

Translator's Preface

This book gives us a great preacher's best thinking about preaching, but in an unusual context; for here Helmut Thielicke, whose reputation as a theologian and preacher is now world-wide, develops his homiletics against the foil of a nineteenth-century preacher's sermons and lectures on preaching, and brings us straight to the center and secret of Christian proclamation. How piquant, how wonderful, how "ecumenical" that Helmut Thielicke, the highly educated German university professor and Lutheran theologian, should find such deep and warm kinship with Charles Haddon Spurgeon, the self-educated, Victorian Baptist preacher, who to this day remains a "prince among preachers" in the English and American tradition! How strange that a man so widely separated in time and culture should rediscover these lectures on preaching which have influenced a whole line of books on homiletics for fifty years or more! And, after reading of his encounter with Spurgeon and rereading Spurgeon's sermons and his lectures to his students, we are grateful to Thielicke for bringing him again into the stream of our homiletical thinking.

The selection and abbreviation of Spurgeon's lectures and the two sermons were done by Dr. Thielicke. The text of the lectures has been taken from *Lectures to My Students. A Selection from Addresses to the Students of the Pastors' College, Metropolitan Tabernacle, London, First Series* (New York: American Tract Society, n.d.), and *Second Series of Lectures to My Students: Being Addresses Delivered to the Students of the Pastors' College, Metropolitan Tabernacle* (New York: Robert Carter & Bros., 1889). The text of the two sermons is taken from *Sermons of*

Rev. C. H. Spurgeon of London (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, n.d.), Vol. VII. Omissions are indicated by ellipsis marks. Spurgeon's spelling has been retained.

In a few instances where Dr. Thielicke quotes from Spurgeon materials other than the lectures and sermons reprinted in this book, the translator, having been unable to locate the original English passages, has had to resort to the unsatisfactory procedure of retranslating from the German.

JOHN W. DOBERSTEIN

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