

3-1-1956

Notes: Lenten Address: Great Moments in Lent (Luke 22:53), 1956

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2/19/64
Bessie Chapin

Chapel
Hill Wed. 1958

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DATE 3/1/56 OCCASION De Pauw

THEME Great Moments in hist.
*1. Ash Wednesday - morning - Hallelujah -
[Speaks in chapel several times] two vignettes -
dramatic - flashing insight -*

1. Pleasure - away from routine of college administration - money & buildings - the immediate & the material - implied compliment - know something else.
2. Introductory:

Culture
Cont. 40 days

Rome
snuffed
him out
lives a
guttering
candle

a) Fascinated by story - 6 P.M. Thursday to 3 P.M. Friday - 21 hours. obscure corner of the world - seeming defeat - a young man died on a cross on a spring afternoon - yet: 700,000 days - not a single one on which somebody would not have died for him - even purely historically a most remarkable - a unique phenomenon of history - deep diapason

People forget.

b) Mysteries & Problems - tonight the ultimate mystery of the Christian faith - only by an act of faith

Tonight -
also in
our own
lives.

c) Change in our spiritual & intellectual climate - 30 years ago - having seen the Cross in human history we turn to the original Cross - catch its meaning, establish its relevance, evaluate its power for the modern mind & temper.

3. Method: a few vignettes - glimpses into the story - either - or: either it has transcendent final meaning for life & history - or we can pass it by to turn to our immediate concerns, our momentary problems, our slavery to the temporary and the material -

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THEME Great Moments in Lent

4. First: ^{Vignette} A single sentence which sums up - in brilliant focus - a philosophy of life & history - in the garden of agony & betrayal - about midnight - our hard face to face with evil - issues starkly clear - choice between gray - here: black & white - all good on one side - all evil on the other. Now: "This is your hour and the power of darkness". Does not say why - no reason simply: "This is your hour". i.e. there are certain hours in history & life in which evil seems to be triumphant - apparently they are winning - they belong to evil.

5. Footnote: Caricature. "Christian religion somewhat sentimental - escape mechanism - evasion of reality. Stupid & helpless goodness. "Our presence is a good guy Father but he doesn't know the score" - you in class - can't be good & intelligent at the same time - tragic error. ^{hazy} Kianity views life and man & history with cold realism. faces squarely up to ^{basic} ~~basic~~ problems - sees man as they are - knows that life is not all sweetness & light - but often dark & fearful & evil. "This is your hour".

6. Now, however, note well - our hard says this not in resignation - but in rebellion - "This is your hour" but only an hour. the days & the years & eternity belong to me - between now & 3 P.M. Friday you will be

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THEME Great Moments in Lent

- apparently successful. but then, but then:
+ the economy of God will return to
x normal. I shall transform the Cross you
L give me into a throne - throw into a crown.
the pain of my heart into joy and victory.
7. The answer of faith to the problem of
Support/ evil in history & life - note the contrast:
"the power of darkness" (tons of voice-films)
The hour belongs to you - but all you can
x possibly do with it is to make it dark-
fearful. hopeless. you can not bring light
x joy & hope. that power belongs to me - the
x power of goodness & mercy, etc - the long slow,
inevitable, irresistible power of eternity.
8. And now the end. ^{on} one of the greatest
sentences in history - it is fact, in the original
one of them is only a single word. The
sitting.
8. That power real in our own lives - last
year - favorite picture of Calvary - usual
scene. but man taking off his shoes.

Remember moments in your
own life - after a mistake,
can sin - you had to
say. "This is your hour" - but
also the other power. forgiveness.

It is Finished.

And so
we have
tried on
Good Friday
night

1. And now it remains for us, as the dawn of another Good Friday soon comes down over the world to tie all the loose ends together so that they can never break - down in the gutter of a city street is a drop of water, stagnant, soiled, dirty - from far up in the heavens the sun falls upon it, warms it, fills it through & through with a strange new life, lifts it up higher & higher & higher, beyond the clouds & looks day, lets it fall as a snowflake, white & clean & pure, on a mountaintop - there is the whole story: our own lives, often so soiled, so humdrum, so low & weak can be lifted on the wings of the morning if we ~~bring~~ ^{bring} them to Him Who once was lifted up on Good Friday - lifted until they were the high places of the earth, unashamed & unafraid - walking in the company of Him Who said that we might have life & have it more abundantly - ~~for His is the kingdom, etc.~~ ^{back}

2. And so the go, to His Father - and as we watch them go, what shall we say - perhaps the old, warm, intimate words

Thy arms are strong around me, and I know
That somehow I shall follow where you go
To the still land beyond the evening star
When everlasting hills & valleys are
And evil shall not hurt me any more
And terror shall be past, and grief and war.