

**PREACHING AND  
SERMON  
CONSTRUCTION**

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Preaching and Sermon Construction by Paul B. Bull

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**PAUL B. BULL**

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# PREACHING AND SERMON CONSTRUCTION

BY

PAUL B. BULL, M.A.

PRIEST OF THE COMMUNITY OF THE RESURRECTION

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## PREFACE

THESE notes on Preaching and Sermon Construction are an expansion of some lectures given to the students at Lichfield Theological College and to a School for Clergy. I could not have brought myself to publish them if it had not been for the encouragement and persistent persuasion of Prebendary L. A. Phillips, the Principal, and the students of that College, to whom I offer this expansion in gratitude for their kind appreciation, which has conquered my hesitation. I suppose one's reluctance to publish anything on the subject springs chiefly from two facts: firstly, that a preacher has to cover such a wide range of subjects in following his calling that he can bring nothing to perfection, and therefore he has to publish studies which he knows are not yet complete or exhaustive; and, secondly, no preacher who is sincere can escape from the painful realization that the expression of his ideal is the confession of his failure. In nearly every word he condemns himself.

But some such help as is attempted in this book seemed to be needed. Many brilliant and learned preachers have lectured on the Principles of Preaching. But few have come to the aid of the young parish priest in facing this most difficult part of his ministry, the actual construction of a sermon. Undoubtedly many young clergy suffer much in their first efforts to construct a sermon, simply because no one has taught them the few rules which govern the technique of this art. In cases where a preacher is so strong in self-confidence that he does not suffer at all, the suffering is generally borne by the congregation. It is in the hope of relieving such suffering in either case that I offer to young preachers a summary of that part of my experience which I may be able to communicate to others after thirty-four years' labor in this ministry. Every preacher will know that in preaching the Word of God there are joys

and sorrows which cannot be communicated to others, or find expression in words. After a long ministry devoted to the conversion of souls, I may be allowed to express my conviction that the Supernatural is the essence of the Gospel, and that a firm belief in the Deity of Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Virgin-born Son of God, is the only "Word" which by the power of the Holy Spirit can regenerate the human race, and redeem us from the power of sin. This belief alone gives redemptive power to the Cross of Christ. There may be some intellectual satisfaction, but there is no redemptive power, in the modern substitutes for Christianity which "Modernism" offers us. What man needs is the Gospel of Power from on high, not merely the Gospel of a good Example. What God wants is not the patronage of our intellectual approval, but the entire surrender of our will.

I cannot allow this summary of the experience of a lifetime to issue without acknowledging the deep debt of gratitude I owe to Bishop Charles Gore. Not only as a stimulating teacher who first inspired me with the love of truth and righteousness, but also as a faithful friend, I owe him more gratitude than I can express.

PAUL B. BULL, C.R.

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MIRFIELD,  
YORKSHIRE.

# CONTENTS

## CHAPTER I

### PROPHET AND PRIEST

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION . . . . .	1
I.—WHAT IS A PROPHET? . . . . .	1
1. Sensitiveness to God . . . . .	2
2. A Revelation of Righteousness . . . . .	2
3. The Interpretation of God's Will . . . . .	3
II.—PROPHET AND PRIEST CONTRASTED . . . . .	4
1. Personal and Official . . . . .	4
2. Dunamis and Exousia . . . . .	5
3. Individual and Corporate . . . . .	5
4. Ethical and Dogmatic . . . . .	6
5. The Church of England . . . . .	7
6. Our Obligation as Priests . . . . .	8
7. The Need of Definite Teaching . . . . .	9
III.—THREE KINDS OF TEACHING . . . . .	10
(A) Dogmatic Teaching . . . . .	11
I.—A Teaching Church . . . . .	11
II.—The Subject of Dogmatic Teaching . . . . .	13
III.—Considerations on Dogmatic Teaching . . . . .	14
1. Its Necessity: Our Lord's Command . . . . .	14
2. The Needs of Man . . . . .	14
3. Temperamental Differences . . . . .	14
4. Growing Experience of Preachers . . . . .	15
5. The Shield of Faith . . . . .	16
6. The Subjective Value of Dogmatic Teaching . . . . .	17
7. The Tone of Dogmatic Teaching . . . . .	19
(i.) Authoritative . . . . .	19
(ii.) Persuasive . . . . .	19
(iii.) Clear . . . . .	20
8. The Dogmatic Spirit . . . . .	20
(B) Ethical Teaching . . . . .	21
1. Our Lord's Teaching . . . . .	21
2. The Ethical Teaching of the Church . . . . .	23
3. Some Characteristics of Christian Ethics . . . . .	24
(i.) Supernatural . . . . .	24
(ii.) Personality . . . . .	25
(iii.) Freedom . . . . .	25
(iv.) Punishment and Reward . . . . .	27