

# The Voice

of the Mennonite Brethren Bible College

Vol. XI

May - June, 1962

No. 3

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*Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. — 2 Tim. 2:15.*

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## "Vergiß nicht, was er dir Gutes getan hat."

Das Schuljahr 1961-62 ist zum Abschluß gekommen. Wenn die es Blatt unsere Leser erreicht, sind unsere werten Studenten in alle Winde zerstreut. Auch die vielen Gäste, die aus den Provinzen zu unseren Schlußfeiern gekommen waren, und uns durch ihren Besuch erfreuten, sind wieder daheim.

All unseren Studenten rufen wir mit dem Psalmisten zu, "Vergiß nicht, was er dir Gutes getan hat." Auch den Eltern, die die Gnade hatten ihre Kinder unter der Lehre des Wortes Gottes zu haben, möchten wir dieses Mahnword zurufen. Als Arbeiter am College gilt uns diese Aufforderung in besonderer Weise. Der Herr hat es an seiner Hilfe nicht fehlen lassen. "Vergiß nicht, was er dir Gutes getan hat."

In besonderer Weise, aber, gilt dieses Wort des Psalmisten unseren werten Absolventen, deren Namen auf der 3. Umschlagseite zu finden sind. Möchten sie Gnade finden bei Gott und Menschen.

Im Blick auf das viele Gute das wir aus Gottes Hand empfangen haben, wollen wir mutig weiter arbeiten. Unsere werten Lehrer und Kollegen sind auch überall zerstreut. Die Brüder Klassen und Giesbrecht sind auf der Universität in Minneapolis um sich für ihre Arbeit am College weiter auszubilden. Br. Martens gedenkt nach Ontario zur Sommerschule zu fahren. Br. Peters dient diesen Sommer unseren Gemeinden in Süd-Amerika. Br. J. J. Toews löst Br. Nachtigal ab in der Radio-Arbeit, die unsere äußere Missionsbehörde in Quito, Ecuador, tut. Br. Wall hat die Arbeit in der Seelsorge an den Kranken, hier in der Stadt Winnipeg, übernommen. Br. Baerg widmet sich nun vollzeitig der Südend Gemeinde. Br. J. A. Toews setzt seine Arbeit am College durch den Sommer fort. Er wird auch an der Sommerschule unterrichten. Möchte der Herr zu allen Bemühungen seinen Segen geben!

Wir laden noch einmal ein zur Sommerschule, vom 9. bis zum 27. Juli. Eine Anzahl Anmeldungen liegen schon vor, und wir erwarten den Segen Gottes für dieses Unternehmen.

David Ewert

## PRACTICAL

### Living In A World Of Tensions

(A lecture delivered at the 1961 Canadian Conference at Coaldale)

Ours is a world of tensions. It has always been so for Jesus warned that living in the world would spell anxiety and fear. The question which faces the Christian is whether or not he must succumb to these pressures and tensions. With respect to the physical, the Christian is "still in the body" and must take the normal, sane precautions of mental health. Redemption has not, as yet, taken him out of the human realm; that final stage of transformation belongs to the province of hope. On the other hand, Paul promises the struggling Christian that "the peace of God which passeth all understanding shall keep... heart and mind through Christ Jesus."

Psychiatrists have told us that religion is like dynamite; it can be as destructive as it is beneficial. It depends on the way it is used. Religion can be used as an escape mechanism by way of which a person evades coming to grips with present day problems of adjustment. All of us have met people who are covering up faulty adjustments by a pious religious veneer. The day of the "shibboleth" is not passed but in the area of mental health our religion must go deeper than the tongue if it is to be effective.

We as Mennonites are not immune to emotional illness and in some cases are especially vulnerable to present day tensions. Sociologists point to periods of rapid cultural changes as being especially productive of emotional stress. In general, we are in such a period now. Children and parents often disagree because of issues involving cultural changes. The tension is also keenly felt in personal conscience for many are changing but not in response to conviction. They are actually living

ahead of their conscience and the lag is felt in guilt and anxiety.

We have also moved from a rural to an urban environment with almost no experience in city living. Our ethic was developed in rural situations and included the problems commonly met by rural people. Now we face new problems such as labour unions, shift work, family disintegration, and greater mobility. Our lack of an adequate solution brings on distress and tension.

In times such as these the people, our people, look to the Church for an answer. Are leaders aware of the problems which the flock experiences? Are they willing to identify themselves with these problems courageously and honestly? If there is a close identification with leadership and a sense of trust in leadership, a feeling of security is engendered. We need more than pious platitudes and a veneration of the past.

This article is an attempt to understand the tensions which we face in our day. It was born out of reflections on the many experiences which have come to the author in dealing with people in counseling situations.

#### The Curse of Tension

The Psalmist gave expression to the bane of tensions when he wrote: "When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all day long... my moisture turned to the drought of summer." Such picturesque language aptly describes what the sufferer in conflict actually experiences in his soul.

Tension has become part of our way of life. We worship power and have become enslaved by it. Mark Twain once wrote: "If I were a heathen, I would erect a statue to power and fall down and worship it." The tragedy is

that so many have done just that. Notice our preference for such adjectives as dynamic, vigorous, powerful, aggressive, forceful, etc. They reflect the motivation which has become so dominant in the lives of so many. Such adjectives as serene, tranquil, peaceful are found in the literature of the unrealistic idealist or the cultist of the East. If used by us they are used in the subjunctive, expressing a wish.

Our way of life is built on competition and fosters the tension of striving on every hand. A certain amount of this is actually beneficial and is part of growth. However, if present in excess it has a crippling effect on emotional adjustment and brings insecurity and anxiety to the heart. Under the guise of free enterprise we have set into motion a "dog-eat-dog" philosophy of economics. Our academic world presents a student with a "ranking" system. To learn is not first of all to enrich oneself for greater service and happier living in line with one's abilities but comes to mean "beating others" in studies. To fail in this means defeat and loss of self-esteem.

Ministers and church workers are not free from this evil either. One recent article in the **Reader's Digest** points to the high rate of mental illness among ministers and religious workers. Could it be that the question "who is the greatest?" has not died out among us?

Tension is also evident in our reactions to life. In New York, one out of eighteen people are under psychiatric treatment. Our inner resources no longer keep pace with the pressures which impinge on us from the outside. I have noticed some of the majestic cathedrals in Europe and became aware of the absence of inner supports in the building. The flying buttresses withstood the pressure of the nave. In other words, the pressure from the top was met by an equal or greater pressure from the sides. The principle also applies to the soul. The thrust from without must be met by equal or greater thrust from within.

Just notice the expressions on the faces of people riding in a bus at 5:30 p.m. They display strain, tension, ex-

haustion and irritability. These people will come home to meet equally tense people. The result is obvious unless, of course, such people find an inner sanctuary in their hearts where waters become calm and frayed nerves can relax.

Tensions also take their toll in life. Dr. Parran, former Surgeon-General of the U.S.A., invited eighty-five top-flight executives to a meeting of the Heart Association. He placed four containers with four human hearts before the assembly. One heart was that of a former business man who had lived a normal life and died in old age. The second heart was swollen, ballooned to double size and had been the heart of a business executive who died instantly while in the heat of argument. The third belonged to an executive who refused to slow down. The fourth belonged to a business man who suffered a heart attack at sixty-five, slowed down and lived to the age of 80. The application of the object lesson was left to each person attending the meeting. That heart disease is related to hypertension has been amply proven by medical science.

#### The Cause of Tension.

Establishing causation is not an easy matter and oversimplification is a constant hazard. However, two of the more obvious causes could be listed here.

1. **Our inner conflicts.** Intrapersonal tensions are most productive of strain and often lead to breakdown. Such inner conflicts could have their roots in several of many situations of modern living and must be dealt with before they take their toll in mental health. Christians might well be on the lookout in three significant areas fostering inner conflicts.

(a) **Multiple Motivation** — Paul was able to say with inner assurance, "This one thing I do." Double or multiple motivation can only lead to intense personal conflict. James speaks of a "double-minded" man, a "dipsychos". Goethe once wrote, "Ich hab' zwei Seelen in meiner Brust."

This double motivation might be in the realm of the vocational. Indecision

and conflict must give way to an inner feeling of peace and assurance. A person may have a clear sense of call to the ministry but the lure of more financially rewarding professions has not been settled. Such troubled waters must be stilled by the Master and Lord of wind and wave.

(b) **Demanding Duties** — At times we just spread ourselves too thin and our inability to do things well leaves us inwardly in conflict. We could be majoring in minors. However, not always is a busy person in conflict nor an idle person in peace. The world would be surprised to see how much work could be done by a person who is not hampered by inner anxiety or conflict. And yet, no one can do all the good he is called upon to do. He must give up many opportunities in order to utilize a few properly.

(c) **Personal Pressures** — Many individuals suffer from personal pressures. The concern may be for a child who is not responding to training as parents would wish him to. Concern for a church, a conference, a school and hundred other pressures can crowd out peace and tranquility. "Casting all your cares upon him" says Peter, "for he careth for you." Jesus said, "Let not your hearts be troubled, ye believe in God, believe also in me."

2. **Our Outer Conflicts.** Many of our conflicts stem from a direct clash with certain things outside of ourselves. Such conflicts must also be dealt with "according to the power that worketh in us."

(a) **Compulsive Conformity** — We desire to be like others. Our sense of acceptance and belonging often depends on our being like others. It takes personality strength to be different and relaxed. The Scriptures enjoin us not to be conformed to this world but to be transformed by renewing our minds. Conform we must, but let it be a conforming to the ideal of the new man in Jesus Christ.

Man is born original and dies a type. The world has "squeezed him into a mould" as Phillips translates Romans 12:1-2.

I am not encouraging a certain abandonment of convention and social decorum which finds its present day expression in 'beatnik' philosophy. There is however, a wholesome appreciation of individual personality as created by God and developed under God which allows for individual differences. Here one does not seek to be someone else but attempts to sanctify that which characterizes the individual in order to make a contribution as an individual.

b) **Invidious Inferiority** — Since we try to be like others, we constantly compare ourselves with others. The result is a sense of inferiority which breeds envy. Such an inferiority complex gives rise to many unchristian forms of interpersonal reactions. Jesus in His conversation with the Ruler pointed out that our love for our neighbor is based on a wholesome appreciation of ourselves as creatures of God. We cannot appreciate others until we come to peace with ourselves.

Humility is ninety percent honesty. It is the grace to think of ourselves as we ought to think. It also means thinking of others as we ought to think of them. It allows us to give credit where it is due and to accept it if it rightly comes to us. In one of the recent articles in the **Reader's Digest** an author has suggested expressing appreciation to three people every day. Of course, this must be an honest expression, but usually there is no problem finding sufficient occasion if one can get beyond himself.

c) **Frustrating Failures.** It is quite possible for a person to move on a level which is quite beyond him and which allows for few really satisfying experiences. The job is just too big. Honest facing of the problem is the only answer. "Square pegs in round holes" are seldom comfortable.

On the other hand, Paul encourages us to "forget the things which are behind." Once a failure has been made we ought to analyze it, learn from it, and then promptly forget it. A certain business executive told an aspirant to a higher position: "You can make any mistake — once." We were not meant to live under constant failure, we are

to be "more than conquerors through him who loved us."

### The Cure of Tension

Proper medication follows an enlightening diagnosis. Such medication is found in the "hygienic" doctrine of the Word. The gospel creates tension in order to cure tension.

1. **The Tonic of Honesty** — A proper evaluation of our condition before God is an absolute must. As long as we are not truthful before God, He cannot help us. "The Truth shall make you free" said Jesus. The word "confess" (*homologeō*) means "to say the same thing as." To confess before God is to say the same thing as God says about us, to stop contradicting Him.

Once we no longer try to hide our defects before God and man, we come to a strange peace in our lives. Our defenses are discarded and the peace of God which is so deeply rooted in the forgiveness of God becomes our portion.

Such a condition can also exist between brethren. When men in Christian love can accept others without envy and hostility, they create an atmosphere in which people can be open to each other. They no longer fear each other and this makes honesty with each other possible.

2. **The Balm of Release** — The Greeks employed the word "catharsis" which spoke of an inner purification which comes from "talking out" our problems. I remember a German hymn which was sung when I was a boy. "O, wie's Ruhe bringt, wenn ich alles gesagt meinem Jesu!"

## Die Krise im Familienleben

Daß die Welt von heute sich in einer Krise befindet, wird keiner verstreiten. Wiederholt hört man von den politischen, finanziellen, sozialen, moralischen und anderen Krisen. Es sind auf vielen Gebieten schwere Probleme zu finden und es werden große Anstrengungen gemacht, dieselben zu überwäligen. Aber die erschütterndste Krise ist in der äl-

Peter says, "Casting all your cares upon him." This casting is not to be a great cataclysmic heaving (*ekbalo*) but a gentle depositing of our legitimate and illegitimate concerns in the bank of God and then to step back allowing Him to transact business on our behalf. The unconcern we are to seek is not that of indifference but that of one who has a manager more capable than himself.

3. **The Therapy of Fellowship** — All of us need to feel accepted. First and foremost we need a sense of divine acceptance. The gospel communicates this. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Then "walking in the light" we have "fellowship one with another" and the Blood of Christ keeps us in fellowship.

We also need a therapeutic brotherhood, a sense of belonging which comes to those who feel a oneness with each other. Here the strong accept the infirmities of the weak in order to make strong. Here the spiritual admonish the straying. Such a "society of the concerned" invites mental health and spiritual growth.

Here is our weakness. Our world has made us worldly in that we react to each other much the way the world does.

There is a balm in Gilead. "The daughter of my people" can be healed. If only we could be in the world and not of the world. We have a medication which still functions but it is often administered by malfunctioning people.

F. C. Peters.

testen sozialen Einrichtung — in der Familie, zu finden. Hier sind die Wurzeln des Lebens zu finden, aber gerade hier versagt heute unsere Zivilisation. Der feste Boden für eine gesunde Gesellschaft, nämlich das Heim, ist schankend geworden. Überall nimmt man diese Tatsache wahr, doch wird so wenig getan, und nur selten wird das

Problem tatkräftig angegriffen, um eine Lösung zu finden.

Jedermann gibt zu, daß wir heute in einer Übergangsperiode leben. Besonders seit dem letzten Weltkrieg haben wir es mit Schmerzen feststellen müssen, daß das Familienleben zusammenbricht. Man behauptet, daß die Kommunisten das Familienleben bewußt angreifen und daß Lenin gesagt haben soll, die Familie der Bourgeoisie würde mit dem Überwinden des Kapitalismus von der Erde verschwinden. Was die Gottlosen bewußt niederreißen, lassen wir oft durch Gleichgültigkeit und Fleischlichkeit aus den Händen schwinden. Also geschieht in der Institution, die man jahrhundertlang als die stabilste Einrichtung unter Menschen angesehen hat, ein großer Umschwung und ein radikaler Wechsel. Die Einstellung zur Familie hat sich grundsätzlich geändert. Man sagt sogar, wenn auch die Familie bis heute bestanden hat, so ist das noch keine Garantie, daß sie fort dauern wird.

1. **Warum diese Veränderung in der Einstellung zur Familie?** Die Gründe die man für diese Umwälzung angeben könnte, sind unzählig. Da wäre einmal zu erwähnen, daß der Drang zur Stadt viel dazu beiträgt, daß die Familie zertrübt wird. Da wird so viel geboten, es gibt so viel zu tun, und man sucht so viel Zerstreuung, daß für die Familie wenig Zeit übrig bleibt. Auch bringt das Stadtleben einen kulturellen Umschwung mit sich. Soziale und kulturelle Veränderungen verursachen oft Probleme und bringen Familien aus dem Gleichgewicht.

Ein anderer störender Umstand ist der Massenverkehr. Isolierung ist heute fast unmöglich. Durchs Radio, Zeitschriften, TV und andere Kommunikationsmittel werden wir so von Außen bearbeitet, daß wir bald ganz schön in die allgemeine Gesellschaftsform hineinpassen. Wo die Familie als Bollwerk gegen die feindlichen Angriffe dienen sollte, steht sie oft kraftlos da. Um in unserer Zeit zu leben, muß man ja informiert sein, aber durch die Aneignung dieser Information über unsere Gesellschaft saugt man sich auch den Geist der heutigen Welt ein. Wenn man dann

noch an Kunst, an Theater und Sport denkt, wie leicht wird der Einzelne und die Familie da mitgerissen. Durch die Kommunikationsmittel wird z.B. eine Familie in Winnipeg von dem was in London, Paris, New York, und Hollywood vorgeht, beeinflusst.

Ein anderer Umstand welcher das Familienleben beeinträchtigt, ist der Wohlstand. Dieser macht es uns viel leichter, uns anzupassen. Dann wären auch noch die guten Verkehrsmöglichkeiten zu erwähnen. Mit dem Auto kann man nun mit großer Geschwindigkeit von einem Ort zum andern fahren.

Aber einige Umstände sind in der Familie selbst zu finden. Die Grundlage für die Heirat ist heute oft eine andere als sie vor Zeiten war. Heute legt man große Betonung auf das Romantische und Erotische. Das hat auch seinen gottgewollten Platz, solange es nicht in lauter Sinnlichkeit ausartet. Dann wäre noch zu erwähnen, daß viele Frauen und Mütter außerhalb des Heimes arbeiten. Dieses trägt nicht zum gesunden Aufbau des Heimes bei. Es stärkt dieses oft nur das Verlangen nach dem Materiellen und nach Bequemlichkeiten. Unwillkürlich folgt darauf das Bedürfnis nach einer kleinen Familie, denn Kinder passen in solch ein Bild nicht hinein. Auch verliert der Mann und Vater oft dadurch seine Stellung als Haupt im Heim. Eines reicht dem andern die Hand und so gibt es viele Umstände, die oft unbemerkt weitgreifende Veränderungen im Familienleben herbeiführen.

Was aber noch viel kritischer ist, ist das Versagen des Familienglaubens. Welch eine Dürre des Glaubens im Familienleben! Oft fragt man auch in der christlichen Familie viel mehr nach dem Materiellen als nach dem Geistlichen. Der Gottesdienst wird in vielen Heimen vernachlässigt. Wenn das Christentum uns das Heim, so wie wir es kennen, gegeben hat, so kann die christliche Familie auch nur dann bestehen, wenn das christliche Leben im Heim gepflegt wird. Viele würden in iner Generation zu Heiden werden, wenn sie sich allein auf ihre religiöse Erziehung, die sie im Heim bekommen,

verlassen würden. Daß der Morgen- und Abendsegen in den Heimen vernachlässigt wird, hat eine geistliche Hungersnot verursacht. Es spitzt sich alles auf das Materielle und Sekuläre. Sehr bemerkbar macht sich dieses im Besuch des Gotteshauses und der verschiedenen Gottesdienste. Wie leicht lassen sich Eltern und auch Kinder zurückhalten vom Besuch der Kirche! Manche begnügen sich mit einer Versammlung pro Woche. Viele bekommen nicht einmal so viel. Wie wollen wir uns mit so wenig Speise geistlich erhalten?

Noch eine andere Frage beschäftigt uns:

**2. Wie fest und bindend ist das Versprechen am Hochzeitsaltar?** Viele nehmen dieses nicht mehr so ernst. Daß das Versprechen fürs Leben war — bis der Tod sie voneinander schied — war früher selbstverständlich, und das sogar bei anständigen Nichtchristen. Heute ist es am Platze, daß wir es unter Christen betonen. Wenn dieser Bund, der von der menschlichen Natur geknüpft und bestätigt wird, nicht mehr verlässlich ist, wie soll der Mensch dann auf anderen Gebieten Treue bewahren? Hier liegt der Grund für alle anderen Einrichtungen und Handlungen. Wenn Mann und Frau in die Ehe treten, dann gibt es eine neue Art von Gemeinschaft unter einer neuen Ordnung. Die göttliche Ordnung, die zwischen Mann und Frau besteht, darf man nicht übersehen. Der Mann ist das Haupt und der Patriarch. Die Frau steht nicht auf einer niedrigen Stufe, aber sie hat andere Aufgaben und zielt ihren Stand, wenn sie sich unterordnet. Auch haben Eltern und Kinder ihre Sonderstellung in der Familie. Wenn diese Ordnungen nicht eingehalten werden und eine Kindermonarchie eingeführt wird, da gibt es Unordnung und Verbrechen. Ein großes Übel in unseren Tagen ist, daß Mann und Frau, Eltern und Kinder nicht die gottgewollte Ordnungen innehalten. Gegenseitige Geborgenheit fühlen Eltern und Kinder, Mann und Frau nur dann, wenn sie sich untereinander unterstützen und nicht auf diesem Gebiete versagen.

Aber nicht nur versagen unsere Heime im Familienleben und in der Familienordnung, sondern auch in den Familienaufgaben. Der Vater hat Vateraufgaben, und er erhält seine wahre Männlichkeit durch das Erfüllen seiner besonderen Aufgaben. Er ist nicht nur Versorger, sondern auch Priester und Freund. Viele Väter haben ihre Interessen außerhalb des Heimes und glauben ihre Aufgabe getan zu haben, wenn sie für den täglichen Bedarf sorgen. Gleichfalls ist es zu bedauern, daß so viele Frauen die Mutterrolle ablehnen und mit anderen Sachen ihre Zeit verschwenden. Da fängt das selbstsüchtige Leben an. Wenn möglich führt sie ihren Beruf weiter und schadet ihre Kinder. Daß die Kinder oft keine Aufgaben haben, ist sehr zu bedauern. Früher konnten Kinder mit den Eltern zusammen arbeiten, aber in unserer industriellen und mechanisierten Welt ist das fast unmöglich. Also bummeln sich fünfzehn und sechzehnjährige Knaben herum und fallen allerlei Lastern zur Beute, und das Verantwortungsgefühl wird abgestumpft.

Die letzte und vielleicht dringende Frage ist:

**3. Wie beugen wir diese Krisen vor?** Natürlich ist es schon von großem Wert, wenn man die Sachlage analysiert und richtig überprüft. Aber es muß auch eine Antwort gegeben werden und ein praktischer Weg gefunden werden, um diese Übel zu bekämpfen. Hier ist wohl nur eine Antwort notwendig: Setzen wir unser Ziel und Streben auf höhere Werte, auf Ewigkeitswerte. Alles was gut ist wollen wir bewahren und stärken. Wo wir unterlegen sind, wollen wir uns beugen und frisch aufraffen. Durch die Kraft des Geistes und des Wortes, wollen wir überwinden, wo wir geschwächt worden sind. Das Geistliche hat auch heute in unserer materiellen und sekulären Welt seinen Platz. Wir wollen konsequent und klar in der Familie, vor unsern Kindern und vor der Welt, die bleibenden Werte wählen. Das Böse wollen wir geduldig aber unermüdet aufdecken und strafen. Hier erlebte Eli, nach 1. Samuel 2, 17ff seine Niederlage, denn er duldet das Böse in seiner Familie.

Wollen unseren Kindern und der Umgebung ein positives christliches Bild geben. Es wird gesagt: Wer in seinem Beruf Erfolg hat, aber im Heime versagt, der wird bankrott. Wer aber in der Familie erfolgreich ist, dessen Leben gelingt, auch wenn er im Beruf nicht so viel Glück gehabt hat. Re-

gierungen, soziale Organization, und andere Bemühungen von Seiten der Gesellschaft werden uns in dieser Sache nicht helfen. Nur Gott kann uns helfen. So daß wir in einer Zeit wie Noahs Zeit war, doch samt unserem Haus selig werden können.

H. R. Baerg.

## Some Unforgettable Lessons I Learned in the Family

(The faculty was responsible for one of the regular student-night programs. Upon the request of the faculty, Brother C. Wall, who this year completed a fifty-year span of teaching, shared with the College family some of the insights, he has gained into familyliving. With Mother's and Father's Day still fresh in our memories, we felt that these lessons should be shared with our readers. — Ed.)

It will surprise no one when I confess that I am in a predicament, due to the faculty's assignment to relate some of the unforgettable lessons I learned during the forty-four years of our married life. To my deep regret the faculty did not forewarn me forty years ago, for then I would have jotted down some observations during the course of the years. As it is, I have to pick experiences at random and plead for mercy, should the logic of the arrangement not be to your liking.

I am to be objective, truthful and realistic. It is so easy to get into idealizing when one views, retrospectively, situations and experiences of life. In telling you about some of the lessons learned, I shall attempt to remain realistic.

1. I learned that it really paid well to look for a good Christian girl and not only that, but also to marry a good girl, who was willing to make my occupation and calling hers, and to share the joys and griefs resulting from the work. But I also learned that it pays to be a good Christian husband to the good girl I married, as well as to be a good father to my children. Whenever I failed in these respects, I was the loser, and everyone was made to suffer. I am ashamed of those occasions when I failed to be the Christian husband and the good father.

2. Furthermore, I learned unforgettably that one and one may make two

'ones', but they may just as well and just as easily make a team of two. By the grace of God I think I can truthfully say that we learned something of the beauty of cooperation and real unity; the beauty of making a team instead of two 'ones' I learned to realize that one and one and one and one—we have two girls—can make four 'ones', but they may just as easily make a team of four. I have learned that two and two and two—our girls married in the meantime—may make three couples, but also for the same price, be a combination of three 'twos' or a team of six. The possibilities are there for either trend. I learned to prefer teamwork, but in the process of learning I realized that much depends on the way "the old cock crows." The German proverb, "Wie man in den Wald schreit, so kommt es zurück," and "Wie die Alten sungen, so zwitschern auch die Jungen," are true to life and worthy of my attention.

3. Again I learned that it pays to be the head of the house, not only to act as one. But how to be the head of the house has been a matter of great concern. The responsibility of the head is not to wield the big stick, but to find the proper balance between affectionate devotion and adherence to basic principles. The secret is my willingness to be properly the servant of all, the helper of every one's happiness and joy. It was gratifying for me as father to

hear my infant girls say, "Mein Papa kann alles." It gives me equally great satisfaction to hear my grown up children say, "Our daddy does for us all he possibly can." It takes humility and grace to be the head of the house. I deeply regret every instance when I failed in this divinely appointed office to be loving, cooperative, reasonable. I praise God for granting me grace in the course of time to learn something of the beauty of being the father of the family and the head of the house.

4. I learned the fact that one can win through losing, and lose through winning; to gain by sharing and lose by selfishly withholding. I still reap for sharing with my family every candy bar that came into my possession during the lean years of our family life; for assuring the family that our finances were family property, not my money. I know our girls are different girls because I lost the fight for the bicycle and was pushed off, when teasingly I would not let them have it; that I did get soaked in the water fight, that I let them take revenge by putting walunt shells under the sheet of my bed, after I had done the same to them.

5. I learned to take for granted that every member of the family, and most certainly the life's partner, is good-natured and definitely means well. It hardly ever occurred, as I realize in retrospect that either my children nor my "Schatz" — as I prefer to call my partner—did anything for spite, except for fun. Frequently I wronged them by getting aggravated and upset, assuming that their reactions were motivated by refusal to cooperate. In the course of time I learned to realize that there is far more good will and cooperation with them than I had given them credit for. I am ashamed of my harshness which the members of the family at times had to endure. As far as I know those offenses have been confessed and forgiven, and we learned to laugh off a good many instances which in former years would have caused friction and injustice and hurt feelings.

In this connection I learned a few lessons about car rides. To me, as well

as to everyone else, the side seat or back seat driver is an aggravation. But I learned that it is much harder to occupy one of these seats than to be in the driver's seat. While my dear "Schatz" had to learn a few things as side-seat driver, it was my task to persuade her that I had not yet discovered the formula for driving slowly and 'getting places' fast. But what is more important, I am in the process of learning more fully to drive, not only carefully, but considerately, "nicht nur vorsichtig, sondern auch rücksichtsvoll", giving due consideration to the emotional state of the occupant of the side-seat. Having learned that to a degree, rides are much more pleasant and profitable.

6. I learned that it pays to be reasonable in my demands upon my family. With all the devotion I had for my first love, I still had to learn to reason not for her, but with her. The same held true for the children. It dawned upon me that I had to guard their interests as closely as I possibly could and respect their rights. I realized that much friction comes from withholding something to which a member of the family is entitled. To reason with the members of the family left room for the assumption that I did intend to be the loving father and husband, not the dictator. It left room for the exchange of opinion and by that, for the erasing of the suspicion that I was convinced always to be right. It pays to reason instead of quarrelling. It pays to be open for changes and adjustments upon the suggestions of members of the family. I found that this is in no wise below the dignity of the "head of the house." It makes for greater peace and unity without robbing the husband and father of his authority, or removing from him the responsibility of being the head of the family. I regret having ever been bossy. By the grace of God I believe to have learned at least in part, the lesson of being reasonable and being willing to listen to reason.

7. I learned to realize that it pays to let the children grow up. One has to reconcile himself with that fact. For me this was a hard task. But by the

grace of God I learned it in a measure. To those of you who have families and still have your children with you, I want to say, enjoy your children while you have them and while you can. The nest soon will be empty. Blessed is the parent who, in the years when he can do not much more for the children than to pray for them and occasionally visit them or write to them, is able to recall the pleasant moments when the children were at home and when there was not only work and play, but real heartfelt good-will extended to them. Live for the children in a godly way, and you will feel rewarded in older age when you are back where you started, but in an altogether different frame of mind and under different circumstances. Through affection and devotion to each other you will have grown more fond of each other, but your hearts will ache because of being separated from the children. As natural as it may be for the younger generation to start out independently, the parents find it hard to reconcile themselves with the fact that the child goes his own way.

The crucial moment is the day when the child demands the right to live his own life and the parent has failed to see that the claim is justified and has failed to prepare himself for that day. Unless the parents are reconciled to the fact, they become either indifferent to their children, or bitter, refusing to help and to fellowship with them, unless they continue to yield to parental control. In either case, much hardship comes into the lives of both, parents as well as children. The parents still long for their children, and the children feel that the demands of the parents are unjustified. There is a way of avoiding this catastrophe.

It was up to us to let our girls grow up. It was a hard lesson to learn. But once we reconciled ourselves with the fact that our girls were growing up and we were agreed to let them live their own lives, we had peace and understanding. It is by the grace of God that we are able to talk over with our children all the problems that come up, theirs and ours. I take the liberty of giving advice, without assuming re-

sponsibility for their actions, or demanding of them to follow my advice. They are to live their own lives and "eat their soups." Of course, if it gets too sour, we try to season it for them a bit to make it more palatable. They, in turn, are at liberty to give us advice, but after that, permit us to do as we please.

8. And lastly, I learned the unforgettable lesson that unless my immediate family learns to respect my Christianity, I have failed in my Christian testimony. I realized long ago that I cannot fool them. No use trying! I cannot hide my real self from them, I live too closely with them. They immediately detect my inconsistencies. They sense it whether I am determined to serve the Lord, or whether I am bluffing, whether or not I am honest, just and fair, whether or not I, in sincerity, do seek to live in the presence and fellowship of the Lord, whether my Christianity is genuine or false.

By the grace of God I learned to see this, and in all humility may I take the liberty of professing, that I have taken my life seriously so that my Christianity at present is being respected by sister Wall and the family, which to me is evidence that my Christian life and my relationship to the Lord is of the right kind.

Life so far has been for me a very interesting business. I enjoyed it and want to continue enjoying it every moment I am in the business of living. My motto has been for many years, "For me to live is Christ," and that goes for sister Wall also. That is why we enjoy living. And when the Lord's summons will come, to "close shop" — for sooner or later it must come — we hope by the grace of God not to regret that we reached that point. Neither do we want to wish that we could start all over. As we say now, "For us to live is Christ," so then by the grace of God, we want to repeat the second half of Paul's statement, "To die is gain." In my opinion the road to true happiness is,

"Lebe, wie Du, wenn Du stirbst,  
Wünschen wirst, gelebt zu haben."

C. Wall

## DENOMINATIONAL

### An Anabaptist's Apprehensions About Ecumenism

(This article was given as a lecture at a joint meeting of the staff of the M. B. College and that of the Can. Menn. College. This annual meeting has provided many on occasion for profitable conversation on a variety of subjects. — Ed.)

#### Introduction:

The primary reason for the choice of my subject for this evening is its current interest. Some subjects for historical or theological discussion are hidden and buried in theological works or historical archives. Others you meet on the crowded crossways of life. Fifty years ago leaders in the Methodist and Presbyterian Churches often remarked, "Church union is in the air." This seems to be true of ecumenism today. It is in the air. Recently there appeared two articles in the *Canadian Mennonite* on the subject. The first article, written by R. Epp, is entitled: **The Ecumenical Movement—faith in man or God.** The writer expresses some serious concerns about the nature and objectives of the World Council of Churches. A second article, written by Bill W. Dick, constitutes a plea to the Mennonite Conferences of Canada to join the Canadian Council of Churches. According to the second writer, we have nothing to lose and very much to gain by joining such an organization. Obviously, ecumenism means different things to different people.

Before launching out on a little exploration trip into the troubled waters of the ecumenical sea, I thought it would be wise to investigate, whether our respective conferences had made any official statements on this issue. My hope of making any converts in a group that is already officially committed to an ecumenical movement would be slight indeed. I was encouraged to pursue my interests, when I found the following **Statement On Ecumenical Relations** released by the General Confer-

ence of Mennonites. The statement is found in the *Canadian Mennonite* of December 8, 1961:

"We recognize the New Testament teaching on the unity of the Christian brotherhood in Jesus Christ and that the Holy Spirit seeks to direct all Christians toward that goal.

We acknowledge our desire to be led by the Spirit toward Christian unity, both within our denomination and with other denominations. Moreover, we believe that the General Conference Mennonite Church has much to give and to gain in conversation with the larger Christian fellowship.

We recognize also, however, that there are some real concerns about affiliation with any one of the ecumenical groups. A thorough discussion of this matter at the Centennial Study Conference on Christian Unity (Donnellson, Iowa, August 1960) revealed that there are differing convictions among us regarding ecumenical affiliations.

We therefore believe that we as a General Conference Mennonite Church should not at this time become members of any of the major ecumenical groups (i.e., National Association of Evangelicals, National Council of Churches, World Council of Churches).

However, we would encourage contact and conversation with them for the purpose of comity, sharing information, concerns, and services, and for witness. For example, Conference boards may become affiliated with functional sections of interdenominational agencies for such appropriate purposes."

It might be well to state here, that contrary to popular opinion, the Men-

nonite Brethren Conference of North America is not a regular member of the **National Association of Evangelicals.** Representatives of our Conference have attended the annual meetings of the N.A.E. as observers, but the official status of the Conference could probably be described as one of associate membership. As Anabaptists we have our concerns not only about the ecumenical movements to the left, but also about those to the right. We have our concerns about joining the N.A.E., as well as our concerns about joining the W.C.C. although we might find ourselves in greater agreement with the former than with the latter.

Historically, it appears, ecumenism has not been a real issue in our Mennonite Brotherhood. Although the Duthch Mennonites (A.D.S.) belong to the W.C.C., the editors of the Mennonite Encyclopedia have not found it necessary or advisable to devote any space to the subject of ecumenism.

Before stating some of my Anabaptist concerns, or perhaps even better, my concerns as a biblical Christian, it may be necessary to define the term "ecumenism."

According to Thayer's Greek Lexicon, the Greek word "oikoumene" in the Scripture has the significance of the whole inhabited earth, or the world. In the Early Church it was chiefly used as a descriptive title of councils that were convoked from the entire church.

Today the word "ecumenical" has a new connotation. It is used to convey the idea of **unity** as well as of **catholicity.** Dr. Visser't Hooft states, that the "term 'ecumenical' refers to the expression within history of the given unity of the Church." From the literature of the W.C.C. it appears, that the ideal to be realized by the ecumenical movement is nothing less than an organizational unity of the various churches and denominations. Dr. Charles Clayton Morrison, an ardent champion of the movement clearly states this objective:

"The goal of the ecumenical movement cannot be envisaged in any terms short of the actual embodiment of the now unembodied Church of Christ (**The Unfinished Reformation**, p. 54).

In his stimulating book, **Ecumenism and the Evangelical**, J. Marcellus Kik also gives a definition of ecumenism in terms of a biblical, evangelical faith. As Anabaptists, I believe, we could wholeheartedly subscribe to it. This is how he defines it:

"Ecumenism is the movement in the universal visible Church upon earth by which, under the influence and guidance of the Holy Spirit, the Church comes into the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

Here we have the N.T. emphasis on faith and knowledge as the true basis of union.

Permit me, now, to list briefly several Anabaptist apprehensions about ecumenism as interpreted by the W.C.C.

#### I have an apprehension

**1. With Reference to the Concept of Scripture-authority.** C. A. Cornelius describes the early Anabaptists as a "Church of radical Bible readers." (Quoted by C. Krahn, *Ein Beitrag* . . . p. 104). I believe C. H. Smith is right in claiming that the Anabaptists relied more exclusively and devotedly upon the Bible than did the other reformers in their search after truth. This Biblicalism, this respect for the teachings of Scripture, this acceptance of the canonical books as the inspired Word of God—constitutes the foundation for our faith and mission.

The modern ecumenical movement is not committed to this concept of Scripture authority, nor is it interested in Biblical theology. Theology, and especially biblical theology, is looked upon as the great divider, which has separated large bodies of people into different denominations. It could be argued, however, that the opposite has been true, and that distinctive biblical doctrines have welded together millions of people (e.g. Methodists, Baptists, etc.). As Kik puts it: "Hazy, indefinite theology has no cohesive power" (p. 13).

"Pure religion" is emphasized in the ecumenical movement at the expense of biblical doctrine. Is not the latter in-

dispensable in producing the former? Is unity possible on any other basis than on the basis of the authority of the Scriptures in all matters of faith and conduct?

In John chapter 17 we have Christ's prayer for the unity of his disciples. Those who are to be one according to the will of the Lord are those who believe in Him through the word of the Apostles: "I pray for those who shall believe in me through their word" (John 17:20). Then follows the petition of v. 21, "that they all may be one." (This petition, by the way, has become the charter of the ecumenical movement and finds constant repetition in their literature. For some it is the only passage which is accepted as the inspired Word of God and as a true revelation of the mind of Christ).

In his very enlightening articles on **True Ecumenicity** Jules Marcel Nicole reminds us that we should not forget the little phrase: "Those who are to believe in me through their word." He continues:

"This is to say, through the word of the Apostles. It is the Apostles' Word, the N.T. which constitutes our authority to know Christ... Therefore, fruitful Christian unity can only manifest itself in an atmosphere of absolute respect for the Bible. Where human traditions displace the Scriptures, where human authorities claim the right to tear off pages from the sacred text, there could not exist such unity as our Lord desires" (**Gordon Review**, May, 1956, p. 72).

The position of theological schools on the Scriptures will be of great significance in this endeavor to unify the various denominations. Hence these schools must be captured by the movement if it is to attain its goals. C. Morrison is very explicit on this point.

And there can be no united Church without a ministry that is ecumenically minded and ecumenically accepted... The ecumenical ideal requires the abandonment of this organ (e.g. seminary) of denominationalism and the transformation of its theological seminaries into ecumenical institutions (**The Unfinished Reformation**, p. 59, 60).

There is cause for apprehension here.

### I have a second apprehension

**2. With Reference to the Concept of Christ's Person.** What think ye of Christ? is still the basic question to be addressed to any movement that professes to be Christian. Some would point out that this question is adequately answered in the W.C.C. formula, "our Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour." The present theological climate, however, and the diversity of interpretation given to every word in this formula, make it necessary to probe a little deeper into this confession. To what Christ will ecumenicity cleave?

Will it be the Christ of the modernist, an individual without pre-existence, incarnation or virgin birth? (Note: The latter is also not accepted by the neo-orthodox theologians). Will it be the mythical Christ of Bultmann—a person stripped of all supernatural attributes? Or will it be the metamorphosed Christ of Paul Tillich, the human person who became divine? Or could it be the Christ revealed in Scripture, the second person of the Trinity, the eternal Son of God? With such a low view of Scripture, as indicated above, it is doubtful whether one can entertain such a high view of Christ.

The only way that the divisions can be really healed in the sight of God, R. Epp maintains, is in a return to the teachings of God's word. Since a refusal to accept these teachings in many instances caused the division in the first place, it is unlikely that a wholesale repentance will occur now. The only other course for attaining unity lies in the settlement of differences by negotiation, which of necessity entails compromise. Basic to our concept of salvation is the teaching of Scripture, that sinful man is redeemed with the precious blood of Christ. Can we join a movement, in which large groups reject the teaching of the atonement? We certainly should exercise Christian tolerance in connection with many marginal issues, but when it concerns the foundations of our faith, we dare not compromise. Christ has warned us, that not all those who say Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven.

### I have a third apprehension

**3. With Respect to the Concept of the Believers' Church.** As Anabaptists we hold to the concept of the gathered Church (ecclesia), or the believers' Church. True unity is possible only among genuine believers. In Acts 4:32 the early Church is described thus "And the multitude of them that **believed** were of one heart and of one soul." In His prayer in John 17 Christ gives a clear answer to the question of the nature of Christian unity. His prayer presupposes a radical distinction between believers and other men. "They are not of the world," says Jesus, "as I am not of the world" (verse 16). He prays for unity among those, whom the Father has given him. In modern ecumenism this fundamental distinction between the disciples of Christ and the remainder of humanity is often overlooked. Leaders of the ecumenical movement are more interested in a powerful institution, which will speak with a united voice on social and political issues, than in a return to the New Testament pattern of the Church, where true believers unite for a life of discipleship and evangelism. There is much in the striving for organizational unity in the modern ecumenical movement that reminds one of the ambitions of the Roman Catholic hierarchy. Until recently Protestants were exhorted to unite in order to resist the growing power of Roman Catholicism. By this overemphasis of organizational unity, however, the way has been prepared for union with Rome. The all-inclusiveness of ecumenism is a direct threat to the biblical concept of the true Church. Leaders in the ecumenical movement need to be reminded of Christ's words in Luke 12:51: "Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division." Nicole is right in showing the need for the observance of this division in our striving for a spiritual unity. Christian unity according to Christ's prayer, he writes, "can exist only in an attitude of separation from the world which has not accepted Jesus Christ and his grace" (**Gordon Review**, May, 1956, p. 71). The ecumenical

emphasis on the all-inclusiveness of the Church as an institution comes very close to the old territorial conception of the Roman Catholic Church. The lines of demarcation between Church and World are obliterated, and a practice of biblical non-conformity and of Church discipline become virtually impossible. Such an ecclesiastical hierarchy may be able to raise a strong voice of protest against Government policy, it may be able to influence education and have an impact on culture, but it is doubtful whether it will discharge its primary responsibility—the carrying out of the Great Commission of our Lord.

By their fruits ye shall know them, Christ has said. Modern ecumenism does not seem to be the answer to Christ's prayer in John 17:21. Does Christ's prayer imply a visible external unity of all his followers?

In this prayer, the triune God serves as a prototype of Christian unity. "That they may be one as we are one." According to Christ's teaching in the gospel of John this is a unity of essence, a unity of truth, of purpose, of love. Christian unity is primarily spiritual in nature. To promote this unity among believers requires conversation and communion. Whereas the latter may be an ideal difficult to realize in the present state of imperfection, the former is certainly possible. I am inclined to agree with John H. Yoder, when he defines the nature of our task in these terms:

"Unity does not mean that we approve of the present belief and behavior of another Christian; it means that we lay upon him the claims which Christ lays upon those who confess His name; we ask of him Christian obedience, Biblical baptism, separation from the World, and the rest of what the gospel implies. (**The Ecumenical Movement and the Faithful Church**, p. 36.)

This conversation with other groups however, must be a two-way street. We should also be prepared to listen and to yield to the claims of Christ as interpreted and presented by others who confess Christ as Lord.

J. A. Toews

## THEOLOGICAL

### Der Wille Gottes

Ein großer Teil unseres religiösen Wortschatzes ist ja der heiligen Schrift entnommen. Übrigens wird bei treuen Bibellesern die Alltagssprache auch stark von biblischer Terminologie beeinflusst. Eine biblische Redewendung, die sich in unserem religiösen Wortschatz eingebürgert hat, ist: "Der Wille Gottes." Aber diese Phrase wird verschieden verstanden, und verschieden gebraucht. Man ermahnt Gotteskinder "im Zentrum des Willens Gottes" zu leben. Es wird vor einem Leben "außerhalb des Willens Gottes" gewarnt. Einige Seelsorger dringen darauf, daß man "Gottes Willen für sein Leben" erkenne. Es wird erwartet, daß man bei allen Schritten genau wisse was Gottes Wille sei.

Durch solche und ähnliche Ermahnungen kann es geschehen, daß manch einem Jünger Jesu die Lehre vom Willen Gottes manche Seelennot bereitet. Da dürfte es am Platz sein, einmal einen Versuch zu machen über den Willen Gottes im neutestamentlichen Sprachgebrauch etwas zu schreiben. Weil der Ausdruck 'Wille Gottes' so sehr häufig im Neuen Testament vorkommt, können wir hier nur einige Linien andeuten. Wenn dieses Schreiben Anregung geben könnte, noch einmal die biblische Lehre vom Willen Gottes zu durchdenken, wären wir schon reichlich belohnt.

#### I. Das christologische Gebiet.

Der Wille Gottes spielte eine bedeutende Rolle im Leben unseres Herrn, Jesus Christus. Man darf also auf das 'christologische' Gebiet in dieser Lehre hinweisen.

Das Gebet Jesu in Gethsemane war: "Laß deinen Willen geschehen" (Matt. 26, 24). Diese Grundeinstellung, die in dem schweren Ringen unseres Herrn vor seinem Sterben zum Ausdruck kam,

kennzeichnete sein ganzes Leben. Von den Evangelien-schreibern spricht Johannes am öftesten vom Willen Gottes mit christologischer Anwendung. "Meine Speise ist zu tun den Willen des, der mich gesandt hat" (Joh. 4, 34). "Ich suche nicht meinen Willen, sondern den Willen des, der mich gesandt hat" (Joh. 5, 30). "Ich bin vom Himmel gekommen nicht meinen Willen zu tun, sondern den Willen des, der mich gesandt hat" (Joh. 6, 38). Jesus als Gesandter Gottes, ist schlechthin der Willensträger und Willensübermittler des Sendenden. Er gehorcht, und führt des Vaters Willen aus. Das bedeutet für ihn die völlige Verneinung seines Eigenwillens. "Nicht mein, sondern dein Wille geschehe" (Luk. 22, 42). Der Hebräer-schreiber faßt Jesu Leben unter einer neuen Anwendung eines Psalmwortes zusammen: "Siehe ich komme... zu tun, o Gott, deinen Willen." (Hebr. 10, 7-8; Ps. 40, 7-9).

Indem Jesus durch sein Wirken und Sterben Gottes Willen ausführt, offenbart er Gottes Heilsabsicht. So darf man auch von der soteriologischen (*soteria*—Heil) Bedeutung des Willens Gottes reden.

#### II. Der soteriologische Gebrauch.

Nur einmal im Neuen Testament kommt *thelema* (Wille) als Wille des Schöpfers, also im kosmischen Sinn, vor. "Durch deinen Willen waren sie und sind sie geschaffen" (Offb. 4, 11). Sonst ist fast ausschließlich der Heils-Wille Gottes gemeint. "Er ist nicht der Wille vor eurem Vater im Himmel, daß eines dieser Kleinsten umkomme" (Math. 18, 14). (Für Matthäus ist es bezeichnend, daß er den Begriff ganz einheitlich mit dem Vaternamen verbindet: 6, 10; 7, 21; 12, 50; 18, 14; 21, 31).

Bei Paulus findet sich häufig der Ausdruck "nach (*kata*) Gottes Willen." "Der sich selbst für unsere Sünden gegeben, damit er uns errettete... nach dem Willen Gottes und unseres Vaters" (Gal. 1, 4). In dem großen Hymnus, in welchem die Erwählung, Erlösung und Einsetzung ins Erbe besungen werden (Eph. 1, 13-14), wird immer wieder betont, daß all diese Heilsgüter "nach Gottes Willen" uns zuteil geworden sind. Dieser Heilswille wird als *eudokia*, freies Ermessen (1, 5), als *boule*, Plan oder Ratschluß (1, 9), als *mysterion*, kundgemachtes Geheimnis (1,11), erklärt. Das einfache "Wille" oder "Wille Gottes" scheint dem Verfasser einfach nicht ausreichend zu sein. Gottes Wille ist für ihn der letzte Grund und die einzige Quelle des ganzen göttlichen Heilsgeschehens. Er ist der vorzeitliche Letztgrund. Alles ist getragen von dem Eindruck, daß beim Ausführen des Heilsplanes nichts Menschliches, sondern allein der Wille Gottes den Ausschlag gibt. Gott "*will*, daß alle Menschen sollen gerettet werden und zur vollen Erkenntnis (*epignosis*) der Wahrheit kommen sollen" (1. Tim. 2, 4).

Dieser Heilswille Gottes ist den Gläubigen kundgetan worden, und dadurch sind sie in Gottes Willen hineingezogen worden, so daß nun ihr Leben unter dem Zeichen des Willens Gottes steht. Für sie ist Gottes Willen tun, Lebensziel und Lebensinhalt. Damit sind wir zur Brennpunktfrage gekommen: Was bedeutet es eigentlich für den Gläubigen, Gottes Willen zu tun? Unseres Erachtens liegt die Antwort des Neuen Testaments auf zwei Linien, 'die persönliche' und die 'ethische'. Zuerst die 'persönliche'.

#### III. Die persönliche Anwendung.

Wenn wir von der persönlichen Anwendung der Lehre vom Willen Gottes sprechen, denken wir an 'Wille Gottes' im Rahmen göttlicher Führung und Bestimmung in den Fragen der Lebensgestaltung. Die ausdrückliche Betonung der Einzelführung liegt in den Briefen des Pauls am feierlichsten vor in der Formel, "Paulus ein Apostel Jesu Christi durch den Willen Gottes." (cf. 1. Kor. 1, 1; 2. Kor. 1, 1; Kol. 1, 1; Eph.

1, 1; 2. Tim. 1, 1) So stellt er seinen Dienst in schlagender Kürze in den Rahmen des Willens Gottes hinein. Nicht er selbst hat sich seinen Dienst gewählt, hat sich für seine 'Kariere' ausbilden lassen, sondern letzte Ursache seines apostolischen Dienstes ist Gottes Willensakt.

Dieser Wille Gottes bestimmt auch die einzelnen Entscheidungen des Lebens, ja sogar seine Reisepläne. Doch muß es beachtet werden, daß er vom Willen Gottes nicht als von einer Autokarte sprach. Er betete lange "ob sich's einmal zutragen wollte, daß er zu ihnen käme durch den Willen Gottes" (Röm. 1, 10). Es war sein Plan und seine Absicht nach Rom zu reisen, aber Umstände hinderten ihn daran seinen Plan auszuführen, und so beugte er sich unter Gottes Vorsehung. Paulus betete, plante, hoffte und versuchte. Manch ein Plan wurde durchkreuzt ("ihnen wurde gewehrt von dem heiligen Geiste, zu reden das Wort in Asien", Apg. 16, 6); nicht alle Hoffnungen wurde erfüllt "Ich hoffe, ich werde etliche Zeit bei euch bleiben, so es der Herr zuläßt", (1. Kor. 16, 7); nicht jeder Versuch gelang ihm ("Darum haben wir wollen zu euch kommen... zweimal, und Satan hat uns verhindert", 1. Thess. 2, 18); nicht immer war er sich sicher, wie es werden würde ("Solches schreibe ich dir und hoffe, bald zu dir zu kommen; so ich aber verzögere, daß du wissest, wie du wandeln sollst...", 1. Tim. 3, 14-15). Andere konnten die Pläne des Apostels Paulus nicht immer verstehen und versuchten ihn eines besseren zu belehren. Den Ephesern gelang dieses aber nicht und daher schwiegen sie und sprachen: "Des Herrn Wille geschehe" (Apg. 21, 14). Jakobus ermahnt uns, unser ganzes Leben unter den Grundsatz zu stellen: "So der Herr will, werden wir leben und dieses und jenes tun" (Jak. 4, 15).

Viel ungebührliche Behauptungen werden bei der Frage nach dem Willen Gottes in der persönlichen Lebensführung gemacht. Manche glauben, sie haben ganz besondere Einblicke in die Pläne Gottes für ihr Leben erhalten. Sie sprechen vom Willen Gottes als ob derselbe gleichsam eine Art "**blueprint**"

wäre, der ihnen direkt von Gott unterbreitet worden ist. Hier gilt es in aller Demut zu bekennen, daß wir uns auch mitunter irren, und daß wir nicht immer genau wissen, wie wir in einer Entscheidung zu handeln haben. Wer aber ernstlich besorgt ist Gottes Willen zu tun, und mit diesem Verlangen seine Entscheidungen trifft, der wird ja auch das Bewußtsein in seinem Herzen tragen, daß er Gottes Willen tut. Oft aber sehen wir nur im Rückblick wie Gott schwere, wie auch scheinbar triviale Entscheidungen, überwacht hat, und alles zum Heile ausgeführt hat.

Noch eine andere Seite in der persönlichen Anwendung der Lehre vom Willen Gottes ist, daß sich Beugen unter Lebensverhältnisse die man nicht ändern kann. In solchen Verhältnissen ist auch das Leid eingeschlossen. Die Sklaven tröstet Petrus mit dem Wort, "Denn es ist besser, so es Gottes Wille ist, daß ihr von Wohltat wegen leidet als von Übeltat wegen" (1. Pet. 3, 17). Aber auch den Gotteskindern im Allgemeinen ruft er das Wort zu, "Welche da leiden nach Gottes Willen, die sollen ihm ihre Seelen befehlen als dem treuen Schöpfer in guten Werken" (1. Pet. 4, 19). Es gibt also nicht nur ein Tun des Willens Gottes, sondern auch ein demütiges Sichbeugen unter Gottes heiligem Willen.

Jedoch wenn man einmal alle neutestamentliche Stellen, die vom Willen Gottes reden, näher ins Auge faßt, dann merkt man sehr bald, daß die Hauptbetonung in dieser Lehre eigentlich gar nicht bei der Frage der Lebensführung liegt. Sie liegt vielmehr auf ethischer Linie, bei der Frage von Recht und Unrecht. Wir wenden uns nun dieser ethischen Bedeutung des Willens Gottes zu, und lassen einmal einige Schriftstellen zur Frage sprechen.

#### IV. Die ethische Bedeutung.

Wir weisen zuerst auf einige Stellen hin, wo die inhaltliche Grundbestimmungen des Willens Gottes für die Gläubigen angegeben werden. Doch sollte hier noch gesagt werden, daß verhältnismäßig selten, wenn vom Willen Gottes die Rede ist, genau gesagt

wird was Gott will, weil stets vorausgesetzt ist, dieser Wille ist kein Geheimnis. Aber nun einige Schriftstellen: "Das ist der Wille Gottes, eure Heiligung" (1. Thess. 4:3). "Seid dankbar in allen Dingen; denn das ist der Wille Gottes in Christo Jesu an euch" (1. Thess. 5, 18). "Sie ergaben sich selbst, zuerst dem Herrn und darnach uns, durch den Willen Gottes" (2. Kor. 8, 5). "Denn das ist der Wille Gottes, daß ihr mit Wohltun verstopfet die Unwissenheit der törichten Menschen" (1. Pet. 2, 15). Also: Heiligung, Dankbarkeit, Ganzhingabe, Wohltun, sind, ohne Zweifel, Gottes Willen. Alles ethische Forderungen!

Nun gibt es aber viele Fragen im Glaubensleben auf die die Heilige Schrift nicht so klar antwortet, und da gilt es zu prüfen. "Darum werdet nicht unverständlich, sondern verständlich, was da sei des Herrn Wille" (Eph. 5, 17). Geht es hier um die Lebensführung? Um Licht für den Weg, den wir zu gehen haben? Nein, hier geht es um Recht und Unrecht. Gleich im folgenden Vers wird gegen das unmäßige Trinken gewarnt (V. 18), und vorhin (V. 15) wird vom vorsichtigen Wandel gesprochen. So ist es auch bei der bekannten Stelle, Römer 12, 1-2: "Und stellet euch nicht dieser Welt gleich, sondern verändert euch durch Erneuerung eures Sinnes, auf daß ihr prüfen möget, welches da sei der gute, wohlgefällige und vollkommene Gotteswille." Um welche Erkenntnis geht es hier? Bestimmt nicht um Berufswahl, oder Wahl des Wohnorts, udgm., sondern es geht darum, daß man sich im sittlichen Urteilen dahin übt und schärft, daß man prüfen kann, was dem Herrn wohlgefällt in sittlichen Fragen. Noch viel klarer ist Kol. 1, 9-10 "... daß ihr erfüllt werdet mit der Erkenntnis seines Willens in jeder Weisheit und Einsicht, wie der Geist sie gibt, zu wandeln würdig dem Herrn zu allem Wohlgefallen, in jedem guten Werk fruchtbringend." Worum geht es hier bei der "Erkenntnis seines Willens"? Um ein intellektuelles erfassen dogmatischer und ethischer Grundsätze? Jawohl! aber mit der einen Absicht: recht zu handeln, zu wandeln wie es dem Herrn gefällt.

Nun mag jemand sagen: Ist nicht der Wille Gottes immer der gleiche? Ist Gott nicht ewig? und hat er nicht einen unabänderlichen Willen? Hat er diesen seinen Willen nicht klar in den Geboten des Alten und Neuen Testaments offenbart? Darauf müssen wir wieder mit Ja! antworten. Aber jede Generation muß den Willen Gottes neu erfassen. In den tausend Fragen, die uns persönlich und als Gemeinde entgegentreten, gilt es beständig zu prüfen und zu fragen nach dem was dem Herrn gefällt. Oft ist es nicht eine Frage zwischen Recht und Unrecht, sondern zwischen dem Guten und dem Besseren. Da gilt das Wort: "Prüfet was da sei das Bessere" (Phil. 1, 10).

Man kann zu keinem anderen Schluß kommen als zu dem: das Hauptgewicht in der Frage um den Willen Gottes liegt auf ethischem Gebiet. Nicht dar-

um geht es in der Hauptsache, was Gott von uns haben will in der Frage des Lebensberufs, sondern viel mehr darum, was Gott von uns auf ethischer Linie fordert. Aber es wäre jedenfalls nicht weit gefehlt wenn man hinzufügte, daß die welche es genau nehmen in sittlichen Fragen, auch in den Entscheidungen des Lebens, wenn es sich um Dienst und Beruf handelt, guten Boden unter ihren Füßen haben werden.

Auf jeden Fall gilt es den Willen Gottes ernst zu nehmen, denn "nicht alle, die zu mir sagen: Herr, Herr! werden in das Himmelreich kommen, sondern die den Willen meines Vaters im Himmel tun" (Matth. 7, 21). "Die Welt vergeht mit ihrer Lust, wer aber den Willen Gottes tut bleibt in Ewigkeit" (1. Joh. 2, 17).

David Ewert.

## MISSIONS

### Missionary Acculturation

#### Introduction

Missionary acculturation has been discussed repeatedly and books have been written seeking to find a solution to the problem. It may seem inappropriate or even presumptuous to tackle its treatment in an article. Yet, when one has labored with the problem in one's own mind for some time and it continues to be of increasing importance in one's own sphere of Christian service, particularly as a member of a foreign mission board, one would like to clarify one's own thinking on the matter.

In order to understand the problem under discussion more specifically, a definition of terms is essential. By the word culture, as we plan to use it, we do not mean a certain state of refinement, but rather any type of acquired behavior, or the behavior not transmitted by genes. Anthropologists would

say, "that part of the environment that is the creation of man."<sup>1</sup> Culture then connotes the way of life of a people constituting a social unit. We may speak of national culture when it pertains to the culture of a nation as a whole; but we may also speak of sub-cultures within a nation, meaning thereby a culture of minority groups within a larger social unit. Such a minority group may be ethnic or professional in character. Since culture is "a way of life" of a social unit, a specific culture is usually also peculiar to certain geographic areas. This need not always be true, but often is because geographic proximity leads to the adaptation of each other's way of doing things.

This leads us to the definition of another concept. What do we mean by "acculturation"? Nida says it is "... the broad cultural exchange which takes

place when two people live in continuous and relatively intimate contact." <sup>2</sup> This sounds more like a cultural merger, due to free cultural borrowing on a large scale, where neither culture imposes its way upon the other. Acculturation, however, also implies that a large social unit seeks to impose its culture traits upon a smaller group or subjugated people, as in the case of war; or seeks to integrate an individual into its way of doing things as in the case of an immigrant or in the socialization of a child.

In speaking of missionary acculturation we have in mind the messenger of the Gospel going to a people not his own for the purpose of evangelization. The problem of a cultural gap is immediately apparent. A people other than his own will also have a culture other than his own. How should this cultural gap be bridged? Should the missionary fully adopt the culture of the people he goes to, or should he require the people he preaches to accept his culture? If it is not an "either or" proposition, what compromise can we seek to establish and still be scriptural in our approach? This is the problem that shall occupy us in this paper.

### I. Scriptural Attitude to Missionary Acculturation

When a missionary faces the cultural gap as he comes to a people, he must resolve the difficulty not merely on the basis of expediency or his own personal judgment, but establish scriptural principles which shall guide him in his attitude to the acculturation. In forming his attitude he needs to note the following:

1. **He has come for a spiritual ministry.** Paul says: "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." <sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, when facing a new country and people, the material distinctiveness strikes the eye first. The outward acts are the most obvious and solicit immediate attention. However, these are of secondary concern to a missionary. He is more concerned with the spiritual background of these

strange ways and the motivating power behind the moves. Cultural content is of both material and non-material content and the latter is the undergirding of the former. It is not only unscriptural, but also futile for a missionary to concern himself merely with that which strikes the eye. His attack strikes the undergirding powers that are of unchristian origin. It is not the "How" of a culture but the "Why" and the "Wherefore" that concerns the servant of God. In Scripture Paul is known as a missionary who "turned the world upside down," but there is no strong intimation that he labored to change the outward. He worked with people, bringing them the transforming message of the gospel, and the changed natives then gave expression to the new life received. A missionary is not a "culture changer," but a "people changer."

2. **The missionary must adjust culturally.** In Scripture we find a consistent emphasis on the messenger of the gospel changing to the culture of the people rather than expecting the people to change for him. Paul's missionary career was so effective because of his ability to adapt himself to whatever people he ministered to. "For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; to them that are without law, as without law (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ), that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some" (I Cor. 9:19-22). The burden of adjustment was upon Paul, the messenger. Nowhere did he require people to become acculturated to his way, but rather he consciously and voluntarily became acculturated to their ways. Paul even admonished Peter for inconsistency in the acculturation process because he would not eat with the Gentiles when representatives of James appeared upon the scene. In Jerusalem Paul observed ceremonial laws again

when he returned for a later visit in order to pacify the hostile Jews (Acts 21:24ff). Paul circumcised Timothy for the purpose of gaining acceptance with the Jews (Acts 16:3). When such was not required by the people to whom he wanted to minister, Paul did not see a necessity for it and therefore did not circumcise Titus (Gal. 2:3). Paul would go to almost any length within the limitations of Christian consistency, even to the point of not eating meat while the world standeth, in order not to offend his brother (I Cor. 8:13). Paul assumed responsibility for any adjustment required to span the cultural gap between him and his listeners.

He was blessed with a unique background for such adjustments in his day. He was born in a Greek community as a Roman citizen and of Hebrew parents, giving him a wide cultural understanding to help him in making the adjustment. The missionary must start on any missionary career with the attitude of readiness to adjust. This may require advanced study of the people and culture where he expects to work with one concern: how can I become acceptable to them as an ambassador of good news. Government officials and industrialists may take a piece of America with them and set up a cultural island in a foreign land from which they operate. Not so the messenger of Christ. He who took upon Himself the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of men in order to reach lost souls can only use such who are ready to empty themselves of prejudices and preferences in favor of those to whom they would minister.

Only after Fatts O. Pye of the American Board of Missions in north China had sought out the elders of the area and listened to them patiently as they expounded Confucian philosophy to him and told him of their religious beliefs could "he point out to them the nature of the Christian faith, its similarities and differences and its power to fulfill the precepts of Confucius and to vitalize the conventional Chinese ethics by personally relating the individual to God."<sup>4</sup> Many more concrete examples could be cited, but the above must suffice in a short article.

3. **The missionary will be divinely aided in the adjustment.** The responsibility of adjustment as pictured above may appear difficult to the ordinary person. That this is not easy is granted, for even Paul had to "learn" to be content in whatsoever state he was (Phil. 4:11). It did not come automatically nor as a "matter of course" to him. Learning implies conscious, volitional and continuous effort on his part. However, he also tells us, in this connection, of making the necessary adjustments so that he knew how to be abased, to abound, to be full, to be hungry, and to suffer need, where he received the power to do so. It is in this context where he gives us the often quoted verse: "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4:13). The Christ who was in all points tempted as we are, yet made all adjustments so satisfactorily, now strengthens those on whom is laid the necessity of adjusting to alien culture. For a missionary to retain the reservation that there are points of limitation is precarious. As long as it is within the framework of Scripture, we believe that there is no impossible situation, for the Christ who enabled Paul to do all things is also the Christ of a modern missionary. In an attitude of faith in his Master, a missionary knows no impossible cultural barriers that cannot be overcome.

### II. The Degree of Missionary Acculturation

Is missionary acculturation unlimited? Can a missionary go to any heathen people and adopt their way of life in its totality? Obviously we must answer in the negative. This brings us to the question: To what degree is missionary acculturation required? Here we must be guided by scriptural principles and not only by personal judgment or merely immediate expediency.

1. **Differentiate between absolute and relative moral principles of Scripture.** By absolute moral principles of Scripture we mean such as cannot be violated without offence regardless of circumstances. Let me mention a few to illustrate the point. Stealing is always sin regardless of the circumstances involved. The same could be said of false

witnessing, adultery, murdering, etc. In relative moral principles we are thinking of such issues as may be right in one circumstance and wrong in another.

Again we give some illustrations to bring the issue into relief. Paul would eat meat offered to idols without compunction of conscience, but if some of his associates would take offence by him doing so, it became a sin (I Cor. 8:4-12). In one circumstance it is perfectly legitimate and in another it is wrong. Taking a modern hypothetical case: to play ball is wholesome recreation, but to do so on Sunday morning when a child of God should be faithful to his church is something else. Legitimate entertainment in a place of ill repute is a serious offence. To sit and rest is to do what Jesus did at Jacob's well, but to sit "in the seat of the scornful" is another question. Daniel no doubt had many associations with Belshazzar in his work, but when the latter had a feast of debauchery and needed someone to interpret the handwriting on the wall, Daniel had to be brought in; he was not there (Daniel 5:12-13).

It is rather interesting to note the list of absolutes as they are found in Scripture: no fornicator, idolator, adulterer, effeminate, abusers of themselves with mankind, thieves, covetous, drunkards, revilers nor extortioners shall inherit the kingdom of God (I Cor. 6:9-10). "But the fearful, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death" (Rev. 21:8). Here the Scriptures make no exceptions. There are no circumstances which may alter the guilt connected with such acts. There is an impressive array of absolutes of which we can only say "beware." But let us note the room left for relatives. Nothing is said about what or how to eat. The question of indulgence or overeating is much more serious than what we eat. The principle of modesty is an absolute, but the type of clothing is entirely relative.

**2. The actual degree of missionary acculturation.** Missionary acculturation must never militate against the scriptural absolutes. In the area of relatives, the missionary will do all he can to ad-

just. Rather than build a cultural island in the midst of the native culture, he will seek to adapt to their way of living in such areas as: Type of food as well as manner and time of eating, type of homes, beds, clothes, marketing, everyday work, etc. The example of Rachel Saint among the Auca Indians in Ecuador is a marvelous one. She lived among them as the Aucas themselves lived and won their hearts. She slept in a hammock, ate monkey meat roasted by the Indians, she sat with them around their fire and engaged in many other of their activities. She did not bring American culture to them, but when she wanted to win the Aucas, she became an Auca that she might win some.<sup>5</sup> However, she remained consistent with the scriptural absolutes of modesty and did wear clothes; she used her influence against the pagan spearing, upholding the absolute of not seeking revenge nor murder.

A missionary may even be required to offend a native when the latter requests a violation of these absolutes. He would, for instance, kindly but firmly decline the hospitality gesture of the Eskimo to share his wife with him, because of the absolute of adultery. He would participate in native festivities, but if they are linked with idolatry, the missionary would need to decline, no matter how insistent the invitation. There is a limit, where the missionary must obey God rather than man.

**3. Acculturation of natives.** In a sense a missionary may have to attempt to change the native culture, but primarily only in one area, i.e. where accepted practices of the native culture clash with the absolutes of Scripture. Upon contact with the Aucas, Rachel Saint did everything she could to deter the natives from their practice of spearing each other, infanticide and other cruelties. These practices, although accepted and general, were not only sinful but destructive to the natives themselves. Having come to live with them as they lived, with genuine love for them, the Aucas accepted influence in these areas to their own good. Such an attempt to acculturate them to the standards of the Biblical absolutes in no

way hindered the missionary outreach. This was Paul's method. He rejoiced that the Thessalonians turned "from idols to serve the living and true God" (I Thess. 1:9). He used the most severe language to reprove fornication in the church of Corinth (I Cor. 5).

Missionary acculturation will also seek to offer leadership to the natives where special needs are to be met. The missionary will seek to give the natives an understanding of hygiene, methods of agriculture that will lead to greater productivity, improve shelter, and aid their well-being. In this, however, the missionary must observe certain principles:

i. Never seek a change in native practices for their own sake.

ii. Beware of cultural ethnocentrism (thinking that his own culture is best).

iii. Changes of individual traits must not cause a breakdown of too many other cultural aspects so as to do harm to the general cultural structure.

A great deal of wisdom will have to be exercised on the part of the missionary so as not to do more harm than good when he seeks to effect a change in native culture. On the other hand, the missionary need not make western music compulsory in the national church. The national "people often find

it hard to sing such hymns, which remain forever a more or less artificial feature of the church service."<sup>6</sup>

Many indigenous practices have been stifled by missionaries, often unintentionally, but nevertheless to the disadvantage of the mission assignment. Some heathen methods may be given Christian content and retained. "In many parts of Africa it is a common practice for one person to tell a story in song, leading out with a line which is repeated by the chorus. This is an excellent way to review a Sunday school lesson, but some missions have hesitated to use such a method because it has seemed 'too pagan'."<sup>7</sup> One may even learn from anthropologists in Papua who succeeded in introducing "a pig instead of a human body in a fertility rite and a football to replace a spear in working off hostilities between embittered factions in a tribe."<sup>8</sup> Missions seeks to bring about a change in the individual and does not first of all seek to change the culture radically. After the individual is changed, the initiative for cultural change will rest with the changed national rather than the foreigner.

(To be continued)

J. J. Toews

## MUSIC

### Music and Youth

Classical music in the lives of our younger generation is a controversial issue. Its great importance in a child's development cannot be overestimated. Therefore, it lies with the parents and teachers of this present age to join forces in implementing the child's aesthetic values and raising his ideals of good music.

A typical scene from my public school teaching experience comes to mind to illustrate the urgency of this situation. As I leave the school ground, I hear mingled sounds of music coming from

the house across the street and the swimming pool a block away. Intermittently the pure notes of a Bach Invention comes to the fore only to be drowned by the steady double beat of rock and roll. I now visualize the lives of youngsters in which music obviously plays a major role, and wish to make some observations on what has taken place in their musical development.

When a child's musical aptitude is recognized and correctly channeled already at a kindergarten or Grade I level, it may be a great factor in his

musical development. A child whose rhythmic urge is satisfied by beating pots and pans and marching around the room will certainly acquire an interest for Schumann's "Scenes from Childhood" or "Carnival of the Animals" more readily than one who because of the "cuteness" of it is taught the modified twist from some TV show.

With regards to Sunday School music, much could be said. It would be well for our Primary children to be taught such thought-provoking hymns as "Father We Thank Thee" or "This is my Father's World" rather than some of the regular hand-clapping choruses so prevalent in many of our DVBS and Sunday School programs.

Often by the time a youngster starts school signs of musical interest and awareness are observed. As a foundation for future musical study and knowledge it would be wise to start the child on piano lessons. This early exposure to what music is all about—the fascination of producing sounds and melodies by pressing certain keys—the wonder of moving two hands independently and later the satisfaction of being able to play by heart a Sonatina by Beethoven all aid in the stimulation of a young person's musical growth. Besides cultivating an appreciation of the aesthetic, piano lessons perform a major role in the teaching of self-discipline. As soon as the child starts lessons, a definite practise period should be set aside. This period should **never** be disrupted it will start a habit which if once acquired will cause a conscience pang if broken. Only if a strict practise routine is followed will piano lessons be really successful. A child who has to practise an hour a day will be more diligent in the classroom in completing his assignment so that there will be less homework.

In the early years of adolescence when loitering and talking sessions are so important, much unnecessary idleness can be curbed by having to meet a practise deadline. This discipline in piano practice will also carry over into Junior and Senior High School where the budgeting of time is very important.

When a child reaches Junior High, it seems to be the logical procedure to dabble in many activities to broaden the educational horizon in all fields. As a result something has to take a "back seat" and usually it is the private music lesson. Extra-curricular activities plus the added burden of homework generally make it impossible for the average teenager to work in the specified amount of practising. When this becomes the case, it would be important for the parents to stop and consider what is of greatest importance to the adolescent in the future. If the child is of average musical ability and has no great interest in musical advancement, it would probably be more advisable to pursue another field. However, if the student has special talent in music, then other "weights" should be dropped and a thorough program of study should be followed.

There appear to be too many "jack-of-all-trades" type of teenagers developing today—the fault perhaps pointing to parents who want their children to do everything—the result of which is doing nothing well!

Apart from the "piano" field, a young person who has been disciplined and instructed in good music, will also make a useful contribution to a school choir or Glee Club. It is extremely difficult to introduce music such as "Beautiful Saviour" or "Flocks in Pastures Green Abiding" to a choir whose main dish has been "Do Lord, Oh Please Remember Me." Children from many evangelical circles who perhaps harmonize well, are often ill-taught with regard to good religious music. Quite frequently, students from non-evangelical churches have a better grasp of church music and are more receptive to a higher standard of the same. Our foot-tapping, rhythmic gospel music and western Hit Parade tunes appeal to many of our teenagers who have not been educated to a higher level of musical understanding. This is a precarious situation and could lead to a major degradation of music if special guidance is not given in the musical life of our teenagers and children.

Of perhaps greatest significance for

a wellrounded musical education, is the principle of idealism involved in this. In all forms of art, the striving for the "perfect" is employed. If a young person is exposed to classical music, he hears the very best performed by excellent artists. He receives inspiration to aim for this perfection or high standard and has true ideals which he can follow. When some of these high ideals can be

set up in a young person's life, his whole line of thinking and reasoning can be affected. Where a striving for perfection persists, there will be a more receptive response to Divine communication. Then instead of dwelling on lower planes, he will be uplifted to new heights—musically, intellectually and spiritually.

Marjorie Wiens.

## YOUR QUESTION

### How Should a Christian Spend His Holidays?

I am no authority on taking vacations, since I've had so few, but I am willing to make some comments concerning this important question.

Certainly Christians are no different from others in that they need to "get away from it all" as much as anyone else. But a Christian must know that he is accountable to God for his holiday time as much as for any other time, and should know how to honour Him in this as well. He should also be aware of the fact that holidaying has become big business, and that much nonsense is advertised concerning how, when, where, and why we should spend our holiday period, and how much money it should cost us.

Christians in particular should not try to "keep up with the Joneses" when they plan their holidays. We have lost the art of spending free time wisely and simply. Too many of us are under the impression that we must do big things and travel long distances and see many wonderful places if we want to have "holidays." What virtue or merit is there in covering a lot of territory with an automobile? One has to overlook many things in the process.

The Christian should know why he is holidaying. Ostensibly he wants a change from the daily routine, so that he may refresh body and soul and come

back to his usual work renewed in spirit and filled with new zest for the tasks that face him. Many Christians have found it profitable to spend their holiday time teaching DVBS or working in some summer camp as a counselor. A family ought to try to spend a good part of each day doing something together, and spend less time visiting friends and relatives in other provinces. The time should be spent in the outdoors, by going on hikes, exploring new areas, boating, swimming, or visiting parks and historical places, planetariums and museums.

The Christian should not spend more than he can afford for holiday purposes, since this may spoil his feeling of pleasure and be an unnecessary waste as well. Why travel hundreds of miles each year to the "big places" when there are countless scenic spots within a radius of a hundred miles? Why follow the crowd to the usual places, where the fun of discovering something new can never be found? Don't you want to get away from the hot dog stands and the soft drink counters?

And let us not forget that Canada is a big country and that we can easily exhaust ourselves trying to cover a good part of it while looking for ways and means of spending our holidays.

Peter Klassen

## Graduating Class of 1962

### BACHELOR OF THEOLOGY

BLOCK, JOHN	Borden, Sask.	(3 years)
	Bethany Bible Institute, Hepburn	
DIRKS, GEORGE	Namaka, Alberta	(3 years)
	Coaldale Bible School	
FRIESEN, CORNELIUS	Altona, Manitoba	(3 years)
	Steinbach Bible Institute	
GUENTHER, ALLEN R.	Clearbrook, B.C.	(2 years)
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HEIDEBRECHT, HARRY	Coaldale, Alberta	(3 years)
	Coaldale Bible School Lethbridge Junior College	
HUBERT, HENRY	Coaldale, Alberta	(3 years)
	Coaldale Bible School	
JANZEN, EDMUND	Grimsby, Ontario	(2 years)
	M.B. Bible School, Kitchener McMaster University, B.A.	
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SIEMENS, LEO	Abbotsford, B.C.	(2 years)
	University of B.C. M.B. Bible Institute, Clearbrook	
TOEWS, FERDINAND	Abbotsford, B.C.	(3 years)
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WICHERT, JACOB	Virgil, Ontario	(2 years)
	M.B. Bible School, Kitchener, McMaster University, B.A.	
WIENS, ALFRED C.	Watrous, Sask.	(2 years)
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### BACHELOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

BERGEN, MARTHA	Chilliwack, B.C.	(3 years)
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BRANDT, ETHEL	Clearbrook, B.C.	(2 years)
	East Chilliwack Bible School Teachers' College, B.C. University of B.C.	
DOERKSEN, AGNES	Chilliwack, B.C.	(2 years)
	East Chilliwack Bible School Teachers' College, B.C. University of B.C.	
HEPPNER, HERBERT	Garson, Manitoba	(3 years)
	Winkler Bible School	

JANZEN, ERNA	Winnipeg, Manitoba	(3 years)
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KLASSEN, MARGARET	Vancouver, B.C.	(2 years)
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KLASSEN, RUTH	Morden, Manitoba	(3 years)
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KLASSEN, SARAH	Winnipeg, Manitoba	(2 years)
	Manitoba Teachers' College University of Manitoba	
KOOP, HELMUT	St. Catharines, Ontario	(3 years)
	Eden Bible School	
KOOP, LOUISE	Chilliwack, B.C.	(3 years)
	East Chilliwack Bible School Vancouver General Hospital, R.N.	
PAULS, ALICE	Port Rowan, Ontario	(3 years)
	Eden Bible School Manitoba Teachers' College	
PETKAU, ELIZABETH	Vauxhall, Alberta	(3 years)
	Coaldale Bible School Lethbridge Municipal Hospital, R.N.	
REGEHR, MARTHA	Winnipeg, Manitoba	(3 years)
	Grace Hospital, R.N.	
REIMER, KATHERINE	Kitchener, Ontario	(3 years)
REMPEL, DAVE	Abbotsford, B.C.	(2 years)
	M.B. Bible Institute, Clearbrook	
STOBBE, WILMA	Abbotsford, B.C.	(2 years)
	M.B. Bible Institute, Clearbrook Vancouver General Hospital, R.N.	
THIESSEN, ALVINA	Swift Current, Sask.	(2 years)
	Herbert Bible School Saskatchewan Teachers' College University of Saskatchewan	
WALL, ANNE	Culross, Manitoba	(2 years)
	Manitoba Teachers' College University of Manitoba	
WIEBE, MARY	St. Catharines, Ontario	(3 years)
	Hamilton General Hospital, R.N.	

### SACRED MUSIC COURSE

DICK, MARINA	Kitchener, Ontario	(3 years)
DOERKSEN, IRENE	Clearbrook, B.C.	(3 years)
FRIESEN, MABEL	Winkler, Manitoba	(3 years)
	Manitoba Teachers' College	
KAETHLER, NICKOLAUS	Kitchener, Ontario	(3 years)
KLASSEN, HENRY	Winnipeg, Manitoba	(3 years)
KRAHN, BREATA	Saskatoon, Sask.	(3 years)
	Briercrest Bible Institute Saskatchewan Teachers' College University of Saskatchewan	
PAULS, MARGARET	Coaldale, Alberta	(3 years)
REDEKOP, E. JOYCE	Main Centre, Sask.	(3 years)
THIESSEN, CLARA	Clearbrook, B.C.	(2 years)
	M.B. Bible Institute, Clearbrook	

## Pentecost

When God of old came down from heaven,  
In power and wrath He came;  
Before His feet the clouds were riven,  
Half darkness and half flame:

But when He came the second time,  
He came in power and love;  
Softer than gale at morning prime  
Hovered His holy Dove.

The fires, that rushed on Sinai down  
In sudden torrents dread,  
Now gently light, a glorious crown,  
On every sainted head.

And as on Israel's awestruck ear  
The voice exceeding loud,  
The trump that angels quake to hear,  
Thilled from the deep, dark cloud;

So, when the Spirit of our God  
Came down His flock to find,  
A voice from heaven was heard abroad,  
A rushing, mighty wind...

John Keble