

1. The New Testament is "the oldest preserved book of the church's sermons" (Marxsen).

2. But sermons have texts, and the New Testament writings, being sermons, also have texts.

3. These texts in turn may prove to be still older sermons that also have texts.

4. If we follow back the lines of tradition leading to the oldest texts that in turn are sermons, their "text" is *the* text, the *primal* text, Jesus Christ himself.

5. But this primal text is never to be had simply in himself and as such, as distinct from being accessible to us solely in and through the oldest sermons that are the *primary* texts comprising the witness of the apostles. ("Apostle" here is to be understood in the strict sense of first preacher, the "text" of whose sermon is Jesus Christ and whose sermon itself, because this is so, is in turn a primary text for all later Christian sermons.)

6. Analysis discloses two main lines of tradition leading back to the primary texts or sermons: (1) the tradition of the Jesus-kerygma that preceded even our earliest gospel (i.e., pre-Marcian Jesus-traditions, possibly earlier collections thereof, especially a pre-Marcian passion narrative; and the sayings source commonly called "Q"); and (2) the tradition of the Christ-kerygma of the pre-Pauline Palestinian and Hellenistic Christian communities.

7. The first of these two lines of tradition is relatively older; and since, by their own claim, the sermons or texts belonging to the second line intend to proclaim none other than the same Jesus already proclaimed in the sermons or texts belonging to the first, they are subject to critical validation as appropriate by reference to these relatively older sermons or texts. In short, Christ-kerygma must be critically validated by Jesus-kerygma.

8. On the other hand, Christ-kerygma more or less adequately explicates the christological assertion implied by the Jesus-kerygma precisely as

kerygma, thereby keeping it from being misunderstood simply as a representation of Jesus as the supreme moral and/or religious example and of Christian faith, accordingly, as simply a matter of following his example.

9. Recognizing this, one has every reason to acknowledge the formal normativeness of the oldest Christ-kerygma alongside that of the oldest Jesus-kerygma—and to recognize those who first proclaimed the Christ-kerygma as also apostles in the strict sense of first preachers, the text of whose sermons is Jesus Christ and whose sermons themselves, because this is so, are in turn primary texts for all later Christian sermons.

10. Included among the earlier of these later sermons, of course, are all those comprising the two lines of tradition leading up to the writings of the New Testament as well as all the New Testament writings themselves.

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1. The New Testament is "the oldest preserved book of sermons of the church" (Marxsen).

2. But sermons have texts, and the New Testament writings, being sermons, also have texts.

3. These texts, in turn, may prove to be still earlier sermons that have texts.

4. If we follow up the lines leading back to the earliest texts that in turn prove to be sermons, their text is *the text*, the *primal text*, Jesus Christ.

5. But this primal text is never to be had in itself and as such, as distinct from being accessible to us solely in and through the earliest sermons that have it as their text and, therefore, are the *primary* texts that constitute the witness of the apostles, in the sense of the first preachers, whose sermons have as their text the primal text, Jesus Christ, and which, in turn, become the texts for all later sermons.

6. Analysis discloses two main types of such primary texts or sermons: (1) those comprising the Jesus-kerygma that preceded even our earliest gospel (i.e., pre-Markan Jesus traditions, possibly earlier collections thereof, especially a pre-Markan passion narrative; and the sayings source commonly called "Q"); and (2) those comprising the Christ-kerygma of the pre-Pauline Palestinian and Hellenistic Christian communities.

7. The first of these two types of sermons or texts is relatively earlier; and since, by the claim of sermons or texts of the second type themselves, they intend to proclaim none other than the Jesus proclaimed in sermons or texts of the first type, they are subject to validation as appropriate by reference to these relatively earlier sermons or texts. In a word, Christ-kerygma is to be validated by Jesus-kerygma.

8. On the other hand, Christ-kerygma more or less adequately explicates the claim implied by the *that* of the Jesus-kerygma precisely as kerygma, thereby keeping it from being misunderstood simply as a representation of Jesus as the supreme moral and/or religious example and of Christian faith, accordingly, as a matter of following his example.

9. Recognizing this, one has every reason to acknowledge the formal normativeness of the Christ-kerygma alongside the Jesus-kerygma—and to recognize those who first proclaimed the Christ-kerygma as also apostles, in the sense of being first preachers, whose sermons had as their text the primal text, Jesus Christ and which, in turn, became the texts for later sermons that,

in turn, became the texts for still later sermons—and so on, up to the New Testament writings as we now have them.

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