

# Preaching With Passion

by G. Campbell Morgan

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*A true sermon must be characterized by passion, which requires a deep commitment to the truth and a willingness to be used by God to reach others.*

**Scripture:** Psalm 41:1, Matthew 5:7, Matthew 18:33, Luke 10:37, Hebrews 2:17

**Topics:** "Christian Character", "Divine Mercy"

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## Description

J. Hamilton preaches on the beatitude 'Blessed are the merciful,' emphasizing that true mercy is not just about being kind or soft-hearted, but about actively seeking to alleviate the suffering and wrongs of others. Mercy is a divine quality brought by Christ from heaven, not natural to the human heart, and is an essential aspect of Christian character. The merciful are those who show forgiveness, pity, and compassion to those in need, reflecting the love and mercy of God. Hamilton highlights the importance of personal contact with sorrow and suffering to nurture and express mercy, and how mercy is a response to sin, suffering, ignorance, and infirmities, seeking to mend brokenness and alleviate pain.

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## Transcript

In the true sermon there must always be passion. Our Lord's testimony concerning John, His forerunner, was this: "He was a burning and a shining light" (John 5:35). It is one thing to shine; it is quite another to burn as well.

Half the sermons today--may I be forgiven if I am cruel--are failing because they lack the note of passion.

There is a tale told of that great English actor, Macready. An eminent preacher once said to him: "I wish you would explain something to me.

"What is it? I don't know if I can explain anything to a preacher."

"What is the reason for the difference between you and me? You are appearing before crowds night after night with fiction, and the crowds come wherever you go. I am preaching the essential and unchangeable truth, and I am not getting any crowd at all."

Macready's answer was this: "That is quite simple. I can tell you the difference between us. I present the fiction as though it were fact; you present the fact as though it were fiction."

I leave that story right at this point. Of course the question comes, whether a man can preach these things without passion if they are truth to him. I don't know; I must not sit in judgment on other men. But our theme as preachers of the Word has to do with the glory of life--with the tragedy of sin, and its remedy; I cannot see how anyone can really handle these things until he is handled by them.

A man was formerly said to "handle his text." If he handles his text he cannot preach at all. But when his text handles him, when it grips and masters and possesses him, and in experience he is responsive to the thing he is declaring, having conviction of the supremacy of truth and experience of the power of truth, I think that must create passion.

I am not arguing for mere excitement. Painted fire never burns, and an imitated enthusiasm is the most empty thing that can possibly exist in a preacher. Given the preacher with a message from the whole Bible, seeing its bearing on life at any point, I cannot personally understand that man not being swept sometimes right out of himself by the fire and the force and the fervor of his work.

#### Citadel of the Will

The preacher should never address a crowd without remembering his ultimate citadel is the citadel of the human will. He may travel along the line of emotions, but he is after the will. He may approach along the line of intellect, but he is after the will. When preaching becomes merely discussion in the realm of the intellect, or--forgive my use of the word--fooling in the realm of the emotions, and when preaching ends in the intellectual or emotional, it fails. It is successful only when it is able to storm the will, under the will of God.

The preacher comes with good news; but he does not come with something to be trifled with. His message has an insistent demand, because he comes on behalf of a King.

#### The Price of Passion

During the great Welsh Revival, it is said, a certain minister was marvelously successful in his preaching. He had but one sermon, but under it hundreds of men were saved. Far away from where he lived in a lonely valley, news of this wonderful success reached a brother preacher. Forthwith he became anxious to find out the secret of his success. At length, reaching the humble cottage where the good man lived, he said, "Brother, where did you get that sermon?"

He was taken into a poorly furnished room and pointed to a spot where the carpet was worn shabby and bare, near a window that looked out toward the mountains. The minister said, "Brother, that's where I got that sermon. My heart was heavy for men. One evening I knelt there and cried for power to preach as I had never preached before.

"The hours passed until the midnight struck, and the stars looked down on the sleeping valley and silent hills; but the answer came not. So I prayed until at length I saw a faint gray shoot up in the east. Presently it became silver, and I watched and prayed until the silver became purple and gold, and on all the mountain crests blazed the altar fires of the new day; and then the sermon came, and the power came.

"I lay down and slept, and arose and preached, and scores fell down before the fire of God. That is where I got that sermon."

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