

May 5, 1961

Professor H. Richard Niebuhr
Yale University Divinity School
409 Prospect
New Haven, Connecticut

Dear Dr. Niebuhr:

I appreciated hearing from you. Please think nothing of the misplacement of the copy of the Bultmann letter, since, of course, I have the original and it is no trouble for me to get another photocopy. I am sending you another such copy enclosed, in case you would be interested in examining his response further.

I am deeply involved in the hammering out of the core course in Christian ethics, which I am teaching for the first time this spring. I will enclose a syllabus in case you would care to see how it has shaped up. This summer I am planning to reserve all my time for research and further inquiry into areas of curiosity to me. I am deeply interested in the growing edge of existential psychiatry in psychology in this country and abroad. I am also interested in pursuing further my interests in a deontological Christian ethic. Bishop Stephen Neill examined my dissertation and suggested that I might wish to boil down the Bultmann and Barth sections to the point where this study could become an introduction to my own constructive approach to a Christian ethical obedience. I am considering doing some further work along this line, and I would appreciate any suggestions you might have.

We at Phillips are presently engaged in the important task of trying to acquire a seminary dean who could give some really excellent leadership to our community during the future years. You may be interested to know that Herndon Wagers visited us last weekend concerning this matter and is now deliberating on this possibility. After having been

his colleague at Perkins, and after having known him for several years, I feel that Herndon could give the kind of academic and administrative leadership to this community which would enable a new image of theological seriousness to be projected throughout the Disciples' Brotherhood. Our faculty hopes very much that he will come.

It would be a great pleasure to see you and talk with you. I hope before too long that it will be possible.

Yours cordially and sincerely,

Thomas C. Oden

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