding statements to longer impersonal materials, thus applying those sections to the hearers and making them personal?" This was shown to be the case in much of Fosdick's preaching. However, this is not as apparent in Macartney's sermons. As was shown, thirty of the seventy-three personal statements were concentrated in two paragraphs, one at the end

of a lengthy Law section, the last paragraph in a group of twenty, and the other at the very beginning of a Law section of the same length. The sermon which began with a personal Law section ended its initial paragraph with, "But what was spoken then to a nation is spoken to 138 you and me as individuals--'Be sure your sin will find you out.'"<sup>1</sup> Nothing further was done to link the hearer and the Law in the remainder of the Law section. The other sermon concluded with a linkage of hearer and Law at the end of a long Law section.

Have you ever felt the flame of jealousy in your heart? Has that serpent ever hissed in your ear? Is there some one in your line of work or service whose name has brought a passing cloud over your face? Is there anyone whose superior talents and gifts have made you secretly gnash your teeth? Is there anyone whose beauty you secretly hate? Whose goodness you scorn? Is there under the sun a single person whose affection you fear might be turned, or is now turning, toward someone else? Then beware of jealousy. Stamp this flame out before [145] the winds have fanned it into fury, and your happiness here and hereafter is destroyed.<sup>2</sup>

So, in these two sermons at least, there was something done to make the impersonal become personal.

But thirty personal references so occupied in two paragraphs leaves a remainder of only forty-three references for the rest of the four sermons. This can be better understood when these facts are transferred to statistics in sentences. All in all, there were found forty-one sentences of personal

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<sup>1</sup>Clarence E. Macartney, The Greatest Texts Of The Bible (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1947), pp. 137-138.

<sup>2</sup>Clarence E. Macartney, Facing Life And Getting The Best Of It (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1940), pp. 144-145.

application. The two paragraphs in which the thirty personal references were concentrated totalled twenty-one sentences, half of all the sentences of personal application. That allows twenty sentences for the rest of the four sermons. There was a total of 436 sentences of Law in all six sermons which means that the remainder of the twenty sentences had to be spaced throughout approximately 400 Law sentences in order to make the impersonal sections personal. This indicates the difficulty in attaching a sufficient amount of personal references to the impersonal sections. This is further emphasized by the fact that one sermon did not have any sentences of personal application, one had fourteen and two others had three.

#### Use of Indirect Attack

No distinct examples of direct attack were evident. Two sections were very personal, but they were really indirect in technique. The one example is the paragraph quoted above in which the attack actually is indirect by its almost complete use of questions. One other interesting example appears quite indirect. In it the speaker links himself with the hearers by means of "we" and "us." "You" was not employed at all. One question was used, a stanza of a poem was quoted in support of the thought and the speaker talked in the first person singular, not necessarily referring to himself but reflecting how the hearers were thinking to themselves.

This excuse strikes [55] us as foolish and childish. But is it more childish and foolish than the excuses men make to themselves and to others when they have done

wrong? We all like to blame the furnaces or the fire; that is, we all like to blame human nature. I spoke angrily, or ungenerously, or profanely; but I was sorely provoked. I yielded to the appetite of the body; but it was God who implanted that appetite in my body. Therefore I am not responsible. All of which amounts to saying that God tempts man to sin. This excuse has received memorable recognition in Omar's great poem, where he says, Oh thou, who didst with pitfall and gin reset the road I was to wander in, Thou wilt not with Predestined Evil round Enmesh and then impute my Fall to Sin!<sup>3</sup>

Certain other indirect techniques were used throughout the sermon. No real presumptions were made. The use of questions was not predominantly in evidence as one might suspect. Only nineteen questions were used in connection with the Law and these among a total of 436 sentences in the Law section are less than one out of every twenty sentences. The use of illustration was employed far more than any other technique. Over half of the sentences discussing Law were occupied with the use of illustration. Two hundred and thirty-one sentences out of a total of 436 sentences consisted of illustrations.

As one might suppose, a great deal of prestige value was employed in the many illustrations. Twice he referred to works by Shakespeare. He quoted consequetively proverbs by the Greek, Turk, Persian, Chinese and Arab, and twice he referred to Scottish preachers, though not by name, once as a "distinguished Scottish preacher," and again as "one of the famous preachers of Scotland." One other unnamed source was referred to as "one of the great artists," and another quote had refer-

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<sup>3</sup>Clarence E. Macartney, Mountains And Mountain Men Of The Bible (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1950), pp. 54-55.

ence only to Robespierre. Other men included Martin Luther, Whipple, Addison, James Froude (life of Julius Caesar), Lincoln, Bishop Simpson, Leonardo da Vinci, Dean Swift, Robert E. Lee, John Bunyan, Henry M. Stanley, George Eliot, Tertullian, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, Omar, President Coolidge and Thomas Hood.

One obtains two important impressions from a review of Macartney's sermons. The first is their impersonal and indirect character. Not only does one feel the sermons are impersonal, but often much of the material is not related at all, whether personal or impersonal. This may be due to the other characteristic. The sermons are overwhelmingly illustrative. Illustrations of every kind are employed, often one after the other. These illustrations would at least secure the hearer's interest, and if the illustrations were sufficiently comparable to the hearers that they could easily identify themselves with the point of the illustration, this use of illustration would offset the deficiency of personal application.

## CHAPTER VIII

CHARLES H. SPURGEON

In direct and sharp contrast to the sermons of the other men studied, Spurgeon represents an approach which is highly direct and personal. Of a total of 968 sentences in the Law sections, 363 sentences linked the Law impersonally to the guilty agents. However, there were 443 sentences which personally related the hearers to the Law. What is of the most revealing fact is that of these 443 sentences, 435 of them related the Law to the hearers personally by means of the second person "you." Only eight sentences related Law to the hearers in terms of "we," "us," and "our." Without a doubt, these sermons represent a type of preaching that is highly personal and direct in approach and which is distinct from the other men studied.

Several examples are characteristic of his direct approach.

Your mother took you on her knee and taught you early to pray; your father tutored you in the ways of godliness. And yet you are here tonight, without grace in your heart--without hope of heaven. You are going downwards to hell as fast as your feet can carry you.<sup>1</sup>

Ah, sirs! there will be a day when you will have to hear your spirit speak. When your cups are empty, and not a drop of water can be given your burning tongue--when your music has ceased, and the doleful "Misere" of the

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<sup>1</sup>C. H. Spurgeon, Sermons of Rev. C. H. Spurgeon Vol. I  
(New York: Funk and Wagnalls Co., n.d.)

lost shall be your Black Sanctus,--when you shall be launched upon a sea where merriment and mirth are strangers--then you will hear the cries of your soul, but hear too late.<sup>2</sup>

Much of Spurgeon's application was impersonal. Often he ascribed the sins diagnosed to an impersonal group or class of people. However, he seldom let the description stand without applying it personally to the hearers. A personal application generally followed an impersonal discussion of the Law. In one sermon, for instance, he discussed the Jew and the Greek. But before he began the description, he said,

Now these are two very respectable gentlemen--the Jew and the Greek--I am not going to make these ancient individuals the object of my condemnation, but I look upon them as members of a great parliament, representatives of a great constituency, and I shall attempt to show that if all the race of Jews were cut off, there would still be a great number in the world who would answer to the name of Jew.<sup>3</sup>

Then after the description of the Jew, he said,

But I am going to find out Mr. Jew here in Exeter Hall--persons who answer to his description--to whom Christ is a stumbling block. Let me introduce you to yourselves, some of you.<sup>4</sup>

Again, after another description of the Jew, he asked, "Do you see yourselves here, my friends? See yourselves as others see you? See yourselves as God sees you?"<sup>5</sup> After a description of the Greek he said, "To such a man--for he is here this morning, very likely to come to hear this reed shaken of the

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<sup>2</sup>ibid., VII, p. 180.

<sup>3</sup>ibid., VII, p. 91.

<sup>4</sup>ibid., VII, p. 93.

<sup>5</sup>ibid., VII, p. 96.

wind--I have to say this: . . . ."6 Similarly, in other sermons, Spurgeon impersonally described certain classes of men as guilty of the Law. Sometimes after the initial sentence he immediately applied this to the hearers, or only drew the hearers into the application after an interval of description.

Several examples demonstrate that he wanted the hearers involved right from the beginning of a particular Law section.

I now turn to another individual, a very common personage, the accuser of the brethren. I fear I have not a few here of that sort. I know I have some, but I fear they may be more than I think.<sup>7</sup>

The first person I shall have to deal with this morning, is the man who has peace because he spends his life in a ceaseless round of gaiety and frivolity. You have scarcely come from one place of amusement before you enter another. You are always planning some excursion, and dividing the day between one entertainment and another.<sup>8</sup>

At other times, Spurgeon allowed an interval of description before he came to apply the Law to the hearers. An example of this is found in the above quotes concerning the Jew and the Greek. Two further examples are:

Doubtless I have here this morning, the moralist, the man who hates the very name of drunkenness. As for profanity, if he saw the seat of the scorners, he would pass by it at the remotest distance possible. . . . My dear friend, I am glad to see you here this morning. I wish that all men were as moral as you are. I wish that all hated sin as much as you do; but still I have a question

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid., VII, p. 99.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., VII, p. 98.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., VII, p. 179.



to ask of you, which perhaps you may not like, . . .<sup>9</sup>

I shall come now to a third class of men. These are people not particularly addicted to gaiety, nor especially given to infidel notions; but they are a sort of folk who are careless, and determined to let well alone. . . . Ah! and you have been doing this for years, have you? Whenever you have heard an earnest powerful sermon, you have gone home and labored to get rid of it.<sup>10</sup>

What factors allowed Spurgeon to be so direct in approach? Of course, the conditions could have been psychologically favorable. His prestige and reputation may have brought the hearers to accept what he had to say. One does not get the impression that he dealt with sins that could not be reasonably denied and thus merely stating the problem would induce the hearers to accept his pronouncements. But there was some evidence of two other techniques that may have somewhat softened the direct attack. Also, he did employ self-interest in that he always did preach the Gospel and have the hearers leave with the forgiveness of sins.

#### Use of Indirect Techniques

Two techniques of indirect suggestion were employed. The use of questions was amply evident in every sermon. No sermon had less than eleven questions and one had as many as thirty-two questions. Of the total of 968 Law sentences, 121 sentences were questions relating the Law to the hearers. This is a ratio of exactly one out of every eight sen-

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid., VII, p. 97.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., VII, p. 183.

tences used as questions. Sometimes the questions would appear in clusters for emphasis, but often also singly. This heavy use of questions would indicate a presence of an indirect attack as well as the direct attack already in evidence.

Often, however, Spurgeon followed his questions with a very direct answer and application to the hearers thus giving this indirect technique somewhat of a more direct coloring. It seems that often Spurgeon did not want the hearers to get the wrong answer or find the questions unapplied. The following examples indicate this technique. "And where are ye to be cast to? Ye are to be cast 'into outer darkness;' ye are to be put into the place where there will be no hope."<sup>11</sup>

Do you see yourselves here, my friends? See yourselves as others see you? See yourselves as God sees you? For so it is, here be many to whom Christ is as much a stumbling block now as ever he was.<sup>12</sup>

The following questions were prefaced by three additional questions:

Can you bless God for affliction? Can you plunge in, accoutred as ye are, and swim through all the floods of trial? Can you march triumphant through the lion's den, laugh at affliction, and bid defiance to hell? Can you? No! Your Gospel is an effeminate thing--a thing of words and sounds, and not of power.<sup>13</sup>

The following quote was prefaced by four questions similar to the following in nature:

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<sup>11</sup>ibid., VII, p. 314.

<sup>12</sup>ibid., I, p. 96.

<sup>13</sup>ibid., p. 110.

Has your tongue always been as clean of every evil thing as God's law requires it should be? What! have you the matchless effrontery to say that? Do you think so well of yourself that you will declare nothing has never come out of your mouth but that which is good?<sup>14</sup>

Preceded by two questions this follows:

Have you always heard as you would desire to hear if the sermon should be your last? Have you always prayed as you would desire to pray if you knew that rising from your knees you would have to lie down in your grave? Oh no, my brethren, we are too cold, too lukewarm, too chilled in our affections; we must mourn before God that with us, even with us, there are sins against the Lord our God.<sup>15</sup>

The other indirect technique was the use of illustration.

Not including sections in which Spurgeon described certain classes of men, there were twenty-two items of illustration comprising a total of seventy-eight lines. This is a relatively small amount of sentences used for illustrations. As with some of the questions, Spurgeon seemed anxious to have the hearers see themselves in the illustrations and often made the application of the illustration direct to the hearers. He often made a preceding and concluding statement to the illustration linking the point of the illustration to the hearers. These are examples directly following the illustration and point out how the illustration was linked to the hearer by means of a concluding statement: "Ah, there are some of you, 'children of the kingdom,' who can remember your mothers."<sup>16</sup> "Young

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid., VII, p. 97.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., VII, p. 101.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., I, p. 310.

man, what will you think, when the last day comes, to hear Christ say, 'Depart, ye cursed?'"<sup>17</sup> "So it is with you, sir, you say you are honest, and yet on your own confession that very honesty which you plead is but a confession of your own abominable wickedness."<sup>18</sup>

Other illustrations had a complete circle of application around them. They were both preceded and concluded by sentences of application.

Ah, you remind me, with your fine arguments, of the Chinese soldiers. . . . And so you arm yourselves with blasphemies, and come out to attack God's ministers, and think we will run away because of your sophistries.<sup>19</sup>

Well, sir, I will give you a picture of yourself. There is a foolish farmer yonder in his house. . . . So you, when God is warning you--when your faithful conscience is doing its best to save you--you try to kill your only friend, . . .<sup>20</sup>

Therefore, it should be noted that by the heavy use of questions and the moderate use of illustration the use of such indirect techniques was nevertheless somewhat direct.

One would suspect that there would be a great deal of common ground if the speaker became as direct in his approach as was Spurgeon, in order to soften the attack. This was not found to be especially the case. Only eight times did Spurgeon link himself with the hearers as the agents guilty of the Law in terms of "we," "us," or "our." Expressions such as

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<sup>18</sup>Ibid., VII, p. 102.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., VII, p. 182.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., VII, p. 183.

"my friends," "my dear friends," and "my dear hearers," occurred only eleven times throughout the sermons. Only once did the speaker specifically fix the blame on himself.

The preacher stands here this morning to make a personal confession. It not infrequently happens that in condemning others he condemns himself; and while that is a painful thing to him as a man, it is always a hopeful sign to him as a minister, because surely that which compels contrition and repentance in your pastor, may possibly be profitable to you, to bring you also to repentance.<sup>21</sup>

The lack of a use of common ground simply accentuates again the direct approach in the preaching of Spurgeon.

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<sup>21</sup>Ibid., VII, p. 100.

## CHAPTER LX

### CONCLUSION

A summary of a study of these men shows some interesting contrasts. Macartney was greatly impersonal and indirect. His technique was most generally displayed in the use of illustration. At an opposite pole was Spurgeon, who was decidedly direct and personal. The direct character of his sermons is emphasized by the overwhelming use of the second person pronoun "you." Fosdick, on the other hand, represented sermons that were very personal and related to the hearers. One got the impression that he tried very intensively to make his sermons applicable and pertinent to the hearers. He was both direct and indirect, with more of an indirect approach. More techniques were found in his sermons than in the others. Geiseman, like Macartney, was found to be impersonal, though not nearly as severe as Macartney. There was evidence of several techniques in Geiseman's sermons, though not to the extent of Fosdick's sermons.

It would be interesting to see further studies made on this subject. A strict comparison between the men, each measured by the same standard, would be interesting and profitable. Likewise, a more extensive study of any of the men might at least be more conclusive and revealing than a report of just the six sermons of each man.

APPENDIX A

Type of Relation of Law to Hearers  
in Sermons of O. A. Geiseman

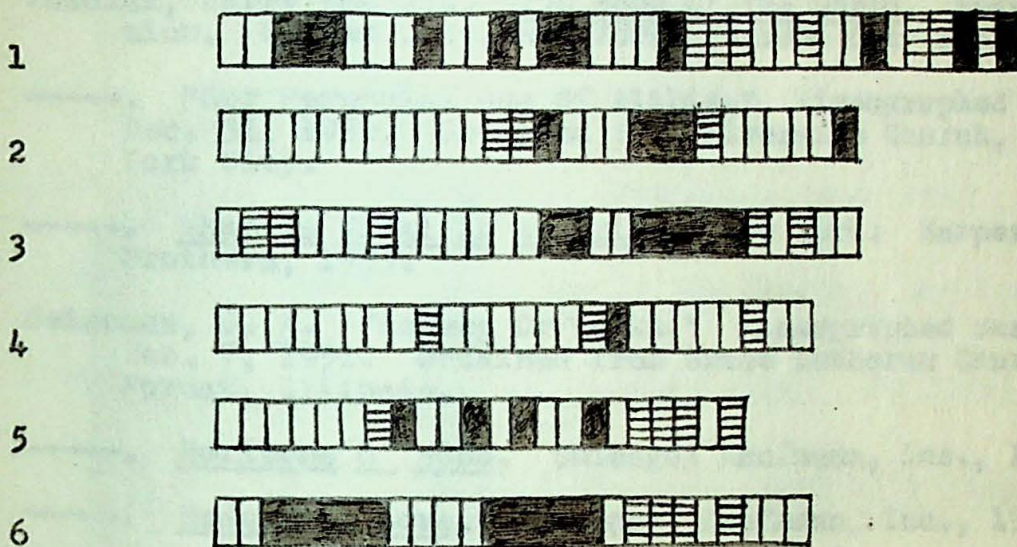
<u>Sermons</u>	<u>Personal</u>	<u>Impersonal</u>
A	29%	71%
B	14%	86%
C	23%	77%
D	41%	59%
E	16%	84%
F	44%	56%




- actively impersonal
- actively personal
- personal and impersonal
- 1 The Case of the Bible, pp. 1-10.
- 2 Ibid., pp. 11-100.
- 3 Ibid., pp. 101-210.
- 4 The Case of the Bible, pp. 111-142.
- 5 Ibid., pp. 143-174.
- 6 The Personal Use of Bible.

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APPENDIX B

Types of Paragraphs in Sermons of H. E. Fosdick



-  Entirely Impersonal
-  Entirely Personal
-  Personal and Impersonal

<sup>1</sup>The Hope Of The World, pp. 1-10.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 96-106.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 222-230.

<sup>4</sup>What Is Vital In Religion, pp. 133-142.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., pp. 187-198.

<sup>6</sup>"Our Perennial Use Of Alibis."



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