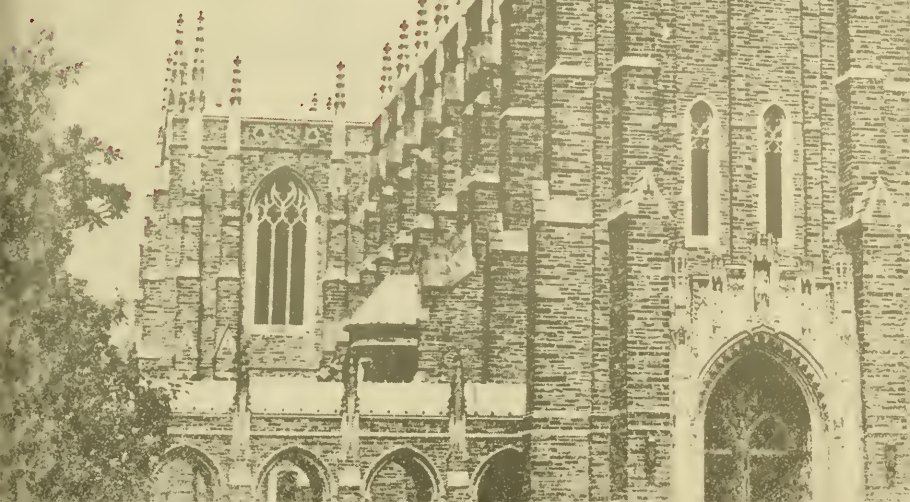


THE DUKE DIVINITY SCHOOL REVIEW

Autumn 1964



'Pacem in Terris'

... Let us, then, pray with all fervor for this peace which our divine Redeemer came to bring us. May He banish from the souls of men whatever might endanger peace. May He transform all men into witnesses of truth, justice and brotherly love. May He illumine with His light the minds of rulers so that, besides caring for the proper material welfare of their people, they may also guarantee them the fairest gift of peace.

Finally, may Christ inflame the desires of all men to break through the barriers which divide them, to strengthen the bonds of mutual love, to learn to understand one another and to pardon those who have done them wrong. Through His power and inspiration may all peoples welcome each other to their hearts as brothers, and may the peace they long for ever flower and ever reign among them. . . .

April 11, 1963

POPE JOHN XXIII
Papal Encyclical

THE
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'Issues Which the Church Must Face'

BISHOP EARL G. HUNT, JR.
Charlotte Area, The Methodist Church

This is a strange age, one in which it would be easy and perhaps comfortable to subscribe to some form of apocalypticism. We are uneasily conscious of great movements whose currents are as difficult to trace as those of hidden subterranean streams. We have read the prophets of Christianity's downfall, like the gentle Santayana who said nearly forty years ago, "Romantic Christendom—picturesque, passionate, unhappy episode—may be coming to an end. Such a catastrophe would be no reason for despair. Nothing lasts forever."

It is so customary for Methodist preachers to deal glibly in statistics, programs, and inconsequential dialectics that they often have little mental energy left to appraise with sober judgment the signs of their times. At the risk of seeming presumptuous, and with assurances of my own deep humility and trembling uncertainty as I make my attempt, I wish to try to focus our minds upon certain broad background problems and facts that appear to be shaping and conditioning our present religious climate, remembering how Shaw said to Canterbury, "I rate a man or a church not by the reasons they give for things, but by the things for which they give reasons."

I

The first and fundamental issue confronting churchmen today is that of *vast and almost incredible change*. In his *La Grande Chartreuse*, Matthew Arnold used this language:

Between two worlds—one dead,
The other powerless to be born.

But his rhetoric is too mild to describe the revolutionary turbulence of our day. Perhaps a better commentary on this moment in history is the sentence spoken by the Angel Gabriel to "De Lawd" in *Green Pastures*: "Everything nailed down is a-comin' loose!"

[This address was delivered at the Divinity School Convocation, October 27, 1964.]

For example, there is *the economic and political emergence of Asia and Africa*. This is a part of the new nationalism which has brought approximately thirty new nations involving more than 700 millions of people upon the international scene since 1946. For the last two hundred years this has been essentially a white man's world, but these new nations, by and large, are not nations of white men. Nearly three years ago I was a guest in the delegates' dining-room of the United Nations in New York. My host was the man who at that time was the British Ambassador to the United Nations. We sat at a table near an entrance door, and during our luncheon together we were interrupted thirteen times by delegates who stopped to greet Sir Hugh Foot. Each time, as I acknowledged the introduction he graciously performed, I found myself remembering a book I had read as a college student years before—Oswald Spengler's volume entitled *The Decline of the West*—and realizing that its thesis was being enacted before my eyes that noontime. These were men and women wearing non-Western attire. They spoke for the most part flawless English, but with a delectable medley of accents representing almost every part of Africa and Asia. They were not people of white skin; they were people of color. One of the new facts with which we must become conversant today is that the white man and the colored man must share leadership in the world, and an organically related fact could well be that civilization's initiative may conceivably pass from the Western to the Eastern world. The domestic corollary to all of this is, of course, the current civil rights struggle.

Again, there is the matter of an *over-populated earth*. The demographers tell us that in the year 10,000 B.C. there were a million people living on this planet. In the days of Jesus there were between two hundred and three hundred million inhabitants of the earth. In the period when the colonies of Plymouth and Jamestown were established, there were probably as many as six hundred million people in the world. In 1945 A.D. we had reached a world population aggregate of two billion, six hundred million. In 1961 the statisticians in the United Nations told us that we had passed the four billion mark. They are saying further that within the lifetime of the younger generation we will have as many as seven billion men and women and boys and girls living upon this planet, and those of us who are citizens of the United States are being told that in our own time we may have to face the frightening task of providing food, housing, medical care, education and government for as many as 450 million people in our own land. These facts help us to understand

why matters like birth control and gerontology have become items of vast concern in our day and world.

Once more, any contemplation of contemporary change makes us conscious of a new *religious pluralism*. Phrases like "Christian nation," "Christian civilization" and "Christian society" no longer seem as appropriate as they did a generation ago. Part of this development may be attributed to greater honesty on the part of today's phrase-makers, but this is not all of it. Time is separating us more and more from our vigorous Protestant beginnings, and has given rise to a cluster of factors like population growth and mobility, the development of communications media, urbanism, et cetera—all of which have upset the tradition of Protestant prominence.

And so Protestantism's dream of empire seems to have been shattered and its culture plunged into a recession. One incisive thinker of our current times speaks of it in this fashion: "Once there were trumpets; now there is only the muffled drum of the rear guard. Once there was volume; now there is a long diminuendo."

Practical results emerging from the fact of religious pluralism are numerous and they include (1) far-reaching judicial decisions; (2) a mass of pending or threatened legislative measures; (3) sweeping revisions in the philosophy of missions; (4) the burgeoning influence of the ecumenical movement as a means of presenting a united front for the forces of Christ in the presence of a resurgence of vitality on the part of Islam, Buddhism and other great religions; and (5) a consciousness within the Church that new definitions must be sought and old strategies restyled.

One of the changes of gravest concern to men of faith is the *moral revolution*. This has been a day of "price-fixing" by industrial complexes of national reputation, a day of "big-time" dishonesty in intercollegiate athletics, a day of an almost unbelievable scandal in nationally televised "quiz" shows, a day of the nearly wholesale abandonment of Honor Systems on college and university campuses and a day when the practice of gambling is struggling to attain legal dignity. Moreover, it has been a time of striking deterioration in standards of sex conduct, as was pointed out in a frightening way eight years ago by Professor Sorokin of Harvard in his little book, *The American Sex Revolution*. In its pages, the distinguished if controversial sociologist uses such phrases as "growing sex addiction," "proliferating promiscuity" and "dangerous listless drift" to suggest the dimensions of our nation's problem in this delicate area. Since then, an extensive literature of protest has appeared, particu-

larly through the religious press, to emphasize the seriousness of the situation.

But beyond these more obvious manifestations of a moral revolution, an underlying fact in contemporary thought-life is even more disturbing. Perhaps because of the current popular tendency to deify the idea of freedom for the individual, and perhaps because of ethical vagueness emanating from the essentially insubstantial Bultmannian insistence upon religion as a concept or an idea, apart from historical roots, there has been widespread philosophical *departure from a sense of the transcendent basis of morality*. Right and wrong, if they derive no longer from God, become variables instead of constants in the moral world. Implicit in this trend is surely potential catastrophe for every basic position in Christian ethics.

Change—vast and incredible change! This is the hallmark of our age, the controlling climate in which we as ministers and men of faith must witness and labor. There are, I think, two primary responsibilities we must face in such a time.

The first is purely and simply the responsibility for awareness of this change, full and devastating awareness of it, in spite of our habitually cloistered and often unrealistic existences. The second is the responsibility for structuring an effective strategy by which we may be able to convince the laity of the Church that social and political problems have their inevitable religious connotations and are therefore legitimate areas for Christian thought, speech and action.

II

The second issue I see on the horizon today is the *Ecumenical Movement*. Archbishop Temple, you remember, said that this is the great new fact of our age. It began in the relatively peaceful yesterday of the nineteenth century, as the world was beginning to shrink, and it has grown to serious proportions in the stormier era of the twentieth century. It has had many distinguished proponents, including men like Mott, Temple, Dibelius and Oxnam. Four decades ago, Dr. George W. Truett, the famous Baptist, stood on the steps of the Capitol in Washington and said:

We hold that all people who believe in Christ as their personal Saviour are our brothers in the common salvation, whether they be in the Catholic communion, in the Protestant communion, in any other communion, or in no communion.

More recently, one of history's memorable personalities, Pope John XXIII (of whom Dr. Albert Outler has said, "He was so human, he

could have written the script for 'Bonanza'.") began to strike down centuries-old barriers to Catholic-Protestant fraternity, and so gave impetus to the spirit of cooperation among non-Catholics. Only a few weeks ago, Richard Cardinal Cushing and Dr. Billy Graham made inter-faith history with their statements and meeting during the Graham Crusade in Boston. In this period of the Gray Lectures, Father Diekmann, with his incisive thought, his ecumenical outlook and his contagious Christian spirit, has beautifully and impressively augmented all that we have known or thought about hopeful Catholic-Protestant relations.

Beyond the glamor, the pageantry, the expectancy and the adventure of the Ecumenical Movement, there are certain basic and almost elementary statements which ought to be noted:

- (1) A vigorous manifestation of the ecumenical spirit is indicated if Christendom is to survive, humanly speaking, in a world of secularism and downright hedonism.
- (2) The ecumenical spirit today, in spite of the most recalcitrant among us, is a blessed fact.
- (3) We must find valid ways to conserve the unique and constructive distinctions of the different communions in the process.
- (4) Lines of ultimate concession must be carefully drawn, lest Christianity be in the end tragically diluted. (Fletcher's new biography of William Temple makes it abundantly clear that even the great Anglican felt it may be possible to pay too great a price for ecumenicity!)
- (5) The peril of bigness—sheer bigness—is very real. (There are many illustrations. The good cook, for example, knows that a food's delicate flavors are often sacrificed when quantity is increased.)
- (6) The place to begin in the implementation of the ecumenical mood is the local community, and the effective sponsors of the effort must be the Christians, ordained and unordained, who preach or labor there.

III

The Quaker philosopher, Elton Trueblood, would take issue with Archbishop Temple about the Ecumenical Movement's priority rating among new facts in our day, and would insist—as indeed he does in his volume entitled *The Yoke of Christ*—that the really great new fact of our time is “the powerful drive toward the development of a universal ministry”—or, put another way, the new emphasis upon the laity.

Actually, this is far from being a twentieth-century concept. The work of religion, from time immemorial, has rested significantly in the hands of lay leadership. Abraham, Moses, Amos of Tekoa, Isaiah

in the Temple, Peter, James, John, Luke the Physician, and Paul of monumental intellect were all lay people in the sense that none was a priest or an official ecclesiastic. And, more than fifteen years ago, Dr. Fosdick reminded us that Christ himself was a layman. Martin Luther, centuries earlier, espoused the idea of the efficacy of lay witnessing when he said, "Even the milk-maid can milk cows to the glory of God." And, to bring the matter more nearly down to date, the work of the Church in the past century has had a galaxy of important lay names associated with it: Henry Drummond, C. T. Studd, Dwight L. Moody, John R. Mott, Robert E. Speer, Hudson Taylor, K. T. Paul of India, Sherwood Eddy, to mention only a few.

The new recrudescence of emphasis upon the laity, to which people like Trueblood have made reference, constitutes, if not a fresh fact in our time, still one of the surest signs of hope for the Church in this early afternoon of the twentieth century. Put in its simplest terms, it means that the great enterprises of Christendom will have multiplied laborers in their vineyards. It also means that refreshingly different approaches and techniques will enrich these enterprises.

All of this imposes upon us as ministers an urgent new task of training our laymen to meet the demands of discipleship in this complex day. Fortunately we live in an era of mushrooming adult education, when the success of efforts like the Great Books Movement has been dramatic. We can confidently predict that the ecclesiastical counterpart of such programs would also meet with extremely promising results. Enterprises like Gordon Cosby's controversial Church of the Saviour in Washington, D. C. are built largely upon the principle of dedicated educational effort, and their effectiveness has amazed even their critics. Perhaps a series of classes for laymen on such themes as "A Philosophy of Religion," "Doctrines of Our Faith," "The History of the Church," "The Christian Classics" and "Great Issues Before Christians Today" would have a surprising number of takers, particularly if such classes could be carefully explained, appealingly promoted and thrillingly taught.

In this connection the following points ought to be considered:

- (1) We must sincerely and gratefully recognize the significant role of the layman in the Church, including, for Methodists, the Annual Conference, and we must communicate this recognition to him.
- (2) We must labor to help laymen who are not technically trained in Biblical, theological and ecclesiastical matters to grasp the *full sweep* of religious responsibility in a day like ours.

- (3) We must emphasize properly for the layman the Divine meaning of vocation, *without endangering the uniqueness or the legitimate stature of the ordained ministry.*
- (4) We must keep the call to preach sufficiently apart from and above the broader emphasis on vocation to enable us to protect the historic concept of the ministry, and also to recruit in adequate quality and quantity pulpit leadership for the immediate tomorrows.
- (5) We must protect the Church in which laymen hopefully have assumed new prominence and new influence from those periodic political, economic, social and even religious pressures to which laymen, perhaps more than ministers, are potential prey. These pressures sometimes call for an equation of the demands of the Christian Gospel in the socio-political world with the intrusions of alien and despicable philosophies—evidence either of colossal ignorance or of deliberate obstinacy where applying principles of justice and brotherhood are concerned. From such apostasy the Church must be delivered.

IV

Any description of the contemporary situation must include reference to its *theological fluidity*. Even casual contact with current writings produces the impression that old categories like "liberal," "conservative," "modernist," "fundamentalist"—and now "neo-orthodox"—are conspicuously obsolete—unless the literature and oratory of the 1964 political campaigns give some of them currency again! But one cannot sustain an impression that those earlier categories, at this point, have actually been replaced by new ones. Theology is groping for new boundary lines, new meanings, and the process is still in the confusion of an exploratory phase.

There are apparently no great original American theological voices today. There is still the voice of Niebuhr, for which we have gratitude, but there are moments when it seems to sound like an echo and—in these days of his semi-retirement—a whispered echo at that. We seem to be sitting and listening in some great philosophical concert hall where a chorus of European theological voices are singing their stimulating, exciting, but often doleful music, more frequently in dissonance than in harmony. The soloists have been artists named Barth, Brunner, Berdyaev, Tillich, Bultmann (and in the case of Bultmann, one senses that the unbelieving Heidegger has stood just off-stage, score in hand, to prompt, smiling at the singer who has sought to make theology out of his philosophy).

But the astute observer of the modern scene wonders if these are the real theologians of our age? Or if the actually influential

ones may not be a coterie of irreverent amateurs wearing casuals rather than clericals—men like Albert Camus, Jean Paul Sartre, Ernest Hemingway, Tennessee Williams and Hugh M. Hefner.

Certainly currently prevailing thought patterns involve a bold revival of antinomianism and hedonism, both impressively supported by the letters and arts of our day. Looming large in the background is that difficult to define and more difficult to evaluate philosophical formulation known as existentialism, with its tempting array of partial truths and its interpretive cloak of many colors.

The sophisticated theology—in the strictly lay opinion of this speaker—which has emerged to provide what we may hope is interim adjustment to these pressures of thought and conduct has seemed at times to deify the idea of human freedom and individuality to the point of risking moral relativism and inviting the virtual elimination of a positive ethic. Put in practical terms, the new theology, in its present form, may encounter difficulty in attempting to undergird a philosophy of missions, a program of evangelism, or a serious effort to apply principles of righteousness to solidly entrenched social evils.

But there are at least four hopeful signs to be identified:

- (1) The contemporary theological fluidity reveals a genuine effort to comprehend the characteristics and dimensions of the enemy.
- (2) It reveals also a determination to make theology relevant in our time. (Without agreeing with Bishop Pike in his recent attack upon Trinitarian doctrine, one can acknowledge that such is surely the motivation behind his thought.)
- (3) It makes clear a widespread desire to restore the Bible to a place of central influence in Christian thought.
- (4) There can be little doubt that a synthesis of theological positions adequate for our era of human history is in process, and may be expected to be achieved.

V

Very soon after we thought we were living in a day of religion's roseate renaissance, we found that a new period was dawning in which the Church, humanly speaking, was fighting grimly for its life. A wave of *anti-institutionalism* has swept our society, lingering disturbingly on college and university campuses, and even finding friendly response in segments of the ministry itself. This anti-institutionalism is a product of a combination of factors, including the restless, hypercritical cynicism, the militant and sometimes arrogant nationalism, and the exclamatory emphasis on individual freedom so strikingly characteristic of our age—but including also the

too-evident failure of the organized Church in many spheres, and the blunt honesty with which seriously conscientious Christians have lately faced that failure. Our criticism of the Church, beginning for tragically adequate cause and as a wholesome manifestation of the desire for renewal, has in very many instances overleaped boundary lines of charity and constructive judgment, and begun to operate like a slow malignancy in Christ's body.

As part of a religious lyceum program two years ago, Emory and Henry College invited a nationally distinguished existentialist theologian, an ordained clergyman, to speak in its Memorial Chapel. In the course of his address, he declared, "If religion is to have its chance in our time, we must destroy the Church as we know it now." The same year the president of the college was waited upon in his office by a committee of students eager to bring measures of emancipation to the beleaguered young men and women on that Methodist campus, and insistent that this would contribute to the spiritual health of the academic community. I asked for practical suggestions, and the first one I received was this: "Tear down the Chapel, which stands for churchly religion on the campus!"

There are preachers who live and live sumptuously by the hand of a church for which they never really have a good word to say—and who rarely, if ever, suffer pangs of conscience over ethical inconsistency because of this.

Our task is grave and urgent. It may include the following ideas:

- (1) We must help our more radical friends—often desperately sincere—to see that great ideas and doctrines will immediately suffer distortion and ultimately perish without the protective security of a proper institutional format.
- (2) We must help all of our people to recognize the enduring values of the institutional Church.
- (3) We must both learn and teach the gentle and fine art of *compassionate* criticism—the capacity to offer corrective suggestions in a context of appreciation and affection.
- (4) We must strive to cease thinking, speaking and programming according to stereotypes.
- (5) We must do the most difficult of all things—rededicate ourselves. (Escaping from the hobgoblins of salary, prestige and creature comfort poses the minister's most personal and complicated challenge.)
- (6) We must so prophesy in the pulpit that the institution's alleged liabilities will have their compensating assets in the vision and the voice of its preachers.

Let me linger here a final moment. Great preaching, whether in the age of Savonarola or Phillips Brooks, is the irresistible proclamation of an authentic message from God. Ours is more a generation of priests, counselors and ecclesiastical technologists than it is of preachers. Dr. Marty has a devastating word about the contemporary preacher: "When he speaks, he uses a kind of voice no one else uses. He never has anything really important to say. The vitalities of the plot move beyond and around him. He is the aging, silver-haired, mellifluous and unctuous fossil." Exaggerated? I wish I might be sure. Now hear instead the words of John Masefield in his "Ode at the Centenary of Harvard College—to John Harvard":

For when he preached, his earnestness would pierce
Beyond the bounded tenement of sense,
Into that living love, forever fierce,
Whose glory makes our stammering eloquence.

If we who proclaim Him could earn for ourselves, in crucibles of prayer and toil, that encomium, perhaps the objective of a renewed institutional Church would be in sight.

VI

These are the issues that haunt one Methodist preacher and frighten him to his knees as he examines his task. To return to George Santayana, the Spanish poet-philosopher, his biographer includes a pleasant little story from the brief period when he taught at Harvard. It was a spring morning and the professor was lecturing to a roomful of young men, pausing every little while to gaze wistfully out the windows at the greening grass, the budding trees and the occasional colorful flower peeping out among the shrubs. At last the spell of the springtime was too much for his poet's heart, and Mr. Santayana stopped his lecture, closed his notebook, gathered up his cane and hat and smiled at his class as he said, "I fear you must excuse me now, young gentlemen, for I have a date with an April morning!" Dare one voice suggest a simple fact? If, in our time, the Christian Faith is to have "a date with an April morning," it will be partly because we who belong to "the mighty ordination of the pierced hands" have taken the trouble to understand the issues that throng the horizon at this climactic moment in the history of the world and the life of the Church.

'Pulpit Is Prow'

R. WRIGHT SPEARS, '36

President of Columbia College, South Carolina

One of the best descriptions of the pulpit of the Christian church is set forth by Herman Melville in his classic novel, *Moby Dick*. Father Maple climbs to his lofty pulpit in the seaport community. No doubt this pulpit was built according to the specifications of the preacher, without stairs, but with a rope ladder alongside. Sailor-like, Maple completes his ascent and gathers up the rope ladder—"leaving him impregnable in his little Quebec." Then Melville expresses the confidence that the preacher, who enjoyed such a splendid reputation, could not be performing an act to attract attention or to gain notoriety. Rather, it must be that some important symbol of truth is to be noted. So the author asks: "Can it be, then, that by that act of physical isolation, he signifies his spiritual withdrawal for a time from all worldly ties and connexions?"

But the crux of the description follows: "What could be more full of meaning?—for the pulpit is ever this earth's foremost part; all else comes in its rear; the pulpit leads the world. From thence it is the storm of God's quick wrath is first decried, and the bow must bear the earliest brunt. From thence it is the God of breezes fair or foul is first invoked for favorable winds. Yes, the world's a ship on its passage out, and not a voyage complete; and the pulpit is its prow." (Herman Melville, *Moby Dick*, p. 24)

If the church today can be portrayed as a ship set in turbulent waters, surely the pulpit must be its prow—advancing fearlessly, plowing through storms, challenging the opposition, facing the elements, disturbing the complacent, clearing the way for truth and light! Are we not convinced that the message of the pulpit today must be so relevant, so powerful, so understood, that out of the complexity of the social maze through which we move there can be clarity and redemptive meaning for a waiting people? What, therefore, is to be the stance of the modern pulpit with vexing and disturbing social problems as the backdrop for our preaching? How is the power of the gospel of the Christ to be focused upon these crucial issues of our age?

A Stage of Sensitivity

Whatever else you say about the pulpit, are you not compelled to call it a stage of sensitivity? Perhaps it should be said that there is no instrument of God today which carries more responsibility or sensitivity than the Christian pulpit. The old Latin "*pulpitum*" was a scaffold, a stage, a platform; it was the area from which idea power raced out into society to confront problems and to find solutions. A modern *pulpitum* in Christianity moves ahead into the world, studying with radar-like perception the ills which plague the hearts of man. Of course some dare stand here with nonchalance, apparently ignoring the struggles and conflicts of humanity. They seem to be willing to depend upon modern detergents and scientific genius to free society of its pollutions. Why become involved? Why not give the people the simple gospel? Will not solutions to the great problems emerge normally? Why not take a position of neutrality and wait out the storm? At this point we remember the church custodian mentioned by Dr. Ralph Sockman. When asked how he got his job done with so many people telling him what to do he said: "I just throw my mind into neutral and go where I'm pushed."

But there is substantial evidence in history to indicate that the church's spokesmen, when most effective, have been involved. The preface to Victor Hugo's *Les Miserables*, written a hundred and two years ago, for instance, challenged religion as well as literature:

So long as there shall exist, by reason of law or custom, any social condemnation which, in the face of civilization, creates hells upon the earth, and complicates a destiny that is divine with human fatality; so long as the problems of the age—ruin of woman by starvation, degradation of man by poverty, the dwarfing of childhood by physical or spiritual might, and so long as, in certain regions, social asphixia shall be possible; in other words, and yet from the more extended point of view, so long as misery remains on earth, books like this shall not be useless.

To translate this age-old statement into contemporary terms: So long as man's cruelty to his fellows is in evidence, the pulpit of sensitivity is one of God's necessary instruments! When there is racial strife prevalent, or the constant possibility of nuclear war, or moral decadence resulting from cheapness in regard for human life, the man in the pulpit cannot allow himself to become an apostle of acquiescence. He cannot be a penguin of progress. There is no neutral corner for him!

The problem of awareness is always upon us. Sometimes it seems much easier to look the other way than to use the pulpit as

an instrument of sensitivity. An English novel carries a passage which ought to cut deep into the conscience of the modern church, often desensitized by the sin of unawareness. Something terrible has happened in the community, and the author describes the rector: "The parson was distracted by this tragedy from his usual business of moderating the incidents of illegitimacy in the community, visiting the old ladies, and preparing a sermon each week that would pass muster with the more intelligent children of the parish." Has our ministry sometimes been so anemic, calloused, or naive that this description disturbs us?

The pulpit, at its best, is the stage of great sensitivity, even though a man may feel loneliness as he stands in it. Perhaps Walter Rauschenbusch had ministers in mind especially when he wrote:

Is it strange, then, that those who love God
Find their eyes hot with unshed tears for that they see?
That they feel themselves to be strangers
And homeless men upon the earth
Where the poor are wasted for gain,
And the ground is red with the blood of young men?
And the sun is dark with lies?

It seems appropriate to compare the pulpit with the latest scientific equipment to assist in the treatment of heart disease. This new device of medical science is capable of tracking a cardiac patient. It is beamed to the patient constantly, keeping him under surveillance at home, in the office, at his club, on the golf course. Any difficulty is recorded immediately on his chart. The patient can be called in at once, or the doctor can go to him. Surely an effective pulpit, equipped with the power of love and intelligence, will be beamed to society to record ills and to extend treatment needed urgently!

Such sensitivity allows the preacher through his pulpit to keep a finger on the pulse of humanity. It is as if he held a spiritual stethoscope to the heart of man. It is that quality which Matthew Arnold referred to in speaking of Goethe:

He took this suffering human race,
He read each wound, each weakness clear;
And struck his finger on the place
And said "Thou ailst here and here."

A Scaffold for Courage

The Christian pulpit is surely a scaffold for courage! Anyone who has tried to preach, even occasionally, on controversial issues feels the need for courage. There are no safety belts! One preach-

er, threatened by some of his opposition because of their violent disagreement with recent sermons and statements, was warned that he should not use the pulpit again. They said: "If you go into that pulpit next Sunday, you will be brought out, one way or another." Some of his friends gave support by suggesting that he ought to preach, and that he probably would be evicted, and perhaps cast into jail. This would be good, they reasoned, because this would make him a martyr, and what the cause needed most was a martyr. "But," said the preacher, "you don't understand. I don't think I want to be a martyr!" Actually, if the truth were known, not many of us want to be martyrs.

But this is not necessarily a call to martyrdom. It is a challenge for courageous preaching. Hear some words of Cecil Northcott: "Most of us will not be called upon to die physically in this era, perhaps, but many of us may be required to undergo the death of attitude and custom. Each time there is such a death, there is the opportunity for a resurrection after that death—an Easter of the spirit."

The real question is, "How do we preach effectively to a variety of people to be found in our congregation?" Some think us too radical; others feel we are far too conservative. To better understand those to whom we minister from the pulpit it is helpful to recall a statement of Nels Ferré in his *Finality of Faith*:

There are some people who so worship the past that they fail to make the needed adjustments in each present. . . . They try to freeze history. . . . Every great reform is mostly the reforming of the past, the reshaping of it. . . . Radicals are usually rootless although the literal meaning of the name 'radical' implies going to the roots of things. For most people radicals are those who want big changes fast, too fast for soundness and safety. In religion, too, we have conservatives who cling desperately to the past and countenance no change. . . . They are far more concerned with roots than fruits; they have little concern for new flowers. (Pp. 30-31)

In his preaching John Wesley gave us good balance in courage and common sense. In Bristol, England, a visitor to the first church erected especially for Mr. Wesley will find an interesting physical setting. The pulpit is high, aloof from the congregation. One enters the pulpit from the rear only. The communion rail is across the church, reaching from wall to wall, and separating the preacher from the worshippers. You may ask the custodian, usually a retired Methodist preacher, the reason for such construction. He replies that you must remember the topics upon which Mr. Wesley preached

often—slavery, the opium traffic, smuggling, exploitation of wealth, prison reform. The subjects were so controversial that he felt he should be barricaded from the people! Of course they might still throw fruit, but they could not rush him! Could it be that our spiritual father was indeed combining courage and common sense, regarding his pulpit as prow of a ship moving through rough waters?

Pulpits today, for the most part, hold no such physical danger. Surely I know of no church in which the chancel rail has been attached to opposite walls thus protecting the preacher from angry mobs. Of course it should be said in passing that some pastoral relations committees can be rather effective in getting at the preacher without a frontal attack. The significant fact here is that Mr. Wesley, by careful planning, devised ways to continue to share the strong gospel convictions to which he was devoted!

The lack of common sense, or propriety, in responding to those who think us too liberal is found a story of a young Presbyterian minister who was undergoing tough probing at the hands of an examining committee. The question put to this young man, thought to be far too liberal, was: "Would you be willing, young man, to be damned for the Kingdom of God?" He is reputed to have answered: "I would go further than that and be willing for this whole Presbytery to be damned." Obviously, there must be more tactful answers.

For the best preaching on this scaffold of courage where shall we turn for inspiration? Would you not go to Augustine for the spirit of love? To St. Francis of Assisi for tenderness? To Luther and Zwingli and Wesley for determination? And who could forget our Lord's superb dignity and calm judgment when confronted by a climate of tension?

Coming closer to the contemporary scene, we can keep in touch with the spirit of Ernest Fremont Tittle of Evanston, recalling how he preached constantly on the great issues of his time—never on the "mousy little topics." Do you recall that groups were urging his removal after he had served there for about one year? But so great was his love for his people, so well known was his agonizing with them in trouble, and so helpful his prayer life, that he not only won the battle of the pulpit but became the stalwart and permanent preacher of the years! On Dr. Tittle's tenth anniversary one fellow—no doubt one of the committee who would have moved him at the end of the first year—paused to say: "My, Dr. Tittle, how you have grown during these ten years!" Just then he caught himself and was big enough to make the correction: "What I mean is—how much *we* have grown!"

Those who have thought of the pulpit as prow have passed on to us something of the thrill of the ministry. They have shown the necessary combination of nerve and wisdom in dealing with controversy. Needless to say, the man who speaks on these delicate matters without adequate preparation, or without the spirit of love, has flouted a rule referred to by Carl Sandburg as the eleventh commandment: "Thou shall not commit nimcompoopery!"

Recall some of those stalwarts who have used courage on their preaching scaffold across the years. You find Harry Emerson Fosdick, when World War II was at its peak, and death seemed to be closing in upon us, putting this topic on his bulletin board: "It's a Great Time To Be Alive!" Or you may remember Henry Hitt Crane at Duke, year after year preaching pacifism when it was a very unpopular doctrine. What courage as he moved through opposition! You think with appreciation also of Dr. J. L. Hromadka of Prague, a controversial figure because he stands in a seminary under fire from East and West, stating his convictions: "We shall continue to oppose the passing on of nuclear and atomic weapons to other states.—We shall demand the liquidation of military bases.—It will be the task of our Assembly to say a word on this struggle. Not a self-justifying, coldly moralizing or polemic word, but in a creative way, with full comprehension and devotion as the great Yea of the Gospel illuminates and urges us to do."

With gratitude one remembers Bishop Francis J. McConnell, who used his pulpit so effectively in mediating disputes between management and labor during the early days of the labor movement in America. And we think of Edwin McNeil Poterat here in North Carolina, preaching penetratingly on the crucial issues—always in the framework of intelligent Christian love. Or Carlyle Marney of Charlotte, writing and speaking on the tensions among races—using an intelligence so strong and a love so profound that oppositions grow weak!

Doubtless some preachers take the position that a crisis period is no time for the church to proceed as the prow. Perhaps the church needs the same indictment which Ben Franklin used in referring to the King of France once. When Mr. Franklin wrote home, he said: "Under normal circumstances, he would have made a great king, but he inherited a revolution." Apparently the conclusion often is that we have inherited a revolution, so there is no opportunity for courageous preaching!

Immediately there come to mind those giants of the pulpit who seize a revolution as the opportunity for effective preaching. It may

be Dietrich Bonhoeffer, facing a crisis which involves "acting and being," bringing the gospel of power to bear upon a government bloated with evil. Or Hans Lilje in Germany, snatched from his pulpit, but performing in true Pauline fashion, and speaking to all the future: "At this moment I made a resolve. I determined to mobilize all my faculties of spiritual and mental resistance, in order that under no circumstances should I break down..." Again, you reach far back into the early Reformation and hear Martin Luther preaching a powerful one-sentence sermon: "I go to Worms, even if the shingles on the roof turn to angels in hell."

In recent days we have the unmistakable call to justice for all God's children from Robert McCracken of New York, Helmut Thielicke in Germany, Wallace Hamilton in the deep South, Bishop Gerald Kennedy on the West Coast. Who said the day of courageous preaching has passed?

Watch the artistry of these men standing at the prow! Their sermons can be compared often to the surgeon's scalpel as it cuts infected tissue from the human body. Or to the poet's ideals designed to lift humanity from despair. Such preaching has the precision of a scientist bringing to fruition a dream through long experiments. Or the humor and satire of the cartoonist as he dares man to look at himself. Surely it can have the power of the philosopher in calling humanity to examine great ideas. What diversity of talents is brought in focus by these preachers, and by many others who may not be known as widely as those named. It would appear that the pulpit is, in a real sense, the matrix of God's developing thought for man!

Podium of Prophecy

The Christian pulpit must exert its leadership as the podium of prophecy. Remember the prominence Melville gave it: "All else comes in its rear." Somehow this interpretive, prophetic instrument of God must assume its obligation to move ahead—to lean forward—for the word of authenticity. We expect no easy answers to the great social issues of our time. But can we not expect solutions of meaning hammered out on the anvil of agony? If the sparks of God's thought be blown to white heat in the minds and souls of those standing at this podium, can we not expect solutions forged in lasting metals of justice and righteousness and brotherhood?

The pulpit as an instrument of truth has no obligation to cater to the whims of some who demand a pastel religion today! Chris-

tianity has never been thought of as a pretty blend of beliefs in history, always compatible with the society in which it resides. Rather, has it not been a sacrament of sharing, a movement in search of God's word for life! Has it not been a thrust of eternal value and truth epitomized in Jesus, the Christ!

The prophetic voice at the center of the church continues to project that spirit of understanding which involves man's relationship to God and to his fellows. Dostoyevsky put it in a word: "To love a person is to see him as God intended him to be." Helmut Thielicke suggests that if our Father accepts a man as His son, surely we should accept that man as our brother.

In the highly sensitive areas of human relationships today is the church willing to retreat, allowing extremists to command the field of battle? Or is the church to take the offensive, using the pulpit as the podium of prophetic utterance it was designed to be? Many agonizing Christians are convinced that the church better have something to say and to do with respect to crucial issues! These matters concern all the children of God, and are at the center of humanity's dilemma. Have we lost the passion of early Methodism, concluding that our members are to find solutions to the great social problems in politics and government only?

Can you imagine Mr. Wesley ignoring the opium traffic, child labor, slavery, or the exploitation of wealth? Rather, did he not use these issues as focal points for the application of the gospel truth?

Recently a young layman, in opening a meeting on social concerns prayed: "O God, save us from timidity. Give us courage to rock the boat. In a day when the man or committee of the year is apt to be the champion of conformity, let us not conform! Remind us that we are called to discover new shapes of life together in the church, and new shapes of mission in the world. God, give us courage to disagree in love, and let Thy Holy Spirit cause true dialogue to occur. From this dialogue we pray for a generation of action to redeem the sick, the drunk, the hungry, the prisoners, and the demons in the gray flannel suits. Amen!" What an incisive and prophetic prayer! Would that preachers be inspired to pray a similar prayer each time we enter the pulpit!

In the musical comedy, *Camelot*, Arthur is, at one point, driven to despair because of dissension among the knights. The devilry of an adversary has succeeded in spreading distrust. Arthur has spoken fervently and firmly to them, but the opposition continues. Finally, a close counselor crosses the stage, puts a supportive arm around his shoulder and says: "Arthur, you've got to quit making

speeches and try something!" Could it be that those of us entrusted with the podium of prophecy have been satisfied to make speeches? Now we have to try something—real preaching, after attentive listening to the thought of God! The prophet has the thought for us: "Audiam, qui loquatur, in me Dominus Deus—I will listen to what God speaks."

The late Robert Frost spoke a word to speakers and poets which has real significance for men of the pulpit: "Speak out of experience. Be valid. Be relevant. Speak to the moment. It's not enough to scream."

Out of the agonies of our day can emerge the most meaningful evidence of great preaching—sensitivity, courage, and prophecy. At our college, earlier this year, a tragic fire destroyed much of our plant, including a beautiful chapel. By some strange phenomenon one corner of the chapel, where the pulpit stood, was protected from the falling timbers and belching flames. The surviving pulpit area, almost by miracle it would appear, contained two symbols—a box of candles for the worship center and a prayer book. These objects uncharred and still usable, seem to say to us that the Christian pulpit holds two indestructibles in a day of raging battles, great storms, and burning issues—light and truth! The pulpit is the prow!

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'Looking Unto Jesus'

ROBERT E. CUSHMAN

Therefore let us also, seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and perfecter of *our* faith . . . Hebrews 12:1.

I

All of us, faculty and students together, are conscious of a heightened sense of expectancy and satisfaction as we here unitedly enter upon the thirty-ninth academic year of our Divinity School. Our annual convocation as a community is always an invitation to reflection as well as rejoicing. It invites us to reflect upon the aims and purposes of the school, of students and faculty, and of our common and individual ministries.

From the perspective of the school community, we may be aware of ministries just beginning, ministries (especially of the older faculty) continuing; and ministries of retired or deceased colleagues now ended. And today our hearts give a responsive "Amen" to the words of the collect: "Grant, O Lord, that all our works being begun, may be continued and ended in Thee."

This succession of ministries, from the "catechumens" of the entering class to those who have ended their course and now rest from their labors, is a type, in miniature perhaps, of the Church in its history. And, as we are convoked today, many of us, especially the older faculty, are conscious of the succession of classes, of students, of generations of students, and of colleagues of other days, who devotedly built their lives into the fabric of this school. We are conscious also of a reciprocal giving and receiving whereby the school or the community likewise built itself, as an empowering influence, into the lives both of those who learned and those who taught. Above all, we are conscious today that the history of this school, as of other schools of like nature, is a history of mutual disciplining of student and faculty and also of mutual building up of one another in love and in understanding of the common faith—even Jesus Christ.

All this enables us to share vividly the perspective and the grati-

tude, the sense of elevation and moral undergirding voiced by the writer of Hebrews: we *are* "compassed about with a great cloud of witnesses." This is or may be a challenge, a galvanizing incentive, prompting us to lay aside every weight and the sin that doth so easily beset us all. This realization of our place in a noble succession may nerve and sustain our resolution to run with patience and perseverance the course that is set before us.

Every generation is called to faithfulness, to the fulfillment of its own particular vocation. And, surely, this is irrefutably true of every generation sensible of the Christian calling. In the metaphor of Hebrews, it is a course that is set before us. It is like a race with a goal at the end of the way. But it is an obstacle course, full of obstructions and pitfalls. Worse than that, it is a course where faith encounters positive evil—evil incarnate in hostile "principalities and powers," as St. Paul graphically declared. And, most shockingly of all, he even warned against the obstacle of "spiritual hosts of wickedness in heavenly places" (Eph. 6:13).

II

As we once again begin the year, as the "novitiates" begin their race and others continue on the way they have already begun, it is pertinent for all of us to remember that we are "compassed about with a great cloud of witnesses." This can be challenging and reinforcing. It is also salutary to remember that the witnesses in whose train we follow probably chart a hard way and a treacherous way. Our Lord called it "a strait way with a narrow gate." It calls for patience indeed, patience in fidelity. It calls for wisdom and courage. It calls for perseverance in adversity. But, most of all, I think, it calls for undistracted vision and a mastering love. It is for this reason, I believe, that the author of Hebrews—enjoining believers to run with patience the course that is set before them—places his hope of their success not so much in the company of those they keep in the race, but in fixing and holding their eye on the goal. What he is really saying is this, it seems to me: While you have the noble example of forerunners to inspire you, you too can run with patience and fidelity the course set before you *by* looking to Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith.

If this is a valid exegesis, then, quite plainly, our text underscores the importance, perhaps the indispensability—for the runner and the race—of *undistracted vision* and *mastering love*. Furthermore, I think the passage is saying, the race is possible of completion, the course negotiable, *only* by virtue of undistracted vision and master-

ing love and that, without these, the company even of the faithful cloud of witnesses is not enough. The history of Christian faithfulness is instructive and inspiring, whether in this school or in the wider world of the historic and universal church—in recollection of the prophets, apostles and saints, ancient or modern. Therefrom we learn that Christian faithfulness is a hard-won, precious, and exalted prize, worthy of praise and emulation. But in emulating it we do not thereby avail ourselves of its own ground and enabling possibility. We do not probe the roots or ourselves attain the spring and impulse whence it came and was nurtured. That spring and impulse, that enabling possibility, seems to me to be—and increasingly—this same empowering unity of undistracted vision and mastering love. It is the vision of Christ and the love of him—Christ the mirror of God and the love of God.

III

Someone has said—and it may not immediately grasp you—that the condition of sainthood is an uncommon capacity of unswerving attention. We might call it the power of continuous recall, the unbroken recollection of one's life center and mastering purpose. But this is only the subjective side, the being mastered by and galvanized by a reality that controls our vision and engages our affection and, so, commands our will. When that reality is noble, it creates the moral rectitude of Socrates. When that reality is Jesus Christ, it creates Christians—whether they be celebrated or unknown and obscure. It makes Christians able to run with patience the course that is set before them—whether they be a Paul, or a Wesley, or a John XXIII, or a Laubach.

I say these things especially for the hearing of you of the entering class. I say them as reminders to returning students and to all who can hear on this opening day of our academic year. I say them not because I did not know them through the toilsome way of disciplined theological study and reflection, nor because you do not somewhat recognize them as ancient generalities of deposited Christian wisdom. I say them to you now because, in the long haul of the middle years and the steady up-hill pull of the course, I find them verified in experience. Perseverance is not a matter of endurance or of courage. On the contrary, the endurance and the courage of perseverance are the products of undistracted vision and mastering love. And, where vision becomes clouded and affection flags, the race is done or comes to a lame and sour finish. The start of the race cannot rightly begin without the mastering vision and the commanding love. Neither can

it be continued, much less perfected, without them; and blessed only is he who endures to the end, for he shall be saved. He will also be saving.

I warn you, therefore, about the bright light of the initial vision and the glad eagerness of the mastering initial affection. They impel and motivate the start. They are indispensable. They are a divine gift. But they are not only "a treasure in *earthen* vessels" (namely, in us), they are also subject to obstruction and occlusion because they are beset behind and before by competitors. Of these competitors it may be said their name is "legion." They are many and they are deceptive. They take multiple and diverse forms in every age, and each generation must pierce their disguise for its safety. They had certain forms for St. Paul, others for Luther and Bunyan, and they have updated and devious disguises for the would-be Christian wayfarer today.

IV

For the particular one that can concern us today, let us glance again at the Hebrews passage that has been our text—and, I hope, not just a "pretext"—in this meditation. I refer to the great cloud of witnesses by which, we are reminded, we are compassed round. Plainly the author finds not only inspiration but cause for rejoicing in this company. Plainly he is referring to the company of the faithful, to the community of the Church.

On this theme, community and the glory of it, I have a few things to say that may jar with the current euphoria about "community" in both theological or secular prose and may be dissonant and out-of-joint with this time of "togetherness." It may not be wholly true, as Whitehead suggested, that "religion is what a man does with his solitariness." But it is, I think, wholly true that when religion becomes exclusively communal, it is in danger of ceasing to be authentic religion. The reason is simple: it becomes more preoccupied with man's relation to man than with man's relation to God. It loses its consciousness of the Transcendent in human life. It becomes preoccupied with vision of and relatedness to the human other. The community becomes "the lonely crowd." Its members can only exist in the smile and esteem of the peer and the peer-group. Without this esteem and assurance the lonely crowd is discomfited, ill-at-ease, harboring neuroses.

For this situation, which finds expression everywhere and not the least in the present-day Church—whether Catholic or Protestant—we may invoke the earlier exegesis of the passage in Hebrews.

The author does not call attention to the company of witnesses because to emulate them and to unite with them assures perseverance in the race of Christian faith. Rather, he sees that we can only run with patience the course that is set before us by looking unto Jesus, who alone is the author and perfecter of our faith.

For us this means that God cannot make much use of the communal mentality that is always requiring from the peer-group a favorable answer to the question, "How'm I doing?" Such a mentality and such men are always measuring themselves by men rather than by God. Their vision is not only distracted; theologically speaking, it is occluded, and, in point of fact, their affections, rather than directed Godward, are turned in upon themselves. The more introverted their gaze and affection the more they defend the institutions upon which their security and self-esteem depend. They become organizational and institutional men.

I do not know about you, but I have diminishing respect for the communal man. I distrust a man who cannot be alone. No man is made apart from human community, but no man is trustworthy who is wholly made by it. It is the same with the Church as community. No man probably becomes a Christian quite apart from the Christian community. It is also true that no man remains one or fulfills the race that is set before him unless both his vision and his loyalty transcend the community.

This, in point of fact, is a variant way of putting the Protestant principle. It is the principle of which the Roman Church, through John XXIII, caught a vision and with which it is right now trying to settle accounts against the inertial forces of centuries. It is the residual right and need of the individual soul to be accountable before God alone. It is justification by faith only. It is the root and principle of conscience. And conscience is the distinctive human character of which communal man is, as present-day society shows, in fearful danger of being shorn. Communal man is untrustworthy because he takes his norms from the nods and approbations or the disapprobations of the crowd, the *consensus gentium*.

V

What corollaries may be drawn from these observations for our common life in this school I must and shall leave it to each to divine as he is disposed or able. This I will say: In the course that is set before you, you will grow weary in well-doing, you will hardly run with patience or persevere unto the end, unless beyond the group, the academic community, even the nurturing community of the Church,

you maintain, or again and again recover, an undistracted vision and an unfaltering loyalty to the Christ who surpasses every human goal and achievement and every passing disappointment and default. Only that vision and that empowering love will avail to see you to the end of the course upon which some of you now begin to travel. And, when you are tempted to contemplate how much you progress and how you look by comparison with the attainment or progress of others in the Christian way, then you will do wisely and well to recall our Lord's admonition when Peter was comparing his lot with that of the "beloved disciple." He was rebuked again and for the last time by his Lord—and we should take the rebuke to ourselves: "What is that to thee, follow thou me." Here is the single-minded purpose enjoined upon us—an undistracted vision of Christ and a mastering love of him.

'Christian Ministry to the Human Predicament'

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The topic assigned to me is "Christian Ministry in Our Time." I do not know that I have anything significant to say about this particular time. Perhaps this is one thing pride does to us: it causes us to think that our time is different, and therefore *we* are different. But the only thing really special about our time is that it is the time given to us. If the gospel is eternal truth, it is true for all times, and human nature remains essentially the same. To be sure, our human problems appear in somewhat differing forms, but they rise out of the fundamental facts of our human situation. If I were permitted to re-phrase my topic, it would be "Christian Ministry to the Human Predicament." Of course this is the time in which you and I must fulfill our ministry, so I hope that what I say will not be entirely irrelevant to the contemporary world. But if it is relevant, it will be so for the same reasons that the gospel has been relevant in each generation.

What I want to say can be put in one sentence, which we will

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then discuss in more detail: Christian ministry becomes most relevant at the point where the personal and social intersect. Or it may be expressed in a familiar symbol: the Cross, with its vertical upright suggesting a relationship between earth and heaven and its horizontal arms reaching out to the humanity around it.

What is unique about human beings is their personhood. This is suggested in the Genesis story of creation. Of all else that God made He spoke in the third person—that is, impersonally. “Let there be light,” and sun and moon and stars and earth and plants and animals. But to man God speaks in personal terms: “Thou shalt . . .” Man is the crown of creation because there is a personal relationship between him and his Maker. As Thomas Mann wrote, “In the depths of my heart I cherish the surmise that with these words, ‘Let there be,’ which summoned the cosmos from the night, when life was generated out of inorganic being, it was *man* who was foreseen . . .”

This insight is confirmed in the gospels. In Mark 13:1 we are told how the disciples coming out of the temple said to Jesus, “Look, Teacher, what wonderful stones and buildings!” But before that, inside the temple, the Master had watched a poor widow put two small coins in the offering and remarked that she had given more than all the other worshipers. The two incidents are separated by a chapter division, and so we may miss their connection, but they belong together. Each of them is, as it were, a picture of the Church, but taken with a different focus. Both the disciples and the Master said, “Look,” but they were looking at different things. The disciples were impressed by the size and splendor of the institution. The Master was moved to wonder by what happened within a person: the sacrificial love in a woman’s heart.

Or to take only one other instance: as Jesus and his company were leaving Jericho on the way to Jerusalem, a blind man by the roadside cried out for help. Those nearby tried to hush him. After all, the Master was going to the holy city to announce the advent of the Kingdom. He could hardly be expected to turn aside from this great crusade for one lone man. But he did. He heard, and stopped, and called the blind man to him. Someone has said that the only reason Jesus ever joined a crowd was for the opportunity it afforded of coming into vital touch with individual persons.

Some years ago, I read a book called *A Person-Minded Ministry*. I do not now recall anything that was in the book, but the title seems to me a fine description of what Christian ministry ought to be. Members of my official board once suggested that I try to enlist a

certain member for a job that needed to be filled, remarking that his wife and children belonged to another church and that giving him something to do might hold him in our congregation. I went to see him, and he spoke of his concern about his family being divided in their church experience. For the life of me I could not disagree with him. What is it we are concerned about: building up our membership and organization, or the needs of persons?

These persons—all of us—have two fundamental needs. The first is in the fact of our creatureliness. We did not make ourselves and we are not sufficient unto ourselves. Perhaps one change in the contemporary world is that our science and technology make it easier for us to hide our helplessness from ourselves. But men have always been adept at that: witness the parable of the Rich Fool. It reminds us that our limitations are inescapably manifest in death. We try to put this out of our minds, but it is of no real use. Even the doctor whose skill is devoted to preserving life knows that it is a losing battle. All he can do is fight a delaying action, and in the end he himself must die. But the parable is not simply a threat that death will come some day. It is a revelation that in the midst of life we are in death. There are limits beyond which we cannot go. We are men and not God. And the only rescue from our creatureliness is to know ourselves in the hand of God.

The second need of our nature is in our guilt. Writing out of his experience as physician and psychologist, Dr. Tournier declares, "A guilty conscience is the seasoning of our daily life." For me that is confirmed in both personal and pastoral experience. Consider only one evidence: that we habitually complain that we are so busy we have not time to do all we ought do—and this complaint is at least as characteristic of preachers as of anyone else. Sir Francis Galton, the anthropologist, remarked that "evangelical divines are very apt to pass their days in a gently complaining and fatigued spirit." If you do not recognize that description, you do not know many preachers. But the truth is that a just God does not call us to do anything he does not give us time to do. So we must be doing some things we ought not. Personally, I have stopped saying I am too busy, for the reason that I do not like to confess my sins publicly.

There is a tension and torture in our souls because we know we are not what we ought be. Here again, like Adam, we try to hide from that fact. Dr. Tournier dissects and discredits the stratagems we use to try to justify ourselves, and I shall not undertake that here. But none of them really work, for as Tennyson wrote, each of us

... ever bears about
 A silent court of justice in his breast,
 Himself the judge and jury, and himself
 The prisoner at the bar.

The only relief from our guilt is forgiveness. And since it is against him that we sin, only God can forgive.

It is persons who matter. But, as was suggested, men are persons only in relationship. It was when Adam was addressed by God that he became aware of his personal identity. But there is another dimension in the relationship. To the first man seeking to hide his shame the Lord God called, "Where art thou?" That is, where do you stand in relation to your Maker? But to Adam's son Cain another question was put, "Where is Abel, thy brother?" It is here also that God meets us and speaks to us: in our relations with our fellow men. A Harvard philosopher wrote that "religion is what a man does with his solitariness." But while there is some value in that definition, it is not the complete Biblical definition. There the question is what a man does with his *brother*. This is what Jesus said, "Inasmuch as you have done it to one of the least of these my brothers you have done it to me." It is in our fellow man and his need that we most inescapably come face to face with Jesus Christ. Is this not, indeed, the meaning of his coming? For incarnation means involvement in the body of humanity. Therefore the Church, which has been called "the continuation of the Incarnation," must be involved in the contemporary world—that is, in the actual world in which we live. Our ministry is not only to persons in their need of God, but also to persons in all their relationships with one another, for it is just here that our need of God is objectively revealed.

And it is just here that we are apt to raise a question. One recent graduate of the Divinity School says that the topic most discussed by students in their informal sessions was this: "Where can I make my ministry pertinent in today's world?" Underlying such a question, I think, is the feeling that the ministry of the Church is not pertinent to the pressing problems of our time. Such doubtings are not limited to divinity students. Last year I told the orientation group that I had in my files a folder on "The Role of the Church in the Racial Crisis." I decided to try to re-think for myself and perhaps for my people just what the Church should do in that situation, and for that purpose was collecting my thoughts and the thoughts of others. Well, the folder is still there, and I have to confess that I still do not know the answer. Doubtless this is true of my people also. In fact, I suspect that many of them feel that religion has no real relation to

the major concerns of their lives. It is, as Helmut Thielicke put it, a kind of *dessert*, which is nice to have, but after all one can get along without dessert if he has to. What matters is the main dish: my job, my professional standing, my social status.

And yet, if it is true that the essential facts about man are his creatureliness and his sinfulness, if all his other problems arise out of these, then the message of the Church is directed to the whole of his life. Though it may seem indirect, it is sometimes more relevant than we suppose. Last year a University of North Carolina sociologist made a study of how businessmen, desiring new industries and aware that companies are reluctant to locate plants in communities where there is racial conflict, are influenced by this consideration in their attitudes toward desegregation in the schools. His conclusion was that there was no significant correlation between the two factors. But he did discover, apparently unexpectedly, that there is another factor which more than any other encourages openness to change in race relations. This, to quote his words, is "religiosity—as measured by frequency of church attendance." Well, eleven o'clock on Sunday morning may still be "the most segregated hour in American life," but perhaps what happens during that hour is not so irrelevant as we have thought!

To be sure the Church—that is, we ourselves—are often unfaithful and therefore irrelevant. We become preoccupied with the success of the Church—or our own. We measure success by norms that are unrelated, or only distantly related, to the inner meaning of the gospel. Dick Sheppard, seeing the weakness and worldliness of the Church, was tempted like many of us to leave it but decided to "remain explosively within the Church." Sometimes, especially at a session of the annual conference, I feel as if I will literally explode.

When we speak of this protest within the Church we may use the phrase "prophetic preaching." But, remembering the prophets of the Bible, this seems to me to be claiming too much. I had rather use the word "integrity." A man tries to keep himself open to the Word of truth, and as he hears he says and does what he must. A biographer of William Law wrote, "Chiefly we know this about Law and his spiritual kin, that they stand in the world's story stout and grim and honorable, simply because they never counted anything little which was to them clearly defined in its being right or wrong." Integrity, I think, is humbly but staunchly trying to stand by what one believes is right.

But to do this requires an inner citadel of integrity which is not of our making. It is significant that Law, who gave up position and

possessions to stand by his convictions, is remembered not so much as a prophet as a man of prayer. On the day when I formally entered the ministry, a kinsman who was a saintly spirit as well as a great churchman expressed the hope that I would make it a practice to spend some time each day in private prayer. I have not followed that counsel as faithfully as I ought, but I have often had occasion to wish that I had. One of them was when I felt that I had to take a position that deeply disturbed a number of the most responsible and influential leaders in my church. I do not criticize them. They believed that I was doing the church real damage, and in one sense I may have been. I thought there were others who would approve my stand, but, not wishing to make it an open issue that would divide the church, I discussed it with none except those leaders. For some weeks, as they repeated their protest, I felt under attack and utterly alone. Then the bishop came to my rescue, saying unhesitatingly that a preacher must be free to follow his convictions. It would be difficult to communicate the sense of relief I felt.

But then I had to ask myself: what if the bishop had not been there, or had taken a different position? Was I sure enough of Another who was with me? Could I have said with Paul, "Though *all* men forsook me, the Lord stood with me and strengthened me?" Again and again I am forced back to this. Though I often complain and rebel against the Church, and though I am well aware of the inadequacy of "Christian ministry in our time"—especially that of my fellow ministers!—whenever I am honest with myself I have to ask, "Do I really put myself in His hands and trust Him to use me as He will?" Until I do that, how can I know what He might do with me and through me?

‘The People’s Book and Figures of Speech’

Jesus said ‘Feed my sheep (John 21:17) . . . let down your nets for a catch.’ (Luke 5:5). I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God . . . (Rev. 21:2)

Our theme this week is “The People’s Book and Mixed Figures of Speech.” Parishioners invariably tell their preacher that they are interested only in the simple gospel. The pastor would do well to “throw the Book at them.” The Bible alone has the complicated simplicity and the mixed up clarity adequate to the human predicament. No work surpasses it in the handling of mixed images and mixed motivations.

The Bible is not merely a treasury of literary allusions. It is a veritable anthology of living complexities. Anyone who thinks the Bible is simple is a simpleton. It is about as obvious as the mystery of redemption. When people talk of the simple gospel, they tend to think of pious platitudes that will cost no one anything. Actually, the Bible is an all-demanding book. Each person on whom the Lord looks pays a fearful price: the cost of examining one’s reason for being, and of meeting God’s full demand upon him. The requirement is simply awful; the issues are sublimely intricate.

Fools can quote the Bible without modifying their natural stupidity. Wise men sucked into the gospel’s brutal maw are rendered as silly as cackling hens. The simple fact is that human beings are complicated. The Bible is the divine owner’s manual for dealing with tricky, human innards. Only the Bible is adequate to the unmasking of human vanity and the exposure of trumped-up innocence.

The Book is not mainly a series of obvious declarations. It is chiefly a repertoire of real-life subtleties. These are couched in self-disclosing metaphors and mixed figures of speech. Intercept live current from any part of the Bible and you are pinned down by high voltage from all the rest of it. Biblical metaphors are as devious as the mole tunnels of human intention; as resourceful as the falconry of divinely redemptive love. The Bible is not primarily a set of ponderous convictions born of cumulative logic. It is much more like the shattering impact of sudden light generated by figures of speech. These impressions move in on us like unexpected visitors with ample time to stay awhile.

English teachers may properly warn us about the perils of mixed metaphors. But the New Testament, like the Old, doggedly "mixes it up" with all classes and conditions. The mixed ironies of life are depicted in mixed figures of speech. Out of the issues of life the mouth speaketh. Figures of speech are consonant with the human configuration. It is no accident that a girl's outlines may help fill in a boy's syllabus of errors. What we see in the mind's eye overleaps the innocent diversion of the physical moment. Tom Jones and Jenny convulse us with their gustatory attacks on chicken legs and juicy pears. But each personal assault is but a veiled pledge of mutual, erotic intent. Adam and Eve are at it again. Mixed figures of speech are indispensable to the simple truth.

The most basic metaphors in Jesus' spiritual imagery are three-fold. They present the gospel, *first*, in terms of the rural, pastoral scene, of seedtime and harvest, of bread and wine, of nervous roosters and jittery consciences. A *second* set of gospel metaphors exploits the language of maritime life. Our Lord discourses endlessly on boats and fishing, on sailors and the ship of salvation, of nets, of big fish, and of blundering fishermen. *Third* in the gospel repertoire is the metaphor of city life and of urban renewal, of earthly cities refurbished from the celestial, of home ports and safe harbors for storm-tossed voyagers.

The gospel is full of country people. Jesus is tempted to make bread out of stones. The homely language of barns, growing flowers, and tilled fields rises naturally to his lips. He has the country man's respect for infrequent rains and the horrors of drought. He knows the retreats of animals and birds. He is wise in the captious ways of razorbacks and the odors of pigsties. The habits of goats and of sheep are a part of his lore. He is a specialist in the doings of sheep, of their pitiful gullibility, their readiness to be led and misled. Shepherds he knows, and the ways of them. After all, they watched in the country while he was born in the town.

Snakes and doves alternate in his realistic imagery. Foot weariness and the necessity of bathing away the dusty roads are his portion. Reapers, shrewd farm women, sour fields, and the smell of fresh-cut lumber punctuate his earthy tales. Tired, thirsty, hungry crowds move him to pity. Population explosion, stray curs, always hungry children, and bleating lambs pull on his heartstrings. Bread is everywhere in his thoughts, nowhere in sufficiency. Crumbs are precious. Human skin is slick with sweat, or supple with oil, or cracked with despair, after the fashion of landsmen everywhere. And the sheep—always his mind returns to these silly, hurting, expendable beings.

He knows about migrant workers and labor gangs. Outside great estates men wait to be hired. Foremen police the vineyards. The sun beats down unabated. A fruitless fruit tree is more than Jesus can bear. Great burdens rest on weary shoulders. Vultures wheel in the hot sky. Tombs stink and split open. They house the demented.

Yes, Jesus knows the rural scene. But does he know fish and fishermen? Aye! he knows them so well that, in the centuries following, he is spiritually reincarnated as the big fish—*ichthus*, himself—Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour.

Yes, Christ Jesus knows fish, the smell of them, the glinting light on them, the weight of them in a net. Where they hide, he also knows. None knows as he does, where to find them, where to put down the net for them.

And fishermen? He knows them like the back of his hand. He can pick them out anywhere. By the smell of them. By the stubbornness of them. By the call of the sea in them. By the look in their eyes. But the boat-haunting urge in them, where they go, on land and sea, he also knows. Who else would go to sleep with them at the helm, in a big blow? He trusts them.

But he is not a city man, you say. Is that so? Does he not know the stock exchange? Does he not know the city curs as well as the country hounds—all the two- and four-legged breeds of them? Internal revenue men and external produce men! He knows them all. Towns and cities he knows. He is aware of the street gangs. He knows the city kids' games, even as he knows the city smells, and the dank, fetid odors of urban duplicity. Leaves in the rain smell one way; rascals in a back alley smell another way; and polished crooks in well-ordered suites smell yet another way. He broods over Jerusalem. Urban planners finally do him in.

But city, country, and sea were co-mingled in him. His figures of speech mixed them all up. His sentences shot out like singing reels over a fishing hole. Every prayer lifted a stray lamb onto his shoulder. His death drew lightning on the Institute for Religious Research. His life, like his vocabulary, was a *mélange* of snake pits, fruit orchards, fish fries, tax collections, and harbor smells. He went into the wilderness, and the devil showed him a great city. He recruited fishermen as disciples, preached in towns, hulled fresh grain in the country, upset real estate deals, gave his thumb to young lambs. He traded views with street vendors, swapped genealogies with hostesses at urban garden parties, put a tag on a sparrow's tail out of the corner of his eye.

He mixed up people's lives and their calculations. He was himself the food of life and the distributor of it. He *was* the loaves and the fishes that he parceled out to the hungry. He was the shepherd of the sheep and the paschal lamb that was sacrificed. A sea of water gushed from his side. A stream of life flowed through his dehydrated, crucified corpse. It coursed down the main street of the city of eternal life. He was the head of the Church and the body of the Faithful. He was, and is, the central image of the People's Book, the cohesive symbol of its mixed figures of speech.

April 21-22, 1964

RAY C. PETRY

And a man of God came near and said to the king of Israel, "Thus says the Lord, 'Because the Syrians have said, "The Lord is a god of the hills but he is not a god of the valleys," therefore I will give all this great multitude into your hand, and you shall know that I am the Lord.'" (I Kings 20:28)

History shows that each people in the ancient world had their God. The Moabites followed Chemosh, the Philistines looked to Baal, and the Israelites worshipped Yahweh. The victory of one army in battle generally implied that the God of the conquering tribe was more powerful than its neighbor.

In the scripture read, the Syrian reasoning is understandable. In their eyes the God of the Israelites was "up," and as long as he stayed god only of the hills they would have things their way by fighting at a "lower level." Syrian superstition limited Yahweh to the hills, limited God to the high and lofty places of worship where smoke rising from hilltop altars was apparent.

But Yahweh would have none of it. Those who said he was not a god of the valleys soon met his power in muddy conflict far from smoking sacrifices. The valleys became the place of the Lord's vindication. "That they might know, I AM THE LORD."

I think a parallel can be drawn from this ancient tale to the twentieth century. We in modern times are not guilty of limiting God to the hilltops or the plains; instead, we tend to distort our understanding of the Divine with words.

Dr. Petry has been talking about the powerful imagery of the "Good Book" and the unabashed Biblical use of mixed figures of speech. Obviously his point is well taken that such earthly metaphor is part of our heritage.

However what we do as ministers with these picturesque insights into human nature is another problem. As spokesmen for this Book

and this heritage, we are confronted with a kind of linguistic dilemma every time we step into the pulpit. On one extreme we can follow those who cast away the imagery of ages past, or we can turn to the other extreme and side with those who cling overprotectively to rigid Biblical tradition.

If we choose the first alternative, for many of us God becomes primarily a deity of hilltop thoughts. We come to prefer to speak of the Divine in modern rational categories far from the pastoral, maritime, or even urban Biblical figures of speech. We are almost ashamed of the illogical naiveté of scripture. In fact, the longer we study, the more we tend to isolate, clarify, and logically express our faith as distinct *from* such figures. We want to be consistent. And if we find this impossible, we enjoy our paradoxical solutions with a kind of self-conscious relish.

While a certain measure of clarification within Biblical terminology is obviously necessary to the mature Christian, in our own way we are like the Syrians. For us, God is not "up" on the literal peaks above the crowded plains, but frozen verbally in forms and phrases more sophisticated than normal speech—in phrases far from the Biblical tradition. In our struggle to shake off what we feel to be the linguistic shackles of scripture by demythologizing, we lose the spontaneity of metaphor. In the interests of clarity, we destroy poetry.

It is very likely that the outcome of such radical demythologizing will become meaningless after one generation. Stripping down to the skeletal structure of faith is constructive only when real needs are met and real expendables disposed. The emancipation which *we* find from centuries of ecclesiastical gloss on Biblical motifs, and even from the figures of speech in scripture itself, may open *our* eyes. But this shunning of life-giving imagery will be less and less beneficial to those who follow us.

In the long run, these efforts which are now so useful to us undermine the very faith we cherish. For although they may lift our understanding of God out of the straight jacket of past mores and customs, they often limit the Gospel—limit it to philosophical terms unrelated to life and devoid of artistic meaning. With the Syrians, we falsely relegate God to the *intellectual* highlands.

Yet the other extreme is no solution either. To preserve *blindly* each metaphor created and expressed in a world foreign to modern ears can also be catastrophic. The danger here has been apparent to the church for centuries.

Men may hear the words of scripture but, because of differences in time and experience, fail to understand. The human plight and

hope may be timeless, but putting it into words is a recurring task. It is a task which Jesus, the Biblical writers, and the Church Fathers did not shirk. It is a task which takes precedence over logical consistency and sophisticated terminology.

In our world of supersonic speed, synthetics and stereo, often scripture passages, once so pregnant with meaning, lose their power. As much as *we* may rejoice in the imagery of Jesus and sense his compelling power over the Palestinian multitudes—let's face it—upon modern multitudes the impact is slight. The average man in the street, even the average church member, endures rather than absorbs his religious tradition. If the language used is not above his daily life in the philosophical sense, it is irrelevant because he doesn't "catch on" to the rich metaphors intended. God is a god of *ancient* hilltops by default.

Is there an escape from this dilemma? Is there a way to preach the Gospel relevant to modern experience and rich with the poetic depth of our Biblical tradition? I think there is. I believe there has to be!

The solution will take form in two areas. First, we need to be made aware that our tradition abounds in figures of speech and mixed metaphor. Certainly Dr. Petry has done this for us. But we cannot rest merely on this awareness.

Any English teacher will point out how effective verbal imagery depends upon a context of the familiar; when the context changes, the image must either adjust or become less meaningful. So our second task (the task of the preacher) is to take our cue from Biblical language and move on to speak in terms of modern myths. Never forsaking the marvelous symbols of our heritage, we must use analogy familiar to our mechanized age.

This is not easy. Because we are heirs to a faith historically grounded in a particular time and a particular place, our use of modern symbol will ever be colored by the past. We can never extricate ourselves from the pastoral, maritime and urban pictures of our spiritual ancestors.

Yet, just as classical Greek drama re-enacted familiar mythological plots by varying the linguistic form, so we must proclaim eternal and historical truths in an ever new manner. Not because the basic nature of man and God are any different, but precisely because they remain the same.

Man is still a creature molded by cultural forces. He understands in context and best comprehends the insights of faith exactly

in the same manner he always has—through mixed metaphor and illogical figure of speech.

I am convinced that to communicate to contemporary man, we must recognize that new human world views and modes of expression constitute a different context. Old needs cannot be met merely by relying on *exactly* the same old words.

However, the Biblical pattern of picture, symbol and myth is still the key. To measure off new intellectual categories devoid of these, or merely to dust off the old icons, is not enough. We need words for today as vital, as lively, as unselfconscious as those of old.

April 23, 1964

BARBARA ZIKMUND, '64

CALENDAR FOR THE YEAR

Jan. 18-19, 1965—Divinity School Seminars, West Market Street Church, Greensboro

Jan. 21-22, 1965—Divinity School Seminars, Hay Street Church, Fayetteville

Feb. 10, 1965—Prof. Hans Hillerbrand

Feb. 24, 1965—Christian Mission Symposium. Principal J. Russell Chandran, United Theological Seminary, Bangalore, India

April 21, 1965—Prof. Ray Petry, Faculty Lecture

May 12, 1965—Dean Barnes Woodhall, Medical School

Focus on Faculty

When asked to write an autobiographical sketch of myself for this REVIEW, I had serious reservations, for my life makes relatively dull reading in comparison with many of the men who have preceded me in this series. I was born in the United States of America and thus cannot give to the reader a comparison and/or critique of this country with some other. I was not born in some other area of this great nation and thus cannot give to the reader a comparison and/or critique of this region with some other. I was not reared in another faith and thus cannot give to the reader the story of my conversion. As long as I can remember, I have been a "child of the covenant."

The son of Christian parents (for whom I continually give thanks), I was thrust into this vale of tears on May 30, 1932, in the midst of the depression. I attended public school in Kannapolis, N. C., where I was born, received the A.B. degree in 1954 from Davidson College, the B.D. degree in 1958 from Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, and the Ph.D. degree from Duke University in 1962. During these years my life has been touched and enriched by dedicated teachers too numerous to mention by name. It is in large measure because of their profound influence on my life that I feel called to teach.

Because of the fact that most of my "story" would be a resumé of the intellectual, emotional, and economic struggles of these years, I have decided to present some of my observations of certain "dangerous tendencies" which seem to permeate our society. These thoughts have been framed by my own involvement in the world, and I must emphasize that the comments which follow are not directed at any one person, group, or institution.

The most disturbing of these, to my mind, is that while we talk of "academic freedom" and "tolerance" in our society today, in reality "academic freedom" or "tolerance" by the attitude of far too many is freedom to espouse the prevailing theological or political or economic or sociological "line." Anyone who does not conform to this "line" is ridiculed, his ideas spurned at best, or at worst he is labeled "non-Christian." There seems to be little respect for other contrary views, and personalities often become so involved that a difference of opinion means dissolution of friendships. If Christians—whether of conservative or liberal persuasion—cannot disagree with each other, face conflicting ideas and viewpoints, refrain from ridicule or name-calling, and remain brothers in Christ, what does this have to

say about our academic freedom and tolerance—or, more importantly, our sense of Christian *koinonia*?

As a person concerned with the teaching of the Bible, I contend that the Bible should be emphasized again as the center of the Christian faith not simply in theory but in practice. This collection of books is the primary way in which God seeks to reveal Himself to man, and historically speaking the great spiritual revivals of living religion in the church have been accompanied by a return to the Biblical revelation. This revelation, however, attempts to communicate with men not only through certain historical narrative, but also through imagery, poetry, and analogy. Could it be that our attempt to rid it of these latter features has obscured its message and robbed it of its power and appeal? This book was written in the language of the people—why not keep it that way?

One of the Biblical teachings which is most difficult for me to understand is the teaching concerning election. This remains for me an insoluble mystery. Let me illustrate by a personal reference. Why is it that my parents were not able to obtain college degrees? In fact, my father went to work at the ripe old age of eight years in a textile mill. Both of my parents have excellent minds (much better than mine, but that is not formidable opposition) and many talents. Why were they never afforded the opportunities which I have had? Or my wife, the former Joan Shelf also of Kannapolis, who has labored outside the home for many years now so that I could continue my education—she has many talents yet undeveloped because of this. A further consideration closely related for all of us is that of *our* place in *this* nation. Why us? Why here? These thoughts should cause us to give thanks to God for our privileges and to think deeply about our own election and the responsibilities which are thus laid upon us.

This leads to another of my observations; namely, that we seem to be losing a sense of the value and responsibility of the individual. While talking about individuality we place great pressures, direct and indirect, upon each person to conform to the group or organization to which he may belong. It is the group which is important; it is the group which will survive the individual; therefore each person must be made to conform to the group. I am advocating not non-conformity for the sake of non-conformity, nor that organizations are inherently bad, but that individuals are more important than impersonal groups or organizations. Along with this communal emphasis has gone a decrease in the sense of responsibility on the part of

the individual because he finds it easy to transfer his obligations and even his responsibility for sin to the group.

A factor with which we are faced today is the increasing complexity of the world. There is no simple answer which will suffice for our problems; we should not be so naive as to think that there is. It appears, however, that we actually have contributed to the confusion and the complexity of our time. We seem to think that complexity and obscurity are inevitable and essential and that they *assure* deeper thought and better answers. Thus the more obscure the writing or lecture or sermon the more profound it appears to be. Could it be that we, especially we preachers, are hiding behind a cloak of obscurity to refrain from facing some of the cold facts of the world in which we live?

If these comments have appeared to be short and somewhat unrelated, they were deliberately set forth in this way. It is hoped that these comments will not only serve as an introduction to some of my views, but will also stimulate the reader to do some thinking and observing (even if he disagrees)! After all, this is the purpose of teaching, and if there is anything which I love to do—it is to teach.

JAMES M. EFIRD

The Setting of the Sermon on the Mount. W. D. Davies. Cambridge University Press. 1964. i-xiv, 1-547 pp. \$12.50.

Many readers of this *Review* have sat in classes under Dr. Davies and would gladly pay tribute to his outstanding qualities as a teacher. We here at Duke can feel honored at the association we have with Dr. Davies. His already widespread reputation as one of the leading experts of our day in the Jewish background of the New Testament must surely be enhanced by this monumental study.

Marked throughout by the soundest scholarship, discreet at every point in its sifting of the available evidence, and delicately balanced in its judgments and conclusions, the work is obviously that of one who has an endless capacity for taking pains. If in places it seems to be cautious to a degree—the author himself senses this when, in his discussion of New Exodus and New Moses motifs in Matthew, he alludes to Montefiore's phrase about "applying critical hammers to the wings of a butterfly" (p. 74)—then that is an error in the right direction in an age when patient historical investigation is too readily and quickly surrendered to "theology."

The book as a whole is a very significant and timely contribution, for four main reasons.

First, it comes as a warning that we ought not to begin theologizing about the content of the Sermon on the Mount (SM) as if it were a set of "timeless principles" for the moral life, or accommodating it to modern ethical theorizing, until we have exhaustively investigated its "setting in life," the total range of circumstances in which it came into being. We must, that is, take full account of the concrete historical human factors involved in the mediation of the Word.

Second, in the last few decades we have witnessed a prevailing tendency among interpreters to make sweeping generalizations about what the New Testament is saying in its entirety, to assume too hastily its unity by subsuming everything in it under the watchwords of "kerygma," "existence," etc. At several strategic points Dr. Davies demonstrates the folly in this by uncovering for us the *variety* of understandings of the message of Jesus in different layers of the New Testament. For example, the sayings of Jesus in Q are "crisis" sayings of the most radical nature—here the ethical teaching of Jesus is understood as itself part of the "crisis" of his coming (p. 385). But in the M material of Matthew's Gospel a Christian gemaric element is discernible: M in fact reflects a more settled age of the Church when the radical demands of Q have been modified to the *regulatory*, to the halakhic prescriptions of a kind of "Christian rabbinism" within an emergent "neo-legalistic" society (p. 401). The same type of development takes place in the "incipient casuistry" to be found in Paul (p. 413). In contrast with this, another development occurs in the Epistle of James and the Johannine sources, where the ethical injunctions of Jesus are gathered up under one all-embracing norm or principle (pp. 401ff.). In the Fourth Gospel particularly everything is summed up in the commandment of love, rooted not so much in what Jesus said but in what he did, especially on the Cross.

Third, by attempting to do justice to "the Law" that is always woven up

with the Gospel, Dr. Davies offers a corrective to contemporary preoccupation with strictly kerygmatic and theological questions, informed by German-Lutheran notions of "justification by faith alone," and inclined to reduce the Words of Jesus simply to a call to decision so as to drain them of all importance for understanding Jesus himself or for the business of daily living.

Fourth, Dr. Davies' historical study, delineating as it does how the SM in its setting spans the arch between Grace and Law, is directly relevant to contemporary ecumenical discussion, inasmuch as it points to a healing dimension in the New Testament itself for that divisiveness which has arisen among the great historic communions of the Church on the matter of Gospel and Law (p. 440).

The author begins his work with a discussion of the Pentateuchal Motifs in the Gospel of Matthew. The pentateuchal approach to the Gospel, exemplified particularly by B. W. Bacon, is subjected to a searching scrutiny. Bacon had held that aside from the Prologue (Mat. 1-2) and the Epilogue (Mat. 26-28), the Gospel falls into five "books" each terminated by an almost identical formula, corresponding to the first five books of the Old Testament. Sighing for the removal of Bacon's ghost from Matthaean studies, Dr. Davies wisely, as we think, asserts that any version of the structure of the Gospel which treats the Birth narratives and the story of the Passion and Resurrection as mere "addenda" can only distort the true nature of Matthew's understanding of Jesus Christ. This very point is in fact a decisive feature of Davies' whole thesis—Matthew never intended the SM to be taken straightforwardly as a "*nova lex*," at least not in the sense that such a Law could be set in rigid antithesis to the Gospel; rather the SM is to be seen in the light of its immediate context and of the total context of the ministry of Jesus Christ. The SM occurs after 4:23-25, which depict Jesus' ministry of compassion, a ministry taken up once again in the miracles of chapters 8-9 immediately following the SM. "Before and after the demand of the SM stands the compassion of the Messiah. The infinite demand is embedded in infinite succour: they both belong together: his acts and his words are congruous" (pp. 433f.).

In agreement with the above is the fact that, over against the popular view that Matthew portrays Jesus simply as the New Moses, Davies says only a very reserved "Yes" to the question of the presence of New Exodus and New Moses motifs in Matthew. Mosaic traits alone cannot comprehensively account for the figure of the Matthaean Christ; instead the Matthaean Christ, who is also Son of Man and Emmanuel, may be said to have absorbed the Mosaic function (p. 93). The author here picks his steps gingerly through the intricacies of the debate about whether Matthew puts forward the SM as a completely new Law, antithetical to the Law of Moses, or as a new interpretation of the Mosaic Law, and the complexities of the debate itself prepare us for the conclusion that *there is a real ambiguity in the Gospel*—amid so much that is evocative of the New Law, the New Sinai and the New Moses, Matthew has yet not given explicit expression to any of these terms (p. 108).

At least one clue to this ambiguity is unfolded for us by Dr. Davies in the next chapter (III), dealing fairly extensively with the Jewish Messianic expectation in the Old Testament, the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Rabbinical Sources. What stands out from this study is the fluidity and tentativeness of that expectation: Jewish sources do not always seem to distinguish clearly between the Age to Come and the Messianic Age, nor do they put forward a single or fixed idea about the future role of the Torah in either of these periods (p. 188). The selfsame ambivalence of Jewish expectation has invaded the Evangelist's own presentation of the Messianic era, in which, like most early Christians, he felt himself to be living (p. 190).

In his fourth chapter, Davies proceeds to consideration of forces that may have influenced Matthew from outside the Church, Gnosticism, the Dead Sea Sect and the Rabbinism of Jamnia. From an examination of the relevant passages (Mat. 4:3f.; 5:16; 28:18; 7:15ff., 23; 13:41; 24:12 and notably 11:25-30), Davies administers the *coup de grace* to Schlatter's theory that the Gospel is characterized by an anti-Gnostic polemic. Davies' argument that the Gospel required no polemic incentive to call it forth, that Matthew's own essential understanding of the Christian message was enough for that, carries conviction (p. 199).

The estimate given on Matthew and Qumran is a very careful one: while the Matthaean world was related *in some way* to the sectarian, it is impossible to prove direct lines of connection. If anywhere, in the "ecclesiastical" data brought forward in Matthew 18, there is an echo of sectarian order and organization (p. 230). However, even here, as Davies correctly points out, it would be a mistake to exaggerate Matthew's "ecclesiasticism." With somewhat less reluctance, albeit still with considerable qualification, Davies traces glances at Qumran in certain sayings of Jesus that he takes to be genuine, e.g. the "salt saying" of 5:13 and part of the antithesis of 5:43ff. "You have heard that it hath been said: 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy.'" The word about "loving the neighbor" is taken to refer back to Leviticus 19:18, but there is no mention there of "hating the enemy." It has therefore been urged that in Matthew 5:43-48 Jesus was actually rejecting the vindictiveness of the sectarians among whom hatred of the enemy was enjoined (DSD 1:7ff.).

Accordingly the situation reflected specifically in the SM is thus reconstructed by Davies. Much of the tradition on which the Evangelist drew for the SM had its roots in a dialogue between Jesus, the disciples and Qumran. But that material has been employed by Matthew in the dialogue which the Church of his day had to conduct with Pharisaism. "Material dealing with the confrontation with Qumran has become embedded in that dealing with Pharisaic Judaism and given a different relevance" (p. 255). But it is an open question whether the sayings of Jesus taken to allude in one way or another to Qumran actually do so. The "salt saying" of 5:13, for instance, can only precariously be construed as setting off the disciples as the true "salt" in contrast with the "salt" of the Dead Sea community. Again the injunction to "hate the enemy" in 5:43 is certainly nowhere to be found in so many words in the Old Testament. But need it imply a slur on Qumran vengeance? May not a Targum to this effect have risen on the basis of certain Psalms, especially Psalm 139:21-22: "Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate thee? and am I not grieved with those that rise up against thee? I hate them with perfect hatred: I count them mine enemies?" However, for the fact that the main external pressure on Matthew, in his structuring of the SM, was the Pharisaism of his own day, Davies presents a very strong case indeed in the intriguing picture he paints of the Pharisaic type of Rabbinic activity connected with Jamnia (pp. 256-315).

In all this wealth of treatment so far, which could not possibly be adequately dealt with here, there is little with which to disagree, and a great many fresh and illuminating insights for which to be thankful.

In the chapter on the setting of the SM in the early Church (V) we enter on even more exciting and perhaps more controversial ground. We can single out only two major points of the discussion at which questions may be raised with Dr. Davies. Has he, in opposition to such scholars as J. Jeremias and T. W. Manson, played down too much the possibly *catechetical* nature of Q, the SM and Matthew's Gospel? Perhaps so, if we admit that catechesis may be instruction in apologetic as much as in religion and morals (see C. F. D. Moule, *The Birth of the New Testament*, Harper, p. 91).

On the relationship between Matthew and Paul we readily endorse Davies' contention that Matthew is not anti-Pauline. The juxtaposition in the Gospel of "particularist" Jewish elements and "universalist" Gentile elements has long constituted a serious problem. The reviewer is in the company of those who, like Dr. Davies (and K. W. Clark), feel that the main weight of Matthew assuredly falls on the "universalist" side. The most satisfying answer to the presence of "particularist" sayings in the Gospel like 10:5f., 23; 15:24 is that, in fitting such into a "universalist" scheme, Matthew's eagerness to be faithful to his tradition has outweighed his desire for consistency (p. 330). Similarly the much discussed saying of 5:18 is best explained not as a stricture on Paulinism or antinomianism but as a rebuttal of Jewish charges that the standards set by Jesus were lower than those of Pharisaic Judaism (pp. 334ff.).

If Matthew is not un-Pauline, it is much less easy to show, on the other side, that Paul is not un-Matthaeian. Whereas Davies recognizes that, in terms of Paul's primary emphases, the Christian life is for him "life in the Spirit," and whereas he accepts the force of the contention of such critics as H. J. Schoeps and W. G. Kümmel that Paul does not feel himself to be a disciple of the historical Jesus, nor to be commissioned to hand on traditions about Jesus, but to proclaim the Christ, he nevertheless seeks to prove that there is an "incipient casuistry" in Paul (see especially I Cor. 1-7), a devotion to the "Law of the Messiah," not merely as to an "interior Law" but to a fixed tradition of the sayings of Jesus that has come down to him (pp. 341ff.). Much as we would like to accept a "legal" interest on Paul's part in "sayings of the Lord," we cannot easily forget that over against the many Pauline passages in which the Law is said to belong to the old eon, there are only *strikingly few* passages where appeal is made to the "Law" in exhortations to Paul's Christian readers, in short, two "Halakha" decisions of Jesus, one about divorce in I Cor. 7:10 and the other about the Church's support of its ministers in I Cor. 9:14. Otherwise, aside from the problematical "I have received from the Lord" of I Cor. 11:23, Logia of Jesus are very seldom quoted. Nor can we put very much weight on the argument that, though for Paul the Person and Words of Jesus had assumed the significance of a New Torah, they came to occupy a secondary place in his letters because of the historical circumstances of Paul's own ministry, set as it was in a conflict against Judaizers (p. 363), particularly since Davies also wishes to argue, in his treatment of the rise of Q, that "in its confrontation with Judaism the Church would have found the impressive ethical teaching of Jesus a powerful weapon" (p. 367). The whole question is, of course, exceedingly subtle and, to our mind, still undecided.

The theme of the last chapter is the *Sitz im Leben Jesu* of the SM. Noteworthy is it that, while some 306 pages have been given to a searching scrutiny of the environmental factors playing upon the Matthaeian Church, not more than 21 are given to the setting of the SM in the ministry of Jesus. Can we take this as an indication of the dilemma confronting historical scholarship in regard to Jesus-research in this post Form-criticism and post-Kerygma era? Significantly enough the main burden of the final chapter is not the establishment of criteria by which we may decide what sayings of the SM convey to us the *vox ipsissima* of Jesus, but the general affirmation that the tradition has been faithfully transmitted, and that there is no necessary antinomy between the eschatological Preaching and the rabbinic Teaching of Jesus.

Nevertheless we wholeheartedly concur with the basic premise of this chapter, that the Words of Jesus must not be detached from his Person—for the early Church his Words were an inseparable part of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. For Davies, therefore, the question of the authority and finality of

Jesus' ethical demand has behind it the prior question of *Who* he was that said these things. And driven back as we are by the absolute demand of God in the SM upon the mystery of the Person of Jesus, we can say of him, according to Davies, that "he passed beyond the light of Law and Prophet, to what we can only call an intuitive awareness of the will of God in its nakedness" (p. 432). We should compare the way taken by Davies here (and *pace* the Bultmann "Schule," should we not follow it once again with renewed boldness?) to that of exponents of the "new quest" like G. Bornkamm who, for fear of "psychologizing," really shuns the question of Who Jesus was, and finds the decisiveness of his Words to rest in the fact that *in these Words themselves* we encounter the unmediated presence of God.

By this scholarly work Dr. Davies has put us immeasurably in his debt. The book is magnificently documented—there are 15 Appendices, each an important study in its own right, an invaluable Bibliography, and 4 Indices. Both the author and his publishers are to be complimented on a remarkably fine and accurate production. Not too many errors were detectable on a first reading. The volume will surely be a fertile and indispensable source of reference for future work on the SM, on Matthew's Gospel, and indeed on the whole field of Christian origins, for a long time to come.

HUGH ANDERSON

The Doctrine of the Church. (Edited by Dow Kirkpatrick under the direction of the World Methodist Council.) Abingdon, 1964. 215 pp. \$3.

According to the publisher, this book is intended as "a thought-provoking symposium" rather than as a normative definition of Methodist ecclesiology. Such a definition, fortunately, does not exclude a very serious concern precisely with those more basic issues that would have to be understood if a Methodist ecclesiology were to be written.

Three contributions in particular merit a very special attention. In the order of presentation, first is Albert C. Outler's highly significant historical and systematic inquiry, "Do Methodists Have a Doctrine of the Church?" The answer that emerges is not so much concerned with a final definition, though that is suggested, but rather comes forth in the form of a very thoughtful consideration of those decisive issues that are involved in asking precisely this kind of a question within our century of ecumenicity.

Secondly, careful attention also ought to be paid to E. Gordon Rupp's "The Doctrine of the Church at the

Reformation." This is a very thorough and historically impeccable analysis of the varieties of ecclesiologies that existed in the era of the Reformation. (The one really bad printing mistake on page 76 has "Karl Stadt" instead of "Karlstadt.") The presentation felicitously avoids being a mere catalogue, and, while not claiming to be a prescription, it nevertheless does reflect upon and elucidate the major types of Protestant ecclesiological thought in a very dynamic way.

The third article that requires taking note is by Dean Robert E. Cushman, "Baptism and the Family of God." This article is familiar to some readers of this *Review*, who have had it available in H.T. 21 on the Desk Reserve. As many of them have said, this is, without a doubt, the most precise, insightful, and stimulating analysis of John Wesley's doctrine of baptism that has been written. More than that, it also offers constructive suggestions that ought to reach beyond the discussions within Methodism—or so, at least, it is thought by this Lutheran reviewer. Yes, it could not be said too emphatically that this statement on baptism ought to be read by everyone who is at all concerned with the doctrine of baptism.

Other articles likewise touch upon a score of interesting and relevant issues. Thus C. H. Dodd deals with "The Biblical Doctrine of the People of God," C. K. Barret interprets "The Ministry in the New Testament," Herbert J. Cook reflects upon the meaning of confirmation, Philip S. Watson outlines the scriptural foundations of ordination and the ministry, A. Raymond George presents the Wesleyan view of eucharistic sacrifice, Gerald O. McCulloh discusses the meaning of Methodist discipline, Frederic Greeves speaks about unity, and F. Thomas Trotter about "The Church and Modern Man."—Egil Grislis.

Systematic Theology. Vol. III. Paul Tillich. University of Chicago Press. 1963. 434 pp. \$7.50.

Morality and Beyond. Paul Tillich. Scribner's. 1963. 95 pp. \$2.95.

The Eternal Now. Paul Tillich. Scribner's. 1963. 185 pp. \$2.95.

The System and The Gospel, A Critique of Paul Tillich. Macmillan. 1963. 247 pp.

Paul Tillich: An Appraisal. J. Heywood Thomas. Westminster. 1963. 216 pp. \$4.50.

The past year was fruitful for those who are interested in the theology of Paul Tillich—three of his own books were published and two full-length studies of his thought were put on the market. We shall attempt to appraise the nature and value of this new body of material in this review.

It is rather fashionable these days to cryptically dismiss the work of Paul Tillich as a remnant of nineteenth-century German philosophy or as the product of a hopelessly obscure and logically confused thinker; even Tillich himself has wondered aloud whether he will be seriously studied ten years from now. The spirit of the times has changed, and the forces of opposition have set upon this theologian, who is probably the most

widely known and respected theological spokesman in America.

The tempest signs of critical assessment are welcome after an unseasonable calm when Tillich was admired, even idolized, but not often questioned. And while I am personally convinced of the rightness of some of the most fundamental criticisms, it should nevertheless be remembered that disagreements with parts or even the whole of his system should not blind one to the positive contributions which he has made. No man is without faults and Tillich is a man, not a god or a demon. But no man of Tillich's ability is without virtues and these also must be acknowledged.

The publication of the third volume of Tillich's *Systematic Theology* does not reveal any new methodological assumptions or principles, but who would expect it to? It does, however, explicate his system more fully, especially in regard to his understanding of the nature of history, the Holy Spirit and the Kingdom of God. And it may be claimed that this explication does clarify the question of Tillich's emphases concerning "finite freedom" or the integrity of the individual *per se*, and the tension between the dynamic and static aspects of his ontology.

Throughout the volume Tillich is at pains to make evident his wholistic view of reality, and whatever methodological scruples one may have about Tillich's interest in a system (see Hamilton) it must be acknowledged that his persistent refusal to allow reckless sundering of man from his total environment or the dissection of man himself remain valuable contributions. Tillich simply refuses to look at life in categories of levels or disconnected qualities; rather he insists upon the coinherence of reality from the inorganic dimension to the full expression of the Divine Spirit; throughout there is continuity and mutual participation. The particular understanding of philosophy which underlies this full-orbed conceptualization of life is open to serious question (as Thomas argues), but the

desirability of undertaking such an inclusive task and the courage revealed in accepting this task can only elicit approbation.

A second important theme in this volume is Tillich's reassertion of the ambiguous existence of man which gives rise to the search for unambiguous life. These terms express his long standing interest in analyzing the existential questions in order to proffer theological answers. To take this line of approach throws Tillich into the main stream of current theological discussion, for his argument is based upon the assumption of man as a religious creature, an assumption which has been seriously challenged by Barth, Bonhoeffer, *et al.* Consequently, this particular type of apologetic theology must be freshly evaluated, and Tillich's approach must now be justified not only because it is apologetic theology (as he sometimes seems to want to do), but on the basis of the type of apologetic theology it presents.

As a general description Tillich's system may be called pan-Spiritism, for he attempts to subsume all theological categories under the Divine Spirit. Here he reveals his basic Idealistic predisposition, which he inherited from Schelling. Systematically there is an imprecision, even a reversibility of language: God is no-thing and God is everything; power is the eternal possibility of being resisting non-being, or of non-being resisting being; the Christ is the Spirit, or the Spirit has the power of making any historical instrument the Christ. The language usage in itself makes Tillich's effort difficult to comprehend and to criticize. Nonetheless, the intention of his system is clear, for the Divine Spirit brings about a "perfect balance" or "essentialization" of all dialectical tensions; the process which moves from essence to existential estrangement to essentialization issues in what might be called dialectical monism or as he prefers "eschatological pan-en-theism."

Tillich's small book, *Morality and*

Beyond, is concerned with the same issues as his third volume, only now the focus is upon specifically ethical problems or, more precisely, the ontological ground of man's moral nature. Consistently, Tillich has insisted that ethics must constitute a part of any theological system, for Christian ethics is theologically rooted. In this new book, which in many ways repeats themes found earlier in *Love, Power and Justice* (along with the inclusion of two chapters from *The Protestant Era*) stresses the point that man must actualize his essential nature as finite freedom. This actualization (the choice of this word is not good because of its Aristotelian connotations, but it does indicate the need to bring man's participation in the power of being to the level of conscious awareness and acknowledgement) makes it possible for man to achieve genuine personhood—that is, it makes him aware of the possibility of expressing his courage to be even in the face of the threat of non-being.

The third book of Tillich's to be published this past year is a selection of his sermons entitled, *The Eternal Now*. Once again one is struck with Tillich's power as a preacher. His mastery of expressive language and his ability to suggest a great deal in a very small space are models from which other preachers could learn much. I have read these sermons slowly—one a day—and can testify to their ability to provoke fruitful reflection and to drive one once again to the source of faith.

But now we must turn from Tillich to his commentators.

The book by Kenneth Hamilton, *The System and The Gospel*, is very narrowly conceived, and his thesis would be more appropriate for an article than for a book. The thrust of Hamilton's critique may be summed up in one of his early statements: "His [Tillich's] speculative picture of the Universe stands logically before and above his interpretation of the Christian faith..." (p. 28). This critic is so impressed with Tillich's

insistence on *system* in theological construction that he sees all of the doctrinal material being forced into this inadequate mold. There is merit in this criticism, for Tillich's systematic intention as well as the limiting character of his philosophic base are imperialistic and do, to a large extent, control his interpretation. But insofar as system means an attempt to be consistent (and even of this Hamilton seems to be suspicious) Tillich's effort must be accepted not only as a valid but as a necessary aspect of theological construction. Father George Tavard has already shown in a more adequate way the potential tyranny of Tillich's approach, but he has also provided better balance in his criticism (*Paul Tillich and the Christian Message*). Systems may be the hob-goblins of small minds, as Emerson suggested, but the fear of system may also be unduly restrictive.

Much more important as a contribution to continuing Tillichian scholarship is the contribution of J. Heywood Thomas, *Paul Tillich: An Appraisal*. This monograph attempts both an explication and a probing of the crucial questions of Tillich's theology. Thomas is at once both sympathetic and devastating. Throughout there is an evident attempt to present Tillich's main themes honestly and appreciatively. But consistently Thomas places his finger on sensitive points in Tillich's corpus. The least satisfying part of the book, it seems to me, is the first section, where he questions Tillich's view of philosophy. While he rightly exposes the ambiguity of the language usage and the pervasive idealism, he does so from a restrictive philosophical perspective of his own which does not offer much of an alternative. Anyone who wants to continue in the Tillichian framework, whether it is in order to extend his philosophical theology or to work out the systematic doctrinal implications of Christian faith, must take seriously the questions Thomas raises and must be ready to give answer to his interrogations.

This is, in my opinion, the best full-length critical assessment of Tillich's theology available.

To have worked through this recent material on Tillich leaves me with ambiguous thoughts. On the one hand, I am keenly appreciative of the contributions which this man has made: his provocative power, his philosophic acumen, his theological sensitivity, his apologetic concern, his breadth of learning and his profundity of spirit are impressive. On the other hand, the liabilities of his philosophical framework and the redefinition of Christian doctrines seem to me to be so great that I cannot conceive of Tillich providing the foundation for theology either presently or in the immediate future.—Thomas A. Langford.

Revolutionary Theology in the Making, Barth-Thurneysen Correspondence, 1914-1925 (translated by James D. Smart). John Knox. 1964. 249 pp. \$5.

The sheer bulk, as well as the imaginative brilliance, of Karl Barth's *Church Dogmatics* makes it difficult indeed to imagine that its author really has any knowledge of or concern for the concrete and mostly mundane problems of preaching and parish. Yet this remarkable and highly interesting correspondence between Barth and Thurneysen should dispel all doubt about the context or concern of Barth's theology, for we see that it was born in the Church, out of the needs of the local parish, and that it has been dedicated to the service of the parish Church. In this volume—containing letters from young Pastor Barth to his ministerial colleague over the mountain, and an exchange of letters between Barth in his first professorship at Goettingen and Pastor Thurneysen, who has remained in the parish—we are offered the rare opportunity to witness from the inside how this Church theologian and his revolutionary theology were made.

The pastor-reader will be able to identify with young Barth's concern

for the effectiveness of his preaching, as when he comments concerning a Christmas sermon, that it "unfortunately, was feeble, though it seemed so fiery on paper" (p. 35). Many readers who have suffered through annual conferences and have perhaps wondered about the relevance of the services of worship by which the sessions are periodically punctuated will appreciate the resolution Barth presented to the synod of his Church: "The customary Synod service of worship is a Christian demonstration that is intrinsically incompatible with the spirit of the Synod as a purely administrative governing body.... It will in the future be omitted" (p. 34). This correspondence reveals that in spite of the handicaps of ecclesiastical incongruities Barth managed in an exemplary way to undergird his ministry with Biblical and theological study and to express it in the outreach of social and political concern—all the while attending to the duties of the parish. Thus, one day in September, 1917, he wrote of two deadlines that pressed upon him: the deadline for the submission of his *Romans* manuscript, and the deadline for "the movement to organize the workers," to which he had given an address the previous Saturday and which would be settled this evening, when "things either would stand or fall" (43 f.).

The later correspondence, from the period of Barth's Goettingen professorship, reflects more the problems of the young professor ("Oh! If only someone would give me time, time, time, to do everything, *properly*." (p. 93). His responses to the colleagues of his profession are interesting. Commenting on Bultmann as devotional leader, he describes him as "the night's orator and mystagogue" (p. 89). On one occasion he refers to Gogarten as "the possessor of a knowledge (of) whose source and content he was unable to give any kind of account" (p. 110). I would mention finally Barth's response to some repentant critics of his *Romans* commentary: "What should the righteous man think when all at once

he is 'appreciated' by such old rascals (certain former critics)?" (p. 94).

Barth appears already in this correspondence as the man he was to become—a man wholly dedicated to Church and theology, disciplined and serious yet, and above all, humane and humorous, always more excited about his visions than his victories, about theology than his theology. The style of Barth's writing is suitable and revealing—every bit as much as the content. Consider, for example, Barth's advice to himself in the face of theological controversy: "What matters above all: *in necessariis* not to give an inch, *in dubiis* to take no notice, *in omnibus* not to let my pipe go out" (p. 82).

This reader is aware of no better introduction to the spirit of Barth and the concerns of his theology, than this volume. Especially helpful is Thurneysen's introduction to Barth's early life and thought. No readers of the *Review* should pass this one by.—Robert T. Osborn.

John Wesley: A Theological Biography, Vol. I. Martin Schmidt (translated by Norman Goldhawk). Abingdon (The Epworth Press). 1963. 320 pp. \$6.50.

This is a straight-forward account by a trustworthy scholar. He is well suited to the difficult task of delineating a complex character without oversimplifying. A section on background is both lucidly informative and critically selective. The people and movements who help explain the direction Wesley took are in good focus. In all the chapters there is stalwart, unabashed documentation to the primary and secondary literature. Without this, necessary generalizations cannot stand. The author has distinctive vantage points for viewing Wesley in relation to a vast repertoire of German sources and the Lutheran Reformation, especially. He capitalizes these advantages without abusing them. The analysis and exact footnoting of sources is admirable. The content and bearing of specific

treatises that Wesley read are meticulously set forth—whether their provenance be English or German, Moravian or Roman Catholic, that of Pietism or Puritanism. The bibliography is perhaps unduly compressed. The result, in any case, is a genuine study book. It is well adapted to English readers by a resourceful translator.

Particular judgments and proportionate emphases may sometimes be questioned, as in any good book that advances purposeful, biographical objectives. The reader's independent reflection and possible hostile conclusions are not circumscribed. Students may complain, as some of mine have, that there is too little fresh insight on the Oxford years, and too much Lutheran slant on the conversion experience, or too many footnotes to non-English sources. Such criticisms from different quarters tend to cancel each other out. Wesley's spiritual progenitors were not all English and his parishes have not always talked "American."

The account of nurturing home and ancestry has an aura of dignity and realism. The author has taken pains to assess the spiritual as well as the physical blood lines that coursed through Wesley. This clearly marks the influence upon him of such widespread sources as Scougall, Spenser, *The Spectator*, Richard and William Morgan, Spenser and Francke, as well as the Spanish Roman Catholic mystic Lopez, not to mention Nitschmann, Boehler, and Zinzendorf.

The book systematically traverses childhood and youth, Oxford days, Georgia heartbreak and, finally, the "conversion." Different critics will variously assess the balance of sources and of the historical and theological interpretations here intertwined. The author keeps his pledge to write a "theological" biography. The one hundred concluding pages are a treasury of literary and historical tributaries put in a context of interacting cultural and spiritual resources. The author's main contribution—not al-

ways acceptable without challenge—is his interpreting Wesley from a Reformation and mainly Lutheran perspective. This he does out of genuine regard for Christian traditions as divergently specific as Roman Catholic mysticism and Moravian practicality. An example of this is the superb evaluation of the mystic Count de Renty as an influence upon Wesley. The biographer cogently argues with himself about what explains and at the same time deepens the enigma of Wesley's thought and doctrine. Even if, and when, one must demur at the author's line of deduction, one has the basis for a better inquiry into the ramifying truth. Sermons, letters, and diaries (not Wesley's alone) are effectively used. Wesley is taken seriously. One cannot indict the author for not employing humor more in depicting a leader who could have used it so profitably, yet who had so little of it. There is no sweet, slick condescension or modernization of Wesley as a psychiatric case study, no sentimental manipulation of him under the guise of pious appreciation. This book by a church historian is not only helpful to me, another church historian; I believe that it will also serve a wide range of scholars, teachers, students and general readers. May they welcome it, and the translation of the succeeding volume that is to follow shortly!—Ray C. Petry.

In the Steps of John Wesley. Frederick C. Gill. Abingdon. 1962. 240 pp. \$5.

Suppose that you are a Methodist minister who has begun to discover the extraordinary story of John Wesley's evangelical and reforming ministry, or the wisdom of Wesley's ecclesiastical statesmanship, or the rich legacy of Wesley's theological interpretation. You are increasingly interested in the man Wesley, and therefore in when he lived, where he went, what he did. You are given a sabbatical year (still supposing!) and ample funds for an extended visit to

Great Britain and an unhurried pilgrimage to the locations of Wesley's life and ministry. Already you have journeyed imaginatively with Wesley through the pages of his voluminous *Journal*, or mentally hopped around with his widely dispersed *Letters*, or followed his story patiently through Luke Tyerman's encyclopedic old three volumes on the *Life and Times of John Wesley* or John S. Simon's more recent *Five Studies of John Wesley*. Now you want a truly knowledgeable Wesley expert to travel with you and give those eighteenth century events and circumstances "a local habitation and a name."

You would not be able to take Duke's own Professor Frank Baker with you for a guide, because he could not spare the time from his enormous editorial undertaking of the new edition of Wesley's Works. You might then call on the Reverend Frederick C. Gill, and ask him to travel with you, pointing out the places, and the changes, recalling the personages and events, enriching them with the scholarly investigations and the local lore turned up by the Wesleyphiles of the years. What you heard might make up such a book as this, abounding in fascinating detail, copious illustrations, familiar and little-known anecdotes, with the framework of the *Journal* narratives and the full biographies. You would have a valuable biographical supplement, but more, a feeling for the times and people met in such a pilgrimage into the Wesley century.

Dr. Baker would review this book with a keen eye to its adequacy and accuracy, and might add to it from his own unsurpassed knowledge of Wesley. We can but commend it from the standpoint of an interested student of Wesley who would like to visit *some* of these places and imaginatively reconstruct *some* of those scenes. There are many names and other details an outsider may not know. But he can appreciate a faithful, sensitive effort to take us back in imagination to the actualities of the Wesley story. For the solidier theological presentations of Wesley, the

reader is urged to read two recent contributions: Martin Schmidt, *John Wesley: A Theological Biography*, Volume I (Abingdon, 1962), and even better, Albert C. Outler's new Library of Protestant Thought volume, *John Wesley* (Oxford, 1964).—McMurry S. Richey.

Teaching and Preaching the New Testament. Archibald M. Hunter. Westminster, 1963. 191 pp. \$3.75.

You who are Crossword Puzzle fans will understand me when I say that this book is an "olio" or a "pot-pourri." One is not surprised to find a volume of New Testament studies by Hunter, or a collection of sermons by him, or a pen-picture of a theologian from his critical and appreciative hand. He is a good scholar, a worthy preacher, and an interesting biographer. But what possessed him, or whom, to combine all three of his interests in one book? Yet, I am glad that this particular volume turned up. Because if you do not know Archie Hunter of Aberdeen, then here is a good way of becoming acquainted with him.

Part I, "New Testament Studies" is an assemblage of seven essays on such professional topics as "The New English Bible," "The Unfamiliar Sayings of Jesus," "The Style of St. Paul." Hunter is a good teacher, and he writes so as to be understood. Part II, "New Testament Preaching," is a selection of twelve sermons which reveal academic preaching with a pronounced pastoral emphasis, a valid simplicity of organization, and a flowing style. These sermons are short and to the point, to the point at which they were aimed. Part III, "A Theologian of New Testament Faith—P. T. Forsyth" is the substance of four lectures on this seminal thinker, whom Brunner called the greatest British theologian, and he did not mean English. Barth is reported to have said of him (1848-1921): "If Forsyth had not said what he said when he said it, I would have said he was quoting me" (p. 131). The theme of Forsyth's theology was

Christ, crucified and indwelling. His name, like Kierkegaard's, has come to life in the twentieth century.

Hunter is always the scholar but never the pedant; he is always the minister but never the cleric. Do you know this? If you *don't*, I am glad to introduce him to you, so that he may introduce himself in these three modes of his professional being.—James T. Cleland.

The Flaming Spirit: Meditations and Prayers of William L. Sullivan.

Edited by Max F. Daskam. Abingdon. 1961. 143 pp. \$3.

Pope Pius X issued an encyclical in 1907 condemning "modernism" in the Roman Catholic Church and demanding unquestioning allegiance to the historical and traditional interpretation of the faith. As a result, a young Paulist Father searched his soul and in 1909 left the Roman Church. He became a Unitarian in 1912 and, from 1929 to 1935, was pastor of the Germantown Unitarian Church in Philadelphia. He brought preaching gifts of an unusual order to that pulpit, for he read six languages and yet spoke like a story teller. Moreover, he carried with him an Irishman's love of the beloved community, so that these Unitarians found themselves members of a church and not participants in a debating society. Sullivan left an unfinished autobiography *Under Orders*, which is grand reading. Recently his assistant and colleague, with the aid of three of the members, edited a volume of Sullivan's meditations and prayers, and Bishop Gerald H. Kennedy wrote the Introduction.

Here are seventy-one meditations grouped under five headings: Sources of Faith; Discovering Faith; Practices of Faith; Celebrations of Faith; The Kingdom of Faith. Three more meditations make up an Epilogue. Sullivan writes thoughtfully, and assumes patient, meditative readers, because these are devotions for the mind. He writes succinctly, and asks of us reflection because the sentences

are freighted with meaning. He writes daringly, and requires in us a critical open-mindedness because he prefers truth to tradition. This is not a bed-side book. But it may well be a long-term tenant on the study desk.—James T. Cleland.

The Westminster Dictionary of Christian Education. Kendig Brubaker Cully, Editor. Westminster. 1963. 812 pp. \$6.

The assignment to review this massive, double-column tome might tempt one at first to take refuge in that hoary Twain-esque quip on reviewing the dictionary. Or it might prompt the quick and mistaken judgment that such an omnibus on religious education might be scattered and superficial in its treatments. But a cursory leafing through its pages would soon engage and surprise him with the variety of valuable articles by authoritative contributors in many fields—theological, historical, educational, psychological, philosophical, sociological, methodological. Our Professor James T. Cleland writes on Preaching, for example; Gibson Winter on the Suburban Church, Samuel Laeuchli on Sacrament, Claude Welch on Sanctification, Roger L. Shinn on Neo-orthodoxy, L. Harold DeWolf on Neo-liberalism, Robert T. Handy on the Sunday School Movement, Joseph Kitagawa on Sociology of Religion, Jesse H. Ziegler on Theological Education, Randolph C. Miller on Relationship Theology, William Hordern on Logical Analysis. What a range of topics and authorities!

Browsing or search more purposefully, one discovers articles on historical periods and persons (Roman Education, Robert Raikes, Pestalozzi); on Christian education in major denominations and other faiths, and in other countries; on educational methods (Team Teaching, Catechism, Role Playing); on major Christian education organizations (Religious Education Association, United Church Women, Division of Christian Education of the National

Council of Churches); on Television, Worship, Problem-Solving, Theories of Knowledge, Theories of Personality, Nature Study, Motivation, Student Christian Movement, Laboratory School, Group Dynamics, Koinonia, Growth, Guidance, and so on. What else do you want to know? It might be here!

Naturally the articles vary in type, length, and quality. Some do not work out the implications for Christian education as they might. Some may have a limited purview (for example, one on Family Worship takes little account of precedents in periods and denominations other than its author's). But the volume is preponderantly strong and well worth the minister's or DCE's or student's \$6.

Dr. Cully has for some years participated editorially in Westminster Press leadership in publication of competent volumes in Christian educational thought. Until recently Professor of Religious Education at Seabury-Western Theological Seminary, Evanston, he has now moved to a similar post in New York's Biblical Seminary. His wife (Iris V. Cully) is author, and co-author with her husband, of several noteworthy contributions in Christian education.—McMurry S. Richey.

The Ethics of Sex. Helmut Thielicke. Harper and Row. 1964. 338 pp. \$4.95.

It has been over ten years since English-reading churchmen have had a theologically systematic treatment of human sexuality and some of its cognate subjects. Now it comes from a German pastor-theologian who is already well-known in this country, through a half-dozen translated works, for his imaginative and vivid sermons. The volume here reviewed is one of four which comprise Thielicke's *Theologische Ethik*. (The other three are now being translated and are shortly to be published in English).

The title of this work is descrip-

tive enough of its content, inasmuch as the author deals, in turn, with the Biblical understanding of human sexual differentiation, the relationship between *eros* and *agapé* in human sexuality, and a theological interpretation of marriage. What the title may not explicitly convey is that, in a final section, Thielicke addresses himself to such related problems as contraception, abortion, artificial insemination, and homosexuality. Embracing such a breadth of interest, this book will rightly take its place on the shelf beside D. S. Bailey's *The Mystery of Love and Marriage* and Joseph Fletcher's *Morals and Medicine*.

By far the most exciting feature of the book is its method. Thielicke earnestly seeks to apply the now familiar insights of the hermeneutical study of Biblical texts to the vexing contemporary problems of human sexuality. This means that he is obliged to move constantly between the polarities of normative Biblical and theological affirmation and descriptive phenomenological study. Only in such a fashion, one is bound to agree, can Christian ethics mediate in a genuinely responsible way between God and the human situation.

This way of doing ethics, of course, leads to a kind of ethical casuistry; but Thielicke manages, for the most part, to avoid absolutizing his concrete conclusions and, always, to come seriously to grips with the refractory particulars with which sexual ethics is always confronted but seldom acknowledges.

One would wish to challenge some of the basic assumptions of the book, among them certain notions of sexual differentiation which are better supported by Romanticism and mythology than by modern psychiatric and physiological investigation. Also, one cannot accept uncritically the position that a nascent, germinating, human foetus is "sufficient to establish its status as a human being" or that euthanasia and artificial insemination by donor contradict the meaning of human life.

Nevertheless, Thieliicke has done us an uncommonly good service. Because of its (proper) emphasis upon the tentative and provisional character of moral decision, much of the ethics of liberalism has left us virtually paralyzed in the face of ambiguous and problematic situations. Thieliicke's hermeneutical approach appreciates the relativity of specific choices but demands, all the same, that one be committed concretely to something, here and now. This is not an altogether unexpected development from the author's dependence upon Bultmann's existential hermeneutic, and it is a welcome contribution both to ethical methodology and to moral casuistry. —Harmon L. Smith.

The Congregation in Mission. George Webber. Abingdon. 1964. 208 pp. \$3.50.

This book's sub-title, "emerging structures for the church in an urban world," describes much better than the title what George Webber wants to say. The congregation spoken of here is distinctly urban and inner city, and mission is understood chiefly in terms of problems and opportunities which are largely confined to metropolitan patterns of social grouping.

Pastors who share with Dr. Webber a sense of genuine urgency for new life in the church will welcome his latest work as a helpful resource. This is so because, whereas the details of the book may be almost unique to the author's own experience in the East Harlem Protestant Parish, the thesis with which he deals embraces a concern which is (or ought

to be) universally shared by Christians.

There are two fundamental realities with which congregations must become engaged: one is the Gospel, the other is the world. The Gospel, or the task of theological reflection and formulation, has received almost exclusive attention in our time. What is needed now is that the scales be balanced by similarly serious attention to the world in which the Gospel witnesses to its Lord. No one, I think, could take umbrage at this. Nevertheless, in the course of reading, one frequently paused to consider whether the attempted balancing did not actually create another imbalance, this time at the expense of a cogently formulated and systematically articulated theological affirmation. One often had the distinct impression, for example, that the moral sensibility of the congregation is rather more dependent upon its capacity to discern human need than upon some precursory faith commitment which, itself, is the precondition of such discernment.

Relating the lasting truth of the Gospel to the ever-changing world about it is the vexing problem that confronts the church in each successive generation. No one, least of all the author, would claim that this book (or any book) speaks the last word on the subject to our time. George Webber is, however, a navigator proven in the turbulence of the inner city, and this book, though not as venturesome and germinal as his earlier *God's Colony in Man's World*, will help us plot our course.—Harmon L. Smith.

