

**HOMILIES ON THE
SERMON ON
THE MOUNT**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649606481

Homilies on the Sermon on the Mount by James Tweed

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

JAMES TWEED

**HOMILIES ON THE
SERMON ON
THE MOUNT**

HOMILIES
ON THE
SERMON ON THE MOUNT.

BY THE
REV. JAMES TWEED, M.A.,
FORMERLY OF CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.



OXFORD and LONDON:
JAMES PARKER AND CO.
1867.

100. g. 190.

PREFACE.

THE author of the following discourses, by prefixing to them the somewhat antiquated name of Homilies, intends to convey the notion of their simplicity and familiarity, and of their adaptation to popular use, and, at the same time, to intimate the plan upon which they are composed, which is that observed by the ancient Fathers in those of their works which bear the same title.

The ancient Homily differed from the modern sermon in this, that it was a discourse, not upon a single text, which merely served as a motto to it, but upon a larger portion of Scripture, a paragraph complete in itself. The meaning of the successive passages was explained when necessary, the doctrines or precepts contained in them brought prominently forward, the lessons, moral and religious, to be learnt from them, pressed upon the attention; and exposition was followed by exhortation; that whilst the understanding was enlightened by the knowledge of divine truth, the will might be moved to obedience.

This, surely, was a profitable mode of instruction, and it had the advantage of being popular. Now, to aim at popularity for its own sake is contemptible, and, in a Christian, something worse; but to be popular in order to be useful to the many is both a laudable and a desirable object. It is not, however, meant that the preacher should be popular, but his teaching; and this is effected by the Homily, which meets that fondness of the people for the words of Scripture itself, which may be called a spiritual instinct, and which is surely to be indulged. At the same time, the hearer is not left to interpret the Scriptures for himself. He receives an interpretation with them, and the instruction to be derived from them is plainly drawn out for him.

This method, the author conceives, may be advantageously pursued in the present day. The Epistles and Gospels of our Church are admirable subjects for Homilies of this sort. Of the former it may be said that they require such an exposition, especially those selected from the Epistle to the Galatians, which can hardly be understood from the bare text, and without such an accompaniment are but a dead letter.

The good effects attributed to "the foolishness

of preaching" shew it to be one of the most important of the means of grace, and prove both the sin and the danger of neglecting it. To nothing, perhaps, is the increase of dissent in particular places more to be imputed than to this neglect. When "the hungry sheep look up and are not fed," it is no wonder if they are tempted to stray from the fold. By every feeling of attachment, therefore, to the Church of which we are ministers, we are urged to "take heed to the doctrine." And if the demand for Scriptural preaching cannot be more satisfactorily answered than by the revival of Homilies upon portions of Scripture, to approximate in this way to the practice of the primitive Church is a safer method and a sounder policy than to revive antiquated ceremonies which were never essential, and are now alien from our manners, and, as experience has unhappily proved, offensive to the people whom we ought to conciliate. "The faith once delivered to the saints" we are still bound to communicate, and at no time can it be withheld and the Church not suffer loss; but external forms and observances may be expected to be accommodated to the wishes, and even the prejudices, of the age.

Progression in every thing seems the demand

of our times. In a fuller knowledge and a clearer understanding of Scripture it is, to say the least, as necessary as in other matters; and to this end nothing can better contribute than strictly Scriptural preaching, which is secured by Homilies upon portions of Scripture. A fulness of knowledge may thus be gained which sermons, based upon a single text, can hardly supply. When a person's words are only partially reported to us, his whole meaning cannot be certainly known, at least, it is liable to be mistaken. It is notorious that all the heresies which have infested the Church rest upon detached texts; that by these, taken separately, any one of them seems capable of proof, though by the whole tenor of Scripture they can all be satisfactorily refuted. From passages, therefore, complete in themselves, and not from isolated texts, the whole truth is to be collected*.

The plan which the writer has here attempted and most imperfectly executed himself, he ven-

* The excellent biographer of Archbishop Leighton tells us: "Large portions of Holy Scripture were preferred by him, as subjects for sermons, to single texts; for he thought they offered more scope for pithy practical remark, and were better calculated to engage the attention of the auditors."—*Life*, prefixed to his Works, p. 58.

tures to recommend to those of his clerical brethren who have more leisure and greater abilities to pursue and improve upon it. From the abundance of matter supplied, and the assistance to be obtained from commentators, a Homily of this kind will be found an easier composition than a sermon restricted to a short text. Originality is not required. Scriptural knowledge, clear ideas, and the command not of fine but of plain and simple-language, will be sufficient to furnish a man for this work who aims at usefulness rather than reputation. And surely the display of eminent abilities, the highest praise that composition can win, is not to a well-regulated mind a consideration to be weighed against the satisfaction of contributing, by a humble but profitable work, to the edification of the common people, for whose instruction, it must be remembered, the Homily is especially designed.

It is at this satisfaction that I aim in the present unpretending little work. The doctrines of the Sermon on the Mount are so transcendently important, that attention can hardly be called to them without a beneficial effect. If I have interpreted them truly, explained them clearly, and enforced them impressively, I have done my part. The matter itself is divine, and

will make its way to hearts and minds, properly disposed, if fairly laid before them; and if any are induced by the present exhibition of them to consider them with the seriousness their deep importance deserves, the result, I am persuaded, will be their moral and spiritual improvement.