

LESSON THIRTEEN

CHAPTER XIII
GREAT CHAPTERS AS TEXTS

After studying this textbook chapter, pick one of these Scripture chapters and use it as a Text for a sermon. Make a Critical Analysis/Rough Outline based upon the 6 points in this chapter and submit that form and then submit your Final Outline for review and acceptance before taking the test for this lesson.

Click [HERE](#) for a blank Critical Analysis/Rough outline form.

CHAPTER XIII.

GREAT CHAPTERS AS TEXTS.

Oftentimes one is much impressed with the truth as set forth completely and vividly in some one chapter of the Bible, and desires to take that chapter as a text. This is legitimate; indeed it is a practice often honored with signal blessing and profit. Some of the greatest and most helpful sermons ever preached have had texts as large as an entire chapter.

I. SUGGESTIONS.

1. Be Sure that the Chapter You Choose for a Text is a Complete One and Has in It a Complete Subject.

I Corinthians 15 contains a complete subject: "The Resurrection of the Body." I Corinthians 13 is a complete treatise on the subject of "Love." John 17, "The Prayer of our Lord," is also a complete chapter. It would be very difficult to deal with some chapters in Proverbs and Psalms in this way.

2. Ascertain the True Setting of the Chapter.

It is useless to preach on the eighth chapter of Romans, for instance, unless one has in mind the preceding chapters. No exposition of this wonderful chapter would be complete that did not relate itself to the chapters preceding it. This is especially true of chapters chosen from the prophets. Their relation to the history

and condition of the times must be considered before a sermon is prepared with the chapter as its text (cf. Isaiah 6 with 2 Chronicles 26). Sometimes the purpose of the entire book must be considered before one can arrive at a true understanding of the chapter.

3. Analyze the Chapter.

Outline it; divide it; know what its general divisions and sub-divisions are. The Revised Version will greatly help you in this direction. Read the chapter over carefully until the outline stands out bold and clear. It can be done. Keep at it until you succeed. As a rule the great chapters chosen as texts, divide themselves naturally. A careful reading of John 17, for example, reveals to you three natural divisions, which a careful reader could scarcely miss: Christ's prayer for Himself, for His apostles, and for the future Church.

4. Be Sure to Get the Main Theme of the Chapter.

It may require many readings of the chapter to secure this result, but it must be done. Sermonizing is not easy work anyway. The theme of 1 Corinthians 13 is "Love"; chapter 14, "Spiritual Gifts"; chapter 15, "The Resurrection."

5. Surround the Main Theme with Questions.

Answer these questions from the contents of the chapter. If you take 1 Corinthians 13, then ask, What is love? What are its characteristics? How does it manifest itself? What is its relation to and in comparison with other gifts and graces of the Spirit? and so on. These answers will furnish you with the divisions and sub-divisions of the chapter and also of your sermon. All your sermon will then be in your text; you will not be likely to wander from it: your text will then be,

a text in reality, and not, as is oftentimes the case, a pre-text.

6. Compare the Parallel Accounts.

This is especially true of chapters chosen from the Kings and Chronicles, and sometimes the prophets. There are passages in the Kings which have their sequel in the Chronicles; and in the prophets which have their sequel in both these books.

For illustrative sermons on Great Chapters as Texts, see pp. 176-178.

Return to p. 129 and complete the Sermon assignment. Turn in your Critical Analysis/Rough Outline and your Final Outline and have it accepted before proceeding to take the test for this lesson.