Wilder Explores New Testament’s Christian Plot

By RICHARD BEST

The Christian religion is based upon the history of God. This was the central concept of Amos Wilder’s talk in the Rice Chapel on February 7.

The address, entitled “Plot and Anecdote in the New Testament,” dealt with the events of the life of Jesus and of the means of their communication. While in many religions the sacred writings consist mainly of oracles, hymns, codes of law, etc., those of Judaism and Christianity deal mainly with history.

THE CHRISTIAN can communicate religion by telling a story. The meaning of Christianity rests upon historical events in the reign of Augustus.

The main plot of the Christian story is about heaven and earth, beginning and ending. Our time is Act V. The importance placed upon time has affected the great authors of western civilization.

“The modern novel is conceivable only in our culture,” said Wilder.

THE VISITING lecturer in Religion at Rice described two aspects of the Christian plot. First is the lost-found motif. From Adam’s exodus from Paradise to the dead and risen Christ, this theme is found throughout Scripture.

In appealing to the heart of the lost, “Christianity places the plot of Homer’s Odyssey in cosmic proportions.”

Secondly there exists a similar theme of descent and ascent. Christ descended into darkness to rise into glory.