

Session Two – Part 2

Acrostic based on Jack Preus' book *Just Words*

J.A.O. Preus – If you are applying one ideum of the law, you should preach a commiserate form of the Gospel. Sometimes we fail to be as rich as Scripture is, simply going back to the cross.

Have created new words to describe things. ie) Atonement or “in all these things we are more than conquerors.”

S	Sacrifice	See Abraham and Isaac, widow's mite, parables , Hebrews 10
A	Anointing	Image of the priestly role. James 5:14.
L	Liberation	Freedom. Good Friday to Easter – freedom from death. Joseph. Esther.
V	Victory	Revelation 5. Image of the innocent lamb, ferocious lion, ferocious lamb. Romans 8:37.
A	Abundance	Matthew 24 – oil in lamps. Always overflowing.
T	Transaction	
I	Imago Dei	Hebrews 1:3 We become the image of God.
O	Ownership	Eph. 2:1
N	New Life	Rom 6:4

Sacrifice

17/29 of Jesus' parables use money as a source of material. We are afraid to do so as much as Jesus does.

122 incidents of Jesus coming in face to face encounters with people. 112 happen outside of sacred places.

Denominations are the lesser of 2 evils, but they are not “the church.”

Anointing

In high-tech society, need a high touch ministry.

Have more density, but have more isolation and anonymity. Everyone used to know and look out for everybody. Now people who live in condos, but don't know the neighbours. Sr. who held his hand.

Benefit to using oil in anointing. People don't necessarily want physical healing, but peace and a sense of being able to endure if I know God is with me through this. Had stations during the distribution, when you could go aside for prayer, receive the sign of the cross to be reminded of the baptismal promise. Not magic, or extreme unction. Needs to be taught.

In Confessions, no opposition to ordination being called a sacrament. The action/element would be the hands. Small S sacrament. People are yearning for it.

What we call systematic theology, it is generally historical theology regurgitated. At Wittenberg, they were confronting the best thinking of the day. Engaging an idea. The whole sense of engaging the world, even in Pieper, was more contemporary than what we do. We try and engage a pre-Vatican 2 Roman Catholicism. Danger that we set up straw-men who no longer exist. Protestant mainline is done. We need to be engaging the likes of Pentecostalism.

Part is the prosperity stuff. Part is that we deny part of our tradition that deal with experience of the faith. The danger is that we do not want to feel. Story about man from a convention he met. He claimed that reason is higher than feeling in terms of knowing God. Ministerial/ Magisterial use of reason and experience. Some of us buy into this. "Out of the heart flows...." "Be transformed by the renewal of the mind." Neither is dependable as a source of truth, but both can be/must be/are redeemed.

Mind/heart in the Scriptures were united. We've separated emotion from intellect. As Lutherans, we are infected by it. 2 Pathologies. 1.) Intellectualism. 2.) Need to control things. Luther called scholasticism the hoar. Luther doesn't use Chemnitz' distinctions.

FC 4 12 – Good works – Faith is a living, daring confidence in God's grace.... Pentecostals have tied into human experience. We're afraid we will end up out of control.... but our thinking will never be out of control or lead us down the wrong path.

Liberation/Freedom

Nexus of Good Friday to Easter – Resurrection.

Baptism. Look at how water is used in John. Note that in John 6, didn't need to part the sea. He's above it. Reverses the miracle of the Red Sea. Transcends it.

People in bondage to sin. Another reason the pentecostal theology is so popular. We're saying already that this is part of the attraction for us.

Victory

Danger of feminization of Christianity. Gustaf Aulen's book is still good at getting at the Christus Victor mode. For people who are feeling a lot of defeat and alienation. You receive this alien gift of victory. It's the gospel done to you, and nothing you can do to change that.

Abundance

Dying for all. 10 virgins in Matthew 24. You are a living libation. As a pastor, you pour yourself out you are poured out, not burnt out! There is always more coming in. Sometimes I feel wrung out. Cosby – Is the glass half full/empty? Depends on whether you're drinking or pouring.

Session Three

Quote – “I advanced towards the people. The church was full. Cries of joy echoed through it. Glory to God! God be praised! Nobody was silent. Shouts were coming from everywhere. I greeted the people and again they cried out in their enthusiasm. Finally, when silence was restored, the readings from the sacred Scriptures were proclaimed.”
The City of God. Vol. 22 Ch. 7 Counter-intuitive to what we expect from Augustine.

Discussion on the way emotions are put beneath the tradition. This may be part of our western male pathology, where we put everything tidily in its place, under control. When those things ooze out, we are afraid. We need to recognize that in the same way that emotions can be manipulated, our cognitive functions may equally be manipulated. We can march equally off a cliff with both these potential errors. It's easy to assuage ourselves that we have it all together. “Why can't they see what we see?” It is a heuristic. Used to be that the church out-thought everyone. Now, then the church out-felt everyone. Now those have been co-opted by those outside the church. How does that translate into our goals vis-a-vis sermons? Rhetoric delights, educates and moves minds/hearts, men to action. (Augustine, Book 4 *On Christian Doctrine*)

Of course we try and move people, using techniques like repetition. See Lent. Colors. Tonality. Content. Etc. We often try to rate emotionality. It could therefore be hijacked for negative manipulation, when emotionality becomes emotionalism. Like, “Tradition is the living faith of the dead. Traditionalism is the dead faith of the living.” Need to watch the “isms.”

In Luke 11 and Matt 13?, the story of the casting out of the demon from a man who roams around the desert places. That's where the confrontation with evil was always thought to occur. In LW 26, ps 68???, “No one has ever shown greater zeal in coming to god than the dear desert fathers of Egypt and Ethiopia.” But it is a change – used to be that the city was a place of safety and the wilderness was evil. Today, it is seen as though those two things are turned around. Order does not mean everything is OK. 1 Cor 14:40. What came before and after? Things like tongues! One of the problems in the church is that we are often way too serious. We need to recapture the ability to laugh at ourselves.

Talking about growing the church, it is easy to give excuses if small, or become angry or depressed. You need to keep your spirit bouyant. Often things happen in the ministry for which we deserve no credit. Likewise it is easy to get blamed for things. Need to fight about reacting against these things.

Henri Nouwen has a great quote about church workers.

“They are angry at their leaders for not leading and angry at their followers for not following. They are angry at those who do not come to church for not coming and angry at those who do come for coming without enthusiasm. They are angry at their families who make them feel guilty and angry at themselves for not being who they want to be. This is not an open, roaring, blatant anger, but an anger that is hidden behind the smooth word, the smiling face, and the polite handshake.” *The Way of the Heart...*

The work of God is not always visible. Example of a gang kid in Detroit. If Word goes out void, what can it do but return void? God is at work in spite of the evidence or lack thereof.

Abundance (continued from Preus' Just Words)

John 10:10. A wholeness. We need to pay attention. When there is infrastructure, it is easy to say it is not about the material things. It is also about the physical things. We're not Platonists. Matter matters. Sometimes we don't get that. A danger is that we may just focus on heaven, rather than on the physical resurrection. Jesus taught us to pray, "Give us this day our daily bread." Need to be careful in the connecting of the dots. We can and should pray for things, so when the things come, we will recognize the giver and the sender of the good things in our life.

What motivates people to give? People give least to need. That's a law. People give to opportunity and vision. The thing standing between us and this is your cash. We need YOU to be a part of it, with hands on activity if they are younger (servant projects). Pastors know that they don't manage their own money well.

Danger is we can come up with facile answers and legalism if we do not keep in mind the theology of the cross.

Legalism ends up with P.H.D.:
Pride
Hypocrisy
Despair

By leaving out some of these motifs to be lost, it leads to the emasculating of the church. Get the guys into the church. Women will follow. Sometimes we go for the easy win. They are sometimes undermined by the pastors.

Transaction

"He who had no sin became sin for us, so that we might become the righteousness of God."
Maximus peccator. Jesus became the greater sinner for us. Sin is on him, but not in him. A pastor did that at a funeral sermon – greatest sinner. But wasn't the person who died – Jesus. Story of the truck barreling down. Which one is you.

Imago Dei

Christ is the image of God. We become the image of God. Ecc. "Wine maketh glad the hearts of men... money is the answer for everything."

Ownership

We are unworthy servants. We are heirs of righteousness. Necrotic material. What did you do to participate in your own birth. What did you do to be an heir? Totally passive.

New Life

We shy away from the whole panorama. Work out your salvation... Resonate with people.

From Life Together, talking about how we treat one another.

3 R's in terms of how we treat others.

Respect
Reciprocity
Relationality.

Take ourselves too serious. We don't matter that much.

Bonhoeffer: Those who think that they are parts of movements... "The life and death of a Christian community is decided by its ability to reach sole clarity on these points as soon as possible. In other words, a life together under the Word will stay healthy only when it does not form itself into a movement, an order, a society, a collegium theotatis, a conventicle, but instead understands itself as being a part of the one holy universal Christian Church."

Think about movements which form in the church. Not just the church at large, but in our own church. Sometimes we are so narrow minded. Are we really all that different??? Story about Admiral Phipps. Sometimes shoot our cannons at the saints instead of the enemy. Where's the line?

Oswald Hoffmann quotes:

"What'd you think of the sermon?" Response: Three things. He read it. He didn't read it well. It wasn't worth reading.

There once was a time when we'd get together and fight and then go and drink beer.
We no longer drink beer.

Part of our ecclesial culture is that we like fighting over theology.

Think about static modalities to describe the Trinity and how that negatively affects relationality.

Session Four – part one

No Guarantee of a trouble free life. Recounted a basketball injury. There are times that we need to learn about limits and depending on others. People often try and connect the dots between things.

3 R's....

Respect – 1 Peter 3:15 "but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect,"
– Philippians 2:3 Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.
– Preface to the LC – p328 Kolb. "Therefore I appeal once more to all Christians but especially to pastors that they do not try to become doctors too soon and imagine

they know everything. Vain imaginations like new cloth suffer shrinkage. Let all Christians drill themselves in the Catechism daily and constantly put it into practice, guarding themselves with the greatest care and diligence against the poisonous infection of such security or arrogance. Let them constantly read and teach, learn and meditate and ponder. Let them never stop until they have proof by experience and are certain that they have taught the devil to death and have become more learned than God himself and all the saints. If they show such diligence, then I promise them that their experience will bear me out, that they will gain much fruit and God will make excellent people of them. Then in due time they will make the noble confession that the longer they work with the catechism, the more they know it, and the more they have to learn. Only then, hungry and thirsty, will they taste what they cannot bear to smell because they are so bloated and surfeited, then may God grant his grace.”

– story about man he met on the plane, who he introduced to Herbert F. Brokering.
Reinhard Hütter – *Suffering Divine Things*. Book recommendation.

Reciprocity – Need to be able and willing to learn from others.
Create space for everyone, first to learn to serve others.

Relationality – “That we might be one as Jesus and the Father is one.”
It is a perfect love that exists in the Trinity. Perichoresis.
Humility of each member of the Trinity.
Eastern Orthodox get the dynamic nature of the Trinity.
2 Natures in Christ – story of teaching to girl eating hummus.
“You are the body of Christ.”
Whose sermon is this? Preacher’s? God’s? The Church’s? People’s?
Bible Study at National Youth Gathering

Session Four – part two

There is a danger in giving people answers not based on God’s Word, then those people become suspicious of us because those words lack integrity. It is all right to say we do not know. But the theology of the cross does not allow us to probe into the hidden things of God. Deut 29:29.

Eph 4:11-12 – Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers

Apostolicity – a Word to the other. Needs to be recovered.

1. Doctrinal – Acts 2:42
2. Missional – Acts 11. Sent-ness. Robert Scudieri’s
The Apostolic Church: One Holy Catholic and Missionary
3. Ecclesial – Other Churches. The passing down of it to bishop to bishop. Episcopal nature.
4. Charismatic – Gifts — The Holy Spirit deposits gifts in the church’s bosom/womb/lap.
People are hungry for the Holy Spirit, for a spiritual relationship. We know where the abuses lie.