

The Voice

of the Mennonite Brethren Bible College

Vol. XI

March - April, 1962

No. 2

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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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Editor: DAVID EWERT

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„Gott, der die Toten auferweckt“

Das Osterfest ist wieder vorbei. Wir haben uns noch einmal besonnen auf die geschichtliche Grundlage unsers Heils: die Auferstehung Jesu Christi. Nun gilt es täglich Ostern zu feiern, „in Aufrichtigkeit und Wahrheit“ (1. Kor. 5, 8). Es gilt eine österliche Lebensweise zu offenbaren. Zu dieser Lebensweise gehört auch der kindliche Glaube an Gottes Kraft und Gottes Sieg. Paulus kam recht oft, in seinem Dienst für den auferstandenen Herrn, in Lagen, in welchen er nicht ein noch aus wußte. Diese, sagt er, waren dazu angetan, „daß wir nicht auf uns selbst vertrauen sollten, sondern auf Gott, der die Toten auferweckt“ (2. Kor. 1, 9). Solche Erfahrungen kennt ja ein jeder, der sich im Reiche Gottes betätigt.

Auch in der Arbeit am College können wir, einerseits, nur in diesem Gefühl der Abhängigkeit arbeiten; andererseits, nur im Glauben an Gottes Kraft und seinen endgültigen Sieg. Das gibt uns dann auch viel Ursache von Gottes Hilfe Zeugnis abzulegen. Das wollen wir auch tun. Einmal danken wir Gott für seine Führung in der Anstellung der nötigen Lehrkräfte und anderer Mitarbeiter für das kommende Jahr. Auch danken wir Gott für seine gnädige Durchhilfe in diesem Schuljahr. Wir danken Gott für lernlustige, fleißige und geistlich-gesonnene Schüler. Wir danken für betende, unterstützende Gemeinden. Laßt uns im Glauben an den, „der die Toten auferweckt“ arbeiten, solange es heute heißt.

Wir danken den vielen Lesern, die auf unser freundliches Ermahnen reagiert haben und ihr Lesegeld eingeschickt haben. Auch laden wir alle Leser und Schulfreunde zu unseren Schlußfeiern, vom 31. Mai bis zum 3. Juni, ein.

David Ewert

SEASONAL

Der Triumph des Gekreuzigten

(Betrachtungen über die Auferstehungsbotschaft nach Matt. 28, 1-10)

In den alten Weltstädten Europas findet der Reisende auch heute noch die sogenannten „Triumphbogen.“ Durch diese Denkmäler versuchten die Feldherrn und Kaiser der großen Weltreiche ihre militärischen Siege zu verewigen. So findet man in Rom den Triumphbogen des Titus, der nach der Zerstörung Jerusalems errichtet wurde. So findet man auch in Paris einen Triumphbogen aus neuerer Zeit, der eine spätere Generation an die Siege Napoleons erinnern soll. Diese Sieger, sowie auch ihre Leistungen, sind jedoch von der Geschichte begraben worden, und haben wenig oder gar keine Bedeutung für die Menschheit der Gegenwart.

Das Symbol des größten Triumphes, den diese Erde je gesehen, ist ein einfaches Felsengrab, in der Nähe von Golgatha, nahe bei Jerusalem. Das leere Grab, das offene Grab, ist Zeuge des größten Triumphes aller Zeiten. Hier wurde der größte Feind bezwungen, hier wurde der herrlichste Sieg errungen. Die Auferstehung Jesu Christi, die im leeren und offenen Grabe ihr Siegeszeichen hat, bürgt für die Finalität und den endgültigen Sieg des Christentums.

Der Triumph Jesu Christi ist der Triumph des Gekreuzigten. Ohne das Kreuz wäre es nie zu dieser Auferstehung gekommen. Auf solchen Tod mußte die Auferstehung folgen! (Vergl. Phil. 2, 8 u. 9) Der Evangelist Matthäus berichtet uns im obigen Wort über diesen unvergleichlichen Sieg Jesu Christi! Der Titel von Erich Sauers wertvollem Buch dient uns als Thema unserer Betrachtung. Wir merken wie der Himmel (die Geistes- und Engelwelt) und Erde (Erdbeben) an diesem Triumph teilnehmen.

Die Gemeinde Jesu Christi von heute, im Kampfe wider Sünde und Welt,

im ernstesten Ringen mit den Mächten der Finsternis, in aufreibender Arbeit in der innern und äußern Mission, braucht diese Botschaft vom Triumph des Gekreuzigten nötiger denn je zuvor. Beachten wir zunächst einmal

I. Die Stunde des Triumphes.

Wir denken hier nicht vornehmlich an die Stunde des Tages in der physischen Welt — obwohl sie bedeutungsvoll ist — sondern an die Stunde im politischen und religiösen Leben der damaligen Zeit. Der Zeitpunkt der Auferstehung Jesu ist wertvoll im Blick auf gewisse Tatsachen. Es war

1. Die Stunde der besonderen Macht der Finsternis. Mit der Menschwerdung Jesu begann auch eine besondere Offenbarung der Macht der Finsternis. Johannes zeugt davon: „Und das Licht scheint in der Finsternis, und die Finsternis hat's nicht begriffen.“ In Gethsemane, und in besonderer Weise auf Golgatha, erreichte die Macht der Finsternis ihren Höhepunkt. Als die Feinde Jesu Christi in den Garten kamen, um ihn gefangen zu nehmen, ruft der Herr ihnen dieses bedeutungsvolle Wort zu: „... dies ist eure Stunde, und die Macht der Finsternis“ (Lukas 22, 53). Juden und Heiden vereinigten sich zum Generalangriff auf den Herrn aller Herren und den König aller Könige. Herodes und Pilatus wurden Freunde in der Ausführung des letzten Gewaltaktes an dem Gotteslamm. Mit der Kreuzigung des Sohnes Gottes schien die Macht der Finsternis zu triumphieren. Mit der Verwahrung des Grabes und der Versiegelung des Steins (Vgl. Matth. 27, 66) schien der Sieg des Feindes vollkommen und final zu sein. In dieser dunkelsten Stunde der Geschichte des Reiches Gottes auf Erden, triumphtierte der Gekreuzigte als der auferstandene Siegesfürst.

Die Botschaft von der Auferstehung

ist gerade eine Botschaft für die dunkelste Stunde der Weltgeschichte. Die Überzeugung, daß wir in einer Stunde der Offenbarung der besonderen Macht der Finsternis leben, haben nicht nur viele Gotteskinder hinter dem eisernen Vorhang, sondern auch viele Gottesmänner in der westlichen Welt, in Amerika, wo die Ungerechtigkeit auch in erschreckender Weise zunimmt. Die Osterbotschaft spricht vom Sieg inmitten einer feindseligen und gottlosen Welt. Die Stunde des Triumphes ist jedoch auch

2. Die Stunde der furchtbarsten Niederlage mancher Bekenner Christi. In der Welt siegen die Führer und Feldherrn nur dann, wenn ihre Streiter nicht versagen! Christi Streiterschar versagte in der Krisisstunde vollständig. Aus dem innern Kreise seiner Nachfolger kam der Mann, der den schmachvollen Verrat organisierte. Einer der mutigsten Bekenner der früheren Tage verleugnete den Meister in schändlicher Weise. Von den andern lesen wir, daß sie ihn alle verließen. In dieser Stunde des völligen Versagens aller seiner Streiter triumphiert der Gekreuzigte. Er versagte nicht in der heißen Kampfesstunde. Von ihm lesen wir in Phil. 2, 8: „... und ward gehorsam bis zum Tode, ja zum Tode am Kreuz.“ Er kann auch heute, sowie damals, die Niederlage seiner Streiter in einen Triumph verwandeln. Der Auferstandene hat eine Botschaft der Hoffnung für die Gefallenen, für die Besiegten, für die Schuldigen. Die Osterbotschaft sagt uns: Christus wird doch siegen, trotz aller Niederlagen seiner Gemeinde!

Die Stunde des Triumphes ist jedoch auch

3. Die Stunde tiefster Trauer für treue Nachfolger. Für manche treuen Nachfolger Jesu war der erste Ostertag kein Freudentag. Wir denken an die Frauen, die in liebender und hingebender Weise ihm gedient. In tiefer Trauer begaben sie sich in der frühen Morgenstunde zum Grabe ihres Herrn (28, 1). Wir denken auch an die Emmausjünger, die in tiefer Traurigkeit sich über die Ereignisse der letzten Tage unterhielten. Die ganze Hoffnungslosigkeit und Trostlosigkeit ihrer Lage leuchtet heraus aus ih-

rem Bekenntnis: „Wir aber hofften...“ (Lukas 24, 21). In der dunkeln Stunde, wo kein Hoffnungstern den Jüngern mehr leuchtete, kommt zu ihnen die tröstliche Botschaft vom Triumph des Gekreuzigten.

Die Osterbotschaft ist auch heute eine Botschaft für Gotteskinder, die auf den Trümmern aller irdischen Hoffnungen sitzen, die da weinen und trauern, weil ihnen das Liebste genommen. Es gibt keinen köstlicheren Trost für das zerschlagene Herz, als eine Begegnung mit dem auferstandenen Herrn. Beachten wir daher auch

II. Die Proklamation des Triumphes.

Himmelsboten proklamieren diesen größten Sieg der Heilsgeschichte. Der Auferstehungsbericht gibt uns nicht nur eine Beschreibung des siegreichen Aktes der Himmelsboten in der Abwälzung des Steines von der Grabestür (Vgl. V. 2). Wir haben in diesem Bericht auch die Proklamation des Sieges durch die Worte der Engel. Nach dem obigen Schriftwort enthält diese Ankündigung des Triumphes eine vierfache Aufforderung. Es ist einmal

1. Eine Aufforderung zur glaubensmutigen Überwindung der Furcht. „Fürchtet euch nicht!“ ist das erste Wort, das der himmlische Bote, sowie auch Christus selber, den Seinen am Ostermorgen zuruft (Vs. 5, 10). Menschenfurcht, Leidensfurcht und Todesfurcht hatten die Herzen der Jünger gelähmt. Der Auferstandene vertreibt die Furcht. Er kennt unser erfolgloses Suchen (V. 5). Er hat die Antwort auf unsere Fragen (V. 6). Er hat die Hindernisse überwunden. Die aufgestellte Hüterschar und der versiegelte Stein versperrten nicht mehr den Weg zum Erlöser. Deshalb: Fürchtet euch nicht! Merken wir jedoch, daß dieses Wort nicht seinen Feinden, den Hütern, zugerufen wird, sondern seinen Jüngern. Erstere müssen erst Buße tun, ehe ihnen die Furcht genommen werden kann. Weiter ist es

2. Eine Aufforderung zur gründlichen Untersuchung der Tatsachen. „Kommt her und sehet die Stätte, da der Herr gelegen hat“ (V. 6). Der Auferstehungsglaube gründet sich auf erwiesene Tatsachen, auf unumstößliche Bewei-

se. Der Unglaube ist blind, nicht der Glaube! Die Hohenpriester und Ältesten begnügten sich mit einem Bericht aus zweiter Quelle, einer fraglichen Quelle. Der Unglaube ist nicht bereit, die festen Heilstatsachen einmal gründlich zu untersuchen. Untersuchung der Tatsachen brachte dem Apostel Johannes Gewißheit. Wir lesen in Joh. 20, 8: „Da ging auch der andere Jünger hinein, der am ersten zum Grabe kam, und sah und glaubte es.“ Wir haben hier jedoch auch

3. Eine Aufforderung zur geflügelten Verkündigung der Wahrheit. „Und gehet eilend hin und sagt es seinen Jüngern, daß er auferstanden sei von den Toten.“ Die trauernden Herzen sollte nicht eine Stunde länger ohne diesen wunderbaren Trost sich quälen; die besiegte Streiterschar sollte nicht eine Stunde länger ohne diese Siegesbotschaft am Boden liegen.

Auch heute ist es unser Vorrecht, diese zentrale Heilswahrheit von der Auferstehung zu verkündigen. Eile tut not! Jedoch nicht nur die trauernde Jüngerschar soll diese Botschaft hören, sondern auch ein verlorene Welt. Die Osterbotschaft schließt mit dem Missionsauftrag: „Darum gehet hin und lehret alle Völker...“ (28, 19). Die Auferstehung Jesu und der Missionsauftrag sind gar nicht zu trennen. Letztens finden wir hier noch

4. Eine Aufforderung zur persönlichen Begegnung mit dem auferstandenen Herrn. „Und siehe, er wird vor euch hingehen nach Galiläa; da werdet ihr ihn sehen“ (V. 7). Die Jünger werden aufgefordert, nach Galiläa zu gehen, zu

dem Ort, wo sie einmal ihre erste Begegnung mit Christus gehabt. Die neue Begegnung mit dem Auferstandenen sollte gleichzeitig auch eine Erinnerung an die Segnungen seiner Lehre und seines Lebens sein. Da, wo der Meister ihnen die Grundsätze der Jüngerschaft gegeben, an dem Ort, wo er sich ihnen in mannigfacher Weise offenbart hatte, da wollte der Herr den Aposteln noch einmal begegnen, um ihnen seinen letzten Auftrag zu geben. Der Ostermorgen bricht erst dann für das Jüngerherz an, wenn es dem auferstandenen Herrn begegnet: „Da wurden die Jünger froh, daß sie den Herrn sahen“ (Joh. 20, 20).

Welche Wirkung hatte die Proklamation des Triumphes in jener besonderen Stunde der Heilsgeschichte? Wir merken, daß diese Siegesbotschaft von der Auferstehung Jesu eine Schreckensbotschaft für die Feinde Christi war (Vgl. Matth. 28, 4, 11-15). Durch diesen Christus wird Gott einmal die Welt richten (Apg. 17, 31). Die Auferstehung Jesu bürgt für den Sieg des Evangeliums. Die Ankündigung und Verkündigung des Triumphes hatte auch eine mächtige Wirkung auf die Jüngerschar. Es kam zu einer erneuten Weihe und Anbetung (V. 9). Bei einem Petrus kam es zur Wiederherstellung des Dienstes (Vgl. Joh. 21, 15-17). Bei allen war die Proklamation des Triumphes mit dem Auftrag verbunden, die Botschaft hinauszutragen. Der Herr gebe uns ein tieferes Erleben der Kraft seiner Auferstehung, und als Frucht davon ein kraftvolleres Zeugnis vom Heil durch die Erinnerung an den Triumph des Gekreuzigten. J. A. Toews

PRACTICAL

Christian Response

(A chapel message given at the M. B. Bible College by Dr. J. M. Houston, professor of geography at the University of Oxford, currently visiting professor at the University of Manitoba. Printed here by kind permission of Professor

Houston, and with the sincere hope that there shall be a truly 'Christian Response' to the message of the article. Ed.)

Christianity is much more than a name to boast of or a gift to be received

—it is a life to live. When Jesus proclaims, "I am the way," He does not offer us a ticket for a journey whose destination is heaven and all we need to God is climb on to some mechanical conveyance ignorant of the road but assured of the destination. Rather He says, "This is the Way, walk ye in it," and again, "Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me." To be a Christian, means to be a committed disciple of Jesus Christ. We readily make an artificial divorce between mere Christian belief and discipleship. Belief without response is like the building of a foolish man erected upon sands; it has no permanence. But "whosoever heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them," says Jesus, "I will liken him unto a wise man which built his house upon a rock." In the sixteenth century Descartes devised the philosophy, "I think therefore I am," and ever since men have based their ideas on this outlook. To think, to believe, that we are Christians is not enough. Today, modern existentialists have the slogan, "I exist, therefore I am." Apart from its tautology, the concept is meaningless, and for us to suggest that because we exist in our profession as Christians, therefore we are Christians is a delusion. Rather the essential symbol for us should be, "I respond, therefore I am." Christian response means consecrated lives, fully involved in discipleship.

So Little for Christ

The Spanish thinker Unamuno used to say that people could be divided into two categories: those who saw the world from the balcony and those who saw it from the road. Spectatorship is the bane of much of our church life today. Everything seems to hinge on what the speaker will say from the pulpit, or what the dedicated few are doing in the local church. The revival of individual responsibility in our church life is one of the most vital needs of our day. We tend to rely so completely on organized activity and to depend so much on our church fellowship that the great majority of nominal Christians are not vitally responding to the personal claims of Christian discipleship. How different

were the first communities of Christians. Their earliest name was "those of the Way." (Acts 9:2; 19:23; 24:22) They were involved in a life situation that demanded a daily, total responsiveness, which radically affected their whole outlook and manner of life. Their faith was reasonable, but above all it was vital.

Another characteristic of our age, is that we nearly all wear a cloak of orthodoxy that barely covers lives that are secularized by the world around us. There is almost as much class consciousness and social division inside our church fellowships as outside in the world. Indeed, it has been said of countries where church-going is still widely practised, that Sunday 11 a.m. is the hour of most widespread social distinction in the nation's weekly timetable. Success is also just as much our basis of faith as the competitive instinct of the world. The love of money too has weakened our Christian witness. Brisk trade is developed in the name of Christian fellowship and of spiritual needs. One blatant advertisement in a current Christian journal reads: "Just imagine yourself making \$10,000 a year! . . . it's being done by ambitious Christians with a vision . . . these people, whether devoting full or part time to their positions, are filling an important Christian service in their communities—and doing very well financially." Yes, the money changers and traders are still in the temple precincts, and often evangelicals are the worst offenders.

A third, related feature of much evangelical Christianity is the careless lack of emphasis on personal ethics. Loudly we sing, "Free from the law, O happy condition." We insist we live under grace and absolve our daily conduct in metaphysical doctrines. We despise those unenlightened 'churchy' folk who dwell insistently on the ten commandments and the Sermon on the Mount. No wonder the outsider pays scant regard to the much we profess to believe. As Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, the modern Hindu reformer, once said to a missionary, Professor Dewick: "You Christians seem to us Hindus to be rather ordinary people, making very

extraordinary claims!" He replied, "We make these claims not for ourselves, but for Jesus Christ." The retort came back quickly: "If your Christ has not succeeded in making you into better men and women, have we any reason to suppose that He would do more for us if we became Christians?" What can we say?

Professionalism is another hindrance to much Christian witness. We deceive ourselves so much in thinking that because we are on Christian committees, engaged in Christian societies, dashing around in publicized activities, bearing the name of 'Christian,' our service is automatically Christian. From the lives of godly men like Samuel Rutherford, David Brainerd, Henry Martyn, Murray McCheyne, George Mueller and others like them, it is clear that to them the all-absorbing ambition was to be more responsive to Christ and His claims upon their personal lives. Public service was merely a by-product of lives given to God. Their passionate, fundamental concern was that like the apostle "they might win Christ, and be found in Him." The personal jealousy and conflict among Christian servants with which we are riddled, only reveals the true nature of much of our professionalism. Today we are seeing that communism gains great appeal because of its apparent consistency: it preaches a materialistic gospel and it is certainly producing spectacular materialistic results. We preach a spiritual gospel, but when we practise so little of what we preach, is it any wonder that Marxists think religion is the opiate of the people, a delusion?

Spiritual Responsiveness

With so much nominal Christianity, there is the problem of communication. Consecrated and nominal Christians use the same symbols of thought and speak the same language. But they each translate these ideas of discipleship, sacrifice, service, the glory of Christ—into fundamentally different terms of response. Jesus has the same problem in His ministry. He therefore teaches by parables, a system of instruction specifically designed to test the responsiveness of His hearers and not

merely their mental intelligence. Each parable creates a situation to which His hearers must respond. They cannot sit back and murmur 'what a fine sermon has been preached.' Insight into the meaning of one parable leads to spiritual perception of the next, or, alternately, failure to respond and to apprehend leads further into the darkness of mystification. Thus Jesus preaches in the key parable, that of the Sower and the Seed, what He actually enacts in His preaching. For He it is who sows the seed even while He speaks the parable. Clearly He shows that the effect of the Word of God on the heart of man is not uniform nor automatic. The nature of the response is evidenced by the nature of the life that hears the Word. This parable we tend to reserve for the benefit of the non-Christian. Perhaps realistically we should devote it much more to ourselves. The hard heart, the shallow, superficial life, the busied life overwhelmed by the affairs of the world, as well as the good life are present in our own Christian circles. Our conversion is only the first response we make to the Word. The whole of Christian life must be continual, progressive response to a fresh insight and revelation of God.

From this and other parables of growth given by our Lord, it is clear that two basic, contrasted laws are found in human experience. With spiritual growth, there must be a constant responsiveness of life. Just as all the presuppositions of Christian revelation rest ultimately on the events of God in history—His Word expressed in His activity—so to grow in grace, in the revelation He has given, we must always respond to it in our lives. There is no such thing as "the truth," an inanimate corpus of data. When Christ promised the Holy Spirit of Truth, He indicated He would come in the entirety of truth (John 16:13) involving sincerity, honesty, consistency, realism, that is to say, all the practical traits of response to the Person who has revealed and is the Truth. To receive the Truth does not require merely a good memory and attractive platform manners; its reception is marked by the spirit of truth that is seen in our daily

lives. How significant it is that in the Fourth Gospel, when John dwells on this keynote, "The Word became Flesh," a neat balance is maintained between the sayings of Jesus, the miracles or acts of Jesus, and the hearers' response. His preaching is not in empty words, but by creative power. Words and deeds are concomitant in the One who "spake and it was done." Yet how much verbiage there is in our service when we ourselves are not responsive to the Truth we profess to know.

The contrasted law from that of growth "in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ" is spiritual atrophy. The Japanese gardener is a skilled master in the art of repressing life in trees and shrubs. They may be a century old and yet, because of atrophy, remain no more than a few inches high. Psychologists speak of emotional infantilism in adults that results from some fixation; such people have never grown up. This law of atrophy or fixation is most terribly seen in Christians who have made an initial response in conversion, perhaps with a great deal of hearsay knowledge of the Scriptures. But with the absence of a genuine, constantly responsive reception of the Spirit of God into their lives, they exist stunted and moribund. In our own circles, they boast of knowledge and the proud assertion of the principles we practice, and yet the neglect of ethics and the genuine spirit of Christ are evidence of such spiritual atrophy.

Personal Response to Christ

The highest form of truth that a person can know is what is personal. What may be termed "it-truth" provides us with information and perhaps understanding of the world of things. But when we meet Jesus Christ He does not merely inform us, He challenges and affects us personally and ultimately. The final response we make to Him will be either the bliss of seeing Him face to face, or the shame we have at His coming. Because our response to Him must inevitably be personal, it involves the relations of will, mind and love.

In our social relations, when my will is not in harmony with your will, we

lose contact with each other; we disengage the possibility of communion and therefore of friendship. In human friendship it is possible the will of one party will relent and then the quarrel can be patched up. But God's will is eternally the same: "With Him there is no variation, no play of passing shadows, and of His set purpose He gave us birth to be a kind of first-fruits of His creatures" (Jas. 1:18). Self-will is therefore sin. Christ on our behalf has shown, "not my will but Thine be done." "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." The apostle therefore has exhorted us: "Do not let the world—dominated as it is by rebellion towards God—squeeze you into its own mould. Be ye transformed by the renewal of your mindful response, to know that the will of God is good, acceptable and perfect" (Rom. 12:1-2). To take a modern parable: be transformed like the salmon, a fish that begins its life in the dark depths of the ocean, and whose only instinct is to fatten itself in a greedy, self-life. Later, it becomes restive for a sense of well-being—that is, for oxygenated water for its reproductive organs—and therefore it swims out of the salty sea into the new habitat of rivers. It begins to perform unnatural functions for a fish, to scale the rapids and jump the river falls, and lose all instinct for eating. Self-gratification is forgotten in the superior urge to respond to other needs. There, in the fresh sparkling headstreams, the salmon reproduces and dies. Such is a parable of our need of a change of life, to gain new desires in a response to the will of God. In the willing sacrifice of Jesus Christ, through the offering of His body once for all, we have been sanctified (Heb. 10:10). We learn practically to respond to the will of God when we realize in the common things of life that His will is good; in the sufferings of life God's will is acceptable; and in all the ultimate tests of life it is perfect. Our considerations of Christianity will remain theoretical if they are not tested primarily in this area of the will.

Personal response also involves the mind. On the "it-truth" level, reason is the only safe criterion. All rational

men can agree on the truths of mathematics and logic. But the more personal truth becomes, the more faith is required in such matters as history and psychology. To deny the truths of faith is itself a 'faith' resting upon personal assumptions. But whereas the Christian rests upon the personal faith in Christ, the rationalist can only rely upon the negation of his own personal faith—a bleak outlook. We can therefore affirm from our personal experience that "we know the Son of God has come" (I John 5:20). And our response to His coming into our lives, His gift of grace and not our boastful acquisition of knowledge, enables us to receive a new faculty of mind. It is by this redeemed faculty of our thought-life, that we receive the full assurance of faith, to know Christ who is real, true and reliable. Having this disposition to think like Christ will safeguard us from worshipping the false gods our natural, sinful minds so readily conceive and worship.

The apostle Paul makes it clear that to know God involves a mighty response to which the unaided faculties

of man are unequal. Indeed, he is viewed naturally as unresponsive, as a corpse, "dead in trespasses and sin." The personality that has been quickened into life by the Spirit of God, Paul calls "the inner man." He prays that "the inner man" may be so strengthened that we respond in the highest possible way, to love. Greek converts, like many today, tended to over-emphasize the intellectual content of the Christian truth. Yet it is our own experience that the highest knowledge between persons is of love. And in our loving response to Christ, it is God's purpose that we should be filled with the entire fullness of God. That is to say, that we should express in our response the fulfilment of what God intends for our life, in His loving fellowship. Elsewhere the apostle sums it all up when he says, "By grace are ye saved through faith and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God" (Eph. 2:8,9). By His initiative of grace revealed in the cross, He prompts us to respond in the daily exercise of faith, as a living response of obedience, trust and loyalty.

J. M. Houston

REVIVAL

Erweckung in der Stille

Das Wort 'Erweckung' wird sehr verschieden verstanden. Bei einigen Gotteskindern ruft es die Erinnerung an die Stunde wach, als Gottes Geist spürbar an ihren Herzen arbeitete und sie aus dem Sündenschlaf aufrüttelte. Für andere ist Erweckung dasselbe wie Bekehrung und Wiedergeburt. Erweckungspredigten sind Einladungsbot-schaften; in Erweckungsversammlungen werden die Ungläubigen angesprochen. Sie sind also Evangelisationsversammlungen. Bei noch anderen ist das Wort Erweckung gleichbedeutend mit Neubelebung, und wird als Erfrischung des inneren Menschen, als Erquickung der Seele, als Reinigung des Herzens, als

erneute Hingabe an Gott verstanden. Wie immer man nun auch das Wort Erweckung versteht in diesem Schreiben soll es im Sinne von geistlicher Neubelebung der Gotteskinder gebraucht werden.

Daß wir als Gemeinden, und als einzelne, solch einer Erweckung beständig bedürfen, wird wohl niemand, der sonst Gottes Wort liest und sich selbst prüft, leugnen. Wie wir uns solche Erweckung vorstellen, ist eine andere Sache. Manche können sich eine Erweckung getrennt von Erweckungsversammlungen gar nicht denken. Viel bleibende Frucht ist auch durch solche Veranstaltungen gewirkt worden. Bei vielen stellte sich

jedoch nach solchen Hochfluten sofort wieder Ebbe ein, und die Mängel in ihrem täglichen Wandel waren nur zu sichtbar. Andere lernten es, ihr geistliches Leben frisch zu erhalten indem sie täglich, in der Stille, Gottes Angesicht suchten, sein Wort lasen, ihre Fehler bekannten, und sich Tag für Tag dem Herrn aufs Neue ergaben. Solche tägliche Neubelebung wird nicht publik gemacht; darüber berichten auch nicht die religiösen Zeitschriften; aber, die Gemeinde, die Gesellschaft, die Geschäftswelt merkt, daß es heute noch Männer und Frauen gibt, die, wie einst ein Noah, „mit Gott wandeln.“

Solch eine Erweckung in der Stille erlebte schon vor vielen Jahren der Gottesknecht Elia. In 1. Könige 19 sehen wir ihn den langen Weg zum Horeb gehen, um dort an der Quelle der Bundesgeschichte Israels seinen Glauben zu erneuern.

I. Die Veranlassung.

Elia lebte in einer der kritischsten Stunden der Geschichte Israels. Radikale Veränderungen auf allen Gebieten des Lebens gingen vor sich. Die Vereinigung aller Stämme unter einem Herrscher war durch Saul, David und Salomo durchgeführt worden, aber tief im Herzen der Bürger des vereinten Staates war die Stammestreue geblieben. Daß Israel die Monarchie — die sehr bald zur Autokratie wurde — nicht vollends angenommen hatte ist schon daran zu erkennen, daß im späteren Nordreich ein Königshaus nach dem anderen gestürzt wurde. Augenblicklich herrschten die Omriden, und unter diesem starken Hause kam Israel politisch und wirtschaftlich hoch. Auf wirtschaftlichem Gebiet gab es große Veränderungen. Während nach alter Sitte jeder Bürger Israels sein Stückchen Land hatte, rissen jetzt Landbesitzer mehr und mehr Gut an sich. Als Naboth z.B. sein väterliches Erbgut nicht abgeben wollte, verlor er sein Leben. Von einem Landvolk sollte Israel zu einem Stadtvolk werden, und das wollte manch einem Israeliten schwer ein.

Jedoch, die radikalste Veränderung fand auf religiösem Gebiet statt. Hätte

Ahab nicht die phönizische Izebel geheiratet, wäre es jedenfalls anders geworden. Ahab baute für seine Braut in Samarien, der neuen Hauptstadt des Nordreiches, dem phönizischen Baal Melkart einen Tempel. Die Altäre Yahwehs wurden niedrigerissen, Propheten, die noch für die Wahrheit einstanden, wurden getötet, andere kompromitierten ihre Stellung als Gottes Botschafter, und somit wurde das ganze Volk vergiftet.

In dieser dunklen Stunde trat Elia auf den Plan, ein Mann, von dem die Schrift sagt: „Elia war ein Mann gleichwie wir.“ Durch ihn wurde dem Überhandnehmen der Sünde Einhalt geboten. Es war einmal wieder eine Stunde gekommen, von der man sagen könnte, „Als die Zeit erfüllet war.“ In ganz wunderbarer Weise bewahrte ihn Gott zur Zeit der Teurung. Gott zeigte es ihm ganz klar zur Zeit der Hungersnot, daß Jahve und nicht der kanaanitische Gott der Fruchtbarkeit, über die Fruchtbarkeit des Landes verfügte. Elia hatte große Siege gefeiert. In Gottes Namen war er allein gegen die 450 Propheten Baals und die 400 Propheten der Asherah aufgetreten. Mit einem Entweder-Oder forderte er sie zur Treue gegen Gott auf und erlaubte ihnen kein Hinken auf beiden Seiten (mit einem Fuß auf dem Glauben Israels und dem anderen auf dem Baalsdienst stehend). Gott hatte sich zu seinem Zeugnis bekannt und die Propheten Baals waren auf dem Karmel niedergemacht worden. Aber im Handumdrehen verließ Elia das Land und suchte die Stille, bestimmt nicht nur, weil er sich seines Lebens nicht mehr sicher war (denn Gott sandte ihn zurück), sondern auch um in der Stille sein Herz auszuschnitten und seinen inwendigen Menschen zu stärken. In seiner Müdigkeit und Bedrücktheit erfuhr er göttliche Stärkung, und kam zum Berge Horeb.

II. Der Ort.

Elia war nicht der erste unter den Frommen Israels, der eine Reise nach dem Berge Horeb machte. Jedenfalls war es eine nicht seltene Erscheinung, daß treue Gottesverehrer in Israel den heiligen Ort besuchten, an dem Gott

sich einmal Israel zum Volk erwählt hatte. Nach der gnädigen Erlösung aus dem Haus der Knechtschaft hatte Gott in seiner großen Gnade und Liebe Israel in seine besondere Gemeinschaft gezogen, hatte ihm seine ewige Treue versichert und seine **Bundesverheißungen** geschenkt. In der Wüstenstille, im Schatten der Felsengebirge hatte Gott sich seinem Volk mitgeteilt. Dort hatte Israel ihrem Gott seine Treue und seinen Gehorsam gelobt. Horeb wurde somit zum geschichtlichen Zentrum des Glaubens Israels. Horeb stand gleichsam als Gedenkstein zur Erinnerung an das große Gotterleben dieses Volkes da. Es darf uns also nicht wundern, wenn dann und wann die Frommen Israels nach Horeb zogen, um in sich heilige Erinnerungen wach zu rufen.

Für die Christenheit ist ja das Land Palästina so ein heiliger Ort, denn es ist das Land in welchem unser Herr gelebt und gestorben. Der mittelalterlichen Kirche war der Gedanke, daß ungläubige Menschen den heiligen Boden besaßen, ganz unerträglich, und sie unternahm einen Kreuzzug nach dem andern. Die verschiedenen Gemeinschaften der christlichen Kirche haben auch solche heiligen Stätten. Wer aus der Mennoniten-Brüdergemeinde würde nicht einmal Elizabethtal besuchen wollen? Auch als Einzelne haben wir heilige Stätten in unserer Erinnerung — Stätten, an denen Gott uns in besonderer Weise begegnete, ein Gebetskammerlein, ein Heuschuppen, ein Wald, ein Feld, eine Schule, ein Versammlungshaus. Wer würde beim Besuch solcher heiligen Stätten unberührt bleiben?

Doch müßten wir hier auf eine Gefahr hinweisen, eine Gefahr die auch einem Elia drohte. Gott ist nämlich in seiner Offenbarung an keinen Ort gebunden. Elia war nun in der Meinung, daß Gott sich ihm am Horeb so offenbaren müßte, wie er es vor einigen Jahrhunderten an Israel getan. Dazu ging er zum Horeb. Aber wir können Gott nicht so bestimmen und einengen; er ist frei, sich so mitzuteilen, wie er es für gut befindet und wo er es will. Bei manchen ist es noch immer eine Frage, ob Gott sich einem Menschen,

der in der Stadt aufwächst, so mitteilen kann, wie einem, der das Vorrecht hat, auf dem Lande aufzuwachsen. Manchem auch von unseren Brüdern und Schwestern, war eine Begegnung mit Gott nicht möglich, weil der Gottesdienst eine andere Gestalt hatte als 'damals', als Gott zu ihnen in besonderer Weise redete: in einem anderen Hause, in einer anderen Sprache, u.dgl.m. Gott hätte sich zur Zeit Elias gerade so offenbaren können, wie er es beim Auszug aus Ägypten getan hatte, aber er tat es nicht. Er offenbarte sich in einer neuen Weise.

III. Die Art und Weise.

Als Elia an den heiligen Ort der Offenbarung kam, ging er in "die" Höhle (19, 9) — jedenfalls um da zu stehen, wo Mose einst gestanden (Exod. 33, 12ff.). Er wartete nun darauf, daß Gott sich wieder wie vormals mit Erdbeben, Sturm und Feuer offenbaren sollte. Gott gebot ihm auf den Berg zu treten. Er war bereit sich seinem Knecht zu offenbaren. Er offenbart sich noch immer da wo Menschen ihn von ganzem Herzen suchen. Aber er bindet sich an keine Form. Ein Wind brauste durchs Felsengebirge, aber Gott war nicht im Sturm. Die Erde erbebte, aber Gott war auch nicht im Erdbeben. Ein Feuer brannte hell auf, aber Gott war nicht im Feuer. Aber dann wurde es still — so still, daß die Stille hörbar wurde ("eine Stimme der Stille"). Jetzt hörte Elia Gott reden. Jetzt stand Elia vor seinem Gott. In dieser Stille wurde er innerlich erweckt.

Es ist auch für uns von großer Bedeutung zu erkennen, daß Gott sich auch in der Arbeit an unseren Gemeinden nicht an Formen bindet. Auch dürfen wir Gott nicht vorschreiben, wie er unter uns eine Erweckung herbeiführen soll. Wir beten darum und arbeiten daran. Wir lassen die Predigt des Wortes zur vollen Geltung kommen. Aber nachdem wir alles getan haben, stehen wir demütig vor Gott im Bewußtsein, daß er allein das wahre Leben in uns wecken kann. Wenn Gott eine Gemeinde erweckt, dann fragen wir nicht danach, wie viele in einer Versammlung nach vorne kamen um sich dem Herrn

zu ergeben; dann fragen wir, ob im täglichen Leben der Gotteskinder mehr Treue in der Arbeit für den Herrn zu finden ist, mehr Liebe zum Wort, mehr Selbstverleugnung, mehr Aufrichtigkeit im Geschäft, mehr Trennung von der Welt, mehr himmlische Gesinnung.

IV. Die Folgen.

Elia hatte sich in die Stille zurückgezogen; hatte den Platz seiner Wirksamkeit verlassen und stand unter dem falschen Eindruck, daß er allein von den Frommen Israels übriggeblieben sei. Gott rügte solche Gesinnung. Er fragt Elia: "Was tust du hier?", und sandte ihn zurück nach Israel, um dort seine Aufgaben zu erfüllen.

Es hat je und je fromme Menschen in der christlichen Kirche gegeben, denen es schwer wurde, in einer sündigen Umgebung zu leben, und die sich dann ganz zurückzogen, um sich in der Stille ihrer Frömmigkeit zu freuen und die Gottlosigkeit der Gesellschaft zu verurteilen. Niemand wird es verneinen wollen, daß ein gelegentliches Zurückziehen in die Stille eine unbedingte Notwendigkeit ist. Aber wir dürfen da nicht bleiben. Nachdem wir uns innerlich erfrischt haben, müssen wir zurück in den Kampf.

Die ganze prophetische Bewegung des Alten Testaments stand eigentlich für einen Ruf zurück zum Anfang ein. Die Propheten fühlten sich nicht berufen, das Volk "up to date" zu bringen. Es war nicht vornehmlich ihre Sorge,

daß Israel mit dem Fortschritt der Kultur schritthalten sollte. Aber sie waren auch nicht Kulturfeinde. Ihre Sorge war, daß in dem Wechsel der Kultur der alte Glaube neue Anwendungen und neue Ausdrücke finden sollte. Im Gegensatz zu den Propheten gab es in Israel noch eine andere Strömung: die Rechabiten. Diese hielten an den alten Wegen fest. Sie wohnten in Hütten, wie Israel es zur Zeit der Wüstenwanderung getan hatte. Sie sprachen ein entschiedenes Nein! gegen die Sitten des Landes. Jeremia hob diese Treue der Rechabiten hervor, im Gegensatz zu der Untreue derer, die so schnell den kanaanäischen Gottesdienst annahmen. Aber sie hatten für ihre Zeit keine Botschaft; sie fanden ihre Befriedigung darin, daß sie an den Gebräuchen, die sie aus der Wüstenzeit überkommen hatten, festhielten. Ganz anders die Propheten. Sie stellten sich in der Neuzeit mit dem Glauben der Väter in den Riss, und erklärten ihrem Volk, wie sich der alte Glaube in einem neuen Lande, unter neuen Verhältnissen ausdrücken müsse. Nur so kann man den Glauben der Väter fort-pflanzen. Wo lebendiges Christentum ist, wo man im Erweckungsgeist lebt, da gibt Gott auch immer wieder neue Aufträge für jede Generation. Der Herr schenke uns allen eine tiefe, aufrichtige Erweckung, damit auch wir als Gemeinschaft ein Zeugnis von der Lebendigkeit des biblischen Glaubens sein könnten. D. Ewert

Revival: Its Nature and its Result

Billy Graham makes the following statement in his introduction to Armin Gesswein's pamphlet entitled, **Is Revival the Normal?**: "While there is a definite increase in religious interest, we have not as yet seen a genuine heartfelt spiritual revival." ¹ Dr. Graham is convinced that the interest in religion has increased in America, and that religion has become popular. The need for a sweeping revival, however, seems to remain the burden of many. Various churches are conscious of the need. And wherever there are signs of a new in-

terest in the kingdom of God, the believers are hopeful that they are about to enter a period of new and refreshing manifestations of God. Disappointment has awaited them in many instances.

In evangelistic campaigns, occasionally, souls are stirred, but the joy over the success is soon marred by the concern as to how to preserve the gains and keep from slumping back into living conventionally. Are we in a rut and have not found the way out? A re-examination of our views concerning the nature and the desired results of revival

might lead us a step further in the right direction.

I Revival: Its Nature.

Thinking of revival, it is evident that a confusion exists as to what is to be expected in a revival. Gesswein maintains (p. 6) that "we are often vague and indefinite in what we mean by revival." Attempting to define revival, he says, "Revival has reference to Christians who have had life, and this life must be rekindled and renewed . . . It is the joy of the Lord . . ." (p. 7). To Horace F. Dean, revival is "the warm and gracious breath of God on His own" (p. 90).²

But it seems to me that neither of these definitions satisfactorily presents the nature of revival. Is not revival the restoration of the Christian to his normal relationship with God? The need of restoration indicates that there has happened a falling away, a disruption of the relationship. Consequently an adjustment is needed. Perhaps it is safe to say that at conversion one enters into the normal relationship with God. It is not a perfect and fully developed relationship, yet it is the relationship that under given conditions fully satisfied every one concerned, God as well as the believer.

Revival is the act of restoring this normal relationship. The initial experiences are to be relived, although the circumstances cannot and need not be recreated. Revival is never a repetition of conversion, although it, as a rule, is accompanied by penitence, sanctification and consecration.

It is evident that there is a divine as well as a human side to revival. The divine aspect of revival might possibly be defined as the operation of God through the Holy Spirit, or through His messengers, by which He restores the believer to the normal relationship with Himself. The human aspect on the other hand, is the realization of the need of returning to the normal Christian life and the willingness to do so whenever it becomes evident that one's life is not in line with the revealed will of God.

One does not need to read far into the Scriptures to become convinced that

the Lord constantly is at work to bring about a revival. The messages of the prophets, of Paul, but particularly of the Lord Jesus Himself, as He addresses the churches in Revelation chapters 2 and 3, give evidence that our God is anxious to have revivals take place at the very earliest convenience.

Once the Christian realizes that he is in need of a revival, it becomes his responsibility to respond to the warning of God. If he does, he will be revived; if he does not it is his fault that revival did not come to him.

A. The Normal Christian Life.

Speaking of the normal Christian life, the normal relationship to God, one asks what that might mean. It is far too complicated a question for me to answer, even to my own satisfaction, let alone to offer suggestions of its meaning to others, had not Christ Himself made plain what is involved. In John 15:5-7, I find the answer for myself. May I share it with my respected readers as a possible answer to our question. Jesus speaks in these verses about **abiding**. The same aspect is being emphasized in John 14:23: "If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." Paul rejoices in the fact that "Christ liveth in me" (Gal. 2:20). "Christ in us, the hope of glory" (Col. 1:27).

The normal Christian life is marked by a constant, permanent, invariable factor: **The consciousness of the indwelling presence of Christ and God.** It was one of the purposes of Christ's coming to give us this blessing, as He Himself tells His disciples in John 10:11. The abundant life is the normal Christian life, and is marked by the close fellowship and communion of the believer with His Saviour and Father. It is an encounter with the Eternal, and a genuine experience of the believer. Only after having experienced this real fellowship with the Lord, life begins to have meaning and purpose, and only as long as this relationship with God is retained, does it continue to have a meaning. Only when knowing that one is walking through life arm in arm with

God, life really satisfies and one begins to find oneself, one begins to love God and to know that one is being loved, as A. Day assures us (p. 53).³ Thus, only those living in this fellowship with God Almighty enjoy the normal Christian life in the sense of the New Testament.

The Heavenly Father is ever ready and anxious to renew this close fellowship with the believer, if it is interrupted for one reason or another. It is man who frequently is neither willing nor ready to do his part. Yet, without man doing his part, a revival cannot and will not take place. For Jesus Himself (Rev. 3:20) remains standing at the door, knocking and pleading with us to open the door to Him. Wherever the willingness to welcome God the Father and Christ is manifested, people are in the midst of a revival.

B. Return to a Normal Christian Life.

Since we are all human, all of us have to be concerned about whether or not we lead that normal Christian life which the New Testament demands of every believer; and should this not be the case, whether we are willing to return to that normal life. That means we have to ask ourselves whether or not we live in the spirit of revival. The possibility of deviating from the course charted for us in Scripture is ever present with us. For that reason we of necessity have to entertain the spirit of revival constantly, and not wait for the time when special revival meetings will be conducted. I personally find it necessary to be ready constantly for the restoration into the normal relationship with my Lord and not to wait for revival meetings to come around. I would be miserable in my Christian life, should I have to wait for special occasions to have my relationship with God restored. 'Now' is always the most acceptable time when it comes to revival. There is no reason for any one, individual or church, to wait for revival. Let each one take care of the human aspect of revival, God will certainly never delay His entering into the "open door." And as the number of 'revived' increases the probability is high that the whole church will be gripped by this spirit. Paul, in my opinion, expects this type of revival when

he urges his readers to put off the old man and put on the new. Here, revival and sanctification become synonymous.

There was a time in the life of Moses when the Lord rebuked him for his much crying. Instead of moving forward in faith, Moses kept on praying, and God said unto him, "Wherefore criest thou unto me? Speak unto the children of Israel that they go forward" (Ex. 14:15). Perhaps it is time for us to do something about a revival instead of, or, probably still better, in addition to, praying for it. Or do we expect that the Lord will move in without the believers' willingness to do their part? I hardly think that we are justified in expecting Him to do so.

Thus, considering the nature of revival, it is well to pray with the Psalmist, "Wilt thou not revive us again: that thy people may rejoice in thee?" (85:6), but also not to forget Paul's admonition, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" (Phil. 2:12c), as well as his testimony, "I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:14). The apostle was willing to pay the price, and it is evident that he attained. Any one praying with the Psalmist, "As the hart panteth after the water brook, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God . . ." (42:1-2), shall certainly not have to wait long for our God to respond.

II Revival: The Results Desired

In view of our deliberations, it is evident that a false concept of the nature of revival is easily entertained. Speaking of the desired results of revival, one is in danger of expecting wrong results. For that reason it is imperative that we rethink revival also from this angle. What are the desired results?

A. The Primary End Sought.

As previously stated, Christianity has one normative factor: conscious living in the presence of God and Christ, which in effect is fellowship and communion with the Divine. Unless this aspect is achieved in revival, its real purpose has not been accomplished.

When a church calls for revival it admits that many of her members have

backslidden. That their Christianity has retained its respectability in spite of the need for revival, means that they permitted something else than conscious, continuous abiding in the presence and fellowship of God to become the prime end sought in revival. Is the persistent call for revival coming from our churches justified? Or, does it manifest a confusion of the basic issues? Are we backsliders? Or do we expect the wrong results from revivals?

B. Subsequent Developments.

It goes without saying that the close walk with God and communion with Him must affect the personality of the believer. He experiences a transformation. Whereas the one outside of the fellowship with God is unable to understand himself and the purpose of his life, this one begins to know himself and to find himself in God. Day says, "He has arrived. This is that for which he was made. This is the answer to his deepest yearnings . . ." ⁴ His life takes on meaning. It now has a purpose. His activities, being divinely directed, have eternal value and satisfy him, in spite of all their imperfection. The reason for the change is the new motivation, for everything is being done to the glory and honor of the Lord. God is being experienced as the One Who does not merely dish out blessings but Who engages the believer himself in realizing the blessings. This is not a pooling of divine and human energies, but a ready response to the assignments made by God Almighty, an undertaking to which God is a partner."

Living consciously in the presence of God enables God to convey new insights, ordinarily called wisdom. In the presence of God one is far more able to form valid opinions of oneself, of others and of life as a whole. One learns to be realistic and view everything, as far as God permits, from the divine perspective.

But best of all, fellowship with the Lord results in sainthood, a gradual growing into the Christ-likeness, "increasing with the increase of God" (Col. 2:19). The efforts put forth by the believer are not attempts at self-improvement, but Spirit-directed growth, which not only purifies

morally, but also through conscious fellowship with the Lord, conveys discernment and understanding and a new grasp of truths. These in turn create convictions and cause adjustments which lift the believer far above the conventional, unessential, trivial, and manifest—to a degree—the wisdom of God in the believer's life (I Cor. 5:6).

While looking for revival in all sincerity, has a church or an individual believer perhaps longed for these developments without realizing that they can be expected to come only as the result of permitting the Spirit to establish the normal relationship with God? Christ's statement, "I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing" is just as true today as it was at the time He made it.

C. The Resultant By-Products.

It is the nature of the normal Christian life to be accompanied by very desirable and pleasant by-products. Perhaps a few should be brought to our attention. There is the periodic upsurge of the realization that God is actually present with the believer—present not only in the general sense, but in the sense of being peculiarly present for the sake of this particular believer. The consciousness of such presence of God fills the being of the believer with inexplicable satisfaction.

Another by-product is the peace that passes all understanding. The awareness of it is not equally strong at all times, but it is there when the conscience is at ease, and one is honest with God, himself and his neighbor. It is wonderful to realize that God, by His grace, grants us His peace as evidence that His pleasure rests upon us! Nothing, except the consciousness that one lives in fellowship and communion with God, is able to call forth the peace of God which keeps our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

Again, the joy of the Lord at times thrills the hearts of those who live with God. Then, renewed interest in God's kingdom, in prayer meetings, in church attendance and participation in the work of the church are other worthwhile by-products of the believer's nor-

mal relationship with God. These by-products must be taken for what they are. Life proves that their intensity varies from time to time. Under certain conditions the joy of the Lord may recede, the interest in the work of the Lord may be pushed back by some other immediate concern. This does not mean that the believer is out of tune with his Lord, as long as he is consciously living in the presence of the Master, as long as he "abides" in Him, and nothing has marred this relationship.

However, counterfeits may appear in place of the real by-products of revival. Emotional excitement may well pose as joy in the Lord, callousness as peace that passes all understanding. Enthusiasm for the work of the church may conceal self-advancement. Activism may be a substitute for obedient submission. Large donations may be given to cover up the refusal to spend a lifetime in some sacrificial service.

There is a strong tendency to let the by-products become central, and to consider them to be the primary end of revival. Expectations of some who pray for a revival seem to indicate that the presence of the by-products would to them be sufficient evidence of a genuine revival. A full house on Sunday morning, a large collection, a full program of the church that keeps every member hopping are at time considered to be signs of a real awakening. This, however, is not so, unless the full house,

the large amount, the busyness of the church are accompanied by the congregation's willingness to adjust its relationship with the Lord along the entire front and the members of the church do enjoy the conscious personal fellowship and communion with their Lord and Maker.

Neither does the temporary absence of by-products necessarily indicate lack of spirituality or a need for revival. The pressure of life makes them recede at times, and this has to be taken into account. By-products have their place and value, however, none of them constitutes the constant factor. The constant factor is, and always remains: the consciousness of being in the presence of God, of living in His fellowship, of performing His will.

Where do we stand in the important question of "Revival"? Both the nature and the results of revival have to be kept sharply in focus if our prayers for revival are to be followed by showers of blessing sent from God the Father.

C. Wall.

1. Gesswein, Armin, **Is Revival the Normal?**, McBeth Press, Elizabethtown, Pa.

2. Dean, Horace F., **Operation Evangelism**, Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich.

3. Day, Albert E., **An Autobiography of Prayer**, Harper & Brothers, N.Y.

4. *Ibid*, p...

MISSIONS

Changes in Mennonite Brethren Missions

The Mennonite Brethren Church has always been noted for its warm interest in missions. From the very day when the Mennonite Brethren Church was born, January 6, 1860, to the present, there has been a concern for the lost of the world. God has blessed these concerns of His children at home and, in particular, abroad.

The Foreign Missions program has

reached into the far corners of the globe, so that the sun never sets on the mission fields of the M. B. Conference. Today the membership of the M. B. Church abroad exceeds the membership at home, in North America. Besides, other mission societies have received generous support from the M. B. Conference, both in money and in missionary candidates. At the Tri-annual

General Conferences of the M. B. Church, foreign missions received warm consideration by its delegates. Deliberations in the past have concerned themselves more with the expansion of the program than with changes in missionary strategy. The need for changes appears not to have been too urgent, for in the countries where M. B. missions were particularly active, cultural and even political changes were at a minimum. Occidental influence had reached a certain plateau from which only minor deviations were noticeable. Such, however, is no longer the case today.

China went Communist and missionary efforts came to a sudden halt. India, once dominated by Britain, is today heard in the family of nations as an independent power of notable strength. Nationalism in the once insignificant land of the Congo has become one of the world's most perplexing problems. The political complexion of Japan has drastically changed and offers wide open doors for a witness. The sleeping youth of Latin America have awakened and show enough potential to become the Samson of a future day. New modes of transportation have minimized distance, and the entire world is rapidly becoming one community. Science has made staggering progress and has, in part at least, left off exploring this globe and is seeking satellites in space.

Such developments cannot but have a tremendous effect upon the missionary program of any denomination. If our Bible-centred message is to be heard in our day, certain changes are inevitable. Changes in themselves need not always be a threat, instead they can be a blessing. They hold the promise of progress. Man, however, is a creature of habit. Once he is used to doing something in a certain way, he is loath to change. Human nature attributes to permanency a certain amount of stability and dependability, which it is reluctant to give up for the uncertainty of the new.

Changes required in any area of human activity are usually accompanied by tension. Such tension expresses itself in terms of personal frustrations, misunderstandings among the brethren, and discouragement in continuing

the program. It may be well, therefore, to examine, in principle, the changes that have come about in M. B. missions and even mention some of the changes which may be anticipated in the days to come.

I. The Area of Change.

1. M. B. Missions has not changed in its message. There is only one Name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. This Gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation, can be heard from every M. B. representative no matter where he is found. Liberalism and neo-orthodoxy have not yet colored the message of the M. B. missionary. There is no missionary whom we need to suspect in respect of the fundamentals of our faith. Unitedly our missionary force stands on the doctrine of the inspiration and unquestionable authority of the Scriptures, the doctrine of human depravity and need of redemption, the atoning merits of Christ's substitutionary suffering and death on Calvary, His bodily resurrection and personal return. This stability in our message must not be taken for granted. God has graciously kept us united and firm at this point. Wherever the gospel trumpet of the M. B. Church is heard from its missionary staff of over 200, there is a clear Bible oriented tone. For this we as a conference and church need to be deeply grateful.

2. M. B. Missions has not changed in its objective. Our missionary program in any land or field is not geared to fulfill secondary objectives, such as bringing civilization to primitive people, or raising the culture of a far-away land. Our objective has been, is, and must be, the presentation of Christ and His redeeming grace. How grateful we ought to be that not only in our church at home or within the Mission Board, but also in the work of every missionary, this objective is always recognizable. Wherever an M. B. missionary arrives, it is soon clear that he is "an ambassador of Christ."

3. M. B. Missions has changed in methods. The change in M. B. Missions has been more in the area of methods used to present the unchanging mes-

sage. The experience of the Apostolic Church may help us to understand this problem. When the number of the disciples was multiplied, certain aspects of the church program were neglected and there was a murmuring because their widows were overlooked. The Apostles immediately recognized the need for a division of labour. In Acts 4:34, 35, the Apostles appear largely responsible for the administration of finances. In chapter 6, however, this area of responsibility was assigned to the deacons, so that the Apostles could give themselves "continually to prayer and to the ministry of the Word" (Acts 6:4).

At one time our missionaries worked almost exclusively with the outcasts in India and there was no native church. The missionary had many responsibilities which today no longer need to be borne by our brethren in the field. The erection of buildings, the time-consuming work with illiterates, the entire area of primary education, wide areas of local church administration and other responsibilities are borne by the native church. Missionaries, who at one time were principals of schools and administrators in other institutions, had the joy of seeing natives take hold of the work and carry it forth with a remarkable degree of devotion and efficiency. The missionaries in turn now can give themselves "continually to prayer and to the ministry of the Word."

At one time the missionary compound was the centre of missionary activity. Today the spirit of nationalism views the missionary compound as a cultural island of foreign origin which threatens to impose itself upon another way of life. Therefore, the church-life needs to be removed from such centers and placed right into the native community with natives predominantly in charge. The natives must feel that church-life is not so much an institution imposed upon them, but rather an expression of their own personal faith. In the Congo, local administration is almost exclusively in the hands of native brethren today. Our missionaries serve in an advisory capacity and give themselves to prayer and the ministry of the Word. Thus in some fields, our missionaries now carry the responsibility

of training native leaders, teaching them how to teach others, and how to reach out as a native church.

Our missionaries now work more within the framework of a native brotherhood. In Japan, our missionary is not the exclusive authority but sits in committees as a member elected to the committee by the native church. He thus deliberates with the native Christians and recognizes how such team work makes for strength. Naturally, in the case of the **Campa Indians in Peru**, where we have some believers but no native church as yet, our missionaries still have to give considerable attention to the economic aspect of the missionary program. Clearing of land, sowing of pastures, and so forth, takes much of his time. In Europe, again, there is no need to concern ourselves with education or a medical program. Our brethren there are primarily occupied with the spiritual phase of church building. Here, new babes in Christ must be built into a body of organized believers. So, the method of work changes from place to place and from time to time, but the message and the objective are everywhere the same.

II. Reasons for Change.

Various factors combine to make such changes necessary.

1. The change in the natives in the respective fields. The spirit of nationalism has gripped them, and the resentment toward any domineering influence of a foreigner is noticeable everywhere. This problem has been discussed repeatedly in contemporary literature and need not delay us here.

2. Political powers have made changes in missionary procedure imperative. In the Congo, political instability necessitated evacuation and the complete indigenization of the work as far as local responsibility was concerned. In India, the government has openly declared that India is for the Indians, and that all foreign influence upon the natives must be progressively eliminated. This implies a decrease in missionary personnel and even a systematic reduction of foreign missionary subsidies. Therefore, the church must learn as rapidly

as possible how to stand without the administration of foreigners.

3. The cultural advance which various countries have made. Mechanization is making itself felt in all cultures. Education is becoming more and more the concern of governments of every land. Governments will subsidize primary education and thus assume the responsibility of combating illiteracy. Living standards are being raised in many countries and medical services improved. More native personnel for this purpose is becoming available, relieving the missionaries for the work of prayer and the ministry of the Word.

4. The potential of the native church. The native church needs to be activated and involved. Christianity for them must become something not to be selfishly exploited but something to which they must give themselves unreservedly. A church from which they receive must become a church to which they contribute. We will never build a strong church abroad until it too has caught the missionary vision and dedicated itself fully to the cause of spreading the Gospel. Native talent must be challenged to express itself in service for the cause of Christ. It is not good that everything is done for them. They must learn to do it. Personal involvement of each member in the program of the church is greatly needed abroad and, in many instances, at home also.

III. Effects of the Change.

1. The effect upon the missionary church at home. The church at home will have to learn to look upon the churches abroad as their equal in Christ Jesus. The brotherhood concept will have to include different nationalities and peoples of foreign cultures. The missionary church at home must divest itself of all thoughts of superiority, and learn by experience what Jesus meant when he said, ". . . they shall be one fold and one shepherd." The relationship between the home church and the native churches abroad has not yet been completely crystallized within our Conference framework. However, the need for equality is being recognized and we are confident that negotiations will bring forth a Scriptural solution.

2. The effect upon the missionary. He has been the front-line man, fighting the battle of the faith. Everyone develops patterns of service. All of us get into a rut easily. The missionary is not excluded. He, too, accustoms himself to a certain type of work and also to a method of doing it. Military strategy often requires that, after the heat of one battle, the general withdraw his forces and regroup them for a new onslaught upon the enemy. New assignments are made and individuals are transplanted into an entirely new framework of operation. This is also required of our missionary personnel. Let no one say that our missionaries of the past have not served well. If in the regrouping process some missionary must be assigned to other responsibilities because of new needs within the program, that is no reflection on his past work. One missionary nurse in our program has been assigned to literary work. Sisters who have served well as principals of primary schools are now assigned to teach Bible classes and serve as house mothers in dormitories in secondary schools. Missionaries, who at one time did outstanding work of leadership in a local native church on the compound, are now sent forth as evangelists, teaching the Word and strengthening the brethren. Missionaries who had prepared for one field have been challenged to go into another country. The missionary who was used to doing most of the work himself, must now teach the natives how to do it. The latter task is often harder, more frustrating and more time consuming than the former. It is all part of the regrouping process for the new offensive which shall bring further defeat to the enemy and honor and glory to our Christ.

3. The effect upon the Mission Board. The Board must have a wide perspective in mission strategy. The changes in missions are not peculiar to our program. All missions are experiencing them. Some mission boards have already solved some of the problems which we are facing at the moment. We must be open to learn from others and, therefore, need to acquaint ourselves with a

goodly number of other missions, and see how they overcome new obstacles.

The Board will need to provide opportunities for higher theological training for natives. Yet we cannot operate a higher theological school in every field. Neither can we take a native out of his cultural and native setting and train him elsewhere in some central school. Therefore, joint efforts with other missions are imperative.

The redirecting of missionary personnel takes special wisdom. It is human to err, and the Mission Board keenly recognizes its own limitations.

The Board also recognizes that our missionary force on the field needs spiritual refreshing and that our native churches need the benefit of the ministry of the leading brethren of our Conference. They must be sent on short-term ministries abroad.

Seeking of new frontiers in missions is not to be overlooked. The work among the Campa Indians in Peru and the Waunana Indians in Panama are such new frontiers in our M. B. Conference.

4. Effects upon the native church. The native church must cease to hold the missionary responsible for its own spiritual welfare. Every native Christian must learn to assume responsibility for himself and for the native church.

MUSIC

Music and the Church Pastor

When congregations select a pastor or church leader he is ordinarily not expected to know very much about music, at least not in our conference. In other churches where the service is more liturgical, the pastor is expected to be able to sing or chant the sections which apply to his part of the service. Nevertheless, we consider the pastor (or church leader) to be responsible for everything that goes on in the church—in the end he will have to answer for everyone, even if it be the

The native church must cease to be a mission field but become a missionary force reaching out into the community and villages farther afield. Instead of seeing a missionary come, they must see some of their own members go out as missionaries.

The native church must grasp the concept of brotherhood in Christ Jesus. Tribal boundaries and caste discrimination must fade and the vision of Christ of "one fold and one shepherd" must grip their hearts. To bring this about, these and other changes will require time and a strong teaching ministry within the M. B. Church program.

As we have stated above, changes bring tension. Will these changes in the mission program have a wholesome effect upon the M. B. Churches as such, or will the tension disrupt unity? The foe of missions would have nothing rather than to use this occasion to arouse suspicion within the constituency, mistrust toward the Mission Board, and criticism of the work of our missionaries. It shall be our prayer that by His grace we may band together in Christian love as never before to complete the great task entrusted unto us by the Saviour when He said, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15).

J. J. Toews

youth committee that created a problem. Hence it behooves the pastor to have some control over the music that is sung or played in the church, or at least to have some knowledge of what is going on. The same would be expected of him with regard to the Sunday school program or the youth work.

Now it goes without saying that the pastor need not be a practicing musician in order to fulfil the requirements we would set for him. It is only necessary that he have some general but

meaningful information about music and its place in the church. He should have good reasons to support his using music in the service. What purpose is being served at present by the congregational singing? the choir? Is there a definite reason why the singing is done at a certain time in the service? Furthermore, the pastor should know something about the different types of church music that the congregation hears—hymns, motets, cantatas, oratorios, anthems, organ preludes etc. Any standard book on church music will have all this information.

Since we sing many hymns in our services the pastor should know what constitutes a good hymn and how to get the most out of the hymns that are sung. The singing in the church by the choir and congregation should not be considered as "preliminaries" to the sermon, but as integral parts of the entire worship service, worth doing on their own account. Furthermore, the pastor should know what music is currently in use at the various levels of the church—the Sunday school, the youth meetings, and the various "special" events in the church year. In most churches there is nobody who holds himself ultimately responsible for the music that is used. The choir leader confines his interests and responsibilities to his field, and the pastor feels that music is out of his ken; thus there are elements in most churches that are left to their own devices with respect to the choice of music, etc. This state of affairs is not as it should be.

Another area in which the pastor should have a minimum of general information would be in the field of hymnology and church music. This is as necessary as a knowledge of church history and practice is beneficial to him in his understanding of the church as it exists today. The church possesses a fine heritage in its music as well as in its theology, and to be ignorant of this heritage is to lose a good deal. In biblical studies one states that the Christian must become familiar with the whole Bible; in music one would say that the congregation should become familiar with and learn to cherish all the finest examples of church music

down through the ages, and should not confine its interests to a short period only. The pastor can guard against this being the case in his own church by encouraging a wide selection of the material used.

How can the pastor be of assistance in the singing of the choir, the congregation, and the Sunday school in his church? In the first place by showing that he is interested in this part of the church program. He should attend some of the rehearsals with the choir and discuss the work with its director. Any problems that may be present should be discussed frankly. The pastor and the choir leader need to understand each other if they are to work together. The pastor should ask the director what criteria he uses in making choices for songs that are used, and what his idea of good church music is. Nor should the pastor overlook the important contribution made to the service by the accompanist or organist. Whatever the occasion may be, the pastor will win friends among the musicians in his church by showing an active interest in the work that each is doing and helping them to strive for higher ideals. Nor should he forget to encourage young people in his church who seem to have some musical ability to think of taking special musical training in order that the church may benefit thereby. Nor should the church forget that occasionally some financial assistance may be in order. Usually the Bible school program is heavily subsidized by supporting churches, but it is rarely the case that the musical training of the young people is taken equally seriously.

Finally, how can the pastor help his congregation to get more out of the musical parts of the service? In the first place, by treating these sections with due respect and careful preparation. He should not allow the church members to be disturbed by commotion or needless distractions during these times. He should occasionally draw the attention of the congregation to the message in the songs used, and should demand better singing from the congregation generally. Everyone should be encouraged to participate, but the song leader (if there is one) should not be

allowed to make a regular "song-fest" out of the singing. The congregation should feel that the hymns are a part of the service, not a prelude to it; hence the choir and pastor should be in their places at the commencement of the singing, if at all possible.

The pastor can also increase the effectiveness of music in the church by arranging to have certain programs in the church year devoted to this very purpose. Most churches have an annual Saengerfest, but more can be done in the course of the year. I have known some churches that had a "hymn sing" at the close of an evening service. Everyone who wished to remain for the singing was then given opportunity to join in a song session made up mainly of hymn favourites suggested by the singers themselves. Another effective way of using music in the service is by means of programs called "Gesanggottesdienst." On these occasions the various musical groups in the church, or others specially formed for the occasion, are given opportunity to serve. Some churches use male choruses made up of the older men in the church who enjoy singing the good old songs of their youth. Various instrumentalists in the church have an opportunity to perform on such programs. Occasions such as these are excellent

opportunities for the pastor to educate his congregation in matters pertaining to music in the church service. Since most of our church members like to sing, I am sure that they would appreciate an evening of this sort. Nor should one neglect to use these occasions for teaching new hymns to the congregation. Programs of this sort are also very suitable for purposes of evangelism in the community. Many people who would not come to a regular service may be induced to attend one of these musical evenings, and thus get to know something of the work of the church in this way. A song may outlive a sermon in memory.

It may seem from this article that I have placed too large a share of the responsibility for the music-making in a church on the already-overloaded pastor. In most cases he ought to take the initiative in these matters, since he is in the best position to do so. In any case, let the pastor take a greater interest in the music-making in his church and he will probably be surprised at the response he will get. The singing in our churches needs to be revitalized on all levels, from the Sunday school through all the departments. If this vitality begins at the top it may well rejuvenate the entire church.

Peter Klassen

CHRISTIAN WORKER'S LIBRARY

Illustrating the Sermon (VII)

(Continued from last issue)

b) Biographical works.

The realm of biographical literature is large and includes, to mention only the more familiar varieties, the following: autobiography, individual biography, group biography, memoir, diary, and travel account. Such literature has always been popular enough with the common multitude—even with those who read very little else—and that for two reasons. Its narrative content, gen-

erally speaking, is (1) easily comprehended by the ordinary reader, and (2) ministers so directly to his desire to share, vicariously, in the experiences of another—one who, more often than not, is greater or at least more famous than himself.

Much of this literature, however, is doomed to essential oblivion in the end, and probably rightly so. "To survive," literary critics remind us, "biographical writing must contain new facts, must present facts with interest, must show

that the author has a notable grasp of his subject, and must have artistic form and style." It is only as the last two of these prerequisites, in particular, are fulfilled (and that in more than ordinary measure) that a biographical work is likely to continue to lay hold of the reader's imagination, to illuminate for him "some aspect of truth, experience or duty," and, what is even more, to inspire to finer and nobler living.

If we look to the past, it is not difficult to point to a few biographical works that, by common admission, do fulfil these prerequisites and do embody these qualities. As examples of such, we may cite the following: (1) **autobiographies**—Augustine's **Confessions** and B. Franklin's **Autobiography**; (2) **memoirs**—**Memoirs of McCheyne**, edited by A. Bonar, and **Journal of John Woolman**; (3) **diaries**—John Wesley's **Journal** and **The Life and Diary of David Brainerd**, edited by J. Edwards; (4) **individual biographies (secular)**—A. Maurois' **Disrailli** and H. A. Fisher's **Napoleon**; (5) **individual biographies (religious)**—F. Wilson's **Crusader in Crinoline** and A. Porritt's **John Henry Jowett**; (6) **group biographies**—Plutarch's **Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans** and A. D. White's **Seven Great Statesmen**.

It is more difficult and hazardous to select from more recent literature works that promise to become classic biographies, but the following are among those which seem likely candidates: G. Seaver's **David Livingstone: His Life and Letters**; R. Holt's **George Washington Carver: An American Biography**; C. Anderson's **To the Golden Shore**; C. S. Lewis' **Surprised By Joy**; R. H. Bainton's **Here I Stand: A Life of Martin Luther**; E. Elliot's **Through Gates of Splendor**; W. Churchill's **My Early Life**; F. G. Gill's **The Glorious Company**; J. C. Pollock's **The Cambridge Seven**; C. E. Macartney's **The Making of a Minister**.

We have said that good biographies are capable of illumining, for the reader, "some aspect of truth, experience or duty." The following excerpts from three recent biographies, not yet alluded to but all of which, once again, promise to become noteworthy instances

of biographical literature, may serve to illustrate more concretely how specific works may be made to yield up treasures both "new and old." Ned B. Stonehouse's full and inspiring biography, **J. Gresham Machen: A Biographical Memoir**, first of all, supplies us with a moving illustration of an aspect of truth and of the search after it on the part of one who, at the time of his death, was called (by C. W. Hodge of Princeton Seminary) the "greatest theologian in the English-speaking world." Be this as it may, the tribute paid him by another intimate observer can hardly be gainsaid, namely, that he (Machen) was "a saint of God who loved truth, sought truth, found truth, and upheld truth against all adversaries, however mighty."

At a time (1912) when a perilous tendency amongst students at Princeton Seminary, as well as in the church as a whole, to set up a sharp disjunction between the pursuit of knowledge and the cultivation of piety was developing, Machen, clearly discerning the situation, took up the challenge and voiced his plea that the students of the Seminary might catch a vision of a ministry that would be thoroughly Christian in its evaluation of knowledge and, at the same time, vigorously intellectual in the interests of Christian piety. Part of his historic address given at that time follows: "Modern culture is a tremendous force either subservient to the gospel or else it is the deadliest enemy of the gospel. For making it subservient, religious emotion is not enough; intellectual labor is also necessary. And that labor is being neglected. The Church has turned to easier tasks. And now she is reaping the fruits of her indolence. Now she must battle for her life.

"The situation is desperate. It might discourage us. But not if we are truly Christians. Not if we are living in vital communion with the risen Lord. If we are really convinced of the truth of our message, then we can proclaim it before a world of enemies; then the very difficulty of our task, the very scarcity of our allies becomes an inspiration; then we can even rejoice that God did not place us in an easy age, but in a time of doubt and perplexity

and battle. Then, too, we shall not be afraid to call forth other soldiers into the conflict. Instead of making our theological seminaries merely centres of religious emotion, we shall make them battle-grounds of the faith, where helped a little by the experience of Christian teachers, men are taught to fight their own battle, where they come to appreciate the real strength of the adversary and in the hard school of intellectual struggle learn to substitute for the unthinking faith of childhood the profound convictions of full-grown men . . . The twentieth century, in theory, is agreed on social betterment. But sin, and death, and salvation, life, and God—about these things there is debate. You can avoid the debate if you choose. You need only drift with the current. Preach every Sunday during your Seminary course, devote the fag ends of your time to study and thought, study about as you studied in college—and these questions will probably never trouble you. The great questions may easily be avoided. Many preachers are avoiding them. And many preachers are preaching to the air. The Church is waiting for men of another type. Men to fight her battles and solve her problems. The hope of finding them is the one great inspiration of a Seminary's life."

A second instance that illumines an aspect of **experience** — religious experience, that is—comes to us from the autobiography of Professor E. Keri Evans, **My Spiritual Pilgrimage: From Philosophy to Faith**, a work that has been described by that discerning preacher and author, William Barclay, as "indeed a spiritual classic." During the early years of his life, Keri Evans had one passion, and that was poetry. At about the age of twenty there came to him, quite unsought, the call to preach. In the course of his preparation as a preacher he became a brilliant philosopher, studied in Glasgow under Edward Caird, and was, soon enough, appointed Caird's assistant. He was then, even before he could assume this post in Glasgow, appointed to the Chair of Philosophy in Bangor in North Wales. But, finally, and before very long, he left his Chair to become a min-

ister of the church and a preacher of the gospel.

It is rarely that a man leaves a university chair to become a minister of the Gospel, and such a shift is to be explained, generally speaking, only in terms of a definite spiritual experience. And indeed Keri Evans had such an experience. He says, "I would not take all the chairs of philosophy in the world in exchange for the experience that subsequently became mine." He recounts how, when he was about to leave Bangor, a career in law was suggested to him. "I remember being attracted by this, and I can recall the spot on the street at Newcastle Emlyn when there came a tender influence like a gentle hand to keep me from yielding to that temptation." It is little wonder, therefore, that Keri Evans' great message was that genuine religion is relationship with Christ. And it is little wonder, too, that a man once stopped and asked him, "Do you know any others in Wales who are preaching **Christ** and not preaching **sermons**?"

Finally, here is an incident out of the life of a great Manchester industrialist, Frank Crossley, culled from E. K. Crossley's biography of him, **He Heard From God**, that focusses clearly on one aspect of **duty**. Frank Crossley was an engineer of the first rank and owner of the very lucrative patent for the Crossley gas engine, but his true greatness lay in the intimacy of his walk with God and the passion of his heart for the souls of men. Moreover, he was remarkably generous with his wealth. To the Salvation Army alone he gave 100,000 pounds. Once when he was staying in Bowdon, his minister, Dr. MacKinnal, came to him asking for a donation for a good cause. Crossley gave him a cheque for 100 pounds, and then said an amazing thing: "Don't be afraid of bleeding me. I am the possessor of a patent. I may, any morning, find that a new invention has been registered which may render mine useless. **While I am making money, I ought to give it away.**" Most Christians would have regarded that very situation as a reason for saving money; Crossley, however, regarded it as altogether im-

perative that he give it away while he had it.

e) Historical works.

Already in the sixteenth century one thoughtful inquirer at least, Francis Bacon, had discovered for himself, and had reminded others that "histories make men wise." History, as we know, deals not only with the lives of great individuals but with larger masses of men, classes, communities and nations, and, while the individual is likely to be rather unpredictable, such broader social groups tend to act and react in much the same way to similar situations. And because this is so, a study of their historical origins and development can prove most revealing and instructive. It can often provide significant clues to the forces and factors that operate within these groups and to the motives and conflicts that actually shape events.

Charles A. Beard, a famous historian in his day, once summed up the important lessons of human history in four succinct sentences: (1) Whom the gods would destroy, they first make mad with power; (2) he mills of God grind slowly, yet they grind exceeding small; (3) The bee fertilizes the flower it robs; and (4) When it is dark enough one can see the stars. Highly suggestive as Beard's general affirmations may be, for the Christian they are not altogether adequate, as formulated here. At any rate, they seem to bypass the

most significant lesson of all. The assertion of another historian, the renowned Professor of Modern History in the University of Cambridge, Herbert Butterfield (in his **Christianity and History**, that the one really important lesson of history is that there exists, and indeed **must** exist "**a Providence . . . which moves over history with the function of creating good out of evil,**" is more acceptable to the Christian observer.

Now, it is the reading of **Biblical** history, wherein, as John A. Broadus once put it, "the designs of Providence are not left to be judged of by our sagacity but are often clearly revealed, so as to show . . . the meaning of things obscure and the real co-working of things apparently antagonistic," that has taught Butterfield — and Christians generally — to approach and interpret **general** history in this profounder moral sense. In view of all this, it is the Christian preacher's distinct obligation and privilege, surely, to draw upon episodes from general history and to set them forth in such a light (without distorting facts, of course) that they actually do illustrate spiritual truths—especially this central truth that "the only really significant thing about the life of any man or nation is the relation in which it stands to the promises of God" (cf. John Baillie, in his **The Belief in Progress**).

H. Giesbrecht

(To be continued)

YOUR QUESTION

What should be our attitude toward brethren who remain unforgiving in their attitude?

Usually such brethren consider their attitude a justifiable one. They feel that the wrong which has been committed is of such a nature that forgiveness cannot be expected of them. Are they right in this?

Forgiveness in the truly Christian sense is not only a matter of the emo-

tions. Certainly the emotions are deeply affected, but the mainsprings for forgiving attitudes with the Christian lie rooted in Christian love. **Agape**, the Christian love, is a free act and is rooted in the will. God's love is rooted "in the eternal resolve to love," and such love has been "shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost." **Agape** demands the exercise of the whole man and becomes a principle by which men **deliberately** live. It is a conquest and

a victory, not necessarily an emotional affinity. Barclay defines it as "unconquerable benevolence."

This would mean that I can forgive if I so desire. The unforgiving spirit is the unconquered spirit, a pampering of the self. It is deeply rooted in pride.

To remain unforgiving is to be unspiritual. Jesus clearly implied, in his parable on forgiveness, that the person who fails to forgive others has forgotten his own forgiveness. His relationship to his divine benefactor has been severed and, therefore, the Lord's prayer teaches that such people cannot be forgiven.

What should the church do when brethren just will not forgive? In the first place, such a brother cannot serve

in the church. His attitude is such that he cannot be "an ambassador for Christ" pleading that others might experience forgiveness and be reconciled. In order to help the brother, admonition, as Jesus Himself taught it, would be in order. Should the brother hear, he has been won from a life of misery and inner defeat.

In a recent book by Paul Tournier, *Guilt and Grace*, the concept of forgiveness is given a new application in mental health. More and more psychiatrists are substantiating clinically what Christians have claimed experientially. Forgiveness is a healing balm for the human heart. To neglect its application is to experience what David describes in Psalm 32. F. C. Peters

Summer Session: July 9 — July 27, 1962

An Interpretation of Paul's Prison Epistles

Instructor — David Ewert, M.A., M.Th.

An exegetical study of the Prison Epistles of Paul, with emphasis on basic theological concepts, will be attempted. The study is designed to acquaint the student with some of the important principles of Biblical interpretation. A serious effort will be made to relate the exegesis to contemporary life situations. — 2 hours

Studies in American Christianity

Instructor — J. A. Toews, M.A., B.D. (Cand. Ph.D.)

An introduction to some of the major religious movements in the United States and Canada. The course is designed to acquaint the student with such movements as Puritanism, the Great Awakening, Revivalism, Modernism, Fundamentalism, etc., that have shaped the course and determined the pattern of the Christian churches in North America. — 2 hours

1962 Commencement

May 31, Thursday, Baccalaureate Service
June 1, Friday, Graduation Banquet
June 2, Saturday, Senior Class Programme
June 3, Sunday, Graduation Exercises

Berichtigung: In der Januar-Februar Nummer des „The Voice“, Seite 2, Spalte 1, Par. 3, soll es heißen: Diesen Christus kann man sich auch *nicht* nur als denjenigen denken, . . .

The B.D. Curriculum offered this coming school year, 1962, for university graduates.

First Year			
First Semester	Hours per week	Second Semester	Hours per week
Bible	4	Bible	4
Christian Ethics	2	Christian Ethics	2
Biblical Theology	2	Biblical Theology	2
Evangelism	2	Evangelism	2
Acts	2	M. B. Missions	2
Church History	2	Church History	2
Greek I	3	Greek I	3
	17		17
Second Year			
Bible	4	Bible	4
Syst. Theology I	2	Syst. Theology III	3
Syst. Theology II	3	Christian Education	2
Homiletics	2	Homiletics	2
Greek Exegesis	3	Greek Exegesis	3
Elective	3	Elective	3
	17		17
Third Year			
O.T. Research	2	N.T. Research	2
Contemp. Theology Seminar	2	Hermeneutics	2
Church Administration	2	Christian Education Seminar	2
Greek Exegesis	3	Greek Exegesis	3
Hebrew	3	Hebrew	3
Electives	2	Anabaptist Seminar	2
Research Papers	3	Electives	3
	17		17

Note: Research Papers: Students will be asked to do 3 rather comprehensive research papers in different fields of theological studies. One paper must be in the Biblical field.

THE CROSS

Alas! I knew not what I did,
But now my tears are vain;
Where shall my trembling soul be hid?
For I my Lord have slain.

A second look He gave, which said:
"I freely all forgive;
This blood is for thy ransom shed;
I die, that thou mayest live."

Thus, while His death my sin displays
In all its blackest hue;
Such is the mystery of grace,
It seals my pardon too.

With pleasing grief and mournful joy
My spirit now is filled,
That I should such a life destroy,
Yet live through Him I killed.

—John Newton