

gone!" "No, my lord," answered Whitefield, "he is not quite gone; let us hope that he may yet be saved." Then he went on to preach deliverance from the delusions of blind self-trust through faith in Jesus Christ.

Now, we may not possess one-tenth of George Whitefield's dramatic imagination. Nevertheless, the art of illustration is a thing no preacher can afford to neglect. Abstract truth has to be translated into concrete terms, if it is to impinge upon the average mind. The preacher who will not condescend thus to translate his meaning, who disdains the use of illustration, considering it undignified and puerile, is being very foolish. Surely our Lord's example is decisive here. Jesus did not speak of the efficacy of importunate prayer: He showed us a man shamelessly hammering at his neighbour's door at midnight. He did not say that wrong personal relationships were inimical to religious reality: He said it would be wise to leave our gift before the altar, and go and make peace with our brother, and then come back and offer the gift. When a certain jurist, an expert in definitions, demanded "Who is my neighbour?" the answer was "A certain man went down to Jericho," and the story of the Good Samaritan. Truth made concrete will find a way past many a door where abstractions knock in vain.

This is an art, of course, which calls for careful handling. Illustrations dragged in at random and needlessly multiplied betoken a slovenly mind. Any illustration which is only doubtfully relevant to the main theme ought to be rigorously banned. No matter how vivid it may be in itself, if it does not immediately light up the particular truth under discussion, exclude it ruthlessly. Otherwise it will simply distract attention and defeat