

11-1-1973

A Comparison Measurement of Law and Gospel in Selected Sermons of Saint Augustine, Bernard of Clairvaux, Jonathan Edwards, Phillips Brooks, and Walter A. Maier

David Gunderlach

Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, davjoy@cox.net

Follow this and additional works at: <http://scholar.csl.edu/mdiv>

 Part of the [Religious Thought, Theology and Philosophy of Religion Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Gunderlach, David, "A Comparison Measurement of Law and Gospel in Selected Sermons of Saint Augustine, Bernard of Clairvaux, Jonathan Edwards, Phillips Brooks, and Walter A. Maier" (1973). *Master of Divinity Thesis*. 88.
<http://scholar.csl.edu/mdiv/88>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Concordia Seminary Scholarship at Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary. It has been accepted for inclusion in Master of Divinity Thesis by an authorized administrator of Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary. For more information, please contact seitzw@csl.edu.

A COMPARISON MEASUREMENT OF LAW AND GOSPEL
IN SELECTED SERMONS OF SAINT AUGUSTINE,
BERNARD OF CLAIRVAUX, JONATHAN EDWARDS,
PHILLIPS BROOKS, AND WALTER A. MAIER

A Research Paper Presented to the Faculty
of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for elective
P-200

by
David Gunderlach
November 1973

Paul G. Lessmann
Adviser

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. INTRODUCTION.	1
Historical Background	1
Objectives.	3
II. LAW AND GOSPEL.	5
Law	5
Gospel.	8
III. SERMON STUDIES.	13
Methodology	13
Saint Augustine	14
Bernard of Clairvaux.	17
Jonathan Edwards.	20
Phillips Brooks	27
Walter A. Maier	31
CONCLUSION	39
APPENDIX	40
BIBLIOGRAPHY	41

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Historical Background

"When the church bells ring on Sunday morning there is an air of expectancy that something great, crucial, and even momentous is to happen."¹ That something great is the presence of God in the worship service coming to man through His Word and Sacraments. God Himself comes to us, the God who in times past defeated whole armies, cured diseases, sent the sunshine and the rain, punished disobedience and rewarded faithfulness. Today, however, He has, for the most part, drifted off to the side. The sharp, two-edged sword of His Word has seemingly become dulled. In essence, man has put God out of the picture, out of his life. That is why man is longing for something-- something that will give meaning and completeness to his life. That something is God in Christ.² C. F. W. Walther saw this as one of the most important reasons for properly distinguishing Law and Gospel. He quotes Luther to that effect: "The distinction is made easily enough in words. But in affliction you will realize that the Gospel is a rare guest in men's consciences, while the Law is their daily and familiar companion."³

Walther was one of the few who in his day even bothered with the distinction between Law and Gospel at all. The smoothing over of the

Law-Gospel distinction is traceable to John Calvin. In his Geneva Catechism of 1536 he defined the Law as a rule for living rightly and justly. It fulfills an informatory task and at the same time it induces its own fulfillment.⁴ Historically, the sharp Law-Gospel distinction smoothed together until, in the theology of rationalism, the issue no longer was even discussed, for the end of both Law and Gospel was the same--moral improvement.

If, then, when the church bells ring on Sunday morning, the people are expecting to find God Himself speaking to them in the worship service, they need to hear what God is saying and doing and not what man is doing (and has done). This is another of Walther's distinctions between Law and Gospel: the Law tells us what we are to do; the Gospel tells us what God is doing. The Law makes demands without promises; the Gospel makes offers of free grace. Threats are of the Law; promises of free grace are of the Gospel.⁵ Each sermon must contain both doctrines: Law for the secure, and Gospel for the crushed sinner. Walther says that this distinction is inherent in all of Scripture, although Scripture does not directly refer to it as such. He learned it from Luther, who in turn learned it from the apostles and prophets.⁶ That all of Scripture consists of Law and Gospel is shown by the apparent contradictions throughout the Bible as to how to be saved. On the one hand, the Bible offers forgiveness to all sinners, while on the other hand, forgiveness is withheld from all sinners. The solution to this riddle lies in the existence of the two different doctrines of Law and Gospel.⁷

Objectives

If these two doctrines of Law and Gospel are an integral part of the Christian Scriptures and not merely a product of the Lutheran Reformation, then they should appear in Christian sermons of all ages. This is one of the reasons we have selected for this study five preachers who lived over a span of some sixteen hundred years: St. Augustine (A.D. 354-430), St. Bernard of Clairvaux (1091-1153), Jonathan Edwards (1703-58), Phillips Brooks (1835-93), and Walter A. Maier (1893-1950). Our comparative measurement of Law and Gospel will show us whether, and to what extent, our two pre-Reformation preachers, Augustine and Bernard, distinguished between Law and Gospel in their sermons as compared with our three post-Reformation preachers.

The second objective is to compare the homiletical use of Law and Gospel (both quantitatively and qualitatively) in Lutheran as compared with non-Lutheran preachers. Our two pre-Reformation preachers are obviously non-Lutheran, and two of the three post-Reformation preachers, Jonathan Edwards and Phillips Brooks, are non-Lutheran Protestants. For comparison's sake (and since this is written from within the Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod) our fifth preacher, Walter A. Maier, was chosen for two reasons: his thorough Missouri Synod Lutheran background, and his extensive preaching experience on the Lutheran Hour weekly radio broadcast.

Footnotes

Chapter I

¹August Bernthal, "Preaching in the '70's" (unpublished Wenchel Lectures on Preaching [cassette tape], Concordia Seminary, 1972), side 1.

²ibid., side 2.

³C. F. W. Walther, The Proper Distinction Between Law and Gospel (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, n.d.), p. 27.

⁴Werner Elert, Law and Gospel, translated by Edward H. Schroeder (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1967), p. 7.

⁵Walther, pp. 9, 11.

⁶ibid., pp. 5-6.

⁷ibid.

CHAPTER II

LAW AND GOSPEL

Law

Our task as regards the Law is to determine a way in which to measure, quantitatively and qualitatively, the law content in sermons. Law relates to the human situation in the sight of God; this is the human predicament. Man has the "dignity" of being a sinner, and he doesn't give up that dignity very easily. He had hoped to be the manager, but in actual fact he finds himself to be the one who is managed by forces he can't control. He has not only lost God; he has lost himself. "He needs the honor of being judged."¹ Further, it is man's inherent nature that he refuses and rejects confrontation and confession of his sinful situation. Man characteristically defends himself from the truth of God's Law in order to protect his own ego.² Such law-talk is aimed at man to inform him of his inadequacy, guilt, failure, incompetence--all symptoms of the deeper underlying condition of sin.

Werner Elert refers to this condition as "nomological existence"³, an operative reality in the midst of which and under which all men live, whether they know it or not. It is the judgment of God in the truest sense because it is something from which no one can escape, not the richest, not the most manipulative person in all creation. God says, in effect, 'I can't stand you, because I'm holy and you are soaked through with sin. You cannot be where I am.' And not being where

where God is, is hell. The preaching of the Law, then, entails showing man his nomological existence. Thus our first test for the use of the Law in sermons is to ask whether the preacher is really showing the hearers their nomological existence of condemnation for sin, or whether he is merely describing the symptoms.

Walther summarized the effect of preaching the Law as being three-fold: (a) the Law tells us what to do, but doesn't enable us to comply with its demands; (b) the Law uncovers sins but offers no help to get out of them, thus hurling man into despair; (c) the Law produces contrition, but absolutely no comfort.⁴

Mellaender puts it another way. Making the message of God's action in Christ speak to the people's needs is the preaching task and not merely an aspect of it. If we are going to help our people understand their world in terms of the theological categories they hear preached from the pulpit, we must do two things: (a) we must speak of Jesus in relation to the problem of the human predicament, since the Gospel is only good news when it is related to the Law; (b) the problem developed must be one that God's action in Christ really solves. The many difficulties of life are 'solved' only if they can be related to the basic problem of man's alienation from God, which has been dealt with directly by Jesus Christ.⁵ In the light of man's real problem, 'preaching the Law' might better be thought of as "developing or exhibiting the situation of man under the wrath of God."⁶ It is not really accusation against individual hearers nor an attempt to make them feel or rationally assent to personal guilt. It does not attempt to accuse men of guilt

but to exhibit mankind's fallen condition. The things of which men are guilty, the symptoms of this universal fallen condition, are the very things against which Boecler said man defends himself and his ego.⁷ Thus the Apology to the Augsburg Confession says that the Law always accuses; It does not follow, however, that everything accusatory is rightly termed "Law."⁸

We are not, therefore, in our sermon studies, looking for "Law" in accusatory phrases. Rather, we shall look for an exhibition of man's fallen condition. Let us, then, look in reverse at the process of preaching the Law, i.e. from the preacher's rather than from the hearer's (or, in our case, reader's) point of view. Mellaender suggests a three-fold method of preaching the Law: (a) develop a picture of man as he was meant to be--uncorrupted; (b) point out that this uncorrupted ideal conflicts with the realities of our experience; (c) conclude that this conflict is a sign that creation itself has been thrown "out of kilter."⁹ Beyond the point of indication that creation is out of kilter (step three in Mellaender's method), nothing else can be demonstrated. From there on, the preacher can only invite the hearer to accept his share of the burden of the fallen creation. That is, the gap between the ideal and reality is now viewed as a result of man's disobedience and rebellion against God--a theological interpretation of reality on the basis of the Scriptures. This is at all points collective; there is no individual accusation. There is a distinction between guilt and fallenness. We move to the realm of the individual by inviting each hearer to admit his own humanity and accept his share

in the fallen condition. Laying before him the condition of men, we imply that this is also the plight of men taken individually.¹⁰ Our second test for use of the Law, then, is whether the preacher does his job as a theologian and actually relates man's predicament to God's wrath rather than merely asserting that predicament as something 'evil' (i.e. immoral, profane, contrary to society, etc.)

This seems to be an effective way of preaching the Law for two reasons. First, it gets to the real heart of what Law preaching is all about, viz. sin and God's judgment of sin. It doesn't mistake the symptoms for the disease. Secondly, it speaks to the person in the pew on an honest level of theological and spiritual reality instead of lambasting and accusing his or her pet vices. By so doing, the preacher is less in danger of 'turning off' the hearer.

To sum up, we have developed two measuring instruments to measure the use of Law in sermons. For purposes of application, we will phrase them as questions: Is the preacher really showing the hearers their nomological existence of condemnation for sin rather than merely describing the symptoms? Secondly, is the preacher actually relating man's predicament to God's wrath rather than asserting that the predicament is merely something 'evil'?

GOSPEL

More precious than the Law--indeed, most precious of all--is the Gospel. In its wider sense, it is the entire ministry of Christ Himself (cf. Mark 1:1). In its narrower sense, the Gospel is that which teaches what a man should believe in order to receive the forgiveness of sins. Its content, classically stated, is ~~that~~ that the Son of God,

Christ our Lord, himself assumed and bore the curse of the law and expiated and paid for all our sins, that through him alone we . . . obtain forgiveness of sins through faith, are freed from death and all the punishments of sin, and are saved eternally."¹¹

Such proclamation of Good News is the kerygma of the New Testament. In New Testament usage, kerygma may signify either the act of proclaiming or the thing proclaimed, the latter being the more common usage. C. H. Dodd makes the absolute statement that kerygma does not refer to the action of the preacher but to his message.¹² This content, says A. M. Hunter, can be summarized in the words "Jesus Christ."¹³ This is borne out by Biblical evidence, as is seen in a brief look at the content, the kerygma, summarized in the speeches of Peter:

1. "The age of fulfillment has dawned." (Acts 2:16; 3:18, 24).
2. "This age has appeared through Christ's birth, ministry, death, and resurrection." (Acts 2:30-31, citing Psalm 132:11; 2:22; 3:22; 2:23; 3:13; 14; 2:24, 25, 27; 3:15; 4:10.)
3. "Jesus has been exalted at the right hand of God, as Messianic head of the new Israel by virtue of His resurrection." (Acts 2:33-36, citing Psalm 110:1; 3:13; 4:11, citing Psalm 118:22; 5:31.)
4. "The presence of the Holy Spirit in the Church is the sign of Christ's present power and glory." (Acts 2:33.)
5. "The Messianic Age will soon reach its consummation in Christ's return." (Acts 3:21; 10:42.)
6. "The kerygma always closes with an appeal for repentance, the offer of forgiveness and of the Holy Spirit, and the promise of salvation to those who enter the kingdom." (Acts 2:38-39, citing Joel 2:32 and Isaiah 57:19; 3:19, 25, 26, citing Genesis 12:3; 4:12; 5:31; 10:43.)¹⁴

One way to apply a test of kerygma to our sermons is to ask, Is Jesus necessary in this sermon? Since kerygma is the thing proclaimed, and Jesus Christ is the content of that kerygma, He should be present in every Christian sermon. Without Christ there is no Gospel, and without Gospel there is no news of salvation, no way of escape from our sin and its constant upheaval in our lives.

Numerous bumper stickers in the past several years have proclaimed that "Christ is the Answer." But we would ask What's the question? In order to point out a second measure of Gospel in our sermon studies, viz. that the Gospel must accompany the Law. Gospel by itself is the answer without the question; if the question is not being asked, no answer is needed. "the Gospel . . . does not at all reprove the sinner, but takes all terror, all fear, all anguish, from him and fills him with peace and joy in the Holy Ghost."¹⁵ If the Law is not present to stir up terror, fear, and anguish in a person, he has no need of the Gospel. To borrow a phrase from Oscar Hammerstein II, Law and Gospel "go together like a horse and carriage. . . . You can't have one without the other."¹⁶ Our second test, then, is the presence of Law and Gospel together.

A further consideration is what the Gospel requires. It requires nothing. "the Gospel does not require anything good that man must furnish: not a good heart, not a good disposition, no improvement of his condition, no godliness, no love either of God or Men. It issues no orders, but it changes man."¹⁷ It is the action of God rather than man's action; It is God at work through His Word and Sacraments in the minds and hearts of His people. This is one place where busy, overtaxed pastors can back off and let God do the work. In fact, if their preaching does not let God do the work of salvation, that is if preachers imply that salvation requires anything that man can or must furnish, then there is no Gospel being preached. Our third test is the sole sufficiency of God through Christ to right man's out-of-kilter condition, i.e. to save him.

To sum up, our three measurements for the presence of Gospel in our sermon studies are again phrased as questions for purposes of application: (a) Is Jesus necessary in this sermon (paragraph)? (b) Is the Law present to show man his need of the Good News of God's grace (rather than merely presenting Christ as the Answer without a question)? (c) Does the Gospel point to God in Christ as the only means of salvation (without requiring some pre-condition in order for the Gospel to work)?

Footnotes

Chapter II

¹ August Bernthal, "Preaching in the '70's" (unpublished Wenchel Lectures on Preaching [cassette tape], Concordia Seminary, 1972), side 2.

² Paul Boecler, "The Preaching of the Law in the Sermons of Geiseman, Fosdick, Spurgeon, and Macartney and the Application of Psychological Persuasive Procedures" (unpublished S. T. M. thesis, Concordia Seminary, 1957), p. 1.

³ Werner Elert, Law and Gospel, translated by Edward H. Schroeder (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1967), p. vi.

⁴ C. F. W. Walther, The Proper Distinction Between Law and Gospel (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, n.d.), pp. 13-14.

⁵ Gilbert Mellaender, "Perspective for the Preaching of the Law", Concordia Theological Monthly, XLII (July-August, 1971), 444.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Supra, p. 5.

⁸ Mellaender, p. 444.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid., pp. 444-45.

¹¹ Theodore G. Tappert, editor, The Book of Concord (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1959), p. 561.

¹² Donald Miesner, "The Preaching of the Gospel in Selected Lenten Sermons of Bishop Fulton J. Sheen" (unpublished B.D. research paper, Concordia Seminary, 1959), p. 4.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Miesner, pp. 10-12.

¹⁵ Walther, p. 16.

¹⁶ Oscar Hammerstein II, Oklahoma!

¹⁷ Walther, p. 16.

CHAPTER III

SERMON STUDIES

Methodology

We will now apply our measurement questions to two selected sermons from each of our five preachers. This will be accomplished by examining each paragraph of each sermon. If it deals basically with the Law, we will apply our two questions about the Law; if a given paragraph deals basically with the Gospel, we will apply our three questions about the Gospel.

Since it is impractical and burdensome to quote ten sermons in their entirety, a brief content summary of each will be given at the beginning of each, followed by a designation for each paragraph; an indicator of whether that paragraph deals with Law ("L") or Gospel ("G"); a "yes" or "no" response to each of our measurement questions; and, in most cases, a brief quotation from the paragraph to show how that response was arrived at.

The measurement questions will be indicated by "(a)" and "(b)" in the case of a Law paragraph, and by "(x)", "(y)", and "(z)" in the case of a Gospel paragraph. The questions once again are as follows: (In a Law paragraph) (a) Is the preacher really showing the hearers their nomological existence of condemnation for sin rather than merely describing the symptoms?

(b) Is the preacher actually relating man's

predicament to God's wrath rather than asserting that the predicament is merely something 'evil'?

(Gospel paragraph) (x) Is Jesus necessary in this sermon (paragraph)?

(y) Is the Law present to show man his need of the Good News of God's grace (rather than merely presenting Christ as the Answer without a question)?

(z) Does the Gospel point to God in Christ as the only means of salvation (without requiring some pre-condition in order for the Gospel to work)?

St. Augustine

Sermon 1: A Lenten sermon on the subject of forgiveness. Those who pray the Lord's Prayer ought to practice forgiveness; the ramification of not doing so is not to be forgiven.†

1 L (a) yes.

(b) yes.

2 L (a) yes. This is a description of symptoms, but it is based on man's nomological existence exhibited in paragraph 1.

(b) yes.

3 L (a) yes.

(b) yes.

4 G (x) no.

(y) yes.

(z) yes.

5 G (x) no.

(y) yes

(z) yes, but not specifically "In Christ"--yet.

6 G (x) yes.

(y) yes.

(z) yes. The first mention of Jesus Christ in this sermon. It is also the high point, in terms of the Gospel.

7 G (x) no.

(y) yes.

(z) yes.

8 G (x) yes.

(y) yes.

(z) yes. A real statement of the absolute pricelessness of salvation.

Of the eight paragraphs in this sermon, five dealt basically with the Gospel and three with the Law.

Sermon 11: "On Luke 24:13-31"-- St. Augustine points out the synoptic problem but proceeds to assure his hearers that "because the One Spirit spoke through the Evangelists, the authority of the Holy Gospel is so great that even what only one writer gives is true."²

1 Introductory; explains the synoptic problem.

2 G (x) yes.

(y) yes. The people were disturbed from seeing Jesus hang on a cross.

(z) no. The lesson (the Easter gospel) brings home to us a very important lesson--"If we understand!"

3 G (x) yes.

(y) yes. Have you stopped hoping? "Hope is dead in you."

(z) yes. "Christ is alive."

4 G (x) yes. The Lord is present in the breaking of bread.

(y) yes. "they [the disciples] had lost faith; they had lost hope."

(z) no.

5 G (x) yes.

(y) no.

(z) no. "If you wish to have life, do what they did that you may recognize the Lord."

6 G (x) no.

(y) no.

(z) no. The pre-condition is faith.

7 G (x) yes. Finally, Augustine very plainly points to Jesus' suffering, death, and resurrection.

(y) yes. "We shall all rise again, but we shall not all rejoice."

(z) yes.

The sermon ends on a clear statement which is Christocentric and points both to the resurrection and the second coming. This sermon seems to be very Gospel oriented, yet with enough Law to show the hearer this need. Of the seven paragraphs, all seven dealt basically with the Gospel.

Bernard of Clairvaux

Sermon 1: "The Three Spiritual Perfumes"³ Bernard preached at the Second Crusade before the Pope and King Louis VII; it was the high point of Bernard's life. The Crusades gave oral proclamation a new and inspiring purpose; they saw a spectrum of preaching ranging from flaming personal testimony, on one end, to a mechanical churchly routine on the other. Bernard's was the former.

1,2 Introductory, dealing specifically with neither Law nor Gospel.

3^f G (x) no. It is the "love of God" which provides compassion and spiritual encouragement, although this may be possibly construed to refer to Christ.

(y) no.

(z) no. Bernard speaks here of the Church as "our spiritual mother."

4 L (a) yes. "As for the salvation of souls, or their loss, they think of it not at all."

(b) yes. The replacement of greed for compassion on the part of those "who have taken upon them the cure of souls."

5 G (x) no. Here Bernard introduces the perfumes as the perfumes of the church, not Christ.

(y) yes, in the paragraphs above.

(z) no.

6 G (x) no. "a perfume or unguent which the soul . . . compounds for itself . . ."

(y) yes. "the sinner is poor and needy . . ."

(z) no. "let him not neglect to prepare this . . .
for a broken and contrite heart God will not despise."

7 G (x) no. this invisible and spiritual unguent was designated in type by that visible ointment wherewith the feet of God manifest in the flesh were anointed by the woman who was a sinner, we shall not be able to regard it as altogether worthless.

(y) yes, in the paragraphs above.

(z) no.

8 G (x) no. "we find them [the materials of the former perfume] within ourselves . . ."

(y) yes, in the paragraphs above.

(z) no. "this perfume is compounded which Divine goodness has bestowed upon the human race."

9 G (x) yes.

(y) yes.

(z) yes. "all our hope rests rightly upon Him who is the God-man . . ."

10 G (x) yes. "unless you have first received the light which shall comfort it. . ."

(y) yes. "Immediately it is recalled to the consciousness of its cares and uneasiness . . ."

(z) yes. Implied, however, and not directly expressed.

11 G (x) yes. "Would that I too might be able to render thanksgivings . . . in Jesus Christ our Lord."

(y) yes.

(z) yes. Here Bernard quotes 1 Cor. 1:4.

In this sermon, Bernard shows a preponderance of Gospel: of the nine paragraphs considered, eight dealt with the Gospel.

Sermon 11: "Sermon XIII for the Advent Season"⁴ Based on
2 Chron. 20:17, this sermon is addressed to Jews.

1 G (x) no.

(y) yes. "If your whole lives confess that you are sinners, and deserving of the greatest punishments. . ."

(z) no. "In all you do propose to yourself no other end, than to be reconciled with God and have peace with Him."

2 G (x) yes. "Cursed by the day on which I was born."

(y) yes. "the day of Adam, the day of sin . . ."

(z) yes. "One is under Adam, another in Christ, the third with Christ."

3 G (x) yes. "the day of a new redemption for us has dawned . . ."

(y) "Many unhappy necessities of the body hold us back."

(z) yes. Bernard here quotes Col. 3:12.

4 G (x) yes. "we may fly to His mercy . . ."

(y) yes. "that imperfection is not hidden from the eyes of God."

(z) no.

5 G (x) no.

(y) yes. "Nor indeed, will the heritage be re-established, until the heirs of it return to their first state."

(z) no.

6 G (x) no.

(y) yes. Woe to you, whoever you are, who are meditating a return to the mire, and the vomit. Do you suppose that you will thus render favourable to you at the day of judgment, those whom you wish to deprive of a joy so great, and so much hoped for?"

- (z) no.
- 7 G (x) yes. "The marriage feast is prepared . . ."
 (y) no.
 (z) yes. "not only because of the great love where-
 with He loved you . . . but because of His Own Self . . ."
- 8 G (x) yes. Bernard quotes Ps. 2:8 and 110:1.
 (y) no.
 (z) yes. "His creatures, for whose sake the Father sent
 Him into the world . . ."
- 9 G (x) yes. "the wedding feast is prepared . . ."
 (y) no.
 (z) yes. "let us, in the joy of salvation, accept the
 crown of our newborn King; His help, Who with the Father and the Holy
 Ghost, liveth and reigneth..."

Bernard shows in this sermon, too, a definite orientation toward the Gospel: all nine paragraphs are primarily Gospel-centered.

Jonathan Edwards

Sermon 1: "Sinners In the Hands of an Angry God"⁵ This sermon, based on Deut. 32:35, was preached at Enfield, Connecticut, July 8, 1741. It had such a marked effect on his hearers that they "groaned and shrieked convulsively; and their outcries of distress once drowned the preacher's voice."⁶ This was during a New England revival. As we might expect from Edwards' Calvinistic background, the sermon frequently rings of predestination.

1-4 Announcement of text and introduction. Therefore, for our purposes, we shall take the first four paragraphs as one.

L (a) no. It speaks only post facto: the punishment and destruction which the Israelites were exposed to.

(b) no.

5 L (a) yes. Nomological existence is implied, but it is not actually stated as the reason for men's falling from perfection.

(b) yes. "when that due time [i.e. God's appointed time] comes, 'their feet shall slide'."

6-7 L (a) yes. "There is nothing that keeps wicked men at any one moment out of hell but the mere pleasure of God."

(b) no. It is man's wickedness that destines him to hell.

8-10 L (a) yes, but it is already assumed. (Edwards seems to delight in painting as gruesome a picture as possible.)

(b) yes. "Man's hands cannot be strong when God rises up."

11 L (a) yes. "They deserve to be cast into hell."

(b) yes. "Divine justice never stands in the way."

12 L (a) yes. "They are already under a sentence of condemnation to hell."

(b) yes. "the sentence of the law of God . . . is gone out against them."

13 L (a) yes.

(b) yes. "They are now the objects of the very same anger and wrath of God."

14 L (a) yes.

- (b) yes. "The wrath of God burns against them."
- 15 L (a) yes.
(b) yes.
- 16 L (a) yes. "There is laid in the very nature of carnal men, a foundation for the torments of hell."
(b) yes.
- 17,18 L (a) yes.
(b) yes. "God has so many different, unsearchable ways of taking wicked men out of the world . . ."
- 19 G (x) no.
(y) yes.
(z) no.
- 20 L (a) yes. "they [natural men] have no interest in any Mediator . . . they have no refuge, nothing to take hold of."
(b) yes. "His anger is great toward them . . ."
- 21 L (a) yes. "This is the case of every one of you that are out of Christ."
(b) yes. "the glowing flames of the wrath of God."
- 22 L (a) yes. "your guilt . . . is constantly increasing."
(b) yes. "you are every day treasuring up more wrath . . ."
- 23 L (a) yes. "justice bends the arrow at your hearts . . ."
(b) yes. "The bow of God's wrath is bent . . ."
- 24 L (a) yes. "He looks upon you as worthy of nothing else but to be cast into the fire."
(b) yes. "His wrath toward you burns like fire . . ."

- 25 L (a) yes. "you have no interest in any mediator . . ."
 (b) yes. "God whose wrath is provoked . . ."

This sermon comes up with only one Gospel paragraph in twenty-five.

Sermon II: "The Christian Pilgrim"⁷ Text: Heb. 11:13-14.

- 1-3 G Introductory. (x) no. (y) no. (z) no.
- 4 G (x) yes. "We ought to desire . . . to dwell with Jesus Christ."
 (y) no.
 (z) no.
- 5 G (x) no. (y) no. (z) no. This paragraph merely contains examples.
- 6 G (x) yes. Edwards calls his hearers "Christians."
 (y) yes. "time is short."
 (z) no.
- 7 G (x) no.
 (y) yes. "we must lay it [appetite] aside if it be of any hindrance . . ."
 (z) no.
- 8 L (a) no. "We should follow Christ"--by ourselves, as if we could!
 (b) no.
- 9 L (a) yes. We should "surmount the difficulties and obstacles that are in our way."
 (b) no.
- 10 L (a) no. "Our whole lives ought to be spent in travelling this road."

- (b) no.
- 11 L (a) no. "Though the journey be long, yet we must not stop short."
(b) no.
- 12 G (x) no. "The perfection of heaven should be our mark."
(y) no.
(z) no. "We should be endeavoring to come nearer to heaven..."
- 13 L (a) no. "We ought wholly to subordinate all our other business . . . to this affair of travelling to heaven."
(b) no.
- 14 L (a) yes. "It [this world] was never designed by God to be our home."
(b) no.
- 15 G (x) no.
(y) yes. "The present state is short and transitory."
(z) no. "all our concerns in this world should be wholly subordinate to it."
- 16 G (x) no.
(y) yes. "There is but a very imperfect union with God to be had in this world."
(z) no. "Then we shall perfectly give up ourselves to God . . ."
- 17 G (x) no.
(y) yes. "the company of earthly friends, are but shadows."
(z) no. "It becomes us to make the seeking of our highest end and proper good, the whole work of our lives."
- 18 G (x) no.

(y) no.

(z) no. As usual, it points to us.

19 G (x) no. "If they lived a holy life, then their lives were a journey towards heaven."

(y) no.

(z) no.

20 G (x) yes. "the Lamb . . . shall feed them, and shall lead them . . ."

(y) yes. "[mourning a loved one's death] is due to our infirmity . . ."

(z) yes. Finally no pre-conditions!

21 G (x) yes.

(y) yes. "as long as we are flesh and blood, we have animal propensities and affections."

(z) yes. Edwards here quotes 1 Thess. 4:14.

22 L (a) yes. "Some men spend their whole lives . . . in going down the road way to destruction."

(b) no.

23 L (a) yes. "Persons before conversion never take a step that way."

(b) no.

24 L (a) no.

(b) no.

25 G (x) no.

(y) yes. "They who are converted, should strive to 'make their calling and election sure.'"

(z) no. The pre-condition, again, is seeking God.

- 26 G (x) no.
 (y) yes. "Labour to have your heart taken up."
 (z) no.
- 27 L (a) no.
 (b) no.
- 28 L (a) no.
 (b) no.
- 29 G (x) no.
 (y) no.
 (z) no.
- 30 L (a) yes. "No more of your life will be pleasant to think of when you come to die, than has been spent after this manner."
 (b) no.
- 31 G (x) yes. "the dwelling place of the Son of God . . ."
 (y) no.
 (z) yes. "And we may have it freely; without money and without price."
- 32 L (a) yes. "If our lives be not a journey towards heaven, they will be a journey to hell."
 (b) no.
- 33 L (a) yes. "the little satisfaction that is to be enjoyed here; . . is unserviceableness when we most stand in need of help, viz. on a deathbed."
- 34 L (a) yes. "If you are not acquainted with [heaven] , you will not be likely to spend your life as a journey thither."

- (b) no.
- 35 G (x) yes. "Seek heaven only by Jesus Christ."
 (y) no.
 (z) yes. "we must seek it by him, and not by our own righteousness."

- 36 G (x) no.
 (y) no.
 (z) no.

Edwards strikes a much better balance in this sermon than he did in the previous one. Out of the thirty-four paragraphs considered, nineteen were Gospel oriented, while fifteen were Law oriented.

Phillips Brooks

Sermon 1: "The Fire and the Calf"⁸ Based on Ex. 32:24, this sermon focuses on Aaron's knack of blaming the fire for producing the golden calf, when the only one at fault is, of course, Aaron himself. The application is then made to the hearers.

- 1 L (a) yes. The text points to idolatry.
 (b) yes. "Let not the anger of my Lord wax hot."
- 2 L (a) yes. Brooks points out that Aaron avoids nomological existence for something less serious. Brooks himself, however, points directly to Aaron's nomological existence.
 (b) yes. Aaron trembled.
- 3 L (a) yes. "We are all ready to lay the blame upon the furnaces . . . Its fire can set and fix and fasten what the man puts

into it. But, properly speaking, it can create no character."

(b) no.

4 L (a) yes. "Everywhere there is this cowardly casting off of responsibilities upon the dead circumstances around us."

(b) no.

5 L (a) yes. "It is so easy to ignore or forget the first step, which was that we chose that current for our resting place, and so to say that it is only the drift of the current which is to blame for the dreary shore on which at last our lives are cast up . . ."

(b) no.

6 L (a) yes. "The confusion of men's minds about the judgments of the eternal world is only the echo of their confusion about the responsibilities of the life which they are living now."

(b) no.

7 L (a) yes. "He did the sin, and he is sorry as a sinner."

(b) no.

8 L (a) yes. "cried out and claimed the responsibility and his sin. . ."

(b) no.

9 L (a) no. "we have extenuated our own wickedness . . ."

(b) yes. "I think of . . . judgment day."

10 L (a) yes. "The two men are characterized by their own sins."

(b) no.

11 L (a) yes. "If the world is thus full of the Aaron spirit . . . to represent to others that our sins [blame wrongdoing on other things]."

(b) no.

12 G (x) yes. Especially after being clobbered with the eleven paragraphs of Law!

(y) yes.

(z) yes. "If this the trouble, where, then, is the help? . . .when a man personally enters into the power of Jesus Christ."

13 G (x) yes. "the soul which had lost itself in the slavery of the multitude finds itself again in the obedience of Christ."

(y) no.

(z) yes.

14 G (x) yes. "Who is he? A being whom Christ has forgiven."

(y) yes. "Out of his sin . . . he gathers the consciousness of a self all astray with self-will."

(z) yes.

15 G (x) yes. "forgiveness by its Lord . . ."

(y) yes.

(z) yes.

16 G (x) yes. "Let me refuse to listen . . . to any voice which would make my sins less mine."

(y) yes.

(z) yes.

This sermon definitely shows an orderly arrangement of Law first followed by Gospel. The first eleven paragraphs were law oriented; the last five were Gospel oriented.

Sermon 11: "The Candle of the Lord"⁹ was preached July 4, 1880 in Westminster Abbey. The text is Prov. 20:27. In this sermon Brooks uses the imagery of a candle to symbolize man's situation. God comes to that situation and lights the candle of man.

1 L (a) yes. The human situation is described using the candle imagery.

(b) no.

2 G (x) no. The "candle" merely spreads its influence to others in its community.

(y) no.

(z) no.

3 L (a) yes. He speaks of the stubbornness of human nature, but again through the candle imagery.

(b) no.

4 G (x) no.

(y) yes. "so far as man is obedient to God, the life of God . . .gathers itself into utterance . . ."

(z) yes. "The fire of the Lord has found the candle of the Lord, and burns clear and steady . . ."

5 G (x) yes, but indirectly.

(y) yes. "You might write it all over the skies that God was just, but it would not burn there."

(z) no.

6 L (a) no.

(b) no.

7 G (x) yes. "all these are distortions of the true idea of man . . . Here is the perfect man, Christ Jesus!"

(y) yes. "Man is narrow and bigoted, and makes the light of God shine with his own special color."

(z) yes.

8 G (x) yes. Christ serves as an example of showing God's light.

(y) no.

(z) no.

The order of Law and Gospel is not as rigid as it was in the first sermon we examined, but it was, nonetheless, in healthy proportions: five paragraphs of the eight were Gospel oriented, while three were Law oriented.

Walter A. Maier

Sermon I: "The Inevitable Question"¹⁰ Based on Matthew 27:22, this sermon, preached to a radio audience, was written "with a deep consciousness of the supreme necessity of Christ both in the speaker's life and in the lives of those who heard him."¹¹ This sermon was deliberately chosen from Dr. Maier's early radio ministry to contrast with Sermon II, which was taken from the closing years of that ministry.

1 L (a) yes. Maier begins with the craze for greatness and power, but at the end of the paragraph he makes the further observation that we all "kneel down and worship at its altars."¹²

(b) no, although his vocabulary is beginning to hint

at the upcoming Law preaching.

2 G (x) yes.

(y) yes.

(z) yes.

3 L (a) yes. The sermon is written in such a way that we see ourselves in Judas, who had sold Him; Peter, who had denied Him; and His disciples, who had forsaken Him.

(b) no. It is more of a confrontation of man with the suffering, dying Christ and thus being forced into asking the inevitable question of Pilate, "What shall I do with Jesus?"

4 L (a) yes. Nomological existence is masterfully implied in trying to get rid of Jesus and finding oneself unable to do so.

(b) no.

5 L (a) yes. "fire-winged words, which, pray God, may burn their way through all the obstacles of self-will into the very center of your sin-sick hearts."

(b) yes

6 L (a) yes. A decision concerning Christ is absolutely unavoidable.

(b) yes. "some day the laughter of scorn will change to tears of remorse."

7 L (a) yes. No evasion or compromise on a decision is possible because of one's nomological existence.

(b) yes.

8 L (a) yes. Again, the futility of trying to avoid a decision.

(b) no. The crucifixion is "one of the most brutal modes of torture men have ever known."

9 G (x) yes.

(y) yes.

(z) yes. Forgiveness, faith, and hope are clearly post-conditions, not pre-conditions.

10 G (x) yes.

(y) yes.

(z) yes. "He asks of you for your salvation no effort, no contributions, no cooperation, only--thank God for this--only faith."

11 G (x) yes

(y) yes.

(z) yes.

Of the eleven paragraphs, four were Gospel oriented and seven were Law oriented.

Sermon 11: "Christ, Set Our Hearts on Fire!"¹³ Based on Luke 24:32, this sermon is taken from 1948, near the end of Dr. Maier's radio years. It is noticeably longer and more complex than the preceding sermon, which was preached in the early 1930's.

1-6 Introduction not dealing directly with either Law or Gospel.

7 G (x) yes. "The Savior shows His love particularly to those whom the world often passes unnoticed."

(y) no.

(z) yes. "Our faith gives no preference to caste or class, color or condition."

8 L (a) yes. "told them in their unbelief that Christ, crucified at Calvary, had failed."

(b) no.

9 G (x) yes. "So they made the mistake of leaving the other disciples. Had they remained with the small band of believers, they would have heard . . . the strengthening account of the Lord's resurrection."

(y) yes. "Many of you have paid a similar penalty for forsaking God's house."

(z) yes. "In His redeeming death and resurrection he found 'the peace . . . which passeth all understanding.'"

10 G (x) yes. "the Son of God was alive . . ."

(y) yes. "Many of you doubt Jesus' divine promise."

(z) yes. "find help in the living Christ."

11 G (x) yes. "'We shall be like Him.'"

(y) no.

(z) yes. "through faith in the resurrected Christ you will be forever blessed . . ."

12 G (x) yes. "you, too, have failed to recognize your divine Deliverer."

(y) yes. "you have thrust Him aside."

(z) yes. "take the unfailing comfort He offers you."

13 G (x) yes.

(y) no.

(z) yes.

14 L (a) yes. "a calamity far worse than an automobile accident, the destruction of their souls . . ."

(b) yes. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die."

- 15 G (x) yes. "Jesus had to die and rise again . . ."
 (y) yes. By dying and rising again, "Jesus satisfied the demands of Heaven's righteousness."
 (z) yes. "Christ had to lay down His life and then defeat the grave because only God could thus fully atone for all the sins of mankind."
- 16 G (x) yes.
 (y) no.
 (z) yes. "He has given us the assurance of our salvation."
- 17 G (x) yes. Since Christ had appeared to the two disciples, "their hearts glowed with the fire of faith."
 (y) no.
 (z) yes. "His victory over death . . ."
- 18 G (x) yes. "Christ can . . .warm our chilled hearts."
 (y) yes. Here Maier quotes readers' letters of life's pain and misery.
 (z) no.
- 19 L (a) no.
 (b) no.
- 20 L (a) yes. "Especially does the load of sin's guilt crush happiness out of many lives."
 (b) no.
- 21 L (a) no. As in 18 above, Maier quotes more examples.
 (b) no.
- 22 L (a) no. "Not in any merely human theories!"
 (b) no.

23 G (x) yes. "you must meet the living Savior of the Emmaus Road."

(y) yes. "the whole proud, sin-stricken, lust-filled, hate-charged, rebellious race . . ."

(z) yes. "He gladly paid the full price demanded for complete, universal redemption . . ."

24 G (x) yes. "How matchless the Savior's mercy!"

(y) no.

(z) yes. "the awful agony He endured in your stead on the cross."

25 G (x)yes. "your Savior, who is your God and present Help In every need."

(y) no.

(z) yes.

26 G (x) yes. "Once you truly know Jesus as your Deliverer from death . . ."

(y) no.

(z) yes. "firmly believe that the Christ of the Emmaus road knows your grief even before your afflicted souls beseech His help . . ."

27 G (x) yes. "If the Lord of life were made a welcome Guest in sorrow-shadowed dwellings."

(y) yes. "domestic misery, marital strife, and household unhappiness could be avoided . . ."

(z) yes. "The Savior wants to bless your family . . ."

28 L (a) no.

(b) no.

- 29 G (x) yes. "meet the living Christ in His Gospel. . . "
 (y) yes. "you have time for the many outside activities
 of your congregation but no time to read the Scriptures."
 (z) yes.
- 30 G (x) yes. "he knelt before God and declared himself
 a lost sinner, but the Crucified his Savior."
 (y) yes. "you skeptics and Christ-deniers who have
 been struck down by one blow of adversity after another . . ."
 (z) yes.
- 31 G (x) no.
 (y) no.
 (z) yes.
- 32 L (a) no. Maier compares Scripture with the fallibility
 of humans.
 (b) no. Scripture is a book you must heed if you
 would escape destruction.
- 33 G (x) yes. "our Lord promises, 'Peace I give unto you.'"
 (y) no.
 (z) no.
- 34 G (x) yes. "It is . . . the Christ of the Bible, who
 shed His blood to cleanse you from your sins . . ."
 (y) no.
 (z) yes. "to find the atoning Son of God . . ."
- 35 G (x) yes. "It [the Bible] offers you, through faith in
 God's Son, forgiveness for your sins . . ."
 (y) no.
 (z) no.

Footnotes

Chapter III

¹ Saint Augustine, Sermons on the Liturgical Seasons, translated by Sister Mary Sarah Muldowney, R. S. M. (New York: Fathers of the Church, Inc., 1959), pp. 108-15.

² Ibid., p. 228.

³ S. E. Frost, Jr., compiler, The World's Great Sermons (Garden City, New York: Garden City Publishing Co., 1943), pp. 48-53.

⁴ Ray C. Petry, editor, No Uncertain Sound (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1948), pp. 144-50.

⁵ Frost, pp. 111-15.

⁶ Ibid., p. 111.

⁷ Andrew W. Blackwood, compiler, The Protestant Pulpit (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1947), pp. 40-49.

⁸ Ibid., pp. 129-37.

⁹ Frost, pp. 177-80.

¹⁰ Walter A. Maier, The Lutheran Hour (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1931), pp. 141-48.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ _____, Go Quickly and Tell (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1950), pp. 206-26.

CONCLUSION

Chapter III attempted to compare the homiletical use of Law and Gospel qualitatively. Our study has borne out the fact that Law and Gospel are indeed inherent in Scripture and not just a product of the Reformation, in that we have seen them both actively at work in the sermons we have studied. To a man, all five of our preachers, over a time span of some sixteen hundred years, have preached both Law and Gospel in their sermons.

There seems to be no difference, either, in a preacher's background; both Lutheran and non-Lutheran preachers (both Protestant and pre-Reformation Roman Catholic) make solid use of Law as well as Gospel, Gospel as well as Law. (Perhaps a further study of this nature could include post-Reformation Roman Catholic preachers.) Quantitatively, our two pre-Reformation preachers, Augustine and Bernard, seemed to lean a bit heavily on the Gospel. (See the Appendix for a percentage breakdown). The reason for this is beyond the scope of this study.

APPENDIX

Breakdown (expressed in percentage)
of Law and Gospel paragraphs per sermon

	Augustine		Bernard		Edwards		Brooks		Maier	
Sermon	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Law	37%	0%	11%	0%	96%	46%	69%	37%	64%	28%
Gospel	63%	100%	89%	100%	4%	54%	31%	63%	36%	72%

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Augustine, Saint. Sermons on the Liturgical Seasons. Translated by Sister Mary Sarah Muldowney, R. S. M. New York: Fathers of the Church, Inc., 1959.
- Bernthal, August. "Preaching in the '70's." The Wenchel Lectures on Preaching, Concordia Seminary, 1972. (cassette tape).
- Blackwood, Andrew W., compiler. The Protestant Pulpit. New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1947.
- Boecler, Paul. "The Preaching of the Law in the Sermons of Geiseman, Fosdick, Spurgeon, and Macartney and the Application of Psychological persuasive Procedures." Unpublished S. T. M. thesis, Concordia Seminary, 1957.
- Brillioth, Yngve. A Brief History of Preaching. Translated by Karl E. Mattson. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1965.
- Brooks, Phillips. The Law of Growth and Other Sermons. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1902.
- _____, Lectures on Preaching. London: Allenson & Co., Ltd., n.d.
- Edwards, Jonathan. "Three Sermons on the Necessity of Atonement, and the Consistency Between That and Free Grace In Forgiveness." The Atonement. Discourses and Treatises. Boston: Congregational Board of Publication, 1859.
- Elert, Werner. Law and Gospel. Translated by Edward H. Schroeder. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1967.
- Frost, S. E., Jr., compiler. The World's Great Sermons. Garden City, New York: Garden City Publishing Co., 1943.
- Gerstner, John H. Steps to Salvation. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1960.
- Maler, Walter A. Go Quickly and Tell. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1950.
- _____. The Lutheran Hour. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1931.
- Mellaender, Gilbert. "Perspective for the Preaching of the Law." Concordia Theological Monthly, XLII (July-August, 1971), 443-50.

Miesner, Donald. "The Preaching of the Gospel in Selected Lenten Sermons of Bishop Fulton J. Sheen." Unpublished B. D. thesis, Concordia Seminary, 1959.

Morrison, James Cotter. The Life and Times of Saint Bernard, Abbot of Clairvaux. London: Macmillan and Co., 1868.

Petry, Ray C., editor. No Uncertain Sound. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1948.

Scarlett, William, editor. Phillips Brooks: Selected Sermons. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1949.

Storrs, Richard S. Bernard of Clairvaux, the Times, the Man, and His Work. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1893.

Tappert, Theodore G., editor. The Book of Concord. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1959.

Walther, C. F. W. The Proper Distinction Between Law and Gospel. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, n.d.