

insight as in Beecher. But something distinctive there must be, and, therefore, one of the wisest of rules is, Cultivate your strong side.

But what tells most of all is the personality as a whole. This is one of the prime elements in preaching. The effect of a sermon depends, first of all, on what is said, and next, on how it is said; but, hardly less, on who says it. There are men, says Emerson, who are heard to the ends of the earth though they speak in a whisper.\* We are so constituted that what we hear depends very much for its effect on how we are disposed towards him who speaks. The regular hearers of a minister gradually form in their minds, almost unawares, an image of what he is, into which they put everything which they themselves remember about him and everything which they have heard of his record; and, when he rises on Sunday in the pulpit, it is not the man visible there at the moment that they listen to, but this image, which

\*The finest description of a speaker known to me is this of Lord Bacon in Ben Jonson's *Discoveries*; and it is evident that it was the man rather than the manner or even the matter which made the impression: "Yet there happened in my time one noble speaker, who was full of gravity in his speaking. His language, where he could spare or pass by a jest, was nobly censorious. No man ever spake more neatly, more pressly, more weightily, or suffered less emptiness, less idleness, in what he uttered. No member of his speech but consisted of his own graces. His hearers could not cough, or look aside from him, without loss. He commanded where he spoke; and had his judges angry and pleased at his devotion. No man had their affections more in his power. The fear of every man that heard him was, lest he should make an end."

stands behind him and determines the precise weight and effect of every sentence which he utters.

Closely connected with the force of personality is the other power, which St. Paul possessed in so supreme a degree, of taking an interest in others. It is the manhood in ourselves which enables us to understand the human nature of our hearers; and we must have had experience of life, if we are to preach to the life of men.

Some ministers do this extremely little. Not once but many a time, I have heard a minister on the Sabbath morning, when he rose up and began to pray, plunging at once into a theological meditation; and in all the prayers of the forenoon there would scarcely be a single sentence making reference to the life of the people during the week. Had you been a stranger alighted from another planet, you would never have dreamed that the human beings assembled there had been toiling, rejoicing and sorrowing for six days; that they had mercies to give thanks for and sins to be forgiven; or that they had children at home to pray for and sons across the sea.

There is an unearthly style of preaching, if I may use the term, without the blood of human life in it: the people with their burdens in the pews—the

Stalker, James. *The Preacher and His Models*. New York: Hodder and Stoughton, 1891.