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Lancaster, Pa.

HOMILETICAL VALUES IN HISTORY

History can be the source of homiletical values in the art of presenting the truth of God to our generation. To make history yield its homiletical values a preacher, however, must be convinced of the possibility of the past history of the race; he must see meaning in history; and he must have a Christian philosophy of history.

One of the sources of themes is to be found in the story of the Church. Zion City of our God offers infinite possibilities to speak glorious things. In all of history there are no more dramatic themes than those found here.

Another opportunity is in the history of the parish. Here are legends, events, tragedy, comedy, greed, heroism, sacrifice, and devotion—a heritage worth perpetuating.

Anniversaries, occasions like Bible Sunday, national and international missions, Christian Education Day, Reformation Day, and the like may be interpreted in the light of historic facts and personalities.

World history is replete with ideas useful in the pulpit. The preacher's opportunity is to match the Christian ideas to those which have been evolved by man for handling the human situation. Are ideas like the balance of power, national self-interest, preparation for war, war, associations of victor nations, secret treaties and alliances the solution for our ills? What if we honestly tried the great ideas of the living God, Father of all men of every nation and race, of Christ, who is the way, of a guiding Spirit that draws all men into the deep fellowship of love and builds the ramparts of a Beloved Community? Washington and Lincoln's birthdays, Fourth of July, Armistice Day, Thanksgiving Day, World Order Sunday, Memorial Day, United Nations Day, and the like are appropriate time to ask these searching questions.

The most fruitful source of homiletical values is to be found in biographies. Biography can be the gate of conviction. Biographical interpretations may come as a single sermon or as a series. Here are titles for some biographical series: Cultivators of the Roots of American Liberty, Men Who Found God, Heroes of the Faith, Famous Martyrs of the Early Church, The Church under the Cross, Founders of Living Denominations, Great Thinkers of the Ages, Ambassadors of God, Men

of Action for the Faith, The Religion of Great Statesmen, The Religion of Nation Builders, The Rogues of History, Great Enemies of the Faith, The Religion of Business Men, Great Conversions, From Faithfulness to Faith.

History provides illustrations that can provide real windows for Christian truth. Gather your own and do not rely on "canned" illustrations. Substitute real life situations for sentimental stories. Moreover, as Sockman says, "Illustrations from the lives of historical personalities are far more arresting and convincing than analogies, however clever."

Historical materials are to be used as an aid in presenting the gospel not as a substitute for it. A historical sermon is never a lecture, much less an obituary. Using historical materials is not opening the crypt of history and revealing dead bones but rather invoking the spirits of those who have gone before and letting them speak in the communion of deathless spirits.

Dr. William Toth

Note: This is the third in the series of articles based on the lectures delivered at this year's F & M Institute of Religion. In addition to the capsule of his lecture which Dr. Toth gave to us, he included a set of five sermon suggestions as an illustration of the points he makes in the above paragraphs. They are passed on for their worth as examples and especially for future reference in building sermons on historical material. J.R.G.

A SERIES FROM CHURCH HISTORY

I

Worn out in Service
St. Francis

Scrip. Reading: Matt. 19:21, Lk. 9:1-6
Matt. 16:24-26.

Text: "Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me." Mt. 16:24.

II

Burned but not Convicted
John Hus

Scrip. Reading: Luke 21:5-19
Text: "For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to withstand or gainsay." Luke 21:15.

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III.
Aflame As A Torch
Savonarola

Scrip. Reading: Mt. 21:1-29
Text: "But whosoever shall humble himself shall be exalted." Mt. 21:12b

IV.
The Power of a Magnet
John Calvin

Scrip. Reading: Jn. 17:9-26
Text: "Nor do I pray for them alone, but for all who believe in me by their spoken word; may they all be one! As Thou, Father, art in me and I in Thee, so may they be in us-- that the world may believe Thou hast sent me." (Moffat) Jn. 17:20-21

V.
Revealing Liberty
John Robinson

Scrip. Reading: Gal. 5:13-6:5
Text: "So if the Sun sets you free you will be really free." (Goodspeed)
Jn. 8:36

W.T.

SPORTSCOPE

The action on the sports scene is rather slow at the present moment. The schedule of special events and the vacation period have combined to postpone dart-baseball for the past two weeks. The second-half competition will be resumed next week.

This week the spotlight will be focused on the Seminary Angels. The courtmen will be out to avenge the 44 - 40 loss to the Pi Lambda Phi. It took the Frat boys two over-time periods to claim a hard fought victory. The boys from Richards Hall deserve high praise even in defeat. The Angels take to the court three times this week in a tough series which will ring down the curtain on the basketball scene. Three wins would place the Seminarsians among the leaders.

The ping-pong competition is completed and the Seminary netman compiled a season record of seven wins and four losses. To the individual players and to the team as a whole we say, "Well done!"

Softball practice has been called in anticipation of the future contests in the fast F & M Intermural League. All those who are interested in participating in softball should turn out to these practice sessions and add their talents to the team.

Golf competition will get under way as soon as weather permits. So far two flights have been signed up. The links should witness keen shooting as the men tee off.

The gym in the basement is now in fine condition since the renovation.

Facilities will soon be available for those who desire to work out.

Dick Masters

THINGS PAST AND YET TO BE

The Society of Inquiry held a joint business and program meeting beginning at 6:30 p.m. last Tuesday, March 20th. Following the consideration of the appointed agenda in Room 1, the members withdrew to Santee Chapel for a demonstration by Loren Walters, representative of the Philadelphia denominational office, of the Leadership Education Audio-visuals.

The business session comprised the hearing of reports from the committees of refectory investigation and reorientation of the gymnasium. Appropriate action and near completion was reported by each group, respectively. The meeting also included discussion of a spring picnic for the Seminary family.

On the School Calendar of April 10th, Rev. Paul L. Althouse, of Frederick, Md., will speak on the topic, "The Military Chaplaincy," at Tuesday chapel services at 10 a.m.

Seniors will note that Monday, May 14th, the Monday after the close of their classes on May 10th, is the deadline for fulfillment of all financial obligations to the Seminary and for final approval of the Bachelor of Divinity thesis by the departmental head. Final typing and binding need not be completed by then, but all theses must be in Dr. Stonesifer's hands for binding by May 24th, Commencement. All senior sermons for the Board of Visitors must be given to Dr. Sayres by Monday, April 23rd.

Other calendar highlights are:

Work among the employees and their families of the Glenn Martin plant, near Baltimore, will be the chapel subject of Dr. Francis Casselman, pastor of the Middle River, Md., Board of National Missions Church, next Monday.

Drs. Dunn and Frantz and Dr. Charles Spotts, of F&M, will make up the faculty of the annual school of religion, to open here next Tuesday.

Next Wednesday, the Seminary Choir will sing in concert in St. John's Church, Orwigsburg.

Fres. and Mrs. Meek will entertain the Middler Class next Thursday.

Dr. Howard Fox, Gettysburg, has been asked to be guest preacher at the Worship Convocation in the chapel from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Tuesday, April 17.

Seniors will visit the Schaff Building, Philadelphia, on April 19th.

THE WINNAH!!!!

Peace reigns within the troubled breast of our Art Editor. His child is no longer nameless. Dr. Englert's winning punch-line "The winnah, and still champeen - the Lord!" has given our puzzling cartoon a legal monicker. We take this opportunity to rejoice with Ken and Dr. Englert.