

Protestant Biblical Interpretation

A Textbook of Hermeneutics for Conservative Protestants

by
Bernard Ramm, B.D., Ph.D.

CHAPTER VII

THE DEVOTIONAL AND PRACTICAL USE OF THE BIBLE

A. THE GENERAL USE OF THE BIBLE FOR CHRISTIAN LIVING

The first purpose of the Holy Bible is to make men "wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. 3:15). After a man has received this salvation, then we are told that "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Tim. 3:16,17). Most of the material of the Bible is for the Christian, and specifically for his growth in knowledge, holiness, and spirituality. Doctrine and theology are in primary intention aimed at making sinners into saints, and immature Christians into Christian men. The Bible and its study is one of the prime requisites for every Christian in order that he may lead an effective and genuine Christian life.

In using the Bible for moral, ethical, spiritual, and devotional purposes aimed at our spiritual growth, we suggest the following principles:

(1). *All practical lessons, all applications of Scripture, all devotional material, must be governed by general Protestant hermeneutics.*

More pointedly it could be stated this way: all such usages of the Bible must be based upon sound exegetical principles. The notorious dictum: "The ends justifies the means," is frequently baptized into the Christian fold under the guise of: "The blessing justifies the means."

If a blessing is derived from an improper interpretation of Scripture, the blessing has come not because of improper interpretation, but in spite of the misinterpretation. If a passage does not yield the help and strength the interpreter is seeking, he ought not to distort it until he does get a blessing from it, but he ought to go elsewhere in the Scripture where a blessing can be derived from the native meaning of the text.

In the intense desire to find something practical or devotional in Scripture, we are in danger of obscuring the literal or genuine meaning of the passage. It may sound harsh to so speak, but not too infrequently a very devotional message is conjured up from the Scriptures by a method of interpretation which is nothing short of trifling or tampering with Scripture.

Never should we handle a passage of Scripture in such a way as to distort its original meaning simply because we feel under pressure to find something devotional or spiritual or especially edifying in *every* passage we are called upon to teach or explain. Let the truth of God be its own blessedness.

(2). *The Bible is more a book of principles than a catalogue of specific directions.*

The Bible does contain an excellent blend of the general and the specific with reference to principles for Christian living. If the Bible were never specific we would be somewhat disconcerted in attempting a specific application of its principles. If the Bible were entirely specific in its principles, we would be adrift whenever confronted with a situation in life not covered by a specific principle. The *emphasis* in Scripture is on moral and spiritual principles, not upon specific and itemized lists of rules for moral or spiritual conduct. There are two very important reasons for this:

(i). If it were entirely specific in its practical teachings, then it would be provincial and relative. If Paul had classified sin solely in terms of specifics and therefore in terms of the culture of his day, then as new ways of sinning were devised by man, and as culture changed, Paul's teaching would no longer be relevant. As we study the terminology of Paul we are amazed how he was able to put his finger on the universal element of human sin, and so provide every generation in all cultures with a reliable guide to moral and spiritual behaviour.

(ii). If it were a legal code of rules, then the Bible would foster an artificial spirituality, and indirectly sponsor hypocrisy. If the directions were all specific, a man could live up to the letter of the rules, and yet miss the spirit of true godliness. Real spiritual progress is made only if we are put on our own. Unless we must take a principle and interpret its meaning for a given situation in life, we do not spiritually mature. It is this general nature of New Testament ethics which helps prevent hypocrisy. As long as there is a specific code to obey, men can conform without change of heart. Obedience to a moral code with no change of heart may result in the discrepancy between inner life and outward conduct which is one of the characteristics of hypocrisy. But inasmuch as we must govern ourselves by principle, we are put on our own mettle. In each important decision we shall ask ourselves: *what is the spiritual principle involved?* From this consideration we may then proceed to: *what ought I do?* If we so treat our moral and spiritual decisions we develop in spiritual insight and moral strength. Such development is central to a mature spirituality.

(3). *The Bible emphasizes the inner spirit rather than the outward religious cloak.*

The moral teaching of the Old Testament contains many rules about kinds of food permitted and banned; types of clothing which may be worn, and types prohibited. The basic purpose of these *material* regulations was to inculcate in the Jewish people a sense of *discrimination*. Right and wrong had to be learned on the obvious level of the material to help the mind to learn to discern right and wrong in the more subtle level of the spiritual. In the New Testament, morality and spirituality are lifted to a high level by being inward and spiritual.

The New Testament does not, however, condemn only improper motives, but it also condemns external acts. Gluttony, drunkenness, and revelling are specifically forbidden, and chaste, honorable behaviour before men is taught. But the *emphasis* is upon the inner spiritual life rather than upon a mere social circumspection.

Measuring spirituality entirely by outward appearances is not just to the person being judged. Judging spirituality by external matters (diet, dress, sanctimonious acts) fails to consider that our Lord taught that true spirituality was a secret activity. The external parade of piety as made by the Pharisees is specifically condemned. Prayer is to be in the secret of the closet. Giving is to be such that the right hand does not know what the left hand is doing. Fasting is to be hidden by grooming one's self before one appears in public and so to appear as if one were not fasting.

Negations ("touch not, taste not, handle not," Col. 2:21) do not measure piety; they prepare the way for true piety. True piety is faith, hope, and love. The church has had a constant battle with asceticism. If man is born a legalist in soteriology, he is a born asceticist in sanctification. Asceticism is the belief that the body and the material world are in some sense evil and that victory over them is both by abstinence from the world and by bodily suffering. That there is a measure of truth to asceticism is evident from the Biblical teaching about fasting and sexual abstinence (I Cor. 7:5). But that asceticism as practiced at times in the history of the church is unscriptural is also evident from the words of our Lord (Luke 11:24 ff.) and of Paul (Col. 2:20 ff.).

The Bible is to be used to develop a true inner life. The Beatitudes inform us that happiness is an *inner* quality of life. Spirituality is striving toward correct attitudes, spiritual graces, the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23). The emphasis on outward religious show and manifest badges or banners of religious profession is not in keeping with the Biblical perspective on spirituality.

(4). *In some statements it is the spirit of the statement that is to be our guide.*

We are enjoined to cut off our hands and pluck out our eyes if they offend (Matt. 5:29,30). People who have had the courage to conform to this literally do not impress their contemporaries with their spirituality but with their foolhardiness. Is not the *spirit* of the command that we should not pamper or nurse our sins, but deal with them with the utmost severity? If life and death are the issues, then sin certainly must be treated with the greatest dispatch and severity.

Certainly when our Lord told Peter to forgive his brother seventy times seven he was not prescribing the number of times we are to forgive a brother, but he was prescribing the *spirit* of forgiveness (Matt. 18:21 ff.). The same holds true for commands to turn the other cheek, to go the second mile, to yield the second garment. Certainly, if taken literally they become mechanical or external guides to conduct--the very thing they are intended to correct. But if the inner spirit of the command be taken, these passages teach us lessons of generosity, of kindness, of helpfulness. Rather than being covetous we ought to be generous; rather than being goaded by a spirit of vengeance we should be prompted by a spirit of love; rather than being tightfisted we should be merciful to the destitute.

(5). *Commands in terms of one culture must be translated into our culture.*

When our Lord and his apostles gave exhortations and teachings they spoke in terms of the prevailing culture. Otherwise they could not have communicated effectually with their audience. Paul's statements about women (e.g., I Tim. 2:9) must be reinterpreted for our culture. The same applies for Paul's statements about cutting the hair and wearing the veil. Cutting the hair was associated with paramours, and wearing a veil (not some modern perky hat) was the sign of a decorous woman. In modern terms this means that Christian women should avoid all appearances of immodesty, and should

be chaste and dignified in dress and behaviour.¹

B. GUIDANCE FROM EXAMPLES

The lives of the great men of the Bible provide a great story of spiritual guidance, and the great events of the Bible provide a vast amount of practical wisdom for godly living. We learn, too, by the mistakes of good men or by the sinful careers of bad men.² Events in the lives of great men are often recorded without an express comment by the Biblical writers. Therefore guides are necessary so that we may benefit from their examples without making needless mistakes.

(1). *We must make a distinction between what the Bible records and what it approves.*³ Men frequently make the mistake of assuming that whatever is written in the Bible is thereby approved. Therefore, there is a rather uncritical justification of their activities on the basis that they parallel the activity of men in an inspired document. The *fact* of divine inspiration does not mean that *all* which is in the Bible is the will of God. The Bible no more morally approves of all that it records than an editor approves of all that he prints in his newspaper.

Records of lying, adultery, incest, cruelty,⁴ and deceit are found in the Bible, but on each occasion the sacred writer does not necessarily add his word of condemnation. There are not only sinful acts but erroneous notions recorded. The voice of the devil is heard, the voice of Judas, the voice of demons, the voice of the opponents of Christ, and of the enemies of the apostles. Inspiration here extends only to fidelity of recording. Such words do not constitute either the will of God or the approval of God. Therefore, in every example from a man's life or from Israel's history it must be determined if in any Scripture there is approval or disapproval of this specific situation. If there is none, then we must analyze the passage to see if it is approved or disapproved by other clear teaching of the Bible.⁵

(2). *We may take direct application from all of those incidents that the Bible directly censures or*

1 Cf. Paul Woolley, "The Relevance of Scripture," *The Infallible Word*, pp. 201-204.

2 "When we read of the failings, as well as the sinful actions of men, recorded in Scriptures, we may see what is in our own nature: for there are in us the seeds of the same sin, and similar tendencies to its commission, which would bring forth similar fruits, were it not for the preventing and renewing grace of God. And as many of the persons, whose faults are related in the volume of inspiration, we should learn from them, not only to 'be not high-minded, but fear' (Rom. xi:20); but further, to avoid being rash in censuring conduct of others." Horne, *op. cit.*, I, 427. Italics are omitted.

3 Miller, *General Biblical Introduction*, p. 19.

4 Jephthah's cruel vow has been euphemized into a pledge of perpetual virginity, because it is felt that the Bible approved his act. Although the Bible nowhere condemns it, by the same token it nowhere approves it. The apology to be made at this point is not to distort the very clear meaning of the vow, but simply to indicate that in an inspired record, not all the deeds of even good men are approved by the mere token of being included in the inspired book.

5 "We should carefully distinguish between what the Scripture itself says, and what is only said in the Scripture, and, also, the times, places, and persons, when, where, and by whom anything is recorded as having been said." Horne, *op. cit.*, I, 426. Italics omitted.

approves. The woman who poured out the valuable incense was censured by Judas but approved by Christ, and made an example for all church history (John 12:1 ff.). The equivocal behavior of Peter at Antioch was expressly condemned by Paul writing under inspiration, and is a lesson to all not to be guided by opinion but by principle (Galatians 2:11 ff.). Certainly the rebellion of Saul, the immorality of David, the pride of Absalom, the treachery of Judas, the denials of Peter, and the lying of Ananias and Sapphira stand as examples of what not to do. So the faith of Abraham, the obedience of Moses, the loyalty of Elijah, and the love of John the Apostle stand out as great examples to follow.

(3). *Express commands to individuals are not the will of God for us.* Abraham was commanded to offer up his son; that is not a standing order for each father. Joshua was commanded to slay all in his military campaign; that is not instruction for Christian soldiers. A passage of great instruction is found in the closing part of John's Gospel. Our Lord tells Peter that he will suffer a violent death (John 21:18-19). Misery loves company, so looking at John Peter said, "what shall this man do?" (v. 21) as if to say "haven't you something equally as painful for him?" Our Lord says that if He wills it, John might never die! Two disciples are offered utterly contrasting experiences, yet both within the will of Christ. It behooves us to be unusually careful that we do not try to apply uncritically the commands given to good men of the Bible. Paul's trip to Arabia is not the will of God for some, nor is Peter's call to the apostleship the will of God for others, even though both of these activities were the will of God for Paul and Peter respectively.

(4). *In the lives of men in the Scriptures determine what the outstanding spiritual principle is.* Hebrews 11 is a remarkable example of going through the Old Testament and isolating from the lives of its great men a great spiritual virtue for our benefit. There is a danger of becoming too particular in our lessons from great men, and unconsciously engaging in double-sense interpretations. But if the essential spiritual principles are the goal of our investigations, we derive positive food for the soul, and avoid the mistakes of trying to find too much meaning in trivial details.

(5). *In the application of examples to our lives, we do not need a literal reproduction of the Biblical situation.* Baptism need not be done in the river Jordan nor in the land of Palestine to be Scriptural baptism. Neither do we need to go to an upper room in Jerusalem to have the Lord's Table.

C. PROMISES

"Every promise in the book is mine" is one of the over-statements of the century. Few Bible promises partake of such universality. In applying the promises of the Bible to our specific situations, we need to exercise great care. If we apply promises to ourselves that are not for us, we may suffer severe disappointment. Also, promises must not be used to tempt God. A reserve and a patience should temper all our usages of promises.

(1). *Note whether the promise is universal in scope.* The classic example of a universal promise is "and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev. 22:18). General invitations to salvation are for all men, but invitations to prayer or to special blessings are only for the company of the saved.

(2). *Note whether the promise is personal.* When God said to Paul, "Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee" (Acts 18:9-10), that was

personal to Paul and may not be used generally. Missionaries in difficult situations may hope for this type of deliverance but may not command it.

(3). *Note whether the promise is conditional.* When it says "Draw nigh unto God and he will draw nigh to you" (James 4:8), there is a human condition to be fulfilled before the promise is received.

(4). *Note whether the promise is for our time.* Some promises pertain just to the Jews in their land and have ceased with the coming of the New Testament. Some promises refer to future conditions that shall prevail upon the earth at the close of the age. Evidently, in Revelation 2 and 3 certain promises were restricted to different churches.

In connection with the use of promises some have used the Bible on the same principle of animistic divination. Divination is the means whereby primitives decide whether they should undergo a proposed adventure such as hunting, fishing, or battle. Common methods among primitives to decide the portent of future events are to read the entrails of pigs or chickens; to crack a bone in the heat of the fire and decide what to do from the nature of the crack; to throw an egg on a grass roof to see if it breaks or not; to use the fire-test to determine guilt. On the sillier level divination is predicting one's future by the reading of cards or tea leaves.

Whenever we force the Bible to say something on specific items of our life, we are in danger of divination. If we do this we leave the sensible, intelligent use of the Bible for that which borders on primitive divination. Most notorious is the custom of opening the Bible and putting the finger on a verse and taking that verse as divine guidance. This method dishonors the intelligence of God, the sobriety of the Bible, puts the Christian faith in a ridiculous light, and places the method of determining the will of God on a superstitious, magical basis. It ought to be added: *no promise of the Bible is to be used that is not in keeping with sane, exegetical principles.*

The type of divination mentioned above exists on a more sophisticated level with those who every day try to find specific guidance from the Bible--not guidance in the sense of getting truth, soul-food, and principles, but in finding one particular verse that tells them exactly what to do that day, or how to resolve a given situation. To do this they have to admit that God can give a message through the Bible that is completely divorced from the native, grammatical meaning of the verse. If this is permitted, then what is to prevent the interpreter from finding anything he wishes in the Bible?

To be specific, at the outbreak of World War II, a certain individual could not decide what his course of action should be--enlist? join the merchant marine? get a theological waiver? He went to his Bible and, finding a reference to those who go down to the seas in ships, he took it as his orders from God to enlist in the United States Navy. The action could not be based upon any sensible exegetical principle, nor upon any spiritual principle; it was a haphazard coincidence between the verse that had the word *seas* in it and the United States Navy.

The will of God is determined from the Bible only in terms of what it says in its first grammatical sense, or what can be derived from it in terms of great spiritual principles. To use the Bible as in the above example is in direct violation of the nature of inspiration and of the character of the Bible. God does not "double-talk" when He speaks in Scripture, i.e., He does not have a historical, common-sense meaning, *plus* some special message to us in a given situation. If God speaks to us in a given situation,

it must be in terms of the sound exegesis of the passage.⁶

D. THE USE OF THE BIBLE IN PREACHING OR TEACHING

The preaching and teaching ministry in the church is applied hermeneutics and exegesis and comes under the discussion of the practical use of the Bible. The *basic theory* of the ministry must be understood if the correct ministry of preaching will be done by the preacher or teacher. The preacher is *a minister of the Word of God*. He is not a person who has a full and free right of sermonizing before a group of people. If he is a true minister of God *he is bound to the ministry of the Word of God*. He has only one claim to the right to preach and demand decision, and that is that he is *declaring the truth of God*. It is impossible to separate the man from his calling, but as much as possible the minister must realize preaching is not *his* opportunity to express *his* religious views. His fundamental task in preaching is not to be clever or sermonic or profound but *to minister the truth of God*. The apostles were called *ministers of the word* (Luke 1:2). The apostles were ordained as *witnesses of Jesus Christ* (Acts 1:8). Their task was to preach what they heard and saw with reference to the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The elder (pastor) is to labor *in word and doctrine* (1 Tim. 5:17). What Timothy is to hand on to others is not apostolic succession but *the truth of Christianity* which he heard from many Christians (2 Tim. 2:2). Paul instructs Timothy not to sermonize but to "preach *the message*" (2 Tim. 4:2, Greek: *kērukson ton logon*). Peter says he is an elder by virtue of having *witnessed* the sufferings of our Lord (1 Peter 5:1).

The New Testament servant of Christ was not one free to preach as he wished, but one bound to minister the truth of Christianity, to preach the word of God, and to be a witness of the Gospel. This is very far removed from much of our contemporary preaching which is hardly more than popular, superficial, and personal discourses on religious themes.

One of the mighty issues of the Reformation was the nature of the Christian ministry. Martin Luther and John Calvin both opposed the notion of the ministry as a priesthood. The doctrine of justification by faith alone meant the end of Catholic priestcraft and sacerdotalism. What then was a minister? He was according to both Luther and Calvin *a minister of the Word of God*. In place of the liturgy and sacrament was put the singing of hymns and the preaching of the Word of God. No longer was the altar the focal point of attention, but the open Bible with the man of God preaching forth its meaning and content. The magnificent and thrilling singing of hymns was the spirited way in which the Reformed movement expressed its new joy in Jesus Christ and its freedom from the ritual and liturgy. The mass, so central to Catholic piety and ministry, was replaced by *the preaching of the Word of God*.

Again it is painful to note how these great Reformation convictions have been forgotten, and how the great emphasis on the ministry of the Word of God as God's supreme method of blessing His people has given way to popular, ephemeral sermonizing.

6 "The only way of ascertaining the will of God . . . is to learn it by zealous application as students of the revelation of that will contained in the Scriptures. Short cuts as pulling verses out of boxes, getting guidance by daily motto books, and letting the Bible fall open like a casting of dice are not only useless; they are deceptive." Paul Woolley, "The Relevance of Scripture," *The Infallible Word*, P. 195. His entire refutation of the magical use of the Bible is good.

The rules for the practical use of the Bible in preaching are basically derived from (i) general hermeneutic theory, and (ii) the conviction about the nature of the Christian ministry.

(1). *The minister must realize he is a servant of the Lord and bound to the word of the Lord.*

His basic motivation in preaching must be to convey to people the truth of God's word. This means he should publicly read the Bible, which is evidently the meaning of "give attendance to reading" (1 Tim. 4:13). He should teach God's word, for one of the requirements of a pastor is "apt to teach" (1 Tim. 3:2). He should *herald* or *preach* the word of God.

(2). *The preacher must use all Scripture in accordance with the rules of hermeneutics.*

It is felt too frequently by preachers that preaching is of such a nature as to exempt the preacher from close adherence to the rules of exegesis. Proper exegesis is necessary for commentators and theologians but preachers--it is argued--have a 'poetic license' with reference to Scripture. This is most unfortunate reasoning. If the preacher's duty is to minister the Word of God, hermeneutics is the means whereby he determines the *meaning* of the Word of God. *To ask for exemptions from the strict rules of hermeneutics is then to ask for an exemption from preaching the true meaning of the Word of God.* This is precisely a repudiation of what a man is called to preach, namely, the truth of God's Word.

This does not mean that preaching is nothing but public exegesis or drab commenting on the Sacred Text. There must be energy, life, imagination, relevancy, illustration, and passion to all preaching. Bookish, dry, technical exposition is not necessarily preaching the Word of God. But whenever Scripture is used, it must be used according to sound rules of hermeneutics.

The principal mistakes in preaching in violating the meaning of Scripture are:

(i). Taking a phrase from a text because of its attractive wording. The preacher does not actually expound the meaning of the text, but uses the felicitous wording of it as the basis for his own sermonizing. Broadus says that this is not preaching Scripture, but merely the words of Scripture.⁷ No matter how literary the expression nor how catchy to the ear, a phrase must not be wrenched from its content and preached upon with no real interpretation of its meaning. This is not preaching the Word of God.

(ii). A preacher may choose a text but rather than explaining it sermonize on it. The remarks in a sermon need not be as narrow as the text, but if a text or passage is employed then the preacher is under holy obligation to explain its meaning. Either the preacher ignores the text save for the topic it suggests, or else he misinterprets it altogether. This is not a wilful perversion of Scripture but a negligent or careless or ignorant method of treating the inspired Text. Broadus is not too strong when writing on this sort of an abuse of a text when he says: "It is a mournful fact that Universalists, Romanists, Mormons, can find an apparent support for their heresies in Scripture, without interpreting more loosely, without doing greater violence to the meaning and connection of the Sacred Text than is

7 John A. Broadus, *A Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons* (thirtieth edition), p. 33. Broadus has a learned and unusually wise discussion of the sermon and the interpretation of the text. Part I, Chapter II, "The Text--Interpretation."

sometimes done by orthodoxy, devout, and even intelligent men."⁸

(iii). A preacher may "spiritualize" a text or a passage and so impose a meaning on the text that is not there. This is usually done under the sincere pretense that the preacher is seeking a deeper meaning of the Bible. It is actually a species of patristic allegorization, and it is astounding how many of the patristic allegories are taught in Protestantism under the guise of typology.

One of the primary causes of this Protestant allegorizing is the proper motive to be edifying. Some Scripture is plain historical narrative and it is not especially edifying for the preacher to summarize so many historical incidents. But if he can read into the passage something about Christ, or the gospel, or spiritual life, then he can make the passage very interesting. But he does so at the expense of its true meaning. He then is no longer preaching the Word of God but engaging in allegorization. Again we cite with much approval the judgment of Broadus about this sort of treatment of the Sacred Text:

Among Baptists, for instance, the influence of Fuller, Hall, and others, and the wider diffusion of ministerial education, have wrought a gratifying change. But there is still much ignorance to overcome, and too many able and honored ministers continue sometimes to sanction by their potent example the old-fashioned spiritualizing [really, allegorizing]. It is so easy and pleasant for men of fertile fancy to break away from laborious study of phraseology and connection, to cease plodding along the rough and homely paths of earth, and sport, free and rejoicing, in the open heaven; the people are so charmed by ingenious novelties, so carried away with imaginative flights, so delighted to find everywhere types of Christ and likenesses to the spiritual life; it is so common to think that whatever kindles the imagination and touches the heart must be good preaching, and so easy to insist that the doctrines of the sermon are in themselves true and Scriptural, though they be not actually taught in the text,--that preachers often lose sight of their fundamental and inexcusable error, of *saying that a passage of God's Word means what it does not mean*. So independent, too, one may feel; so original he may think himself. Commentaries, he can sneer at them all; other preachers, he has little need of comparing views with them. No need of anything but the resources of his own imagination, for such preaching is too often only building castles in the air.⁹

The proper and improper limits of typological exegesis will be discussed in the chapter on typology. But the proper alternative to spiritualizing the Old Testament is to *principlize* the Old Testament. To *principlize* is to discover in any narrative the basic spiritual, moral, or theological principles. These principles are latent in the text and it is the process of deduction which brings them to the surface. It is not an imposition on the text. Allegorizing is the imputation to the text of a meaning which is not there, but *principlizing* is not so guilty. By principlizing we are able to obtain devotional and spiritual truth from Scripture and avoid the charge of eisegesis.

When David repeatedly refuses to slay Saul we see the principle of obedience to powers that be. When Saul is not patient with God's prophet we see the principle of disobedience. When Isaiah prays for the shadow to retreat on the sundial we see the principle of great spiritual courage. In truth, Hebrews 11 is a magnificent example of principlizing. The great faith of a multitude of men is set before us as the

8 *Ibid.*, p. 47.

9 *Ibid.*, p. 52. Italics are his.

true principle of their lives.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Angus and Green, *Cyclopedic Handbook to the Bible*, Chapter X. The best general account in the literature.
- Terry, *Biblical Hermeneutics*, Part Second, Chapter XXIV.
- Chafer, *The Science of Biblical Hermeneutics*, Chapter IV.
- Pierson, *Knowing the Scriptures*, Chapter I.
- Manley, editor, *The New Bible Handbook*, p. 72 ff.
- Horne, *An Introduction to the Study and Critical Knowledge of The Holy Scriptures*, I, 425 ff.
- Broadus, *Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*, (thirtieth edition), Part I, Chapter II.
- Baughman, "Books on Biblical Preaching," *Interpretation*, 5:470-477. An annotated bibliography.