

The Voice

of the Mennonite Brethren Bible College

Vol. XII

SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER, 1963

No. 5

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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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Geistliche Geographie (Psalm 36, 6-7).

Die Wunderwege Gottes mit der Menschheit, mit der Gemeinde Jesu Christi, und auch mit uns persönlich, fordern uns stets zur Demütigung, Anerkennung und Anbetung auf. Denn in diesen seinen Wegen sehen wir, wie der Psalmist es ausdrückt, daß (1) seine Güte bis in den Himmel reicht. Gottes Güte ist nichts anderes als seine Bundes-treue. Weil er diese Treue einem Volk, das immer den Irrweg will, hält, ist seine Güte unverdiente Gnade. Blicken wir in die Geschichte unsrer Gemeinde hier zu Lande, können wir nicht anders als ausrufen, "Herr, deine Güte reicht, so weit der Himmel ist."

Ein zweites bekennt der Psalmist: (2) "Seine Wahrheit reicht bis in die Wolken." Über all das Vergängliche, das Irdische, das Kleinliche, türmt Gottes unwandelbare Festigkeit. Er wandelt nie; er wird nicht wanken; er bleibt treu. Er ist treu im Vergeben unserer Sünden (1. Joh. 1, 9). Er wird uns fest erhalten bis ans Ende, "denn Gott ist treu" (1. Kor. 1, 9). Blicken wir zurück auf das zwanzigjährige Be-tehen unsrer Schule, dann müssen wir über die Wahrheit (Treue) Gottes staunen. Wahrlich sie reicht bis an die Wolken. Die Tabelle auf der dritten Umschlagseite zeugt von dieser seiner Treue. Sie zeugt aber auch von der Treue unsrer Gemeinden, die hinter dem Werk stehen.

Ein drittes fällt dem Psalmisten, im Gedanken an Gottes Walten, auf. Nämlich, (3) "seine Gerechtigkeit ist wie die hohen Berge." 'Gerechtigkeit' Gottes ist heilbringend. "Rette mich durch deine Gerechtigkeit," war für Martin Luther lang ein rätselhaftes Wort, weil er Gottes Gerechtigkeit nur als strafende, richtende Gerechtigkeit verstand. Aber sie ist beides, strafend und heilend. So erleben auch wir sie beim Unterricht, wie auch beim Studium.

Noch eine Seite hebt der Psalmist an Gottes Wunderwegen hervor: (4) "Sein Recht ist wie die Tiefe." Vor der Tiefe des Meeres fürchtete sich der Hebräer, denn im Meer sind Geheimnisse, die ihm Furcht eintreiben. Zum Hoffnungsbild der Gläubigen gehört auch die Verheißung, "und das Meer war nicht mehr." Dann werden die unbegreiflichen Wege Gottes uns klar werden. Hier auf Erden bleibt uns Gottes Han-

(Fortsetzung auf Umschlagseite 3)

DENOMINATIONAL

Inter-Mennonite Relations

viewed from the standpoint of personal experience.

— A TESTIMONY —

I am a member of the Mennonite Brethren Church. Following an early conversion, I was baptized at the age of 16. My parents were members of the M.B. Church and so it was a fore-gone conclusion that this was the Church where I should find nurture and fellowship. Becoming a member of this particular denomination did not involve a choice for me. I had no alternative.

Thirty-four summers have come and gone since I was immersed in the North Saskatchewan River. During these years I have been abundantly blessed in fellowship with my brethren. I have also become painfully aware of many weaknesses and inconsistencies. It would be very far from true to say that the Mennonite Brethren Church is a perfect Church. But that Jesus Christ loves us, I cannot doubt. I have seen ample evidence of the new life in Christ, of holy living and of sacrificial service. I am grateful to God that in His gracious providence He led me to become a member of the Mennonite Brethren Church. I want to continue to weep with my brethren over our failures and rejoice with them over our victories in Christ.

During my very early years there was, to my knowledge, only one Mennonite Church — the Mennonite Brethren. However, not long after I became aware of another Mennonite denomination. We lived in the same community. We, the children, attended the same elementary country school on a little hill. Our parents visited together and, from all appearances, were indeed friendly toward each other. On Sundays we passed each other on the road. They went to the house of prayer (Bet-haus) and we went to the meeting

house (Versammlungshaus). Passing each other on the road in winter time became difficult. Sometimes we wondered why we could not all travel in the same direction, but which direction should it be? It must be said that our Young People's meetings were held on different Sunday nights. On these occasions we all travelled in one direction. Those were pleasant evenings. There were times when unfriendly remarks were made by some people in the district, but to my knowledge they were heard mainly by over-sensitive ears. The general attitude of one to the other remained friendly.

But time went on and my little world increased in size. A little farther away there lived another group of Mennonites. I still had no knowledge of historic origins. However, I became aware of the fact that the distance between the groups was not only geographical but also social. Relations were not too intimate. Certain community projects resulted in some inter-Mennonite activity which resulted in a greater familiarity and better mutual understanding. I met some of the people of the other group and marveled that such sincere men could be found among them. But on the whole I sensed that some historic event had resulted in separation. The story of this separation came to me only gradually. I still do not know whether I have been given all the facts, and whether they were biased or not. But a few things seem to be well authenticated: there developed differences, tensions, hatred, abuse, over-bearing pride. And somehow these attitudes were perpetuated from generation to generation. I soon discovered that I, too, had been influenced, and was carrying with me certain prejudices which I could not fully explain nor

easily abandon. I had become involved. I had been caught in the stream of history and was carried along with it.

Today, I know full well that there are considerably more than three branches on the Mennonite tree. It is interesting to study when and where and why the branches separated and developed into fairly independent and distinct groups.

If some have difficulty finding the trunk of the tree among the branches, all seem to know of a common root which is referred to as our Anabaptist heritage. To what an extent the various groups have retained or recaptured this heritage is an open question. That we have developed apart over the course of years is common knowledge. There are differences in culture and in religious practice. There are also some theological differences. But let it be said in all fairness that there are also many areas of agreement. Anyone interested in looking for these points of agreement may find his search richly rewarded. There is still a very strong emphasis on the Scriptures as the final authority in matters of faith and practice and I pray that this may be retained.

It became my privilege during the course of my public ministry to live and labor in proximity to other Mennonite denominations. This was a new experience for me since I had to this point been restricted more to my own denomination. Wonderful opportunities for co-operative efforts presented themselves and were utilized. I realized that it is possible, particularly on the ministerial level, to work together constructively in the true spirit of brotherly love. An honest effort to work objectively in the interest of winning souls for Christ and His kingdom rather than merely for denominational ends, left little room for straining tensions and nurturing prejudices. Looking back from my present perspective, I still consider that the friendly relations were not merely the expression of refinement, but of genuine brotherliness.

In the ministry I have been brought face to face with some very practical issues. One such issue is the question

of intermarriage. Should I encourage such marriages, or should I caution against them? Public opinion has shifted in this matter but it has by no means been uniform. The observed fact, however, is that these intermarriages take place and not infrequently. In so many instances these marriages are successful and result in matrimonial happiness. I have found nothing sinful about them as such. Still we know that they require some additional adjustment with reference to the religious question. Religious convictions are well-rooted, if not in thought, then at least in feeling. Often, the young people concerned found their problems augmented by the attitudes of parents who claimed their hearts would be broken, should their child unite with another Mennonite Church. Churches themselves presented difficulties to these people insofar as they would not accept them without submitting to certain rites. So here I found these young couples with unsolved church problems due to conscience scruples, family pressures, and church regulations. Some continued with a divided church membership or else practically lived without church affiliation. Children were born, saved, and confronted with baptism. Which way should they go? The children did not know; neither did the parents. My heart has often been touched and my mind disturbed as I sought to give sympathetic understanding and practical guidance. Did we make it needlessly difficult for them to find a solution? This question has often haunted me.

I had to face another practical issue — that of Christian fellowship. Must I exclude from full fellowship those who were not members of the M.B. Church? I could not understand this. I tried to think historically. What gave rise to the founding of the Mennonite Brethren Church? Was it not the emphasis on the new birth and the separated life? Did not the question of rites come up later? So I understand. Then, can I not have full fellowship with those who meet these requirements? I have read my Bible to obtain direction. To this day I have

not found any Scripture that would forbid me to have communion and working fellowship within one church with such as profess Jesus Christ as Lord and are added to the church upon believer's baptism.

Today I seek to observe trends in the larger brotherhood. Here I call to mind certain statements made at the Centennial Conference in Reedley, California, just a few years ago. These statements greatly impressed me. I quote first from the statement read by Dr. Erland Waltner on behalf of the delegates of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

"We, of this generation, do not really know the details of the events that led to separation. We are, however, sorry for all feelings, words, and deeds expressed by our fathers in an unbrotherly way and in a manner contrary to the Spirit of Christ. We are sorry that these events resulted in such an intense break within the Anabaptist — Mennonite brotherhood that for a full century two parallel lines of explanation have been advanced as to the historical facts and that these parallel explanations are still perpetuated today.

We recognize the need for spiritual renewal that existed within the Mennonite brotherhood in Russia a century ago and we now feel constrained by our Lord to seek for more discussions as to what did happen in Russia, and thus understand that which now prevents us, as a new generation of the church, from having close fellowship."

The delegates of our Centennial Conference gave unanimous approval to the following response:

"We, too, share your concerns that the separation of 1860 occasioned 'many feelings, words, and deeds that were not brotherly'. We recognize that certain attitudes on our part, have been colored with intolerance, even to the point of reservations of mutual fellowship and love. We deeply regret our failings and weaknesses of the past and hasten to say that we are motivated by the spirit of love to ask forgiveness where we have acted coldly and unbrotherly."

I was of the opinion, then, that both statements were made in the spirit of genuine repentance and love. I sensed no hypocrisy. For me, this scene was one of the highlights of the conference. The question has since come to me whether this represented the thinking and feeling at the grass-roots level or whether it tended to move in that direction. We know from experience that often our thinking moves ahead of our prejudices. That is why our expressions and our actions do not always agree. Sometimes the prejudices are rooted so deeply that even cool reflection will not uproot them. They have a tendency to persist. Still we are hopeful that the sincerity of many devout people will lead to continued improvement of relations.

Could it also be that a counter-movement could set in? Family quarrels have a tendency to erupt from time to time. Jacob and Esau were reconciled to each other, but their descendants continued to hate each other. God forbid that a revival of hatred and ill-feeling should occur!

Does the possibility exist of another division coming into the camp? Will it cut along new lines when it comes or will it deepen the grooves that time has not completely filled? The spirit of revival and spiritual renewal has cut across all denominational lines. This has given much occasion for rejoicing. We hope and pray that genuine spiritual progress will lead to better understanding and co-operation. Should a division shape up on theological issues, may they be so clearly stated that everyone will know where he belongs.

J. H. Quiring

FRIENDSHIP

O, the comfort, the inexpressible comfort of feeling safe with a person, having neither to weigh thoughts nor measure words, but pour them out just as they are, chaff and grain together, knowing that a faithful hand will take and sift them, keep what is worth keeping, and then with the breath of kindness blow the rest away.

MUSIC

Der Gemeindeleiter und der Gemeindegesang

Während den letzten Jahren, nimmt der sogenannte "spezielle Gesang" in unsern Gottesdiensten immer mehr Zeit in Anspruch. Solos, Trios, Quartetts und sonstige Gruppen verdrängen scheinbar mehr und mehr den allgemeinen Gesang der ganzen Gemeinde. Nach meinem Dafürhalten, ist es hoch an der Zeit, waß wir unsere Lage einmal bepröfen damit wir letzten Endes nicht dahin kommen, wo die Kirche sich im Mittelalter befand, wo eine kleine Gruppe für die Gemeinde sang und der größere Teil passiv zulauschte.

In meinem letzten Artikel, "Toward better Congregational Singing," wies ich darauf hin, daß die Gemeinde bezüglich ihrer Aufgabe im Singen erzogen werden muß. Ich deutete an, daß es des Christen Pflicht ist; dem Herrn Dank- und Lobopfer darzubringen, und daß dieses im Gebet so wie auch im Lied getan werden kann. Schon die erste Gemeinde ist uns ein Vorbild darin, daß sie des Herrn Lob besang. Weiter fordert uns der Schreiber des Hebräerbriefes auf, unser Dankopfer dem Herrn darzubringen. "So lasset uns nun opfern durch ihn das Lobopfer Gott allezeit, das ist die Frucht der Lippen, die seinen Namen bekennen" (Hebr. 13, 15). Auch der Apostel Paulus nahm Stellung zu der Frage des Gesanges indem er, in I Kor. 14, 15, Gebet und Gesang auf eine Stufe stellt. "...Ich will beten mit dem Geist und will beten auch im Sinn; ich will Psalmen singen im Geist und will auch Psalmen singen mit dem Sinn."

Was ist nun die Verantwortung des Pastors dem Gemeindegesang gegenüber? Dieses ist die Frage, die uns in diesem Artikel ganz kurz beschäftigen soll. Könnte es sein, daß einer oder der andere diese Frage überhaupt für unnötig ansieht, weil er überhaupt keine

Verantwortung von Seiten des Pastors anerkannt? Nein, wir wissen alle wie eindrucksvoll die Einstellung des Pastors auf die Gemeinde wirkt. Es ist keinesfalls erforderlich, daß der Pastor ein großer Sänger oder sogar ein berühmter Dirigent sein muß. Die Hauptsache ist, daß er die Wichtigkeit des Gesanges erkennt, und mit voller Überzeugung mitsingt. Natürlich läßt es sich nun von selbst verstehen, daß des Predigers Notizbüchlein während des Singens zubleiben muß. Wo die Gemeinde merkt, daß der Pastor nicht voll und ganz mitsingt, da wird es schwer sein die Gemeinde von dem Wert des Singens zu überzeugen.

Des Pastors Verantwortung ist mit einer positiven Einstellung zum Gesang der Gemeinde noch nicht erledigt. Er muß weiter gehen. Als Hirte trägt er Sorge um die ganze Herde. Wie steht es mit dem Gesang in der Sonntagschule? Wer prüft die Reinheit der Lehren, die unsere Kinder sich sozusagen einsingen. Wir alle anerkennen die Tatsache, daß den Kindern durch das Lernen von passenden Liedern viel für das spätere Leben kann mitgegeben werden. Wollen wir, daß unsere Kinder, sowohl als auch die Jugend, die "Kernlieder" der Gemeinde lernen sollen, so wird es besondere Anstrengungen kosten, und das nicht allein von Seiten des Sonntagsschullehrers, sondern auch vom Pastor als Überwacher der Gemeinde.

Weiter müssen wir feststellen, daß der Pastor verantwortlich ist für die Wahl und den Gebrauch der Lieder während des Gottesdienstes. Es ist bedauerndswert, daß die Gemeinde so selten vor und nach der Wortverkündigung passende Lieder singt, besonders da dieses doch eigentlich die passendste Zeit für den gemeinsamen Gesang ist. Die

Herzen sind vom Worte Gottes angeührt worden, und sind jetzt erst in der richtigen Verfassung durch das Singen eines Liedes ihre Stellung zum Worte Gottes auszudrücken.

Um diese ganze Sache des Gesanges zu fördern, wäre es gut, wenn der Prediger statt ein Lied aus dem Gesangbuch zu wählen, selber Worte schreiben würde, die der Botschaft entsprechend sind. Diese Worte könnten im "Bulletin" stehen und nach einer wohlbekanntem Melodie gesungen werden. Würde dieses ab und zu durchgeführt werden, dann würde die Gemeinde bald merken, daß das Singen von Liedern nicht nur eine schöne Angewohnheit ist, sondern ein wichtiger Teil unseres öffentlichen Bekenntnisses und Lobens.

Die Geschichte lehrt uns das gerade Prediger die größten Liederdichter waren. Wir denken an einen Luther, dessen Lieder so einen großen Einfluß auf den Ablauf der Reformation hatten. Weiter denken wir an Paul Gerhardt, der während des 30-jährigen Krieges, Lieder des Trostes und der Ermunterung dichtete. In England finden wir Prediger wie Charles Wesley und John Newton, die in diesem Lande zeitgemäße Lieder dichteten. Dieses waren Männer, die mit der Heiligen Schrift gut bekannt waren, und am besten in der Lage waren, die Lehren derselben klar und deutlich in Liedern auszudrücken. Wir schauen heute aus zu unsern Predigerbrüdern nach neuen, zeitgemäßen Liederversen.

Um den Gesang eindrucksvoll zu gestalten, muß man nicht nur auf die Wahl der Lieder achtgeben, sondern auch auf ihren Gebrauch, oder auf die Art des Singens. Der Gemeindegesang muß frisch und lebendig sein. Nur zu oft sinkt des Herz des Besuchers wenn der Prediger ein Lied angibt, wo 6 oder 7 Verse stehen. Hier möchte ich empfehlen, daß anstatt das Auslassen von Versen, mehr Abwechslung geschehen würde wie z.B., ein Vers könnte einstimmig gesungen werden, oder die Gemeinde könnte still mitlesen während die Orgel spielt. In früheren Zeiten wurde viel Gebrauch gemacht vom antiphonen Gesang, wo Männer und Frauen, oder sogar Alte und Junge, abwechselnd

sangen. Wo dieses ordentlich getan wird, wirkt es nicht störend, sondern erfrischt den Gesang.

Als Letztes sehe ich es als Aufgabe des Pastors, daß er die Arbeit des Gemeindechores voll und ganz unterstützt. Wir müssen uns darüber klar sein, daß der Chor im Gottesdienst mitarbeitet. Durch das Lied verkündigt der Chor das Wort Gottes, und durch dasselbe sendet er Gebete zu Gott empor, denen die ganze Gemeinde sich anschließen sollen. Die Einsellung des Pastors kann viel dazu beitragen, daß die Gemeinde auf die Arbeit des Chores positiv reagiert. Wenn Worte wie: "Gesang verschönert den Gottesdienst" oder "You will be favored with a song by the choir" gebraucht werden, kann dieses sich nur negativ auf die Gemeinde auswirken, denn sie erkennt dadurch den Ernst des Singens nicht. Das Singen soll nicht amüsieren, sondern die Gemeinde soll mitsingen und mitbeten.

Wir als Sänger und Dirigenten appellieren an alle Predigerbrüder. Helft uns, damit die bekennende Gemeinde eine singende Gemeinde bleibt. Denn eigentlich sind wir als Gotteskinder, die den Frieden Gottes im Herzen tragen, die Einzigen die Ursache haben mit froher und voller Kehle zu singen. Wollen wir uns untereinander aufmuntern, damit wir dieses mit ganzem Herzen tun.

Victor Martens.

"Oh what abundance of things are there that ministers should understand, and what a great defect it is to be ignorant of them, and how much we shall miss such knowledge in our work! Many ministers study only to compose their sermons and very little more, when there are so many books to be read and so many matters that we should be acquainted with. Nay, in the study of sermons we are too negligent, gathering only a few naked truths and not considering of the most forcible expressions by which we may set them home to men's consciences and hearts."

p. 96

Richard Baxter,
in **The Reformed Pastor**

EVANGELISM

Re-Thinking Evangelism in Mennonite Brethren Churches

In discussing the subject of evangelism in our churches one often notices considerable frustration. There is a general feeling that the efforts put forth fail to produce the desired results. Although reluctantly, we are nevertheless compelled to agree with the above conclusion. In most instances church growth has not been the result of evangelism. Where churches have grown, it has been more often because of migration and transfer of membership. One church has grown at the expense of another. The overall church growth has not even kept pace with the birthrate in our circles. Such sterility has given considerable concern to those who have been especially charged with the responsibility of evangelism. The pastor prepares for a campaign; handbills are printed; invitation cards distributed. As the evangelist arrives for a church campaign, there is an atmosphere of apprehension and anticipation. At the same time, while the campaign is in progress, the evangelist often feels frustrated when he is called upon to preach an evangelistic message to a congregation in which there are only a few unsaved. The pastor becomes disturbed as he reviews the partial representation of the Sunday audience, and does not see the new faces of those who had been encouraged especially to join his audience, so that they might hear the gospel of redemption. The church people themselves become discouraged as one night after another passes by without a break and they begin to comfort each other, as well as the evangelist, by saying that the Word of God shall not return void. Somewhere in someone's heart the Word must be doing some good. Nevertheless, souls remain without the fold and a growing

sensation of perplexity fills the hearts of those who have prayed.

Granted, the above description is not universally applicable. There are some refreshing exceptions in our churches where God seems to break through in great demonstration of power. But such experiences are too rare to answer adequately the question: Why have we not been more successful in reaching the lost for Christ? In re-thinking evangelism we will do well to note the following:

1. The God-given message is still adequate for our day. The Gospel of Christ is still the power of God unto salvation unto everyone that believes (Romans 1:16). "Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). "Faith still comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God" (Romans 10:17). There is no need to be apprehensive about the message itself. Although we live in a complex culture and in a of time dramatic changes the God-given message is still adequate.

2. The method of preaching must be retained as the biblically prescribed approach. Many substitute methods may be suggested, but "it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe" (I Cor. 1:21). In His last words to His disciples Jesus emphasized "that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem" (Luke 24:47). Therefore, it is our strong conviction that the campaign approach to evangelism within a church program cannot be eliminated. However, a word of caution may be in order at this point. If the soul-saving anticipation from preaching

is only seasonal, or related more or less exclusively to campaigns, then we need to re-examine, both the preaching in our pulpits from Sunday to Sunday, as well as the training of our congregation. To many of our parishioners it would be a rather astonishing surprise, should a soul be saved in an ordinary church service. This expectation is only too rare. Such an attitude is not only peculiar to the congregation alone, but the ministry as such may also be guilty of seasonal expectations and of ascribing such results more to the work of certain brethren rather than to the preaching of the gospel in general. A sermon can be evangelical without being evangelistic.

3. The method of witnessing must not be over-looked or neglected. Here may be one of our major weaknesses. Christ underscored the witnessing responsibility of the believer repeatedly. His parting words have left a ring in the ears of His disciples, "Ye shall be witnesses unto me" (Acts 1:8). As one reads the book of Acts one cannot help but sense that witnessing was one of the most effective methods of the early church, and the responsibility to witness rested heavily upon the individual Christians. In telling the Sanhedrin what God had done for the redemption of humanity in the person of Christ Jesus, Peter concludes: "And we are His witnesses of these things" (Acts 5:32). John expresses the same burden in the words, "That which was from the beginning which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and our hands have handled of the word of life, for the life was manifested and we have seen it and bear witness and show it unto you the eternal life which was with the father and was manifested unto us" (I John 1:1-2).

The distinguishing features of a witnessing ministry can also be recognized in the above words. An effective testimony must rest on experience. The content of a testimony must be very real. One can only witness of that which has personally been manifested to one's own heart, and of that which we have "seen and heard" (Acts 4:20).

Witnessing calls for a personal involvement of the Christian. It is the sublime privilege of relating not what somebody has said, nor we have done, but what God has done in us and through us. Often the reluctance to witness is due to a lack of experience. This can be a very great indictment against the average Christian life in our circles. Seldom do you find people who have made an experience in any area of life who are not willing to relate such an experience. This also holds true in the spiritual realm. An experience that is real and specific wants to be told. A genuine experience with Jesus Christ is no exception. The preaching ministry in our day requires a strong support from a congregation of witnesses. Someone has said, "Remember it's the sheep that give birth to the lambs, not the shepherd."

In such witnessing we must be very careful that the experience is biblically orientated and scripturally substantiated. Nevertheless, it is difficult to understand how a Bible-reading Christian can absolve himself personally from such a responsibility. Sins of omission in this field are legion. We would much rather do evangelism by proxy. We would rather give sacrificially, and have an evangelist come from far to do the work more or less single handedly, than to witness ourselves.

The gospel ministry in evangelism requires team work. We cannot expect a harvest without first having those who will do the planting and the watering through a witnessing ministry. As a result of such team effort God can then give the increase. The burden to reach the lost thus needs to be spread until it rests consciously upon every member of the Church. The campaign method must be supplemented by a constant and strong lay witness.

4. A revival of gospel salesmanship is urgently needed. Too many have been content to play the role of a clerk. The difference between these two is simply this: The clerk waits in the store until the customer arrives and provides him with the article requested. The salesman goes out and finds his customer and then praises the merch-

andise he has for sale. If the customer does not sense the need for the article the salesman endeavors to convince him of such a need. This is part of the persuading ministry, which characterized Paul's approach. "He reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks" (Acts 18:4). Thus he laboured in Corinth. When he came to Ephesus "he went into the synagogue and spoke boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God" (Acts 19:8). This proved so successful that Demetrius, the silversmith, laid the following charge against Paul: "Moreover ye see and hear, that not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying that they be no gods, which are made with hands" (Acts 19:26). When Agrippa came under the impact of this salesman of the gospel he exclaimed: "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian" (Acts 26:28). Upon his arrival in Rome they appointed Paul a day and "here came many to him into his lodging; to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, per-

suading them concerning Jesus..." (Acts 28:23). Paul himself testifies that "knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men" (II Cor. 5:11).

Herein lies one of our basic weaknesses in our churches. This, in our judgement, is one of the reasons why our churches have become more and more impotent in attracting non-believers. Our daily associates, neighbors and friends, have not become convinced by our witness that Jesus Christ will meet a basic need in their life. The crying need is for satisfied customers who can testify convincingly that Christ is fully adequate to satisfy the voidness of the human heart.

We conclude then by saying that our lack of results may not be so much in the things which we have done in behalf of evangelism, but more, in the things we have left undone; namely, to show others that the words which Jesus spoke to His Father in His High Priestly prayer are actually true, that "the glory which Thou gavest me I have given them" (John 17:22). We have this glory and they need it.

J. J. Toews

CHRISTIAN WORKER'S LIBRARY

Devotional Studies of R. E. O. White: A Brief Review

In an article entitled 'Can We Recover the Christian Devotional Life?' (September 25, 1961 issue of **Christianity Today**) J. W. Montgomery laments the relative scarcity of great devotional literature in the evangelical world today, but concedes that "not all great exhibitions of Christian devotion are to be found in the distant past". He refers, in illustration of the truth of the latter statement, to such recent works as, for instance: Jim Elliot's **Diary**, Norman Grubb's **The Law of Faith**, O.

Hallesby's **Under His Wings**, O. Chamber's **My Utmost for His Highest**, D. Bonhoeffer's **Life Together**, and L. E. Maxwell's **Crowded to Christ**.

Another contemporary writer, whose books are not included in J. W. Montgomery's list of "100 Select Devotional Books" but which, as it seems to us, bid fair to become devotional classics of our time, is Reginald E. O. White. White is a Baptist minister of Great Britain, who has also lectured in the Scottish Baptist Theological College in

Glasgow and contributed quite frequently to religious periodicals. He himself is as yet relatively unknown in this country but a steadily growing sheaf of fine devotional studies is bringing him to our attention more and more. Some of these studies, to date, are: **They Teach Us to Pray; Into the Same Image; Prayer is the Secret; The Stranger of Galilee; Beneath the Cross of Jesus; The Upward Calling; Apostle Extraordinary: A Modern Portrait of St. Paul; and 52 Seed Thoughts for Christian Living**.

If authentic insight into Christian truth and pertinent and pointed application of it to human life be one crucial criterion whereby we may recognize "devotional classics," then White's meditations certainly belong to this select group. What Dr. F. Townley Lord has said concerning **They Teach Us to Pray**, that it is 'a book of spiritual enrichment...; its insight into the problems of the spiritual life focus our attention on communion with God... It is a notable addition to the literature of devotion,' is just as true of White's other devotional studies.

In **They Teach Us to Pray**, the author truly illuminates a number of aspects of the Christian's deeper prayer life by inducing us to watch and listen, as it were, to men of prayer (in the Bible) to whom God was real, near, and attentive. In the case of Gideon, for example, we are made to perceive that "true prayer is not the refuge in a cringing spirit, but the armoury of mighty men of valour"; in the case of Elijah, again, we learn that "prayer brings the better understanding in which a clear-eyed courage finds its strength": and, in the case of Jeremiah, we see that prayer can become "a spiritual struggle for uttermost consecration and loyalty at uttermost cost."

In **Beneath the Cross of Jesus**, White focusses upon a number of incidents taken from the accounts of the passion of our Lord, as well as upon various reactions to, and interpretations of this Passion event and experience, and succeeds in linking these meaningfully to the Christian's present life of discipleship. One is amazed to note,

time and time again, how naturally and yet deftly this connection is established for the reader's benefit.

In commenting upon John 11:48-50, to cite one instance here ("The Peril of Security"), the author remarks, almost in passing as it were, "Is it not significant, that these men who made Christ's Calvary were all men seeking for security? To play for safety all the way—this may still put the Christ to death, in your life and mine." And in his meditation upon Christ's words in John 16:33, White brings their relevance home to the reader's heart by concluding thus: "All He did becomes the standard and the ruling passion of those that draw their strength from Him. He that loveth his life shall lose it: he that loseth his life for Christ's sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it. We are not made to triumph, rather are we led in the train of His triumph; are overcome in just that measure in which He first has overcome our hearts."

Again, in **The Upward Calling**, White draws from various New Testament passages that pertain to the life of the Christian disciple lessons that remain ever vital and valid for us. These "living lessons" are grouped, in an interesting and yet genuinely coherent manner, around themes such as "evangelical assumptions", "elementary principles", "concentric responsibilities," "interior resources", and "ultimate ideals" — themes that, taken together, actually encompass the entire public and private life of the Christian believer. And what astonishes one even more about White's development of particular facets of these themes is its singular and sustained balance — a balance, that is, between the "theoretical" and the "practical", between "inner" and "outer" elements, and between the "law" and the "gospel", as these relate to the Christian's life of discipleship.

To illustrate briefly here, in the section on "Interior Resources", White duly dwells (in one chapter) on the Christian's responsibility of **nourishing his mind**. "Minds starved of great ideas", the author asks, "hearts bereft of deep affections or uplifting hopes,

souls eking out a pittance of life on the few interests and trival concerns of a humdrum existence — how can such expect to possess the spiritual resources for great living? The mind's capital is in its ideas, and where these are thin, few, shallow, and mean, the soul is poor." But in another chapter in the same section of the book, White dwells with equal conviction and persuasive power upon the Christian's need for **disciplining his spirit**: "The amount of time and care which the average Protestant gives to the nourishment of spiritual life within his own soul may be impossible to compute, but no one doubts that it is less than once it was, and far less than present needs and tasks demand. Every alert Christian feels some concern about this, but self-training in devotion and the replenishment of the spiritual wells of life call for more than concern. Unrelenting vigilance, some understanding, and **much discipline** are necessary if the Christian's heart, mind and will are to be provisioned for life-long discipleship." Similarly, in other sections of **The Upward Calling** White's disciplined and discerning mind repeatedly juxtaposes individual components of Christian truth in such a way that, finally, the "whole counsel of God" lies open before the reader.

Indeed, even in his **Apostle Extraordinary: A Modern Portrait of St. Paul**, a somewhat weightier study that carefully examines Paul's controlling convictions, main contributions, and the secrets of his spiritual power, White never remains very long within the precincts of the scholar's study, but comes forth often in order to remind his reader of the relevance of all this to his personal life. Sometimes that reminder is given in terms of a direct exhortation but more frequently it is only implied, yet not any the less potent because of that, as is evident from an excerpt such as the following (which concludes the chapter on "Paul's Character"): 'A prevailing gentleness of spirit, an unbreakable courage of heart, an underlying humility of soul, provide the basis for that extraordinary public career. Those who take time to read

the motives behind the controversies, to feel the heartbeats beneath the armor, to measure the saintliness that so refined this man's indomitable strength, can only wonder at the moral miracle which grace wrought in Paul's mighty soul — wonder, and envy."

Finally, in **The Stranger of Galilee**, Reginald White traverses the earthly life of our Lord and skilfully singles out those events and expressions which, for the most part, define its crucial moments and meanings. He takes us from "preparations that accentuate importance" and "beginnings that define intention", through the "ministry that expounds salvation", and the "crisis that forebodes rejection", to the "suffering that achieves redemption" and the "triumph that transfigures tragedy." A final section gathers up "assessments that demand response" — assessments of Christ's entire life or ministry, made by various persons of the time, that demand a serious or significant reaction from us. But it is not only in the final chapters that White brings the relevance of his insights to the lives of his present-day followers home to the heart of his readers. He does it in every chapter of the book, and yet the over-all effect of such repeated application of the truth under consideration, interestingly enough, is not one of dull didacticism or wrested interpretation at all!

The legitimacy and naturalness of White's applications to the personal life of the reader, of meditations upon given episodes in the life of Christ, may be sensed from the following concluding paragraph of the chapter, for example, that treats of the Caesarea crisis of Mark 8:27-30: "So sooner or later He brings us all to Caesarea, to discover where He stands with us, and for us to decide what He means to us. To live under the influence of His teaching, surrounded by the sentiments of Christian culture, heirs to a Christian tradition and home, is not enough. All this must crystallize into personal faith in Christ: all further understanding, victory, service, peace wait on that decision."

There are other criteria that can help

us identify genuine "devotional classics", such as the author's intellectual powers of analysis and sheer literary competence, conceived in the broadest sense of these terms. And by these criteria, also we suggest, White's books deserve a place in the roster of "devotional classics." We need not quote further here in order to make our point, for the excerpts already given supply ample evidence, surely, of the clear and yet altogether pleasing style of the writer, and only a protracted study "in depth" of at least several of these "deceptively simple" meditations by the reader himself can reveal the actual extent of this writer's intellectual powers of analysis.

But this criterion — authentic insight into divine truth and plain and pertinent application of it to human life — remains, undoubtedly, the most important one. This is so because, in the very nature of the case, only what has come

into the inner life of the **writer himself** and made a crucial difference **there** can be embodied in convincing and compelling language such as the Spirit of God can use to transform the inner lives of the **readers**. It is this fact that Rudy Dare (See "I Believe in... the Communion of Saints", in Winter, 1961, issue of **The Gordon Review**) clearly has reference to when she remarks that "as they live, they write. From this impulse have come the classics of Christian devotion." One cannot help but feel that in the case of Reginald White we have indeed another true representative of that "select company" of writers who have written out of their own hearts and lives, but who in doing so have left with us, not passing speculations or pleasant musings merely, but precious legacies of spiritual truth.

Herbert Giesbrecht

Leon Morris:

Spirit of the Living God

London: Inter-Varsity Fellowship, 1960, 102 pp.

The purpose of this book, according to the author, is not to present a scholarly work "with much information about the Spirit with many a learned footnote," which does not show the reader how he might lead a godly life; it is the author's intent to set out some of the important teachings of the Bible on the Holy Spirit, while at the same time guiding the reader into a Spirit-filled life.

Within the small compass of the booklet in his characteristically pithy and lucid style, Leon Morris does just that. He begins with our Lord's discourse on 'born of the Spirit' with Nicodemus. The remainder of the book includes, the Spirit of the Lord in the New Testament, the Holy Spirit as a person, the Spirit as divine, the work of the Spirit in the church, the Spirit in the life of the believer, and the fullness of the Spirit.

The author is very emphatic on the

need of the Spirit in the life of the church and the believer. It is the Holy Spirit which brought the church into being in the "full sense of the church, in vigorous life, redeemed by the cross of Christ, invigorated by the divine power" (p. 54). The Spirit galvanized the disciples into action and constituted them the church. Apart from being filled with the Holy Spirit of God, the church cannot be the church of Christ in any meaningful sense. In the true church the Spirit rules with his dynamic presence. Dr. Morris maintains that the Christian church must be defined not only in terms of a fellowship of the Redeemer, but also as a fellowship created by the Holy Spirit. The energy of the flesh cannot produce a church of God; a church is produced by the action of the Spirit! Likewise, the unity that unites Christians is not man-made but is produced by the supernatural activity of the Spirit (p. 59).

As one follows the author in his treatment of the work of the Spirit in the church, one sees with a newness and

freshness the supreme role of the Spirit in the giving of gifts, in Christian worship and prayer, and in extending the church in this world. Dr. Morris also touches upon such aspects as whether we may pray to the Holy Spirit.

The author's treatment of the Spirit in the life of the believer should be of great interest to any Christian, particularly his chapter on the 'fullness of the Spirit'. According to Ephesians 5:18, the believer is to be filled with the Spirit. Dr. Morris distinguishes this filling from the baptism of the Spirit, which is the experience of every believer at the inception of his Christian life. "Though all Christians have the Spirit, not all have the fullness of the Spirit" (p. 93). This 'fullness of the Spirit' is a gift of God given to those who are ready to receive it. The believer, therefore, has the obligation to seek the further filling of the Holy Spirit; this 'filling of the Holy Spirit' is associated with an unspectacular happening which results in a continual transformation of the life of the believer. The fullness of the Spirit could, therefore, come to him who asks the Father (Luke 11:13),

longs for it in the awareness of his shortcomings, turns from his evil ways, seeks to obey God in his life (Acts 5:32), and lives by faith.

The treatment of the various aspects of the Holy Spirit and his work is thoroughly biblical; theological perception and discernment is apparent throughout the book. It abounds in careful studies of scriptural passages. Key Greek words, which illuminate the subject and contribute to the clarity of the passage, are used in such a way that the general reader will find no difficulty in understanding the development of thought. Not all aspects of the work of the Holy Spirit are dealt with, nor could some aspects receive too full a treatment; but the book deals with the more important teachings of the Bible on the Holy Spirit in such a fashion as to instill in the reader a greater desire to appropriate the gifts of the Spirit and to give evidence of this power in his life. Here is exemplified a congeniality between scholarship and Christian devotion.

V. Adrian

HISTORICAL

Das Versammlungshaus im Urchristentum

Einleitung: Daß die evangelische Christenheit Versammlungshäuser hat, nehmen wir als selbstverständlich hin. Aber warum betet sie nicht in Tempeln oder Synagogen Gott an, wenn die Wurzeln des christlichen Gottesdienstes bis ins Alte Testament zurückreichen? Darauf soll hier kurz geantwortet werden, unter dem Punkt "Begründung". Es soll dann etwas über die Versammlungshäuser der ersten Christen gesagt werden, unter dem Punkt "Beschreibung". Zuletzt wollen wir uns einige Fragen darüber stellen, ob wir aus alter Zeit etwas für unsere Zeit lernen könnten, unter dem Punkt "Besinnung".

I. Begründung.

Durch die Reinigung des jerusalemischen Tempels hatte unser Herr seinen Protest gegen alles tote Formwesen im jüdischen Gottesdienst ausgesprochen. In seinem Gespräch mit der Samariterin sah er die Zeit kommen, in welcher die rechten Anbeter "im Geist und in der Wahrheit" anbeten würden. Die Anklage gegen einen Vertreter der ersten Christen, nämlich Stephanus, war diese: "Dieser Mensch hört nicht auf, zu reden Lästerworte wider diese heilige Stätte..." (Apg. 6, 13ff.). In seiner Verteidigungsrede vor dem

Hohen Rat betont Stephanus, daß der Allmächtige nicht in Tempeln wohnt, die mit Händen gemacht sind (7, 47ff). Sein Protest gegen die tote Liturgie im Judentum kostete ihm das Leben. Also, es entspann sich, nach der Erhöhung des Herrn, ein Kampf um die Verinnerlichung des Gottesdienstes. Schon die alttestamentlichen Propheten kämpften für solche Vertiefung u. Verinnerlichung des Gottesdienstes, und die apostolischen Prediger hatten die Botschaft der Propheten und die Lehre Jesu dahin verstanden, daß die neue Heilszeit zu neuen Formen in der Anbetung führen sollte.

In der Beschreibung der Anbetung, die nun "im Geist und in der Wahrheit" geschieht, bedienen sich die neutestamentlichen Schreiber der Sprache der alttestamentlichen Liturgie, z.B. Paulus ermahnt die Römer ihre Leiber zum Opfer zu geben, und dieses, sagt er, ist ihr geistlicher Gottesdienst (Röm. 12, 1). Petrus fordert christliche Pilgrime auf, sich zu einem geistlichen Hause und heiligen Priestertum zu bauen, "zu opfern geistliche Opfer, die Gott angenehm sind durch Jesus Christus" (1. Pet. 2, 5).

Doch ist dabei nicht zu vergessen, daß die Anbetung von der die Propheten, unser Herr, und die Apostel sprachen, nicht eine rein persönliche, 'geistliche', und innerliche Sache war. Schon allein die Gründung einer sichtbaren Gemeinde, in welcher man durch die Taufe Glied wurde, und in welcher man an einem Mahl teilnahm, forderte ein gemeinsames Anbeten, und Zusammenkommen. Und wenn durch Buße und Bekehrung die persönliche Verantwortung der einzelnen Gotteskinder stark hervorgehoben wurde, wurde zugleich auch durch den apostolischen Gemeindebegriff dem geistlichen Individualismus ein Damm geschüttet.

Es war ja hauptsächlich das Versammeln der ersten Christen zur Anbetung ihres Herrn, das ihnen so viel Schmach und Verfolgung einbrachte. Einmal sprachen sie sich dadurch von der Kaiserverehrung los, und zum andern, verletzten sie dadurch ein römisches Gesetz, welches solche 'heimlichen' Versammlungen verbot. Auch

gaben die Versammlungen der Christen, zu welchen die Heiden nicht Zutritt hatten, Veranlassung zu den schwersten Verleumdungen. Sie hätten ja auch zu Hause, privatum, anbeten können! Der Herr Jesus hatte ja doch das Kämmerlein empfohlen! Aber ohne Gemeinschaft konnte die erste Gemeinde sich ihr Leben nicht denken, und daher ließen sie es sich Gut und Blut kosten, aber ohne 'Versammlung' ging es nicht. Nur so konnten sie im Strombett des alttestamentlichen Gottesvolks bleiben, und nur so glaubten sie die Lehre und das Werk Jesu richtig im Leben verwirklichen zu können. Dazu mußten sie aber Versammlungshäuser haben.

II. Beschreibung:

Der Bruch mit der Synagoge und mit dem Tempel kam ja recht bald nach dem ersten Pfingsten, aber damit ist nicht gesagt, daß gläubig gewordene Juden die Synagoge und den Tempel nie wieder betraten. Jedoch der neue Wein konnte nicht in den alten Schläuchen gehalten werden, und der Bruch mit dem Judentum führte auch zur Trennung von der Synagoge. Aber wohin sollten sie gehen? Wo sich versammeln? Die erste Antwort wird uns im Neuen Testament gegeben. Sie versammelten sich in Häusern (z.B. Apg. 2, 46). Es ist zu beachten, daß es nicht heißt **kat' oikous**, d.h. in jedem Haus, sondern **kat' oikon**, d.h. in verschiedenen Häusern, je nachdem sie passend waren. Nicht alle Häuser hatten ein **hyperoion**, einen "oberen Saal", ein "Eßzimmer."

Die paulinischen Briefe geben dasselbe Bild als die Apostelgeschichte. Paulus grüßt die Gemeinde zu Rom, die sich im Hause der Priszilla und des Aquilla versammelt. Die Gemeinde zu Kolossä versammelte sich, allem Anscheine nach, im Hause des Philemon. So stellten die mehr bemittelten Brüder der Gemeinde ihr Haus zur Verfügung. Es gibt in Rom heute noch manch eine Kirche, die nach dem Namen des Christen genannt wird, der ursprünglich sein Haus der Gemeinde zum Gebrauch zur Verfügung stellte. Es erklärt sich von selbst, daß größere Gemeinden, in Städten wie Korinth und

Ephesus, unmöglich in einem Hause zu Gast sein konnten. Auch fand sich nach und nach das Bedürfnis nach Häusern die Gemeineigentum der Gemeinde waren, und nicht von Privatpersonen geeignet wurden. Hier und da haben wohlhabende Brüder der Gemeinde ein Haus geschenkt, andere wurden von der Gemeinde gekauft oder gebaut, aber auch diese waren anfänglich nichts mehr als Privathäuser, ihrer Struktur nach.

Um das Jahr 200 A.D. eigneten Gemeinden an manchen Orten schon ihre Gotteshäuser. Allerdings mußten sie bereit sein diese Häuser irgend eine Zeit, unter dem Druck der Verfolgung, zu verlieren. Die Meinung, daß die ersten Christen such in den Katakomben versammelten beruht nicht auf Tatsache. Einmal sind Katakomben vornehmlich in Italien zu finden. Zudem waren die Katakomben eigentlich nur Grabesstätten. Gelegentlich mögen sich römische Christen in einem dieser *cubacula* versammelt haben. Weil wir schon von den Römern sprechen, dürfte noch hinzugefügt werden, daß die größeren römischen Häuser für die Versammlungen der ersten Gemeinden recht geeignet waren. Sie hatten am Türeingang ein großes Zimmer (*atrium*), und in der Mitte war der Wasserbehälter (*impluvium*) — zum Taufen geeignet. Aus dem *atrium* ging es ins *tablinum* (Wohnzimmer). Als man im Jahre 1930, in Dura-Europos, im Zweistromland, eine christliche Kapelle, die aus vor-konstantinischer Zeit stammt, ausgrub, wurde klarer Beweis dafür geliefert, daß die ersten Versammlungshäuser der Christen nur umgestaltete Privathäuser waren.

Aus der Zeit der Verfolgung unter Diokletian haben wir Information über die Versammlungshäuser der Christen in Nord Afrika. Es wurde nämlich ein Haus konfisziert "in qua Christiani conveniebant" (d.h. ein Haus in welchem Christen sich versammelten) — man sprach noch nicht von einer Kirche, denn das Haus in welchem sie sich versammelten war einem Privathaus ähnlich. Und was fand die Polizei in diesem Haus? Leere Bücherregale! Die Christen hatten die Bücher bei Zeiten

versteckt (also ist eine Gemeindebibliothek kein moderner Ausfund). Auch fanden sie Geschirr und Lampen, und einen Haufen von Schuhen und Kleidern (zweifellos für Wohltätigkeitszwecke).

Die Hauptsorge bei dem Suchen nach einem Bethaus war ja natürlich immer der Versammlungssaal. Darin unterschieden sich christliche Versammlungshäuser von heidnischen Tempeln. Während die heidnischen Tempel dazu gebaut wurden um dem Gott, den sie anbeteten, eine Behausung zu geben, ging es bei den christlichen Versammlungshäusern um einen Platz, wo die Gemeinde sich versammeln konnte. Deshalb war auch ein großer Teil eines Götzentempels nur zum Schmuck und zur Zierde; die Priester mußten ihr Zimmer haben; es war eigentlich kein Platz für die versammelten Anbeter. Im Judentum war das schon anders, hier gab es im Tempel einen Vorhof für das Volk, und auch in der Synagoge versammelte man sich zum Gottesdienst. Aber in der neutestamentlichen Gemeinde ist doch eine Betonung neu: Nicht das Haus, sondern die Versammlung ist im Blickfeld. Das Haus dient dem einen Zweck: Die Versammlung der Gemeinde. Nicht das Haus ist das Heiligtum; nicht die leblosen Wände, die schönen Lampen und Fenster, sondern das Heiligtum ist die versammelte Gemeinde Jesu Christi. Daher nannte man die ersten christlichen Gotteshäuser: *oikos tes ekklesias* ('Haus der Versammlung'), und durch Abkürzung wurde schließlich das Haus selbst *ekkllesia* (Kirche, Versammlung) genannt, und wir sagen heute: Ich gehe zur Kirche, ohne dabei zu unterscheiden, ob wir 'die Versammlung' oder 'das Versammlungshaus' im Sinn haben.

Weil die ganze versammelte Gemeinde Gott geistliche Opfer bringt, ist auch die ganze Gemeinde ein Priestertum. Aber der Einzelne wird im Neuen Testament nie als Priester bezeichnet (wie im Juden- und im Heidentum), sondern die Gemeinde erfreut sich der Gegenwart Gottes, wenn sie sich im Namen Jesu versammelt — durch Ihn kommen sie zu Gott.

Es ist interessant zu beobachten, wie die Struktur der Gotteshäuser durch

eine Verschiebung des apostolischen Gemeindebegriffs bestimmt wurde. Bald nahm die Gemeinde selbst nicht mehr den Hauptplatz ein, denn die Gemeinde war ja nur da zu finden, wo der Bischof war; und diese Betonung stellte neue Forderungen an den Bau einer Kirche. Die Kirchen des Mittelalters zeugen nur zu klar davon, daß vieles was von außen und von innen in die Kirchen hineingebaut wurde, von heidnischen Tempeln übernommen worden war (ich denke hier an Altar, und ähnliche Dinge).

III. Besinnung:

Es steigt nun die Frage auf, ob wir, die wir uns so gerne nach dem Frühchristentum einrichten möchten, aus dieser flüchtigen Beschreibung der Gotteshäuser in ältester Zeit, etwas lernen können. Es werden ja auch unserer Konferenz viel Versammlungshäuser gebaut; und oft läßt man sich beim Planen solcher Bauten von all zu menschlichen Motiven leiten: Größer und schöner als das Bethaus der Nachbargemeinde soll es sein. Dürften wir hier einiges andeuten, daß, wie es uns scheint, durch frühchristliche Praxis empfohlen wird?

1. Es sollte uns allen klar sein, daß ein Gotteshaus nicht eine Behausung Gottes ist, wie heidnische Tempel es sind. Und wenn man das Gotteshaus zieren will, dann soll man dieses nicht versuchen durch das Tempelgold des alttestamentlichen Heiligtums zu begründen. Daß man ein Gotteshaus aus rein praktischen Gründen versucht schön und anziehend zu machen, ist ja niemandem verboten, solange er die Grenzen zwischen dem was dem Gottesdienst förderlich ist, und was unnötiger Luxus ist, zu finden weiß.

2. Wenn wir uns auch in aller Ehrfurcht im Gotteshause benehmen wollen, so ist es nicht deshalb weil "der Herr in seinem heiligen Tempel" ist, sondern weil der Herr da gegenwärtig ist, wo die Gemeinde sich versammelt. Auch die Einweihung eines Gotteshauses macht das Haus noch nicht zu einem heiligen Tempel. Die Gemeinde selbst

ist Gottes Heiligtum. Sollten Verhältnisse es so führen, daß die Gemeinde sich nicht mehr in einem Gotteshause versammelt, dann darf es ja für einen andern Zweck benutzt werden. Die Ziegel und die Bretter an sich sind nicht heilig, wenn uns auch manche heilige Erinnerung an ein Haus binden mag, und wir deshalb auch nicht willkürlich mit einem geschlossenen Versammlungshaus umgehen wollen. Aber vergessen wir nie, daß es heute gerade so wahr ist wie zur Zeit Jesajas, daß der Herr nicht in Tempeln von Händen gemacht wohnt, sondern in zerbrochenen Herzen.

3. Weil ein Gotteshaus vornehmlich ein Versammlungshaus ist, sollte man diesen Zweck auch vornehmlich im Auge behalten, wenn man den Bau eines Gotteshauses plant. M.E. sollten die Hauptsäle nicht zu groß gebaut werden, so daß dadurch jegliches Gefühl der Vertrautheit und der Zusammengehörigkeit schwindet. Der private Umgang mit Gott soll im Gotteshaus und außerhalb des Gotteshauses gepflegt werden, aber wenn die Gemeinde sich versammelt, ist es nicht zu empfehlen, daß man sonntäglich eine Massenversammlung abhält. Manche Gemeinde bedauert heute, daß sie so groß gebaut hat. Ist das Versammlungshaus überfüllt, kann man ja ein zweites bauen. Im Grunde ist ja das Versammlungshaus nur Mittel zum Zweck: Der Aufbau der Gemeinde, die dann in der Welt eine Leuchte sein soll. Gott läßt sich von der Schönheit und der Kostspieligkeit eines Versammlungshauses im Spenden seines Segens nicht bestimmen. Da wo eine Gemeinde in Demut zusammenkommt um ihre Sünden zu bekennen, anzubeten und zu preisen, durch das Wort neues Licht für den Lebensweg zu finden, da offenbart sich der Herr.

D. Ewert

Quellen: Josef Jungmann, *The Early Liturgy*. Gregory Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy*. Oscar Cullmann, *Early Christian Worship*.



THEOLOGICAL

The Bible as Personal Authority

Bertrand Ramm in his book, **Patterns of Authority**, says: "The concept of authority has become one of the most controversial notions of modern times." About us we are witnessing a general rebellion against **authoritarianism**, the principle which advocates adherence to authority over personal freedom. The question for us is not whether we wish to accept authority or not, the issue at stake is where to seek authority or what or whom to recognize as our highest authority. Unchecked individualism is simply "inverted slavery."

Authority is good for it acts as a frame of reference and serves as a guide on an uncharted sea. There is security in authority. Rightly defined, authority means "that right and power inherent in some person or system of morals to command action or compliance."

As Christians we have bowed to the ultimate authority of God. Now we must decide how such authority is communicated to man. So much has been, and still is, contributed to divine command or sanction which is actually conflicting in nature. Does God tell one person to do one thing and another to do the exact opposite? Are all "voices" which people hear the Voice of God?

Obviously not, for God cannot contradict Himself. He has expressed Himself manward by a revelation of Himself. God has spoken through the ages and what He said is inscripturated for us. The acme of the self-revelation of God was in Jesus Christ who dwelt among men and transmitted the divine will to men.

Whether such divine authority really operates in man's life or whether it is simply acknowledged in theory is a second question. The denial of divine authority does not dissolve it. How-

ever, it does render it inoperative for the denier unless God chooses to bring force to bear upon that person. Some day all knees shall bow before divine authority. Blessed the man who willingly submits to the authority of God in his life.

If the Bible is God's communication to man in the interest of redemption, it should be reasonable to expect man to appropriate its message personally. This would mean that he acquaint himself thoroughly with the Book and its message. To be ignorant of the Bible is to stand under another pattern of authority of personal or ecclesiastical origin.

P. T. Forsyth says: "To obey Christ is better than to be free; it is the only way to be permanently free; individually or socially; without such obedience freedom is a curse. Absolute obedience is the condition of entire freedom." The highest spiritual personality is realized by surrender of a measure of freedom in obedience to Jesus Christ.

The Bible as Intellectual Authority

There has been warfare between science and biblical authority ever since Copernicus in 1543 published his great work setting forth the heliocentric theory of the universe. From that day on a mistaken notion has haunted men which led them to believe that science and Scripture were inherently opposite poles and that the differences were basic rather than superficial. To be intellectually honest for a scientist meant to deny biblical authority. On the other hand, to be loyal to scripture meant to speak derogatorily of science and scientists.

It should be clear to all students that there is no object, no entity or concrete reality called science. Science

is not a thing. It is a method of compilation, verification and observation. It is an approach to a certain body of data with which man is able to deal. Viewed as a method, it has much to offer the biblically oriented student.

Science can give us a greater concept of God and the universe. By use of the telescope and the interferometer, man's concept of distance and space has been greatly revised. Man is forced to think bigger thoughts about God, His Creator. Why should the Christian oppose or resist that which makes God great? Could it be that a smaller God leaves man greater and that proud man would rather retain a smaller God?

Not all facets of truth can be approached by the scientific method. Science does not have the tools which are needed for investigating certain aspects of reality. Science fishes in the sea of truth with a certain kind of net — the scientific method — but there is certainly much in the unfathomable sea of truth which the meshes of the scientific net cannot catch.

Does the Bible serve a function in the struggle for intellectual integrity? Even a scientist must do more than describe and explain phenomena. Questions of origin, meaning and destiny keep presenting themselves to every honest man and demand an answer. Here the Bible speaks with authority and presents man with a framework for a philosophy of origin, of meaning, and of ultimate end.

Without the Bible, it would be difficult to answer the important question of how we ought to live. Every scientist would recognize the need of moral guides for man. Can he give man moral guidance from his own study of the amoeba? The Bible has safely guided men morally for centuries, and, inasmuch as man has actually allowed the Bible to stand as authority, this has been a guide to greater moral heights. The Bible has not misled men; the personal systems of men have led men to their own destruction.

The Bible as Emotional Authority

Religion has an effect on mental health. Since Freud, there has been

a suspicion on the part of some psychiatrists that the Bible as authority would mean confusion in the mental health. On the other hand, well-meaning Christians have drawn a clear battle line between psychology and the Christian faith. Again, both attitudes are wrong and deserve to be challenged.

Religion is like dynamite: equally as dangerous as it can be useful. Paul writes to Titus: "Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound (hygienic) doctrine both to exhort and convince" (Titus 1:9). The Bible does not make men sick, its precepts bring health to man's soul and mind.

Wayne Oates in his book, **Religious Factors in Mental Health**, presents the result of a careful analysis of the religious experiences of sixty-eight mental patients.

- 17% showed rebellion or submission to the religion of their home.
- 10% had taken religion as a last straw.
- 20% had simply clothed their illness in religious terminology.
- 51% showed no religious interest at all.

Oates then presents the data from psychiatric interviews with 200 Baptist candidates for the mission field. These men and women had been under the influence of the Bible from their earliest years. It was discovered that they had less neurotic symptoms than the average and showed the reverse sense of mission found in mental patients.

Not always are the people who have been solely under the influence of modern psychological principles the best examples of personal adjustment. On the other hand, not all Christians have really appropriated the principles of the Scriptures.

The Bible can operate at different levels in Christians. It may operate merely at the verbal level. People memorize or read, but do not respond sincerely and deeply to its demands. The Bible calls men to forgive others. Do men really forgive or does the "root of bitterness" operate as a festering sore for years, till the poison has

permeated the entire personality. To what extent does the Christian accept the call of the Word "to be anxious for nothing, but in all things by prayer and supplication let his requests be made known to God. He cannot expect to have peace of God if he does not meet the requirements.

The Bible and Spiritual Authority

Reading the Bible is to be an event not an exercise. Man is to meet a personal God as he reads the pages of the Word. Such reading is to lead men into spiritual involvement. "Hear these sayings of mine and doeth them" is the command of Jesus. The Christian must come off the bleachers into the arena. Personal involvement with the truth leads to discipleship. "If any man will do his will, he shall know..." When man begins to read the Word as a disciple, willing to follow truth wherever it leads him, then the Bible has become spiritual authority for him.

In the matter of salvation, we need a clear "Thus saith the Lord." Too often religious feelings are the basis of spiritual authority. When such feelings subside, authority wanes and the Christian is hopelessly confused or becomes a seeker of more religious thrills.

When leading men and women to Christ, we need to root their faith and their experience firmly in the Word of God. In that way their spiritual experience has an authority outside of

itself, a point of departure and point of orientation. This allows the believer to say, "I know in whom I have believed and am persuaded..."

When the Bible has become spiritual authority for us, we do not let our living get ahead of our convictions. Rationalization is still a powerful technique and operates in Christians as well as in unbelievers. "Whatever is not of faith is sin." Before venturing out on a previously forbidden course, the Christian will want to search out the Word for guidance and conviction. We ought to obey God rather than man in more areas than those involving government.

For the Christian the Bible is personal authority. What other alternative does he have but to follow Christ as He is presented to him in the Word. To lose firm grip on this authority is to lose one's effectiveness.

The opinions of men can become normative for the Christian. Questionnaires, opinionnaires and discussions give us the status of public opinion at the present time. These, however, do not give us a valid standard for Christian authority.

When our Biblical authority is lost, our concept of God changes. People say: "My God is a God of love and would not punish His creation." Our God better be the God of the Scriptures or we are creating a God in our own image. This would make us idol worshippers.

F. C. Peters.

Take Heed . . . To Your Teaching

Teachers of the Word are frequently exhorted by it to see to the purity and the soundness of their teaching. To them are addressed words such as these: "But as for you, teach what befits sound doctrine" (Titus 2:1); or they are urged to strive to be "...workmen...rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15). Both doctrine and method are to be in harmony with the nature of the Word. The Sacred Scriptures are the inspired Word of God and as such

they are authoritative and inerrant. But this Word has been given to us, who are fallible and weak, and it now becomes our responsibility to handle it in such a way that its message to the hearts of men is clear and sound and that it does not call forth conceptions that are distortions of the original intent.

Meeting the challenge of these exhortations will take effort on our part. God has given us the pure Word; He has

given us the Holy Spirit, Who is to lead us into all truth. And yet both of these precious gifts do not automatically assure that which we teach is true. We are "earthly vessels" in which these treasures are laid, and if we are not careful we can impart to the teaching which issues from us, an "earthly" quality which will hinder it from achieving that abiding, God-pleasing fruit which we desire. Therefore the constant exhortation to care, diligence, watchfulness.

In our time we need to be especially careful, lest by careless word or action, we hinder the effective working of the Word in its redemptive process. We are living in an atmosphere of high pressure persuasion, mass communication and subliminal propaganda. We are not immune to such attacks, and if we do not prayerfully and diligently seek the corrective guidance of Word and Spirit, we will be derelict in the discharge of our duty. This, in spite of the sincerest intent to the contrary. I do not believe that we will ever reach that level where our teaching becomes the full truth, unmingled with error, but purity of doctrine and soundness of method are those goals towards which we strive as long as it pleases the Master Teacher to permit us to labor in His kingdom.

There are certain practices which occasionally hinder us in our progress towards the above mentioned goal. Several of these I would like to mention, where possible giving illustrations from teaching situations.

I. Faulty Illustrations

It is good teaching practice to use illustrations from life to make the truth we are attempting to teach more readily accessible. Jesus used many illustrations with telling effect. However, because illustrations are so powerful, we must make doubly sure that the illustration emphasizes correctly the truth to be taught. If the example or the story is not carefully chosen it can distort the truth beyond recognition and often with devastating consequences. We can call forth a wrong understand-

ing or present a wrong image of God. Here is a case in point. The story is told in an attempt to illustrate "reconciliation" as we have it in Jesus Christ. The only son of a family has through his rebellious and wayward conduct provoked his father to the point where the father asks him to leave the home and not to return. There is no communication between the parents and the son. In time the mother becomes seriously ill. It becomes obvious to those nearest to her that her end is near. She wants to see her son before she dies and finally the father consents to have the son called. The son heeds the call and as he enters his home the air becomes tense. The mother calls him to her side and takes his hand. She also takes the hand of the father who is on the opposite side of the bed, and places it on top of the hand of the son. In this position she dies; reconciliation has been achieved. It is a moving story and therefore all the more dangerous when its imagery is applied to what happens in the reconciliation of the sinner to God. The father in the story, who represents God, is angry with his son, extremely reluctant to be reconciled to him, and does so only as a concession to his dying wife. What a contrast such an image of God is to that presented to us by Jesus in the parable of the prodigal Son — "...and when he was yet a great way off... his father ran..."

Sometimes the stories told children in Sunday School or as a special feature of a service, leave completely erroneous impressions in the minds of the youngsters. This is all the more dangerous if the story in itself is interesting and is told in a captivating manner. An example: the children were told about a little boy who for some unaccountable reason did not want to say his prayers. The parents did not directly force him to do so, but they would not smile at him, would not call him by his name, and in various ways showed their displeasure at his conduct. Through this and through an experience which could have ended fatally, he again began to pray. It is doubtless of great value to impress upon children the importance

of prayer and to give them an insight into the loss of blessing which results from a neglect of prayer. But is that what this story taught? I don't believe it did. It would seem that if the youngsters remembered the story at all, they would have caught this meaning: if you don't pray, at least openly, you get in trouble with people, you can't have all the things you like. And this you do, whether you feel like it or not. There was no attempt to show why he did not want to pray, nor was it pointed out for what reason he began to pray again, unless, by implication, it was the desire to gain the favor of his parents and the restoration of privileges.

The two examples given, the faulty illustration and the story which planted a wrong concept, were given for the purpose of showing the importance of carefully checking our illustrative and narrative material for elements which can and do mislead. Superficial similarities of certain details or a pious atmosphere do not guarantee that the material is suitable for the purpose intending. Careful, critical enquiry and thoughtful study should precede our use of non-Biblical material to explain, illustrate and emphasize divine truth.

II. The Analogy between the material and the Spiritual

Another example of a practice which can mar the purity of doctrine, is the appeal to a phenomenon which is true for, and operates in, the material realm as a proof of the truth of a statement or contention in the realm of the spiritual. The use of the various phenomena in the world of visible things to illustrate a spiritual truth can be very valuable — to put that truth in a form more easily understood by the learners. Jesus used this method rather frequently. He said, "I am the vine, ye are the branches..." And thus he made clearer, certain aspects of the relationship which the believer has to the Lord Jesus Christ. These pictures taken from the material world can be very valuable but they have their limitations. First, they never form the basis of proof of the

truth which they are to illustrate. Jesus did not ground the truth of the believers relationship to Him in the truth of the relationship existing between the natural vine and its branches. He merely illustrated it. The second limitation is that not all aspects of the relationship between the vine and its branches apply to the relationship between Christ and the believer. For example, the vine and the branches are of the same substance and again, if you took away all the branches, the vine would die, etc. An appeal to things and relationships in the material world to prove certain things and relationships in the spiritual can result in a false teaching. How valid is the oft quoted analogy between natural and spiritual sonship? Those who hold to the truth of the teaching concerning the unconditional, eternal security of the believer, often appeal for proof of their contention to the natural relationship between father and son. Once a son, always a son, they say. The son can be wayward, disobedient, but still is always a son. Underlying such a contention, is the assumption that exactly the same relationship obtains and the same laws operate in both realms. This is something which can by no means be taken for granted.

Another practice which may often produce negative effects is the tendency to read more into Scripture than is contained in it. Scripture does not tell us everything we would like to know about the past nor does it tell us everything we would like to know about the future. The temptation then comes to us to claim a modern "gnosis" and supply some of these details out of our store of speculation. There may not be any serious harm in this as long as these ideas are presented as fantasy. How many children have been told that Cain knew his sacrifice was not accepted by God because the smoke of it did not ascend to heaven but went downward instead? Or who has not heard a detailed account of the chaos which will arise at the second coming of Christ, with trains rushing off without conductors, planes crashing without pilots, etc. The workman that "needs

not to be ashamed" does not mix speculation with established facts of revelation, unless he clearly indicates that they are speculations.

The abovementioned tendency may manifest itself in other ways, each of which could work against the effectiveness of our teaching. For lack of space, these can only be mentioned here. There is the tendency to place greater weight upon a particular Scripture statement than it was designed to bear. Then also it may happen that we feel that certain passages, which are as Peter said "hard to be understood" can have only one interpretation and that is the one we hold. Untimely identification of certain modern personalities with those foreshadowed in Scripture has led to confusion and embarrassment of certain teachers. How diligent, how careful we must be, lest we distort the precious Word of God.

III. Caricaturing Opposing Views

There are many systems of thought and many religions prevalent today which are opposed to the teaching of Scripture. Against these fallacious and heretical views we are called to witness of the truth. We want to warn those, whom we have been called to teach, about the error and the dangers resident in these false religions. This we can best be done by exposing the essence of that which they teach and then relating what they teach to the revealed divine truth. Sometimes, however, through lack of familiarity with what they teach, or for some other reason, we fasten on some peripheral, bizarre aspect of this false religion, which may or may not be true, and present this as the distinguishing characteristic of that movement. If we do this, we are not fair. We as Mennonites resent it when people contend that you can know a Mennonite by his big, black hat, or his beard, or his horse and buggy. But what is even worse, we may undermine the confidence in our truthfulness and dependability of those whom we have so taught. If they accept our representation at the time it is given and then later find out that this is but a

caricature of that particular movement, or a minor, peripheral aspect of their teaching (e.g. polygamy in present day Mormonism), they may be tempted, and rightly so, to question the reliability of other things we have told them. However, there is a still more serious effect. We have not dealt with the central fallacy of the view, and when that which we have told them about the particular religion is proved wrong or unimportant, they really have no defence left against this false teaching. Caricature may be humorous and get a laugh; it may even give us an opportunity to show our disgust at such a perversion of truth, but it certainly does not make for fruitful, effective teaching.

Paul admonishes Timothy with these words: "Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth" (RSV 2 Tim. 2:15). May God give us grace to be such workmen.

H. Voth.

Enunciation in Preaching

"Some men are loud enough, but they are not distinct; their words overlap each other, play at leap-frog, or trip each other up. Distinct utterance is far more important than wind-power. Do give a word a fair chance; do not break its back in your vehemence, or run it off its legs in your haste... let a man shout ever so lustily, he will not be well heard unless he learns to push his words forward with due space between. To speak too slowly is miserable work, and subjects active-minded hearers to the disease called 'the horrors'. It is impossible to hear a man who crawls along at a mile an hour. One word today and one tomorrow is a kind of slow-fire which martyrs only could enjoy. Excessively rapid speaking, tearing and raving into utter rant, is quite as inexcusable; it is not, and never can be powerful, except with idiots, for it turns what should be an army of words into a mob, and most effectually drowns the sense in floods of sounds."

Spurgeon, in *Lectures to My Students*

YOUR QUESTION

What is Karl Barth's View of Scripture and How Does It Differ from the Main Stream of Evangelical Thought?

Karl Barth insists that he holds a true evangelical view of the Scriptures, similar to Luther and Calvin, which gives full credit and honor to the Word of God. We believe that an investigation of his views as expressed in his **Kirchliche Dogmatik** invalidates his claim and indicates a substantial departure from the historical evangelical position.

Barth describes Scriptures as a witness to the Word of God, but not the Word of God itself (**Church Dogmatics II**, 2, Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1956, p. 527). Between Scriptures and the Word of God there is only an indirect identity; Scriptures are the written expressions of the experiences of the prophets and apostles with God, which witness to the fact that God reveals Himself and that He speaks to man. However, it is not itself the objective Word of God to all men (**Ibid.**, p. 507). Scriptures may become the Word of God to man by faith; this occurs in the event or act when the believer makes a dynamic encounter with God. Such a miraculous encounter, when the Word of God comes to man, may occur in the study of Scriptures, but they are not to be identified with the Word of God. **What** God speaks to Paul, for example, cannot be recorded by Paul so as to produce an objective, inspired, infallible Word of God to all men.

The Scriptures are for Barth the product of fallible, sinful men and therefore fallible and errant. "The prophets and apostles as such, even in their office, even in their function as witnesses, even in their act of writing down their witness, were real, historical men as we are, and therefore sinful in their action and capable and actually guilty of er-

ror in their spoken and written word" (**Ibid.**, p. 529). The Bible is here understood as a book of error and contradiction, which as every point is the vulnerable word of man. It is further maintained that it consists of saga, legend, poetry, secular legislation, much of which cannot be accepted as religious literature. Barth bases his view on the presupposition that God cannot give to man an infallible, inscripturated revelation because man is a fallible, sinful creature. The inspiration of these witnesses to the revelation of God, he insists, is not to be understood in terms of 'Inspiriertheit', i.e., that through inspiration they were enabled to write or speak something which was the objective, inspired Word of God.

Barth's view of Scripture poses the crucial question of the authority of Scriptures. If Scriptures are not the objective words of God, spoken through men of God by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, are they absolute authority for man? Barth says Scripture **may become** our authority through the internal testimony of the Holy Spirit in the moment of that encounter. At this point we must differentiate between Barth's view of the internal testimony of the Holy Spirit and the historical, evangelical view. The latter view maintains that the internal testimony of the Holy Spirit is necessary to **convince** the unbeliever of the authority of the Scriptures, an authority which exists objectively and independently in Scriptures because "men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit" (II Peter 1:21). The distinction is clear and significant; for Barth the Scriptures are the fallible words of men, which God can miraculously use to speak to man in the

authoritative moment; for the orthodox evangelical the Scriptures are the objective, authoritative Word of God, regardless of whether man recognizes them as such or not. Barth's view is well summarized in his own words: "Verbal inspiration does not mean the infallibility of the biblical word in its linguistic, historical and theological character as a human word. It means that the fallible and faulty word is as such used by God and has to be received and heard in spite of its human fallibility" (**Ibid.**, p. 533).

Because Barth does not identify Scriptures with the Word of God, Scriptures are made into a **relative authority**. He maintains that the church must repeat the experience of the prophets and apostles in their confrontation with Christ. By a series of such encounters the church receives its authority. In other words, Barth would bypass Scriptures in seeking and receiving direct revelation from our Lord. The role of Scriptures is relegated to that of being a norm by which the church tests its own experiences and encounters with God. It is quite apparent that Barth departs from the Reformation principle of **sola scriptura**. Although he wants to call men back to the Bible, he does not regard the Bible the believer's final authority for faith and life; final authority exists in the event, when in man's encounter with God, God speaks to him personally.

We believe that this brief review of a few aspects of Barth's view of Scripture indicates his departure from the consistent testimony of Scripture itself. While he is right in emphasizing the need of a personal encounter with God, while he is right in making a distinction between Scriptures and our Lord, we believe that his view of Scripture opens the door to rank subjectivism. Barth's view ultimately leads to making God unknowable—or man correlative with God. If God cannot speak to man and give to man an objective, infallible revelation of Himself and His purposes, then He becomes irrational—then communication breaks down—then man cannot really know God's will. If God speaks to man today, apart from Scrip-

tures, in a subjective experience as he spoke to Isaiah and the Apostles—who determines what God has spoken. In such an instance, men can claim divine inspiration for the fruits of their own speculations; they make themselves correlative with God.

We believe Scriptures are that which they claim to be—the objective, inspired Word of God, our authority (II Tim. 3:16; II Peter 1:21). We believe in the testimony of Moses and the prophets, who testified that the words they spoke came from God. We believe that the Scriptures are the living Word of God, powerful in the hearts of those regenerated by the Holy Spirit, and disclosing to man without error, God's revelation of himself and his redemptive acts in Christ. "But abide thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; and that from a babe thou hast known the sacred writings which are able to make the wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (II Tim. 3:14).

Victor Adrian

The Voice in Preaching

"All mimicry is in the pulpit near akin to an unpardonable sin... I have heard many different varieties... I do not condemn them—let every creature speak in its own tongue; but the fact is, that in nine cases out of ten, these sacred brogues, which I hope will soon be dead languages, are unnatural and strained. I am persuaded that these tones and semitones and monotones are Babylonian, that they are not at all the Jerusalem dialect; for the Jerusalem dialect has this one distinguishing mark, that it is a man's own mode of speech, and is the same out of the pulpit as it is in it... I maintain that the best notes a man's voice is capable of should be given to the proclamation of the gospel, and these are such as nature teaches him to use in earnest conversation."

Spurgeon, in **Lectures to My Students**

Open Season

Hunting season is open. No limit on kills has been established, so the woods are full of hunters and, characteristically, they are taking shots at anything that is alive. You see, it is "open season" on Christian schools which maintain a strict doctrinal position.

The most recent "hunter" to invade the woods arrived on the scene in the September issue of a Christian magazine. His aim was directed at the usual target, academic excellence versus doctrinal integrity. Perhaps it is time for the prey of these marksmen not to run and take cover at the sound of the gun, but to face the hunter and learn that he shoots blanks.

His "mighty" weapon is the *a priori* proclamation that schools with a strict doctrinal position cannot possibly have the academic freedom conducive to a scholastic search for truth. This particular hunter, who would so strongly defend the right to search for truth, makes the astounding statement that "Investigation creates more and more possibilities for the equivocation of the Christian faith." It is difficult to reconcile this statement with the words of Jesus Christ who declares Himself to be "... the Way, the Truth and the Life," or the words of Paul about Christ, "... in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." It seems that a sincere search for truth would inevitably bring one closer to our Lord Jesus Christ.

The ammunition our hunter would use is the historic fact that the majority of the colleges and universities which were founded upon strict Christian principles and with Christian aims and objectives have since drifted to an outright secular point of view. As the marksman loads his gun, this ammunition certainly looks formidable. But

closer examination encourages one to ask the question, Is it freedom to investigate that leads to an equivocation of the Christian faith, or freedom to propagate false doctrines and the philosophies of men which leads to an undermining of the foundations of a student's life?

In secular education hunting parties have been enjoying the thrill of the chase for many years over the ruckus concerning the right versus the privilege of Communist sympathizers to teach in colleges and universities. To deny a man the right to search for truth is to deny academic freedom. Not to deny him the right to propagate doctrines and beliefs at variance with the *raison d'être* of a college is to commit educational suicide. In political matters our government recognizes this distinction. Freedom of belief and freedom of investigation are both basic to our way of life. However, when an open propagation of seditious teaching is at variance with our nation's best interests, our federal government has been empowered by the people to take action to silence those who would use their freedom to subvert our way of life.

Perhaps we should spend less time defending ourselves from the onslaughts of the hunter and begin to pursue him. While doing this, though, let us continue to devote considerable energy to the task of building fine Christian educational institutions which possess our characteristic doctrinal distinctives while exhibiting the finest of scholarship. In these ways we can both claim our critics in error and prove the fallacy of their attack. —Sherburne P. Hill, Chairman, Com. on Pub. Rel. in Newsbulletin of Am. Accrediting Association of Bible Colleges.

**REMEMBER THE WORK OF THE COLLEGE
ON COLLEGE-DAY — NOVEMBER 17**

(Fortsetzung von Umschlagseite 2) —

deln oft ein Geheimnis. Was Gott mit uns als Konferenz im Plan hat, welche Aufgaben in der Zukunft an uns gestellt mögen werden, welche Züchtigungen der Herr an uns wird ausüben müssen, ist uns nicht bewußt. Seine Wege sind tief wie das Meer.

Als Schule wollen wir die Tiefen des Meeres, die Spitzen der Berge, die Wolkentürme, und das Himmelsgewölbe in unsere 'geistliche Geographie' hineinbauen. Denn sie erinnern uns an Gottes geheimnisvolles Rechtshandeln, an seine heilbringende Gerechtigkeit, an seine unverbrüchliche Treue, und an seine unverdiente Güte.

D. Ewert

Current Enrollment at M.B.B.C.

Total Enrollment:

(a) Full-time students	161
(b) Part-time students	18
(c) Evening school	55
(not included in above numbers)	

Classification of full time students:

(a) According to Geography:

British Columbia	43
Alberta	19
Saskatchewan	15
Manitoba	51
Ontario	30
U.S.A.	2
Trinidad	1
	161

(b) According to Marital Status:

Married	41
Single	120
	161

(c) According to Sex:

Men	81
Ladies	80
	161

(d) According to Church:

Menn. Brethren	147
Baptist	4
EMMC	3
EMC	2
Gen. Conference	2
Church of God	1
Prairie Tabernacle	1
Plymouth Brethren	1
	161

(e) According to Courses:

Th.B.	50
B.R.E.—Missions	19
—Chr.Ed.	36
—Music	23
Sacred Music	19
B.D.	8

(f) Enrolled in one or more Liberal Arts subjects with Waterloo University College, 77 (including part-time students). Regular students enrolled in arts exclusively—6).

(g) According to Educational Background:

i. High School:

Senior Matriculation	138
Junior Matriculation	9
Adult Specials	14
	161

ii. Bible School: 62

(on the average 2 years)

iii. University: 62

(h) According to Occupation:

Teachers	36
Nurses	13
Ministers and Mission Workers	8
Students	77
Others	27
	161

(i) Average Age: 24.01

CONFESSION!

Holy God, to whose service I long ago dedicated my soul and life, I grieve and lament before Thee that I am still:

So prone to sin and so little inclined to obedience:

So much attached to the pleasures of sense, so negligent of things spiritual:

So prompt to gratify my body, so slow to nourish my soul:

So greedy for present delight, so indifferent to lasting blessedness:

So fond of idleness, so indisposed for labour:

So soon at play, so late at prayer:

So brisk in the service of self, so slack in the service of others:

So eager to get, so reluctant to give:

So lofty in my profession, so low in my practice:

So full of good intentions, so backward to fulfil them:

So severe with my neighbours, so indulgent with myself:

So eager to find fault, so resentful at being found fault with:

So little able for great tasks, so discontented with small ones:

So weak in adversity, so swollen and self-satisfied in prosperity:

So helpless apart from Thee, and yet so little willing to be bound to Thee.

—John Baillie