

LESSON 7

DEVELOPING STYLE

Introduction

Style is defined basically as the characteristics and qualities of the language in a particular piece of discourse. It concerns the choice of words, sentence patterns, paragraph constructions, and the general arrangement and the emphases of the material. It is the mode of expressing thought. In oral communication, style refers also to the speaker's individual characteristics of delivery. Since the choice of words was discussed in the previous lesson on diction, little attention will be given to that area in this lesson.

An address with good style has the following characteristics:

1. Clarity of thought and expression;
2. Beauty based on originality and the attractiveness of words, expressions, and illustrations;
3. Force in delivery derived from energy, rate, and pitch;
4. Interest based on a relevant subject which is personally applied;
5. Appropriate expression in reading, quoting, describing, and illustrating.

Clarity of Thought and Expression

Clarity of thought

Adequate preparation and organization are prerequisites to a message which is presented with clear ideas. Sermon Building and Lesson 2 of this study guide deal with some methods to follow in achieving clarity of thought.

Clarity of expression

A good outline must be expressed in simple and easily understood language. The ideas must be stated precisely and accurately. The language of a

Read the definition of style (first sentence of text) again. Learn this definition.

Style concerns the choice of _____, _____ patterns, _____ constructions, and the general arrangement and the _____ of the material. Style also includes the speaker's characteristics of _____.

(Compare your answers with the text.)

An address with good style has c _____, b _____, f _____, i _____, and a _____ e _____.

(clarity, beauty, force, interest, appropriate expression)

what God did, it is better to use the active voice with God as the subject.

Using positive statements.—Definite assertions and positive statements are superior to negative statements and general non-committal language. "He was not very often on time" is improved by putting it into the positive statement, "He usually came late." "He was not interested in the subject" can be positively stated as "he was disinterested in the subject." The word "not" should be used as a means of denial or antithesis rather than as a means of evasion. Hearers would rather be told what is rather than what is not. As a rule, it is better to express even a negative in a positive form. The words and phrases in the following columns illustrate how negative statements can be made in positive form:

not honest	dishonest
not important	trifling
did not remember	forgot
did not pay any attention to	ignored
did not have much confidence in	distrusted ¹

Simple and specific statements.—Oral style must be simpler and more specific than written style. The listener does not have opportunity to turn back and reread ideas which were not clear when they were spoken. Since the listener cannot stop and ponder the meaning of a statement without losing the trend of the speaker's thought, the language employed must be very clear. Specific language is superior to general terminology. Orange tree is more specific than fruit tree, but fruit tree is more specific than tree. Select the simpler words in the following pairs:

ephemeral	short-lived
bitter	acrimonious
ubiquitous	omnipresent
secret	clandestine
obdurate	stubborn

Repetition.—Since the listener cannot return to a statement to understand more fully its meaning, the speaker should use more repetition and restatement in oral communication than he would in writing. He should state his point, develop it, and summarize it. Illustrations are not truths standing alone but stories which cast light on the truth being discussed. Rather than repeating the same words several times, the speaker should use variety in stating a truth from different perspectives. He can state the same point in many ways by using examples, comparisons, explanations, and narratives.

¹William Strunk, Jr., and E. B. White, The Elements of Style (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1959), p. 15.

Underline the correct words.

(Negative, Positive) statements are superior to (positive, negative) statements.

(Positive, negative)

State the following sentence positively.

He was not interested in the subject.

(Compare your answer with the text.)

A speaker's language must be very clear because the listener cannot _____ and _____ the meaning of a statement.

(stop and ponder)

Underline the correct word.

In oral communication, (more, less) repetition should be used than in writing.

(more)

Elements of Attractiveness

Attractiveness of style is the composite of a number of qualities of the sermon content and delivery. Attractiveness has to do with the sermon's eloquence and beauty. It overlaps with clarity. Thoughts which are simple and clear usually are attractive.

Imagination

Attractiveness is a product of imagination. Imagination has been defined as the ability to see mentally events or scenes which are removed by time and space. Imagination is required for the preacher to see the relevance of a biblical passage to modern life. It is necessary if the preacher is to select Scriptures and subjects which will meet the real needs of his people.

The preacher does not employ his imagination to delight the audience, but to take noble truths which may have grown dull and give them new brightness. Imagination enables him to be fresh and original in his presentation of old truths.

Rhythmic sentences

According to Aristotle, rhetorical style should be patterned after poetry. For the poet, beauty is the most important stylistic element. For the orator, it may be subordinate to clarity and force, but it remains important. Everyone expects the singer to have a pleasant tone and cadence. The poet is expected to give pleasure.

Well chosen quotations from verse or prose add beauty to the sermon; however, they should not be added merely for beauty, but they should contribute to the understanding of the truth. Quoting an appropriate verse of a hymn often sets forth theological truth in a beautiful manner.

Smooth, flowing sentences are most elegant. Deep emotional feelings tend to give rhythmic movement to expressions. A succession of smooth and graceful sentences of the same pattern, however, becomes monotonous. Attractive style in speaking requires variation in sentence patterns.

Figures of speech

Similes, metaphors, personifications, and other figures of speech contribute to attractiveness of style. A simile is a statement of comparison which uses the word as or like. A literal statement of similarity is not a simile. A simile is a comparison in which two objects differ in most ways but are still much alike in some one aspect. Some forceful similes which are

What adds freshness and originality to a preacher's presentation of old and noble truths? _____

(Compare your answer with the text.)

Attractive style requires _____ sentences and _____ in patterns.

(rhythmic, variation)

Attractiveness in style is aided also by the use of _____ of _____.

Write the definition of a simile. _____

(Compare your answers with the text.)

found in the Bible include: "His eyes were as a flame of fire;...and his voice as the sound of many waters" (Rev. 1:14f.). "For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be" (Matt. 24:27). "The ungodly are not so; but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away" (Ps. 1:4). A metaphor implies likeness rather than stating it explicitly: "Whose teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue is a sharp sword" (Ps. 57:4).

Antithesis occurs frequently in the Scriptures and it is the most forceful figure of speech. Examples of antithesis are: "The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath (Mark 2:27). "The memory of the just is blessed: but the name of the wicked shall rot" (Pro. 10:7). Bossuet's second sermon on the first Sunday in Advent illustrates the antithetic paragraph:

Hear how the author of the Book of Maccabees speaks of the great King of Macedonia, whose name seemed to breathe nothing but victory and triumph. "It happened that Alexander, son of Philip, reigned over Greece, and made many wars, and won many strongholds, and slew the kings of the earth, and went to the ends of the world, and took spoils of many nations, in so much that the earth was quiet before him." A grand and magnificent beginning!—But hear the conclusion: "After these things he fell sick, and perceived that he must die; wherefore he called his servants, and parted his kingdom among them. So Alexander reigned twelve years, and he died." To this fate is suddenly reduced all his glory; in this manner the history of Alexander the Great terminates. How different the history of Jesus Christ. It does not indeed commence in a manner so pompous, neither does it end in a manner so ruinous. It begins by showing Him to us in a sordid manger, then leads Him through various stages of humiliation, then conducts Him to the infamy of the cross, and at length envelops Him in the darkness of the tomb, confessedly the very lowest degree of depression. But this, instead of being the period of His final abasement, is that from which He recovers, and is exalted. He rises, ascends, takes possession of His throne, is extending His glory to the utmost bounds of the universe, and will one

A metaphor implies _____.

(likeness)

Is this statement true or false?

An antithesis contrasts a second statement to a first statement. _____

(true)

Identify the following as simile, metaphor, or antithesis.

1. "Whose teeth are spears and arrows."

2. "The sabbath was made for man, not man for the sabbath." _____

3. "His eyes were as a flame of fire."

(1. metaphor, 2. antithesis, 3. simile)

Which is the most forceful figure of speech?

(antithesis)

day come with great power and judge the quick and dead.²

Analogy is another rhetorical device which adds beauty to sermons. It joins the metaphor and simile in making comparisons; however, it differs from them by containing several points of similarity instead of just one. Analogy is based on the presumption that things whose likeness in certain respects is known can also be found alike in respects about which knowledge is limited to one of them. Some of the parables of Jesus illustrate the use of analogy.

Comparison lies at the heart of parables, which are illustrations drawn from nature or daily life and are designed to illuminate some spiritual truth. Parables compare the unknown with the known. Some of the comparisons are metaphors: "Ye are the light of the world" (Matt. 5:14); "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees" (Matt. 16:6). Others are similes: "Be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves" (Matt. 10:16). These comparisons are expanded into pictures, like the similitude of The Lost Sheep, and into stories like the story-parable of The Prodigal Son. The truths of the earthly story are applied to the spiritual realm by analogy. For example, the sower of good seed is the Son of Man, the field is the world, the good seed is the children of the Kingdom, but the tares are the children of the wicked one (Matt. 13:24-30, 37-43).

The similitude presents a typical, familiar, recurring scene with more than one verb, whereas similes and metaphors have only one verb. The story-parable has a series of verbs, all in the past tense.

Choosing colourful language

Clarity and simplicity of language do not mean dull and colourless language. Some words do not have emotional connotations. Since the speaker must address the heart as well as the intellect, words with emotional connotations add forcefulness and beauty to his message. "The man walked down the street" is a statement of fact without drama or colour. "The drunk staggered along the sidewalk" or "the robber slipped stealthily through the alley" are statements which are colourful and dramatic.

²Quoted by M. Reu, Homiletics: A Manual of the Theory and Practice of Preaching (Reprint; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House, 1967), p. 209.

Jesus' earthly stories which contain truths applied to the spiritual realm are called

_____.

(parables)

Forcefulness and beauty in a message are gained by use of _____ language.

(colourful)

Colourful words connote attitudes and feelings in addition to the meaning denoted. Dictator and tyrant are more colourful than ruler; slave and peon are more vivid than worker. Rights, liberty, freedom, discrimination, and equality are words filled with emotional colouring.

Forcefulness in Delivery

Force is usually thought of as the energetic delivery of a message. The qualities of style which contribute to clarity and interest also make sermons forceful. Broadus lists concrete and specific language, the proper construction of sentences, and figures of speech as requisites to forceful style.³

Energy and enthusiasm

Forceful style includes animation or liveliness which serves to stimulate attention. The speaker's goal is to do more than speak in an understandable manner. He desires to arouse his audience to action and to make inattention difficult. To accomplish this goal, he must believe deeply what he is saying and use arguments which appeal to the emotions as well as the intellect of the hearer. When the speaker becomes emotionally involved in the message, he naturally will deliver it with more enthusiasm and energy.

The energetic nature of the person is essential for forcefulness of style. The speaker needs forceful character and passion of soul if he is ever to attain eloquence. He must feel that what he is saying is true and be convinced that those to whom he speaks need to be persuaded of that truth.

Enthusiasm is contagious and essential for kindling enthusiastic response. It is not only what is said that is important but the spirit in which it is said. The earnestness of the speaker is often the only thing that hearers carry away. Half-heartedness is fatal to public influence.

Sympathy

Forcefulness in speaking requires sympathy, which is unselfish interest in others who are in need. It means joining with others in their feelings. Men's

³John A. Broadus, On the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons (Rev. ed.; Nashville: Broadman Press, 1944), pp. 252ff.

Colourful words connote _____ and _____ and _____ denote _____.

(Compare your answers with the text.)

Read this paragraph and the next one before doing the following exercise.

A message is delivered with energy when the speaker--

1. is _____ involved in the message;
2. has an _____ nature.

(1. emotionally, 2. energetic)

hearts are controlled by hope and fear, love and hate, and acceptance and rejection. The speaker who recognizes and responds to the needs of his audience will find a ready reaction from it.

Jesus' forceful personality did not depend on accomplishments in education, literary works, or oratorical prominence but upon His interest in others. A preacher cannot be a forceful speaker without identifying with the needs of others and speaking to those needs.

Stressing important words

Forceful speaking requires the stressing of the important thought, word, or phrase in a statement. Strong nouns and verbs should carry the weight of the speaker's thought. He should stress nouns because they provide power and verbs because they show power at work. Nouns are names of things and should be concrete when possible. Verbs express the action of those nouns and should be in the active voice when possible. Occasionally, other parts of speech should be stressed. For example, the order of the Hebrew in Isaiah 53:5 calls for stress on the pronouns: "He was wounded for our transgressions." Also, the invitation of our Lord requires the pronoun to be stressed: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden" (Matt. 11:28). New material and positive statements are accentuated. Normally, pronouns, which have antecedents, are never new material and should not be stressed. Negative statements are never stressed. Weighing down of nouns and verbs with qualifying words and phrases should be avoided.

The words which come at the beginning or at the end of a sentence receive the greater natural force. The normal English order is subject, predicate, and complement. However, it is not necessary to follow this order all the time. Normally the subject should be stressed and followed closely by the predicate, which describes the action of the subject. If another part of speech needs emphasizing, it should be placed near the beginning or end of the sentence. It will not receive due emphasis if it is in the middle of the sentence. If it is placed in the middle of the statement, it is de-emphasized. Determine which parts of the following sentences are stressed in the various orders:

I will do this gladly for you, my
dearest friend.
My dearest friend, I will do this
gladly for you.
Gladly will I do this for you, my
dearest friend.
This will I do gladly for you, my
dearest friend.

Write the word can or cannot to make the following statement true.

A preacher _____ be a forceful speaker without identifying with the needs of others and speaking to those needs.

(Compare your answer with the text.)

The parts of speech which are usually stressed are _____ and _____.

(nouns, verbs)

New material and positive statements should be _____.

(accentuated)

Sentence length

A variety of long and short sentences in speaking provides a technique for giving greater emphasis to certain statements and helps prevent monotony. A single short sentence in the midst of longer sentences serves to summarize and to emphasize. It is like the accent in music.

Tense and mood

Forceful preaching requires the correct tense and mood. The disciples on the road to Emmaus said to Jesus, "But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel" (Luke 24:21—RSV). The verb tense is past perfect and reveals the innermost hearts of the disciples, their misunderstanding and despair. They had hoped, but they no longer had hope.

Forceful preaching must be contemporaneous. It should be expressed in the present tense. The task of preaching is to take Scriptures which were given long ago and to interpret them to meet the concerns of today. If the sermon fails to make the transition from the historical to the present, it loses forcefulness. Preaching is not just a commentary on the grammatical and historical meanings of Scripture, but it must translate the ancient records into modern life.

The three moods of the English verb express varying degrees of reality. The indicative mood makes direct assertions or asks questions. It is the mood of reality and objective fact. Sermons in the indicative mood speak of the act or state of being as an objective fact. Sermons which are preached in the subjunctive mood present potential actions and conditions which are possible under certain situations. This mood is expressed as wishes or remote possibilities. The imperative mood expresses command, entreaty, or exhortation. The action has not taken place, but it has been commanded.

All three moods are proper and necessary in preaching. Since God is authoritative, He has given commands to man. As prophet, the preacher speaks forth God's Word, God's imperative. The imperative mood is especially relevant with regard to moral requirements. Opinion is divided whether the preacher should speak in the first person plural or second person when he uses the imperative mood, the mood of commandment. Should he say, "We must," "we ought," "let us"? Or should he say "you must," "you ought," "do this"? If he uses the latter approach, he should make it clear that the commandment comes from God, and he is only God's spokesman. Otherwise, his words will reveal a false authoritarian attitude, or they will wrongly suggest a pompous attitude. On some occasions, the polite first person plural makes the

Sentences should vary in _____.

(Compare your answer with the text.)

Forceful preaching must be in the _____ tense.

(Compare your answer with the text.)

Match the moods with their definitions.
Place an X beside the mood used most often in preaching.

- | | |
|--------------------|---|
| ___ 1. Indicative | a. expresses command, intreaty, exhortation |
| ___ 2. Imperative | b. expresses wishes or remote possibilities |
| ___ 3. Subjunctive | c. reality and objective fact |

(c-1, a-2, b-3, X by 1)

The imperative mood is appropriate when the preacher speaks of God's m _____ r _____.

(moral requirements)

statement too general and removes forcefulness from preaching.

It is proper sometimes to use the subjunctive or conditional mood. In speaking to lost persons, the Bible sets forth the condition that, if they confess their sins and believe in their hearts that God raised Jesus from the dead, they will be saved. Salvation by God's grace is conditioned on man's repentance and faith. It is unlikely that an entire sermon would ever be preached in the imperative or the conditional mood.

The mood of the verb used by the preacher reflects his point of view. Frequent use of the imperative gives the impression of a dogmatic moralist and an exhorter. If all preaching were in the imperative mood, religion would be only doing this and not doing that, a form of moralism. However, if the imperative is completely absent, preaching fails to set forth properly God's claims upon man.

The indicative mood states what is true: "God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36). It sets forth direct assertions. The time of the action can be past, present, or future. Since sermons normally begin with references from the Bible, the starting point will usually be past tense. The discussion of the text should be transferred to the present tense as soon as possible in order that the audience will see that the message applies to them. Future hope is also a vital part of the gospel; therefore, some preaching will be in the future tense. The indicative mood conveys that the speaker has strong convictions. It is the mood of positive assertions about Christ the Son of God, man's Saviour.

When over-used, the conditional mood robs preaching of its forcefulness by reverting to general statements and potential conditions. An illustration of general statements and arguments is the sermon proposition that taking Christ as our Lord will pay us in health, happiness, and spiritual well-being. Too much preaching today emphasizes man's ability to improve his condition if he turns to Christianity. This kind of preaching would be strengthened greatly by asserting what Christ has done for the man who responds by faith.

Expressiveness in Delivery

Phrasing

Words in written and oral communication have meaning only when related to other words in groups or phrases. Phrasing refers to grouping related words to express a thought unit. In oral communication, brief pauses and voice inflexions set off each

The subjunctive mood may be used when speaking of the conditions for man's _____.

(salvation)

Over-use of the imperative mood by a preacher gives the impression of a dogmatic _____.

(moralist)

Over-use of the conditional (subjunctive) mood robs preaching of its _____.

(forcefulness)

Grouping related words to express a thought unit is called _____.

(Compare your answer with the text.)

thought unit. Without phrasing, one group of words would spill over into another and thoughts would run together. Phrasing is essential for conveying clearly the exact meaning of groups of related words. Notice the phrasing indicated by diagonal lines in the following quotation.

I expect to pass through this world
but once. // Any good therefore that
I can do, or any kindness that I can
show to any fellow creature // let me
do it now. Let me not defer or
neglect it, // for I shall not pass this
way again.⁴

When the speaker covers a section of material that affords little to see or feel, he phrases in fairly long units. When he wishes to make something stand out, he resorts to shorter phrases. The length of his phrases is determined by feeling rather than rules. If his phrases are too short and his pauses are too long, his speech sounds choppy. If he uses no phrases, he rushes past words that ought to receive greater attention. The speaker attempts to interpret the spirit of every sentence. The more momentous the utterance, the more careful the phrasing should be.

The effectively used pause aids in achieving emphasis, clarity, intelligibility, and emotional quality. The dramatic pause is used to express emotional quality or emphasis. Profound and complex material demands longer pauses than light, simple, or familiar material. A long pause after the statement of an idea gives general emphasis and finality to what has just been said. An extended pause before the statement of an idea generally heightens suspense. A pause is the speaker's device in giving his listeners time to absorb or respond to what has been said or to prepare them for what is about to be said.

To gain emphasis, the inexperienced speaker often raises his pitch, increases his volume, and quickens his pace. The experienced speaker usually does the reverse. He has discovered that pausing before and after important phrases makes them stand out. In the following passage, long, medium, and short pauses are indicated in the parentheses by L, M, and S.

Come unto me, (M) all ye that
labour (S) and are heavy laden, (M)
and I will give you (S) rest. (L)
Take my yoke upon you, (S) and
learn of me; (M) for I am meek (S)
and lowly in heart: (L) and ye shall
find rest unto your souls. (Matt. 11:28-29)

⁴Lyle V. Mayer, Fundamentals of Voice and Diction (Rev. ed.; Dubuque, Iowa: Wm. C. Brown Company Publishers, 1968), p. 250.

Thought units are set off by brief _____
and voice _____.

(Compare your answers with the text. See the first part of this paragraph on previous page.)

A long pause can be used before a statement
to heighten _____.

A long pause can be used after a statement
to give the listeners time to _____
what has been said.

(suspense, absorb)

The long pause is especially effective at the time of the conclusion. The central truth of the sermon (the proposition), which the minister has laboured to communicate to the listeners, is usually summed up in one statement, which should be preceded or followed by a pause long enough to set it apart from other statements. Next, the minister states what the people should do in response to the central truth. Again, a long pause can be used effectively.

The rate of speech

Closely related to phrasing is tempo or timing. The experienced speaker does not proceed at the same rate all through the sermon. He begins at a moderate pace and increases speed as he speaks. As he approaches the climax, the rate may increase in accordance with the feeling; however, he must use phrasing and pausing effectively to be sure that the important statements receive proper emphasis. When he comes to something he wants the hearer to remember, he must say it slowly. Rate includes the speed of utterance, quantity or duration of sounds, and length and number of pauses. Rate is determined by the personality and mood of the speaker, the nature of the material being spoken, and the size of the audience.

No experienced speaker proceeds at a very rapid rate. He is aware that each thought he expresses can hit its target only once; therefore, he moves deliberately through his material. The rate of speaking varies from 120 to 180 words a minute. The nature of the material will determine the number of words spoken per minute. Usually, the message is begun at a slower rate of approximately 125 words a minute. The rate may increase to an average of 150 words a minute. Only very light material should be spoken at a rate faster than 170 words per minute.

Speaking rate may be determined by selecting well-written prose, making a mark at the end of 125 words and another mark at the end of 150 words. The reader then times himself as he reads with appropriate pauses. If he does not reach the first mark before one minute has elapsed, he is speaking too slowly. If he goes beyond the second mark, he is speaking too rapidly and perhaps not utilizing pauses. This exercise should be repeated until the speaker is able to adjust his rate to approximately 140 words per minute. The personality and mood of some speakers will require that the rate be increased 10 to 20 words per minute. The speaker does not want to drag his statements, nor does he want to utter them so rapidly that the sounds are indistinct. He should remember that the more rapid rate may indicate a neglect of sufficient pauses. If the speaker has a tape recorder

Write the word conclusion or beginning in the following statement.

The long pause is especially effective at the time of the _____.

(conclusion)

Rate of speech includes:

speed of _____,
duration of _____,
length and number of _____.

Unscramble the following words to indicate how rate of speech is determined:

1. by the _____ and mood of the speaker,
tonserpilya
2. by the nature of the _____ being spoken,
tamirale
3. by the _____ of the audience.
zies

(Compare your answers with the text.)

available, he may check his rate of speaking by recording his message and counting the number of words per minute at various points in his sermon.

Material which is exceptionally energetic or forceful and expresses great elation, excitement, fear, or anger usually is spoken at a more rapid rate. However, the speaker must remember to use phrasing and pausing to emphasize statements. Constantly speaking at a rapid rate without a change of pace eventually exhausts the listeners and suggests that the speaker is very nervous.

Intonation

Lyle Mayer defines intonation as the over-all pattern or melody of pitch changes and movements in phrases and sentences.⁵ Variety of intonation is important in speaking. Both monotonous and repeated pitch patterns are objectionable.

While speaking, the pitch of the voice will be inflected upward and downward; however, the pitch range will seem to cluster about an average or central pitch level. This pitch level is the most durable and serviceable level. It is the optimum pitch which should be used as the basic level for effective speaking. From the optimum level, the speaker should practise higher and lower tones to give variety to intonation.

One who speaks in a monotone does not range beyond two to four tones. The effective speaker changes from 12 to 14 full tones, approximately two octaves, in the course of his speech. One whose voice seems to drone can correct this objectionable habit by widening his voice range. Exercises which are similar to those of a singer who practises scales should be used. If a piano is available, the voice range can be found by humming a tone and finding the corresponding tone on the piano. From the optimum pitch, the tone should be hummed up the scale to the highest good tone and reversed to the lowest.

Words and phrases may be given emphasis or stress by increasing or decreasing loudness, raising or lowering pitch, and using pauses. Nouns and verbs are frequently emphasized by raising or lowering the pitch level. The optimum pitch level is normally used for the non-emphatic pronouns, prepositions, and conjunctions.

⁵Fundamentals of Voice and Diction, p. 223.

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<p><i>Is this statement true or false?</i></p> <p><i>Variety of intonation is important in speaking. _____</i></p> <p><i>(Compare your answer with the text.)</i></p>

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<p><i>Doing exercises to widen one's voice range helps to correct faulty _____.</i></p> <p><i>(intonation)</i></p>
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Reading Scripture and verse

Since the reading of Scripture usually comes at the beginning of the message and the message is based on it, its proper reading is very important. When the people are invited to follow the reading of a Scripture, they should be given time to locate it in their Bibles. The correct order for announcing a Scripture location is book, chapter, and verse. The speaker may pause for a moment to permit the audience to find the book and then repeat the chapter and verse or verses. He should have read the text orally several times before coming to the pulpit. He should have looked up the pronunciation of any unfamiliar words.

As the Scripture is read, all marks of punctuation should be observed carefully and words articulated clearly. The voice should have sufficient volume to be heard easily.

In preparing to read the Scripture, it is helpful for the speaker to imagine himself in the circumstances of the original writer. Through imagination, he will be able to capture the mood and emotion of the passage. The good reading of Scripture requires the expression of proper feeling and understanding.

Scripture and poetry should be read by phrasing or grouping words according to thoughts, not by the line length. Phrases are usually indicated by punctuation marks. Modern translations indicate that much of the Bible was written in verse with a definite metrical pattern. Parallelism is a primary characteristic of Hebrew verse, whereas rhyme is a characteristic of modern verse. Rhyme is usually related to the end of lines. It is possible to read verse by proper phrasing and also to give some emphasis to rhyme.

The imaginative and emotional nature of poetry must be understood before it can be expressed properly. Since verse contains ideas, it must be read by phrases and word groupings. Difficulty arises because the melody of the verse dictates pauses of its own which seldom coincide with thought units. The reader must attempt to observe proper phrasing without destroying the melody.

The metre of poetry cannot be ignored since the chief effect of rhythm is to give pleasure. The story of "Mary Had a Little Lamb" is dull and uninteresting, yet its rhythm has a charm for children. English is an accented language with heavy and light syllables. The heavy syllables usually have higher pitch and longer duration. In the word remark, re- will commonly be lighter in stress, shorter in duration, and lower in pitch than the accented syllable -mark. Metre is the result of the regular recurrence

In Scripture reading, all marks of _____ should be observed carefully and _____ articulated clearly.

(Compare your answers with the text.)

To read Scripture well requires the expression of proper _____ and _____.

(Compare your answers with the text.)

Scripture should be read by phrasing or grouping words according to _____.

(thoughts)

Modern verse is difficult to read because the melody of the verse may dictate _____ of its own which seldom coincide with _____ units.

(pauses, thought)

of heavy and light syllables. When a light syllable regularly alternates with a heavy syllable, the metre is called "iambic," and each heavy syllable with its preceding light syllable is called an iambic foot.⁶ If the heavy syllable comes first, the metre is "trochaic." The intervention of two light syllables between the heavy ones is called "anapestic" or "dactylic." A line of poetry is determined by the number of accents or syllables it contains. Due attention must be given to the accents of each line in order to read poetry with proper rhythm. Without rhythm, the beauty and feeling are lost. Rhythm can be detected in the sing-song chants of children, such as "Johnny Jones, broke his bones."

Rhyme also needs attention. Notice the distorted rhyme in the following comic statement:

A lady there was of Antigua,
Who said to her spouse, "What a pig you are!"
He answered, "My queen,
Is it manners you mean,
Or do you refer to my fig-u-ah?"⁷

In this limerick, the end of each phrase coincides with the end of each line, but the rhythm is broken in favour of rhyme. The listener awaits with a pleasant expectancy the rounding out of the second and fifth lines with absurd words which are chosen for their humour and rhyme.

The reading of verse requires that attention be given to phrasing, rhythm, and rhyme. Some poetry is not easy to read properly because rhyme and phrasing do not correspond. Also there is the danger of expressing the rhythm in a sing-song pattern.

In preparing to read or quote poetry, one should note where pause and emphasis dictated by the verse conflict with those dictated by thought. The prevailing scheme of metre and rhyme should be understood and given proper value in reading, yet the thoughts should be expressed as units. The appropriate mood should be discovered and expressed. The reading of poetry differs from that of prose (Scripture and other selections) because of the additional elements of rhythm and rhyme.

For a fuller treatment of this subject, the student is referred to Reading Aloud by Wayland M. Parrish.

⁶Wayland M. Parrish, Reading Aloud (3rd ed.; New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1953), p. 192.

⁷Ibid., p. 194.

Read all of the text on this page before doing the following exercise.

Four aspects of poetry which must be considered in reading it properly are:

1. Understanding of the _____ and _____ nature of poetry;
2. Respect for its _____ units;
3. Recognition of its _____ or _____;
4. Attention to its _____.

(1. imaginative, emotional, 2. thought, 3. metre, rhythm, 4. rhyme)

Home Study Exercise

Basic activity (Levels 1, 2, and 3). After reading the study guide text, answer the following questions.

1. Define style. _____

2. What is meant by building units of expression? _____

3. What should be included in a good paragraph? _____

4. Why is the active voice preferred instead of the passive in speaking? _____

5. Give an example of a negative statement in a positive form. _____
6. Why must oral communication be simple and clear? _____

7. List the elements of attractive speech. _____
8. Define and give an example of a simile. _____

9. Define and give an example of a metaphor. _____

10. Describe anthithesis and explain its importance in speaking. _____

11. What is a parable? _____
12. Name two conditions which determine whether a message is delivered with energy. _____

13. What should be stressed in statements? _____

14. What tense and mood should dominate preaching? _____

15. When are the imperative and subjunctive moods used properly? _____

16. What are the weaknesses of over-using the imperative and subjunctive moods? _____

17. What is phrasing? _____

18. When should a long pause be used? _____

19. What is rate of speech and what determines it? _____

20. What is your speaking rate in words per minute? _____
21. How can one correct faulty intonation? _____
22. Give three suggestions that will help assure proper expression in the reading of Scripture.

23. Why is modern verse more difficult to read than prose? _____

24. Give four aspects of poetry which must be considered in reading it properly. _____

Supplementary activity (Levels 2 and 3):

1. Select a passage of Scripture and prepare to read it for the seminar. Give special attention to the announcing of the reference, to pitch, and to emphasis by phrasing and pausing.

2. Select a few lines of poetry to read to the seminar. In preparing to read them, give attention to the rhyme, rhythm, mood, and emphasis. Remember that emphasis is accomplished by proper phrasing, pauses, and pitch.

Advanced activity (Level 3):

List the elements of style and write out an introduction to a sermon in which you apply these elements.

Seminar Discussion

1. What is meant by style and what elements of style are neglected most in sermons?
2. What are figures of speech and why should they be used in sermons?
3. When is it proper to use the imperative and subjunctive moods in sermon delivery? Should the first or second person plural be used with the imperative?
4. What is phrasing? Analyse the proper phrasing of the selections prepared by students in supplementary and advanced activities.
5. Let different students read selected passages of Scripture and work on improving expression.