

SOUTHERN METHODIST UNIVERSITY
PERKINS SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY
DALLAS 5, TEXAS

March 23, 1960

Dr. Finis Crutchfield
McFarland Memorial Methodist Church
Norman, Okla.

Dear Finis,

How often Edrita and I have thought of you and wished to chat with you over the last several years. Since we left Norman we have become involved in so many things and concerns of great import, it seems we have failed to keep in touch.

Clark is now a rousing three-year-old whottalks like an LP record. Edrita occasionally does some dramatic work (such as the opening night event of the Purdue Conference of Methodist Youth last August), but mostly she is very very busy being a mother and wife.

My writing career got underway this year. My first two published articles appeared in print this winter: "The Gospel Knows No Iron Curtain", in The Christian Advocate, Dec. 24, 1959, and "The Christology of T.S. Eliot", in Encounter, Winter, 1960.

After finishing my residence at Yale I came to Perkins to work half time as a teacher and half time as my dissertation last year. With dissertation finished, I have been working full-time this year in the seminary as a teacher and enjoyed it immensely. My teaching assignment at Perkins, though heavy and diverse, has been a quite interesting one and a great joy. My courses have been extremely varied, and I have loved it---theology, ethics, introduction to philosophy, homiletics and Christian worship, and pastoral care.

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Pastoral Care and Christian Ethics have been the two areas of the curriculum in which I have worked chiefly. One of the most interesting aspects of this year's work has been the increased load of personal counseling I have been carrying. I am now giving fourteen theological students regular therapy one hour weekly, in addition to my teaching load. I have shared teaching responsibilities in the area of Pastoral Care with Prof. Elliott. This has been an extremely interesting dimension of my work here.

Finis, the real matter about which I am writing you concerns my plans for next year. My teaching assignment at Perkins is as Visiting Lecturer. I have known all along that my position here would not be permanent. I do not think it wise, professionally, for me to stay here on a year-to-year basis, so I am now, as you might expect, in the process of looking around to see what opportunities for service in teaching or in other areas might be currently open, for which I might be qualified. I have thought some about student work in a Wesley Foundation. There are not many Wesley Foundations I would want to be involved in, but there are a few. I am speaking entirely out of ignorance of the local situation there, but I would like to check with you about the O.U. Wesley Foundation and see if you anticipate any change there. I hesitated to write Clyde directly. Thought I should check with you first. But if you think things might open up there, I would be glad to be considered. I think there would be an astounding challenge at O.U. working with students.

I believe that my most effective ministry is going to be with students. I have enjoyed seminary teaching a great deal, and think that service to students is my immediate vocation. Frankly, Finis, I would like to come back to Oklahoma. If I would, though, I think I would have to carve out a place for myself. Right now I am in the process of trying to find out whether there is a place to be carved out. If O.C.U. needed me, I think I would consider that very seriously, but I doubt that they assess their needs to be needs which I can fill. Anyway, I thought I would check with you at this stage of the game and see if you had any ideas.

As ever,

Thomas C. Oden