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EDITORIAL

A NOTE ON THE ORDER OF WORSHIP IN OUR SERVICES

There was a time when the various services in our churches followed a predictable pattern in the great majority of our churches. Whether you attended a service in Yarrow or in Virgil you felt at home, and you knew you were attending an M.B. church even though most of the people may have been relative strangers to you. The "homey" feeling resulted because the service was in German, the choir sang relatively familiar songs, during the Sunday School period the sanctuary was subdivided into about six classes by either green or brown curtains, and the names mentioned during various parts of the service had a familiar ring. The church was full, the front benches were crowded with children, and the congregational songs were the same ones sung in other M.B. churches.

There is a good deal to be said for uniformity in our worship services and in other types of services. (A choir becomes a solid unit in more ways than one if the members wear gowns.) There ought to be reasonable unanimity among the churches of the same denomination with regard to such matters as the external form or order that is followed in the various services. Any order of service that is used should be the result of careful thought on the part of church leaders.

An order of service is, after all, indicative of a certain interpretation of Scripture in the way in which man sees fit to serve God acceptably in public corporate worship. Private worship can follow a very flexible pattern according to the desires of the individual, but public corporate worship must assume a reasonably fixed and stable pattern if it is to have the most beneficial results possible. Paul says that all things should be done decently and in order. I am sure none of us feel that order is not necessary in our services. Yet the fact remains that at present we have a great diversity, or at any rate, a lack of uniformity in our churches with regard to the order of service (and I am thinking in particular of our morning worship services).

There have been a great number of changes in our churches during the last decade or so, and the changes in the order of service for the morning worship service have resulted largely because of other changes, such as the use of English in the services (either complete or in part), changes in the architectural design of the churches (which for one thing discouraged the use of wires strung across the sanctuary), changes in the educational level of church members (often resulting in a desire for a more sophisticated or more "orderly" form of public service. Most of the changes that have been made in the order of service have not been made easily.

It goes without saying that many members in a given church are generally of the opinion that the changes made were not for the better.

The past and the present

In order to show more precisely the great difference that exists between the forms of various services followed by certain churches in our conference, let me sketch briefly what many of us experienced as the "old time" type of morning worship service and then indicate briefly what form many churches follow at present. Let me say again that I am not discussing the relative merits of each but merely indicating the extent to which they differ from each other.

The older type of service on a Sunday morning was divided into two main sections: the Sunday School service and the "church service." Of these the latter was always considered more important, since members need never attend Sunday School, but if they never attended the "church service" they would no doubt have been brought before the church before very long. The church service itself was further subdivided into two main parts — the "Gebetsstunde" — (which never did last an hour) and the sermon.

Around these two focal points were built a number of supporting aspects, such as songs by the choir and the congregation, introductory and closing prayers, etc. Then there were aspects that were "extras" and were fitted into the service wherever it seemed convenient — such items as words of welcome, announcements, and the taking up of the "collection". This type of church service generally began at about 10:40 or so and ended at 12 noon, with the sermon usually a little over half an hour in length, often adjusted somewhat to the length of the foregoing items.

The new order of worship for many of our churches has generally just the one focal point — the sermon. There is no "Gebetsstunde" although there is a longer "pastoral prayer" as a rule, and a reading from Scripture. There are congregational songs and there are songs by the choir. Announcements are still made (and there is always a church bulletin) and an offering is taken. The sermon is not generally longer than half an hour. This type of service usually begins at 11:00 a.m. and represents the "one hour church service." This form of service is followed by most city churches, with minor variations.

Needless to say, there are a number of churches which follow a pattern that lies somewhere between the two extremes. Most "bilingual" churches have now substituted the "Gebetsstunde" section with a short sermon in English. From the time allotted to this part and the choice of speakers made, I have often had the impression that many churches still felt the main emphasis was still in the German message that followed.

Some churches have a "German service" during the regular Sunday School session for those who prefer a German service, and

the service that follows is then conducted completely in the English language. Speaking very broadly, one could say that the older type of service is followed where the language is still predominantly German, and the changes have been made by those churches using the English language.

Some general observations

And what shall we make of all these things? Are we better off than we were before? It is probably too early to tell just yet. In the first place, I don't think we need be alarmed by the fact that many changes have been introduced in the past decade or so. It is actually quite a natural thing that changes occur from time to time — it is much more important to be aware of changes that **should** be made and that the church be united in making them. Complete agreement in making changes is probably not to be expected, but a good deal of teaching and clarification should be made before changes are introduced. There are still too many people who believe that past forms of worship are practically inspired and should never be altered. A traditional form of service is not necessarily serving a congregation best just because it has been followed for many years.

It seems to me that it is high time for the ministers and pastors, the deacons and church musicians and other interested persons to get together in the various churches and on the conference level to spend some time in considering anew the purposes of the various orders of worship presently being used and to discover the patterns of service that would serve our needs best today. I believe it is still true that in most of our churches the same message is being preached from our pulpits and taught in the Sunday Schools. It is not so clear that our churches are also interested in gaining unanimity in the forms used for the various services. Our conference cannot afford to have some churches follow a pattern that is almost liturgical while others follow one that is almost formless.

We need more preaching or teaching about the meaning of the forms we use and the value of worshipping in certain ways. A congregation needs to be reminded from time to time just what it is to "get out of" a service or a certain part of it. It is not clear to me, for example, whether the traditional form of service we used to follow was the result of our own interpretation of Scripture or merely patterned after the form of service of the Baptists or some other denomination. I am not convinced that our present forms of service give a proper emphasis to the "brethren" ideal that we like to stress. Our new churches, for example, are largely patterned after designs that other groups use who make little of the "brethren" idea.

In this period when we are engaging in changes that have a far-reaching influence on our total Christian witness we need to reconsider as well the reasons which underly the forms we use

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ARTICLES

THE SWORD AND THE KEYS OF THE KINGDOM

(Continuation from previous issue)

2. Meredith G. Kline in "The Intrusion and the Decalogue," *Westminster Theological Journal*, presents the concept of "Intrusion Ethics." His view is as follows: the fall of man might have introduced at once the consummate age; this would have meant universal damnation. But God in divine compassion chose to delay the consummate age through the introduction of the Covenant of Grace and its corollary, common grace. The Covenant of Grace is eschatological; it is an intrusion into this period of delay, of the powers, principles and reality of the consummation. Through the Covenant of Grace elements of the consummation age break into the Old Testament and more profoundly into the New Testament.

The Covenant of Grace in the Old Testament is in earthly form and veils its ultimate glory; it is an age of preparation for a later fulfillment. However, in the pattern of earthly things there is included a core of reality. The Old Testament forms are therefore patterned after an archetype in heaven; they are symbols of a real intrusion of the consummate age and a type of the reality that is still future. The New Covenant is their archetype because the revelation of the Son is an epochmaking unfolding of the intrusion.

However, it is not yet the perfect consummation; common grace still delays it. There are Old Testament types which have not yet found their antitype. Consequently, Dr. Kline states that the theocracy is a **more extensive** though less intensive edition of the final and ultimate reality in the consummate age. This more extensive edition is reflected both in its typical aspects and in realized eschatology. Realized eschatology consists of the intrusion of powers and realities of the consummate age into this age of delay through common grace. On the basis of this more extensive edition of ultimate reality in the theocracy Dr. Kline explains the difficult aspects of Old Testament ethics.

The variableness in the sanctions annexed to the laws of the first table, in that the Old Covenant penalty was death and the New Covenant is ecclesiastical discipline, is explained on the basis that the Old Testament theocracy anticipates the consummation. The penal sanctions are an intrusion. The difference between the Old and the New Covenant cannot be explained simply by an appeal to the civil aspect of the theocracy because the authority to enforce the first table was unique to the theocracy.

More particularly Dr. Kline concentrates on the second table of the law. He maintains that in the consummate age the laws founded upon intra-creational relations will change. For example,

today the believer is commanded to love his neighbor, but in the consummate age, when God withdraws his favor from the reprobate, the believer must also hate the reprobate with a perfect holy hatred. The ethics of the consummate age are, therefore, different from the ethics normative in this age of delay. The attitudes and the conduct of members of the theocracy, when subject to God's command, were on occasion an intrusion of the consummate age — they were an intrusion of God's judgement on the reprobate.

Examples of such intrusion ethics are: (a) **Imprecations in the Psalms** (e.g. Psalms 7, 35, 55, 59, 69, 79, 109, and 137). These imprecations were divinely inspired; they were not expressed in a bitter spirit of personal vindictiveness but out of a concern for the honor of God. Normally, a believer is not to pray imprecations; he is not to seek the destruction of those for whom Christ has died. But on the day of judgement imprecatory prayers are in order. The imprecations of the Old Testament are, therefore, an intrusion of the consummation ethics.

(b) **The Conquest of Canaan:** Here, too, the ordinary prescribed ethical principles are suspended and the ethical principles of the last judgment intrude. The destruction of the Canaanite women and children was realized eschatology.

Dr. Kline does not, therefore, consider the intrusion ethics of the Old Testament to be of a lower or laxer order than in the New Covenant but contrawise, they demand the highest outreach of faith. To have shown mercy would not have been a compliance with a higher standard; it would have been outright disobedience to God.

This view also recognizes a sharp contrast between the penal sanctions and, therefore, the ethics of the Old Covenant and the ethics of the New Covenant. There is no suggestion that sin or the immaturity of Israel was related to its ethical standard. The difference is not explained by an appeal to the civil aspects of the theocracy because the authority granted to it in the sword was unique. The difference is to be explained in terms of intrusion ethics.

Such a view establishes a complete discontinuity between the Old Testament ethics and the New Testament ethics with regard to the imposition of penal sanctions and discipline. Consequently, on that basis, the New Testament ethics cannot be related to the Old in terms of immature and mature or inferior or superior methods. If that which constitutes intrusion ethics falls into the "more extensive edition" of the consummate age reflected in the theocracy, then there is no strand which organically relates the Old Testament ethics to the New in terms of progressive revelation. There is no suggestion that the right of the sword in the theocracy was the application of a pedagogical principle which was no longer required in the New Covenant. Even if aspects of the Old Testament ethic are regarded as an intrusion, the question still remains

— why are such intrusions no longer required in the New Covenant.

3. William B. Greene, in "The Ethic of the Old Testament," *The Princeton Theological Review*, and C. Van Til in *Christian Theistic Ethics (Syllabus)*, present the Old and New Testament ethics in terms of progressive revelation and pedagogical principles. Greene considers the Old Testament to be a pictorial primer in religion and ethics, adapted to the stage of Israel's maturity and influenced in part by the culture of its surroundings. The law of Christ is more spiritual than the law of Moses; the concrete illustrations of the latter prepare for the abstract statements of the former. There is, therefore, an organic relationship. The Old Testament ethic is still in undeveloped form and incomplete in material or scope; it is an inferior ethic, but not an inferiority of imperfection. It is the inferiority of the seed to the blade; the blade to the budding plant; the bud to the flower and the flower to the fruit. The incompleteness and inferiority of the Old Testament ethics is in harmony with the life principle of development.

The emphasis on the external in the theocracy is explained in terms of the preparatory character of Old Testament ethics. Some ethical principles in the Old Testament were expressed in rude form because higher forms were not yet possible. Concessions were made with regard to polygamy and divorce because man was not yet able to bear the higher teaching of the New Testament. **In the Old as well as the New Testament, perfect conformity to the will of God is the standard, but because less light was given in the Old Testament, the quality of conformity is not the same.** The detailed instructions in the civil and ceremonial laws were to teach man the completeness and all-comprehensiveness of God's claim on man. All of man is to be subjected to his command.

The wars of extermination in the Old Testament are to be seen, in the light of God's right to give and take life; the excessive wickedness of the Canaanites in Palestine, the natural methods of warfare in that day and the fact that wars were not carried out by man's fierce spirit in private vengeance but by God's implicit command at specific times and for specific objects.

Why were these sanctions conceded and commanded in the Old Testament? Greene answers: on the basis of the principle that moral laws which are founded upon the permanent relations of men can be set aside by God when he chooses to do so. Consequently, under Mosaic law within certain limits, polygamy and divorce were permitted; heretics were commanded to be killed, Agag was to be executed. In the New Testament these concessions and commands no longer apply; God is able to suspend the moral laws when he sees fit.

Dr. Van Til sees the externalism in the Old Testament laws and death penalties in the light of an incomplete self-revelation of God. Then too, they were in part an adjustment to the customs developed among men as a result of their sin. This externalism

was an effective method by which God sought to inculcate the truth that he is a God of absolute holiness and expects his people to be holy. It is therefore, perfectly legitimate to advance the characteristics of the times as an explanation for Old Testament ethics. God seeks to lead man out of the depths of his moral blindness in a gradual manner. The **mode** of ethics in the Old Testament must therefore be different from that of the New Testament; it must be more externalistic. The wholesale extermination of the enemies of God is an effective way of teaching Israel that sin must be destroyed absolutely; God's ideal for man is a perfect earth where only righteousness may dwell. Similarly the death penalty for various transgressions graphically teaches the holiness of God.

The emphasis on the external, but not to the exclusion of the internal, was God's pedagogical principle of bringing Israel gradually to the realization of an absolute ideal of both external and internal perfection. The emphasis on the national, though not the exclusion of the universal (e.g. Abraham), was again God's pedagogical principle of gradually bringing the absolute ideal of God's spiritual blessings to the consciousness of the Israelite. The external blessings of life, health and a land flowing with milk and honey was a concrete way of teaching Israel the principle that righteousness, holiness and blessedness belong together. In the New Testament the believer is to live in the strong faith of an Asaph (Psalms 73), in the hope of a new heaven and a new earth because he has a clearer and fuller revelation of that glorious hope. He enjoys blessedness right now because he knows he is an heir of God; but he knows that complete blessedness is in the future when all sin will be done away. Therefore he rejoices in the midst of tribulation.

A Suggested Solution of Continuity and Progress

The thesis which this paper seeks to present is more in line with the latter view. The differences in ethics must be understood in the light of progressive revelation and its co-ordinate, a progressively higher ethic. The ethic of the theocracy was in keeping with Israel's stage of maturity. Its method of combatting evil by means of the sword and severe sanctions, as prescribed by God, was in perfect accordance with his will. This method was the most effective way by which God could teach and inculcate the spiritual truths of his holiness and his demands for the holiness of his people. Just as the ceremonial laws, with the requirement of continual and repetitive sacrifices, were a graphic and concrete method of indicating the barrenness and ineffectualness of these sacrifices in themselves, (pointing to the gracious provision of the Messiah), so the civil law with its sanctions and the commands to exterminate God's enemies taught in a concrete way obedience to a God who could not tolerate sin. The depths to which man had fallen with Adam, required such a gradual rudimentary way of bringing him to faith in the righteousness provided by God in

Christ and into the pattern of holiness which vital union with Christ requires and produces. The immediateness of the judgment of God in the Old Testament, be it by intrusion, was unique to the theocracy. (The case of Ananias and Sapphira is an exception in the New Testament; as such it was not effected through the physical sword.) The mighty judgment of God wrought directly or through the instrumentality of man was to arouse fear and faith in the nations and in the members of the theocracy. Rahab is an example of a Canaanite woman who responded in faith.

All the principles which the authority of the sword sought to inculcate are also present in the New Testament, only with greater clarity and fulness. The judgment of God and eternal damnation is presented in a more terrible light than was possible in the Old Testament. The holiness of God and the standard of holiness for believers is more explicit and pervasive — but the method of challenging the enemies of God and combatting sin in the ranks of the godly has changed.

The authority of the sword has been replaced by the authority of the keys of the kingdom. It is no less real and no less effective than the sword. The church with its keys brings judgment or salvation, curses or blessing. What the church binds or looses has heavenly validity.

The keys of the kingdom were entrusted to the apostles by Christ and consequently to the church. To Peter Christ said: "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Matthew 16:19). And to all the apostles Christ said shortly thereafter: "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Matthew 18:18). The "binding" and "loosing" refer to "forbidding" and "allowing" in the Jewish usage in the synagogue. It is a ministerial authority; subject to Christ it exercises a stewardship in declaring what the conditions are which allow entry into the kingdom and which forbid such entry. The context of Matthew 16:19 refers to the church as the confessing church — conferring and declaring the truth revealed by the Father. The keys also include a disciplinary authority and ministry as well as a preaching ministry. The context of Matthew 18:18 suggests a governmental authority. When the church is gathered together with Christ in its midst, then binding and loosing has heavenly validity. Penitent sinners are received and impenitent sinners are rejected.

The conditions set down for entrance into the kingdom are the conditions which have been laid down by Christ. They may be summed up as faith in Christ as Saviour together with preceding repentance from sin and consequent obedience to Christ as Lord. As the church is faithful in the ministration of the Word, both in proclamation and in exercising discipline it opens its doors and the gate of heaven for believers, and closes that door for

unbelievers. The opening and the closing are real; the blessing of the kingdom of God experienced upon entrance into it is real and the judgment resting upon those who reject the conditions is real.

It is through the agency of the church that God opens and closes the kingdom. Members of the New Testament Church, as in the Old Covenant, became a savour of life unto life and a savour of death unto death (2 Corinthians 2:15-16). The disciples sent out by Christ to proclaim the kingdom of God brought both blessings and curses. Those who received them received Christ and those who rejected them rejected Christ (Matthew 10:40). The solemnity of such a rejection is indicated in the disciples action of shaking off the dust from their feet (Matthew 10:14; Luke 9:5; cf. Acts 13:51). This significant action was a testimony against those who refused to receive Christ (Luke 9:5). On the great day of judgment that act would convict those who consciously and definitely rejected him. At the same time it was a warning of judgment which should call them to repentance. By these means the disciples indicated that they broke off their relationship with them. The people who were unrepentant were to know that the kingdom of God had come near; they had no excuse for not entering into it.

The judgment which then fell upon those who rejected Christ was more severe than the judgment falling upon the unrepentant in the Old Testament. The judgment upon Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum was worse than what had befallen Sodom. To oppose the sword wielded by the church of the New Covenant is a very dangerous thing — it is more fatal than the sword of Joshua or Samuel! It is not a physical sword but the sword of the Spirit and the Word of God. This is the instrument by which the church combats evil within itself and in the world. Its motive is always to win men to Christ; to bring them into the kingdom of God; to restore the fallen and reclaim the sinners. Its members love their enemies and pray for those who persecute them. They do not inflict judgment and death upon those who oppose God. But with Christ, who warned men of the judgment to come (Matthew 25:31ff), they too warn those who oppose the sword of the Word of God. As they bind and loose men they seek to bring men to enjoy the blessings of the kingdom.

In the New Covenant the method of combatting evil has changed; it is a spiritual kingdom which fights with spiritual weapons. Actual judgment is held in abeyance because the New Testament is predominantly a covenant of Grace. Christ has come to seek and to save men, not to destroy them. In this age of fuller revelation the forming of the body of Christ, and the more intense activity of the Holy Spirit, who has been poured out and who convinces the world of sin, God has adopted a superior method, in keeping with progressive revelation — not the physical sword, but the keys of the kingdom.

DER MATERIELLE WOHLSTAND — EINE GEISTLICHE GEFAHR

Wirtschaftlicher Fortschritt und materieller Wohlstand kennzeichnen das Leben unserer mennonitischen Bruderschaft in Nordamerika. Ein Vergleich der wirtschaftlichen Verhältnisse von 1945 und 1965 zeigt den gewaltigen ökonomischen Aufschwung in unsern Gemeinden in den letzten Jahren. Der zunehmende Wohlstand offenbart sich nicht nur in reich-ausgestatteten Wohnungen, prunkvollen Hochzeiten, und ausgedehnten Ferienreisen, sondern auch im Bauen von christlichen Anstalten und in Beiträgen für das Werk des Herrn. In dem Jahrzehnt von 1953 bis 1963, zum Beispiel, hat sich das Geben für die Äußere Mission mehr als verdoppelt. (Siehe Statistik im **M.B. Herald**, Vol. IV, No. 24, S. 15).

Materieller Segen ist auch göttlicher Segen. Kann denn Gottes Segen eine geistliche Gefahr bilden? Ein Blick in die Heilige Schrift, sowie auch in die Geschichte der christlichen Kirche, läßt keinen Zweifel an der Tatsache, daß irdischer Besitz auch für Gottes Volk zum Verhängnis werden kann. Auch Gläubige können vom Materialismus geblendet werden; auch Christen sind in Gefahr, ihre Hoffnung auf den "ungewissen Reichtum" zu setzen! (vrgl. 1. Tim. 1, 17).

Der berühmte amerikanische Staatsmann Daniel Webster wurde bei einer Gelegenheit gefragt, wie er sich die zukünftige Entwicklung der Vereinigten Staaten denke. "Die Geschichte unsers Landes," antwortete Webster, "kann ich in fünf Worten zusammenfassen: Aufstieg, Wohlstand, Luxus, Niedergang, Verfall." Sollte das ein prophetisches Wort sein? Und wäre es möglich, daß es sich auch in der Geschichte unserer Gemeinschaft erfüllen könnte? Gott bewahre! Sinnesänderung und geistliche Erneuerung können die Anziehungskraft des Materialismus überwinden und die geistliche Geschichte einer Gemeinschaft in neue Bahnen bringen. Diese Betrachtung soll zur Selbstbesinnung Anleitung geben. Wir beachten zunächst einmal

I. Die nähere Beschreibung dieser Gefahr

Die Schreiber des Alten sowie auch Neuen Testaments weisen wiederholt darauf hin, daß auf dem Boden des materiellen Wohlstandes gewisse Untugenden (Sünden) sich sehr leicht einwurzeln wollen. Welches sind die negativen Begleiterscheinungen, die sich oft beim zunehmenden Besitz einstellen wollen? Die Heilige Schrift warnt vor folgenden Neigungen:

1. Selbstüberhebung

Am Abschluß der Wüstenwanderung, und kurz vor dem Einzug in das Verheißene Land, gibt der Herr seinem Volke diese ernste Warnung: "So hüte dich nun, daß du des Herrn deines Gottes, nicht vergessest... daß wenn du nun gegessen hast und satt bist

und schöne Häuser erbaust und darin wohnst, und deine Rinder und Schafe und Silber und Gold und alles, was du hast, sich mehrt, daß dann dein Herz sich nicht überhebe..." (5. Mose 8, 11-14). Es ist nicht schwer eine Parallele zu ziehen zwischen Israeliten und Mennoniten. Viele der Letzteren hat der Herr auch aus dem Land der Knechtschaft und der Armut herausgeführt und in ein Land gebracht, wo sie in kurzer Zeit wohlhabend geworden sind. Wie schnell vergißt man jedoch Knechtschaft und Flucht in guten Verhältnissen, und überhebt sich im Blick auf irdisches Vermögen.

Im Neuen Testament finden wir dieselbe Warnung. Paulus gibt dem Timotheus folgende Anweisung: "Den Reichen von dieser Welt gebiete, daß sie nicht stolz seien..." (1. Tim. 6, 17). Der Zusammenhang zeigt klar, daß es sich hier um reiche Brüder in den Gemeinden handelt. Der Stolz will sich oft mit dem Reichtum verbinden. In Sprüche 18, 23 lesen wir: "Ein Reicher antwortet stolz." Gottes Wort lehrt, daß der Herr dem Hoffärtigen widersteht, aber dem Demütigen Gnade gibt. Gott helfe uns, die Sünde der Selbstüberhebung und Selbstverherrlichung im persönlichen sowie auch im Gemeindeleben zu bekämpfen. Materieller Wohlstand fördert auch das

2. Selbstvertrauen.

Großer irdischer Besitz gibt dem Menschen ein Gefühl der Sicherheit, der Macht, der Unabhängigkeit. In dem oben erwähnten Wort aus 5. Mose warnt der Herr auch vor dieser Gefahr: "Du möchtest sonst sagen in deinem Herzen: Meine Kräfte und meiner Hände Stärke haben mir dies Vermögen ausgerichtet" (8, 17). Es ist so natürlich und menschlich auch den materiellen Wohlstand seinem eigenen Wissen, seiner eigenen Anstrengung, seiner eigenen Fähigkeit zuzuschreiben. Es erfordert einen hohen Grad der Geistlichkeit, auch bei zunehmendem Reichtum ein kindliches Gottvertrauen und eine demütige Herzensstellung zu bewahren. Das Leben Abraham's gibt uns den schlagenden Beweis für die Möglichkeit solch einer Glaubensstellung.

Materieller Wohlstand erzeugt auch oft eine

3. Selbstzufriedenheit.

Der Reichtum gehört auch zu den Dornen, die den Samen des Wortes Gottes und das Verlangen nach geistlichen Schätzen ersticken (vrgl. Lukas 8, 14). Vermehrung des Besitzes raubt oft den Blick für die unsichtbare, ewige Welt, und man findet volle Befriedigung in irdischen Dingen. Die Lebensphilosophie des reichen Kornbauers ist leider auch die Denkweise mancher Christen: "Liebe Seele, du hast einen Vorrat auf viele Jahre; habe nun Ruhe, iß, trink und habe guten Mut!" (Luk. 12, 19). Das schärfste Urteil in den Sendschreiben wird über die selbstzufriedene, reiche Gemeinde zu Laodizea ausgesprochen, die da bekennt, "Ich bin reich und habe gar satt, und bedarf nichts!" (Offb. 3, 17). Merken wir etwas von dieser Selbstzufriedenheit in unsern Gemeinden? Materieller Wohlstand führt auch oft zur

4. Selbstverhärtung.

Das Sprichwort sagt: Habsucht macht den Menschen zum Stein, Wollust zum Tier, Hochmut zum Teufel. Die Liebe zum Mitmenschen wird erstickt durch die Liebe zum Gelde. Das geschieht auch bei Gotteskindern. Johannes schreibt: "Wenn aber jemand dieser Welt Güter hat und sieht seinen Bruder darben und schließt sein Herz vor ihm zu, — wie bleibt die Liebe Gottes bei ihm?" (1. Joh. 3, 17). Jakobus klagt über die Reichen (Gemeindeglieder), die sich Schätze gesammelt in den letzten Tagen und die ihren Arbeitern den Lohn vorenthalten (Jak. 5:3-4).

Nach der Lehre der Heiligen Schrift ist der materielle Wohlstand nicht nur ein großes Hinderniß zum Eingang in das Reich Gottes (vgl. der reiche Jüngling, Luk. 18, 18-27), sondern auch eine große Gefahr für die Bürger dieses Reiches. Die Mennonitengeschichte, sowie auch die allgemeine Kirchengeschichte, liefert manche tragischen Beispiele für die angeführten Warnungen. Nur zu oft hat es sich bewahrheitet, daß die Frömmigkeit den Reichtum gebar, und daß später das Kind sich wandte und die Mutter tötete. Oft kann man diesen Vorgang in der zweiten Generation beobachten. Manche Eltern, die einmal als arme Immigranten nach Kanada kamen, haben es durch Fleiß, Frömmigkeit und Gottes Segen zum Wohlstand gebracht. Ihre Kinder, jedoch, verlieren sich im Wohlleben und weltlichen Vergnügungen und kehren Gott und dem Glauben der Väter den Rücken.

Wie begegnen wir dieser Gefahr in unsern Gemeinden? Was ist unsere Aufgabe als Diener am Wort in der Überwindung dieser materialistischen Gesinnung? Wir befassen uns weiter kurz mit dieser Frage.

II. Die erfolgreiche Bekämpfung dieser Gefahr.

Wir möchten drei Linien der geistlichen Gegenwirkung unterstreichen.

1. Durch Vertiefung des Glaubenslebens.

Der Erzvater Abraham hatte bei seinem großen Reichtum sehr leicht in eine irdische Gesinnung verfallen können. Was schützte ihn vor dieser Gefahr? Hebräer 11, 9 gibt uns die Antwort: "Durch den Glauben ist er ein Fremdling gewesen im verheißenen Lande als in einem fremden und wohnte in Hütten..." Unser Glaube ist die Siegesmacht der auch diese Welt überwunden hat (vgl. 1. Joh. 5, 4, n. Menge). Der Glaube gibt eine richtige Perspektive zur Bewertung des Besitzes, weil er mit der Realität der unsichtbaren Welt rechnet (Hebr. 11, 1). Er sieht die Eitelkeit und Vergänglichkeit aller irdischen Dinge, und bekennt mit Paulus: "... was sichtbar ist, das ist zeitlich; was aber unsichtbar ist das ist ewig." (2. Kor. 4, 18). Wer erst einmal innerlich tief ergriffen worden ist von der Herrlichkeit Jesu, den wird kein Glanz dieser Welt mehr blenden können.

In der Belehrung der Gläubigen ist die geschichtliche Beleuchtung dieser Gefahr auch von Bedeutung. Am Wege unserer

Geschichte stehen manche Warnungstafeln. In Rußland waren es Revolution und Bürgerkrieg (1917-1921), und in Kanada Depression und Dürre (1929-1937) die in kurzer Zeit mit dem Wohlstand aufräumten. Paulus braucht die Geschichte seines Volkes als Warnung für die Gemeinden: "Das ist aber uns zum Vorbilde geschehen, daß wir nicht uns gelüsten lassen des Boesen, gleichwie jene gelüftet hat" (1. Kor. 10, 6). Geschichte wiederholt sich nur für diejenigen, die nichts aus der Geschichte lernen. Weiter muß dieser Gefahr entgegengewirkt werden.

2. Durch Vermehrung der Opferwilligkeit.

Das erfolgreichste Gegenmittel zur Überwindung des Geizes und des Materialismus ist reichliches Geben. Der Herr Jesus gab seinen Jüngern, die auch die Neigung offenbarten nach irdischen Dingen zu trachten, diesen Rat: "Sammelt euch aber Schätze im Himmel, da sie weder Motten noch Rost fressen, und da die Diebe nicht nachgraben und stehlen" (Matth. 6, 20). Der Apostel Paulus gibt dem Timotheus eine ähnliche Anweisung zur Bekämpfung dieser Gefahr in der Gemeinde. "Den Reichen von dieser Welt gebiete, ... daß sie Gutes tun, reich werden an guten Werken, gern geben, behilflich seien" (1. Tim. 6, 18). Hier haben wir das Arbeitsprogramm (und die einzige Rettung!) für unsere wohlhabenden Gemeinden der Gegenwart.

Wenn wir auch als M.B. Gemeinden eine Vergrößerung in den Missionsbeiträgen verzeichnen können, so bleibt doch noch viel Raum zur Verbesserung. Im Blick auf die größeren Einnahmen, größere Gliederzahl, und größere Inflation, ist es fraglich ob wir heute mehr geben als vor 10 Jahren. Wenn der materielle Wohlstand uns nicht zum Fluch werden soll, dann müssen die Prinzipien der biblischen Haushalterschaft sich bei uns noch in einem größeren Masse praktisch durchsetzen.

3. Durch Verstärkung der Zukunftshoffnung.

Die Erwartung des wiederkommenden Herrn hat einen bestimmenden Einfluß auf die Verwaltung der anvertrauten irdischen Güter. In der Heiligen Schrift werden rechte Haushalterschaft und die lebendige Hoffnung auf Christi wiederkunft oft verbunden (Matth. 25, 14-30; Lukas 19, 11-18, u.a.). Die Gemeinde zu Thessalonich, die eine starke Zukunftshoffnung offenbarte, war willig beizusteuern für die Not anderer "nach allem Vermögen... und über Vermögen..." (2. Kor. 8, 3).

Die Neubelebung der Hoffnung der Wiederkunft Jesu ist das wirksamste Gegenmittel gegen die Gefahren des materiellen Wohlstandes. Es fehlt an einer stärkeren Betonung dieser Wahrheit in unsern Gemeinden.

Gott zieht sein Volk durch Güte und Ernst. Wenn seine Güte uns nicht zur Buße leitet, dann braucht Er Heimsuchungen. Ich schließe mit einem Gebet des verstorbenen Glaubensvaters B. B. Janz für unsere Bruderschaft: "Wenn du uns nicht ziehen kannst durch Güte, dann laß Trübsal kommen, damit wir uns wieder näher bei der Himmelstür aussiedeln." J. A. Toews

FINDING PEOPLE

In the missionary concern of the church one hears much about outreach, witnessing, evangelism, leading others to the Lord, and so forth. But one seldom hears about "finding people." Yet when we look into the Bible, we soon realize that it puts much stress upon this aspect of the missionary program. Immediately after the fall of man, God walked in the garden and called Adam, saying "Where art thou?" In Luke 15 we read of a shepherd who leaves the ninety and nine in the wilderness and goes after that which was lost until he finds it (Luke 15:4). And when he has found it, he tells his neighbors "Rejoice with me, for I have **found** my sheep which was lost." In the same chapter Jesus tells the story of a woman who lights a candle and sweeps the house and seeks diligently till she **finds** the one piece of silver that was lost. The father of the prodigal son, after his return, rejoiced, saying, "For this my son was dead and is alive, he was lost and is **found**" (Luke 15:24). In the first chapter of the Gospel of John we read that Andrew "first **findeth** his own brother Simon" (v.41) and then in verse 43 it says "The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee and **findeth** Philip". Again we read (vs. 45) "Philip **findeth** Nathaneal." Such emphasis is not without significance and in this article we want to consider this aspect of the missionary program.

I. What is Meant by this Term "Finding People"

From the Scripture passages above, we soon recognize that there is more implied in the term "finding" than locating a person or a thing geographically. God knew where Adam was and yet he called, "Where art thou?" In John I "Philip findeth Nathaneal", but Jesus later on tells him that "Before Philip called thee, even when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee." In other words Jesus knew where he was, but he still had to be found by Philip. This is even more true when we think of Luke 19:10 "For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost". Here seeking precedes finding. Certainly Jesus did not come to locate people; in his seeking there is more involved. Using biblical language, we could speak more in terms of one finding the heart of the other. In modern language we may speak of finding the other person's viewpoint, his opinion or, to use a psychological term, his cognitions. It is possible for two persons to be very close to each other geographically, but never to find each other in the process of communication. Father and son may sit together at the same table, in the same house, eat from the same food and yet inwardly be far apart from each other because they are not able to see an issue from the same perspective. The son looks at it from one point of view, the father from another. The father may be perfectly correct in the opinion which he endeavors to impose upon his son, but in his effort to communicate he very likely will not succeed until he has made a sincere effort to find his son's point of view,

and then to relate what he has to say, to his understanding of his son's position. Sometimes husband and wife live under the same roof but cannot find each other. Two brethren may be in the same church but still be far apart. How shall they ever get together unless one is willing to find the other. This principle also holds true when the Christian seeks to communicate the saving message of the Gospel to an unbeliever. He must first establish a point of contact before he can actually begin to communicate. Without such a contact all his convincing arguments will be of little avail because he has not first found the people.

2. Finding People Precedes Bringing People to Christ

Turning again to John 1, we read "Andrew first findeth his own brother Simon" and then in verse 42 "and he brought him to Jesus." Finding precedes bringing. We could also say: finding precedes saving, "for the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." Seeking is an effort to find and precedes saving. There are many Christians who would be ready to lead a soul to Christ after that soul has been found. Finding something is always a difficult task. When something is lost it takes a determined effort to find it. Not very many people have enjoyed searching for things and so there are many who sit in the "Comfortable Pew" and wonder why there is no one to be led to the Lord. The answer is that there has not been enough seeking and finding of people. We notice in John 4 the example of Jesus as he dealt with the woman at Jacob's well. She came to the well, a person of ill repute, who evidently was not interested in spiritual things, and there she met the Lord. It's intriguing to read how the Lord **found** her. This woman was thinking about water and the Lord spoke to her about water, before he could offer her the living water. Yet after he had **found** her she was so taken up with what He had to say that we read, (vs. 28) "The woman then left her water pot and went her way into the city and said to the men "Come see a man which told me all things whichsoever I did, is not this the Christ?" Paul, the great Soul-winner, was one day preaching in the synagogue at Antioch in Pisidia. We may take for granted that he was speaking to a congregation of Jews. We note how (vs. 16, 17 and on) he points out facts favorable to Israel. He says, "Men of Israel and ye that fear God, give audience. The God of this people of Israel chose our fathers and exalted the people and they dwelt as strangers in the land of Egypt" and so on. Then he begins to speak about David. Who of the Jews would'nt listen to a man who speaks in this way? But after he has found them he tells them, (vs. 23) "Of this man's seed hath God, according to His promise, raised unto Israel a Savior, Jesus." Again when we find Paul speaking to the Athenians (Acts 17) we notice (vs. 28) that he does not quote from the Pentateuch or the prophets, but he speaks to them about the unknown god whom they ignorantly worshipped and tells the Athenians "For in him we live, and move and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have

said." Paul made a conscious effort to find the Athenians, by quoting from their poets and then he preached the Gospel to them. The story is told of B. H. Trumbull, the one-time editor of the Sunday School Times, that during the prohibition days this man of God sat next to another on the train, who offered him alcoholic drinks from a hidden bottle. Trumbull refused. The man took a drink and hid the bottle. After a while he offered Trumbull a drink again. Trumbull again refused, and the man took another drink and hid the bottle. For the third time he offered Trumbull a drink, but Trumbull again refused. Then the man took his third drink and said to Trumbull, "I guess you think I am an awful fellow to drink this way." Dr. Trumbull responded, "Do you know what I think of you. You are one of the most generous persons I ever met. You have offered me three times something which I have refused." Thus he had found the man. Before they got off the train, they knelt at the foot of the Cross where the drinking man experienced Christ in his heart. Jesus was a friend of publicans and sinners and that is why he was so successful in reaching them. This does not mean that Jesus participated in their sins. No! A Christian never can justify participation in sin by attaching to it a missionary motive. But his attitude to erring and sinning men is such that, even though he cannot condone sin, he loves the sinner and is his best friend. Many are willing to go out and to knock on doors and invite somebody to church once or twice. If then they don't come, they just go back to their churches and complain about the hardened sinners in their community who will not come to church. Finding the neighbors means more than just meeting them and urging them to come to church. It may include this, but before such persons can be brought to Christ, their hearts must be found. This is the task we often overlook. And yet this is the biblical sequence, first we need to find them, and then we can bring them.

3. The Prerequisites for Finding

a) The initiative must come from the one who wants to find, not from the one who needs to be found. So many Christians expect the initial move to come from those who need Christ. The Bible teaches us otherwise. In John 1, we see that Andrew who had found Christ took the initiative to find his brother Simon. Philip, who had been found by Christ had to take the initiative to find Nathaneal. The shepherd in Luke 15, took the initiative in finding the lost sheep. The woman searched for the lost coin, and the Christian of our day needs to find lost men and women. The reason they are not found in the church is because Christians haven't found them outside of the church.

b) To find requires persistence. In Luke 15 we read of the good Shepherd, that he went out "...after the one which is lost **until** he finds it." And of the woman we read that she searched diligently for the lost coin **until** she found it. This persistent effort

to find the lost is rare among God's people today. We may invite a person once or give him a tract; we may do it again, but if then there are no results we may feel that we have done our part. But the Bible says "**until** he find it." Many begin, but few persist.

This seeking and finding requires forgetting self, and giving priority to the one who is to be found. We cannot expect the unbeliever to take an interest in what we have to offer before we take a general interest in him. His problems, his concerns, his burdens, his needs have to become part of us and have a place in our planning. Many a Christian is amazed that the unbeliever cannot see the Christian point of view. What effort has he made to see the other person's point of view? We need to arise and find people.

4. Finding People is a Means to an End

Finding people in the missionary sense is never an end in itself. Andrew findeth his own brother (John 1:41) he brings him to Jesus (vs. 42). Philip findeth Nathaneal (vs. 5) with the purpose of introducing him to Christ. There is a danger that we become pre-occupied with finding and make many friends, but never introduce them to Jesus Christ. Many Christians communicate to unbelievers, but never communicate **Christ** to them. Finding alone brings no results unless it is followed by a purposeful endeavor to introduce the found person to the only Name "under Heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." Popularity is not the substitute for witnessing, but it may be helpful in opening the door by which the Saviour may come in. It is in this spirit that Paul says "I am made all things to all men that I might by all means save some" (I Corinthians 9:22).

Jacob J. Toews

A SERMON

LOVE IN ACTION

I Corinthians 13:4-7

Very few people ask for a definition of love and few are able to define it. However, most people know unmistakably what love is when they see it in action. If love is difficult to define, it is not difficult to discern. The average man is less interested in great orations on love than he is in a practical manifestation of love. He will listen to a verbal description of love, but in order to be convinced of its genuineness, he must see it in active demonstration. For this reason Paul does not attempt to define love but simply pictures love in action. He shows us what love can do, how it feels, and what it refrains from doing. Love is a dynamic force which achieves the greatest wonders. It breaks down walls of separation and builds bridges over chasms which no other force could span.

In some fifteen terse statements Paul pictures the operation of love as a power that can transform all human life. These statements are both negative and positive. They show us what love will NOT do and what it will do. We want to adhere to Paul's order and begin with an emphasis on the negative characteristics of love which are really part of its positive perfection.

A. What love will not do

Many of the base and despicable feelings and actions would be conspicuously absent if love were permitted to rule.

1. **Love envieth not.** It never boils with jealousy. Envy is pain at the sight of a superior excellence in another. It is a vice which arises from a discontent with one's own condition as compared with others. It shows its ugly head in the classroom, on the sports ground, in the home, in the pulpit and in every other conceivable place. It is one of the basest vices of which man is capable and it leads to all kinds of strife and schism. But love is opposed to envy. It does not begrudge others their superior gifts. It harbors no irritation when outstripped by a competitor. It does not walk away in sullen silence when a rival receives the prize and the praise. Love enables man to suppress the evil passions of his heart and to rejoice in his neighbor's prosperity.

2. **Love vaunteth not itself.** It is not boastful. It does not seek to display superior gifts or to attract unmerited attention. It does not make a foolish display of self-importance after the manner of a braggart. We have all observed that some people have a greater disposition toward showing off than others. Some of these have real ability, but along with it there is a vanity which limits its usefulness. Others are marked by an absence of ability but lack the wisdom to see it, and by boasting of something that is not there, make themselves the laughing stock of all. Love will not do this. It seeks the good of others; how can it seek their admiration?

3. **Love is not puffed up with pride.** It does not swell and swagger. It is not arrogant toward inferiors. The proud man has a mind full of himself, of thoughts of his own greatness and importance. He is inflated by his self-conceit. You have seen these people striding into church and walking about in society bloated with a feeling of their own importance. You have felt the chill that emanated from them. Now this is not the way of love. Love is the outflowing of the heart's affection in kindness toward others. He who is always thinking of the welfare of his fellow-men, has neither time nor inclination for thoughts of self-exaltation.

4. **Love does not behave itself unseemly.** It does not act with rudeness. Regardless of circumstances, love is courteous. It permits nothing of that which is vulgar. People do not always see eye to eye and hence express differences of opinion, but such a situation need not give rise to flaring tempers. Love always includes con-

siderateness and exercises self-restraint and dignity. It controls the tone of voice, the expression of the eye and the muscular play of the countenance. The art of politeness is not learned exclusively from books on etiquette; it comes from within and is guided by consideration for the feelings of others. Lack of love rather than lack of knowledge leads to bad manners. The fostering of true love will do more to promote courtesy in human intercourse than all instruction in rules of etiquette.

5. **Love seeketh not her own.** It does not insist upon its rights. It sees the rights of others as well as the rights of self. It does not demand precedence, recognition or applause. Love gives and does not grasp. It has an eye for other's wants and sorrows. It moves about among men with gracious mien and with open hand.

6. **Love is not easily provoked.** Its temper is not quick, nor are its words hasty. Much of peevishness, anger and resentment springs from the wounding of the imaginary being that goes under our name, is fondled with our caresses and idolized in our vanity. This coddled self is often very sensitive and intolerant of criticism. Any little spark which falls on it ignites the ill temper. But love is not so. It is good-natured. The best cure for an irritable temper is the persevering cultivation of unselfish love. Chrysostom has said, "As a spark which falls into the sea and hurts not the sea, but is itself extinguished, so an evil thing befalling a loving soul will be extinguished without disquietude."

7. **Love thinketh no evil.** You may know of people who take good account of evil, who make a rigorous record of the injuries received from others, who cherish the memory of wrongs done to them, against a day of retribution. This is not the way of love. Love does not store up memories of wrongs, of grievances, of wounds. Love wipes out the record of wrong-doing from the memory and knows nothing of vindictiveness. It is able to forgive and to forget. It writes our personal wrongs in ashes or in water.

8. **Love rejoices not in iniquity.** One of the worst forms of malignity is when people exult over the fall of others into sin. This is not mere imagination. This is fact. There are those who are glad when others go wrong. It is clear that such people are not motivated by love. Love finds no secret satisfaction in discovering the moral weakness or the hidden wickedness of a rival. It is not eager to spread an evil report. It never glories in the triumph of wrong. Love grieves over the overthrow and prostration of others and seeks to lift them out of the mire.

Just imagine living in a community where love has opposed and destroyed the vices of jealousy, boastfulness and pride, discourtesy, selfishness, irritableness, vindictiveness and malignity. You can help to build such a society by permitting love to dominate your life.

Now let us also concentrate on the positive manifestations of love. Let us see love not only in the lecture hall, but out in the field of action where it speaks in concrete terms.

B. What love will do.

1. **It is longsuffering and kind.** Love can suffer. If it couldn't, it would not be a virtue. It suffers from the strokes inflicted by provoking and injurious individuals. Such you can find in the family, in civil life, and even in the church. It is almost impossible to mix with human society without encountering many occasions for irritations. Under these varied circumstances love provides the power to suffer and to suffer long. It is patient toward others and patient with itself. It does not give place to bitterness and wrath; it harbors no resentment. It forgives and is kind. Love finds no time to brood over its ills, to magnify its afflictions. Rather it displays a sweetness of temper during its most painful experiences. Its sympathy extends to those who seek to do harm and while it endures evil it also confers a blessing. Looking again at the meek and gentle sufferer we can see the traces of pain on his face, but beyond that we can also see the imprint of kindness without any trace of envy or malice.

2. **Love rejoiceth in the truth.** This positive statement is placed alongside its negative, "love rejoiceth not in iniquity," i.e., it is not glad when others go wrong and fall into sin. Contrariwise, it rejoices in the victory of truth over falsehood. How many false accusations have been maliciously reported to injure others! How many false suspicions have been aroused by slanderous reports to the detriment of innocent men and women. How many of these reports are eagerly received and devoured without further investigation by those who are motivated by envy and jealousy. But in such instances again love triumphs over envy. It rejoices when truth defeats calumny and when suspicions are proved unfounded; when wrong is vanquished and when right prevails. Love celebrates when truth wins out over falsehood.

3. **Love beareth all things.** Reference is here made to the quiet bearing of the imperfections of other people. Love endures wrongs and evils and covers them with a beautiful silence. True love forms the habit of concealing and covering up the faults and infirmities of our brethren. It does not mean that we condone these faults,

ORDER OF WORSHIP — Continued from page 3)

in our public services and to study anew the principles that underly the methods we employ. Until we achieve the forms most suited to our needs let us not hesitate to experiment in matters such as the order of a service. At the same time, let us see if we cannot gain more benefits from these experiments by conducting them with the purpose of eventual **universal** acceptance by the entire Brotherhood and sharing our findings with others to a much greater degree.

Peter Klassen

but rather that we do not find it necessary to publish them abroad. Where love is absent the faults and failures of people are carefully sought and then multiplied and magnified. They constitute the topic of many a conversation much to the harm and hurt of the people concerned and of the causes which they represent. How much good could be done and harm avoided by hiding the infirmities of good men and the human defects which are to be found even in a good cause. Love is not out to seek human faults and to nail them to the billboards. Rather it is ready to make excuses for others and to throw a kindly mantle over all their faults. Love will also bear the faults of others on wings of prayer and intercede on their behalf for forgiveness and victory.

4. **Love believeth all things.** I understand these words to mean that love prefers to take the best and kindest views of all men and all circumstances as long as it is possible to do so. As such it is opposed to the spirit of suspicion which questions every act and every word and every motive. Love cherishes faith even in people who are under suspicion. It bestows a trust upon his fellow men which enables him to take them at their highest and best. It searches for good qualities in men who are most disagreeable and repulsive. It finds extreme joy in bringing out some good hidden qualities which it can use to lay over that which is not so good. Where there is reason to distrust even love will distrust but even then it makes charitable allowances and often gives the other man the benefits of the doubt. Such a showing of confidence has often yielded great reward. It has disclosed unsuspected qualities of goodness and strength even in the most depraved. It has succeeded in winning the confidence of others and thus opened the door for offering further and much-needed assistance.

But what is to be done when confidence has been misplaced, when circumstances have compelled one to cease trusting? Will joyful confidence then be replaced with sourness and gloom? Will love yield to despair? No. —

5. **Love hopeth all things.** Even in the gravest crisis love will not despair. If it can no longer hope for acquittal, it looks confidently for reformation and recovery. Look at the parent who in love has patiently borne with the infirmities of his son. He was the last one to believe the disturbing stories that were circulating in his community about him. But now the indisputable evidence has been turned in and the boy stands convicted. Does love give up hope? No. He hopes where others without love have ceased to hope. He does not permit despondency and despair to wreck these hopes regardless of how long he has to wait. True Christian love is anchored in God and hopes on. True love knows something of the mighty forces engaged on the side of goodness. It puts its trust in a great and loving God who is able to change the human heart by a birth from above.

6. **Love also endureth all things.** It gives us the power to en-

sure anything, whether it be the many offences of a brother, the sufferings and self-denials and persecutions of the life spent in doing good, or the patient waiting for the restoration of an erring child. Love is undaunted and undiscouraged in the face of prolonged delay. It does not grow weary when hope is deferred. Someone has given the following interpretation of love, and we quote:

*"Patience is love on the anvil, bearing blow after blow of suffering.
Zeal is love in the harvest field, never tiring of toil.
Meekness is love in company when it vaunteth not itself.
Perseverance is love on a journey, pressing on with unflagging step
toward the end.
Joy is love making its own sunshine, where others see nothing
but gloom.
Power is love driving the soul's chariot wheels over all opposition."*

Such is the true nature of love. It is a grace not only difficult to define, but also difficult to imitate, counterfeit, or to conceal, but it can be possessed. It is more to be desired than any gift with its attendant marvel and mystery. May it be the earnest and honest desire of your heart to possess this love in action.

J. H. Quiring

BOOK REVIEW

From the Exile to Christ

by Werner Foerster, translated by G. E. Harris
(Fortress Press, 1964, 247 pp., \$4.85).

Der Schreiber dieses Buches — welches vor einigen Jahren in deutscher Sprache unter der Überschrift: "Das Judentum zur Zeit Jesu und der Apostel," erschien — ist Werner Foerster. Foerster ist Professor für Neues Testament an der Universität Münster, und darf einigen Lesern bekannt sein durch seine Beiträge zu Kittels "Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament."

Es sind in jüngster Zeit manche Versuche gemacht worden, das Judentum zur Zeit Jesu ins rechte Licht zu stellen, und daher ist es etwas schwer auf diesem Feld neue Furchen zu ziehen. Förster ist es gelungen das große und verwickelte Gebiet in leicht leserlicher Weise darzulegen.

Der erste Teil des Buches gibt uns einen geschichtlichen Überblick. Israels Geschichte von der babylonischen Gefangenschaft an, bis zur Zerstörung Jerusalems 70 A.D., wird in diesem Teil zusammengefaßt. Die Herrschaft der Ptolmäer und Syrer, die Makkabäer Kriege, die Hasidim, die religiösen Ansiedlungen beim Toten Meer, die Entstehung der jüdischen Sekten, die Zeloten, die Herodianer, die Römer, usw. sind einige der Themen die Foerster bespricht.

Der zweite Teil des Buches handelt von dem religiösen Leben des Judentums zur Zeit Jesu, mit besonderer Betonung der theologischen Ansichten die im neutestamentlichen Judentum zu Hause waren. Unter anderem beschreibt er das jüdi-

sche Weltbild, den Gebrauch des Gottesnamens, und die Bedeutung der Torah in Israel.

Von besonderem Wert ist Foersters Zusammenfassung der Zukunftserwartungen des Judentums. Die Erwartungen des messianischen Reiches, die Versuche die Zeit des Anbruches dieses Reiches festzustellen, die Messiahsfrage, das Gericht und der neue Äon — alles sind Themen, die viel Licht auf das Neue Testament werfen.

Zum Schluß behandelt Foerster das Problem der Sünde und die Frage der Erlösung wie diese im Judentum verstanden wurden. Auch nur eine geringe Bekanntschaft mit den Antworten die im Judentum auf diese und ähnliche Fragen gegeben wurden, gibt neue Perspektive für das Studium des Neuen Testaments.

Nun gilt es ja bei all diesem wertvollen Material welches Foerster an den Tag bringt, nicht zu vergessen, daß es eigentlich keine einheitliche Theologie im Judentum gab. Die Rabbiner gingen sich weit auseinander in ihrer Erklärung und Anwendung des Alten Testaments. Daher

darf die Lehre, oder ein Ausspruch, eines Rabbiners, nie als die offizielle Ansicht des Judentums verstanden werden.

Es darf einigen ungemütlich werden, so viel Ähnlichkeiten zwischen dem Judentum und dem Neuen Testament zu sehen, aber das Gegenteil würde eine viel schwierigere Frage hervorheben. Doch ist zu beachten, daß "Ähnlichkeiten" in Sprache und Weltbild die Einzigartigkeit der neutestamentlichen Botschaft nicht beeinträchtigen. Eigentlich kann man die Einzigartigkeit des Neuen Testaments nur dann recht sehen, wenn man die Umwelt des Neuen Testaments kennen lernt. Die Botschaft Jesu und der Apostel war 'in der Welt, aber nicht von der Welt.'

Das Buch ist ein wertvolles Werkzeug in der Hand eines Predigers. Foerster schreibt hier nicht in einem Gelehrtenjargon, und macht dadurch allen Predigern, Sonntagschullehrern, und wer sonst das Vorrecht hat Gottes Wort zu lehren, dieses wertvolle Stück der Schriftgelehrsamkeit zugänglich. D. Ewert.

Comparative Religion

This is the study of the various religions of the world in their relationship of similarity and dissimilarity. It is obviously legitimate in itself, and to the extent that Christianity has the external features of religion it may rightly be included in this type of investigation. Indeed, a higher legitimation may be found in the fact that with varying degrees of corruption all religions derive originally from natural revelation. On the other hand, certain dangers are to be noted. First, comparative religion is often applied to the explaining away of all religion and therefore of Christianity. Second, it has the result of making religion a purely human phenomenon and thus subjectivizing it. Third, it entails a relativizing of Christianity as perhaps the best religion, yet only one among many others. Finally, it obscures the proper work of Christian Theology, substituting historical investigation for biblical exposition and dogmatics. It has thus to be realized that comparative religion can teach us only the less important things concerning the form of the divine revelation in Jesus Christ and our response to it. If this is firmly grasped, and it is given only a minor role in theology, it is not without a certain interest and value. But if not, it denies from the very outset the basic factor of God's own Word and work, and in the hands of friends and foes alike its results are necessarily mischievous.

(G. W. Bromiley, *Baker's Dictionary of Theology*)

SPECIAL EVENTS AT M.B. BIBLE COLLEGE—1965-66

I want to thank all our readers for your interest in and prayerful support of the College.

We are about to begin the twenty-second year of instruction. Preparations for the opening of school are almost complete. Enthusiasm among faculty members runs high as we think of the 140 students who have already made application or have informed us of their intention to return.

I would like to call your attention to a few of the anticipated highlights of the year.

The Deeper Life Emphasis Week, concluding with a day of prayer, is scheduled for November 15-19. Although the deeper Christian life receives emphasis throughout the year in classroom and chapel, this special concentration on the true meaning of discipleship and the way of the cross has a decidedly positive effect on the lives of faculty and students.

The Annual Missionary Conference will be held February 10-13. We consider ourselves fortunate in having received the consent of Dr. Eugene Nida, translation secretary of the American Bible Society, to serve as guest speaker. The Conference will bring to us a number of choice servants of the Lord and also some representatives from our Mission Boards. God has used these conferences in the past to lead students to a more definite commitment to the Lord and to clarify the question of the call to service.

We invite our pastors to put forth a special effort to attend this conference and to share these blessings with their congregations. The conference could develop into a wonderful occasion for all pastors to meet in order to gain a deeper insight into the larger mission program and to enter into consultation with each other with reference to our own missionary efforts.

This Conference will be followed immediately by a two-week **Ministers' Course**. Further details will be announced in due time. Our intention is to make the course as practical and pertinent as possible for our ministers.

We are happy to announce the **Conrad Grebel Lectures** for March 15-18. These lectures are administered by a lectureship committee appointed by the Mennonite Board of Education. Present members are.

NELSON E. KAUFFMAN, chairman, Elkhart, Indiana
 PAUL ERB, Executive secretary, Scottdale, Pennsylvania
 IRWIN B. HORST, Harrisonburg, Virginia
 GUY F. HERSHBERGER, Goshen, Indiana
 GIDEON G. YODER, Hesston, Kansas

This Committee appoints the lecturer, approves the subject and arranges for the delivery of the lectures at one or more places. The lectures for this series have been written by John C. Wenger and are entitled, "The Word Written".

We covet the privilege of sharing many of these blessings with the larger constituency.

J. H. Quiring