I'd like to spend most of the time in this article in giving "for instances" of how I've tried to "do" it, for whatever value it may have for someone else who will, of course, have his own way with palette and brush. But before that, there are things that I've got to say—to myself first, and then to anyone else who will listen:

(1) When speaking about Moses and the prophets, or about Jesus Christ and the God whom he Abba-tized, one has to feel the situation, see where one stands in relation to incident or teaching. That is, one has to take an existential stance so that it is real to us . . . and to our people. In Rough Justice by C. E. Montague (one of our least known but great novelists) Bron, a twelve-year old, goes to church for the first time. The pastor gives out a terrible piece of news, that a good man who had healed sick people and had spoken as no other even spoke, had been cruelly killed and there was something he wanted the people there in church that morning to do. Bron was excited and waited; but the people went out of church that morning and talked about the weather, and didn't act as if anything important had happened.

When, for example, we preach on the parables of Jesus, do we moralize or allegorize them, seek the "one point" which Jesus is trying to get across—or do we stop to realize that Jesus' words (as well as His deeds) precipitated a conflict that resulted in His Death? Do we make people see that Jesus' parables are interpreting His behavior, are part of the provocation of His conflict, that He risked His life through His word? What do we say to the person who opines, "I don't go to church but I believe that the Sermon on the Mount is the basis for right living?" Do we make others realize at all that the One who lived that kind of life died, that we are called to die, that loss of life is really a gaining of life? Do we really give a vision of "the difference between authentic and inauthentic existence, about what Jesus affirmed and what He rejected?" 1 Is the story flat and old-hat, and thus are we condemned?

(2) Tired and sanctimonious language has to go. So many of our words are loaded with familiarity and caution, or with religious hangovers. It's a good practice to go over our manuscripts and substitute a fresh word, give a new image, and certainly make it contemporary without being matey or condescending. (M. L. King in a sermon in St. Paul's, London, suggested that the Church has to present its message in the modern idiom, but when it undertakes to proclaim the gospel in a secular idiom it must beware lest it ends up proclaiming secularism in a Christian idiom!) I find that reading novels makes me study my language, understand more fully the passions and provocations our people endure, and most of all come to grips with the real questions they find being put to them in everyday traffic.

Indeed, the preacher isn't around to answer questions nobody today is asking. Rather, he is to ask the right questions. When Dr. Buttrick was

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