

## **G. Campbell Morgan**

### **“A preacher come from God”**

Sam Horn, Ph.D.  
VP of Ministerial Training, Northland Baptist Bible College  
Senior Pastor, Brookside Baptist Church

*But the point I want to make about him as a preacher is this . . . that we are all agreed that he was God’s gift to His Church. He surely was the supreme illustration of the fact that God always gives His gifts at the right time . . . When did he come upon the scene? It was immediately after those wonderful campaigns of D. L. Moody and Sankey in this country. There had been those great visitations of the Spirit. Men and women had been converted by the thousand. This great evangelistic movement had come into the whole life of the Church, and what was needed above everything else at that point was someone who could teach these converts. And ‘a man came from God’ whose name was George Campbell Morgan; and he came at the critical moment, at the very right time when all those spiritual emotions and experiences needed to be harnessed and deepened and fostered. The evangelists had done their work; it was time for the teacher; and God sent him.<sup>1</sup>*

D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones

This tribute delivered by Lloyd Jones at the memorial service for G. Campbell Morgan reveals the high esteem in which he held his predecessor. A review of the life and ministry of this servant of God quickly reveals the reason for the high esteem in which Morgan was held. For sixty-seven years he faithfully preached the Scriptures and served churches on both sides of the Atlantic. He was in much demand as a speaker and crossed the Atlantic fifty-four times to fulfill engagements in a long and fruitful conference ministry.<sup>2</sup> He pastored eight different churches in England and America, but is best remembered as pastor of Westminster Chapel in London, a position he occupied on two different occasions. During his time at Westminster, Morgan taught a weekly Bible class on Friday evenings with an average attendance of 1,400.<sup>3</sup> Although Morgan never received a college or seminary degree, he served as the president of Cheshunt College from 1911-14 and was on the faculties of BIOLA in Los Angeles in 1927-28

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<sup>1</sup> This was a portion of the eulogy given by Lloyd-Jones at the memorial service for G. Campbell Morgan held in Westminster Chapel on May 28, 1945. Lloyd-Jones moderated the service. Portions of Lloyd-Jones comments are preserved in a chapter describing the details of that service in one of the better biographies on Morgan written by his daughter-in-law. Jill Morgan, *A Man of the Word: Life of G. Campbell Morgan* (London: Pickering & Inglis Ltd., 1951), pp. 329-330.

<sup>2</sup> For additional summary material see David L. Larson, *The Company of the Preachers: A History of Biblical Preaching from the Old Testament to the Modern Era* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1998), p. 633.

<sup>3</sup> Morgan, *A Man of the Word*, p. 161. This became the heart of his work at Westminster, particularly during his first tenure as pastor. Morgan, in her biography, includes many interesting details related to this aspect of her father-in-law’s ministry. Another helpful description of these Friday meetings is preserved by one of his students, Harold Murray in his brief but valuable work, *Campbell Morgan Bible Teacher* (London: Mashall, Morgan & Scott, Ltd., n.d.).

and Gordon College in Boston in 1930-32. Over the years of his ministry Morgan preached more than 23,390 times and wrote more than 70 books.<sup>4</sup>

## The Man

George Campbell Morgan was born in the small village of Tetbury, England in 1863 to godly Christian parents. His father was a Baptist pastor who resigned his pulpit after coming under the influence of George Mueller and the Plymouth Brethren movement. Although his father continued to preach, young George attended a Methodist congregation in the area. Often, he went with his father to hear well-known preachers who arrived in the area, and on one of these occasions in 1873, Morgan heard D. L. Moody and Ira Sankey for the first time. His childhood companion, his sister Lizzie, died at 12 years of age when Morgan was eight. He was a born preacher and one of his favorite childhood activities was preaching to Lizzie and her dolls. He preached his first official sermon on Sunday, August 27, 1876 to the small congregation at Monmouth Methodist Church. He was thirteen years old. He preached on salvation from a variety of texts. Morgan returned to this congregation sixty years later for a jubilee service held in honor and preached from the same pulpit out of the same text.<sup>5</sup>

Morgan attended school and was taught by a firm but capable instructor under whose tutelage he gained a passion for teaching. By fifteen, he regularly preached in nearby churches and chapels and gained quite a reputation as a “boy preacher.” After finishing his studies, he found work as a teacher at the Jewish Collegiate School for Boys where E. Lawrence Levy was principal. Levy recognized Morgan’s teaching gift and hired him in the post of Assistant Master. During these years two important things developed in Morgan’s heart. First was the conviction that God had called him to serve in ministry full time. The second was a crisis of faith that resulted in his life-long conviction that the Bible was reliable and authoritative. Morgan’s own words as cited by Larsen demonstrate the severity of this crisis and its resolution.

*For two years my Bible was shut; two years of sadness and sorrow. Strange, alluring materialistic theories were in the air, and to these I turned . . . I became well-versed in the philosophies that were the vogue in England at that time, but from them I got no relief. In my despair I took all the books that I had, placed them in a cupboard, turned the key, and there they remained for seven years. I bought a new Bible, and began to read it with an open mind and a determined will. That Bible found me. The Book gave forth a glow which warmed my heart, and the Word of God which I read to therein gave to my troubled soul the relief and satisfaction that I had sought for elsewhere. Since that time I have lived for one end—to preach the teachings of the Book that found me.<sup>6</sup>*

Although his first love was preaching, due to the financial pressure his parents were under, Morgan felt compelled to continue teaching. He struggled mightily with the call to leave teaching and devote himself completely to preaching. So great was the unrest of soul that he finally conceded that he would go if God forced him. The next day Levy reluctantly told him the

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<sup>4</sup> Murray, *Campbell Morgan*, pp. 14-17. These were just the sermons preached up through 1936. Morgan continued preaching until his resignation in June of 1943. Morgan, *A Man of the Word*, p. 316.

<sup>5</sup> Morgan, *A Man of the Word*, p. 31. The outline of the sermon is preserved here for the interested reader.

<sup>6</sup> Larsen, *The Company of the Preachers*, p. 631. Morgan has a fuller account on pages 39-40 of her work.

school would be closing and he would have to find work elsewhere. This settled the matter for Morgan; from here on out he would preach.

After considering joining the Salvation Army, a movement he always highly regarded, Morgan sought ordination by the Methodist denomination. After two months of intense study, he successfully passed the required doctrinal examination. However, after preaching his trial sermon on May 22, 1888, his examiners rejected his application. His daughter-in-law later observed that although this was part of God's providential plan, it stung young Morgan deeply.

*He wired to his father the one word, 'Rejected,' and sat down to write in his diary: "Very dark everything seems. Still, He knoweth best." Quickly came the reply: "Rejected on earth. Accepted in heaven. Dad." . . . "I thank God to-day," he said many years later, as he looked back across the years, "for closing that door of hope, because, when He turned my feet in another direction I found the breadth of His commandments, and the glory of His service."*<sup>7</sup>

There were happy times as well. In August of that year Morgan married his cousin, Nancy, who stood with him through all the mountains and valleys of ministry. Together, they had seven children. The boys, Percy, John (Jack), Frank, and Howard all followed their father into the ministry. Howard succeeded his father as pastor of Tabernacle Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia when Morgan returned for his second ministry at Westminster in 1932. The girls, Gwendoline (Gwennie), Kathleen, and Ruth were devoted children. Ruth and Kathleen would marry fine Christian men and their children were special sources of delight to Morgan. Gwendoline, his first child, died suddenly in infancy. Morgan never forgot the difficulty of that event.

*I can hardly speak of this matter without becoming personal and reminiscent, remembering a time forty years ago, when my own first lassie lay at the point of death, dying. I called for Him then, and He came, and surely said to our troubled hearts, 'Fear not, believe only.' He did not say, She shall be made whole. She was not made whole on the earthly plane. She passed away into the life beyond. He did say to her, 'Talitha cumi,' 'little lamb arise'; but, in her case, that did not mean, stay on the earth level. It meant that He needed her, and He took her to be with Himself. She has been with Him for all those years, as we measure time here, and I have missed her every day; but His word, 'Believe only,' has been the strength of all the passing years.'*<sup>8</sup>

G. Campbell Morgan was a preacher's preacher. He not only preached well, he looked the part. Tall and thin, his profile added to his persona in the pulpit. When in public, he wore the clerical collar common among Congregational ministers and always preached in a robe on Sundays. His powerful voice could be easily heard by thousands even in the early days before sound equipment was installed at Westminster Chapel. He kept in good physical shape and was a fine tennis player. Friends were important to Morgan and he cultivated many deep and loyal friendships over the years on both sides of the Atlantic. Surprisingly, he was not known as a

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<sup>7</sup> Morgan, *A Man of the Word*, p. 60.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 82-83. She also recounts Morgan's diary entry sixth month's after Gwendolyn's death. "Today I am thirty-one years old. Surely goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life! There have been no accidents. All under the Father's government, and all best."

warm and approachable person by visitors to his services or by those who knew him only casually. However, this was more often than not a misperception due to his shy nature.<sup>9</sup> When at home or on holiday, Morgan loved to dress in bright colors. More than one reference to his unusual ties is recorded by his biographer. He tended to be criticized by those who did not know him well as a man of extravagant tastes. While one might be critical of his policy to travel and stay in the best accommodations rather than in homes, this practice helped him maintain a rigid and disciplined study and writing schedule while away from home, and thus his writing ministry did not suffer in spite of his heavy travel schedule. In his latter years Morgan had a large regular income from his writing and was generous to a fault in using that income for others.<sup>10</sup>

Morgan had a long and fruitful ministry as a preacher of the Gospel. He preached several times a week for most of his life. During his later years he still preached weekly but had to cut back on speaking other than Sunday and Friday evenings. Amazingly, he preached weekly up to the last month of his life. After a brief period of declining health, he died on May 16, 1945.

## **His Ministry**

Morgan's chief love was the pastorate. In 1889, he was ordained by the Congregational Church and in August of 1889, he assumed his first pastorate in Stone, Staffordshire. The two years of ministry there were difficult for Morgan. His congregation loved his preaching but grew increasingly frustrated at the constant demand for their minister to speak in other places. In 1891, Morgan left Stone and accepted a call to come to Rugeley, fifteen miles away where he enjoyed a profitable ministry for almost two years before accepting a call from Westminster Road Congregational Church in Birmingham, England where he served until 1897. At Birmingham he began his weekly bible teaching ministry on Thursday evenings in order to teach through the Bible systematically. His famous "bird's-eye view" outlines, later were incorporated into the *Analyzed Bible*, were first delivered here.<sup>11</sup>

In 1896, Morgan made his first visit to America and struck up a friendship with D. L. Moody. He preached for the first of many times at the famous Northfield Bible Conference in Massachusetts. In January of 1897, at 34 years of age, Morgan assumed his fourth pastorate this one at North Court Trollington Park, London where he served until 1901. During this time, Morgan was in much demand as a speaker and maintained a heavy traveling ministry. It was not unusual for him to speak in four or five different places during the course of a week. At North Court his lifelong interest in missions resulted in his involvement with the London Missionary Society. It was also at North Court that his writing ministry significantly expanded. It was clear that God was opening wider doors for this young expositor.

In 1901, he resigned from North Court and joined Moody as a speaker and itinerant expositor for the Northfield conference ministry. After each summer conference Morgan returned to England for several months of itinerant ministry to the churches. Upon his return to America, he traveled from city to city preaching to full churches from New York to Atlanta to Los Angeles. It seemed everyone wanted to hear the "prince of expositors" and there was no want for meetings.

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<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 244.    <sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 86, 253.

<sup>10</sup> Jill Morgan includes in her book includes a frank and fair discussion of this part of Morgan's life and ministry on pages 258-261.

In 1904, Morgan returned to his beloved London and assumed the pastorate of Westminster Chapel where he served for the next thirteen years. When he arrived at Westminster Chapel, the once stately church was in disrepair. The large edifice had been built too large and the upper gallery had been unused for over fifteen years. It was known by Congregational leaders as their “white elephant.” His lifelong friend, Albert Swift, came as his assistant. Under Morgan’s preaching and Swift’s unusual administrative ability, the church was soon filled. Within the first year, a major renovation of the building was undertaken and many new programs were initiated to strengthen and deepen the spiritual lives of the membership. During the early years of his tenure, the famous Friday evening bible classes were initiated and soon, over a thousand were attending regularly. This number would eventually grow to two thousand. In 1911 he accepted the presidency of Cheshunt College and immediately set about to raise funds for the renovation and enlargement of the facilities. His ministry to the students was well received and those who took his courses on preaching were impacted for life.<sup>12</sup> During these years at Westminster Chapel, Morgan made yearly pilgrimages to America each summer. Additionally, he was a regular speaker in five other major preaching centers throughout England. In 1904 he determined that England needed a conference similar to Moody’s Northfield conference. He purchased property at Mundesley, a village by the coast of Norfolk for this purpose and from 1906-1914 great 10-day conferences were held each year with speakers such as F. B. Meyer, R. B. Girdlestone, John Hutton, James Orr, W. H. Griffith Thomas, J. H. Jowett, A. T. Pierson, Charles R. Eerdman, and Gipsy Smith preaching to over one thousand conference attenders.<sup>13</sup>

In January of 1917, Morgan resigned his ministry at Westminster. Intending to take a year long opportunity to preach in Melbourne, Australia, his plans changed with the outbreak of WWI. Instead, he ministered with the Y.M.C.A. for a year and filled the pulpit at Westminster when opportunity arose. You can be sure many opportunities were created to bring their beloved pastor to his old pulpit. In 1918, Jowett was called by Westminster Chapel and Morgan began a year long pulpit ministry with Highbury Quadrant Church in North London. In 1919 he moved again to America where he would enjoy fourteen years of extraordinarily profitable ministry as a traveling Bible expositor. He preached in thousands of churches and held meetings in almost every state of the Union. He also held many meetings in Canada and encouraged pastors there to consider expository preaching.<sup>14</sup> He purchased a home in Athens, Georgia which served as a “home base” until 1926 when he again became a pastor, this time in America. After a short and surprisingly disappointing experience as the pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in Cincinnati, Ohio, he joined the faculty of BIOLA in 1927. However, he took issue with the administration’s treatment of a fellow professor and resigned the following November. His loyalty to friends was always his strong point and at times it caused him to overlook serious flaws and potential doctrinal differences. While he was always firm in his beliefs about the origins and character of Scripture, in this case, his loyalty may have been misplaced.<sup>15</sup> Soon

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<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 193-198. This section is well worth reading. His students revered him and speak of his ministry to them in unforgettable terms.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 173. The story of Morgan’s Westminster years mentioned in this paragraph is found in much fuller form in Morgan’s work in her section on Morgan’s life from 41-53 years of age in which she provides many fascinating details and several pictures.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 245.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 271-274. BIOLA’s eventual direction may in part be traced to the introduction and the giving away of certain ground by men like Dr. MacInnis, Dean of the school. The story of this particular instance is both indicative of Morgan’s fierce loyalty, his personal commitment to truth, and his willingness to stand by his principles. He

after, in 1929 he accepted the pastorate of Tabernacle Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia where he served until 1932. During this time he served on the faculty of Gordon College of Theology. Upon his resignation and return to London, Tabernacle Presbyterian called his youngest son, Howard, to take his father's place.

In 1933 at 69 years of age, Morgan returned to pastor Westminster Chapel where he served until his retirement in 1943. He continued to preach with great power but the glory of the old days never quite returned. His attempt to resurrect the Mundesley conference failed and the last conference was held in 1935. The one bright spot where the old Morgan still could be seen was the Friday evening bible studies. More than two thousand gathered to hear Morgan give his weekly lessons. In this arena, the teacher had not lost any of his power.<sup>16</sup> In 1936, Morgan celebrated sixty years of ministry. The members of Westminster spared no expense in honoring their beloved pastor on this occasion, and inaugurated a year of Jubilee in which was raised a large sum of money for the complete renovation of the church. He continued to minister during the war years but clearly his health was declining. He suffered slight memory loss and privately admitted to battling a strange fear of mounting the stairs to his pulpit each week. More than once he offered his resignation, and finally in 1943, he became Minister Emeritus at Westminster Chapel. His faithful assistant, D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, became pastor in his stead. On May, 16<sup>th</sup>, 1945 after 67 years of ministry, G. Campbell Morgan died peacefully at his home.

## His Messages

Without question, the secret to Morgan's success as a preacher was his clear, powerful, and penetrating exposition of the Bible. He has been described as the "Prince of Expositors" and given the preaching of his day, this description may well have been warranted.<sup>17</sup> Morgan's preaching was expositional in that he constructed sermons solidly on the text and its explanation. During his ministry at Westminster, the Sunday morning messages were lengthy expositional series of different books of the Bible. For example, he spent three years preaching through Matthew and two years preaching through Acts. Much of the material in his commentaries on these books was shaped by these messages.<sup>18</sup> He rarely preached topical messages. However, many of his messages still available demonstrate that in reality, Morgan expounded the text by means of careful exegesis and then preached more of a textual message. He tended to do most of his preparation from the English text and frequently preached out of the RSV. Although he did use the original languages in his study, the primary use to which they seem to have been put was in providing word pictures for key terms in the text he was preaching. None-the-less, his systematic verse-by-verse approach to preaching through a book of the Bible and showing its connections to the rest of Scripture was not done by many in his day and was both of interest and profit to his hearers.<sup>19</sup>

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resigned because he felt the institution was willing to sacrifice an individual whose work while questionable had been declared orthodox by the board of the college. In the face of the firestorm that unfolded, the board determined to release the professor.

<sup>16</sup> Interestingly, Larsen reports the largest crowds numbered 1500. However, Jill Morgan cites Morgan himself in a letter speaking of more than 2000 in attendance. *Ibid.*, 286.

<sup>17</sup> Larsen, *The Company of the Preachers*, p. 631.

<sup>18</sup> Morgan, *A Man of the Word*, p. 158.

<sup>19</sup> Murray observes, "I had never properly understood how each book of the Bible has its own particular theme until Dr. Morgan revealed that fact by means of those compelling blackboard analyses thirty years ago. (I wish the present generation could have seen Dr. Morgan's skill with that blackboard!) His aim always is to let the Bible

His style in the pulpit was clearly didactic with strong emphasis on applying the lesson to life. His Friday evening lessons were an hour long and consisted of Morgan outlining the book and placing the particular text in its broader context. Sometimes he outlined an entire book in one sitting. In addition to sound homiletical practice, Morgan made use of the latest technology of his day. He constructed his pulpit to accommodate a large moving blackboard that he used regularly in his Friday evening classes.

His work ethic was legendary. He rose early and studied for several hours each day. As mentioned earlier, he maintained a rigorous discipline when traveling and much of his writing and studying was done on trains and in hotels. He read prodigiously and widely. One of the great secrets of his ministry was his secretary, Miss Winifred Howell. Early on in his ministry he and Nancy were joined by “Winnie” who remained with them for life. She never married and traveled with the Morgans where they went. She dedicated herself to organizing and handling all the details of his ministry. She organized those who served as stenographers for his weekly sermons and handled the editing and publication details for his books. He could not have accomplished what he did without her.<sup>20</sup> Although he was a born teacher, there is no question that his primary gift was in preaching. He is better described as a preacher who taught than a teacher who preached as can be seen in the following paragraph from one who heard him regularly.

*Like many another, I have often asked myself what is the secret of Dr. Morgan's preeminence and popularity as a Bible teacher? If I had to give it in one word, I think I should choose the term 'dynamic'. But what are the factors which impart that distinguishing quality to his ministry? He loves the word 'teacher'; but his lectures are far removed from the purely didactic. Teaching which is merely teaching may inform, but it does not inspire. And, let us make no mistake, the crowds flock to Westminster because first and foremost they find inspiration there. I agree, therefore, with the late Mrs. Herman in the opinion that Dr. Morgan is a great teacher because he is a born preacher.<sup>21</sup>*

## **His Mindset**

Morgan was convinced that what the Church of his age most needed was solid Bible teaching. To that end he devoted himself to the systematic exposition of the Bible. In essence Morgan occupied three roles in this endeavor. First, he was an exegete and gave himself to the study of the text. While one might wish for a deeper use of the original languages, Morgan must be taken in his context and evaluated in light of his opportunities. For one never having received formal theological education, this self-taught preacher gained what knowledge he had from long hours of personal bible study. His stated practice on his sermon preparation was this:

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deliver its own message, and I know of no one who has demonstrated more convincingly the marvelous unity of the Divine Library. Large areas of Scripture, sadly neglected even by orthodox preachers, have been compelled to yield up rich treasures of truth. Any section he touches, begins to speak at once with living voice to our own generation.” Murray, *Campbell Morgan Bible Teacher*, p. 48.

<sup>20</sup> Morgan, *A Man of the Word*, p. 107.

<sup>21</sup> Murray, *Campbell Morgan Bible Teacher*, pp. 47-48.

*Two things are vital, first personal, first-hand work on the text, and then all scholarly aids obtainable. I never take down a commentary until I have done the first-hand work and have made my outline. To turn to commentaries first is to create a second-hand mentality. I speak freely, from a brief most carefully prepared.*<sup>22</sup>

Second, he occupied the role of an expositor and labored to reveal the text in his preaching. He preached systematically and practically. Normally his messages exceeded fifty minutes in length. Although his sermons were deeply biblical, they were more than simply explanation of the text. The explanation had a purpose and that was to produce life change in the hearer. Therefore, his messages were intentionally application oriented and not just exegetical lectures. As his biographer stated,

*Certainly he considered the preaching and teaching of the Word of vital importance, but he constantly reminded students that 'the teaching of the Bible is a means to an end and not an end in itself.' The wisdom of the sacred writings must ever lead the way 'unto salvation' and into service, evangelism, and then activity for Christ must be the goal of all Bible preaching and teaching.*<sup>23</sup>

The third role he occupied was that of educator. Morgan understood the value of teaching the text to others who could themselves preach or teach it to others. His Friday evening classes were filled with individuals many of whom did not attend Westminster Bible Chapel but were preachers or teachers in other congregations. He consistently found ways to minister and teach preachers how to understand and interpret the Bible. His commentaries on the Minor Prophets and on Jeremiah are examples of how valuable this material was to preachers of his day who had precious little material on these books available to them. Likewise, his commitment to teach on the faculty of three different colleges during his life was driven by his vision to train another generation of young people. The material he presented in his preaching classes eventually became his book entitled *Preaching*. His basic premise was that expository preaching needed to be grounded in the truth of Scripture—it needed to be biblical. Good preaching also demanded clarity. Clarity in a message was achieved by unifying the message around a single theme or proposition, ordering and arranging that theme in logical and understandable divisions, and making clear progress toward a specific goal throughout the delivery process. Third, good preaching demanded passion. A good message wonderfully prepared was greatly weakened by poor or listless delivery. This simple method helped scores of preachers and ministerial students become better preachers.

## **His Method**

Morgan developed and practiced an approach to sermon preparation that was taught this reviewer in a homiletics course taught by Dr. Mark Minnick, pastor of Mt. Calvary Baptist Church, Greenville, SC. The method consists of four stages that occupy the preparatory process in a fashion that is logically consecutive but in actual practice may occur simultaneously.

First, the exegete engages in the *Survey* stage. Here he is looking to discern the overall theme of the passage. In order to do so, he reads the text repeatedly. This reading of the

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<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 88.

<sup>23</sup> Morgan, *A Man of the Word*, pp. 144-145.

preaching text is accompanied and often preceded by a repeated reading of the book in which the passage occurs. Dr. Morgan reportedly would not work on a preaching text until he had read the book where it was located at least 50 times in one sitting. While this may be a ministerial legend, he did comment on having read Exodus 40 times in one sitting before preparing his exegesis.<sup>24</sup>

Having determined the theme, the next stage is the *Condense* stage. The goal in this stage is to condense the preaching passage to the primary statements that develop the theme. This is in essence discovering the main points of the passage and is done by analysis and by examining the structure and flow of the sentences that comprise the paragraph. At the end of the process, the expositor has identified the theme and the major divisions of the passage.

The *Expand* stage follows. In this stage, the exegete seeks to discover how each of the major lines or main divisions is developed by the text. What does the text say about each of the major divisions and how are they developed? At the end of this stage, the expositor has discovered the theme, the major propositions or main points the passage is making about that theme, and the specific sub-statements that develop each major division of the them.

The final step is the *Dissect* stage. Here the expositor examines every term and image in the context looking for information that might be useful in helping to add detail to the theme, main points, and sub-points developed in the prior stages. At the end of this process, the expositor has all the exegetical materials from which to construct his sermon. At this point, Morgan would consult commentaries to answer questions he still had about the text, to verify his conclusions, and to add ideas which perhaps had not occurred to him in the process.

## Lessons From His Legacy

Morgan's ministry contains many valuable lessons for contemporary Bible expositors. *First*, his life reminds us that failure is a part of God's plan for those He chooses to use in great ways. Morgan never forgot the pain of being rejected by the Methodist ordination board. However, this failure caused him to determine to depend on God alone rather than men for approval. He learned that men and situations are not always as they first appear. Furthermore, his life demonstrates that what initially may seem hopeless and useless may in fact become a powerful tool in God's hand. This may explain in part Morgan's tendency to choose or invest in opportunities that to others seemed hopeless or to see potential where others saw none. More than once he envisioned the full potential of an opportunity and by the sheer force of his vision and faith compelled others to follow. In almost every case, great blessing and accomplishment resulted.

*Second*, his life reminds us that the minister must be first partaker of his vision. In every case where Morgan engaged in ministry that demanded sacrifice, Morgan led the way. He personally contributed large sums of his own to every building project he initiated. He personally involved himself in the organization and oversight of every conference at Mundesley, even the last one at the end of his life. Morgan led by example and his congregation willingly followed.

*Third*, Morgan's ministry reminds us that great success is often accompanied by personal hardship and suffering. The loss of his daughter remained with Morgan throughout his ministry; yet, it gave great power to his preaching as seen in his commentaries where this event is referenced. His first ministry at Stone as well as the ministry at Cincinnati were difficult, yet

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<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 149.

they were an important part of God’s wonderful appointment for Morgan. Morgan had a saying that is worth repeating here, “Disappointment; His appointment.”

**Fourth**, Morgan compels us to study. The secret to his ministry in many ways was hard work. No amount of books, seminars, and resources can compensate for a poor work ethic. Morgan disciplined himself to study in the midst of a busy travel schedule and heavy administrative duties. Yet, he took advantage of every moment and left a legacy born out of his study.<sup>25</sup>

**Fifth**, Morgan demonstrates the value and necessity of team ministry. From his first days at Westminster, Morgan always had a consummate assistant in the work. His personal secretary stayed with him for over forty years. He chose Albert Swift and then Arthur Marsh as assistants. Later, D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones came as his assistant first and then as his successor. This shared leadership allowed him to keep abreast of the work and cast the vision or initiate the work and then turn over its organization, development, and administration to others who served with him. His participation from then on was largely motivational and in the preaching/teaching parts.

**Sixth**, Morgan reminds us to cultivate deep friendships in ministry. Many of Morgan’s friends were initially met during his itinerant ministry. He had a wonderful friendship with Gypsy Smith and named one of his sons for D. L. Moody. His friendships were deep and loyal as demonstrated in the BIOLA episode. Furthermore, his friendships crossed denominational lines and he invited his friends to share in his ministry. This is particularly true at Mundesley-by-the-sea. Every year the conference was held, the speakers were Morgan’s friends. He never forgot a friendship and never hesitated to cultivate a relationship by some unexpected act of kindness or generosity.

**Seventh**, Morgan encourages us that busy ministry does not preclude raising a godly family. All four of his sons saw something in their father that drew them to his call in life. All four of them became ministers. Space does not allow for great detail here but two things account for this in addition to his godly life and prayer. First, Mrs. Morgan. Second, his constant and unbounded joy in the presence of his children. They were a true delight to him and he was never happier than when with them.

**Eighth**, Morgan demonstrates the power of a pure and committed life. Morgan learned this lesson early on in marriage. Shortly after moving into their first home, Morgan invited his father for a visit. Upon completing the tour of the little home, Morgan’s dad observed that while it was lovely, there was nothing in the home that would indicate that anything but a moral person lived there – no one would conclude by looking at where they lived that these moral people were believers. Morgan never forgot that lesson and his life, his personal habits, and his home were always testimonies for Christ. This may explain in part his decision to wear the clerical collar in public during the week. He wanted to be clearly identified for what and who he was.

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<sup>25</sup> The following citation bears this out. “[His] itinerant ministry was not carried out at the expense of standing before his own congregation with any lack of preparation. That preparation was often paid for in other ways, for he rose early and retired late. Those who crowded into the church to be stirred by the wonder of the Bible, and see for the first time, or in a new way, the mighty sweep of its message, had no knowledge of those lamp-lit hours before day. This man, so dynamic and virile in the pulpit, they had not seen in a circle of light at five o’clock in the morning, with Bible and notebook spread before him. Neither had they seen him in the compartment of a train, speeding through the countryside, making notes in neat and microscopic writing, as his thoughts wandered through the labyrinthine paths of a text, exploring, analyzing, seeking for truth and ways to interpret it. The potent message, the attentive listeners, the intangible atmosphere of union between teacher and taught, was the result of arduous, concentrated toil and unremitting devotion to ‘this one thing I do,’ this preaching the Word—this above all.” Morgan, *A Man of the Word*, p. 105.

*Ninth*, Morgan teaches us the value of teaching teachers. His ministry expanded exponentially through the legacy he left for other expositors. Hundreds of teachers were trained in his evening Bible classes. Thousands taught their students and congregations the outlines they first learned from his blackboard. His books and commentaries are still in print today and have been used to great profit by expositors for over six decades. Morgan saw beyond his parish and even beyond his times. And because he did, his ministry and legacy continue to bear great fruit even though he has gone on ahead to his reward.

*Tenth*, Morgan is a testimony to the life-giving power of expository preaching. In an age where expository preaching is almost non-existent and those who preach it are considered out of step with the culture, Morgan reminds us that the true need of the church is not for some new method or scheme to get more people to attend, but rather for the plain and powerful teaching of the Scriptures.

*These are evil days. It is the age of rush, of movement, of effort. The old sacred art of contemplation and meditation is almost dead. It is the age when men and women are trying to live even within the Church by dissipating and exciting forms of so called religious services. The old solemn hours of quiet loneliness with God that made the saints of the past re almost unknown. We are carried up and borne forward before we know it on the characteristics of the time. When men and women come to me as they do sometimes and say we need in the Church to catch the spirit of the age and keep level with it, I say in God's name, No! What we need is to be led by the Spirit of God, and that will send us against the spirit of the age and never along with it.<sup>26</sup>*

Morgan spoke these words in 1900 at one of the first conferences at Mundesley. His answer to the evil days was to preach the word clearly, expositionally, and exclusively. May the Lord raise up such preachers in our times.

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<sup>26</sup> Murray, *Campbell Morgan Bible Teacher*, pp. 113-114.