"Preaching Ministry"

14 September–24 November 1948
[Chester, Pa.]

During his first term at Crozer Theological Seminary, King submitted this handwritten outline for Robert E. Keighton’s course Preaching Ministry of the Church. The outline reveals King’s early commitment to addressing societal needs and ills: “I must be concerned about unemployment, [slums], and economic insecurity. I am a profound advocate of the social gospel.” Keighton marked the paper B+.

I. The Development of Significant Trends

1. The first significant trend developing in the Christian era of preaching was the rise of the Apostolic fathers. Here we get an emphasis placed on the resurrection and immanent return of Christ. This period is divided into two groups
   (1) the Disciple
   (2) Paul

2. The second significant trend, which developed in the Christian era was the Age of the Apologist. This was the period in which there was an attempt to give validation for the Christian faith.

3. The third significant trend which developed in the Christian era was that of the Reformation. Immediately after the middle ages two events came about which affected the trend of preaching to a great extent.
   (1) the passing of the feudal system.
   (2) The rise of the Renaissance.

These events brought about a great change in the method of preaching. During this period preaching fell into three phases.
   (1) Scholastic
   (2) Doctrinal
   (3) Allegorical.

1. King took ten courses from Keighton at Crozer Theological Seminary. For a list of these courses, see Introduction, in Papers 1:48.

2. The Apostolic Fathers were first and second century CE Christian writers, including Clement of Rome, Ignatius, and Polycarp, whose personal relationships with the Apostles are said to have influenced their writings. According to a syllabus that was included in the instructions for Crozer’s comprehensive examination, the course Preaching Ministry addressed the history of preaching, including “the distinguishable periods of Christian preaching” (Crozer Theological Seminary, “Syllabus in preaching and worship,” September 1950).

3. The Apologetic period began in the second century CE and included writers such as Justin Martyr, Tatian, and Tertullian.

4. Keighton circled the misspelling “fitdal.”

5. Keighton added an “s” to the word “event.”
It was during this period that we find such men as Luther, Calvin, and Knox. Each of these men were more or less doctrinal preachers. It is significant to know that this period marked the beginning of the modern era of preaching.

Immediately after the reformation many different schools of thought developed. Each school of thought had its method of preaching. It is out of this that we get German, French, British and American preaching. The trend at this time appeared to be evangelical.

6. Martin Luther (1483–1546), John Calvin (1509–1564), and John Knox (1513–1572) were leading figures in the Protestant Reformation.

7. Keighton inserted the word "was" over the word "were" and added the word "a" between "less" and "doctrinal." He also crossed out the "s" in "preachers."

8. Keighton put a question mark at the end of this sentence.
It is significant to know that preaching did not start with Christianity. It had its roots [far?] in the soil of Hebrew culture.

(1) From Moses to Samuel
(2) to the eighth century prophets
(3) Rise of the Synagogue

Preaching was found in each of these groups.

(2) The preaching of the first four centuries was mainly apologetic. After Christ had failed to return, there had to be some justification for the validity of the Christian gospel. For this reason that the apologist arose. They were out at every turn to defend the Christian religion. Such men as Origen and Justin were forever attempting to prove the divinity of Christ. It was doing the period that the Trinitarian doctrine arose. It is also significant to know that the preaching of this period was mainly scriptural. The condition of the age required apologetic preaching.

Twentieth century preaching, on the contrary, deals with great social problem. Moreover, much of our twentieth century preaching is an attempt to adjust individuals to the complexities of modern society. The problem of the virgin birth and the trinity is not the most important features in twentieth century preaching, as was the case in the first four centuries of preaching.

Also we find that twentieth century preaching is not as scriptural as was the preaching of the first four centuries. The twentieth century preacher uses the Bible as a basis, in many instances, then he bring in all the empirical knowledge he can find to supplement that found in the Bible. On the other hand twentieth century preaching might grow out of a novel or a newspaper article. This was not the case in the first four centuries. The differences between these two types are inevitable, for preaching grows out of the times in which the preacher lives.

I fell that preaching is one of the most vital needs of our society, if it is used correctly. There is a great paradox in preaching, on the one hand it may be very helpful and on the other it may be very pernicious. It is my opinion that sincerity is not enough for the preaching ministry. The minister must be both sincere and intelligent. To often do our ministers possess the

9. Samuel was a prophet prior to and during the early part of the united monarchy in Israel, including the reigns of Saul and David.
10. Eighth century BCE prophets included Amos, Hosea, Micah, and Isaiah.
11. Keighton put a question mark between the words “there” and “had.”
12. Origen (185?-254 CE) was an early church leader and prolific author. Justin Martyr (ca. 100-ca. 165 CE) was one of the earliest theologians and apologists for the Christian church and was put to death.
13. Keighton circled the word “doing.” The Trinitarian doctrine, which holds that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are one entity, was established through decisions at the Nicene Council (325 CE) and the Council of Constantinople (381 CE).
14. Keighton added an “s” to the word “problem” and inserted the word “are” between the words “trinity” and “not.”
15. Keighton wrote the word “so” between the words “not” and “scriptural.”
16. Keighton inserted another “e” over the first “i” in the word “fell.”
former but not the latter.\textsuperscript{17} This, I think, is a serious problem facing the ministry.\textsuperscript{18}

I also think that the minister should possess profundity of conviction. We have too many ministers in the pulpit who are great spellbounders and too few who possess spiritual power.\textsuperscript{19} It is my profound conviction that I, as an aspirant for the ministry, will should possess these powers.

I think that preaching should grow out of the experiences of the people. Therefore, I, as a minister must know the problems of the people that I am pastoring.\textsuperscript{20} To often do educated ministers leave the people lost in the fog of theological abstractions, rather than presenting that theology in the light of the people's experiences.\textsuperscript{21} It is my conviction that the minister must somehow take profound theological and philosophical views and place them in a concrete framework. I must forever make the complex, the simple.

Above all I see the preaching ministry as a duel process.\textsuperscript{22} On the one hand I must attempt to change the soul of individuals so that their societies may be changed. On the other I must attempt to change the societies so that the individual soul will have a change. Therefore, I must be concerned about unemployment, slumms, and economic insecurity.\textsuperscript{23} I am a profound advocate of the social gospel.

\textit{[signed]} M. L. King\textsuperscript{24}

AHDS. CSKC: Sermon file, folder 36, "Sermon Notes."

\textsuperscript{17.} Keighton added another "o" to the word "To."
\textsuperscript{18.} For a fuller treatment of this theme, see King, Sincerity Is Not Enough, 3 June 1951, pp. 119–120 in this volume.
\textsuperscript{19.} Keighton crossed out the "ou" in the word "spellbounders," changing it to "spellbinders." He also added another "o" to the word "to" in both occurrences.
\textsuperscript{20.} Keighton added commas to set off the phrase "as a minister."
\textsuperscript{21.} Keighton added another "o" to the word "To."
\textsuperscript{22.} Keighton circled the word "duel."
\textsuperscript{23.} Keighton crossed out the second "m" in the word "slumms."
\textsuperscript{24.} Following common practice for his Crozer assignments, King folded these sheets lengthwise and signed his name on the verso of the last page.
I. The Development of Preaching Tones

1. The first significant trend developing in the Christian era was the rise of the Apostolic fathers. Here we get an emphasis placed on the resurrection and imminent return of Christ, which period is divided into two parts: (1) the period of the New Testament writers and (2) the period of the early church fathers.

2. The second significant trend which developed in the Christian era was the era of the Apologists. This was the period in which there was an attempt to give evidence for the Christian faith.

3. The third significant trend which developed in the Christian era was that of the Reformation. Immediately after the middle ages there were two events: (a) the reformation and (b) the rise of the Renaissance. These events brought about a great change in the method of preaching. During the period of preaching...
...
doctrine arose. It is also significant to know that the preaching of the period was mainly apologetic. The emphasis of the age required apologetic preaching.

Twentieth-century preaching, on the contrary, deals with great social problems. Moreover, much of our twentieth-century preaching is an attempt to adjust individuals to the complexities of modern society. The problems of the original with and the twenty-first are not the most important features in twentieth-century preaching, as were the case in the first four centuries of preaching.

Also we find that twentieth-century preaching is not as scriptural as were the preaching of the first four centuries. The twentieth-century preacher, the Bible is a living, in many instances, more living in all the empirical knowledge he can find as supplement that found in the Bible. On the other hand, twentieth-century preaching might grow out of a novel or a newspaper article. This was not the case in the first four centuries. The differences between these two types are inevitable, for preaching grew out of the times in which the preacher lived.
3. I feel that preaching is one of the most vital modes of our society, if it is done correctly. There is a great paradox in preaching: one can preach very well, and on the other it may be very permissive. It is my opinion that sincerity is not enough for the preaching ministry. I think that the minister must be both sincere and intelligent. Too often, as our ministers possess the power but not the latter, this, I think, is a serious problem facing the ministry.

I also think that the minister shall possess a profound depth of conviction. We have too many ministers in this country who are great spellbinders and too few who possess spiritual power. It is my profound conviction that the minister shall possess spiritual power.

I think that preaching should grow out of the experience of the people. Therefore, I, as a minister, must know the problems of the people that I am preaching to. Too often, the minister leaves the people behind in the fog of theological abstraction rather than presenting that theology in the light of the people's experiences. This is my conviction that the minister must somehow take profound theological and philosophical views and place them in a concrete framework. I must of ever make the complex, the

Above all I see the preaching ministry as a heal process. On the one hand, I must attempt to change the soul of individuals so that their society may be changed. On the other I must attempt to change the society so that the individual soul will have a change. Therefore I must be concerned about unemployment, Sharing and economic insecurity. I am an adherent of the social gospel.