that they have been able to overwhelm the main stream. In other words, the church has picked up a lot of historical vices. This is the tragedy of the church, for it has confused the vices of the church with the virtues of Christ. The church has been nothing but the slave of society. Whenever the mores call for evil practices, society runs to the church to get its sanction.

Therefore, I conclude that the church, in its present state, is not the hope of the world. I believe that nothing has so persistently and effectively blocked the way of salvation as the church. On the other hand, the church can be the hope of the world, but only when it returns to Christ. If we take Christ to the world, we will turn it upside down, but the tragedy is that we too often take Christianity. It is our job as ministers to bring the church back to the center of the human race. But we can only bring the church back to the center of the human race when we bring Christ back to the center of the church.

[signed] M L King Jr

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

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King probably prepared this brief handwritten document while enrolled in Keighton’s course Preaching Problems.

1. Difficulty in preaching on special days that appear in the Christian year.
2. Difficulty in applying the Old Testament to modern life.

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1. For examples of sermons that King drafted for holidays, see King, After Christmas, What? 28 December 1952, “Criss in the Modern Family,” Sermon at Dexter Avenue Baptist Church, 8 May 1955, and Questions That Easter Answers, Sermon Delivered at Dexter Avenue Baptist Church, 21 April 1957, pp 128-129, 209-213, and 283-293 in this volume, respectively.
3. I often get criticisms from laymen and unlettered ministers for using a modern translation of the Bible as a source of preaching.

Christmas is an Incarnation. It is the meeting of two worlds.

Outline of a Christmas sermon

AD MLKP-MBU Box 113

Three Levels of Fellowship

[28 May 1950]
[Atlanta, Ga.]

Following his second year at Crozer, King returned to Ebenezer for the summer, where he preached a sermon that may have been based on the following handwritten outline:

Subject: Three Levels of Fellowship
Text: 1 Cor 1 2, 9

1. Gasterism — lower level — the thing that holds this level together is sensuality.
2. Communism — middle level — the thing that holds this level together is economics.
3. Spirit — Higher level — the thing that hold this level together is love.

AD CSKC Sermon file, folder 100, “Sermons by Other Ministers”

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1 King’s announced sermon topic at Ebenezer for 28 May 1950 was “Three Levels of Fellowship” (“Rev M. L. King, Jr to Fill Ebenezer Pulpit Tomorrow,” Atlanta Daily World, 27 May 1950)

2 1 Corinthians 1:2 “Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours”, 1 Corinthians 1:9 “God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord”

3 Gaster is the Greek word for ‘stomach’.

Three Essays on Religion

In the following three essays, King wrestles with the role of religion in modern society. In the first assignment, he calls science and religion “different though converging truths” that both “spring from the same seeds of vital human needs.” King emphasizes an awareness of God’s presence in the second document, noting that religion’s purpose “is not to perpetuate a dogma or a theology, but to produce living witnesses and...”