Sermon Sketches

[30 November 1948–16 February 1949?]
[Chester, Pa.?]

King probably wrote these exercises for the course Preparation of the Sermon. Throughout his life, he would revisit many of these themes and utilize many of these titles, including "Facing Life's Inescapables" and "What Is Man?"2

The Martin Luther King, Jr. Papers Project

Sermon Sketches I

I Title—The Assurance of Immortality
Job 19:253

Theme—We are able to attain immortality through the men and women that we influence, and through the children who are touched by the flame of our spirits.

Purpose—To show that the desire for immortality will not be in vain.

In this sermon I purpose to show that the actual meaning of this text has often been misunderstood. Actually this was a developing concept of immortality. The word redeemer comes from the Hebrew word go'el meaning...
ing next-kin. In other words the author believed he would live on through his "next-kin." This whole concept grew out of the view of levirate marriage.

II Title—Beyond Asceticism
Colossians 2:21
Theme—True religion goes beyond asceticism and ritualistic practices; it is a new life.
Purpose—to show how to attain this new life.

III Title—Almost Persuaded
Acts 26:28
Theme—Procrastination is the thief of time
Purpose—to show the listeners that great experiences are often missed when we procrastinate.

In this sermon I will assume that Agrippa's words were serious. Of course, it is difficult to tell whether the words of Agrippa are ironical or spoken seriously.

IV Title—Looking Toward The Hills
Ps. 121:1
Theme—God is always found in the highest and best things of life
Purpose—to show that God is the highest good.

V Title—The Misused Covenant
In this sermon I purpose to show that this covenant is a threat rather than a benediction. From this point I will go on to say that man should rise above the watchful state: In other words, he should be able to conform in that area where the law does not reach.

[signed] M. L. King, Jr.

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

Sermon Sketches II

I Title—"Repentance"
Theme—Repentance means a [change?] of conduct as well as of heart.
Purpose—to show that God always reserves for man the possibility of repentance

4. Keighton wrote a question mark in the margin next to this sentence.
5. Levirate marriage calls for the closest male relative to marry the widow and to name their first son after the deceased man in the event that a husband dies without a son. For illustrations of levirate marriage, see Deuteronomy 25:5-10, and Ruth 3-4. Keighton wrote another a question mark in the margin next to this sentence.
6. "Touch not; taste not; handle not."
7. "Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." Herod Agrippa II (27 CE—CA. 100 CE) was the Roman-appointed authority in the first century CE over the region that included Jerusalem.
8. "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help."
9. King folded this assignment lengthwise and signed his name on the verso of the last page.