

My present pastor is one of the last of the breed of sermon-memorizers. He's flawless, hasn't flubbed in the decade (leastwise when I've been in church, which is whenever I'm not in church elsewhere in ministry of my own), has been at it for 40 years, and requires only a few hours to master his script. Pretty deadly, too, come to think of it. But impressive, yes. And persuasive in spite of 100% lack of spontaneity....What I'm getting at is the storage/retrieval function of that computer we call our brain/mind, the soft-warm-gray computer in our cranium. All of us in ministry have up there a storage of literature, and we vary in our retrieval skills [what in this thinksheet I'm calling "psycho-retrieval"]. Rote learning, memorization "by heart," has been out of style in educational circles for so long a time that probably nobody reading this thinksheet will have a hearty word-for-word stock of literature in the cranium. But we all do have our synapses programmed with stories, fragments, bits and pieces from great literature.

EXERCISE: *In the categories below, what bits of literature do you use spontaneously [in contrast to by plan, as in preaching] in your ministry? After you have quickly jotted down the items that pop into mind, go back over the three categories and rate 1-4 [4 being the highest, most frequent-intense use] each item.*

JEWISH NORMATIVE LITERATURE ["Old Testament"]

CHRISTIAN NORMATIVE LITERATURE ["New Testament"]

OTHER LITERATURE [Use other side.]