

LESSON TEN

CHAPTER X
THE SERMON ITSELF

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C. THE CONCLUSION.

1. Its Importance.

The Greek orators expressed their conception of the importance of the Conclusion of an address, or oration, by calling it, "the final struggle which decides the conflict." It is not too much to say that the last five minutes of the sermon is the most important part of it. It is during this time that the issues involved are decided, if decided at all. Yet, how very seldom the conclusion receives the preparation and thought it ought to by virtue of its important place. Very often its matter and form are left to the inspiration (?) of the moment. How scattering, and wild, and pointless are the "concluding remarks" of the average sermon—what aimless exhortations! This is sad, indeed, when we remember that we have been speaking for thirty or forty minutes for the very purpose of accomplishing the work of the last five minutes. The Introduction and the Body or Argument of the sermon, with its definition, explanation, proof, and argument, have all been dealt with for the very purpose of bringing things to an issue in the Conclusion. What a mistake then to neglect the thorough preparation of this important part of the sermon.

2. What Form Shall the Conclusion Take?

The answer to this question depends altogether on the manner in which the matter which may properly belong

to the conclusion has been included in the preceding part—What then?— of the sermon. If the main issue of the conclusion be to leave the listener with the impression of completeness, then it may be well to gather up the missing threads. This is sometimes done by what is called—

a) Recapitulation.

Cicero defines Recapitulation as “recollection revived, not speech repeated.” By this we are not to understand that to repeat the divisions or leading thoughts of the sermon is a breach of homiletics, but that recapitulation must not consist merely in such repetition. It should take the form rather of a grand resumé in which is gathered up in a few striking, well-chosen, soul-moving sentences, or in a well-chosen and pointed illustration, the grand, central idea and purpose of the entire sermon.

b) Poem, or illustration.

Sometimes the conclusion of the sermon takes the form of a poem, or the verse of some well-known hymn. Or the sermon may be finished by the use of one striking sentence.

(See under the fourth general division of a sermon: “Form which application may assume” for further instruction on this point, see pp. 100, 101.)

3. What Should Be the Length of the Conclusion?

It should not be any longer than the introduction. From three to five minutes is long enough. Conclude when you are through. If you say, “And now, finally,” let it be finally. Do not say, “Now, this last word,” and then still go on. If it is the last word, let it be the last. Indeed it may not be wise to let it be known that you are bringing your sermon to a close. Close before your people think about it. It is better to leave a congregation longing than loathing.

For illustrations of Textual Sermons, see pp. 151-165.

ATTENTION: You must complete the assignment on the next page and submit it to the college and receive notice that it has been accepted before taking the test for this Lesson.

HOW TO PREPARE SERMONS

Lesson Ten Sermon Assignment

As part of this lesson you will write a sermon and a critical analysis of it.

1. You will begin your sermon by considering the various sections of the textbook using an outline of the textbook. You will derive your outline for your critical analysis by considering the points in the textbook from chapter II. onward.
2. To compose a rough outline of your sermon, go to each section of the textbook and make a note of which parts in the textbook will influence your outline and which ones are not applicable. The ones that are not applicable are to be marked NA on your critical analysis of your sermon. For the parts of the textbook that are applicable to your sermon, you are to mark them with a short sentence in your critical analysis explaining how they have been used in your sermon.
3. Your critical analysis will be composed at the same time you are composing your rough outline. Then that rough outline will be used to compose your final outline.
4. Following is an example of a Critical Analysis and Rough Outline page:

Critical Analysis	Rough Sermon Outline
<p>ch. II. I am not imitating anyone and I am living a morally clean and healthy life. I know who's servant I am.</p> <p>ch. III. I have chosen a short text.</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">I. Considered.</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">II. This is an appropriate text.</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">III. I have considered this section.</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">IV. Principles...</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">1. This is to the lost, their need is salvation.</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">2. I have not preached to this group before.</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">3. I am quite able to deal with this text.</p> <p>PARTICULAR PRINCIPLES</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">1. - 3. NA</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">4. I have sought the guidance of the Holy Spirit.</p> <p>V. CERTAIN PRECAUTIONS</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">1. This is not an odd text.</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">2. Text will not appear ludicrous or ridiculous.</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">3. Will not create expectations which will not be filled.</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">4. NA</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">5. NA</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">6. NA</p>	<p>Text: John 3:16</p>

Critical Analysis	Rough Sermon Outline
<p>ch. IV. INTERPRETATION</p> <p>I. Rules for Interpretations of a text.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It is a literal text. 2. The words need no defining. 3. NA 4. The analogy of faith. 5. NA <p>II. Sources for Interpretation of the text.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The text teaches exactly what it says. 2. Context is plain and simple. 3. Parallel passages. 4. Resources outside of the text. <p>ch. V. THE THEME</p> <p>I. BY WAY OF SUGGESTIONS.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I know my theme thoroughly. 2. People will readily understand the theme. 3. Considered. 4. Definite Aim. 5. I am in accord and believe in my theme. 6. It is suitable to time, place, and occasion. <p>ch. VI. GATHERING SERMON MATERIAL.</p> <p>I. THE GATHERING OF MATERIALS.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Considered. 2. Considered. 3. Considered. 4. What have I gathered on this subject? <p>ch. VII. SERMON MATERIAL ARRANGING IT</p> <p>I. THERE ARE CERTAIN ADVANTAGES IN THE ARRANGEMENT OF SERMON MATERIAL.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Considered. 2. Considered. 	<p>Ro 3:23, 24; 5:8; 6:23; 10:13</p> <p>OT passages- Children of Israel in Num 21:6-9; Abraham in Gen 15:16; Nineveh in Jonah 3:5-10</p> <p>Commentaries by: Mathew Henry; Jamieson, Fausset, & Brown</p> <p>Salvation of the lost and Encouragement to the Saved to Win Souls.</p> <p>Salvation of the lost & encouragement to the believer.</p> <p>John 3:16 by Kuhn Is John 3:16 the Gospel? by David Pawson</p>

3. Considered.

4. In accord with the needs of the Theme.

II. CHARACTERISTICS AND QUALITIES OF A GOOD ARRANGEMENT.

1. One Theme.

2. etc.

3. etc.

III. THE ARRANGEMENT ITSELF

Considered.

ch. VIII. THE SERMON ITSELF

A. THE INTRODUCTION

I. PURPOSE OF AN INTRODUCTION

Considered.

1. etc.; etc.

2. etc.; etc.

3. etc.; etc.

etc.; etc.

etc.; etc.

List each point in the textbook on through to the end of it and make appropriate comments in your critique of your outline and appropriate entries in your Rough Outline in the right-hand column of this page.

You will then use the Rough Outline to compose your Final Outline.

This Critical Analysis/Rough Outline page and your Final Outline must all be submitted to the college for assessment. You must submit all of these and then complete any rewrites required by the college before this lesson is considered completed. After you have completed all of these, you will then be allowed to take your test for this Lesson.

You will not take your Final Test in this course until you have completed this sermon assignment and all following assignments.

[Click HERE to open a blank Critical Analysis/Rough Outline page.](#)

[Outline Submission link.](#)