A STUDY OF THE THEORIES OF
HOMILETICS OF THE AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH

Thesis for the Degree of Ph. D.
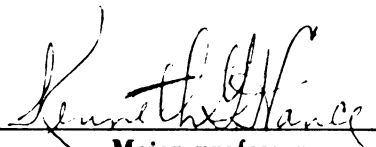MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
JOHN C. McCOLLISTER
1969

This is to certify that the

thesis entitled

A STUDY OF THE THEORIES OF HOMILETICS

OF THE AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH

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ABSTRACT

A STUDY OF THE THEORIES OF HOMILETICS OF THE
AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH

By

John C. McCollister

In his first letter to the Church in Corinth, St.
Paul referred to "the foolishness of preaching." To this
body of young Christians, Paul explained that while
preaching may be deemed "foolishness" by others, to the
Church it is the prescribed method of communicating the
gospel. Consequently, for nearly two thousand years,
the primary goal of the Christian Church has been to
tell the story about the Lord, Jesus Christ, through
preaching.

However, although the command has been given to
the Church to preach the gospel, no instruction was given
as to how this is to be done. As a result, the study of
theories of preaching (homiletics) has produced a variety
of opinions as to the most effective ways by which to
communicate the good news.

The homiletical theories considered in this study
are those presented through the three seminaries of the
American Lutheran Church. These theories are reported

as a result of: (1) interviews with the professors of homiletics at the three seminaries, (2) the material found in the basic textbooks of the courses, (3) the lecture notes of the professors, and (4) the direct association of the writer with the programs.

A comparison is made of these theories with those presented through the writings of the six most influential homiletical theorists of today as revealed through the study conducted by Daniel E. Weiss.[1] These theories are reported along the lines of the constituents of homiletics known as "Invention," "Arrangement," "Style," "Memory," and "Delivery."

Evaluation of these theories is made through: (1) a survey of the three seminary graduating classes of 1961, (2) a survey of the three seminary graduating classes of 1969, and (3) the opinions of the writer.

Suggestions for the future of homiletical instruction are proposed as a result of: (1) a survey of the three seminary graduating classes of 1961, (2) a survey of the three seminary graduating classes of 1969, (3) the opinions of the three professors of homiletics at the seminaries, and (4) the opinions of the writer.

The following conclusions are noted:

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[1]Daniel Edwin Weiss, "Conceptions of 'Arrangement' in American Protestant Homiletical Theory" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Dept. of Speech, Michigan State University, 1964).

1. The three seminaries of the American Lutheran Church offer the same basic approach to homiletical theory, although each seminary stresses different methods on occasion.

2. The theories of the American Lutheran Church vary somewhat from those promoted by the six homiletical theorists used for comparison.

3. There is general agreement among the 1961 and 1969 graduating classes and the writer as to the strengths and weaknesses of the homiletical theories of the American Lutheran Church.

4. There is general agreement among the 1961 and 1969 graduating classes, the professors of homiletics, and the writer regarding the suggestions for the future of homiletical instruction in the American Lutheran Church.

A STUDY OF THE THEORIES OF HOMILETICS OF THE

AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH

By

John C. McCollister

A THESIS

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"Hinduism lives by ritual and
social organization, Buddhism
by meditation, Confucianism by
a code of manners; but Christianity
by 'the foolishness of preaching.'"

Paul Scherer
from: For We Have This Treasure

This thesis is written in honor of
Dr. Ronald M. Hals for his continual
inspiration in scholarship, preaching,
and the Christian life.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this project is to study the homiletical theories of the American Lutheran Church via description, interpretation, analysis, and evaluation of the instruction in homiletics at the three seminaries of the Church. This study deals with the theories of homiletics in terms of the following five constituents of preaching: "Invention," "Arrangement," "Style," "Memory," and "Delivery." This study concerns itself with the classes in homiletics, with the men who serve as professors of homiletics at these institutions, and with the 1961 and 1969 graduating classes of the three seminaries.

Throughout this study answers are sought to the following questions:

1. What is the history of the development of homiletical theories within the three seminaries of the American Lutheran Church? Note: There is no intention to trace the history of the American Lutheran Church and of its seminaries; books on this subject are available.

2. According to their writings and oral state-
   ments via interviews, what are the homi-
   letical theories of the professors of
   homiletics of the three seminaries of the
   American Lutheran Church with respect to the
   five constituents of homiletics known as
   "Invention," "Arrangement," "Style,"
   "Memory," and "Delivery"?

3. In the seminary classrooms, what homiletical
   theories are taught regarding the five consti-
   tuents of homiletics? Note: this includes
   a study of the primary textbooks used in
   class.

4. With respect to the five elements of homi-
   letics, what is recommended:

   A. Regarding "Invention"?
       1) What is said about the preacher as a
          person? Note: this includes the con-
          cepts of ethos and source credibility.
       2) What is said regarding the relationship
          between the audience and invention?
          Note: audience analysis is of concern
          here.
       3) What is said regarding the relationship
          between the occasion and invention?

4) What is the place of the text in the selection of the subject?

5) What is the place of the Liturgical Year in the choice of a text or subject?

6) What are the principles of analysis of the subject?

7) What kinds of developmental materials are advocated? Is scripture alone endorsed? If not, what other materials are used?

B. Regarding "Arrangement"?

1) What is the preferred plan of organizing a sermon?

2) Does the text dictate the organization of a sermon?

3) What is the place of the reading of the text within the sermon organization?

4) What is the proper use of the introduction and conclusion?

C. Regarding "Style"?

1) What biblical translations are endorsed for preaching?

2) In terms of such labels as "formal" or "informal" what type of style is recommended? What is the "tone" of the language advocated?

3) What is the place of humor in the pulpit?

4) What is said concerning the relationship of the occasion and style?

5) What is the relationship of audience analysis and style?

6) Are there any comments on the language of the introduction and conclusion?

D. Regarding "Memory"?

1) What is said in terms of "word memory," "outline memory," and/or "thought memory"?

2) Are "sermon rehearsals" advocated? If so, to what degree?

E. Regarding "Delivery"?

1) What is recommended concerning the place of manuscripts in preaching?

2) What is taken into the pulpit?

3) What kinds of delivery are advocated? e.g., memorized, extemporaneous, reading of manuscripts, etc.

4) What are the canons of delivery advocated at the seminaries?

5) What is the relationship between audience analysis and delivery?

5. What tendencies, directions, or emphases may be found with respect to these homiletical theories?

6. How do these homiletical theories compare with those of selected American Protestant homiletical theorists? (Note: a description of the theorists appears later in this section).

7. In the light of these comparisons, what elements of uniqueness appear in the theories of the American Lutheran Church?

8. Therefore, what specific contributions to homiletical theory become evident? In terms of uniqueness, what other contributions through emphasis are evident?

9. What reasons can be advocated to explain the emphases in American Lutheran Church homiletical theory and its elements of uniqueness in relation to the homiletical theorists mentioned before?

10. What evaluations of the homiletical theory are made by:

    A. The professors of homiletics at the three seminaries?

B. The 1961 graduates of the three seminaries

    1) What judgments do these graduates have regarding the theories of homiletics?

    2) Do these graduates feel inclined to put these theories into practice?

C. The 1969 graduates of the three seminaries

    1) What judgments do these graduates have regarding the theories of homiletics?

    2) Do these graduates feel inclined to put these theories into practice?

11. In terms of the body of homiletical theory derived from the homiletical theorists mentioned before, the comments of the graduating classes, and the judgments of the writer, what are the strengths and weaknesses of the homiletical theory of the American Lutheran Church?

Within the scope of this study, certain hypotheses are tested.

1. Through observation, it appears that:

A. The three seminaries of the Church offer the same basic approach to the theory of homiletics although each seminary may stress different methods on occasion.

B. The Liturgical Year has much to say in terms of what is preached on a given Sunday.

2. It appears probable that:

   A. The American Lutheran Church philosophy
      of homiletics has a specific "combination
      of ingredients" (such as promotion of
      textual preaching alone, the subscription
      to the themes of the Liturgical Year, etc.)
      which sets it apart from those advocated
      by other denominations.

   B. The theories of the American Lutheran
      Church will vary somewhat from those pro-
      moted through the texts of the American
      Protestant homiletical theorists men-
      tioned before.

   C. There is general agreement among the
      professors of homiletics, the graduates of
      the seminaries, and the writer regarding
      the strengths and weaknesses of the homi-
      letical theories of the American Lutheran
      Church.

   D. The students and graduates of the seminary
      program do not always put into practice
      that which was taught to them in the semi-
      nary (especially when it comes to "textual"
      preaching vs. "topical" or "problem-centered"
      sermons).

3. It appears that the results of this study will
    produce certain critical evaluations of the
    American Lutheran Church homiletical theory
    such as:

    A. The American Lutheran Church theories of
        homiletics as presented by the professors
        of homiletics through their classes at the
        three seminaries of the church offer to
        the students a solid background and
        philosophy of preaching.

    B. The insistence of the American Lutheran
        Church that every sermon must be "textual"
        and its rejection of the so-called "topical"
        or "problem-centered" sermon is a limitation
        as to what can be done in preaching.

Definition of Terms

The Church.--The American Lutheran Church (A. L. C.)
the formation of which took place in 1960. Per the
parochial report of January 1, 1968, the Church consists
of 4,906 congregations served by 5,869 pastors. Con-
firmed membership is 1,750,740 and baptized membership
is 2,576,027. The American Lutheran Church is the third
largest Lutheran body within the United States.

The Seminaries.--Three seminaries are the property
of the American Lutheran Church:

A. Evangelical Theological Seminary, Columbus, Ohio (E. L. T. S.)

B. Luther Theological Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota

C. Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa

Professors of Homiletics.--A. L. Halvorson, (Luther); W. A. Poovey (Wartburg); S. D. Schneider (E. L. T. S.)

Invention.--That constituent of homiletics concerned with the finding and analyzing of the materials of the sermon; it embodies such elements as: purposes and kinds of speeches, topics (subject matter), finding the modes of persuasion, analysis of the audience, preparation of the discourse in terms of basic methodology, and the types of sermons involved (i.e., textual, topical, problem-centered, etc.).

Arrangement.--That constituent of homiletics concerned with the arrangement of materials; it embodies such elements as: the plan of the sermon in the large, and the specific parts of the sermon (i.e., the outline).

Style.--That constituent of homiletics concerned with matters of language, with the phrasing of the selected and arranged materials; it embodies word choice and word composition with a particular emphasis upon the theology implied by the choice of words.

Memory.--That constituent of homiletics concerned with the storing up in the mind of principles, bodies of factual material, lines of thought, and phrases which will be ready for use in a sermon; it embodies thought memory and word memory. The suggested use of a manuscript, outline, or lack of both is of special interest in this study.

Delivery.--That constituent of homiletics concerned with oral and visible expression; it embodies those elements concerned with the actual preaching of the sermon.

Limitations Imposed

This study is concerned with the theories of preaching within the American Lutheran Church as reflected by the courses in homiletics at the three seminaries and by the professors who instruct in these classes. Some additional information (primarily centered in evaluation) is supplied by the 1961 and 1969 graduates of the seminaries. This study is concerned with the practice of preaching only as far as the reports by the graduates indicate the amount of application of the homiletical theories taught in the seminaries. Although a more involved study of the practice of preaching within the American Lutheran Church might prove profitable, the results probably would not be of enough significance in the light of the goals

of this study--which are to determine the nature and the value of the theories of homiletics.

Justification of Project

Intrinsic Merit

1. To the writer and to other members of the clergy of the American Lutheran Church the gathering together of the separate materials along with the description, interpretation, analysis, and evaluation of the homiletical theories of the Church would be of value in enabling us to know where this denomination "stands" in this area and in providing a means for current evaluation and aids to future development of the homiletical program of the Church.

2. The American Lutheran Church seminary administrators and professors as well as other leaders of the American Lutheran Church responsible for the training of preachers will benefit from this body of material in that it will provide a basis for evaluation of present materials and programs and a similar basis for possible improvement of the programs.

3. To the students and clergymen of other denomi-
   nations, this study will provide in readily
   available form a comparison to other studies
   of homiletical works, lectureships on preach-
   ing, etc.

4. In addition to the values listed above, there
   are values in making a study of a theory of
   homiletics in order to provide further bases
   for comparisons among homiletical theorists
   and the principles and methods which they
   espouse (especially if someone were to pursue
   a study of the practice of preaching in the
   American Lutheran Church).

5. There is an additional value in studying an
   aspect of the work of a denomination which has
   a significant and long history, has nearly
   three million members and six thousand active
   clergymen, and has been deemed worthy of study
   within the context of scholarly research and
   writing. As support for this claim, the writer
   refers to the acceptance by Yale University of
   the doctoral dissertation by Fred W. Meuser
   entitled, "The Formation of the American
   Lutheran Church."

Distinctiveness

By the listing of Knower and Auer and according to
the Board of Theological Education of the American
Lutheran Church, no such study has been attempted or
is contemplated by anyone else.

Materials and Sources

Used in this study are:

1. The homiletical theories of the professors of
   homiletics as reflected by their writings and
   by oral statements derived from interviews.

2. A report of the contents of the courses in
   homiletics at the three seminaries of the
   Church.

3. The results of questionnaires sent to the
   seminary graduates of 1961 and 1969.

4. The textbooks written by the six most prominent
   American Protestant homiletical theorists of
   today (according to a survey by Daniel Weiss):[1]

   A. Blackwood, Andrew, The Preparation of
      Sermons (Abingdon)

   B. Davis, Henry Grady, Design for Preaching
      (Muhlenberg)

_____

[1]Daniel Edwin Weiss, "Conceptions of 'Arrangement'
in American Protestant Homiletical Theory" (unpublished
Ph.D. dissertation, Dept. of Speech, Michigan State Uni-
versity, 1964).

C. Jones, Ilion T., _Principles and Practice of Preaching_ (Abingdon)

D. Kennedy, Gerald H., _His Word Through Preaching_ (Harper)

E. Luccock, Halford E., _In the Minister's Workshop_ (Abingdon)

F. Scherer, Paul Ehrman, _For We Have This Treasure_ (Harper)

5. The primary textbooks used in the classes of homiletics at the three seminaries of the Church.

6. Various source books and historical data which offer the basis for a history of the homiletics programs at the three seminaries of the Church.

Method of Research

The method of data gathering and interpretation is as follows:

1. The writer sent a letter to each of the three seminaries of the Church in which he informed them of his proposed topic, and asked for the assistance of the faculty in the gathering of material for this study. In this letter he also asked for an appointment of a specific time during which it would be convenient to interview the professors of homiletics at the institutions.

2. He read all of the available published works of the professors and recorded what each has written regarding the five elements of homiletics described before.

3. He sought from the seminary professors of homiletics a descriptive outline of the courses in homiletics which they teach. From these outlines a report was prepared concerning what is taught in each class in terms of the five elements of homiletics described before.

4. He asked each of the professors to report what textbooks are used in his course and to what extent they are used in the instruction of the students.

5. He sent to the professors of homiletics the results of his findings concerning their theories of homiletics as reflected by their writings, by their course outlines, and by the material found in the textbooks used in their classes. These findings were listed under the headings of the five constituents of homiletics described before. A note accompanied this report stating that these findings would be discussed at a forthcoming meeting.

6. In a similar manner, he prepared a synthesis
   of the theories of homiletics presented through
   the six American Protestant homiletical texts
   mentioned before as to the five constituents
   of homiletics.
7. He compared the apparent theories of homi-
   letics of the American Lutheran Church with
   those set forth by the six homiletical texts
   and made note of the similarities and/or
   differences.
8. He visited each seminary and discussed at
   length with each of the professors of homi-
   letics the following questions:
   A. Is what has been reported through my
      recent findings a true reflection of your
      theories of homiletics? If not, where is
      it wrong or incomplete?
   B. Why do you differ in your approach to
      preaching from those theories presented
      by the six homiletical texts mentioned in
      the Weiss study?
   C. What specific approaches do you use in
      class to promote your homiletical theories?
   D. Have you altered any of your theories of
      homiletics since 1960? If so, why?

E. Do you have any suggestions for the future development of homiletics within the American Lutheran Church?

9. After acquiring from the seminaries a list of the names and addresses of the seminary graduates of 1961 and 1969, the writer sent to them questionnaires in which the following questions were asked:

A. From your recollection, what were some of the strengths of the seminary program in homiletics? What were some of the weaknesses?

B. To what degree do you apply what you were taught in the seminary classroom? Note: of primary emphasis in this direction was the application (or lack of such) of the "textual" form of preaching vs. the "topical" or "problem-centered" approach to homiletics with the inevitable practices which stem from the use or non-use of the textual form of preaching.

C. Do you have any suggestions for the future development of homiletics within the American Lutheran Church?

10. The materials derived from the research have been organized as follows:

A. A description of the theories of homi-
   letics of the American Lutheran Church
   in terms of the five constituents of
   homiletics as derived from:
   1) The writings of the professors of
      homiletics.
   2) The textbooks used in the classes in
      homiletics.
   3) The descriptive outline of the courses
      in homiletics.
   4) Oral statements derived from interviews
      with the professors.
   5) The results of the questionnaires sent
      to the 1961 and 1969 seminary graduates.
B. A side-by-side comparison of these theories
   with those presented by the six leading
   American Protestant homiletical theorists
   mentioned before.
C. An analysis of the theories of homiletics
   of the American Lutheran Church as a result
   of comments by the professors of homiletics.
D. An evaluation of these theories resulting
   from:
   1) Opinions of the graduates surveyed via
      the questionnaires.
   2) Opinions of the writer.

E. Suggestions for the future development of

homiletics within the American Lutheran

Church resulting from:

1) Opinions of the professors.

2) Opinions of the graduates surveyed

with the questionnaires.

3) Opinions of the writer.

Method of Report

Chapter I--Homiletical Instruction at the Semi-naries of the American Lutheran Church.

Chapter II--Homiletical Instruction Regarding "Invention."

Chapter III--Homiletical Instruction Regrading "Arrangement."

Chapter IV--Homiletical Instruction Regarding "Style."

Chapter V--Homiletical Instruction Regarding "Memory."

Chapter VI--Homiletical Instruction Regarding "Delivery."

Chapter VII--Evaluation of the Homiletical Theories of the American Lutheran Church.

Chapter VIII--Suggestions for the Future.

OUTLINE FOR CHAPTER I

HOMILETICAL INSTRUCTION AT THE SEMINARIES

OF THE AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH

CHAPTER I

HOMILETICAL INSTRUCTION AT THE SEMINARIES

OF THE AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH

The Purpose

The purpose of this chapter is to present the history of homiletical instruction at the three seminaries of the American Lutheran Church, and to show the various philosophies of homiletics that have developed within each seminary.

It is the belief of the writer that the purposes for which the seminaries were established and the different philosophies of homiletics associated with the seminaries over many years have a direct bearing upon the current program of homiletics at each institution.

Evangelical Lutheran Theological Seminary, Columbus, Ohio

The Evangelical Lutheran Theological Seminary of Columbus, Ohio, has associated with it a long and distinguished history. The seminary was the first Lutheran seminary founded west of the Allegheny Mountains.[1]

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[1] C. V. Sheatsley, History of the First Lutheran Seminary of the West 1830-1890 (Columbus, Ohio: Lutheran Book Concern, n.d.), p. 8.

Although the present student body of 235 and faculty

of 16 reflect a sizable school, the seminary records a

humble beginning.

> The Theological Seminary of the Evangelical
> Lutheran Joint Synod of Ohio was established by
> resolution of synod in convention assembled in
> Zanesville, Ohio, in the spring of 1830 and was
> opened on the 15th of October of the same year
> in Canton, Ohio, with a teaching force of one
> man and an enrollment of six students.[1]

The seminary was established to instruct candidates

for the ministry "in the solid knowledge of the contents

of the Holy Scriptures."[2] At the founding of the semi-

nary, therefore, very few courses in practical theology

were offered. Homiletics or anything relating to the

theories of preaching was not included in the plan of

instruction.[3]

Specific courses in homiletics began in 1911 with

the calling to the faculty of the Rev. R. C. H. Lenski, an

enthusiastic promotor of homiletical instruction who be-

lieved that "preaching is the highest function of the

ministry."[4] His primary source of instruction was the

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[1]George H. Shodde, Historical Sketch of the Theo-
logical Seminary of the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod
of Ohio and Other States (Columbus, Ohio: Joint Synod of
Ohio, 1905), p. 3.

[2]Interview with Dr. Herbert C. Leupold, Professor
of Old Testament at E. L. T. S., February 24, 1969.

[3]C. A. Frank, History of the German Lutheran Semi-
nary of the German Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Ohio
and Other States Located at Columbus, Ohio (Columbus,
Ohio: Ohio Synodical Printing House, 1880), p. 4.

[4]Unpublished notes supplied by Leonard L. Ludwig,

text in German, _Homiletik_, by Christian Palmer.[1] Later,

Dr. Lenski's theories of preaching were published in his

own book, _The Sermon: Its Homiletical Construction_.

Dr. Lenski taught homiletics until 1927, when he

was succeeded by Jacob A. Dell, who served as Professor

of Homiletics from 1927 until his death in 1953. Dr.

Dell followed the same basic philosophies of preaching as

did Dr. Lenski while following the latter's textbook

rather rigidly.[2]

From 1954 to the present, Stanley D. Schneider has

served at the helm of the courses in homiletics. Following

in the patterns established by Lenski and Dell, Dr. Schneider

has authored a homiletical guideline "in the tradition which

has long been established at the Evangelical Lutheran Theo-

logical Seminary at Columbus, Ohio"[3] under the title, _As_

One Who Speaks for God. This work serves as the basic

textbook for Schneider's class in homiletical theory.

In short, the history of homiletical instruction at

Evangelical Lutheran Theological Seminary had its roots in

Professor of Church History at Evangelical Lutheran Theo-
logical Seminary, dated 1915.

[1]Christian Palmer, _Homiletik_ (Stuttgart: T. F.
Steinkopf, 1850).

[2]Interview with Dr. Stanley D. Schneider, Professor
of Homiletics, E. L. T. S., February 25, 1969.

[3]Stanley D. Schneider, _As One Who Speaks for God_
(Minneapolis, Minnesota: Augsburg Publishing House,
1965), p. v.

the philosophies of Christian Palmer's Homiletik published
in 1850. Although revised, edited, and adapted, the basic
theories of this book have served as the primary source of
material for the lectures and writings of Drs. Lenski, Dell,
and Schneider. Consequently, it has formed the basic
theories of homiletics at the seminary from 1911 until the
present day.

Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa

In 1842, a seminary was established in Saginaw,
Michigan by members of the Iowa Synod of the Lutheran
Church who "stressed teaching, administration of the
sacraments, and liturgy over preaching."[1] The seminary
personnel numbered five students and one professor.[2]
In an attempt to move the Lutheran Church westward, the
synod moved the school to its present location in Dubuque,
Iowa, and became known as Wartburg, named after the castle
in which Martin Luther sought refuge during the heat of
the Reformation. Today, the seminary shows an enrollment
of 165 students and 13 full-time faculty.

From existing records, it may be assumed that the
theories of preaching were treated as "by-products" for
each student as he completed his course of study.

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[1] Gerhard Sigmund Ottersberg, "The Evangelical Lutheran
Synod of Iowa and Other States 1854-1904" (unpublished Ph.D.
dissertation, Dept. of History, University of Nebraska,
1949), pp. 3-4.

[2] Ibid., p. 14.

Although no formal classes in homiletics were offered, as early as 1862, students had to meet certain requirements prior to ordination among which were "written examinations . . . on large topics of dogmatics and pastoral theology, and a sermon to be delivered before the next pastoral conference."[1]

The earliest record of homiletical instruction, which dates back to 1872, lists a class taught by Sigmund Fritschel on April 11 of that year on a homiletical treatise of 1 Peter 2:11-20.[2] Two years later, a series of classes in homiletics was included as a regular part of the curriculum. Each week, two classes were taught in Homiletiche Uebungen (Homiletical Practice).[3]

In 1897, Professor W. L. Proehl assumed the task of teaching the classes in homiletics. In that same year he offered a record of his homiletical theories through his unpublished booklet entitled "Homiletik." In these notes he strongly advocated a thorough grounding in the holy scriptures and a firm adherence to textual preaching.[4]

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[1]Ibid., p. 88.

[2]Unpublished notes of Sigmund Fritchel, dated 1872.

[3]Unpublished notes of Sigmund Fritchel, dated 1874.

[4]W. L. Proehl, "Homiletik" (unpublished manuscript, dated 1897), pp. 109-114.

Undoubtedly, the most influential force in the history of homiletical instruction at Wartburg was Dr. J. Michael Reu, who taught at the seminary from 1900 until 1943. Professor Reu who published his theories of preaching in the book Homiletics,[1] has had more influence than has any other in the development of homiletical theory at Wartburg.[2] Further reference will be made to Dr. Reu's book throughout this thesis.

Dr. Reu taught homiletics until the addition to the faculty of the Rev. Samuel F. Salzmann in 1934. Professor Salzmann taught for twenty-four years, following in the traditions established by J. Michael Reu.[3]

In 1958, the seminary called the Rev. W. A. Poovey as Professor of Homiletics. He currently holds this position.

Professor Poovey's primary emphasis in teaching is to encourage the preacher to have both the text and the congregation in mind while writing the sermon.[4] No basic textbook is used in his classes.

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[1]M. Reu, Homiletics (Chicago, Illinois: Wartburg Publishing House, 1924).

[2]Interview with the Rev. Robert C. Wiederanders, Archivist of the American Lutheran Church, Dubuque, Iowa, March 17, 1969.

[3]Ibid.

[4]Interview with the Rev. W. A. Poovey, Professor of Homiletics at Wartburg Theological Seminary, March 17, 1969.

Luther Theological Seminary,
St. Paul, Minnesota

The largest of the three seminaries of the American Lutheran Church is Luther Theological Seminary located in St. Paul, Minnesota. The school has an enrollment of 565 students and 28 full-time professors.

The history of Luther Seminary is distinguished from that of the other two seminaries of the Church in two points. In the first place, it is the result of a series of mergers; second, it was designed to serve a specific group of American Lutherans, namely those who were of Norwegian background. This latter aim was emphasized in early catalogs which stated, "The aim of this institution is to prepare clergymen and missionaries that are willing and able to break the Bread of Life for our countrymen in America. . . ."[1]

The seminary has its historical roots in several divinity schools established by Norwegian Lutheran immigrants. Luther Seminary was the theological school of one of the uniting bodies, The Evangelical Lutheran Church (earlier known as the Norwegian Lutheran Church in America), which formed the present American Lutheran Church in 1961.

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[1]Catalog of the United Church Seminary, Minneapolis, Minnesota 1894-1895 (Minneapolis, Minnesota: United Church Seminary, 1895), p. 9.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church had been formed in
1917 as the result of the union of three Norwegian-American
Lutheran Church bodies. In that year three seminaries
were also united: Luther Seminary, St. Paul, of the
Norwegian Synod; Red Wing Seminary, Red Wing, Minnesota,
belonging to Hauge's Synod; and the United Church Semi-
nary, St. Paul, of the United Norwegian Lutheran Church.
The merged school continued the name of Luther Seminary,
the oldest of the three (founded in 1876), and occupied
the site of the United Church Seminary in St. Paul.[1]

In 1963 the Lutheran Free Church merged with the
American Lutheran Church, and its theological schools did
likewise. In the fall of that year Augsburg Seminary of
Minneapolis united with Luther Seminary at the latter's
location. Augsburg Seminary, the first divinity school
established by Norwegian Lutheran immigrants in America,
was founded in 1869 at Marshall, Wisconsin, but was moved
to Minneapolis three years later.[2]

Luther Seminary, which had traditionally observed
1866 as its date of founding, suddenly found itself seven
years older as a result of its merger with Augsburg.

Unlike the position taken by the other two semi-
naries, the place of homiletics in the curriculum was not

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[1]*Luther Theological Seminary Review*, Vol. VII,
No. 1 (St. Paul, Minnesota: Luther Theological Seminary,
1968), p. 42.

[2]*Ibid.*, p. 42.

an afterthought, but served as a definite part of its program from its beginning.[1] However, no one man was called to teach homiletics until 1959. Prior to this date, those responsible for the program were men whose primary emphasis was New Testament Theology, Dogmatics, or some other theological discipline.

Among those who instructed in the theories of preaching were Rev. F. A. Schmidt (1895-1930), Rev. Thaddaeus F. Guillixon (1930-1943), and Dr. Herman A. Preus (1943-1959). The first man called specifically for homiletical instruction is the one currently in charge of the program, Dr. Arndt L. Halvorson, who began his teaching career at Luther Seminary in 1959.

As a result of the urging of Dr. Halvorson, the Rev. Lowell O. Erdahl has been called to the staff to assist in the teaching of homiletical theory, and Mr. John E. Hilbert has been charged with the responsibility of aiding the students in the theory and practice of basic speech.

Dr. Halvorson's main emphasis in teaching is his appeal for the urgent need to bring the gospel to men in a meaningful manner.[2] His basic textbook is Donald Miller's, The Way to Biblical Preaching.[3]

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[1]Interview with Dr. Arndt L. Halvorson, Professor of Homiletics at Luther Seminary, March 18, 1969.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Donald G. Miller, The Way to Biblical Preaching (Nashville, Tennessee: Abingdon Press, 1957).

OUTLINE FOR CHAPTER II

HOMILETICAL THEORIES REGARDING "INVENTION"

   I. The Purposes of the Chapter

  II. Definition of "Invention"

 III. <u>Ethos</u>

       A. According to the Seminary Professors

       B. According to the Homiletical Theorists

       C. Summary

  IV. The Purpose of the Sermon

       A. According to the Seminary Professors

       B. According to the Homiletical Theorists

       C. Summary

   V. The Main Source of the Sermon

       A. According to the Seminary Professors

       B. According to the Homiletical Theorists

       C. Summary

  VI. Invention and the Audience

       A. According to the Seminary Professors

       B. According to the Homiletical Theorists

       C. Summary

VII.   The Place and Influence of the Liturgical Year

      A. According to the Seminary Professors

      B. According to the Homiletical Theorists

      C. Summary

VIII.   The Preparation of Sermons

      A. According to the Seminary Professors

      B. According to the Homiletical Theorists

      C. Summary

IX.   The Materials Used in the Sermon

      A. According to the Seminary Professors

      B. According to the Homiletical Theorists

      C. Summary

X.   Writing Out the Sermon

      A. According to the Seminary Professors

      B. According to the Homiletical Theorists

      C. Summary

XI.   Summary of the Chapter

CHAPTER II

HOMILETICAL THEORIES REGARDING "INVENTION"

The Purpose

The purposes of this chapter are the following:

(1) to describe the homiletical theories regarding the constituent of homiletics known as "Invention" as taught by the three seminaries of the American Lutheran Church, (2) to describe the theories about "Invention" as presented through the writings of the six textbooks authored by the most influential homiletical theorists of today as revealed through the study conducted by Daniel E. Weiss,[1] and (3) to compare the sets of theories as to the similarities and differences in teaching or emphasis.

Definition

By the term "Invention" the writer refers to that constituent of homiletics concerned with the finding and analyzing of the materials of the sermon; for purposes of this study it embodies such elements as _ethos_, the purpose of the sermon, the main source of the sermon (i.e.,

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[1]Daniel Edwin Weiss, "Conceptions of 'Arrangement' in American Protestant Homiletical Theory" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Dept. of Speech, Michigan State University, 1964).

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a text, topic, or problem), audience analysis, the place
and influence of the liturgical year, sermon preparation,
the "proof" materials used in the sermon, and the record-
ing of the sermon on paper. (Other elements of "Invention"
such as pathos are not explicitly treated by the seminary
professors and the corresponding six homiletical theor-
ists.)[1]

Ethos

One of the more important elements in the theory of
rhetoric and public address is that of ethos. This phe-
nomenon has been deemed worthy of consideration by theorists
from the days of Aristotle until now.

By the term "ethos," the writer refers to the image
presented by the person in the opinion of those with whom
he comes in contact. This image results in various degrees
of source credibility as the man addresses an audience.

As ethos is prominent in the studies of rhetoric and
public address, it is also noteworthy as it applies to the
preacher and his congregation. The image of the pastor is
of vital importance to the success of his preaching.

In this study, the ethos of the pastor will be con-
sidered in the light of his image resulting from his daily
life and in terms of that which comes to the audience while
he is in the pulpit.

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[1]While the term "Invention" in homiletics often
refers only to extra-biblical material used in a sermon,
the writer uses the term to encompass all of the materials
in a sermon.

The image which a pastor provides through his daily life is regarded by the three professors of homiletics of the American Lutheran Church as an important element, and they admonish their students to be aware of this vital fact. For example, the Rev. W. A. Poovey, Professor of Homiletics at Wartburg Seminary, states:

> The pastor dare never to forget that he is the "image of God" in the eyes of many in the community. At least, he is the primary representative of his church. Therefore, what he does in his daily life is a direct reflection upon him and all for which he stands.[1]

If a student were to use the excuse that his private life is his own business, Poovey would remind him that in spite of all his efforts to the contrary, the image which the pastor creates through his daily life cannot help but be transferred into the pulpit on Sunday morning.[2]

Stanley D. Schneider, homiletics instructor at Evangelical Lutheran Theological Seminary, offers similar advice to his students:

> Be careful that you do not offend those of your congregation and of the community unnecessarily. To be sure, we all have Christian freedom under the gospel, but we should remember that we have also a duty toward those whom we serve not to stand in the way of the advancement of the gospel.[3]

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[1]Poovey, interview.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Schneider, interview.

He illustrates his argument by pointing to the example of
a pastor who will go out of his way to frequent the local
pub in order to show others that he is "one of the boys."
"However, the pastor is not just 'one of the boys,'" says
Schneider, "he is a leader who must have the respect of
the community in order to best serve his church."[1]

"In a strong sense of the word," he says, "the
pastor should recall Martin Luther's admonition for all
Christians to be 'Little Christs' to those who see us.
Pastors, especially, should heed this advice."[2]

Schneider also feels that the _ethos_ of the pastor
is affected by what he does in his daily life to such a
degree that often this is the one point that separates
the effective preacher from the one who fails to move his
audience. He tells his class:

> The medium is the message. If the preacher is 'a
> fake,' I don't care what he says. If the congre-
> gation knows the preacher to be a fraud, he could
> have beautifully printed sermons, but their
> credibility would be limited by what he is. On
> the other hand, the preacher may have poor themes,
> outlines, etc., yet be regarded by his congregation
> as a fine preacher. Now, what is the point? It is,
> simply stated, that where I may look at the sermon
> from the point of view of a textbook, they may look
> at it from the point of view which says, 'That is
> our pastor speaking to us.' The ethos of the pastor
> makes all the difference in the world.[3]

Luther Seminary's Arndt Halvorson is in total agree-
ment with his two colleagues. He believes it may well be

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[1]_Ibid_.   [2]_Ibid_.   [3]_Ibid_.

that the effect of the preacher is in direct proportion to
his source credibility in the eyes of the congregation.[1]

Pertaining to the element of _ethos_ resulting from the
daily life of the minister, how do the teachings of the
homiletics professors of the American Lutheran Church
resemble those of the six theorists used for comparison
in this study?[2]

Halford E. Luccock of Yale Divinity School states,
"Far more important than what the minister can do about
his sermons is what he can do about himself."[3] He explains
further in the same book:

> If the preacher is not the source of his message
> but a channel for God, then he himself is a primary
> matter--his inner life; the flavor, the color, the
> fire, the music, that make him himself; his capacity
> to absorb spiritual truth and experience, which will
> determine his capacity to transmit them.[4]

"A sermon," says Luccock, "is never a 'put-up job' if
it is a real communication of life through life."[5]

Ilion T. Jones counsels that "the people of the com-
munity look to him [the pastor] to set an example of godly

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[1]Ibid.

[2]Throughout this study, certain elements of homi-
letical theory are not treated by all of the six theorists
used for comparison. The writer, therefore, mentions only
those theorists who comment on the particular element
under discussion.

[3]Halford E. Luccock, _In the Minister's Workshop_
(Nashville, Tennessee: Abingdon Press, 1944), p. 16.

[4]Ibid., p. 16.   [5]Ibid., p. 17.

living, to be a norm of conduct, to embody the morals he

enjoins upon them."[1] He elaborates further:

> A preacher may think he does all his preaching
> from the pulpit, but in the eyes of the people he is
> preaching everywhere he goes by everything he says
> and does. The sermons one preaches by his life
> will either annul or help make fruitful the sermons
> he preaches from the pulpit. 'Unless you preach
> everywhere you go,' said St. Francis, 'there is no
> use to go anywhere to preach.'[2]

Jones says, himself, as does Stanley Schneider, that

the pastor should never forget his responsibility to the

community:

> Now and then we hear of a minister who tries
> to make himself popular by coming down to the level
> of the people and living by their standards. To
> prove he is a man's man, a hail fellow well met,
> he decides to participate in their wordly pleasures
> --in moderation, to be sure. Men and women of his
> community may not tell him so, but among themselves
> they express pity for him, disgust with him, even
> hold him in derision.[3]

What the pastor does with his daily life affects his

ethos in another dimension. Bishop Gerald Kennedy speaks

on this issue with boldness:

> Too many preachers are content with second rate
> performances. There is no time clock in the church
> and no prearranged schedule for a man to follow. He
> must be his own master, and only his conscience can
> give him guidance in the amount of work he does or
> the number of hours he puts into his task. It is a
> sad truth that many men in the ministry do not call
> very much, do not read very much, and could not

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[1]Ilion T. Jones, Principles and Practice of Preaching
(Nashville, Tennessee: Abingdon Press, 1956), p. 58.

[2]Ibid., p. 59.

[3]Ibid., p. 58.

hold a job where a responsible amount of efficiency
was demanded. All of this is apparent when they
preach, and it is absurd to think that such as these
can carry any authority for men who in their own
business know the meaning of long and hard en-
deavor.[1]

Concerning the ethos of the pastor in his daily life,
both the professors of the seminaries of the American
Lutheran Church and the homiletical theorists agree that
it is of vital importance that the minister conduct him-
self in a manner worthy of the office which he holds, for
the impression he leaves during the week speaks as loudly
as do the words uttered from the pulpit on Sunday morning.

The ethos of the pastor is also affected by what he
projects from the pulpit. What he says and how he appears
are of importance.

How does a man reflect a positive ethos from the
pulpit? There is no better place to begin than with him-
self. Arndt Halvorson reminds his students, "Never be
ashamed to preach that for which you have been called."[2]
The pastor is called to deliver a message centered in the
Word of God. Therefore, he should be confident in his
proclamation of the good news.[3]

W. A. Poovey feels the same way; he believes that
the only real preaching today is done by the parish

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[1]Gerald Kennedy, His Word Through Preaching (New
York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1947), p. 85.

[2]Halvorson, interview.

[3]Ibid.

pastor. The pastor is the one who knows and cares about his people. It is he who can best apply the Word of God to those whom he knows and loves.[1]

Stanley Schneider believes that a favorable ethos from the pulpit can be realized if the congregation is convinced that the pastor knows his material. "The sermon is not the result of writing in the pastor's study," he said, "but is the result of his over-all experience with the Word of God."[2]

At times the difference between a favorable ethos and one that is not so favorable centers in small items. For example, the personal appearance of the minister may have much to do with the reception of his message. On this point all three professors of the American Lutheran Church seminaries agree. Halvorson: "He should be as concerned about his appearance in the pulpit as he would be about his appearance at a formal dinner."[3] Schneider: "A man cannot have a polished sermon if his attire testifies to the contrary."[4] Poovey: "A good course in grooming may be the best course in effective preaching that could be offered for many of today's preachers."[5]

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[1] Poovey, interview.

[2] Schneider, interview.

[3] Halvorson, interview.

[4] Schneider, interview.

[5] Poovey, interview.

As in the case involving the _ethos_ of the minister
resulting from his daily life, the six homiletical theorists
support the teachings of the homiletic professors of the
American Lutheran Church, who feel that in order to have
a positive _ethos_, the minister must always maintain his
role as a pastor while in the pulpit. He can never be
just a preacher. This is why Paul Scherer writes that
"even to be a preacher, he must be a pastor."[1]

Andrew W. Blackwood makes an interesting observation
at this point:

> Sermons with a pastoral emphasis seldom make
> church folk angry. Over in Liverpool, John Watson
> (Ian Maclaren) became known as a pastor second to
> none, and as a preacher of helpful sermons. He
> excelled in strengthening and cherring men and
> women who had begun to feel jaded, wondering
> whether life could be worth what it cost. In the
> words of a friend who heard him twice every Lord's
> Day, 'Our minister always puts heart into you for
> the coming week.' Indeed, he kept on bringing
> people hope and cheer long after he had gone home
> to God.[2]

Of the homiletical theorists used for comparison in
this study, Blackwood is perhaps the most outspoken critic
of the personal appearance of the minister as he appears
in the pulpit. In _The Preparation of Sermons_ he writes:

> Before you go into the sanctuary, think about
> your personal appearance. Conform with parish

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[1]Paul E. Scherer, _For We Have This Treasure_ (New
York: Harper & Brothers, 1944), p. 27.

[2]Andrew Watterson Blackwood, _The Preparation of
Sermons_ (Nashville, Tennessee: Abingdon Press, 1948),
p. 33.

custom about wearing a robe or a clerical collar,
perhaps both. Put on black shoes, polished with
care for and aft; if shirt and collar appear at
all, let each look whiter than snow. Let all your
garments come to the sanctuary "unspotted from the
world." With face neatly shaved and hair closely
trimmed, show everyone that you love the holiness
of beauty.[1]

In the same book he further states:

A minister ought to enter the pulpit with a
rested body and a fund of physical reserves. So
get the brunt of the week's toil out of the way
before you draw near to the Lord's Day. Avoid
anything strenuous on Friday evening and all the
next day, especially on Saturday night. In short,
plan to enter the pulpit with all the fullness of
your Christian manhood.[2]

Blackwood adds that the facial expression of the

preacher tells much of the story and assists in creating

a positive ethos:

Throughout the sermon let the expression on
your face accord with what you are saying. As a
rule be sure to look happy; the people have troubles
enough of their own without sharing yours. Look and
act like a bearer of good news.[3]

Blackwood admonishes his readers that "the effect of

the sermon will depend in part on your posture, especially

at first. Since you represent the King of kings, stand

on both feet and stand erect. . . ."[4]

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[1] Ibid., pp. 206-207.

[2] Ibid., p. 205.

[3] Ibid., p. 208.

[4] Ibid., p. 207.

Finally, the same author is certain that the voice
of the minister should be one that lends itself to a
favorable ethos:

> When people come to the sanctuary, they wish
> to hear a voice clear as a bell, sweet as a harp,
> strong as an organ, and full of overtones like
> those in Mendelssohn's Song Without Words. Accord-
> ing to students of church history, no minister
> without an unusual voice has ever attained first
> rank as a preacher to the common people.[1]

Concerning the minister's ethos while in the pulpit,
H. Grady Davis strikes another note in the same chord:

> The best young man who finds himself in a
> pulpit, the man most fit to preach far from wishing
> to stand alone, to speak for himself only, to be a
> law to himself, knows that he stands within the
> one fellowship whose head is Christ, that he is
> called to deliver a message he did not concoct,
> to proclaim, in whatever way it can best be spoken
> to his age, the same gospel which has in all ages
> recalled men from death and brought the church to
> life. The more intelligent and honest he is, the
> more keenly he feels this way. He stands where he
> would not dare to stand unless he had been put
> there, where it would be sacrilege to speak if he
> had not been given a message to speak.[2]

A positive ethos enjoyed by the preacher while in
the pulpit on Sunday mornings is most important to a
favorable reception of his message by his congregation.
On this theory, both the professors of homiletics of the
American Lutheran Church and the authors used for compari-
son are in total agreement.

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[1] Ibid., p. 208.

[2] Henry Grady Davis, Design for Preaching (Phila-
delphia, Pennsylvania: Fortress Press, 1958), p. 46.

The Purpose of the Sermon

What is it that separates the sermon from any other speech? Perhaps the answer lies in the actual purpose of the address. Stanley Schneider is quite blunt as he insists, "Unless a message reveals the Lord, it is not to be considered a sermon."[1]

In his basic classroom textbook, Schneider follows the four sermon classifications of Theodore Parker Ferris: prophetic, didactic, evangelical, and therapeutic.[2] Yet all four classifications help the preacher in implementing the purpose of a sermon, that is, in revealing something about the nature of Almighty God. Schneider writes:

> In a sermon which could be classified as prophetic an effort is made to reveal something of God as the Lord of history.
> In a sermon which could be classified as didactic an effort is made to reveal something of God as the teacher of how to live.
> In a sermon which could be classified as evangelical an effort is made to reveal something of God as Savior, to show something of the love of God, and to proclaim the lengths to which that love goes to reach men.
> In a sermon which could be classified as therapeutic an effort is made to reveal something of God who heals all diseases.[3]

Wartburg's Poovey is more concerned with a response as the primary purpose of preaching:

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[1]Schneider, interview.

[2]Theodore Parker Ferris, Go Tell the People (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951).

[3]Stanley D. Schneider, As One Who Speaks for God (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Augsburg Publishing House, 1965), pp. 77-78.

Every sermon has to have a reason for being pre-
sented. Every preacher must ask himself, "Why am
I preaching this sermon? What kind of response do
I want to get?" If he does not expect a response
then he ought not to preach the sermon. He should
have in mind some change in the mind and heart of
the individual.[1]

Arndt Halvorson openly wishes for any type of re-

sponse that would give some indication that the sermon

has reached the audience:

Sometimes I wish I were a Pentecostal preacher and
could lead an altar call, for it is here that I
could see some sort of response. Any response is
better than that which is seen when people merely
sit and listen. Often I am tempted to invite the
audience to argue with me at the close of the ser-
mon, for I am positive that they do not agree with
everything that was said. What I am saying is that
every sermon should have as its goal a response--
any response.[2]

Halvorson believes, too, that the preacher should

proclaim a message aimed at "slaying dragons." This "dragon"

may be the sin of pride, envy, hatred, or any other of the

vices of the day. "Everytime a preacher goes into the pul-

pit, he has the duty to ask himself, 'What dragon shall I

slay today?'"[3]

The question may be asked, "Doesn't this, then, make

the pastor a controversial figure?" Halvorson answers

that question in this manner:

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[1]Poovey, interview.

[2]Halvorson, interview.

[3]Ibid.

Everyone who is read or listened to is controversial.
If you are not controversial, you are not saying
anything important. Properly understood the gospel
itself is controversial today just as it was during
the time of the Christ. Often it is the gospel
which is an assult on our assumptions and our
prejudices.[1]

Like Stanley Schneider, Halvorson insists that what-

ever the occasion or whoever the preacher, in every sermon

Christ must be proclaimed:

The preacher must center his message upon Christ.
If he does not do this, he is liable to preach
pure morality and produce sermons which could be
easily delivered in Jewish synogogues as well as
in Christian pulpits.[2]

To preach Christ, to reveal some aspect of God, to

aim for some sort of verdict on the part of the listener,

these are the purposes of preaching as advocated by the

seminaries of the American Lutheran Church. General

agreement with these ideals is held by five of the six

homiletical theorists. Paul Scherer, for example, wrote:

Hinduism lives by ritual and social organization,
Buddhism by meditation, Confucianism by a code of
manners; but Christianity lives by "the foolishiness
of preaching" (I Corinthians 1:21). So has it always
been. The most creative and critical ages of its
history--the ages of Paul and the apostles of
Ambrose and Augustine, of Urban, of Luther and
Calvin and Wesley and Brooks--all of these have
been the great ages of Christian preaching. Not
just life or action or example or personal influence,
but preaching. And so shall it ever be until the
truth, which is God's "inescapable claim" upon us,
ceases to speak with human lips; until the love of
Christ ceases to be the endless peril and the never-
failing refuge of the human soul.[3]

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[1] Ibid.   [2] Ibid.

[3] Scherer, op. cit., p. 18.

"We must assume," he continues, "that all preaching worthy of the name is to have its center and focus in Jesus himself, that figure of the past who is our present Lord."[1]

"Preaching is always proclamation," writes H. Grady Davis. In the language of the New Testament:

> . . . a man preaches "the gospel," the good news. He preaches "the gospel of God," or preaches "the gospel of Christ." He preaches "Christ crucified," or "Christ raised from the dead," or "Christ as the one ordained of God to be judge of the living and the dead," or "Christ in you the hope of glory," or he preaches simply, "Christ." He preaches "the acceptable year of the Lord," preaches "release to the captives," preaches "repentance and forgiveness of sins." He preaches "this gospel."[2]

Gerald Kennedy seems to agree:

> The Christian preacher is the proclaimer of an occurrence which was nothing less than God breaking into the processes of life to reveal himself supremely in a person. If the pulpit loses its power, it is always when it loses its sense of God proclaiming this event, through a man to men.[3]

He elaborates further:

> Our Christian preaching is not the reciting of a long list of sins and a long list of ethical duties. It is the production of a vision of the King who came once, comes now, and will come continually. . . .[4]

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[1] Ibid., p. 94.

[2] Davis, op. cit., pp. 107-108.

[3] Kennedy, op. cit., p. 8.

[4] Ibid., p. 30.

Kennedy adds to this thought by stating that "preaching is confronting man's tragic inadequacy with God's redeeming grace."[1]

Ilion Jones sounds the same theme of redemption:

> Preaching may be, should be, and at best will be a redemptive deed. A sermon is not a lecture, an essay, a theological dissertation, a discussion of social, political, and world affairs or instruction in morals, but God's saving approach to the souls of men and women.[2]

Jones, like Halvorson, believes that preachers should strive for individual verdicts:

> Genuine preachers who have the yearning heart do not speak to please literary critics but to please God. They do not try to entertain their hearers but to bring them face to face with God. They are never content with glittering generalities. They have a personal message which they deliver personally--man to man, heart to heart. They are out for individual verdicts.[3]

Andrew Blackwood is much akin to Phillips Brooks when it comes to the purpose of a sermon as he speaks of it as "divine truth through personality or the truth of God voiced by a chosen personality to meet human needs."[4]

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[1]_Ibid._, p. 8.

[2]Jones, _op. cit._, p. 19.

[3]_Ibid._, pp. 173-174.

[4]Blackwood, _op. cit._, p. 13.

The Main Source of the Sermon

Until now, there appears to be unity of thought in terms of homiletical theories on the part of the three seminaries and in view of the writings in the six books used for comparison. However, a wide variety of theories concerning the main source of the sermon places the professors into different camps.

The main source refers to that with which the preacher begins to compose his sermon. For some, the only method of preaching is the so-called "textual" approach, which involves the use of a section of scripture that serves as the basis for the message; this portion of the Bible is referred to as "the text."

Not all homiletical theorists would advocate textual preaching. They would prefer the "topical" or "problem-centered" approach to homiletical theory.

While this type of preaching often takes on many forms, the basic premise is that the preacher centers his writing on a particular issue or problem. Although scripture may be woven throughout the message and may even provide the solution to the problem at hand, the sermon is not based solely upon one section of God's Word.

On the issue concerning the main thought of the sermon, the three seminary professors are divided. Dr. Schneider is the most outspoken of the three in favor of textual preaching only. He describes a text as "a section

of scripture, comprising a unity of thought, on which the sermon is based, and out of which it grows."[1]

When recently asked, "Do you ever endorse the use of anything other than textual preaching?", his answer was a definite, "No!" Then followed the obvious question, "No exceptions?", to which he responded:

> To every rule there is an exception. However, if other than textual preaching is done, there must be good reason and the congregation should know why you are changing the norm. The use of topical or problem-centered sermons should be not only the exception, but the rare exception.[2]

In his textbook, Schneider gives a defense for his position:

> A text helps to hold the preacher to the scriptures. A good text properly used will hold the sermon to the scriptures and to a specific part of the scriptures. It is reasonable to assume that using texts will help to prevent subjective preaching, that is, a mere recital of the experiences of the preacher.[3]

He told about one seminary student who violated this principle and disturbed his professor:

> One of our students preached a sermon about his views on Viet-Nam, and he began by saying, "My text for today is a trip that I took to Washington, D. C." This approach probably would not be accepted in any American Lutheran Church congregation. When the preacher says, "My text is . . .," they expect to hear a section of scripture read, for that is the authority, not the preacher. As taught here in our seminary, the authority is always the written word.[4]

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[1]Schneider, op. cit., p. 55.

[2]Schneider, interview.

[3]Schneider, op. cit., p. 55.

[4]Schneider, interview.

In his classrooms, Professor Schneider quotes Donald Miller's advocacy of textual preaching:

> Textual preaching is an act wherein the living truth of some portion of Holy Scripture, understood in the light of solid exegetical and historical study and made a living reality to the preacher by the Holy Spirit, comes alive to the hearer as he is confronted by God in Christ through the Holy Spirit in judgment and redemption.[1]

Not only is Schneider a strong endorser of textual preaching, he wages a campaign against topical or problem-centered sermons. In As One Who Speaks for God, he takes the opportunity to make known his feelings on this matter:

> Topical preaching means selecting a certain topic and then seeking to find what the Bible has to say on this topic. Topical preaching is difficult because most persons, including some preachers, do not know the Bible well enough to be able to select and develop the wealth of available material. Many parts of scripture may be dealt with in a shallow way with nothing developed to any depth. Furthermore, topical preaching is usually determined by some "relevant" topic, and it is doubtful whether most preachers, particularly beginning ones, are sufficiently well informed to be able to know what topics to select for preaching purposes.[2]

An an added emphasis to his arguments, Schneider reminds us that the doctrine of the means of grace comes into the picture:

> This gets into the area referred to as "the means of grace." In other words, through what does God reveal himself? We would say, "through the Holy Scriptures." Therefore, if we believe this to be true, then we endorse this doctrine by preaching textual sermons. Any other kind of preaching has the danger of missing the truth of the doctrine.[3]

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[1]Miller, op. cit., p. 26.

[2]Schneider, op. cit., pp. 53-54.

[3]Schneider, interview.

Luther Seminary's Arndt Halvorson is not so limited
to textual preaching alone:

> I advocate textual preaching to the extent that
> the sermon is created by the text. This does not
> mean that I talk merely on the text and nothing
> else, but that the thrust of the sermon is not
> something the preacher invented, but is something
> that came to him as he wrestled with the text.[1]

The textbook for Halvorson's homiletics courses
reflects this emphasis:

> From the standpoint of the witness of both the
> early church and the Reformation church, many modern
> pulpit efforts, although often brilliant and humanly
> satisfying, would have been considered an imperti-
> nence--the intrusion of the word of a mere man into
> a situation where God alone has the right to speak.[2]

On this basis, Dr. Halvorson instructs his students
to begin with a text rather than with a problem. This gives
the student some concrete subject matter. He feels that
when an artist goes to school, he is asked to paint an
apple. Or, when a man takes a course in creative writing
he may be asked to describe an old maid. In other words,
creativity is not out in the blue, but is resident in con-
crete subject matter. "The same is true in preaching.
Unless the preacher has a concrete point of reference, he
is wasting the time of those in his audience."[3]

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[1]Halvorson, interview.

[2]Miller, op. cit., p. 28.

[3]Halvorson, interview.

Does Dr. Halvorson, then, advocate topical or
problem-centered preaching?

> I will advocate topical or problem-centered preach-
> ing inasmuch as the key to the solution for the
> problem is centered in Holy Scripture. That is the
> job of the preacher. It could well be that the
> problem may be settled by a psychiatrist or a
> sociologist, but that is not the function of the
> parish pastor. He is to relate the Word of God to
> the problem or the topic at hand.[1]

Although he is sympathetic toward the use of problem-
centered sermons, Professor Halvorson cites a danger that
accompanies such preaching. "If a man begins with a problem
in lieu of a text, he may find himself preaching the law
and not the gospel. The sermon, then, is filled with
scolding and exhortation."[2]

If problem-centered preaching is conducted, Halvorson
declares that above everything else, the message must be
centered in the Holy Scriptures.

W. A. Poovey shows strong tendencies to join the
ranks of those searching for a variety of methods on which
to base a sermon. He is certainly not like Stanley
Schneider when it comes to advocating textual preaching
alone. Professor Poovey feels that the major purpose of
a sermon "is not to expound on a text; that is a Sunday
school lesson."[3]

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[1]Ibid.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Poovey, interview.

Does the Rev. Mr. Poovey, then, encourage problem-
centered preaching over textual preaching? "I do not feel
that these are necessarily opposites," he declared. "When
a person works through a text he comes up with a theme;
that essentially becomes a topic. Therefore, we can have
a blending of the two."[1]

Poovey, however, reminds his students that there is
no place where the preacher can abuse the truth so much
as when he misuses the text. "Therefore, much emphasis
in my classroom is given toward the importance of using
the text aright if the student decides to engage in
textual preaching," he says.[2]

Were the three professors of homiletics placed into
specific camps for purposes of identity, Schneider would
lead those who promoted textual preaching only; Halvorson
is more liberal as he endorses the values of topical or
problem-centered preaching; Poovey attempts to blend the
two philosophies.

Of the six homiletical theorists used for comparison
in this study, only Paul Scherer agrees with Stanley
Schneider's insistence that every sermon should be textual.
Throughout his book, Dr. Scherer presumes that the sermon
is textual. He never refers to topical or problem-
centered sermons--almost as if such sermons never existed.

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[1]Ibid.   [2]Ibid.

Gerald Kennedy has written in a similar spirit to

Halvorson's philosophy that the message must be centered

in the Holy Scriptures:

> [I] cannot help but feel that the best way to
> learn how to preach with power is to step oneself
> into the scriptures. The Bible is the great source
> book of the Gospel and in it there is revealed this
> dramatic nature.[1]

He further asserts that "modern preaching needs the

authority of the Bible in it, and we can do nothing better

than to return to Biblical preaching."[2]

H. Grady Davis also confirms Halvorson's approach:

> If the idea is truly Christian, it need not be
> rejected. Though it cannot be found in the Bible
> in so many words, it may still be biblical, and may
> honestly be preached with biblical sanction. If
> there is not a text that really expresses this idea,
> we cannot honestly take a text for it. We shall
> have to use it as an independent topic. But if it
> is a gospel thought, we can draw each step of its
> development from a faithful exegesis of some text
> of Scripture. The result will be that we use
> several texts rather than one.
> A topical sermon with this kind of development
> can be quite as biblical as one drawn entirely from
> a single text, far more biblical than one which
> draws only the idea from the text, however legiti-
> mately, and then develops the thought independently,
> without further use of Scripture.[3]

At the same time, in <u>Design for Preaching</u>, Davis

supports Poovey's attempt to blend textual and topical

preaching. "A sermon," says Davis, "is not necessarily

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[1] Kennedy, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 39.

[2] <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 97.

[3] Davis, <u>op. cit.</u>, pp. 48-49.

unbiblical because it has no text, nor biblical because it uses one."[1]

In the same publication, the author further justifies his position:

> Let us assume that a man feels bound to adjust his preaching faithfully to the biblical message. That is not brought about by the mere act of taking a text for every sermon. The crucial question is not whether the sermon has a text attached to it, but whether the Scripture is the source of the sermon or not. Many a sermon uses a text but is not derived from a text. The text of such a sermon is not its source; it is only a re-source, a tool used in preaching the sermon—used for psychological or literary effect. Every sermon that has a text falls roughly into one or the other of these classes: it uses the text as source, or only as resource.[2]

Of the homiletical theorists who comment on the main source of the sermon, Andrew Blackwood and Ilion Jones are the most outspoken in their opinions favoring topical or problem-centered preaching as over against textual sermons.

While Blackwood encourages the preacher to use all types of sermons, he favors the topical approach. According to him, the advantages of such a method include:

1. It allows the minister to discuss any subject he thinks needful.
2. It allows breadth of treatment.
3. It encourages a man to seek unity.
4. It enables a man to keep moving towards the goal of the sermon.
5. It often brings out a man's literary gifts.[3]

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[1] Ibid., p. 33.

[2] Ibid., p. 47.

[3] Blackwood, op. cit., pp. 104-106.

In *The Preparation of Sermons*, he lists his objections
to textual preaching:

1. The textual method does not lend itself to
   every passage that calls for a sermon.
2. A text may contain more ideas than a minister
   can make clear and luminous in twenty-five
   minutes.
3. This method often leads to artificial sermons.
4. Textual sermons often lack human interest.
5. Textual sermons may not prove helpful.[1]

Ilion Jones follows the same philosophy when he
urges his readers: "Use textual sermons sparingly."[2]

While Schneider of Evangelical Lutheran Theological
Seminary finds support only from Paul Scherer (and that
from inference), both Halvorson and Poovey are endorsed by
the remaining homiletical theorists. It would appear,
then, that Wartburg and Luther Seminaries are more in-
clined to be in the main stream of contemporary homiletics.
Evangelical Lutheran Theological Seminary is content with
maintaining an allegiance to textual preaching alone.

The importance of the theories surrounding the main
source of the sermon is realized when it is understood
that the preacher's understanding of this concept will
have a direct bearing on the development of his entire
sermon.

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[1]*Ibid*., pp. 58-61.

[2]Jones, *op. cit*., p. 82.

Invention and the Audience

What role does the audience play in the invention of the sermon? How much emphasis is given to the text as compared to the concern for the audience on Sunday morning? Can the preacher center his attention on both effectively? If so, how can this become a reality?

Stanley Schneider tells his students that as they are reading the text for Sunday morning, they should always think of the audience to which they are going to preach their sermons. Since our purpose is to reveal the Lord, the student should ask, "What aspect of the Lord am I going to reveal?" Then the problem faces us as to how we are going to translate this truth of the text into language that is best understood by that particular congregation.[1]

In order best to implement this advice, Schneider asks his students in the classes dealing with sermon outlines to indicate the congregation for which the sermon outline is intended. "No one," says Schneider, "can truly write a sermon apart from a congregation."[2]

The effective pastor will always know his audience. On this issue, Professor Schneider makes an interesting point:

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[1]Schneider, interview.

[2]Ibid.

The preacher may sometimes feel that his
congregation does not understand him. At such
times he may well ask himself how well he under-
stands them and what efforts he has made to do so
in the performance of his pastoral duties. Has he
called on them in their homes, at their places of
work, in the hospitals, at the schools? Has he
found a way of knowing where his congregation is
other than at the usual hour of worship?[1]

By such a gesture, the pastor is saying in bold
language that he is concerned about the people; such a
concern cannot help but make him more aware of the per-
sonality of his weekly audience, thereby making him a
more effective preacher.

Halvorson of Luther suspects that our preachers do
not know enough about their audiences and do not under-
stand their culture enough. He believes that we are
still immigrants in a sense. While we are getting
"Americanized," the trend has been that the American
Lutheran Church has been guilty of trying to translate
German and Norwegian theology into English. "I do not
feel," he said, "that we lose anything by separating
ourselves from Germany and Norway and asking ourselves
questions as to how we can make this gospel relevant to
today's society."[2]

Professor Halvorson realizes the complex job facing
the preacher each week when it comes to audience analysis:

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[1]Schneider, op. cit., p. 36.

[2]Halvorson, interview.

> Always write the sermon with specific people in
> mind, but remember, you must always have to reach
> a wide cross-section of people with varied back-
> grounds in terms of education, economics, political
> leanings, and-so-forth.[1]

In the same vein, Wartburg's Poovey says, "It is
vital that the pastor understand his people and that the
people understand him."[2] This is the kind of thinking
that led Poovey to confess: "I generally conceive of the
sermon as having two centers: the first is Holy Scrip-
ture; the second is the congregation."[3] He feels that
any sermon that becomes too text-centered can do an in-
justice to the text. He concludes that there has to be
a balance between these two.[4] For this reason, Poovey
requires each of his students to indicate to him the type
of congregation for whom a sermon outline is written. His
view is similar to that of Stanley Schneider as he does not
feel that there is such a thing as a "general sermon" which
fits every congregation. Each sermon has a specific purpose
for a specific group of people. Consequently, Poovey feels
that the only true preaching which is done today is done by
the parish pastor who knows his people.[5]

The Rev. Mr. Poovey makes note of the fact that the
pastor has an excellent opportunity to know his congregation

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[1]Halvorson, interview.

[2]Poovey, interview.   [3]Ibid.

[4]Ibid.   [5]Ibid.

by making daily pastoral calls. "I am sorry to say," he admits, "that in most cases preachers do too much talking and not enough listening."[1] By listening to his people, Poovey feels that the pastor can better bring to life the Word of God to them.

All three seminary professors, then, realize the value of audience analysis, and stress various ways in which the pastor may know better those to whom he speaks on Sunday morning.

General agreement and support is witnessed through the writings of four of our six homiletical theorists used for comparison. Ilion Jones, for instance, agrees with Halvorson's promotion of a relevant gospel: "A sermon is composed for the people of the present generation."[2] Jones, therefore, urges the preacher to be aware of the world around him and of the problems peculiar to his own community. Through newspapers, radio, television, periodicals, etc., he can keep his "eyes and ears open to human need."[3]

Jones compares the aims of the speaker to those of a writer in following the same line of thought expressed by Dr. Schneider's view that no sermon can be written

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Jones, op. cit., p. 172.

[3] Ibid., p. 230.

apart from a congregation. Jones writes: "The writer's 'center of gravity' is the written or printed page. The speaker's center of gravity is the listeners out in front."[1] He says, too:

> When the people know a preacher is talking about what is going on in his soul, as well as about their souls, they will listen more eagerly to what he says.[2]

Jones also feels that a sermon should be composed for a mixed group of people.[3]

"To put it another way," writes Halford E. Luccock, "preaching to life situations is not preaching on a subject so much as it is preaching to an object."[4]

Luccock claims that the audience is so important in homiletical invention that he can endorse only two types of sermons: "One begins not with subjects but with persons in the situation which surrounds them; the other begins with an idea but arrives at persons as its destination."[5] "A sermon is like a brick," he goes on to say, "it fulfills its function only as it is placed in relationship, in a structure."[6]

Andrew Blackwood admired the manner in which Phillips Brooks wrote his sermons with the people in mind.

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[1]Ibid., p. 169.   [2]Ibid., p. 60.

[3]Ibid., p. 170.

[4]Luccock, op. cit., p. 52.

[5]Ibid., pp. 50-51.   [6]Ibid., p. 25.

The people of Brooks' congregation were known to him through his willingness to call on them on many occasions. In fact, the sermons themselves displayed that "the Boston pastor . . . wished to help the friends who filled the pews of Trinity Church."[1]

While the audience may be composed of various people all with different backgrounds and interests, Blackwood urges the minister to remember the purpose for which they have come to church. Therefore, "assume that everyone present desires to learn the will of God in order to become a better man or woman."[2]

Blackwood also stresses that preachers should adapt their preaching to include the younger people of their congregations. The urging of young people to attend worship is of vital importance to the future of the Church. He quotes the instance of a seminary professor who once asked his senior class: "How many of you attended morning worship regularly when you were six years old?" Out of the ninety men present almost everyone raised his hand.[3]

Paul Scherer emphatically points out:

> You are not, first of all, in the pulpit or at your desk as a specialist in religion, showing people how to do things, charting their course for them, pointing the way they should go. You are there as

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[1]Blackwood, op. cit., p. 13.

[2]Ibid., p. 207.

[3]Ibid., p. 237.

a religious personality, bearing witness to Christ and to the power of his presence and his peace. Write with that understanding.[1]

Perhaps Scherer best summarizes the concepts of audience analysis shared by the three seminary professors and the homiletical theorists when he recalls the truth that if the preacher knew his people as God knows them, or even as they know themselves, he "might even stand in awe of them for all there is about them that is incalcuably great."[2]

The Place and Influence of the Liturgical Year

By the structure of its worship, the Lutheran Church is a liturgical church, i.e., it has as the basis for Sunday morning worship the Liturgy. Like the Roman Catholic Mass, the Liturgy includes the ritual that has served the Church for centuries. Every congregation that identifies with the Lutheran Church is compelled to follow the prescribed Liturgy. Not only does this mean that a certain order of worship is followed, but also that designated lessons are read and a basic theme for the day is announced. Although the sermons are written by the pastor of the congregation, he is somewhat bound to preach on a text or theme which is in harmony with the particular Sunday of the season.

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[1]Scherer, op. cit., p. 181.

[2]Ibid., pp. 47-48.

Since he is insistent upon the use of textual preaching, it is natural for Schneider of Evangelical Lutheran Theological Seminary to center his thinking along the lines of textual preaching and the Liturgical Year:

> For the regular preaching to a congregation, it is advisable to use what are known as pericope texts. The word pericope is now a rarely used word, found only in unabridged dictionaries. It refers to a section of writing cut out of a larger writing. When used in the church it refers to a section of the Bible which has been selected for reading in the church when the people are assembled for worship, and it was originally intended that the sermon should be based on these sections. The ancient or historic pericope texts include lessons from the Gospels and the Epistles. Lessons from the Old Testament have been selected and are in-cluded in The Service Book and Hymnal of the Lutheran Church. The selection of these lessons is based on the church year, and while there are some parts of the Bible which are not read in the use of pericopes, nonetheless they do cover every major aspect of the revelation of God which comes to us through the Scriptures.[1]

Schneider strongly feels that a wise preacher uses the choice already made for him in the pericope system:

> Such a choice saves the preacher time. He isn't under the weekly pressure of trying to decide what text he should use from one week to the next. His choice has been made for him, and it is a choice that has been tested by time and by use in the church.
> Such a choice enables the preacher to build continuity into his preaching. He can know a year in advance what his text is going to be on a given Sunday or festival day.
> Such a choice helps to assure a fine balance and proportion in preaching. All of the important doctrinal and ethical contents are more likely

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[1]Schneider, op. cit., p. 56.

to be included in pericope selections than in
personal choices.

Such a choice makes the preacher work. Some
of the pericope texts are more difficult. These
texts make the preacher work harder. This helps
him to grow, and such growth will be reflected in
the results of his work.

Such a choice will in some instances, parti-
cularly the major festivals, cause the preacher
to use the same text year after year. This, too,
causes a man to work harder and enables him to
gain new insights into that which God does and the
implications of God's actions in human life.[1]

Schneider believes that in preaching through the

guidelines of the Liturgical Year, the preacher is serving

to build up the faith of the people of his parish to equip

them for the work of ministry. "In order to do this, they

need a well-rounded diet of the Word of God. Through the

Liturgical Year, they are in a position to get this."[2]

"Preaching on the Liturgical Year prevents a man

from 'grinding his own ax,'" he continues. "It helps to

prevent the minister from developing in himself and in his

people a tendency toward heresy."[3] By "heresy" Professor

Schneider does not refer to false doctrine, but rather to

the expression of one aspect of the truth with the result

that the whole truth is distorted by this over-emphasis

on this one part of it. "Dessert is all-right in a meal,"

he said, "but you don't serve all pie."[4]

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[1] Ibid., p. 57.

[2] Schneider, interview.   [3] Ibid.

[4] Ibid.

Poovey agrees that all preachers tend to "ride hobbies." The Liturgical Year helps to force the preacher to give a varied diet as far as sermons are concerned.[1]

"One of the problems of the ministry," he goes on to say, "is the matter of time. If the preacher has to spend too much time in looking for a text, he doesn't have much time to develop his sermon."[2]

According to Professors Schneider and Poovey, there are two great values in following the rhythm of the Liturgical Year.

The first value is that it provides a general pattern for a year's preaching. It thus saves the minister from the hand-to-mouth procedure that is involved in finding something to preach about without having any guidelines or overall plan. With the Church Year in mind, he will always be coming upon material that he will recognize as useful in sermons to be delivered months ahead. Something that he reads during an August vacation will be seen to be appropriate to an Epiphany sermon in January.

A second asset in following the Liturgical Year is that it helps to insure comprehensiveness in the pulpit's message. It keeps the preacher from harping too much on one string. Like everybody else, he is always prone to ride certain hobbies, perhaps unconsciously. If, however,

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[1]Poovey, interview.

[2]Ibid.

he gives attention to the sequences of the calendar of the
Church Year, he will be more likely to maintain needful
variety and balance. He will even find himself preaching
on certain themes from which he might otherwise shy away.

Luther's Arndt Halvorson, on the other hand, feels
that no minister should feel slavishly bound to the de-
tails of the Liturgical Year:

> While I may recommend that the students follow the
> Liturgical Year for at least their first three
> years of preaching, this is merely for purposes
> of training. It is not, by any stretch of the
> imagination, a hard and fast rule. The Norwegian
> Church is much more flexible than those of German
> heritage.[1]

Of the six homiletical theorists used for comparison,
only two endorse preaching on the themes of the Liturgical
Year. One is Andrew Blackwood, who, although not a
Lutheran, feels that if a minister serves God as a Lutheran,
"he does well to follow the Church Year as a guide in preach-
ing."[2]

Blackwood says that the wise use of the Christian
Year in his opinion encourages a minister to preach from
the Bible. "Instead of living from hand to mouth he can
plan the work of the pulpit so as to secure continuity and
progress."[3] He elaborates with a pointed illustration

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[1]Halvorson, interview.

[2]Blackwood, op. cit., p. 259.

[3]Ibid., p. 260.

about how younger ministers have watched throngs of men
and women, boys and girls, on their way to the Roman
Catholic Mass each Lord's Day. In the scope of the Mass,
the people have possibly listened to a Latin service with
a five minute sermon. "Why do they attend week after
week?" he asks. The answer: "Largely because of the
service apart from the sermon."[1]

Blackwood urges his readers to use the course of
the Liturgical Year in order to establish a forward-
looking plan and to avoid playing "hop, skip, and jump"
in preaching schedules.[2]

Another reason for endorsing the use of the Liturgi-
cal Year according to Blackwood is that such a schedule
forces the preacher to concentrate on Christ instead of
himself:

> The use of the Christian Year in preaching
> tends to fix the hearer's attention on Christ.
> Sunday after Sunday, at least for six months, the
> man who attends church feels sure of coming face
> to face with truth or duty as it has to do with
> the Lord Jesus. Strange as it may seem, many
> a regular churchgoer reports that he seldom hears
> a sermon directly about Christ as Savior and Lord.
> Without intending to do so, the man in the pulpit
> may let causes and movements crowd out Christ and
> the Kingdom. If he discussed all the subjects out-
> siders keep suggesting he would have few opportuni-
> ties to say a good word for his Lord.[3]

The other of the homiletical theorists who support
the use of the Church Year is the Lutheran, Paul Scherer,
who wrote:

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[1]Ibid., p. 226.   [2]Ibid., p. 262.   [3]Ibid., p. 261.

> For almost twenty-five years now I have done
> most of my morning preaching on the pericopes . . . ,
> those selections of epistle and gospel worked out
> for all the Sundays of the church year with an eye
> to the whole round content of the Christian faith;
> and I have never felt them to be a hindrance or a
> slavery. It has been one of the most amazing facts
> of my experience to find opening through them one
> avenue after another, vista upon vista. Nothing
> else has so persuaded me that these familiar words
> of Scripture hold enshrined within them the in-
> exhaustible riches of God.[1]

As mentioned before, only Blackwood and Scherer

support the principle of following the guidelines of the

Liturgical Year. Although it is argument by absence, one

may well get the impression that either the other theorists

do not see the necessity of adoption of the Church Year

as a regular guide to preaching, or they feel that most

of their readers will be associated with the non-liturgical

denominations.

The Preparations of Sermons

It may well be said that the preparation of a sermon

has taken as long to develop as it has taken for the pastor

to reach his current age. Every sermon is an outgrowth of

a man's total experience with God and with others. In

this study, however, the word "preparation" will refer to

the actual work involved while gearing in on a specific

sermon for a specific Sunday. Although nothing as yet

has been finalized in terms of Sunday's message, the

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[1]Scherer, op. cit., p. 160.

conscientious minister will have begun his sermon preparation long before the first word is ever written.

According to the teachings of the three seminaries of the American Lutheran Church, the preparation of sermons involves three specific points:

1. Begin with prayer.

2. Plan for a specific goal.

3. Give it time to grow.

However, not all of the seminaries include each point in the programs of homiletical theory. Some of the professors feel that these items are understood before the student enrolls in class; others feel that one or two of these points are much more important than the others, thus they emphasize those which they deem necessary.

For example, only Stanley Schneider makes any reference to the commonplace suggestion that the student should begin with prayer. When the pastor thinks about the text and the congregation to which the sermon is to be preached, "he ought to pray both for the congregation and for the insight in relating the text to the congregation."[1]

In keeping with Schneider's advice, the student at Evangelical Lutheran Theological Seminary is told to practice this admonition by offering a prayer before composing his sermon outlines for homiletics class.[2]

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[1]Schneider, op. cit., p. 59.

[2]Schneider, interview.

The second step in sermon preparation is to plan for a specific goal. Arndt Halvorson of Luther urges his students to think always of one specific need of the congregation that will be explained or satisfied by the text or topic for the day. He asks his students to follow the advice written in the textbook by Donald Miller:

> The specific needs of individuals . . . may often best be met by preaching to those specific needs, and herein lies a great value of clarity of aim and preciseness of purpose in the making of sermons.
> Another value of this is its aid to the minister himself in the preparation of sermons. Clarity of purpose enables him to concentrate his toil on a specific end and thus to avoid wasting a good deal of time in sermon preparation. To know precisely what one is going to do is to bend every effort right from the start to the doing of that one thing.[1]

Professor Halvorson also cites Donald Miller's advice through his textbook: "Before gathering material for the sermon, ask yourself, 'Just why am I going to preach this sermon?'"[2]

Stanley Schneider warns that some may think that merely because they are following the prescribed lessons of the Liturgical Year their planning is done for them. Not necessarily so. The preacher should plan by specific outlines and key thoughts so that over the course of a ministry something happens to upbuild the congregation.[3]

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[1]Miller, op. cit., p. 122.   [2]Ibid., p. 112.

[3]Schneider, interview.

The pastor who plans for a specific goal using a
particular text has an added "plus" according to Schneider:

> He [the pastor] can take the text with him
> wherever he goes during his round of duties. Un-
> less the occasion calls for some specific Scripture
> reading from elsewhere in the Bible, he can use the
> text in his devotions with members of his parish as
> he calls on them during the week.[1]

The final step in sermon preparation is to give it
time to grow. "He should complete the sermon early enough,"
says the Rev. Poovey, "that the pastor has time enough to
rehearse it and enjoy the profits of what may be deemed as
a worthy 'period of incubation.'"[2]

How do the homiletical theorists react to these three
points of sermon preparation? Three of the six make obser-
vations at this point.

Jones agrees with Schneider's idea that prayer should
begin the task of preparation. "Ask God," he says, "to
make both the message and the messenger instruments of
his Spirit for the healing and redemption of souls."[3]

In Design for Preaching, H. Grady Davis feels that
this planning for a specific goal is valuable, but warns
that to be of any value, the goal must be an idea that
the pastor cares about and one that has "power to move
him."[4]

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[1]Schneider, op. cit., p. 59.

[2]Poovey, interview.

[3]Jones, op. cit., p. 135.

[4]Davis, op. cit., p. 58.

Paul Scherer comments on the advantage of the third point concerning the wisdom in allowing a sermon time to grow:

> I would encourage you to spend as much as an hour or two going over the passages provided you by the appointed lessons, or such as you have allotted yourself, letting them sink deeply into your thought, setting down some sudden flash of light from another facet of the truth you had never seen before, allowing sentence after sentence to lie quietly in your mind until it begins to speak.[1]

Later in the same book Scherer urges his readers never to read or study anything without paper and pen. One of the most valuable aids for the preacher can be a record of jottings resulting from the discovery of key thoughts or descriptive phrases which may be incorporated in later sermons. Scherer feels that he had lost a hundred sermons before following this practice. Although acknowledging that everyone must find his own system by which to accomplish this task, he urges the preacher to find his system and to stick to it. The preacher who uses such a method in planning ahead in his schedule of preaching will not be a slave to The Preacher's Manuel for themes and anecdotes or to the last issue of the Christian Century Pulpit.[2]

Like the three professors of homiletics, the theorists used for comparison who comment on the preparation of sermons are somewhat divided in their emphasis on the three points of sermon preparation. However, not one of the

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[1]Scherer, op. cit., p. 160.   [2]Ibid., pp. 150-151.

theorists records a negative reaction to the proposals
of the American Lutheran Church professors.

The Materials Used in the Sermon

What does the preacher use for the development of
the sermon? If it is true, as some believe, that the
world has not had an original thought since Plato, then
not many books or speeches have been written which could
genuinely be called "original." Especially is this true
in the discipline of biblical preaching. Since the goal
of the biblical sermon is not to "invent" new philosophies,
but to explain scriptural truths to those gathered for
that particular purpose on Sunday morning, the question
can be raised as to what sort of materials are used in the
sermon?

While it is true that some Lutheran seminaries within
the United States insist that no sermon should include
material not contained in the Bible, the three divinity
schools of the American Lutheran Church are convinced that
both biblical and "extra-biblical" material may be used.

Poovey of Wartburg is inclined to encourage biblical
materials as the basis for the sermon content. Because he
believes that the primary task of the preacher is to relate
the Word of God to his people and that the pastor is in
the best position to do this, he has the obligation to
familiarize his congregation as much as possible with the

Bible. "Not only does this aid the audience, but it might also get some preachers to study their Bibles a bit more."[1]

Dr. Schneider urges the use of outside material if it is familiar to the congregation. "After all," he said, "our Lord used things familiar to the people to illustrate his teachings."[2]

During the course of his ministry, Schneider noticed that while visiting the homes of his congregation, most of the people had subscribed to the Ladies' Home Journal. As a result, he, too, subscribed to the periodical for the purpose of gathering material that would be familiar to his congregation.

Although Luther's Arndt Halvorson will accept outside material, he does so only in that it aids in relating the truth of the Bible to the audience.

Andrew Blackwood is the only one of the six theorists who writes specifically about outside material. He encourages the preacher to reap the illustrative material from such sources as East River by Sholem Asch, or The Robe by Lloyd Douglas, or from biographies of famous people, or from current news sources such as the New York Times, Atlantic Monthly, or Harper's Magazine.[3]

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[1]Poovey, interview.

[2]Schneider, interview.

[3]Blackwood, op. cit., pp. 81-82.

Blackwood is inclined to believe that sermons without outside materials might be dull and meaningless:

> A sermon that consisted wholly of materials from the Book of books might lack human interest. As in everything else about the ministry today, a man has to keep his balance here. Many a young minister has tried to employ materials from almost every source except the Bible, and some older divines have ignored the ways in which God makes Himself known today. The path of wisdom lies between the two extremes. Why not take the warp of the sermon from Holy Scripture and the woof from life today, including books?[1]

On the subject of materials for the sermon, while the seminary professors may vary on emphasis, the main thrust seems to indicate a willingness on their part to maintain a solid biblical approach to preaching with outside material adding support; never should the outside material overshadow the message of the Bible. Andrew Blackwood, too, is in total agreement.

Writing Out the Sermon

Now that the minister has studied the text or topic for discussion, has gathered his material (both biblical and extra-biblical), and has answered the question: "Why am I going to preach this sermon?" he can begin to reap some fruits from his labors by writing the sermon in an organized manner. Yet the question remains: "How is he to write it?" He has a number of choices which range all the way from jotting a few words to writing out the text

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[1] Ibid., p. 77.

of the message in its entirety. On this point, what are the feelings of the professors of homiletics at the three American Lutheran Church seminaries?

Both Schneider of Evangelical Lutheran Theological Seminary and Luther's Halvorson encourage the practice of writing out the sermon from the first word of the introduction to the last "Amen" of the conclusion.

"Why shouldn't the minister write out his sermon?" asks Schneider. "In this manner he has a roadmap as to where he is going, and can see more clearly how he should arrive at his destination."[1]

Halvorson is inclined to believe that writing out the sermons at least once will give the minister some excellent practice in working with words.[2]

Poovey, while appreciating the discipline of writing out the sermon for the beginner, says, "I try to train the students on the basis that the manuscript soon disappears after a period of time."

The homiletical theorists who write on the matter (three in number) express support for the exercise of writing the complete manuscript. Both Ilion Jones and Andrew Blackwood take similar stands. Jones: "Write out the sermon in full at one sitting."[3] Blackwood: "The

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[1]Schneider, interview.

[2]Halvorson, interview.

[3]Jones, op. cit., p. 133.

wise young minister forms the habit of writing a sermon every week."[1]

Paul Scherer is more explicit:

> . . . let me say this again, this time with violence: I would not give a brass farthing, as a rule, for a preacher who does not write at least one sermon a week for the first ten or fifteen years of his ministry. It is a discipline that no man can afford to forego. To write only the first half and leave the second half to God as one preacher said was his habit, merely exposes you to the compliment that was paid him: "Sir," remarked his monitor, "I congratulate you indeed! Your half is unfailingly better than God's."[2]

Summary

While the constituent of homiletics known as "Invention" receives a variety of emphases by the three professors on whom this study centers, the major thrusts, however, appear to be similar in nature. Perhaps the most obvious difference of opinion is found in the area of textual preaching vs. topical preaching.

Concerning the six homiletical texts used for purposes of comparison, there seems to be general agreement except in the same category of the main source of the sermon involving textual preaching and the problem-centered approach.

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[1]Blackwood, op. cit., p. 174.

[2]Scherer, op. cit., p. 178.

OUTLINE FOR CHAPTER III

HOMILETICAL THEORIES REGARDING

"ARRANGEMENT"

I.   Purposes of the Chapter

II.   Definition of "Arrangement"

III. The Formulation of the Outline

      A.   According to the Seminary Professors

      B.   According to the Six Theorists

      C.   Summary

IV.   Working Toward One Thought

      A.   According to the Seminary Professors

      B.   According to the Six Theorists

      C.   Summary

V.   The Length of the Sermon

      A.   According to the Seminary Professors

      B.   According to the Six Theorists

      C.   Summary

VI.   The Place of the Text

      A.   According to the Seminary Professors

      B.   According to the Six Theorists

      C.   Summary

VII. The Sermon's Introduction

    A. According to the Seminary Professors

    B. According to the Six Theorists

    C. Summary

VIII. Announcing the Parts

    A. According to the Seminary Professors

    B. According to the Six Theorists

    C. Summary

IX. The Sermon's Conclusion

    A. According to the Seminary Professors

    B. According to the Six Theorists

    C. Summary

X. Summary of Section

CHAPTER III

HOMILETICAL THEORIES REGARDING

"ARRANGEMENT"

The Purpose

The purposes of this chapter are the following:
(1) to describe the homiletical theories regarding the
constituent of homiletics known as "Arrangement" as
taught by the three seminaries of the American Lutheran
Church, (2) to describe the theories about "Arrangement"
as presented through the writings of the six textbooks
authored by the most influential homiletical theorists
of today as revealed through the study conducted by
Daniel E. Weiss,[1] and (3) to compare the sets of theories
as to the similarities and differences in teaching or
emphasis.

Definition

In this study the term "Arrangement" refers to that
constituent of homiletics concerned with the placement of
materials; it embodies such elements as the plan of the
sermon, the specific parts of the sermon (i.e., outline),
and the placing of specific items such as the text.

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[1]Daniel Edwin Weiss, "Conceptions of 'Arrangement'
in American Protestant Homiletical Theory" (unpublished
Ph.D. dissertation, Dept. of Speech, Michigan State Uni-
versity, 1964).

The Formulation of the Outline

After the pastor has decided on the materials to be used in the sermon as described in the preceding chapter, he is now ready to organize his findings in a systematic manner. How should he organize his message? What is taught in this matter at the three seminaries of the American Lutheran Church? How are these teachings similar to or different from those promoted through the writings of the six homiletical theorists?

Dr. Schneider of Evangelical Lutheran Theological Seminary writes in his textbook about the preferable characteristics in formulating an outline, of which he says there are three:

1. Brevity--Brevity is achieved in formulating an outline when all the necessary words are there and no more than that.
2. Color--Every text has its own color, and, except for close parallel passages, no two texts have the same color. Color is attractive because it individualizes each sermon, makes it specific, differentiates one sermon from another. Color enables the preacher to avoid generalities and abstractions.
3. Rhythm and Beauty--Beauty of phrase is effective and capable of being remembered.[1]

To illustrate this point, Schneider gives an example of how the factors of brevity, color, rhythm, and beauty

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[1]Schneider, op. cit., p. 81. (Although such terms as "color," "rhythm," and "beauty" may be classified under the heading of "Style," the comments by Schneider are directed at the formulation of the sermon outline. Since this is the major stress, the writer has elected to include the entire text of his remarks under "Arrangement.")

were all brought to bear in producing the final result
in a striking outline. Using as a text Romans 3:19-28,
the first outline he presents is as follows:

> How the Sinner Becomes Just
> I. Through the Law he becomes aware of sin.
> II. Through the Gospel he becomes aware of
> forgiveness.
> III. Through faith he lays hold on the
> righteousness of God.
> As far as content is concerned the outline will
> serve. But it does not have brevity, nor does it
> have any particular beauty. The color is there, but
> it is weak. Noting first of all the lack of brevity,
> one could reduce the outline to something like this:
> Justification
> I. Sin
> II. Grace
> III. Faith
> This sacrifices almost everything, including
> unity, for the sake of brevity. It could just as
> well be a lecture in systematic theology (or four
> of them) as a sermon outline.
> All the desirable characteristics are found
> in the following:
> Your Justification
> I. Sin made it necessary
> II. Grace made it possible
> III. Faith makes it yours.[1]

While teaching his classes in homiletics, Stanley
Schneider has been asked, "Does every sermon contain three
parts?" He has answered on many occasion, "No, but it
appears as though a three-part sermon is the easiest to
remember and appears to be the most natural in explaining
a truth of a text."[2] He cites an example in As One Who
Speaks for God:

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Schneider, interview.

Consider this outline:

> God Gives a Yardstick for Loyalty
> I. The first foot measures enthusiams.
> II. The second foot measures affection.
> III. The third foot measures willingness.
> Obviously this sermon had to have three parts,
> no more, no less. But it is not true that every
> sermon needs to have three parts. There may be
> three, or two, or four or however many are neces-
> sary. It is said that at one time there was a
> rule that a sermon should have three parts as a
> symbol of the Holy Trinity. But this is obscure
> symbolism at best, and surely not in force today.[1]

Since Dr. Schneider is an avid advocate of textual
preaching, the question may be raised, "Is the sermon out-
line dictated by the outline of the text?" "According to
our theory of homiletics," he said, "the outline of the
sermon does not have to follow that of the text."[2] How-
ever, he wrote in his textbook: "In a Sense a text has
already been divided in the process of mastering it."[3]

Arndt Halvorson of Luther holds to the same principle
and gives his reason:

> The outline does not have to follow that of the
> text. I conceive of the sermon as the prolongation
> of the Gospel; it is the Gospel happening now. The
> event that was Christ's re-occurs when the sermon
> strikes fire. Therefore, the sermon is an entity
> in itself. It is the message that is structured
> and not the text that is structured.[4]

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[1] Schneider, op. cit., p. 85.

[2] Schneider, interview.

[3] Schneider, op. cit., p. 76.

[4] Halvorson, interview.

Halvorson goes on to explain that the outline of the sermon, in his opinion, depends largely upon the individual minister. "Just as his personality is unique, so is his way of structuring a sermon," he says. "Consequently, I do my best to help a student develop his own technique of outlining."[1]

Wartburg's Poovey, like Schneider and Halvorson, does not feel that the sermon outline has to follow that of the text. "As long as the outline does justice to the spirit of the text or topic and is in accord with the Word of God, I will accept it," he says.[2]

How do the teachings of the three seminary professors relate to the writings of the homiletical theorists?[3] According to all the available sources, the seminary professors are not as much concerned with the technicalities of the outline as much as they are that the outline be a result of the preacher's personality and his wrestling with the text or the topic to be considered. The six theorists, on the other hand, do not once consider the "individuality" of the preacher; they seem, instead,

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[1]Ibid.

[2]Poovey, interview.

[3]Throughout this study, certain elements of homiletical theory are not treated by all of the six theorists used for comparison. The writer, therefore, mentions only those theorists who comment on the particular element under discussion.

to be bent upon the importance of a well-planned outline.
For example, Gerald Kennedy insists, "More sermons crack
up on this hidden reef of inadequate organization than on
any other rock."[1]

Davis, in his Design for Preaching says that "a
textual sermon . . . draws not only its idea but also its
structural elements from the text."[2] Consequently, unlike
the seminary professors, he feels that the text dictates
the sermon's outline.

Blackwood writes that the marks of good sermon
structure are four in number:

1. Unity
2. Order
3. Symmetry
4. Progress.[3]

Paul Scherer comments upon the number of parts which
a sermon should contain:

> The divisions may be two or three in number,
> rarely more. There is, of course, no magic formula.
> One of my professors used to insist on an unwavering
> three, because a twig divides into three as a rule;
> and all this had something to do with the Trinity!
> I was positively superstitious about it at first.
> It was profoundly important. So you hustled around
> until you found not two, not four, but three. Later
> you discover that logic, in the phrase of Dr. Fos-
> dick, has more to do with the thing than magic; and
> psychology, more than metaphysics.[4]

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[1] Kennedy, op. cit., p. 48.

[2] Davis, op. cit., p. 63.

[3] Blackwood, op. cit., pp. 130-132.

[4] Scherer, op. cit., p. 167.

Ilion Jones directs his thoughts along the line that "The outline confines the sermon within desired limits, controls its course, unfolds it step by step so it will be understandable, and directs it to its intended goals."[1] He goes on to say, "The outline keeps one from taking detours, going around in circles, and holds him steadily on the straight road ahead."[2]

Jones summarizes his teachings when he says, "A speech does not happen; it is designed."[3]

Working Toward One Thought

The story is told of the late Dr. Jacob A. Dell, homiletics professor at Evangelical Lutheran Theological Seminary until 1953, that a student submitted a sermon outline filled with comments about various dogmas of the Church, the sacraments, the Ten Commandments, Church history, and the Holy Scriptures. In order to illustrate the cumbersome properties of such an outline, the professor wrote the content of the outline on the chalkboard for the entire class to see. His only comment on the results was, "This lad has everything here except the kitchen sink." It was obvious to him and to the students that the seminarian had tried to include too much in one sermon.

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[1] Jones, op. cit., p. 90.

[2] Ibid., p. 91.

[3] Ibid., p. 88.

As with any good speech, a sermon, too, should contain one main thought. Still referring to the advisability of textual preaching, Stanley Schneider says, "Since each text has one main thought, that thought should be expressed in the theme and developed through the outline."[1]

Schneider devotes considerable space in his textbook discussing the issue of developing one main thought through the outline. He refers to this main thought as "a line of direction," describing this line of direction as "the specific way in which the preacher is going to deal with the truth of the text."[2] He goes on to explain that the line of direction also "indicates the path that he [the pastor] is going to follow in order to reach his goal."[3]

Usually the line of direction is found through a key word in the theme, according to Schneider. For example, at an ordination service the text used for the sermon was Luke 9:18-26. The theme was "You Are Called by God." The word "Called" provided the line of direction which was made clear through the outline:

You Are Called by God
    I.   From Crowd to Christ
   II.   From Christ to Cross
  III.   From Cross to Christian
   IV.   From Christian to Crowd.[4]

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[1] Schneider, interview.

[2] Schneider, op. cit., p. 71.

[3] Ibid., p. 71.   [4] Ibid., p. 72.

By maintaining a line of direction, he believes, the minister will arrive at a necessary unity of thought and theology:

> A sermon needs unity. It needs a theological unity. The theme provides the theological unity under which the preliminary dividing of the text is organized.
> Without unity, what passes for a sermon may contain any number of thoughts, even good ones, but these thoughts are seldom communicated effectively. Unless a sermon has theological unity, it may be seriously questioned whether it is truly a sermon at all.[1]

Dr. Schneider feels that the main thought of the sermon should be in harmony with the theme set aside for the particular Sunday of the Liturgical Year. "It just does not make sense," he says, "to hear an introit, lessons, and hymns on the theme 'The Love of God' only to have that followed by a sermon on 'Marriage and Divorce.'"[2]

The Rev. Mr. Poovey claims, "One of the most difficult tasks facing the homiletics professor is the problem in keeping his students centered on one thought while writing sermon outlines."[3]

Arndt Halvorson, probably the most liberal of the three professors of the American Lutheran Church, suggests

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[1]Ibid., pp. 76-77.

[2]Schneider, interview.

[3]Poovey, interview.

that it is good procedure to maintain one thought. "Hammer

away at one issue at a time," he says. "Use a multitude of

Scripture verses to support your thesis."[1]

The three seminary professors, then, are of one

thought regarding the value of working toward one key

thought *via* the outline. Likewise, the homiletical

theorists appreciate a singleness of purpose in sermon

outlines.

In writing about the value of maintaining one

thought in sermon outlines, Halford E. Luccock cites the

value of progress:

> An effective sermon is marked by progress, and
> progress is impossible without structure. Progress
> includes movement, but it is more and other than
> movement. It is strategic and cumulative movement
> toward an assigned goal.[2]

H. Grady Davis sees a connection between the form of

the sermon and the purpose of the message:

> The functional form of a sermon is the form
> that sermon takes the better to accomplish the
> definite purpose for which it is preached. More
> correctly, it is that form which almost automati-
> cally results from the intention to accomplish a
> given purpose. To an incalculable extent form does
> follow function in preaching. That is, preaching
> takes the different forms it takes in our day as a
> result of many felt but often unclarified purposes,
> not conscious or deliberate purposes.[3]

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[1]Halvorson, interview.

[2]Luccock, op. cit., p. 126.

[3]Davis, op. cit., p. 99.

The same author also warns about the use of too many thoughts in one message:

> Not many thoughts can be developed and shared in one sermon. If the preacher tries to cover too broad a subject, he will say too much, too many good things, and will not share even one of them with his hearers. When the sermon merely discusses a broad subject without the sharpness and urgency of a keener point, it does not really convey anything of importance to its hearers.[1]

Kennedy strongly suggests that the one main thought of the sermon must be expressed in the theme. This, he feels, should be the unifying point from which is developed a singleness of purpose:

> The sermon that lacks this singleness of purpose gives the impression of arbitrariness and forced direction. One feels that it could just as well have been handled another way, or that this idea could easily have been placed under the other point. Somewhere within the theme there is the organization that is as near perfection as we hope to come. If the preacher wants to handle the word of truth aright, he will not be satisfied until that arrangement has been found.[2]

According to Blackwood, the sermon should have unity so that the clergyman delivers only one message at a time.[3] Blackwood illustrates _via_ the following story: "At the end of the hour in church a deacon may whisper to his wife, 'I don't know what the parson was driving at, do

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[1]_Ibid._, p. 59.

[2]Kennedy, _op. cit._, p. 56.

[3]Blackwood, _op. cit._, p. 130.

you?' Then she may reply, 'No, and I don't think he knew, either!'"[1]

Both the homiletical theorists and the three seminary professors recognize the importance of one basic thought for each sermon. Professor Schneider is the only one of the professors who stresses both unity of thought designed by the text and harmony of the main thought with the theme of the Liturgical Year.

The Length of the Sermon

When Abraham Lincoln was asked the question, "How long should a man's legs be?" he answered, "Long enough to reach from his body to the ground." In the same vein, young men in the ministry are prone to ask, "How long should my sermon be?" The answer here may be similar to Lincoln's: "Long enough to cover the subject." However, that really does not answer the question. Other criteria must be introduced.

Professor Schneider looks to the accustomed length of the service as a guideline to the length of the sermon:

> By and large, twenty minutes is taken for granted.
> We are in a bind to the clock in our society. We
> are accustomed to hour long services, twenty minutes
> of which is the sermon. However, the strong tendency
> today is toward shorter messages. This, of course,
> varies with the congregation and with the minister.[2]

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[1]Ibid., p. 40.

[2]Schneider, interview.

Poovey of Wartburg follows in the tradition of one
of his former colleagues, Professor M. Reu, who wrote in
his textbook about the length of a sermon:

> The average hearer would rather listen to a
> sermon of twenty-five than to one of thirty-five
> or forty-five minutes. The spiritually minded
> hearer will judge differently. The question must
> not, however, be decided by the preference of the
> hearer, but by the nature and the purpose of the
> sermon.[1]

Halvorson is much more concerned about the attention
span of the average audience, and he makes this known in
his classroom:

> I have seen people spellbound for forty minute
> sermons and bored with five minute messages. Yet,
> our society is so found to the clock, that I do
> not permit my students to preach over fifteen
> minutes. A good fifteen minute sermon far sur-
> passes a poor half hour deliberation.[2]

The feelings of the three seminary professors center
on the realization that while we are somewhat bound by
the clock and the tradition of hour-long church services,
the length of the sermon is not as much of a concern as
is the quality of the message.

It may be concluded that the subject of the sermon's
length is of not too much importance to the six homiletical
theorists since only one, Andrew Blackwood, makes any
reference to this point. Unlike Halvorson, Blackwood is
suspicious of the preacher who works to cut his sermon
time for the sake of audience acceptance. The author

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[1] Reu, op. cit., p. 506.

[2] Halvorson, interview.

feels that such clergymen can be classified as those who "are eager to see the sermon whittled down, and reduced to the vanishing point altogether, like the cat in _Alice in Wonderland_, with only the smile behind."[1]

"Why then do churchgoers object to long sermons?" he asks. "Not because of length, but because of boredom. They protest against monotony and dullness."[2] He justifies his statement by saying: "They [church members] do not object to the man who speaks forty-five minutes, provided he has something to say and knows how to say it effectively. The majority of our laymen do not insist on shorter sermons so much as better ones."[3]

The Place of the Text

Let us suppose that the pastor decides to preach a textual sermon. If this is the case, at what point in the sermon is the text to be read? The three seminary professors emphasize different opinions, yet only one of the six homiletical theorists treats of this subject.

Dr. Schneider maintains his rather conservative approach by encouraging that the text should always be read at the beginning of the sermon unless there is a very good reason not to do so. "Since the people expect the sermon to grow out of the text," he says, "it is

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[1]Blackwood, _op. cit._, p. 226.

[2]_Ibid._, p. 227.   [3]_Ibid._, p. 228.

disturbing to the congregation not to hear that on which the sermon is based."[1]

Perhaps Schneider's philosophy in this matter is a result of the long standing tradition established by his predecessor, Jacob A. Dell, who caustically told his students, "Always begin the sermon with the text; this may be the only time the congregation hears the Word of God."

Arndt Halvorson takes a different approach: "The sermon does not always have to begin with the text. The text should be placed wherever it can be most effective."[2]

Poovey, also, feels that the preacher must not necessarily begin with the text. "The text," he feels, "may be used even at the end if this works out better."[3]

Schneider, then, feels inclined to always place the text at the beginning of the message, while both Halvorson and Poovey are much more acceptable to a flexible pattern. How do these teachings compare to the homiletical texts used for comparison?

On the subject of the place of the text in the sermon, only one of the homiletical theorists, Paul Scherer, makes any comment. Scherer, like Halvorson

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[1]Schneider, interview.

[2]Halvorson, interview.

[3]Poovey, interview.

and Poovey, does not make an iron-bound rule about this

matter:

> Once in a while, instead of beginning with it,
> a preacher will want to end with the text. He
> plans not to start out with something given but to
> arrive at something discovered. In this case the
> divisions will follow each other in a logical or
> psychological sequence, moving in a straight line,
> like the links of a chain, not after the fashion
> of a detective story, where Truth plays the role
> of the murderer and nobody can even begin to guess
> its whereabouts until the last page! We are not
> in the pulpit to keep people in suspense or to
> darken their minds with mystery.[1]

He further elaborates on this principle:

> Hugh Black, formerly of Union, used to insist
> that there was but one proper way in which to intro-
> duce a sermon, and that was by giving the text its
> setting in the context and in history, showing it
> against its background of thought and incident.
> Frequently such a procedure is highly desirable;
> sometimes it is unavoidable. But it is not neces-
> sary to forge an iron-bound rule out of it. Maybe
> it is not the text that needs introducing anyway.
> It may be the audience.[2]

To summarize, then, Schneider urges his students to

begin the sermon with the text. Halvorson and Poovey,

along with Paul Scherer, leave room for imagination at

this point.

The Sermon's Introduction

What is the purpose of an introduction of a sermon?

What are the characteristics that mark a good introduction?

These are the questions which the author asked the three

seminary professors.

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[1]Scherer, op. cit., p. 168. [2]Ibid., p. 170.

While answering these questions, Schneider remained in character by anticipating textual preaching. In his usual blunt style he declares, "The purpose of the introduction is to get from the text to the theme in the shortest possible time."[1]

The Rev. Mr. Poovey is more concerned that the introduction raises a problem in the mind of the listener: "One of the things on which I insist is that an introduction should include a problem that concerns modern man, that somehow it must involve the congregation in that problem."[2]

Poovey tells how this is to be done by claiming that the introduction must do three things:

1. It must get the attention of the audience. All is lost if we fail to gain their attention.
2. It must get the attention of the congregation on that specific subject. After all, we could merely shoot off a gun; that would get attention, but not on the subject for consideration.
3. It has to involve the congregation in the specific problem of the sermon. As a result of the introduction, the listener should say, "That concerns me."[3]

Luther's Halvorson is abrupt but clear: "The introduction is to promise the listener that what he is about to hear is worth his time."[4]

It appears, in the light of the preceding statements, that Schneider feels that the introduction is a means

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[1] Schneider, interview.

[2] Poovey, interview.   [3] Ibid.

[4] Halvorson, interview.

whereby we can bridge the text and the "meat" of the message, whereas Poovey is interested in establishing a problem in the mind of the hearer and Halvorson is content to let the introduction serve in establishing the value of the sermon to the audience.

How do these ideas compare with those of the homiletical theorists?

Ilion Jones writes: "Often the first sentence or two, and always the first paragraph, are crucial. If the preacher does not grip the interest of the people by that time he may fail to grip it at all."[1]

Scherer is more explicit:

> In every case, be sure that the introduction is an introduction, the function of which is not simply to arouse interest but to introduce. No more, no less. Above all, it must be relevant and not make people begin to wonder, "For heaven's sake what's he driving at now?" That is a bad start always. Let it bring them to understand that something real and pressing is afoot. With deliberate violence, not so much of manner as a matter, let it seize their restful minds, before they settle back for one more sermon, out of the past tense into which Scripture so often seems to throw people quite unaccountably, and snatch them away into a realization that is not the there and then with which you have to deal but the here and now.[2]

How should the minister accomplish this ideal? Scherer suggests: "You may begin with the high light of

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[1]Jones, op. cit., p. 158.

[2]Scherer, op. cit., pp. 171-172.

some contrast."[1]   Scherer illustrates his point through

an example which teaches by a reverse application.

> One university preacher is said to have quoted as
> his text at chapel Hazael's words to Elisha: "Is
> thy servant a dog, that he should do this thing?"
> He then looked up and said, "Well, dog or no dog,
> he did it." They tell me the students listened
> that day. Unfortunately the passage means no
> such thing. Perhaps it would be better to preach
> on a text that is really there, even though it be
> not so interesting.[2]

> Blackwood suggests that, in order to size up an

introduction, six questions be raised by the conscientious

preacher:

> 1. Is this approach interesting but not exciting?
> 2. Is the introduction short but not abrupt?
> 3. Is the introduction appropriate but not
>   commonplace?
> 4. Is the path of approach friendly but not
>   effusive?
> 5. Is the introduction clear but not anticipatory?
> 6. Do the introductions vary from week to week?[3]

In his book, Kennedy states that the most important

characteristics of the introduction are directness and

speed, concreteness and brevity. He feels, too, that

variety from week to week will maintain the interest

factor.[4]

Of the six homiletical theorists used for compari-

son who write on the sermon's introduction, only Paul

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[1]_Ibid._, p. 170.   [2]_Ibid._, pp. 170-171.

[3]Blackwood, _op. cit._, pp. 109-113.

[4]Kennedy, _op. cit._, p. 58.

Scherer mentions a relationship between the introduction
and a text (which may be natural since Scherer is the only
one of the six who advocates textual preaching). The
other three, Jones, Blackwood, and Kennedy urge brevity
which captures both the spirit of the message and the
attention of the audience.

Announcing the Parts

When the man prepares to stand in the pulpit on
Sunday morning and begin his message to his congregation,
to what degree should he anticipate that his audience will
be able to follow his train of thought? This writer can
well remember an admonition given him one day by a pastor
who had served the Church for twenty-five years: "Never,"
he said, "underestimate the stupidity of your audience."
When he gave this advice, the pastor was not adopting a
snobbish attitude toward the congregation. He explained
that we dare never take for granted that the audience is
automatically able to follow the line of thinking while
listening to a sermon. After all, a man does not preach
to a group of theologians, but to souls, who, for the most
part, have a once-a-week exposure to the Word of God.

It is with this thought in mind that Stanley Schneider
advocates the announcing of the parts of the sermon to the
congregation. "After all," he says, "to see a roadmap does
not take away from the trip, but may enhance it."[1]

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[1]Schneider, interview.

W. A. Poovey of Wartburg could not disagree more:

> There is no need to announce your parts at the
> beginning of the sermon. That is old German
> preaching as far as I am concerned. Why elimi-
> nate all of your "secrets" before the proper
> time? This does not mean that the parts cannot
> be spelled out during the course of the sermon,
> but to announce the parts in the introduction
> will not lend itself to good preaching.[1]

Halvorson, too, does not feel that much can be

gained by announcing the parts at the beginning of the

sermon.[2]

On the subject of announcing parts during the ser-

mon's introduction, Schneider says, "Yes," while both

Poovey and Halvorson declare, "No."

Who gains support from the homiletical theorists

used for comparison? There is no clear answer to this

question due to two points: (1) only two of the theorists

comment on this subject, and (2) each takes a different

position.

Kennedy echoes the philosophy endorsed by Schneider:

"Unless the hidden divisions shine through with enough

clarity so that no one will be in doubt as to where you

are going and where you have been, it is better to make

sure your listeners know by telling them frankly."[3]

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[1]Poovey, interview.

[2]Halvorson, interview.

[3]Kennedy, op. cit., p. 49.

Ilion Jones, on the other hand, recommends a different approach: "Announcing all the parts ahead of time is not recommended as a regular practice, because it gives everything away, leaves no room for the element of surprise."[1]

Briefly stated, then, Schneider of Evangelical Lutheran Theological Seminary and Kennedy agree in principle that in his arrangement of the sermon, the preacher should plan to announce the parts of his sermon to the congregation in the introduction. Poovey and Halvorson find support for their ideals through the statement of Jones.

The Sermon's Conclusion

"Like introductions, conclusions should not be long. If near the end of the sermon all the pews squeak, the preacher has missed a good place to stop."[2] Thus writes Stanley Schneider in As One Who Speaks for God. Since solid conclusions are judged not only on the basis of brevity, Schneider feels that much more is needed. On this point, he still reverts to his love for a sermon based on Holy Scripture:

> If you draw a conclusion that is based solidly on Scripture, you will be on safe ground. But if you base it on your own opinion, then it is simply

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[1]Jones, op. cit., p. 101.

[2]Schneider, op. cit., p. 104.

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that--your own opinion. Someone in the congrega-
tion who has another opinion has, therefore, just
as much authority.[1]

Poovey is more interested in an opportunity given

through the conclusion for the listener to respond.

The conclusion ought to some way or another lay a
challenge on the mind of the congregation. I like
the idea that the sermon has some of the quality of
a knock on the door. The purpose of the conclusion
is to leave that knock which invites the listener
to respond. If the conclusion does not indicate
some sort of response, then the sermon has not
really done very much.[2]

The Wartburg professor explained his position:

I believe that many preachers preach the "Wouldn't
it be Wonderful" sermons in which they picture a
beautiful situation, and the congregation says,
"Wouldn't it be wonderful?" Nothing happens. No-
body expected anything to happen. But, if you don't
expect anything to happen, you don't get anything
to happen. The conclusion, then, ought to lay upon
the heart of the congregation the need for some
sort of response.[3]

Halvorson teaches that the conclusion should be

similar to the style of O'Henry in that it demands pre-

ciseness with no prolonged sentences. "The conclusion

should provide the listener with an opening through which

they can see the purpose of the biblical truth you are

presenting."[4]

While the Luther Seminary professor points to the

same theme promoted by Schneider of Evangelical Lutheran

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[1]Schneider, interview.

[2]Poovey, interview.   [3]Ibid.

[4]Halvorson, interview.

Theological Seminary, namely the importance of sounding
a biblical truth through the conclusion, Wartburg's
Poovey is looking more for a response.

The homiletical theorists used for comparison tend
to look upon the conclusion from the viewpoint of literary
critics. Unlike the three seminary professors, these
authors seem more concerned with the structure of the
conclusion than with biblical truth or with a response on
the part of the audience. Only one, Gerald Kennedy, makes
a passing reference to biblical truth when he wrote about
the conclusion: "Here is the place where the wondrous
beauty and glorious power of the Gospel message must
shine."[1]

Later, in the same book, Kennedy endorses the con-
clusion that is characterized by directness, concreteness,
and brevity.[2]

The remaining comments are centered upon form. Even
the teaching of Paul Scherer, usually geared toward the
urgency of biblical preaching, is primarily concerned
with form in terms of the conclusion. From For We Have
This Treasure comes the following paragraph:

> Equally important with the introduction is
> the conclusion. Many of us make splendid approach
> shots and lose the hole after we get on the green.
> And many a horse is numbered an "also ran" because

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[1] Kennedy, op. cit., p. 61.

[2] Ibid., p. 60.

the jockey did not save anything for the finish!
It need not be long, the conclusion. It should not
be long. Let it summarize, if you will, in a brief,
pungent, telling paragraph the chief heads of your
sermon, restating them perhaps and showing their
organic relation to the one great whole of your
text. Or let it bring home to your hearers all
at once, gathering their thoughts into a sharp
focus, some final, practical, and pointed appli-
cation. Or let us say that you have planned to
leave them quietly in love and awe at the feet of
Jesus, there being nowhere else to go at the end
of a sermon.[1]

Later, in the same book, comes this admonition:

"Whatever your purpose, however you arrange it, let the

closing sentences clinch the matter--lest half-a-dozen

good things, or things not half so good, be left hanging

in the air with no visible means of support."[2]

Blackwood, too, is concerned with the form of the

conclusion:

How then should a sermon close? That depends
on various factors, most of all on the purpose.
Before a man starts out on a journey by land or
air, he must decide upon the destination. When a
minister prepares a sermon for the coming Lord's
Day, he ought to have in mind the goal, so that
he can lead every hearer to a certain spot. When
the guide and his friends reach that destination,
the journey should end.[3]

The same author feels that the conclusion should

show variety from week to week. He suggests that there

are nine varieties of conclusion which will appeal to

the interest factor of the congregation:

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[1]Scherer, op. cit., p. 174.   [2]Ibid., p. 175.

[3]Blackwood, op. cit., p. 163.

1. The direct appeal
2. The practical application
3. The final summary
4. The contrasting truth
5. The appeal to imagination
6. The closing poem
7. The closing illustration
8. The missing conclusion
9. The final sentence.[1]

"Whatever the content and form of the last paragraph or two," he says, "the sermon as a whole must lead up to a final sentence, which ought to stand out more boldly and strongly than any other sentence. . . ."[2]

In a similar manner, Ilion Jones apeaks in general terms regarding the conclusion: "Every poor conclusion is a lost opportunity, because there the sermon should come to its final climax, there its main purpose should be achieved, there the preacher's supreme effort should take place."[3]

Summary

To summarize briefly the positions of the three seminary professors in terms of their ideals about sermon arrangement, it might be concluded that Dr. Schneider of Evangelical Lutheran Theological Seminary concerns himself primarily with the relationship of the outline to the spirit of the text. Wartburg's Poovey is interested more in outline which will generate a response from the hearer. Halvorson of Luther centers his efforts in encouraging a

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[1]Ibid., pp. 163-170.   [2]Ibid., p. 167.

[3]Jones, op. cit., p. 160.

creative outline developed through the personality of the preacher with the goal in mind of telling the listener that this sermon is going to be worth his (the listener's) time.

The six homiletical theorists seem more concerned with the _form_ of the outline than they are with a text, response, or individual personality. The reason for this approach may be directly related to the purpose of the authors in writing their texts. It is conceivable that the homiletical theorists are primarily concerned about theory in general with the understanding that individual application and/or adoption of these theories is the responsibility of the student and his professor. However, the writer feels that, to some degree at least, the homiletical theorists could have encouraged the incorporation of the personality of the individual into the sermon outline.

OUTLINE FOR CHAPTER IV

HOMILETICAL THEORIES REGARDING "STYLE"

I. Purposes of the Chapter

II. Definition of "Style"

III. The Tone of Language

    A. According to the Seminary Professors

    B. According to the Homiletical Theorists

    C. Summary

IV. Style and the Audience

    A. According to the Seminary Professors

    B. According to the Homiletical Theorists

    C. Summary

V. The Use of Imagination

    A. According to the Seminary Professors

    B. According to the Homiletical Theorists

    C. Summary

VI. The Art of "Being Yourself"

    A. According to the Seminary Professors

    B. According to the Homiletical Theorists

    C. Summary

VII.   The Title of the Sermon

    A.   According to the Seminary Professors

    B.   According to the Homiletical Theorists

    C.   Summary

VIII.   The Sermon's Introduction and Conclusion

    A.   According to the Seminary Professors

    B.   According to the Homiletical Theorists

    C.   Summary

IX.   The Biblical Translations Used

    A.   According to the Seminary Professors

X.   The Use of Illustrations

    A.   According to the Seminary Professors

    B.   According to the Homiletical Theorists

    C.   Summary

XI.   The Use of Humor in the Pulpit

    A.   According to the Seminary Professors

    B.   According to the Homiletical Theorists

    C.   Summary

XII.   Summary

CHAPTER IV

HOMILETICAL THEORIES REGARDING "STYLE"

The Purpose

The purposes of this chapter are the following:
(1) to describe the homiletical theories regarding the constituent of homiletics known as "Style" as taught by the three seminaries of the American Lutheran Church, (2) to describe the theories about "Style" as presented through the writings of the six textbooks authored by the most influential homiletical theorists of today as revealed through the study conducted by Daniel E. Weiss,[1] and (3) to compare the sets of theories as to the similarities and differences in teaching or emphasis.

Definition

Within this study, the term "Style" refers to that constituent of homiletics concerned with matters of language and with the phrasing of the selected and arranged materials; it embodies word choice and word composition. Generally, certain criteria pertaining

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[1]Daniel Edwin Weiss,"Conceptions of 'Arrangement' in American Protestant Homiletical Theory" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Dept. of Speech, Michigan State University, 1964).

to style relate to these two components; whether the criteria be represented by such concepts as "clarity," "accuracy," etc., they pertain to words themselves or to such combinations of words as sentences and paragraphs.

The seminary professors speak almost exclusively about word choice; likewise, the six homiletical theorists used for comparison in this study follow the same pattern.

Regarding word choice and word composition, the professors of the seminaries direct their teachings along the lines of certain general items which include: the "tone" of language, the relationship of style and the audience, the use of imagination, and the art of "being yourself"; and they either express or imply specific criteria pertaining to these areas of concern.

The Tone of Language[1]

As with other aspects of rhetoric and public address, the field of preaching often includes biographies of men who succeed or fail not on the basis of _what_ was said but rather on _how_ it was said. If the language of the speaker is too aloof, he runs the danger of alienating a good percentage of his audience. On the other hand, if he attempts

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[1]While the "tone" of language may suggest the constituent known as "Delivery," this concept is being treated in this chapter primarily as an element of language. (It is realized, of course, that the language can, at least in some measure, influence the "tone" of delivery.)

to "talk down" to his audience, he is vulnerable to the charge of "fraud" and his listeners may be highly insulted. Much of this is directly dependent upon the tone of the language used in a speech or sermon.

The three professors of the seminaries feel that the tone of language used in preaching should embody variety, simplicity, and informality.

Dr. Stanley Schneider emphasizes the advantages of using variety:

> There are some who speak the same way about everything. While the content of the message should determine the tone of language, they fail to communicate the message if they insist on, let us say, inviting the congregation to rejoice in the same manner in which they admonish them to repent.[1]

Although the preacher is urged to use variety, he must remember that the tone of the language should be simple. Schneider tells us why:

> Sermons should be extremely simple in language style. Unlike an essay, they are not to be read and re-read over a period of years. Good sermons are consumed like the log which is thrown onto the fire--you can't use it tomorrow. And when it's reduced to the printed page it may appear as cold mashed potatoes when you read it, but that's not what it's for; mashed potatoes aren't made to be left over, they are meant to be eaten right now.[2]

Arndt Halvorson sounds the chord of informality as he encourages an extemporaneous mode in preaching:

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[1]Schneider, interview.

[2]Ibid.

> The man [preacher] should be informal at all times while in the pulpit. I used to think that the preacher was actually two people: one in his daily life and another when preaching. However, I find that it is much more effective for the pastor to develop an extemporaneous mode in preaching so that he is discussing issues with the congregation instead of preaching at them.[1]

The professor of Luther Seminary urges his students to "preach a sermon as though you were writing it for the Saturday Evening Post."[2] He tells them, too, "A good contemporary fiction style or 'picture' style in which you paint a picture by words, is far better than large words centering upon theological abstractions."[3]

When asked about his teaching on the tone of language used in the pulpit, W. A. Poovey outlined this warning:

> The language should not call attention to itself. In other words, the congregation ought not be so surprised at the language used by the preacher that they sit around wondering about the language and therefore miss the point that is made. For example, if the pastor uses some profanity in a sermon, while it might catch attention, immediately it will cause many to wonder if he should or should not have said that. Consequently, they miss the point of what is being said.[4]

According to the three professors of the American Lutheran Church seminaries, the tone of language should embody variety, and informality without becoming so conspicuous that the style calls attention to itself.

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[1] Halvorson, interview.

[2] Ibid.   [3] Ibid.

[4] Poovey, interview.

Similar thoughts are presented through the textbooks used for comparison.

Of the six homiletical theorists, only two make mention of the tone of language by the pastor in the pulpit.[1] One is the late Paul Scherer who, somewhat akin to Poovey, writes:

> A sermon dare never be vulgar, as if the lost boy in the fifteenth chapter of Luke, to borrow John Oman's suggestion, had said, "I'd better get a move on and buzz along and pop in on my old dad and say, 'What about a new start, Governor?'" Yet it need not be polished either, as some men are, until it slips on its own polish.[2]

The other theorist to comment on the tone of language used in preaching is Ilion Jones. Throughout his book, <u>Principles and Practice of Preaching</u>, he encourages the conversational approach in preaching with the use of certain basic ingredients such as simple words, expressive words, and basic sentence structure. Like Halvorson, Jones advocates an informal tone of language on Sunday morning: "Martin Luther said we ought to speak in the church as we do at home, in plain mother tongue, which everyone is acquainted with. That is a good description of aural style. Rudolph Flesch calls it 'Shirt-sleeve' English."[3]

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[1]Throughout this study, certain elements of homiletical theory are not treated by all of the six theorists used for comparison. The writer, therefore, mentions only those theorists who comment on the particular element under discussion.

[2]Scherer, <u>op. cit.</u>, pp. 186-187.

[3]Jones, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 174.

This last quotation from Jones leads us to ask the next question, "What is the relationship of style to the audience?"

Style and the Audience

Should the audience have any bearing on the style used by the preacher? The three seminary professors differ somewhat in their teachings at this point. Stanley D. Schneider is inclined to believe that the style of language used varies with the audience. "When preaching to teen-agers, the pastor will certainly use a jargon different than that used at the local senior citizen's home."[1] He feels that there is a deeper meaning behind this admonition when the minister remembers his role as a pastor:

> Keeping in mind those persons who hear, the preacher looks at his text not only with the eyes of a scholar but also with the eyes of a pastor. It could well be that the thinking he does about the sermon while on the round of parish duties is of equal importance to the thinking that he does in the study. In the study, with all the tools of scholarship, he determines the content of the sermon. In the parish, with all the feeling of his heart, he determines the form in which that content will be given to the persons who hear.[2]

Although Schneider urges his students to vary the style of language with the audience, Wartburg's Poovey takes a position nearly 180 degrees opposite:

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[1]Schneider, interview.

[2]Schneider, op. cit., pp. 36-37. (Note the emphasis of Schneider on the importance of the pastoral approach to preaching.)

> Frankly, I feel that audiences are not that much
> different from one another. For example, even if
> a preacher had a highly educated audience, they
> may not be well educated theologically. The
> audience may be filled with Ph.D.s, yet have no
> conceptions about justification by faith. Conse-
> quently, I do not feel that the preacher has to
> analyze his language to a great degree.[1]

Halvorson is concerned with the fact that pastors

often "miss the boat" when it comes to the subject of

the audience and style. One of the chief sins of the

minister is to use words familiar to him and other

theologians which hold little or no meaning for the

man in the pew. Words such as "justification," "faith,"

"sanctification," and "grace" are among those words used

too often by preachers without adequate explanation as to

its meaning.[2]

How do the views of Schneider, Poovey, and Halvorson

compare to those of the six textbooks?

Only one of the six homiletical theorists, Paul

Scherer, comments on the relationship between the style

of language and the audience by reminding his readers

that the one who observes the importance of this relation-

ship will be the one who realizes a reward:

> You may begin your career with a doctrinaire
> interest in theology or in preaching as one of the
> fine arts. But pray God you may find yourself,
> little by little, drawn to human lives and human

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[1]Poovey, interview.

[2]Halvorson, interview.

hopes and human fears! You may begin with the
aloofness of the scholar. But pray God you may
continue with a tenderness, a warmth of appreci-
ation for all the weary souls of earth, that will
go far to keep you human and to make you great.[1]

This last quotation is included at this point not

because it speaks directly to the issue of the relation-

ship of the audience and the style of language used in a

sermon, but because of the inference that is presented

which says, in effect, that the minister should remember

that he is not speaking to so-called "ivory tower theolo-

gians," but to people who are seeking some concrete ideals

which will aid in guiding them throughout the other six

days of the week.

It is interesting to note that not one of the re-

maining homiletical theorists makes mention of the relation-

ship between the audience and style.

The Use of Imagination

Arndt Halvorson of Luther Seminary has said, "All

things being equal, the one thing that distinguishes the

good preacher from the average is the art in his use of

imagination."[2] He, therefore, stresses in his classroom

the value of a student's using his God-given ability to

think about the subject of his sermon, to wrestle with

the text or topic until he is able to create through

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[1]Scherer, op. cit., p. 183.

[2]Halvorson, interview.

imagination a definite insight into the position of Holy Scripture on the problem at hand. "In this manner," he says, "the congregation has a much better opportunity to realize that what the Bible says has meaning for them today. This cannot help but to increase the chances for some sort of response."[1]

Halvorson points to the advice offered in the text-book for his course in beginning homiletics, Donald Miller's The Way to Biblical Preaching: "It would be well for any preacher to stimulate the imagination and to increase it by exercise."[2]

Wartburg's Poovey refers his students to the admonitions of one of his predecessors, Dr. M. Reu who, through his textbook on preaching, has cited the rewards which come to a pastor who is not afriad to incorporate imagination into his preaching:

> An orator may select his words with the utmost care, and observe scrupulously all the laws of variety, euphony and rhythm; nevertheless, his oration will be beautiful only if at the same time imagination plays in it the role which belongs to it. Imagination rejoices in tropes and figures.

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[1]Halvorson, interview. (Although the use of imagination may sometimes be classified under the heading of "Invention," in this study the use of imaginative material centers around the choice of words and word composition for the purpose of making more relevant to a particular audience the message of the text or the main issue of the sermon. In the interviews with the seminary professors, the subject of imagination pertained to the matter of language.)

[2]Miller, op. cit., p. 146.

She trails the ornamental epithet round the bare
substantive as the gardener trails the ivy round
the pillar. . . . She loves to speed home her
thought by climax and antithesis. She cultivates
the figures of simile and metaphor in order to shed
new light upon old truths, comparing spiritual with
natural and natural with spiritual things.[1]

Reu went on to write that the Bible, itself, should

bear witness to the fact that the wise preacher should use

imagination:

The Scriptures with their wealth of imagery
and similes parables and allegories, with their
description, often verging on the crass, of the
messianic age or the glories of everlasting life
and the terrors of everlasting death, furnish the
very strongest proof that the preacher in his por-
trayal of supersensual realities has a perfect
right to go to the world of the senses for figures
that will illustrate and drive home his meaning.[2]

Poovey also reminds his classes of the dangers sur-

rounding the use of imagination, especially for the in-

experienced as emphasized in Reu's textbook:

We admit, indeed, that the inexperienced and
especially the vain might misconceive our meaning
and imagine themselves called to cultivate the
artificial, the affected and the superlative, to
riot in a welter of figures and fancies, and to let
their imagination carry them to the clouds, far from
the common haunts and the common speech of men.[3]

Stanley Schneider encourages the use of imagination

which is capable of blending the revealed truth of God and

the experiences of men:

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[1]Reu, op. cit., p. 193.   [2]Ibid., p. 196.

[3]Ibid.

The creative use of the imagination has been described as the combination of that which is known in a new way to express truth. It is the skillful blending of the grace of God, the experiences of men, and the sanctified common sense of the preacher.

Some areas in which imagination can function are these: to perceive motives, to visualize situations, to trace results of actions, to draw conclusions from thoughts, and to find illustrations.

Within limits one can use the imagination to perceive motives. When we are not told the reason for an action, we cannot supply one and say that this is the sole reason. For example, why did Judas betray Jesus? All sorts of reasons have been imagined, but in the end God only knows why he did. In trying to trace these reasons for actions, these motives, some of the motivations of those who hear is also touched and those who hear are able to identify themselves with the truth of the text.

The imagination can also be used to visualize situations. Describing the veil in the temple at Jerusalem, James S. Stewart writes, "For the veil had been hanging there for years. It looked as if it might hang there forever. Gorgeously embroidered in blue and purple and scarlet, the massive curtain guarded its secret well" (James S. Stewart, A Faith to Proclaim (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1953), p. 80). This imaginable bit of writing enables one to "see" the veil in the temple. Imaginative speaking stimulates the imaginations of others, so that they are better able to follow.

Imagination can also be used to reach results. How do you suppose Zaccheaus felt about that tree in which Jesus found him? We really don't know. But it isn't hard to imagine that he may have considered it as a sort of personal shrine because of what happened to him there.

Imagination can also be used to draw conclusions. Obviously this is limited by the whole context of the Christian faith, and should be used only when the text itself does not draw a conclusion.

Illustrations are also found by the use of the imagination. What do you see when you look out the window? If you see only what is there, then your imagination needs to be revived. Jesus saw more than the birds of the air and the flowers of the field.[1]

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[1]Schneider, op. cit., pp. 99-100.

Schneider feels, too, that "the use of imaginative language in which illustrative material is blended in with the point is much more effective."[1]

Briefly stated, the three seminary professors have much to say regarding the effective use of imagination. But, a surprising fact is that only two of the six homiletical theorists refer at all to the use of the creative imagination of the preacher. Paul Scherer is one who hints at a plea for imagination when he advises, "Say what you have to say pictorially."[2]

Ilion Jones says a bit more, but is almost apologetic in his terms; he writes about the so-called "first person" sermons in which the preacher portrays a biblical character and gives the sermon as though the subject, himself, were addressing the audience. "This kind of preaching," writes Jones, "must be done by preachers with considerable dramatic ability, imagination, and skill in the techniques of story-telling, if it is to avoid being insipid and trite."[3]

In almost the same manner he addresses himself to the use of imagination through alliteration:

> Avoid odd, smart, merely clever wordings. Endeavor to make them memorable. Alliteration is helpful to these ends but should be used sparingly because it tends to become artificial. Forcing

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[1] Ibid., p. 100.

[2] Scherer, op. cit., p. 191.

[3] Jones, op. cit., pp. 114-115.

alliteration, like straining for puns, becomes unnatural and is often offensive to those who are obligated to hear it too often.[1]

The Art of "Being Yourself"

One of the occupational hazards of the ministry is the presence of an artificial or high sounding language while he is in the pulpit. While some pastors may feel that this adds "dignity" to the worship service, the seminaries of the American Lutheran Church strongly advise that those who adopt such a habit are out of step with the practice of the Church today. Instead of setting himself apart by the use of artificial or high sounding language, the pastor is urged to be natural in his weekly presentations.

Dr. Schneider says:

A conversational mode is most desirable. The man in the pulpit should be the same man who sits across from me at the table. He is not the orator, he is my pastor. This is the type of mode that encourages "dialogue" and encourages the people to think along with him in lieu of taking orders from him.[2]

Poovey feels that too often, preachers "sound like preachers" through the words which they use. "They do this," he says, "by using theological jargon which may be acceptable in a classroom, but has no meaning whatsoever to the man in the pew."[3] He feels that it would be much better

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[1]Ibid., p. 99.

[2]Schneider, interview.

[3]Poovey, interview.

for the preacher, for the congregation, and for the advancement of the Gospel if good, acceptable English is used with the major goal being understanding.[1]

Poovey warns about the danger confronting a pastor who steps out of his own personality in order to "speak the language of the people":

> Sometimes, I suspect that preachers try to "talk down" to their congregations by using slang or types of grammar with which they are accustomed. Yet, congregations are not fooled by this. They realize the pastor has been to college and to seminary, and that this is not his normal way of speaking. Therefore, they are not impressed.[2]

Arndt L. Halvorson is concerned about his ability to develop the natural potential of the student: "Every man is different. We attempt to work with the student in order that he might best develop his own style."[3] How does Halvorson put his theory into practice? "The maximum number in the class is ten," he says. "In this way, we can help develop the individual styles of the students so that they can be creative and, at the same time, be natural."[4]

To develop a personality is to develop a gift of God; this is the feeling of Halvorson: "It is a violation of personality to insist on preaching according to one pattern. One of the gifts from God is one's personality; therefore this gift must be used to its fullest potential."[5]

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[1]Ibid.   [2]Ibid.

[3]Halvorson, interview.   [4]Ibid.   [5]Ibid.

The admonitions of the seminary professors regarding
the belief that the man in the pulpit should be as natural
in his style as he is on every other day of the week is
practically a carbon copy of the advice given by Black-
wood, Scherer, and Jones.

Blackwood writes boldly: "'Son of man, stand upon
thy feet, and I will speak unto thee.' In terms of our
day this may mean: 'Young minister at Cream Ridge, dare
to be yourself! Preach the gospel in your own fashion
and not that of some giant!'"[1]

"Every man ought to speak from the pulpit in a
fashion all his own," Blackwood continues, "and that ought
to differ from sermon to sermon. How else could anyone
voice the manifold truths of God through his personality?"[2]

Paul Scherer is concerned about the pastor who is
not content to be himself through his preaching:

> We begin not with any ideal of ministerial
> behavior, that form of godliness which may all too
> often be without its power, but with a minister's
> first obligation; namely, before anything else, to
> be himself--himself at his best in Christ--but
> still himself. If preaching is the mediation of
> divine truth through personality--and perhaps with
> all definitions lame we may accept this as being
> not more lame than the rest--then the one thing you
> have to contribute toward the transaction is your-
> self. The human heart is now new, the need is not
> new, the truth is not new, the method is not new.
> You are new. You are a bit of God's unrepeated
> handiwork; and what he means to accomplish by you,

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[1]Blackwood, op. cit., p. 25.

[2]Ibid., p. 206.

he must accomplish through you. It would be too bad, then, if you should be found a counterfeit presentment of someone else, an imitation in matter or manner of the great or the near-great.[1]

This same thought is further developed in the same textbook:

> To be only yourself six days in the week and on the seventh be no other, whether in reading the service or in breaching the sermon, may not be very thrilling; but it is the only hope there is for you. Never belittle that self or despite it; never disown it or betray it. You have nothing else but you. Give it reverence and give it freedom. To cut through all artificialities of bearing, to put off all the pompous habits of a false dignity, to hang somewhere on a hook all the seeming which is so far other than being, and to let that essential you, redeemed and enabled in the love and fellowship of Jesus Christ, do its proper work in the world--that is to turn loose something God has never tried before; and He will never try it again: make what you please of that![2]

Ilion Jones comments upon the subject when he reports on the value of adopting the natural self to the Gospel:

> Preaching will be most impressive when the congregation knows the preacher has experienced what he talks about. The French have a saying, "It must come out of one's self." That is true of a sermon. In his letters Paul spoke many times of "the" gospel. But occasionally he used the expression "my" gospel. By this he usually meant not what he had heard from others but what he had received from Christ directly and experienced for himself. . . . One cannot preach "the" gospel effectively until, by right of his own experience, he can call it "my" gospel.[3]

Along with their comments on these four general items of style, the seminary professors and the homiletical

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[1] Scherer, op. cit., pp. 37-38.

[2] Ibid., pp. 38-39.

[3] Jones, op. cit., p. 60.

theorists used for comparison speak about some specific
considerations regarding style especially as they concern
special "problems" which confront the preacher. The
specific "problem areas" involve: the sermon title, the
introduction and conclusion, the biblical translations
used, the use of illustrations, and the incorporation of
humor in the pulpit. In each instance, criteria are
either expressed or implied.

The Title of the Sermon

The title of the sermon has received much attention
in the preaching of the Protestant Church. Often, ministers
will go out of their way to create interesting or "catchy"
themes for their sermons with the hope that an imaginative
phrase will compel the apathetic member of his flock to
attend worship services as a result of a clever sermon
title announced in the local paper or on the church bulle-
tin board outside.

Yet, clever sermon titles have one grave danger--they
often do not truly reflect the message of the text or
arrive at the core of the topic for the day. How, then,
do we have a blending of the two? What are the marks
of good style when we consider the sermon title? The
three seminary professors take the time to discuss with
their students the importance of style as it relates to
the sermon title.

Dr. Schneider of Evangelical Lutheran Theological Seminary maintains his position in favor of textual preaching by suggesting that the style of the title should be similar to the style of the text:

> A text supplies the theme of a sermon. The text always supplies the content of the theme and many times will supply the form in which that content is developed. In the development of the sermon, the theme is important. . . . On special occasions, it may be that the preacher will have a theme suggested by the occasion and will then try to find an appropriate text. More generally, particularly for Sunday morning preaching, the text will be read and studied, and then it will supply the theme for development.[1]

Schneider comments further on the style of the title: "The title should always be in the form of a sentence or at least an implied sentence; never should it be a mere word or phrase."[2]

In his book, As One Who Speaks for God, Schneider describes what he feels to be marks of a good theme [title] in terms of style:[3]

1. A good theme is a sentence, expressly stated or obviously implied.
2. A good theme expresses the unity of the text.
3. A good theme should be exclusive.
4. A good theme should project the particular revelation of the text.
5. A good theme is capable of division.
6. A good theme should be brief, concise, and capable of being remembered.[4]

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[1] Schneider, op. cit., p. 55.

[2] Schneider, interview.

[3] Note, in his textbook, Schneider refers to a sermon title as a "theme."

[4] Schneider, op. cit., pp. 66-68.

In an interview, he called particular attention to point three of the preceding quotation: "Every title," he said, "should be so unique to the particular text of the sermon that by the theme alone the listener could identify the text to which it refers."[1]

Arndt Halvorson comments on Schneider's teaching about the uniqueness of the title when he said, "This is an ideal situation which is not realistic."[2]

Does Halvorson, then, agree with Schneider that every title should be in the form of a sentence? "I believe," he states, "that every title should have a verb. It should, then, imply action."[3]

Halvorson concentrates his teaching upon the value of incorporating a sharply defined title or theme. He points to a section in the textbook by Donald Miller, The Way to Biblical Preaching: "Any sermon worthy of the name should have a theme. Ideally, any single sermon should have just one major idea."[4]

As does Halvorson, the Rev. Mr. Poovey of Wartburg also comments on Schneider's urging of a full sentence title when he said, "I don't care if the title is a phrase or sentence, I am more concerned as to whether or not it offers a proposition of some kind."[5]

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[1]Schneider, interview.

[2]Halvorson, interview.   [3]Ibid.

[4]Miller. op. cit., p. 53.

[5]Poovey, interview.

In terms of the specific uniqueness of the title in relationship to the text as advocated by Stanley Schneider, Poovey sides with Luther's Halvorson and disagrees with Schneider. "To say that the title must be unique to the text is fiction," he declares. "Each text has a special 'flavor,' but not necessarily a unique title."[1]

Briefly stated, Schneider is interested in a full sentence title that is unique to the text, Halvorson is concerned more with the text showing clarity and action, while Poovey looks to the title to offer a proposition of some kind.

How do these views compare with the teachings of the homiletical texts used for comparison? Three of the six theorists write particularly about the style involved in the sermon title.

Ilion Jones is aware of the frustrations which can mount when trying to be creative in the wording of the title while, at the same time, holding to the truth of the text or theme. He writes: "Strive diligently on the one hand to avoid commonplace subjects and on the other to create striking subjects that will attract the attention of busy modern folk. But beware of cheap sensationalism."[2]

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Jones, op. cit., p. 86.

If the preacher decides to use a text, Jones urges, "Make the truth of the text the theme of the sermon."[1] Whereas Schneider feels a necessity of using a title unique to the text, Jones does not go this far. However, he does state that "the relationship of the two [text and title] should be unmistakable."[2]

H. Grady Davis, while not elaborating on the method, does remind his readers about the importance of phrasing the sermon title: "The true subject, how one defines for himself the exact thing he is to talk about, is the primary factor in sermonic design."[3]

Andrew Blackwood advises that while a sermon title should be interesting, it should not be sensational:

> A sensational topic calls attention to itself and the preacher, not to Christ and His gospel. . . . No man can bear witness to Christ and himself at the same time.
> A young fellow who afterwards resigned the ministry held forth about "The Sex Life of Samson." An older man spoke about "A Night with the Witch of Endor." A third "preached" about John the Baptist as "The Man Who Lost His Head at a Dance." A fourth perpetrated a pun about his home town: "Putting the Ill in Clarksville," and again drew a laugh about "The Middle-Age Spread." And yet we wonder why thoughtful laymen quit coming to church![4]

Blackwood does not take the same position as does Schneider in the insistence that the sermon title should

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[1] Ibid., p. 77.   [2] Ibid., p. 155.

[3] Davis, op. cit., p. 76.

[4] Blackwood, op. cit., p. 93.

be always in sentence form. In fact, he cites a reason

for his stand: "Give the preference to a phrase rather

than a sentence or a single word. A phrase suggests far

more than it says, whereas a sentence may tell the whole

story."[1]

Blackwood advises his reader to take advantage of

the way the memory works and phrase a title in a manner

that will aid in his remembering it: "If the layman is

to remember your next sermon, he will associate it with

a subject. Why not give it a name that he will recall

with ease?"[2]

The Sermon's Introduction and Conclusion

Not much is reported by the seminary professors or

the homiletical theorists regarding the style involved in

the introduction and conclusion. Stanley Schneider, for

example, merely states that the language of both the

introduction and conclusion should be "natural." It

therefore, should consist not of a style foreign to the

rest of the sermon.[3]

Poovey says of the introduction and conclusion:

"The sentence structure should be simple and uninvolved.

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[1]Ibid., p. 96.   [2]Ibid., p. 91.

[3]Schneider, interview.

Complicated sentences and closely reasoned material are not apt to stimulate the interest of the listener."[1]

Halvorson makes no statements regarding the style of the introduction and conclusion. His reason for not doing so is simply, "It never occurred to me that this was a genuine problem."[2]

It may be concluded that this issue is also not of much concern to the six homiletical theorists. Only two comment on the style of the introduction and conclusion, and what they say deals more with a summary than with specifics. From His Word Through Preaching, Gerald Kennedy says, "The sermon which begins in generalities is under such a handicap that it hardly ever overcomes it. The introduction should be precise and picturesque."[3]

Concerning the style of the introduction, Paul Scherer writes: "You may begin . . . in any one of a number of ways; remembering only that if you are too brilliant, you will not live up to it, and if you are too heavy, you will never live it down or preach up to it."[4]

The same author comments briefly on the conclusion: "One should stop, yet do more than stop: one should finish, with a little finish."[5]

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[1]Poovey, interview.   [2]Halvorson, interview.

[3]Kennedy, op. cit., p. 59.

[4]Scherer, op. cit., p. 170.   [5]Ibid., p. 175.

To summarize the positions of the professors and of
the homiletical theorists who write on the subject, the
style of the introduction and conclusion should be re-
freshing, yet not get in the way of the overall effect
of the rest of the sermon.

The Biblical Translations Used

What biblical translation should the pastor use
while preaching? On this point, all three professors make
known their ideas, yet not one of the six homiletical
theorists says one word on the subject. The possible
reasons for this fact will be discussed later.

Stanley Schneider says, "As a rule, use the Revised
Standard Version. If you use any other, you ought to
identify it and ought to have a good reason for using it."[1]

Poovey's comment on this subject is nearly a carbon
copy of Schneider's feelings: "Use any translation which
properly reflects the truth of the text. If, however, the
preacher uses any translation other than the Revised Standard
Version, he should so indicate to his congregation."[2]

Arndt Halvorson, on the other hand, while not in-
clined to use only the Revised Standard Version, insists
on informing the people about any change from the weekly
routine:

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[1]Schneider, interview.

[2]Poovey, interview.

Use the translation that best catches the flavor of
the text for you. There are some Old Testament
Psalms that are best read in the King James Version.
At other times the Revised Standard Version or one
of the more modern translations is best. At any
rate, I urge my students to adapt one standard
translation. If he chooses on a given Sunday to
use another, he should so indicate to his people.[1]

As mentioned before, none of the six homiletical

theorists mentions a preference for one biblical trans-

lation over another. Two reasons may account for this

situation: (1) the authors of the homiletical texts are

writing for general audiences, some of which prefer the

Revised Standard Version of Holy Scripture while others

are loyal to the King James Version or one of the more

modern translations. (2) The problem surrounding the use

of different biblical translations did not occur until

the Revised Standard Version arrived on the scene. Before

the printing of this translation in 1952, only the King

James Version of 1611 was regarded as a standard text.

Since only two of the authors (Davis and Jones) wrote their

textbooks after 1952, the other four would have no reason

to endorse one translation over another.

The Use of Illustrations[2]

Opinions differ sharply about illustrations in terms

of the number used, their effect, and the amount of

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[1] Halvorson, interview.

[2] As in the case of the use of imagination, the
subject of illustrations may sometimes be classified under
the heading of "Invention." In this study, the use of
illustrative material centers in the choice of words and

imagination which can be justified in creating the situations about which the pastor speaks. Therefore, it is not surprising to note that the three seminary professors employ different emphases regarding the use and purpose of sermon illustrative material.

Stanley D. Schneider writes about the relation between the illustration and the point which is being promoted:

> In the use of illustrations, it is well to remember that they do not prove anything. They do exactly what the word illustrate says, they shed light on a point. The most elementary way of using an illustration is to state a point, then illustrate with a story or an incident. If the illustration is too long, it may be remembered but the point forgotten. If the point is forgotten, the illustration is not good.[1]

The Rev. Mr. Poovey of Wartburg Seminary is concerned with the relevance of illustrations adopted by the preacher. The choice of illustrations may be determined by the type of audience to which a minister addresses his remarks. "As an example," says Poovey, "a man in a city congregation may be wise to use different illustrations than one who preaches to a rural audience."[2] Poovey goes on to justify this teaching: "Our Lord, himself, used illustrative material that was familiar to those who heard him teach."[3]

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word composition for the purpose of making more relevant the message of the problem or text of the sermon. In the interviews with the seminary professors, the subject of illustrations pertained to the matter of language.

[1] Schneider, op. cit., p. 100.

[2] Poovey, interview.   [3] Ibid.

The subject of illustrations is treated abruptly by Dr. Halvorson of Luther. "Illustrations," he says, "should be brief, to the point, and the result of keen imagination."[1]

Schneider, therefore, is concerned with the relationship of the illustration and the point to be made clear, Poovey with the relevance of the illustration to the audience, and Halvorson with the preciseness of the material.

How do the teachings of the three seminaries compare with the homiletical textbooks used for comparison?

Andrew Blackwood is one of three of the six homiletical theorists who make mention of illustrative material. He is concerned with the variety of opinions surrounding the number of illustrations which should be used in a sermon or in a year's pulpit work:

> An elderly pastor may insist, "Have none at all, or few at most. Why waste time?" A younger minister replies, "Preachers to common people, from the days of our Lord until now, have relied largely on illustrations." Which side ought to win the argument? Neither! The older man probably employs too few, and the younger one too many. Laymen feel that the elderly minister's abode needs more open windows; the younger one's, more solid walls.[2]

Of the six homiletical theorists, the one most concerned with the art of illustrations is Dr. Paul Scherer,

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[1]Halvorson, interview.

[2]Blackwood, op. cit., p. 152.

who urges his readers to be sure to use examples that are
genuinely their own:

> Certainly the most effective of all illustrations
> are the scenes, the incidents, the stories from Scrip-
> ture, from fiction, from life, that come most readily
> to a well-furnished mind, so readily that they seem
> themselves to be integral parts in the movement of the
> whole. They are not often to be had from books of so-
> called illustrative matter, though no doubt at the
> beginning we all use such first-aid kits; but in the
> end, nothing that is set down there is really yours.
> That is the trouble with it: it is alien, it has not
> your spirit, it does not speak your language. Let me
> urge you to gather your own, if you must be a gleaner
> of them; index them as you go, if you have a bent for
> such methodical practice; better still, review them,
> appropriate them, get them somehow into your very
> system, so that they come running with a kind of
> inevitableness when your need of them is hardly
> conscious. That way and no other, by open-eyed
> awareness and the fixed habit of assimilation, on
> a day not too far distant, the dividends will begin
> trickling in. For a while it may be nothing more
> than a trickle; but things will improve. It is in
> this realm, too, that the rewards of diligence are
> most sure.[1]

Further on in the same book, the author outlines the
danger of using personal experiences as illustrations:

> I heard a forty-minute sermon some time ago
> that was not much of anything else. The preacher
> began with a few incidents which had marked the
> past week; and every time he made a point, he
> reached back in his knapsack for another incident.
> If nothing had happened to him that week we should
> not have had a sermon, and that might not have been
> so bad.[2]

"The illustration," Scherer goes on to say, "must
not only illustrate the truth; it must itself be that truth."[3]

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[1]Scherer, op. cit., pp. 185-186.

[2]Ibid., p. 182.   [3]Ibid., p. 185.

Illustrations should be "natural" according to the author:

> Illustrations should illustrate, throw light and luster where it is needed; not like the incandescent suns that cart up in front of a movie set: you do not run off-stage and drag them in after any such fashion as that. They should be as natural to the content, as much in place, as unstudied and unobstrusive, as the glint of the moon on water.[1]

Dr. Scherer reminds his students, "The first duty of an illustration is to illustrate."[2] This seems to be an obvious fact, but he further explains why he makes such a statement: "It [the illustration] should never itself take the place of thought and standing forth alone presume to offer the sermon its shoulders for a pickaback ride."[3]

The third of the homiletical theorists to comment on illustrative material is Ilion Jones. "Illustrations which the preacher invents for himself," he writes, "are the most effective because they are part and parcel of his own thinking."[4] Jones' statement, of course, is much like one of the previous statements of Paul Scherer.

What, then, can we say regarding the teachings of the art of illustrations? With different variations in emphasis, all of the men involved in this study (the

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[1]Ibid., p. 183.

[2]Scherer, op. cit., p. 183.   [3]Ibid.

[4]Jones, op. cit., p. 140.

seminary professors and the homiletical theorists) teach
that the illustration used in a sermon is a means to an
end, not an end in itself. They agree that the illus-
trative material should be natural to the subject, the
preacher, and the audience. Further, they believe that
illustrations should be the product of genuine experi-
ences or original ideas of the pastor.

The Use of Humor in the Pulpit

Because the Lutheran Church has its Sunday worship
grounded in the formal liturgy, the question of how much
humor should be included in the sermon may well be asked.
Perhaps a better question would be, "Should humor be used
at all?". Many old German or Norwegian congregations
would be offended if anything resembling a joke were told
from the pulpit. Never would they compromise by blending
the Word of God with levity. Yet, times are changing. For
example, people are accustomed to hearing the President of
the United States mixing humor with statements on world-
shaking issues. Arndt Halvorson realizes that because his
seminary is the product of a Norwegian tradition, the place
of humor in the pulpit must be considered in terms of that
tradition. Whereas humor in the pulpit formerly was non-
existent, "now, it is slowly being accepted if the in-
clusion of the humor has some purpose in making the

biblical truth relevant to the audience," he says.[1] He

goes on to warn, "Humor should never be used for its own

sake."[2]

Is it proper to use humor when preaching? When

asked this question, Stanley Schneider casually re-

sponded, "Some men can tell a joke, and some can't;

it's as simple as that. There are some who should never

tell a joke."[3]

Poovey, however, treats the subject of humor in

the pulpit with much more depth:

> The use of humor in the pulpit depends upon three
> things: (1) The individual--some can relate
> humorous events in a natural way which offends
> no one and yet aids in developing the message.
> (2) The congregation--there are congregations
> which are offended by this. You'll find that
> some of our older congregations will be quite
> upset if the preacher says something that is
> amusing in the pulpit. (3) The purpose of the
> humor--if humor helps to make the point of the
> sermon, then it serves its purpose. If, however,
> it is employed only to tell the congregation that
> the pastor is a "Good Joe" and knows a good joke
> when he hears one, then this calls attention to
> the preacher and not to the message. This, no
> minister should do.[4]

According to the three professors of the American

Lutheran Church seminaries, the use of humor is finding

its way into the pulpits of the Church, and they emphasize

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[1]Halvorson, interview.   [2]Ibid.

[3]Schneider, interview.

[4]Poovey, interview.

that common sense should tell us that its inclusion should be geared at amplifying the biblical truth and not aimed at exaulting the personality of the preacher.

While the subject of humor in the pulpit is treated in some degree or another by the seminary professors, only Ilion Jones of the six homiletical theorists makes mention of the subject. He speaks about the inclusion of humor from both the positive and negative aspects. On the "plus" side, he writes, "If humor comes naturally, it can be used with good effect. Often a whimsical turn to a subject, a touch of humor, can drive home a truth better than a serious statement."[1]

On the "minus" side, he warns about a caustic approach to humor: "The desire to tell a funny story that contains the slightest tinge of vindictiveness should always be inhibited. Even if a person is endowed with native wit, he should use his ability with restraint."[2] Also, Jones cautions his reader to avoid the temptation to use humor for humor's sake (as also cited by Poovey and Halvorson): "If humor has little or no relevance to what is being said; if, so to speak, it is dragged in by the feet merely to provoke laughter—it is an interruption, a diversion, and an impertinence."[3]

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[1]Jones, op. cit., p. 141.

[2]Ibid., p. 141.   [3]Ibid., p. 141.

Summary

The constituent of homiletics known as "style" has received substantial attention by the homiletic professors of the American Lutheran Church. On the other hand, the six homiletical theorists used for comparison in this study are often conspicuous through their lack of comments surrounding various items within the framework of style.

The reasons for this fact may be many, such as:

1. The possibility that the authors did not feel that every issue was of equal importance.

2. Some of the issues (e.g., biblical translations) were not considerations at the time of the writing of the six homiletical texts.

3. The American Lutheran Church professors were all given opportunities to comment on each issue as a result of direct questions by the writer during the interviews.

However, what cannot be overlooked is this fact: often when one of the six homiletical theorists comments upon an issue under the heading of style, his admonition is centered on the negative aspects or the dangers of the wrong use of style. The seminary professors, in their search for ways to develop the individual styles of their students, concentrate on the positive aspects of style

development. Perhaps the authors of the six homiletical
texts realized that it is impossible for them to offer
personalized instruction <u>via</u> the printed page; therefore,
to render a genuine service to the reader, they can point
to the hurdles which are set before the young minister.
A substantial value, then, can be realized as a result
of the blending of the theories promoted through the
homiletical texts and the personal guidance of the semi-
nary professors on this important matter called "style."

OUTLINE FOR CHAPTER V

HOMILETICAL THEORIES REGARDING "MEMORY"

   I. Purposes of the Chapter

  II. Definition of "Memory"

 III. Word Memory

      A. According to the Seminary Professors

      B. According to the Homiletical Theorists

      C. Summary

  IV. Thought Memory

      A. According to the Seminary Professors

      B. According to the Homiletical Theorists

      C. Summary

   V. Aids to Word or Thought Memory

      A. According to the Seminary Professors

      B. According to the Homiletical Theorists

      C. Summary

  VI. Summary of the Chapter

CHAPTER V

HOMILETICAL THEORIES REGARDING "MEMORY"

The Purpose

The purposes of this chapter are: (1) to describe
the homiletical theories regarding the constituent of
homiletics known as "Memory" as taught by the three semi-
naries of the American Lutheran Church, (2) to describe
the theories about "Memory" as presented through the
writings of the six textbooks authored by the most in-
fluential homiletical theorists of today as revealed
through the study conducted by Daniel E. Weiss,[1] and (3)
to compare the sets of theories as to the similarities
and differences in teaching or emphasis.

Definition

That constituent of homiletics concerned with the
storing up in the mind of principles, bodies of factual
material, lines of thought, and phrases which will be
ready for use in a sermon will be known in this study as
"Memory." This constituent embodies word memory and

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[1]Daniel Edwin Weiss, "Conceptions of 'Arrangement'
in American Protestant Homiletical Theory" (unpublished
Ph.D. dissertation, Dept. of Speech, Michigan State Uni-
versity, 1964).

thought memory. The suggested use of a manuscript, out-
line, or lack of both is of special interest in this
study.

Word Memory

Should the pastor memorize his sermons word for
word? Are there advantages in memorized sermons? What
are the pitfalls that accompany the same? The seminary
professors and the homiletical theorists used for compari-
son have some definite thoughts about this issue.[1]

Arndt Halvorson of Luther said, "I never want a
man to memorize a sermon. This is unnatural, and the
people to whom he preaches will know it."[2]

Schneider of Evangelical Lutheran Theological Semi-
nary realizes that some theorists advocate the memori-
zation of a sermon. "If a man can memorize, let him do
so," he advises. "But, more important than memory is the
ability of the man to find the method that works best for
him."[3]

Since Schneider advocates the use of a text in
preaching, what does he say regarding the memorization

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[1]Throughout this study, certain elements of homi-
letical theory are not treated by all of the six theorists
used for comparison. The writer, therefore, mentions only
those theorists who comment on the particular element
under discussion.

[2]Halvorson, interview.

[3]Schneider, interview.

of a text? "This depends on the ability of the preacher
to memorize," he writes. "At least he [the preacher]
should be familiar with the essential content of the
text if not of its exact form."[1]

The Rev. Mr. Poovey of Wartburg does not advocate
the word-for-word memorization of sermons, but prefers,
instead, the memorization of the outline; this concept
will be handled later in this chapter.

Regarding the constituent of "Memory," it is
Halvorson who is definite in his statement against
memorized sermons. Schneider avoids making a rigid pro-
nouncement but remains rather flexible in his approach.
Poovey endorses the memorization of outlines.

How do these views of the seminary professors com-
pare to those promoted by the homiletical theorists used
for comparison in this study?

Only Luccock, Jones, and Blackwood offer comments,
and all three express definite opinions against memorized
sermons. As an example, Luccock says that if the preach-
er's attention is centered "in the hippodrome of his mind,
around which he is chasing a fleeting idea or form of
words, instead of out in front of him in the audience--
his voice and eyes will show it."[2] In the same textbook,

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[1] Schneider, op. cit., p. 60.

[2] Luccock, op. cit., p. 198.

the author anticipates that a tragic fate will greet the preacher when the audience knows that he has memorized his talk and begins to lose interest.[1]

Ilion Jones feels that the preacher who memorizes falls victim to the danger of being chained to mechanics:

> Under such circumstances the preacher is not free. His chief concern cannot be to get his message over but to recall the next word or sentence. This keeps his gestures from being natural—makes them stiff, mechanical, and artificial. Practically the only faculty of the mind in operation is memory.[2]

In the same vein, Jones adds a commentary on his previous statement by recalling the chief purpose of the man in the pulpit:

> In the pulpit a man is engaged in speaking the truth of God to the hearts and consciences of men. He is out for a verdict on important issues. He is pleading, entreating, beseeching men in behalf of Christ to be reconciled to God. He cannot achieve his persuasive purpose adequately if he gives the people the slightest impression he is demonstrating his artistic abilities instead of pouring out his soul.[3]

When commenting on memorizing the Sunday morning message, Andrew Blackwood confesses, "Few ministers . . . can rely on such powers."[4]

The homiletical theorists are of one voice which says that sermons memorized word-for-word are inclined

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Jones, op. cit., p. 197.   [3] Ibid., p. 198.

[4] Blackwood, op. cit., p. 196.

to call attention to the skills of the pastor more than
to the message which he seeks to bring to his audience.
Perhaps the advice given by Ilion Jones crystallizes the
feelings of the theorists: "Once you get on your feet,
center your attention upon what to say instead of upon
the way you wish to say it."[1]

Thought Memory

While the other seminary professors and the homi-
letical theorists used for comparison argue against
memorized sermons, W. A. Poovey of Wartburg promotes a
positive approach to memory; he feels that the object
of memory is not to retain each word of the message, but,
instead, to know fully the outline. In other words,
Poovey encourages the preacher to memorize his order of
main thoughts. "While I do not look for word-by-word
memory," he declares, "I do demand that the man in the
pulpit be able to know his ultimate purpose in preaching
his sermon. It would, therefore, be to his advantage to
memorize the sermon outline."[2]

Poovey's philosophy receives support from H. Grady
Davis, who writes:

> If a sermon is to be preached without notes,
> or with notes but without manuscript, then no
> other preparation whatever can be so valuable to

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[1]Jones, op. cit., p. 221.

[2]Poovey, interview.

the preacher and to his hearers as the idea clearly thought out and brought to scrupulous expression. Even if the preacher has nothing at all but a subject clearly defined, an inclusive predicate and supporting points lucidly and unambiguously expressed, he is better prepared than if he had any kind of quality of notes without a clear grasp of the central idea.[1]

Aids to Word or Thought Memory

What tools does the preacher have at his disposal to assist in the memorization of words or thoughts in the sermon? One aid can be found in manuscripts; another is the use of sermon rehearsals.

One aid to memory is the use of manuscripts. If a man is not gifted with powers to memorize, or if he is in agreement with those who say that memorized sermons are less than desirable, he may take a manuscript into the pulpit. By a manuscript, the writer refers to the completed form of the message written out word-for-word. The manuscript can become a valuable aid not only in helping the preacher in saying <u>what</u> he wants to say but also in helping him to express his thoughts in the <u>way</u> he wants to say them. With the use of a manuscript, the preacher is apt to avoid the consequences which accompany the moment his mind draws a blank or when, for some reason or another, he loses his train of thought. At moments such as these, the printed text is a "blessing."

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[1]Davis, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 38.

Stanley Schneider is aware of some of the problems surrounding the use of manuscripts, but is also confident that these problems can be overcome:

> At the outset there may be some questions about whether or not a sermon should be written out in advance of its delivery. Poorly read sermons and too much reliance on a manuscript have caused some to think that a fully written sermon gives the impression of insincerity on the part of the preacher. Furthermore, there is a difference in writing something which is to be read by others and something which is to be heard by others. These are different kinds of writing.
> But a man can be sincere in his writing and in his delivery. He can master the contents of his manuscript so that he is not a slave to it. He can learn to write for hearers rather than readers. And he will be better off for it.[1]

How, then, should a man use the manuscript when he is in the pulpit? Schneider gives his opinion in this manner:

> The particular way in which he [the preacher] uses a manuscript will depend on his own talents and abilities. But regardless of these, he will be better off for having put his thoughts into words, for having struggled with his expression so that the impression he makes matches as exactly as possible the expression that he thinks he is making.[2]

While Schneider encourages the minister, especially the beginning minister, to take a manuscript with him into the pulpit, W. A. Poovey advocates an entirely opposite viewpoint:

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[1]Schneider, op. cit., p. 93.

[2]Ibid.

> While I permit my students to take notes or
> whatever else may be of assistance into the pulpit,
> I forbid them to take a manuscript. While it is
> possible for a few preachers to work so hard on
> their manuscript that they almost have it memorized
> and use their manuscript merely as a set of notes,
> the modern parish demands are so great on him that
> the person who takes a manuscript with him is simply
> going to read it.[1]

Halvorson of Luther aims for another goal: "I urge the man to take into the pulpit whatever he needs with the eventual goal of not taking anything into the pulpit but the Bible."[2]

To summarize the three positions, then, Schneider urges the use of a manuscript in the pulpit; Poovey wants anything but a manuscript; and Halvorson prefers nothing outside of the Bible.

Which of these three can claim support for their teachings from the homiletical texts used for comparison? Andrew Blackwood, at first glance, seems to support the philosophy held by Schneider when he advises, "The wise young minister forms the habit of writing a sermon every week."[3] Also, the same author tells the young minister, "Write out the sermon as a whole, at one sitting."[4] However, Blackwood goes on to say that while it is wise

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[1]Poovey, interview.

[2]Halvorson, interview.

[3]Blackwood, op. cit., p. 174.

[4]Ibid., p. 43.

for the minister to write out his message in full, it is
not advisable for him to take the manuscript with him
into the pulpit. "Except in the hands of a minister
with rare pulpit gifts," writes Blackwood, "the use of
a manuscript constitutes a handicap."[1] Why does Black-
wood give such advice? His rationale is spelled out in
this manner: "The ordinary reader of sermons from the
pulpit . . . seems to lose himself in the manuscript and
forgets the hearers."[2]

Blackwood warns the preacher about the danger of
falling into a trap which leads to a feeling of security
merely because each word of a sermon is written on paper:
"No amount of writing can atone for lack of a message or
muddiness of thought."[3]

Davis, too, centers his thoughts on the same danger
and expounds on the results of same:

> Attempting to write the sermon before the
> idea is worked out is perhaps the most dangerous
> way of all and the most deceptive. A man can
> extemporize on paper as easily as on his feet.
> A fully written manuscript is no guarantee of a
> prepared sermon. It may be as carelessly done as
> if he got up and spoke without any preparation at
> all. If writing is a substitute for thinking the
> idea through, it rather guarantees that the sermon
> will never be thoroughly prepared.
> Some young men, however, seem unable to
> develop a sermon, unable to find out what they
> have to say without writing at some length about

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[1]Ibid., p. 198.   [2]Ibid., p. 197.

[3]Ibid., p. 174.

it. If a man has to write first, let him write. But let him keep looking for the idea while he writes, and let him understand that all his writing is tentative until the idea becomes clear.[1]

Regarding the subject of manuscripts, then, Stanley Schneider is alone in his urging of the use of manuscripts in the pulpit. Poovey and Halvorson, who encourage the student to take only notes into the pulpit, find support for their approaches in the writings of Blackwood and Davis.

The second aid to memory is often referred to as "sermon rehearsals." Before an actor performs on stage, he is expected to take part in some rehearsals so that his "lines" are known and he can better communicate to his audience. Since the pastor is, in a sense, "performing" on Sunday morning, is it advisable for him to engage in sermon rehearsals? The three homiletic professors of the American Lutheran Church differ somewhat in their opinions at this point. Schneider does not consider rehearsals as a necessary ingredient to good sermons. "Sermon rehearsals," he said, "are artificial situations, and I do not advocate their use."[2]

W. A. Poovey, however, says just the opposite: "Every student is urged to preach the sermon aloud to himself. In this manner he knows not only what he is going to say, but also how he is going to say it."[3]

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[1]Davis, op. cit., pp. 38-39. [2]Schneider, interview. [3]Poovey, interview.

Arndt Halvorson generally advocates sermon re-

hearsals. However, he realizes that with rehearsals

there is an ever present danger. As a result of re-

hearsals, a minister may aim for performance in lieu of

communication. He told this writer about one of his

students in the seminary who was guilty of performing

instead of communicating while preaching. With this

student Halvorson attempted an experiment. Normally a

student will deliver "practice sermons" to his professor

and classmates in the seminary chapel. Halvorson ex-

plained how he worked at correcting this particular

fault in the student's preaching:

> Instead of the class meeting in the chapel, I had
> them come into a room in which we had the chairs
> in a circular pattern. I asked the student in
> question to merely explain his sermon. At first
> he was nervous, and he really could not get across
> to us his message. When I began to prick him, he
> became "alive" and full of passion. Then I said,
> "Now get up and preach it. That's what I mean by
> preaching."[1]

In summary, Schneider says, "No rehearsals"; Poovey

likes the use of rehearsals; and Halvorson, while advocat-

ing rehearsals, realizes the dangers surrounding them.

Ilion Jones and Andrew Blackwood are the two homi-

letical theorists used for comparison who comment on

sermon rehearsals. Both men, like Poovey and Halvorson,

are in favor of sermon rehearsals. Jones writes: "One

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[1]Halvorson, interview.

can wisely practice graceful movements during the week, as he speaks various sections of the sermon aloud, until he sees for himself why they are natural ways of expressing the ideas that go with them."[1]

Blackwood, in his textbook, The Preparation of Sermons, encourages sermon rehearsals of some kind or another: "Even if a minister expects to speak without notes and without having memorized more than four or five sentences, he ought to prepare for the right sort of emphasis."[2] Blackwood also says that after a pastor has a sermon in shape, has it all written out and revised, "he should go through it with care to be sure that he can pronounce every word correctly and to decide which parts he ought to emphasize most."[3]

Summary

Within the constituent called "Memory," Schneider of Evangelical Lutheran Theological Seminary is in a different camp from that of his colleagues regarding "word" memory, "thought" memory, and the use of aids to memorization such as manuscripts and sermon rehearsals. The consensus of opinions among the homiletical theorists appears to jell with those of Poovey and Halvorson.

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[1]Jones, op. cit., p. 220.

[2]Blackwood, op. cit., p. 201.

[3]Ibid., p. 210.

The question may be asked as to why there is sur-
prisingly little said by the homiletical theorists re-
garding both the aspects of "word" memory and "thought"
memory. Relying solely upon intuition and an educated
guess, the writer feels that the purpose of the text-
book authors is to present theories in the composition
of sermons. The writings of the homiletical theorists
are not aimed at the memory and delivery of a sermon.
Perhaps the majority of the theorists feel that comments
on "Memory" would be given better through textbooks on
basic speech.

The seminary professors, on the other hand, are
responsible for the total communication of the gospel
from the pulpit. This includes the memory and delivery
of a sermon. However, as will be seen in the chapter on
evaluation, the stress on the memory and delivery of
sermons is somewhat slighted at the three American
Lutheran seminaries.

OUTLINE FOR CHAPTER VI

HOMILETICAL THEORIES REGARDING "DELIVERY"

   I. Purposes of the Chapter

  II. Definition of "Delivery"

 III. The Oral Expression

      A. According to the Seminary Professors

      B. According to the Homiletical Theorists

      C. Summary

  IV. The Visible Expression

      A. According to the Seminary Professors

      B. According to the Homiletical Theorists

      C. Summary

   V. Added Advice Regarding Delivery

      A. By Stanley Schneider

      B. By Andrew Blackwood

  VI. Summary of the Chapter

CHAPTER VI

HOMILETICAL THEORIES REGARDING "DELIVERY"

The Purpose

The purposes of this chapter are: (1) to describe the homiletical theories regarding the constituent of homiletics known as "Delivery" as taught by the three seminaries of the American Lutheran Church, (2) to describe the theories about "Delivery" as presented through the writings of the six textbooks authored by the most influential homiletical theorists of today as revealed through the study conducted by Daniel E. Weiss,[1] and (3) to compare the sets of theories as to the similarities and differences in teaching or emphasis.

Definition

Within this study, "Delivery" refers to that constituent of homiletics concerned with oral and visible expression; it embodies those elements concerned with the actual preaching of the sermon.

The Oral Expression

In the chapter relating to "Style," the writer addressed himself to the dangers surrounding the use of

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[1]Daniel Edwin Weiss, "Conceptions of 'Arrangement' in American Protestant Homiletical Theory" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Dept. of Speech, Michigan State University, 1964).

artificial language often referred to as the "Ministerial Moan" or the "Stained Glass Voice." These artificial religious tones are a blending of a hushed speaking and pseudo-chanting which may be an attempt to create an atmosphere of heavenly bliss in which the listener is expected to feel awe and reverence. However, according to the three seminary professors, such tones are not to be present in the pulpit; the delivery of the sermon, above everything else, must be natural. The way a man sounds in the pulpit should be no different from the way he sounds in his daily life among his parishioners.[1]

To emphasize the importance of being natural, the American Lutheran Church seminaries have purchased video tape recorders which are used to record each student who preaches his class sermons. At Evangelical Lutheran Theological Seminary a portable General Electric Video Recorder serves the purpose of recording the chapel sermons for viewing by the preacher and his classmates. Wartburg Seminary has a portable Sony system. The most elaborate equipment, however, is to be found at Luther Seminary, where the sophisticated recording and playback units equal those of some commercial television stations.

According to the professors of homiletics at the three seminaries, the chief value of the television

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[1]The seminary professors feel that the admonition to be "natural" covers items such as "pitch," "melody," and other aspects of delivery. In fact, very little attention is paid to sermon delivery by the seminary professor.

recorders is to make the student aware of the importance

of remaining natural while preaching. Any attempt on

his part to be other than natural will be highlighted

through this visual aid.

The importance of the preacher in remaining

natural in his delivery is also a focal point of Ilion

Jones, the only author among the six homiletical theor-

ists who addresses himself to the concept of a natural

delivery.[1] In his book, Principles and Practice of

Preaching, Jones writes about the importance of adopt-

ing one's own method of delivery.

> In the matter of delivery every preacher must
> "work out [his] own salvation with fear and trembl-
> ing" (Phil. 2:12). Each must study himself and
> his congregation and adopt for himself the method
> of preaching that promises, in the light of all
> known factors, including the will of God, to be
> the most effective for his ministry.[2]

Later, in the same book, Jones states, "The most

important thing in delivery is the man: what he is, what

he thinks, how he feels, his motives, purposes, and

yearnings."[3]

Consequently, Jones is in total agreement with the

seminary professors that a natural delivery is the most

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[1]Throughout this study, certain elements of homi-
letical theory are not treated by all of the six
theorists used for comparison. The writer, therefore,
mentions only those theorists who comment on the parti-
cular element under discussion.

[2]Jones, op. cit., p. 203.   [3]Ibid., p. 222.

effective kind of delivery in communicating the gospel through preaching.

The Visible Expression

Since the constituent known as "Delivery" encompasses the visible expression as well as the oral expression, what are the teachings of the American Lutheran Church seminaries and the homiletical theorists regarding the visible expression in delivery commonly known as "gestures"?[1]

As in the oral expression of delivery, the three professors of homiletics of the American Lutheran Church advocate the importance of remaining natural. If gestures will enhance the communication of the message, the professors feel that they should be used as a natural part of the preacher's speaking. All three men told this writer that the most telling aid in terms of unnecessary or improper gestures is the video recorder at their disposal. The so-called "forced" gestures or the nervous habits of the preacher are bound to be revealed through the recorders.

The only mention about the subject of gestures among the six homiletical theorists used for comparison

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[1]While the writer is aware that the visible expression of delivery may include more than the item known as "gestures" (e.g., the preacher's stance, etc.), these subjects have been treated in the chapter on "Invention" under the section entitled "Ethos."

is found in Blackwood's <u>The Preparation of Sermons</u>. He

appears to be rather hesitant on this point:

> In certain localities, especially where
> ministers wear the robe and read sermons, one
> of them may go for a year without making gesture
> in the pulpit. In view of such divergent cus-
> toms, why not seek for the golden mean? Use
> gestures at times, but not early in the sermon,
> and not often at any one stage. When in doubt,
> don't.[1]

For some reason, unknown to this writer, the remain-

ing five of the six theorists make no comment on the topic

of gestures. Only an educated guess, similar to that

referred to in the previous chapter, leads the writer

to assume that the authors of the six homiletical texts

are concerned primarily with the composition of sermons

and rely upon textbooks on basic speech to offer sug-

gestions about sermon delivery.

Added Advice Regarding Delivery

As a result of the research concerning the constituent

of homiletics known as "Delivery," the writer has recorded

two bits of advice which do not belong under the major

headings within this chapter, but which are isolated

admonitions that he feels are worth mentioning at this

point.

The first comment comes from Schneider of the semi-

nary in Columbus, Ohio. He speaks about the merits of

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[1]Blackwood, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 213.

writing the entire sermon word-for-word as related to the actual delivery of the message:[1]

> Generally speaking, a man will do a better job
> in delivery if he has first written out his
> message. It's almost like taking a trip. If
> he has been over the route before, he will
> probably not get lost. Therefore, he is
> bound to have a smoother delivery if he does
> not have to be concerned about what he is
> going to say next.[2]

Andrew Blackwood offers the second piece of advice along the line of delivery at the start of the sermon for the purposes of creating the proper atmosphere:

> Follow an order of service that will lead
> everyone to rise and sing just before the sermon.
> When at last you stand ready to preach, wait for
> a moment or two silently, in the spirit of prayer,
> but not with eyes closed. Look at the people,
> kindly, and when you hear nothing but your own
> heartbeat, you may begin with the text or with
> an ascription of praise that calls no attention
> to yourself; e.g. "In the name of the Father
> and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen."[3]

Summary

Regarding the oral expression of the constituent of homiletics known as "Delivery," all three seminary professors admonish their students to "be natural." Ilion Jones, the only one of the six homiletical theorists to comment, is in agreement.

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[1]Further comments on the use of manuscripts may be found in the chapter on "Memory" under the section entitled "Aids to Word or Thought Memory."

[2]Schneider, interview.

[3]Blackwood, op. cit., p. 207.

As to the use of the visible expression of "De-
livery" referred to as "gestures," the three American
Lutheran Church men again urge a "natural approach,"
while Andrew Blackwood, the only theorist of the six to
offer suggestions on this point, states, "When in doubt,
don't!"

Finally, Schneider comments on the rewards of
writing out the sermon, and Blackwood calls attention to
the setting of the scene at the beginning of the sermon.

OUTLINE FOR CHAPTER VII

EVALUATION OF THE HOMILETICAL THEORIES OF

THE AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH

I. Introduction

II. Survey of the Class of 1969

    A. Nature of the Survey

    B. Results of the Survey

III. Survey of the Class of 1961

    A. Nature of the Survey

    B. Results of the Survey

IV. Interpretation of the Surveys

    A. Question #2

    B. Question #3

    C. Question #4

    D. Question #5

    E. Question #6

V. Opinions of the Writer

    A. Regarding Evangelical Lutheran Theological
       Seminary

    B. Regarding Luther Seminary

    C. Regarding Wartburg Seminary

VI. Outside Influences

CHAPTER VII

EVALUATION OF THE HOMILETICAL THEORIES OF

THE AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH

Introduction

In the preceding chapters, the homiletical theories
presented through the seminaries of the American Lutheran
Church have been outlined and compared with those theories
presented through the writings of six textbooks authored
by the most influential homiletical theorists of today as
revealed through the study conducted by Daniel E. Weiss.[1]
These theories concerned themselves with the constituents
of homiletics known as "Invention," "Arrangement," "Style,"
"Memory," and "Delivery."

However, the question may be asked, "How good are
these theories?" Perhaps a more pragmatic individual
would ask, "Of how much practical help are these courses
to my preaching?" In order to answer these and parallel
questions, the writer will use three sources for purposes
of evaluation, namely a survey of the class of 1969 of

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[1]Daniel Edwin Weiss, "Conceptions of 'Arrangement'
in American Protestant Homiletical Theory" (unpublished
Ph.D. dissertation, Dept. of Speech, Michigan State Uni-
versity, 1964).

the three seminaries, a survey of the class of 1961 of
the three seminaries, and the opinions of the writer.

Survey of the Class of 1969

The first source for purposes of evaluation comes
from the 1969 graduating class of each of the three
American Lutheran Church seminaries. The students were
asked to comment upon the relative merits of the program
of homiletics at their school through a questionnaire
given them _via_ their homiletics professors.

Nature of the Survey

The following letter (p. 150) was sent to the pro-
fessors of homiletics at the three American Lutheran Church
seminaries.

Along with the letter, a questionnaire (p. 151) was
given to each member of the graduating classes.

Results of the Survey

A total of 99 of the 191 (approximately 52%) of the
graduating classes contacted made some kind of response
to the questionnaire, these reports ranging all the way
from partially answered to completed questionnaires.

The following results were obtained from the three
seminaries:

9 May 1969

Dear _____;

I have enclosed a number of questionnaires which I hope
you will be able to have distributed to the senior
class of the seminary. This questionnaire will provide
the basis for my final chapters in the dissertation sur-
rounding the homiletical theories of the American Lutheran
Church. I will appreciate greatly any help which you may
render in seeing that most of the senior class will com-
plete the forms.

As a part of my dissertation, I am seeking the opinions
of the members of the senior classes at Luther, Evangelical
Lutheran Theological Seminary, and Wartburg regarding the
instruction in homiletics at the seminaries which they
attend. The same questions will be covered via a question-
naire sent to the senior class of 1961. In this manner, we
can compare the results. I shall be sure to send to you
the final tabulation of the answers.

I realize that this is an extremely busy time for both
faculty and student body, however, this survey is most
important to the relative merits of my dissertation.

Enclosed is a self-addressed stamped envelope for the
return of these forms.

I thank you for your kindness in assisting in this matter.
I owe you a favor.

God's richest blessings!

John C. McCollister
Bethlehem Lutheran Church
549 E. Mt. Hope Ave.
Lansing, Michigan 48910

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. At which seminary have you studied basic homiletics?

   _____ E. L. T. S.
   _____ Luther
   _____ Wartburg

2. During your ministry, you anticipate your preaching will be chiefly:

   _____ Textual
   _____ Topical
   _____ Problem-centered
   _____ Other (explain)_____

3. Do you anticipate that your preaching will be based upon the lessons of the Liturgical Year?

   _____ Always
   _____ Most often
   _____ Sometimes
   _____ Seldom
   _____ Never

4. What type of ministry do you plan to enter?

   _____ Parish ministry
   _____ Institutional chaplaincy
   _____ Military chaplaincy
   _____ Specialized ministry (explain)_____
   _____ Other (explain)_____

5. In your opinion, what are the strengths in your seminary's program of homiletical instruction?

6. In your opinion, what are its weaknesses?

7. What suggestions do you have for future instruction in homiletics at your seminary?[1]

Thank you for your cooperation!

----

[1]The results of question #7 will be reported and commented upon in the next chapter.

1. At which seminary have you studied basic homiletics?

   E. L. T. S. (16)[1]
   Luther (59)[2]
   Wartburg (23)[3]

2. During your ministry, you anticipate your preaching will be chiefly:

   E. L. T. S.

       Textual (15)
       Topical (0)
       Problem-centered (0)
       Other (1) (a combination of the above three)

   Luther

       Textual (23)
       Topical (19)
       Problem-centered (15)
       Other (2) (a combination of the above three)

   Wartburg

       Textual (11)
       Topical (2)
       Problem-centered (7)
       Other (2) (a combination of the above three)
       No response (1)

3. Do you anticipate that your preaching will be based upon the lessons of the Liturgical Year?

   E. L. T. S.

       Always (0)
       Most often (14)
       Sometimes (2)
       Seldom (0)
       Never (0)

---

[1] A total of sixteen out of forty-two (38%) of the questionnaires were returned. The rather low percentage of response was due primarily to the fact that the survey at E. L. T. S. was conducted during the week of final examinations.

[2] A total of 59 out of 102 (53%) of the questionnaires were returned.

[3] A total of twenty-three of thirty-nine (59%) of the questionnaires were returned.

Luther

    Always (4)
    Most often (53)
    Sometimes (2)
    Seldom (0)
    Never (0)

Wartburg

    Always (0)
    Most often (17)
    Sometimes (5)
    Seldom (0)
    Never (0)
    No response (1)

4. What type of ministry do you plan to enter?

E. L. T. S.

    Parish ministry (16)
    Institutional chaplaincy (0)
    Military chaplaincy (0)
    Specialized ministry (0)
    Other (0)

Luther

    Parish ministry (55)
    Institutional chaplaincy (0)
    Military chaplaincy (0)
    Specialized ministry (0)
    Other (0)
    No response (4)

Wartburg

    Parish ministry (21)
    Institutional chaplaincy (0)
    Military chaplaincy (1)
    Specialized ministry (0)
    Other (1) (A. L. C. Headquarters)

5. In your opinion, what are the strengths in your seminary's program of homiletical instruction?[1]

<u>E. L. T. S.</u>

    The method of outlining a sermon (6)
    The beginning class of homiletics (5)
    The stress on textual preaching (4)
    Guidelines for biblical preaching (3)
    Interrelationship with other seminary courses (2)
    The use of a video recorder (1)

<u>Luther</u>

    The use of a video recorder (22)
    Interrelationship with other seminary courses (19)
    The professor (17)
    Emphasis on exegesis (11)
    Emphasis on Liturgical Year (9)
    The system of evaluation (5)
    No strengths (5)
    The stress on textual preaching (3)
    The beginning class of homiletics (3)
    Guidelines for biblical preaching (1)
    Freedom of expression (1)
    Individual attention (1)

<u>Wartburg</u>

    The professor (9)
    The system of evaluation (9)
    Guidelines for biblical preaching (8)
    The use of a video recorder (6)
    The beginning class in homiletics (5)
    The stress on textual preaching (4)
    The practical value of homiletics (2)
    The variety of preaching types (2)
    The method of outlining a sermon (1)
    The opportunity to practice in congregations (1)

---

[1]Two notes should be made at this point: (1) on certain occasions the writer does not include the exact phrasing of each response given in the questionnaires. At times the comments were grouped under specific headings. For example, while one subject may write about the necessity for instruction in speaking techniques, another may comment upon the need for a realization that some students are unable to speak well in front of others. Both of these items are classified under the heading "Basic speech methods." (2) The reader will notice that due to the fact that most of the returned questionnaires contained a variety of responses to questions 5 and 6, the total number of responses surpasses the number of questionnaires returned.

6. In your opinion, what are its weaknesses?

E. L. T. S.

      Limited view of preaching (7)
      Lack of experimentation (5)
      Lack of basic speech methods (4)
      Limited to a one-man department (4)
      Limited opportunities to preach (2)
      Over-emphasis on outlines (1)

Luther

      Limited opportunities to preach (30)
      Classes too large (21)
      Artificial conditions for preaching (11)
      Lack of individual attention (11)
      Lack of basic speech methods (10)
      Lack of application to social issues (10)
      Lack of relevancy (10)
      Lack of emphasis on Liturgical Year (7)
      Lack of stress on Hebrew and Greek (7)
      No weaknesses (6)
      Limited use of imagination (3)
      Lack of exposure to successful preachers (3)
      Lack of experimentation (2)
      The system of evaluation (1)

Wartburg

      Artificial conditions for preaching (5)
      Limited view of preaching (5)
      Lack of basic speech methods (4)
      Limited opportunities to preach (4)
      Poor relationship with other departments (4)
      Limited to a one-man department (3)
      Lack of experimentation (3)
      Lack of relevancy (2)
      Lack of Old Testament preaching (2)
      Unwillingness of some students to prepare for class (1)
      Lack of problem-centered preaching (1)
      Too much stress on special occasion preaching (1)

Survey of the Class of 1961

The second source for evaluation is a result of a similar questionnaire sent to the graduating classes of 1961 of the three American Lutheran Church seminaries.

These classes were chosen for two reasons: (1) 1961 was
the year that marked the official merger of various
Lutheran Synods into the present American Lutheran Church,
and (2) 1961 was the earliest year in which the three
present professors of homiletics were actively engaged
in teaching at the seminaries.

Nature of the Survey

The following letter (p. 157) and questionnaire
(p. 158) were sent to 210 members of the graduating
classes of the three American Lutheran Church seminaries.[1]

Results of the Survey

One-hundred-twenty-eight out of 210 (approximately
61%) of the 1961 graduating classes contacted responded
to the questionnaire, these responses ranging all the way
from partially answered to completed questionnaires.

The results of the questionnaires sent to the 1961
graduates of the three seminaries were as follows:

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[1]Questionnaires were sent to all of the 1961
graduates currently residing in the continental United
States and Canada. Questionnaires were not sent to
approximately fifteen graduates who serve in foreign
mission fields or in the overseas military chaplaincy.

19 May 1969

Dear _____;

I am seeking your help in a project which is of importance to me.

I am completing the requirements for a Ph.D. degree in Speech at Michigan State University. My thesis concerns the survey and evaluation of the theories of homiletics taught in the seminaries of our American Lutheran Church.

A vital part of this thesis is the result of a survey taken through the enclosed brief questionnaire which I hope you will complete and return in the self-addressed stamped envelope. This questionnaire is being sent to the 1961 graduates of the three American Lutheran Church seminaries. A similar form has been sent to the graduating seniors of this year.

In advance, let me thank you for your cooperation.

God's richest blessings as you serve our Lord in his Church.

Yours in Xp,

John C. McCollister
Pastor
Bethlehem Lutheran Church
Lansing, Michigan

QUESTIONNAIRE[1]

1. At which seminary have you studied basic homiletics?

    _____ E. L. T. S.
    _____ Luther
    _____ Wartburg

2. During your ministry, your preaching has been chiefly:

    _____ Textual
    _____ Topical
    _____ Problem-centered
    _____ Other (explain)_____

3. Is your preaching based upon the lessons of the Liturgical Year?

    _____ Always
    _____ Most often
    _____ Sometimes
    _____ Seldom
    _____ Never

4. In what type of ministry are you engaged?

    _____ Parish ministry
    _____ Institutional chaplaincy
    _____ Military chaplaincy
    _____ Specialized ministry (explain)_____
    _____ Other (explain)_____

5. In your opinion, what were the strengths in your seminary's program of homiletical instruction?

6. In your opinion, what were its weaknesses?

7. What suggestions do you have for future instruction in homiletics at the seminary?[2]

---

[1]This questionnaire asks basically the same questions as did the survey of the 1969 graduating classes. Added to this questionnaire are other questions regarding specific items relating to location and size of congregation. Later, in this chapter, some conclusions will be recorded in terms of possible relationships between areas and/or types of preaching with location or size of congregation.

[2]As with the previous survey, the results of question #7 will be reported and commented upon in the next chapter.

8. The district in which your church is located is the
   _____ district.

9. The size of community in which your church is
   located is:

   _____ 1,000 or less
   _____ 1,000 - 5,000
   _____ 5,000 - 10,000
   _____ 10,000 - 25,000
   _____ 25,000 - 50,000
   _____ 50,000 - 100,000
   _____ 100,000 - 250,000
   _____ 250,000 - 500,000
   _____ 500,000 - 1,000,000
   _____ Over 1,000,000

10. The size of your congregation (baptized):

    _____ 100 or less
    _____ 100 - 250
    _____ 250 - 500
    _____ 500 - 750
    _____ 750 - 1,000
    _____ 1,000 - 1,500
    _____ 1,500 - 2,000
    _____ 2,000 - 2,500
    _____ 2,500 - 3,000
    _____ Over 3,000

11. If you are serving in a team ministry, what is your
    position?

    _____ Senior pastor
    _____ Associate pastor
    _____ Assistant pastor

12. Would you desire to have available a yearly publi-
    cation of sermons from A. L. C. pulpits?[1]

    _____ Yes
    _____ No

                    Thank you!

_____

[1]Question #12 has no relationship to the previous
questions, but was an attempt of the writer to find the
degree of interest (or lack of interest) in such a
publication. The editing of a work of this nature is
a possible project of the writer.

1. At which seminary have you studied basic homiletics?

    E. L. T. S. (31)[1]
    Luther (73)[2]
    Wartburg (27)[3]

2. During your ministry, your preaching has been chiefly:

    <u>E. L. T. S.</u>

        Textual (28)
        Topical (2)
        Problem-centered (0)
        Other (1) (a combination of the above three)

    <u>Luther</u>

        Textual (43)
        Topical (20)
        Problem-centered (9)
        Other (1) (a combination of the above three)

    <u>Wartburg</u>

        Textual (21)
        Topical (2)
        Problem-centered (1)
        Other (3) (a combination of the above three)

3. Is your preaching based upon the lessons of the
    Liturgical Year?

    <u>E. L. T. S.</u>

        Always (4)
        Most often (18)
        Sometimes (9)
        Seldom (0)
        Never (0)

---

[1]A total of thirty-one out of forty-three (72%) of
the questionnaires were returned.

[2]A total of 73 out of 125 (58%) of the question-
naires were returned.

[3]A total of twenty-seven out of forty-two (64%)
of the questionnaires were returned.

Luther

Always (8)
Most often (58)
Sometimes (2)
Seldon (2)
Never (0)
No response (3)

Wartburg

Always (2)
Most often (15)
Sometimes (9)
Seldom (1)
Never (0)

4. In what type of ministry are you engaged?

E. L. T. S.

Parish ministry (27)
Institutional chaplaincy (0)
Military chaplaincy (0)
Specialized ministry (2) (1 social work, 1 campus
    ministry)
Other (2) (1 graduate study, 1 school administration)

Luther

Parish ministry (59)
Institutional chaplaincy (1)
Military chaplaincy (1)
Specialized ministry (4) (2 campus ministry, 1
    foreign missions, 1 social work)
Other (6) (3 A. L. C. Headquarters, 1 graduate
    study, 1 school administration, 1 teaching)
No response (2)

Wartburg

Parish ministry (22)
Institutional chaplaincy (1)
Military chaplaincy (0)
Specialized ministry (1) (foreign missions)
Other (3) (1 A. L. C. Headquarters, 1 graduate
    study, 1 teaching)

5. In your opinion, what were the strengths in your seminary's program of homiletical instruction?[1]

E. L. T. S.

    The stress on textual preaching (23)
    The method of outlining a sermon (14)
    The system of evaluation (5)
    Emphasis on exegesis (4)
    The stress on the theology of preaching (3)
    Emphasis on Liturgical Year (2)
    The beginning class of homiletics (2)
    Emphasis on the gospel (2)
    The professor (1)
    Preaching in a worship structure (1)
    Instruction in the use of manuscripts (1)

Luther

    The professor (21)
    No strengths (17)
    The stress on textual preaching (15)
    Interrelationship with other seminary courses (9)
    Emphasis on exegesis (7)
    Balance between law and gospel (5)
    Pastoral emphasis (4)
    Emphasis on Liturgical Year (4)
    The system of evaluation (3)
    The beginning class of homiletics (2)
    The opportunity to practice preach (2)
    Guidelines for biblical preaching (2)
    Relevancy (2)
    Exposure to successful preachers (1)
    Freedom of expression (1)
    The stress on the theology of preaching (1)
    Individual attention (1)
    The stress on personal conviction (1)
    The stress on doctrine (1)
    Textbook by Reu (1)

---

[1]As was the case regarding the questionnaire received from the 1969 graduates, the writer does not always include the exact phrasing of each response, and has taken the libergy to group some of the comments under specific headings. Also, as with the returns from the 1969 graduates, because of the fact that most of the returned questionnaires contained a variety of responses to questions 5 and 6, the total number of responses surpasses the number of questionnaires returned.

<u>Wartburg</u>

The professor (12)
The stress on textual preaching (10)
Guidelines for biblical preaching (5)
Freedom of expression (4)
Relevancy (4)
The method of outlining a sermon (3)
The stress on the theology of preaching (2)
Interrelationship with other seminary courses (2)
Exposure to a variety of types of preaching (2)
Emphasis on Liturgical Year (1)
No strengths (1)
The beginning class of homiletics (1)
The system of evaluation (1)
The opportunity to practice preach (1)
Emphasis on positive preaching (1)
Preaching without manuscripts (1)
Practicality of program (1)

6. In your opinion, what are its weaknesses?

<u>E. L. T. S.</u>

Limited view of preaching (13)
Lack of relevancy (11)
Lack of basic speech methods (9)
Lack of experimentation (6)
Limited opportunities to preach (5)
Failure to use recording equipment (4)
Limited use of imagination (3)
Lack of stress on Hebrew and Greek (2)
Limited follow-through on internship program (2)
No weaknesses (2)
Limited to a one-man department (1)
Assumption that congregations know Bible well (1)
Greater need for textual study (1)
Outdated method of outlining (1)
The system of evaluation (1)
Lack of emphasis on Bible study (1)
Lack of application to social issues (1)

<u>Luther</u>

Limited opportunities to preach (26)
Lack of relevancy (21)
Lack of individual attention (16)
Lack of basic speech methods (12)
Classes too large (11)
Lack of emphasis on homiletics (8)
The system of evaluation (7)
Lack of application to social issues (6)
Limited view of preaching (5)

Luther (con't.)

Instruction in sermon preparation (4)
Artificial conditions for preaching (4)
Lack of experimentation (4)
Instruction in the art of illustrations (3)
Lack of emphasis on Liturgical Year (2)
Lack of stress on Hebrew and Greek (2)
Lack of knowledge of homiletics by other
    departments (2)
No weaknesses (2)
Textbook by Reu (2)
Lack of emphasis on the gospel (1)

Wartburg

Lack of opportunities to preach (8)
Lack of relevancy (7)
Lack of basic speech methods (5)
No weaknesses (4)
Limited view of preaching (3)
Lack of experimentation (3)
Lack of stress on theology of preaching (2)
Lack of exposure to successful preachers (1)
Allowing students to preach prematurely (1)
The professor (1)
Lack of stress on Hebrew and Greek (1)
Lack of individual attention (1)
Lack of instruction in special occasion preaching (1)
Lack of pastoral emphasis (1)
Over emphasis on preaching (1)

Interpretation of the Surveys

What, exactly, do the results of these surveys
tell us? Can we see any emphases in opinions? Are there
any trends which can be detected? Are there basic differ-
ences in the attitudes of the graduates of one seminary
as opposed to those of another? Are there any significant
differences between the graduates of 1961 and those of
1969 of one particular seminary?

Questions 2 through 6 are nearly identical in both
surveys. Therefore, in this study the answers by both

the classes of 1969 and 1961 to these questions through the surveys will be reported and compared together.

Question #2 deals with the type of preaching that is being done chiefly by the 1961 graduate or is anticipated by the 1969 graduate.

According to the results of the questionnaires, both the 1961 and 1969 graduating classes of Evangelical Lutheran Theological Seminary have adopted textual preaching far and above topical, problem-centered, or any other form of preaching. At Evangelical Lutheran Theological Seminary, 94 per cent of the 1969 senior class anticipate that they will preach textual sermons; this figure closely resembles the 90 per cent of the 1961 class who report that they are primarily engaged in textual preaching above the other alternatives. Undoubtedly, the strong influence of Professor Schneider has been the main factor in these results.

At both Luther and Wartburg, however, there are different stories. Luther Seminary's 1969 graduating class reports a fairly even distribution in anticipated types of preaching. Thirty-nine per cent anticipate textual preaching, 32 per cent topical, 28 per cent problem-centered, and 3 per cent a combination of the three. These results are not surprising, since the professor, Arndt Halvorson, encourages the use of all three types of preaching. What is noteworthy, however,

is the fact that 59 per cent of the 1961 class are now
chiefly engaged in textual preaching, while only 27 per
cent use topical sermons, and 12 per cent preach problem-
centered messages.

At Wartburg Seminary, the same trend is evident
only on a more obvious scale. The 1969 graduates who
responded to the question indicated that 49 per cent
anticipate using chiefly textual sermons while 9 per
cent anticipate topical preaching, 30 per cent problem-
centered preaching, and 9 per cent a combination of the
three. Compare these figures with the class of 1961
who reported that 78 per cent preach primarily textual
sermons with only 7 per cent preaching topical, 4 per
cent problem-centered, and 10 per cent a combination
of the three.

The reasons for the difference in attitude of
the 1969 and 1961 graduating classes toward textual
preaching may be many. It is possible that those who
are benefactors of eight years of experience find that
textual preaching is more desirable; it is also con-
ceivable that a change in the teaching of the pro-
fessors or in the attitude of the students has taken
place. While it is possible that those who have read
this study or who are familiar with the seminaries of
the American Lutheran Church have some definite opinions
as to the reasons for the difference in attitudes

toward textual preaching, on the basis of the evidence
supplied by the surveys alone, it is impossible to
draw a definite conclusion. However, it would be
interesting to survey the 1969 graduating classes five
or ten years from now as to their attitudes in this
regard.

Question #3, dealing with the type of ministry
anticipated or engaged in by the graduates, will be
considered later in this chapter.

Question #4 raises the issue of the Liturgical
Year. From the results of the surveys to the 1961 and
1969 graduating classes, it may be concluded that the
Liturgical Year is of definite influence upon the preach-
ing within the churches of the American Lutheran Church.
This is not surprising, since the Lutheran Church is
basically a liturgical church.

Evangelical Lutheran Theological Seminary graduates
who responded to the questionnsire sent them indicate that
88 per cent will use the lessons set aside for particular
Sundays of the Church Year as the basis for their preach-
ing most of the time. The other 22 per cent anticipate
using these lessons sometimes. Those who graduated in
1961 have similar leanings, with 13 per cent reporting
that they always use the prescribed lessons, 58 per cent
use them most often, and 29 per cent sometimes.

The same pattern is established by the other semi-
naries. A large majority of Luther's 1969 and 1961

graduates say that the lessons of the Liturgical Year will either always, or most often, be the basis for their preaching. Ninety-six per cent of the 1969 class and 90 per cent of the 1961 class indicate that such is the case for them.

Wartburg Seminary's 1969 graduates show the same trend, with 71 per cent reporting their anticipation to use mostly the lessons of the Liturgical Year as the basis for their preaching. The 1961 graduates, while indicating that 63 per cent have used these lessons as a basis for their preaching, report that 33 per cent use the lessons sometimes and 3 per cent seldom use them at all.

Question #5 dealt with the strengths of the seminary programs in homiletical theory. In lieu of interpretations on every remark made by those who responded to this question, this section of the study will concern itself with the two or three most often cited comments by those who responded to this question.

At Evangelical Lutheran Theological Seminary, the 1969 graduates indicated that the strengths of the program involved the instruction on sermon outlining (38%), the objectives and general content of beginning class in homiletics (31%), and the stress on textual preaching (25%). Similar comments were made by the 1961 graduates as 74 per cent appreciated the stress on textual preaching and 45 per cent felt that the instruction on sermon outlining was of value.

Luther Seminary graduates are somewhat different in their opinions of the strengths of their programs. Of the 1969 graduates, 39 per cent felt the video recorder to be of assistance,[1] 32 per cent appreciated the interrelationship with other seminary departments, and 29 per cent felt that a strength of the program was the Professor, Arndt Halvorson. Likewise, 29 per cent of the 1961 graduates recall that their professor was a definite strength in the homiletics program. However, 12 per cent of this class indicated that they could think of no strengths of the program.

Wartburg Seminary graduates also favored the professor as a strength of the program. Thirty-nine per cent of the class of 1969 and 44 per cent of the class of 1961 have indicated this to be the case. Along with the strength to the program by the professor, W. A. Poovey, the 1969 graduates appreciated the system of evaluation (39%) and the stress on biblical preaching (35%). The 1961 graduates felt that the stress on textual preaching is a definite strength (37%). This appreciation of instruction on textual preaching by the class of 1961 is also reflected in their leanings toward textual preaching as reported earlier in this chapter.

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[1]The video recorder endorsed by the 1969 graduates was not a part of equipment used by the seminary until 1967, thereby explaining the absence of its mention by the class of 1961.

Question #6 seeks responses regarding the opinions
of the graduates as to the weaknesses of the programs
on homiletical instruction. As with question #5, this
section will concern itself with the two or three most
often cited comments by those who responded to this
question.

The most often expressed criticism of the program
at Evangelical Lutheran Theological Seminary by both the
1969 and 1961 graduating classes was the limited view of
preaching (44% of the class of 1969 and 42% of the class
of 1961). It is interesting to note that even though a
large majority of both classes accept textual preaching
as a norm, there is a substantial number of the same men
who feel that the strong endorsement of only one view of
preaching is a weakness in the program. Other weaknesses
as indicated by the class of 1969 are the lack of experi-
mentation (31%), lack of basic speech methods (25%) and
the fact that the program is limited to a one-man depart-
ment (25%). The 1961 class felt that the homiletics in-
struction has a lack of relevancy (35%) and, like the
1969 class, thought it lacked instruction in basic speech
methods (29%).

Because Luther Seminary is much larger than the
other two seminaries of the American Lutheran Church,
it may be anticipated that over-crowded conditions may
create weaknesses. According to the seminary graduates,
this is the case. As a result, 51 per cent of the 1969

graduates feel that there are limited opportunities to practice-preach. Likewise, 36 per cent of the 1961 graduates express the same feeling. Due to the large enrollment, the students have only three opportunities to preach throughout the three years of seminary instruction. The large classes (felt to be a weakness by 36% of the 1969 graduates and 15% of the 1961 graduates) seem to breed other weaknesses as indicated by the class of 1961 such as lack of individual attention (22%). Other weaknesses cited by the same class were lack of relevancy (29%) and lack of basic speech instruction (16%).

Wartburg Seminary graduates of 1969 were equally concerned about two weaknesses: artificial conditions for practice preaching (22%) and a limited view of preaching (22%). The artificial conditions for practice preaching here referred to are the situations in which the students are required to practice preach to classmates in a classroom setting. From the questionnaires received, it is apparent that the students would prefer a worship setting.

The class of 1961 seemed to be concerned about three other items: the lack of opportunity to practice preach (30%), the lack of relevancy (26%) and the lack of instruction in basic speech (19%).

In terms of the strengths and weaknesses of the seminary programs in homiletical instruction, for the

most part there is general agreement between the graduates of 1969 and 1961 as to the relative merits or weaknesses of the respective institutions.

Opinions of the Writer

The opinions of the writer regarding the homiletical theories of the American Lutheran Church are based upon a variety of experiences and associations, namely three years of study at one of the American Lutheran Church seminaries,[1] eight years in the parish ministry of the American Lutheran Church, the association during his undergraduate and graduate training with the theories of rhetoric and public address, and the insights gained through personal visits to the seminaries and the professors of homiletics serving as subjects for this study.

It is evident to the writer that the theories of homiletics presented at the seminary in Columbus, Ohio (E. L. T. S.) are direct results of the extensive promotion of textual preaching as the "officially accepted form" of proclamation from the pulpit.

This strong emphasis upon textual preaching has received criticism from the professors of the two other American Lutheran Church seminaries, from most of the

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[1]The writer was a student of the Evangelical Lutheran Theological Seminary of Columbus, Ohio, from 1957 to 1961 (one of the years consisting of a required internship).

six homiletical theorists, and from some of the students
of the seminary. However, although the teachings of
Stanley Schneider do not appear to be in the main stream
of contemporary homiletical theory, one item cannot be
overlooked. The results of the surveys of the 1961 and
1969 graduating classes show that textual preaching is
used more than any other type by American Lutheran
Church pastors.

A major advantage of stressing one method of preach-
ing lies in the fact that the student gets to know well
one approach to preaching. This might be compared to
teaching a student about the fine points of swimming.
In order to excel, he first must be taught the fundamentals.
Once he has mastered the basic techniques, then he can be-
gin to adopt his own style. Many young swimmers have
faltered not because they lack the necessary physical
ability, but because they have not learned well the basic
fundamentals. The same holds true in preaching. Once the
basic methods are mastered, then the preacher may begin to
"experiment." However, from what has been revealed through
the surveys and through conversation with other graduates
of the seminaries, there is sufficient reason to believe
that textual preaching is still regarded as "standard."

Of the things which are lacking in the homiletical
department at Evangelical Lutheran Theological Seminary,
the writer is of the opinion that the absence of training
in basic speech methods leaves a vacuum in the homiletics

program. It seems as though all of the instruction in theology or in the theories of preaching are of little importance to the preacher if he is unable properly to communicate the gospel to his audience.

Another apparent lack in the program is the hesitance of the professor to give "equal time" to topical and problem-centered preaching. While textual preaching may be the "norm," the writer feels that there is a definite place in Lutheran pulpits for the other forms of preaching.

Missing from the classes in homiletics at Evangelical Lutheran Theological Seminary, is a genuine emphasis on so-called "experimental" preaching such as "dialogue" sermons, "chancel dramas," etc. The writer feels that preaching of this type not only is effective, but can be also in harmony with the emphasis on textual preaching.

At Luther Seminary the chief asset to the program of instruction lies in two areas: (1) the professor, and (2) the resources. The professor, Arndt Halvorson, is a man who seeks to present to his students a variety of preaching methods while, at the same time, developing the individual personalities of the candidates for the ministry.

The resources for homiletical instruction at Luther Seminary far surpass those at the other two schools.

The elaborate video recorder, the presence of a part-time assistant in homiletics, and the availability of a man to aid students with speech problems, are of extreme importance in offering the potential for a well-rounded program in homiletics.

However, due to the size of the enrollment at the seminary, it is virtually impossible for the professor to develop the individual personalities of the students, let alone have the opportunity to hear each of them preach a sufficient number of times. Even the use of the video recorder, while a useful teaching aid, cannot create the proper atmosphere for the serious student of preaching. More will be said about this later in the chapter.

In Dubuque, Iowa, the professor at Wartburg Seminary is deemed to be the most vital element to the success of the program by both the 1969 and 1961 graduates of the school. W. A. Poovey is not only schooled in the theories of preaching, but is also an apt preacher. His chief asset lies in the fact that he is able to stimulate his students through his zeal for preaching. This enthusiasm for preaching is contagious as the students of Wartburg tend to reflect their professor's urgency to preach. Of importance, too, is the Rev. Mr. Poovey's concern that his students write their sermons in the light of their positions as pastors. Each sermon, he feels, should be composed with the congregation in mind.

Lacking in the Wartburg program is the presence on the staff of at least one man trained in the instruction of basic speech methods. As with the situation at Evangelical Lutheran Theological Seminary, the students sometimes find themselves frustrated at having the knowledge of theology and homiletical theories, while not having the communication skills necessary to relate the gospel in the most effective manner.

While Poovey is willing to "experiment" in preaching through the use of dialogue, chancel drama, etc., there appears to be limited opportunity for the students to preach in a worship setting. The writer is convinced that while preaching in a classroom may offer some opportunities for practice, the student will benefit much more from the experience of preaching in a worship setting. Preaching in artificial conditions tends to encourage artificial sermons; the student who preaches in the classroom setting probably will be inclined to preach in a different manner than he would while participating in the atmosphere of worship.

While the three seminaries are not of one mind regarding the theories of homiletics, the writer feels that the American Lutheran Church is stronger as a result of the different emphases. Various ways of communicating the gospel tend to be more effective with more people than the insistence of preaching one way and one way only.

For the conscientious student who knows for what
he is looking in a seminary, there is available a choice
of theories and emphases of homiletics within the frame-
work of the American Lutheran Church. Also, for the
student who may transfer from one seminary to another,
there is the opportunity to become associated with a
different approach to homiletical theory. (However, the
writer is aware of the fact that most of the seminary
students attend a particular school on the basis of geo-
graphical location and are not apt to transfer. There-
fore, for most of the American Lutheran Church seminarians,
there is little opportunity to become acquainted with a
variety of approaches to homiletical theory.)

For the writer, there is the frustration in seeing
an apparent lessening of emphasis on the homiletics por-
tion of the seminary curriculum. He feels that preaching
is of paramount importance to the Church. Therefore,
much more stress should be placed upon upgrading programs
and increasing personnel within the homiletics depart-
ments. More will be said about this in the next chapter
on suggestions for the future.

Outside Influences

Is it possible that application of the theories
taught in the seminary classroom is influenced to any
degree by the situation in which the preacher finds
himself after graduation? Are textual sermons more

commonly preached by those in, let us say, rural parishes
while topical sermons are delivered to congregations in
the larger urban centers?

Through the surveys sent to the classes of 1969
and 1961 of the seminaries, an attempt was made to relate
the effects of outside influences upon the application
of these theories. Prior to receiving the results from
the questionnaires, it was thought by the writer that
there might be a correlation between the type of preach-
ing and the location of a congregation (question #8), the
size of the community (question #9), the size of congre-
gation (question #10), or the type of ministry (questions
#4 and #11). However, as a result of the surveys, no
significant correlation could be detected between the
method of preaching and the types of ministry in which
the pastors are engaged.

OUTLINE FOR CHAPTER VIII

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE FUTURE

CHAPTER VIII

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE FUTURE

Introduction

In Chapter VII, an evaluation of the homiletical

theories of the American Lutheran Church was made in

terms of judgments expressed by the graduating classes

of 1969 and 1961 of the three seminaries of the Ameri-

can Lutheran Church and in terms of the opinions of the

writer.

This chapter concerns itself with the suggestions

for the future instruction in homiletics at the three

seminaries. As was the case in the previous chapter,

various sources will be used: the survey of the class of

1969 of the three seminaries, the survey of the class of

1961 of the three seminaries, the opinions of the pro-

fessors of homiletics at the three seminaries, and the

opinions of the writer.

Survey of the Class of 1969

The first source for the purpose of offering sug-

gestions for the future comes from the 1969 graduating

classes of the three American Lutheran Church seminaries.

The students were asked to offer suggestions for the

future through a questionnaire given them _via_ their homiletics professors. The nature of this survey was discussed at length at the beginning of Chapter VII.

Results of the Survey[1]

The following results were obtained from the three seminaries regarding question #7, "What suggestions do you have for future instruction in homiletics at your seminary?":

E. L. T. S.

    More preaching opportunities (4)
    The use of experimental preaching (4)
    Additional staff (3)
    More stress on basic speech methods (2)
    Exposure to successful preachers (2)
    More stress on problem-centered sermons (2)
    Better seminary class scheduling (1)
    More use of the video recorders (1)

Luther

    Smaller classes (24)
    More relevancy (21)
    More experience in congregational preaching (16)
    More stress on basic speech methods (14)
    Exposure to successful preachers (11)
    More stress on the effect of the sermon on the
        audience (9)
    Better use of imagination (9)
    More importance placed on homiletics (9)
    More emphasis on sermon preparation (6)
    More experimental preaching (5)

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[1]It will be noted that the suggestions for the future are concerned with the mechanics of the classes in homiletics more than with the constituents of "Invention," "Arrangement," "Style," "Memory," and "Delivery" as reported in Chapters II through VI. Consequently, the graduates of 1969 were concerned not as much about the basic theories presented in the classrooms, but with the opportunities to put these theories into practice. Within this chapter, the comments of the graduates of 1961, the seminary professors, and the writer reflect the same feeling.

<u>Luther</u> (con't.)

    No suggestions for the future (5)
    Additional staff (4)
    Stress on special occasion preaching (1)
    Better use of Hebrew and Greek (1)
    Maintaining of competent instructors (1)

<u>Wartburg</u>

    A wider base for evaluation (6)
    The use of experimental preaching (5)
    More individual attention (3)
    More preaching opportunities (2)
    More stress on basic speech methods (2)
    More stress on problem-centered sermons (1)
    Less artificial conditions (1)
    Preaching workshops for graduates (1)

Survey of the Class of 1961

The second source for the purpose of offering suggestions for the future comes from the 1961 graduating classes of the three American Lutheran Church seminaries. The pastors were asked to offer suggestions for the future through a questionnaire sent to them. The nature of this survey was discussed at the beginning of Chapter VII.

Results of the Survey

The following results were obtained from the pastors who graduated in 1961 from the three American Lutheran Church seminaries regarding question #7, "What suggestions do you have for future instruction in homiletics at your seminary?":

E. L. T. S.

More stress on basic speech methods (12)
More experimental preaching (6)
Exposure to successful preachers (6)
Use of recording equipment (4)
Additional staff (4)
Better use of imagination (4)
More relevancy (3)
Stress of the natural style (3)
More opportunities to preach (3)
No suggestions for the future (2)
Use of speech therapy when needed (1)
Stress on preaching for commitment (1)
Stress of pastoral emphasis (1)
More stress of the Liturgical Year (1)
Study of the use of mass media (1)
Stress on more biblical preaching (1)
Stress on the effect of the sermon on the
   audience (1)
Maintaining of competent instructors (1)
Better balance between law and gospel (1)
Emphasis of Bible study (1)

Luther

More relevancy (23)
More opportunities to preach (18)
More stress on basic speech methods (14)
Smaller classes (11)
More experimental preaching (11)
Exposure to successful preachers (11)
More importance placed upon homiletics (5)
No suggestions for the future (5)
Preaching workshops for graduates (4)
More emphasis on sermon preparation (3)
More experience in congregational preaching (3)
Better use of imagination (2)
Better use of Hebrew and Greek (2)
Professors who are good preachers (2)
Stress on need for prayer as part of preparation (2)
Stress on more biblical sermons (1)
More theological sermons (1)
Stress on the work of the Holy Spirit (1)
Additional staff (1)
Less emphasis on the courses in homiletics (1)
Use of sensitivity groups (1)
More help in sermon outlining (1)
Use of both professors and laymen as critics (1)

Wartburg

More stress on basic speech methods (6)
More experimental preaching (6)
More opportunities to preach (5)
Better use of Hebrew and Greek (2)
Preaching workshops for graduates (2)
Better use of imagination (2)
More importance placed upon homiletics (2)
Exposure to successful preachers (1)
Emphasis on sermons for children (1)
Stress on the problem areas of preaching (1)
Better professor (1)
More relevancy (1)
Smaller classes (1)
Stress on special occasion preaching (1)
Instruction in series preaching (1)
Stress on the value of manuscripts (1)
More stress on topical and problem-centered
   preaching (1)
Stress on pastoral emphasis (1)

Interpretation of the Surveys

As in the case of Chapter VII, since the same ques-
tion was asked of both groups, the interpretation of the
surveys of both the 1969 and 1961 graduates will be con-
sidered together and compared as to the results. Also,
as in the case of Chapter VII, comments will be made upon
the two or three most often cited statements given by
the seminarians and pastors who responded to the question-
naires.

At Evangelical Lutheran Theological Seminary, al-
though no specific statement(s) seemed to stand out from
the rest in terms of numbers, it can be reported that
25 per cent of those who responded indicated a desire
for more preaching opportunities and more experimental
preaching. In view of these results and those of the

former questions, it is apparent that the students desire
to practice preach more than three times during their
three years at the seminary. They feel, too, that while
the emphasis on textual preaching may be appreciated, a
wider variety of sermon types in future instruction would
be desirable.

The pastors of the American Lutheran Church who
were graduated from the seminaries in 1961 have appealed
for more stress on basic speech methods (38%). In fact,
this suggestion comes from the 1961 class of all three
seminaries. On top of this, 19 per cent express a de-
sire for more experimental preaching in the seminary and
for the opportunity to become exposed to some of the
successful preachers. As indicated through the returned
questionnaires, this exposure to successful preachers
could be in the form of personal contacts or recorded
sermons.

The students of Luther Seminary were aware of the
problems created through the extremely large classes;
therefore, they were strong in their plea for smaller
class enrollments (41%). Also, 36 per cent of the class
of 1969 suggested that there be more instruction in the
ways of making a sermon more relevant. This suggestion
for the future is shared by the 1961 graduates (31%) who
returned the survey. Nineteen per cent of the surveys of
the class of 1969 contained the suggestion for more

congregational preaching (as opposed to practice preach-
ing in a classroom).

Along with the comments for more relevancy in the
future, the 1961 graduates look for more opportunities
to practice preach (25%) and for some system to place
more stress on basic speech methods (19%).

At Wartburg Seminary, as with the 1969 class at
Evangelical Lutheran Theological Seminary, there is not
much numerical separation in terms of suggestions for
the future. However, 26 per cent of those who answered
question #7 indicated a desire for more of the experi-
mental preaching and for a wider base for evaluation
(i.e., sermon critiques from more sources than the pro-
fessor and student body); suggestions in this regard
included the use of outside pastors or laymen from local
congregations.

The pastors of the 1961 graduating class, like those
of the other seminaries, looked for instruction in basic
speech criteria (22%). The same percentage sought more
of the so-called experimental preaching. Finally, 19
per cent thought that more opportunities to practice
preach would be of merit.

Opinions of the Seminary Professors

What do the seminary professors, themselves, suggest
for the future of the programs for which they are responsi-
ble? During recent interviews, the writer had the oppor-
tunity to ask this question of all three men.

Stanley Schneider of Evangelical Lutheran Theological Seminary has four specific suggestions for the future instruction of homiletics. The first involves the possibility of conducting preaching conferences for the pastors of the American Lutheran Church. Similar to the suggestions offered by the classes of 1969 and 1961, these conferences would be designed to offer to the pastors in the various parishes throughout the country an opportunity to review the basic concepts of homiletical theory along with the chance to receive critical evaluation of their preaching by other pastors.

Schneider's second suggestion is centered on the level of the local parish. He encourages the pastors from various local congregations to meet weekly and discuss the text for Sunday's sermon. Such a "cell group" approach would offer stimulation and insight for the pastors involved.

Third, regarding the seminary program itself, Schneider gives a plea for a greater emphasis upon homiletics. "In 1961," he says, "our seminary had two and one-half years of required homiletics; today, one year is required. We have too many people today who are attempting to minimize the importance of the sermon."[1]

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[1]Schneider, interview.

Finally, the Evangelical Lutheran Theological Seminary professor desires that more pastors practice the method known as textual preaching. In a recent conversation, he addressed himself to this very issue:

> Most of the pastors don't follow our method.
> From what I hear, mostly topical sermons are
> given. The men may know the mechanics of textual
> preaching, but do not use it. This is foolish-
> ness. It is as though he had a fine automobile
> but continually kept it on jacks in the garage.
> The potential and mechanism are there, but they
> are simply not being used.[1]

In St. Paul, Minnesota, Luther Seminary's Arndt Halvorson suggests that something be done to encourage relevant preaching. He feels that perhaps this lack of relevancy may be directly related to the multitude of duties of the parish pastor. "I get the feeling," he said, "that pastors are so busy administratively, that they have neither the time to capture the flavor of the text nor the time to know well their congregation in order to apply the truth of the text in the most meaning-ful way."[2]

Three suggestions are offered by Wartburg's Poovey. According to him, the future of homiletical theory, or of preaching itself, would be enhanced if (1) preachers learn more about their Bible. This, according to Poovey, is "a most vital element in a successful future for

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[1]Ibid.

[2]Halvorson, interview.

preaching."[1] (2) There should be some opportunity in the future to encourage a response from the audience to the sermon. Perhaps this means that sermons should contain more clearly an invitation for the listener to respond. (3) Pastors should know their congregations better. "Too often, we are so text-centered that we forget the people to whom we are preaching."[2]

Opinions of the Writer

In view of the results of this study, the interviews, the surveys, and the conversations with other pastors of the American Lutheran Church, the writer is convinced that the next few years will be of genuine importance in setting the pace for the future of homiletical instruction at the three seminaries of the American Lutheran Church.

During recent years, the trend in homiletical education has been to lessen the emphasis on instruction in preaching. In lieu of required courses in homiletics for each term that the student is in seminary, other courses have been substituted which deal with pastoral counseling, clinical training, and the "Social Gospel." This attitude within the seminaries cannot help but be reflected in the type of ministry within the parishes of the Church.

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[1]Poovey, interview.   [2]Ibid.

Therefore, the writer offers suggestions in two directions. The first is geared toward the seminaries; the second involves the parish pastors.

For the three seminaries of the American Lutheran Church there should be an increasing awareness of the importance of preaching. Certainly, the Holy Scriptures, themselves, bear witness to the fact that preaching is important: "How are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without a preacher?" (Romans 10:14). Consequently, at least one course in homiletical theory should be required of each student for each term in the seminary.

In terms of the nature of these courses, the writer feels that the particular emphases of each professor should be maintained, yet, ample opportunity should be given the students to become exposed to all forms of preaching both as to the types of sermon (textual, topical, and problem-centered), and as to the various methods of expressing the message (dialogue sermons, chancel drama, etc.).

Of value, too, would be the opportunity for the seminarians to become acquainted with successful preachers. Why not invite the great preachers of our day into the seminary for the purpose of giving lectures or examples on effective preaching? While the writer is aware that with this exposure comes the danger of the student's

wanting to imitate another's style instead of developing his own, he is also convinced that there is supreme value in learning through such exposure.

Finally, the seminary program should aim for the increasing of the size of the staff by including, above everything else, a man who can assist in developing sound theories and practice of good speech. This instruction can be aimed at the student's speech while delivering the sermon, reading the lessons, conducting the Liturgy, or in working with his congregation. How valuable it would be for the student who is afraid to stand in front of a group to develop confidence. How much easier it is to correct poor speaking habits early in a man's career. What a blessing would be courses in discussion for a man who will spend much of his valuable time in working with committees.

All in all, the writer is of the opinion that an increased emphasis in homiletical instruction which includes attention to the importance of good speech would assist the young candidates for the ministry in the really important phases of their pastoral responsibilities.

For the parish pastors of the American Lutheran Church, the writer urges the Church to consider the conducting of workshops on preaching. The purpose of each workshop would be to stimulate men to become better preachers, to stress the importance of sermon preparation,

to acquaint the men with various ways of preaching, to offer concrete examples of successful sermons, to introduce the men to successful preachers of our day, and to give each the opportunity to preach at least one sermon during the workshop for purposes of evaluation and criticism by his peers.

The success of this workshop would depend upon a number of items:

1. Someone would have to assume full responsibility for the program. This person, perhaps a man from Church Headquarters, would see to it that workshops are established in key locations with competent individuals at the head of each.

2. Each district of the Church should have at least one such workshop offered each year.

3. Each workshop should contain the same basic format.

4. Finances for the operation of the workshops should come from the pastors who participate in the same. Possibly, the finances would be supplied by the congregations.

5. The workshop experience should not be considered a part of the pastor's vacation. This is a part of his continuing education.

6. The workshop should last about three days.
   Any less time would not permit adequate
   development; more time would lead to
   redundancy.

7. The workshop would be limited to thirty
   pastors per session.

8. Pastors who attend the workshops should have
   been in the active ministry for at least
   five years.

9. A charge of $50.00 per pastor would cover
   the costs for each session including room
   and board.

A workshop of this nature possibly could be arranged
in this manner:

First Day

        Registration
        Introduction of the program
        Presentation by guest speaker[1]
        Lunch
        Instruction in various preaching methods
        Illustrations of successful preaching
        Recess
        Dinner
        "Cell groups" for sermons and critical evaluation

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[1]The guest speaker for each of these workshops would
be someone who has been associated with successful preach-
ing. Examples of such personalities are: Dr. Ralph W.
Sockman (Minister Emeritus, Christ Church, New York City);
Bishop Gerald Kennedy (The Methodist Church, Los Angeles);
Rev. David O. Woodyard (Dean of the Chapel, Denison Uni-
versity); or Dr. G. Paul Butler (Editor of the series,
Best Sermons).

Second Day

    Presentation by guest speaker
    Display of helpful aids to preaching (books, etc.)
    Question-answer session between men and guest
       speaker
    Lunch
    Instruction in "experimental" preaching
    Illustrations of successful preaching
    Recess
    Dinner
    "Cell groups" for sermons and critical evaluation

Third Day

    Presentation by guest speaker
    Display of stimulating sermon outlines
    Question-answer session between men and guest
       speaker
    Lunch
    Instruction in use of mass media
    "Cell groups" for sermons and critical evaluation
    Dinner
    Closing devotions

Summary

Through the suggestions for the future, along with
the survey of the homiletical theories of the American
Lutheran Church and the evaluation of the same by various
sources, the writer has hoped to present a picture of the
current homiletical practice in one of our nation's
larger Protestant denominations. Through this study,
the writer has attempted to show the contributions that
the seminaries of the American Lutheran Church have made
to the field of preaching (especially in terms of textual
preaching). Through interviews, surveys, and associ-
ation with the principles of effective speech, the
writer has presented opinions regarding the strengths

and weaknesses of the seminary programs along with sug-
gestions for the future. In short, the writer has sought
to tell the story of how the American Lutheran Church,
through its homiletical theories promotes that which is
known in St. Paul's first letter to the Church in
Corinth as "the foolishness of preaching."

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