

The result is that in some seminaries you will preach once or twice a year before a class and that's about all the practice you get in speaking. And students come out talking (mumbo jumbo) hardly understand what they say. Talking like some of you did when you gave your names! They come out having wonderful truth, but nobody is greatly interested in hearing them. Because they can't understand them. It's too much work to understand them.

I did a little work in public speaking once and we got a tape recorder. We had a dozen students each of whom read two lines of a poem and then we played it over. Everything thing we heard, all the students would exclaim, Isn't that wonderful; it sounds exactly like him; you'd think he was talking. But in every case the one who was then speaking said, What's the matter with that recorder; it took everybody else well, but it doesn't sound a bit like me. We had to do that to convince them that you don't hear yourself speak. Many of us talk as if our mouths were all stopped up. People don't catch our words. Or we have some queer way of talking we learned as a child and everybody is too polite to show us. We've gone on and gotten the habit so badly from talking that way all our lives, it's a question whether God will ever use us unless we get over it.

When I was in seminary we had a wonderful homiletics teacher but he had a queer personality. He had a few pets whom he taught and the rest of us he wouldn't do anything for. After I'd had over a year with him, I went to him and asked, Won't you give me some help in speaking. What's the use, he said, of trying to give you any help with that terrible midwestern rrrr. How could anybody help you? I said, How can I get over this rrrrr? He said, Say bray, bri, bri, bro, broom; blay, bli, blay, blow, blue, and go through the alphabet. I thought it was a lot of junk. But I knew there was a lot he could teach me that was worthwhile, and I wasn't getting anything from class. So I went for a walk every afternoon for an hour and while I walked I said, blay, blie, bli, blow, blue; clay, clie, cli, clo, clue. I tried to make the rrr and the lll small, so that they would not have what he called that terrible midwestern sound.

I got them so they satisfied him. Unfortunately there were only a couple of months left of school. I learned a lot from him in those clouple of months, but if I could have found that out from him 2 yrs. earlier, I probably would have been twice as good a spaker as I am now. I don't know how good that would be but at least it would be much better than I am now.

If you will work trying to speak clearly and distinctly,=== I heard one of our own graduates last Sunday. He did not preach, but he conducted the service, and he said now we will sing number         . I didn't know what number he said. If I was supposed to look at the clalendar to find out what he said, Why didn't he say it in the first place. Why didn't he just read it and go ahead? I watched people around me and saw what hymn they sang and followed them in my book. But it's so easy to think other people can hear what we say, and there's nothing that will interfere with your effectiveness more than not speaking clearly and distinctly, and learn to speak in an effective way that will hold attention.

We have a Homiletics seminar each year. This year a man came to our seminar who had been preaching for about a half dozen years