

Concordia Theological Monthly

Continuing

LEHRE UND WEHRE

MAGAZIN FUER EV.-LUTH. HOMILETIK

THEOLOGICAL QUARTERLY-THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY

Vol. XVIII

May, 1947

No. 5

CONTENTS

	Page
The Melancthonian Blight. Richard R. Caemmerer	321
Conference Paper on Romans 4:5. H. J. Bouman	338
Sermon Study on Micah 7:14-20. Th. Laetsch	348
Outlines on the Nitzsch Gospel Selections	360
Miscellanea	374
Theological Observer	380
Book Review	396

Ein Prediger muss nicht allein we-
den, also dass er die Schafe unter-
weise, wie sie rechte Christen sollen
sein, sondern auch daneben den Woel-
fen wehren, dass sie die Schafe nicht
angreifen und mit falscher Lehre ver-
fuehren und Irrtum einfuehren.

Luther

Es ist kein Ding, das die Leute
mehr bei der Kirche behaelt denn
die gute Predigt. — *Apologie, Art. 24*

If the trumpet give an uncertain
sound, who shall prepare himself to
the battle? — *1 Cor. 14:3*

Published by the

Ev. Luth. Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States

CONCORDIA PUBLISHING HOUSE, St. Louis 18, Mo.

Homiletics

Outlines on the Nitzsch Gospel Selections

PENTECOST

ACTS 2:1-13

We need a new Pentecost! The Church needs another Reformation! The world needs another Luther! The fickle human spirit is always looking for signs from heaven, instead of availing itself of the gifts God has placed at its disposal. On this day the Church will do well to look backward to her rich legacy and then forward.

THE GIFT OF PENTECOST

- I. Knowledge of the Truth II. Courageous Confession*
III. Zeal for Missions

I

1. By a three years' course of training in the school of the Master the disciples had received the first fruits of the Holy Spirit, John 20:22; 1 Cor. 12:3. Yet great was their ignorance of spiritual things, Luke 18:34; even after the resurrection, Luke 24:21, 25; Acts 1:6. Jesus promised them future enlightenment, John 14:26; 16:13. — V. 4 of text: "They were all filled with the Holy Ghost and began to speak." That was public preaching, which presupposes clear perception of the body of Christian doctrine, or "the wonderful works of God," v. 11. To such an extent that they were infallible in their public utterances, 1 Cor. 2:13; 2 Pet. 1:21.

2. Possession and understanding of Bible truth is a gift of divine grace. The uncovered man is spiritually ignorant, 1 Cor. 2:8, 14; Matt. 11:25. Left to himself, his aspirations do not get beyond self-salvation, or righteousness by works, 1 Cor. 2:8-11. The same Spirit enlightens men today, 2 Cor. 3:6; John 6:63; Matt. 13:11; 1 Cor. 2:10. The Spirit imparts thorough, sure knowledge, John 16:13; 8:32; Eph. 4:13. He teaches knowledge which is not dead, but life-giving, John 17:3; Luke 1:77; knowledge that protects against error, Eph. 4:14; Heb. 5:14.

3. Self-examination, 1 Cor. 3:16-17; 2 Cor. 6:1.

II

1. The disciples were timid, Matt. 26:56; even after the resurrection, John 20:19, 26. — A miraculous change wrought at Pentecost. Same enemies thirst for their blood, but there is no fear, Acts 4:19-20. The courage of Peter, who had denied the Lord, Acts 2:23, 36. They are mocked, v. 13, but are not ashamed.

2. A sublime disregard of personal safety is given those who are temples of the Spirit, Pss. 116:10; 118:17. God answers their prayer for courage, Acts 4:29, 31; 14:3; Eph. 6:19-20. Such confession implies walking uprightly, Rom. 12:2; 1 Pet. 1:14; 1 John 2:15; 1 Pet. 4:4; fighting the holy fight of faith, 2 Tim. 4:7; Eph. 6:10 ff. Such confession and conversation has the object of winning the unconverted, Matt. 5:16; 1 Pet. 2:12.

III

1. False notions of disciples as to Kingdom of God, Acts 1:6. A bone of contention in Apostolic Church, Acts 11:2-3; 10:45. That was prejudice, sinful pride. — Apostles were freed of such erroneous conceptions of God's kingdom by Pentecost. Seventeen nations were represented. The disciples preach to them not only in Hebrew, but in many languages, v. 8. — Success, vv. 41, 47.

2. The enlightened believer will not limit Gospel operations to one nation, Matt. 8:11; Acts 2:17. They which *believe* are the true Israel of God, Gal. 6:16. Abraham is the father not only of the Jews, but of all them that believe, Matt. 3:9; Rom. 4:11; Luke 19:9. The field of the Church is the world, Matt. 13:38. There is no excuse for narrow prejudice against race or color or rank (James 2:1-9) in the Church. "Each One Reach One."
L. J. ROEHM

PENTECOST MONDAY

Acts 2:37-47

Pentecost commemorates the establishing of the Christian Church. The story of Pentecost, Acts 2:1-13. This was the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy, Acts 2:17-21. Through the work of the Holy Ghost the Christian Church came into existence. We consider:

THE FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH

*I. How it was founded**II. How its members manifested their spiritual life*

I

A. "They were pricked in their heart," v. 37. Who? Jews and proselytes, vv. 5-11. Like a sharp spear, the words of Peter had penetrated their hearts. What had Peter said to them? That they had crucified with wicked hands their Lord and Christ, their Savior, whom God had raised from the dead and permitted to ascend into heaven, where now He is sitting at the right hand of the Father, vv. 23-24, 33-36. Proof that Christ was the promised Messiah was made manifest on this day by the fulfillment of the promise the Father had given Jesus regarding the Holy Ghost, v. 33. Through this message these men were so utterly crushed that they asked: "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" V. 37.

B. Peter answers, "Repent and be baptized, etc.," vv. 38 to 40. "Repent" without the addition "believe" signifies the entire inner change of man, contrition and faith. They should turn wholly to Jesus as their Savior and accept Him as such. "And be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins," v. 38. The name of Jesus designates the revelation by which Jesus Christ is known, the Savior. Being baptized in His name implies the confession that one needs Christ as the Savior and is willing to serve Him. But Baptism is not merely a confession; it saves. It offers and seals forgiveness of sins, v. 38; Tit. 3: 5; 1 Pet. 3: 21. They would "receive the gift of the Holy Ghost,"—not the charismatic gifts, but the gift of grace and salvation which is always present in the heart which the Holy Spirit enters, Rom. 8: 16; 8: 26; Eph. 3: 16; Gal. 5: 22-24. And thus they would be "saved from this untoward" crooked, useless, destruction-bound "generation."

C. The result of Peter's sermon was phenomenal. About 3,000 souls were baptized and added to the Church, v. 41. How they were baptized is not stated, for the mode of Baptism is not essential. Thus the first Christian Church was founded by the use of the means of grace.

D. Since man has not changed and God cannot change, the only way to build Christ's kingdom on earth is by the

means of grace. These means of grace are "unto you and to your children and to all that are afar off, etc.," v. 39. Not by education, or entertainment, or human philosophy, or improving of environments, or by a social gospel is the Church built in our days, but only by the Word and the Sacraments. Therefore, Matt. 28: 19-20.

II

A. Having realized their sinfulness and having found joy and comfort in their Savior, these members of the first Christian Church "continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine, etc.," v. 42. They were willing, diligent, and attentive hearers, who would not forsake the assembling of themselves together, Heb. 10: 25. "In fellowship," their common faith and knowledge of Jesus was a stronger bond than family ties, business associations, and material interests. "In the breaking of bread," no doubt, the Sacrament of the Altar. "In prayers," really, in *the* prayers, certain fixed prayers, which became a part of their worship. — Let us follow the example of these early Christians by continuing in the Apostles' doctrine, etc.

B. They proved the sincerity of their faith by a God-pleasing life, vv. 43-45. The conduct of these members constrained the unbelievers who observed them to stand in awe and reverence of them. "Had all things common," not Communism (cf. Acts 5: 4), but charitable co-operation of rich and poor (cf. Acts 4: 36—37). — So today the consistent Christian life commands the respect of the unchurched. The true Christian will have a regard for the needs, material and spiritual, of the brethren. The program of the local congregation and of Synod.

C. These members, finally, were persevering and faithful in their service of Christ and of the Church, vv. 46-47. "Daily in the Temple," most likely for prayer (Acts 3: 1), and in the homes for their more solemn services and for the Lord's Supper. The joy and happiness of their souls reflected itself in their daily life and work so that they found favor with all people and thereby gained other souls for the church. In a short time the church at Jerusalem grew from 3,000 to 5,000, Acts 4: 4. — So today our lives must consistently manifest the grace and goodness of God, Matt. 5: 16, so that we, too, become a blessing to those who know not Christ.

D. The report of the first Christian Church is set forth for an example to us. Let us by diligent use of the means of grace enable the Holy Ghost to strengthen our faith, so that we may abound in love and service of God and our fellow man and obtain power and courage for faithful witnessing unto the Savior.

WALTER A. BAEPLER

TRINITY SUNDAY

MATT. 28: 16-20

Cycle of great church festivals again brought to a close. — The great love of the Father (Christmas), Christ's vicarious sacrifice on Golgotha and His glorious resurrection (Good Friday and Easter), and the significant outpouring of the Holy Spirit (Pentecost). — Today Trinity Sunday.

CHRIST'S GREAT COMMISSION TO HIS CHURCH

- I. *Presents the great truth of the Holy Trinity*
- II. *Outlines the Church's important work*

I

Despite great advantages disciples often revealed much ignorance, especially when Jesus spoke of His work. Also at this post-resurrection revelation some doubted (v. 17). — Jesus undoubtedly removed doubts, as in instance of disciples on way to Emmaus, by referring to Old Testament promises fulfilled in Him. Christ wanted messengers who were convinced.

Jesus had repeatedly spoken of His Father — and of the Spirit, of the latter especially in His farewell address, John 14—16. Now the Savior, in the command to baptize, states expressly, "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

We have here a definite statement about the Trinity. — The doctrine presents a deep mystery. No one can fathom or understand it. Our God is incomprehensible. — But the Savior's language is plain and simple.

These are not three names for one and the same person, but three distinct persons. Cf. John 5: 31-32; 8: 50, 54; 14: 16-17. The Father has begotten the Son, the Son was begotten

of the Father; the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son.

However, the Church is to baptize not into *three* Gods, but *one* God. Jesus had always claimed oneness with the Father, John 10:30; 14:9; 8:19. Bible makes positive claim that there is only *one* God, Deut. 6:4; 2 Kings 19:19; Mark 12:29, 32; 1 Tim. 2:5; Gal. 3:20, etc.

II

V. 18. Christ instituted Holy Baptism. — Church should administer this Sacrament. That Jesus embodied it in His great commission emphasizes great importance of Baptism.

Baptize in name of Triune God. This marvelous name pronounced upon those baptized. Really baptized into the name. Baptized people are thus brought into communion with Triune God.

Baptism is not a mere church ceremony. Since God's name is spoken upon us, we become God's children. Command really reads: "Make disciples by baptizing, etc." The *Father* adopts us. The *Son* redeemed us. We put Him on in Baptism. St. Paul calls Baptism "a washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost." Through Baptism the *Holy Spirit* granted us the new birth.

V. 20. Christ demands: "Teach them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." This surely emphasizes purity of doctrine. *Only* Christ's teachings, and *all* of Christ's teachings, are authorized in the Church. This includes Holy Communion, which the Savior had instituted very recently. It includes Law and Gospel. It includes *all* doctrines. It demands loyal adherence to God's Word in every doctrine. Conversely, it demands the avoidance of every false doctrine. False doctrine breaks down; Christ's doctrine builds the Church.

Can the Church hope to succeed with such a program in a day of obstacles as we face them (world conditions, church conditions, especially doctrinal indifference)? Note two things: 1. He who has all power has commissioned the Church, v. 18. 2. He has given a glorious promise, v. 20.

J. W. BEHNKEN

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

ACTS 3:1-11

"This Sunday teaches the fundamental (thought) that God is Love (*Epistle*, 1 John 4:16) and that he who claims to love God will unmistakably prove it in loving his brethren; only in such an one the love of God dwelleth." (Strodach, *The Church Year*, p. 185; 1 John 4:20, 31.)

Most fittingly therefore our text calls upon us to note:

HOW CHRISTIANS EXTEND THE HELPING HAND
TO THE GLORY OF GOD

I. They reach out to help their needy fellow men according to their abilities

A. They help *in need*. 1. The lame man of our text was in great need: (a) "Lame from his mother's womb" (v. 2, "above forty years" (4:22); (b) "He was laid daily at the gate of the Temple . . . to ask alms" (v. 2); (c) "Was asking" alms (Imperfect) of Peter and John (v. 3), who helped him (v. 7). 2. Around us, at home and abroad, are many who in a similar way are in desperate need and who beseech us for help: (a) Orphans, children of widows and of the ill, who need homes and parental care (*orphanages, home-finding societies, etc.*); (b) The deaf, the dumb, and the blind (*publications for, etc.*), especially the children who need schooling and help for their future (Institute for the Deaf, Detroit); (c) The feeble in mind (State Institutions; Bethesda, etc.) and body (the physically ill in our neighborhood and church; the aged, old folks' homes); (d) the destitute (Europe, Asia, local slums, in our congregations; hence, local charities, Red Cross, community chests, etc., Matt. 5:42); (e) Needy students for the ministry (Indigent Students' Fund; personal help); (f) Superannuated and needy ministers and teachers, their widows and orphans, who because of inadequate salaries were unable to save for emergencies; (g) Immigrants and strangers in our localities (Lev. 25:35-38; Deut. 10:19; Heb. 13:2; 1 Tim. 5:10; Immigrant Mission; Seamen's Mission); (h) Let us, like the Apostles, extend our hand to help (vv. 7-8; Matt. 5:42; Is. 58:6-7; Deut. 15:7-11; Gal. 2:10; 1 Tim. 6:18).

B. They help *according to their abilities*. 1. Peter and John did what they could (vv. 6-7), giving more than money —

the ability to walk and to earn his own daily bread (vv. 7-8).
 2. We do not all possess the same gifts (1 Cor. 12:4-11, 28-31; Luke 11:41; 2 Cor. 8:12; Luke 3:10-11; 1 Cor. 16:2). Hence we are to give as we are able of our love, money, service, kindness, encouragement, etc., and as the situation demands it.

C. But do we always help in need and according to ability?

II. They extend help to the glory of God

A. They cause those that are helped to praise God. The lame man (vv. 8-9), before the people (v. 11. Note the imperfect tenses, indicating repeated leaping and praising).
 2. So we are to help our fellow men that God may be glorified thereby (Matt. 5:16). This is done by helping in the proper spirit; not for self-glory (the Apostles' example, vv. 12-16; 4:9-12; Matt. 6:1-4; 5:16), but as unto Christ (Matt. 25:20), in His name (v. 6; Col. 3:17), in love (1 Cor. 13:3; 2 Cor. 8:24), with a willing mind (2 Cor. 8:2; Philem. 14), bountifully and cheerfully (2 Cor. 9:6-7).

B. By such assistance they *open the hearts of men to the proclamation of the Gospel*. 1. As a result of this miracle the people wondered and were amazed (v. 10), flocked around the Apostles (vv. 9-11), and gave them a wonderful opportunity to preach Christ to them (vv. 12-26) and to the Sanhedrin on the following day (4:1-12). 2. Even so our help to those in need will cause men to listen to the Gospel. Example: I know of a certain pastor who milked a sick man's cow for a whole week, each morning at six and each night at the same hour. As a result this erstwhile scoffer and hardened sinner, who had previously cursed this pastor, received instructions, accepted Christ, and is to this day a regular and faithful worshiper in one of our mission congregations. (Other examples from our medical missions or from personal experiences.) While thus helping our fellow men *physically*, we create opportunities to assist them *spiritually*, and thus through them we bring glory to God forever.

Conclusion. Truly we must all confess that we have not always extended such a helping hand to those in need. Nor have we always served according to our abilities and to the glory of God. Let us therefore contritely pray today's Gradual: "Lord, be merciful unto me, for I have sinned against Thee" (Ps. 41:4); and when in faith we behold God's helping

hand extended in mercy over us (Introit, for "He hath dealt bountifully with me," Ps. 13:6), let us, as we have prayed in the Collect, more and more seek to please Him "in word and deed," by stretching out a helping hand to our needy fellow men everywhere, rejoicing in the promise of the Gradual, "Blessed is he who considereth the poor" (Ps. 41:1). (See also Sermon Study, CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY, Vol. VII, p. 512 ff.)

THEODORE NICKEL

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

ACTS 4:1-12

We are justified before God by grace for Christ's sake. We did not, nor do we now, contribute the least to the redemptive work completed by Christ. This means that we have no active or executive part in the priestly office of Christ. Our faith is the means by which we appropriate the merits of Jesus. But we have been given an active part in the kingly office of Jesus. As loyal subjects of the King of Kings we are elevated to the exalted position of coregents with Him. We are to participate also in the administration of the prophetic office of Jesus.

OUR PART IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE PROPHETIC OFFICE OF CHRIST

The text illustrates as it teaches. The Apostles had performed a miracle in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, v. 10; 3:6. Therefore they revealed by a work Jesus as the Son of God, the almighty Lord, to whom they ascribed the miracle. In the Temple, v. 1, and at the trial, vv. 6-7, they revealed Jesus by word as the Son of God and as the Savior of the world, vv. 10-12. Is this not the same thing which Jesus did during His ministry in the days of His flesh? Catech. Ans. 132A. The text is an example of the manner in which Jesus administers His prophetic office on earth after His ascension. He calls, appoints, indoctrinates His disciples, clergy and laity, to be His witnesses. He causes the Gospel of salvation to be preached. He appears as the Stone and the Foundation on which His Church and every believer is built, set by God, rejected by men. He thus reveals Himself to friend, to foe, to the individual (lame man), to groups (Sad-

ducees, rulers, elders), to the masses (in the Temple). The chief difference in the administration of His prophetic office before and after His ascension is His visible presence then and His invisible presence now, and therefore only in our inability of beholding Him in person. The same Spirit who rested on Jesus is poured out on us, v. 8.

Let us, then, earnestly and sincerely appreciate, and efficiently fill, the prophetic office of Jesus: by observing Luke 10:16; by respecting the messengers of grace, 1 Cor. 4:1; 2 Cor. 5:20; 6:1; by realizing, each Christian in his person, the active part assigned to him in this office, which consists in witnessing for Jesus, John 15:15-16; Is. 6:8; by meeting every opportunity boldly, Mark 16:15-16; by fearlessly facing the high and low Caiaphases of our day, even under threat of persecution, John 16:2; by gently leading the penitent to Jesus and strengthening them (Office of the Keys). Know your honor and glory! Know your importance and responsibility!

The truth did not die at the death of Jesus, vv. 10-12. It was confirmed, and proclaimed with greater power, by His death, by His resurrection, by His ascension. Never has it been silenced, 1 Pet. 1:24-25; text. Jesus, the personal Truth, is eternal, and as the truth of His Word and work endures, so His prophetic office will never fail. But we sometimes fail in our administration of it by carelessness, fear, earthly interests, entanglements with the world and Satan. If we do not properly apply the Law, vv. 10-11, and the Gospel, v. 12, we are unfaithful servants and hamper man's salvation and are unworthy of the trust and honor of true prophets, Luke 11:23. Like the apostolic clergy and laity, we must ever learn the doctrine, the Word of Truth, and we must ever lead a godly, truthful life, as Christian prophets revealing Christ by word and deed.

The peculiar, divine wisdom of Jesus in behalf of humanity foresaw the success of His system or method in entrusting to all Christians the administration of His prophetic office, John 14:12; v. 4. Unconverted man, of course, will oppose and resist the testimony of the truth of the Gospel, v. 11, however, not to the discredit of the Christians. The enemy's hatred can only pursue us if we remain in the front like the Apostles. The success is Christ's, and it is due to the opera-

tions of the Holy Spirit, v. 8, who graciously acts as the motivating power according to Christ's promise, John 16:1-14.

Christ's words are spirit and life, John 6:63 b, in the Christian home at father's knee and in mother's lap, in our Christian schools, in the pastor's office and work, in the Christian pulpit and pew, in our Christian colleges and seminaries, periodicals, broadcasts, in the mission fields the world over. Let us be faithful to Jesus. 1 Cor. 15: 58.

G. H. SMUKAL

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

ACTS 4:13-22

Jesus had prepared His disciples for the difficulties which lay before them when they went out into the world as His ambassadors, John 15:20-21. The Savior's words were true. The Apostles were to learn this fact only too soon.

PREACHING IN CHRIST'S NAME ENCOUNTERS OPPOSITION

I. The nature of this opposition

II. The manner in which it must be met

I

We shall first note the men who opposed the preaching of the Gospel. In our text we see the Apostles Peter and John in the midst of an august assembly, the Sanhedrin, the highest Jewish court. The Apostles were standing trial upon the instigation of the priests, the ruler of the Temple, and the Sadducees, v. 1. The personnel of the court is described in vv. 5-6. Some of the names have a familiar ring from the Passion story. They were old enemies of Christ. Now that Jesus had ascended after He had commissioned His disciples to preach of Him, these enemies focused their hatred on those who dared to proclaim the Gospel of Christ. The same men who had opined of Jesus, Matt. 26:66, were now anxious to silence the Apostles. What a sad picture that these leaders, supposedly the best minds in the nation, could not be won for Jesus!

And what was the reason why the Apostles stood trial before this court? It was the miracle performed on the lame

man, Acts 3:6-7, and the preaching of Christ in connection with the miracle, 3:12 ff.; 4:1 ff., which stimulated the opposition into taking action, 4:3. The deed which the Apostles had done was undeniably good. Even the enemies had to admit that it was a great miracle, vv. 14, 16, 22. The Apostles' message, too, attached to the miracle, offered no reason for proceeding against them. In fact, many of the people believed, 4:4. This last fact was really what grieved the enemies of Jesus. What a flimsy reason for persecuting the Apostles!

Nevertheless, the enemies were determined to put a stop to the Apostles' speaking and teaching in the name of Jesus, vv. 16-18. But by what means could they attain their end? The Sanhedrin was in a real quandary. Having no clear case against the Apostles, they were afraid to inflict punishment on them because of the popular reaction, v. 21. The means for silencing the Apostles were limited, but the enemies went as far as they felt it safe to go, v. 21 a. A plain case of intimidation. What a travesty on justice!

The scene of Peter and John before the Sanhedrin at Jerusalem, in spite of the centuries lying between us and them, nevertheless has something strangely modern about it. Speaking and teaching in Jesus' name still meets with opposition. It may result in shedding the blood of the witness of Christ. Even the pages of modern history afford examples of this. And again, the opposition may take on a more cultured form. Today much of the scientific world objects to Jesus as the Savior, the miracle-worker on the soul of man. Modernism bores from within the Church, and with little ostentation, but so much more effectively, tries to deprive Jesus of His deity in the eyes of man. It is a situation which the Christian Church, faithful to its Lord, must meet. In what manner, we can learn from the Apostles.

II

In contrast to the court which tried them, the Apostles were "unlearned and ignorant men," v. 13. "Ignorant" here means, not especially trained in Jewish theology, laymen. Nevertheless, they were not cowed by the authority of those whom they faced. They displayed a boldness which even impressed the opposition, v. 13 a. Their judges feared the people,

but the Apostles feared nobody. Their attitude grew out of what Jesus had told them, Matt. 10:28. He had also promised Matt. 28:20 b.

But the Apostles' boldness also stemmed from the fact emphasized in v. 20. To them Jesus was not only a great and wise teacher. He was God and man. He was the Messiah of whom the Old Testament had told, John 6:69, Matt. 14:33. His task was outlined by Himself Luke 19:10. And with many miracles they had seen Jesus confirm His words. This news of Jesus, the only Savior and hope of fallen mankind, had to be spread. Men simply had to hear it or be lost. Therefore they boldly declared: vv. 19-20. A man's boldness in behalf of Jesus is proportionate to the extent to which he has seen and heard Jesus.

This boldness disarmed the opposition, v. 21 a. The Apostles secure their freedom without making any promise in response to the demand voiced in v. 18.

The Apostles' example is of special significance to all of us, pastors and laymen alike, in the present "Each One Reach One" movement. Speak and teach of Jesus as you have heard and seen Him. Then God will give His blessing on our words, and there will be many who will do as did the people spoken of in v. 12 b.

G. V. SCHICK

The Cause of Shallow Sermons

A shallow sermon, like shallow water, has no depth. To use a common expression, "There is not much to it." The hearer is given little to take home, his Bible knowledge is not increased, his faith is not strengthened, he is not encouraged towards greater consecration towards his Savior, he receives little or no comfort to endure the trials and tribulations of life, he is not encouraged in his churchgoing.

What is the cause of shallow sermons? 1. The preacher lacks Biblical knowledge. Perhaps he reads and studies much, but not his Bible. 2. The preacher does not thoroughly study and understand his text. He fails to dig into the text and misses important truths. 3. The preacher has no real text at all; he selects a subject and finds a few words of Scripture to serve as a pretext. He preaches a topical sermon and offers platitudes. 4. The preacher, not yet qualified to do otherwise, does not carefully write his sermons. At that he

hastily prepares an outline and then extemporizes. 5. The preacher, though well able to make a good sermon, delays to work on it until the end of the week; other duties then crowd in on him, and on Sunday he enters his pulpit ill-prepared. 6. The preacher fails to realize the importance of preaching doctrinal sermons. These are the hardest for the preacher to make, but for the people they are the most profitable. 7. The preacher does not visit his people, and therefore he does not know and understand their needs. 8. The preacher uses language which the people do not understand. Though such a sermon itself may not be shallow, yet it is shallow for the people. 9. The preacher does not carry through a unit thought in logical progression. His sermon is a conglomeration of thoughts, and not a clear presentation of a single subject. 10. The preacher fails to make the necessary application. The hearers do not know that what he preaches applies to them. 11. The preacher reads his sermons, does not look the people in the face, has little animation, speaks indistinctly and in a low tone of voice. The hearer's interest is not aroused, much that is read he does not even hear. The sermon as it is on paper may have great depth, but poor delivery makes it shallow for the hearer. — Anyone of these things will make a sermon shallow. Shallow sermons do not serve the purpose of preaching. They are more or less ineffective, keep people away from church, do not commend the preacher to the people, nor — to the Lord.

J. H. C. FRITZ

